



European Values in Primary Schools

Impact Report and Policy Recommendations

(Intellectual Output 4)



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission.
This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any
use which may be made of the information contained therein.

2017-1-UK01-KA201-036591

Developing European Values in the Primary School



Contents

I. Introduction	3
II. Transmitting values.....	3
II.1. European values.....	4
II.2. Values transmitted in European societies	6
III. Anti-Muslim racism	7
III.1. Understanding the phenomenon	7
III.2. National contexts of Anti-Muslim racism and racism in general.....	9
III.3. Anti-Muslim racism, discrimination and exclusion within the educational system	15
IV. National school contexts	23
IV.1. General overview.....	23
IV.2. Specific national contexts	23
V. The experience of implementing theatre and arts in primary school education and beyond	30
V.1. The model school – Parkinson Lane P.C. School in Halifax, UK	31
V.2. Belgium	32
V.3. Germany	33
V.4. Greece.....	35
V.5. Italy	37
VI. Conclusions and recommendations	38
At school level:.....	38
At structural level within the school systems:.....	39
At society level:.....	40



I. Introduction

The project Developing European Values in Primary Schools (DEVIPS) wishes to support primary school teachers who work in marginalized contexts and settings of high cultural diversity by offering them practical resources for supporting the educational development of their pupils. The children in such social and educational settings frequently experience exclusion, as well as racism, by members of the dominant ethnic and / or religious population. Depending on their specific situation, they are likely to experience instability within their families (e.g. due to unemployment, alcoholism, etc.), high legal insecurity (especially when they do not have the nationality of the country they are living in), suffer from the absence of role models for their future professional development, etc.

As Intellectual Output 1 (**IO1**) the team developed an online platform with resources for primary school teachers which can be downloaded and implemented. The starting point and model for this project is the primary school Parkinson Lane C.P. in Halifax, UK. The school is situated in an impoverished urban district of Halifax where a large part of the population is of Pakistani descent. Having been one of the schools with lowest teaching success of the UK and in danger of being closed by the end of the last century, a consistent vision of supporting each and every child and the implementation of new teaching methods brought significant change: the school is now among the best of the UK. At the core of the teaching process and the development of the children are those subjects much too often disregarded in educational processes: arts – especially theatre and music -, as well as other forms of artistic expression and sports.

A model curriculum (**IO2**) supports teachers in their effort to implement a pedagogical methodology based on theatre and music(al). The final curriculum and the corresponding handbook (**IO3**) are based on the variety of experience of the partners of this project in (a) Halifax, UK; (b) Hannover, Germany; (c) Palermo, Italy; (d) Brussels, Belgium, and (e) Thessaloniki, Greece. The diverse circumstances of primary and secondary schools in marginalised urban areas with a high level of cultural diversity as well as different educational systems and legal provision (e.g. the decision-making competencies of head teachers) in the European Union influence the possibilities of teachers to implement the model curriculum. Dominant anti-Muslim resentments affect the pupils in their success in the educational system, and measures have to be in place to raise their resilience. In order to evaluate the impact of the project and to elaborate suitable policy recommendations, it is therefore important to analyse the context and the circumstances under which the learning and teaching experience is taking place. This is the aim of this paper (**IO4**).

This document will discuss basic notions of transmitting values as well as the idea of “European values” (chapter II). Given the current social and political dynamics and the contexts of the participating partners, anti-Muslim racism will be discussed as a social phenomenon and problem (chapter III) as well as, more specifically, a phenomenon which affects the learning and teaching processes in European educational systems (chapter IV). Chapter V explores the experience of the implementation of theatre projects in primary schools and beyond. The report finishes with conclusions and recommendations (chapter VI).

II. Transmitting values

The underlying values of a person and of a society determine social interactions and structures. The self-perception of a person and of a society with regard to its dominant values does not necessarily coincide with the values enacted in daily interactions by state institutions or by non-governmental agencies. However, it is this lived experience that has a deeper



influence on the perception of the values that guide a society, than theoretical discourses and classes. This chapter will discuss the idea of European values and consider the values actually transmitted in European societies.

II.1. European values

At the time of its foundation, the initial member states of the European Union did not agree on a common set of European Values. It is not until 2007, at the 50th anniversary of the signature of the Treaties of Rome, that the presidents of the European Parliament, of the Council of the European Union and of the Commission of the European Communities defined their common ideals: “for us, the individual is paramount. His dignity is inviolable. His rights are inalienable. Women and men enjoy equal rights.” This so-called Berlin Declaration further states that the EU strives for peace, freedom, democracy, the rule of law, mutual respect and shared responsibility, prosperity, security, tolerance, participation, justice and solidarity. The European model is supposed to combine economic success and social responsibilities.¹

Currently, the EU considers human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and human rights as values that are supposed to be “an integral part of our European way of life”.² Several EU documents stress equal rights for all as a core concern and refer to the prohibition of discrimination based on gender, color of skin, religion or sexual orientation.³ National and EU institutions have launched campaigns in order to combat online hate speech, to promote the rights of the Roma, etc.⁴

However, this list of values was not elaborated through a collaborative process involving a large number of diverse EU citizens. The Berlin Declaration was a high-level political reaction to the rejection of a European Constitutional Treaty by France and the Netherlands in spring 2005 and a corresponding widespread deficit of identification with the EU among its citizens. The Declaration combines basic human values with two specific projects: the social dimension of the EU’s economic policies, and a specific climate and energy policy. Analysts point out that communicating the social dimension of the EU can raise corresponding expectations among EU citizens while at the same time the competency of decision making on these issues remains with the nation states. This contradiction can further undermine the trust in EU institutions.⁵

The European Values Survey shows that attitudes towards life, family, work, religion, politics and society differ significantly between the populations of European countries as well as within these countries.⁶ Within European countries, age, gender, education, income, religion and urbanization influence attitudes towards authority, family and gender roles or autonomy,

¹ European Parliament & Council of the European Union & Commission of the European Communities, 2007, Declaration on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the signature of the Treaties of Rome, http://europa.eu/50/docs/berlin_declaration_en.pdf, 14.1.2018

² European Union, 2018, Goals and values of the EU, https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/eu-in-brief_en, 14.1.2018. The list of values can now also be found in the briefing of the European Parliament: European Parliament, 2018, Values, <http://europaparlamentti.info/en/values-and-objectives/values/>, 14.1.2018

³ e.g. the Charter of Fundamental Rights

⁴ Council of Europe, 2018, Values. Human Rights, Democracy, Rule of Law, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/about-us/values>, 14.1.2018

⁵ Seeger, Sarah, 2007, Communicating European Values: the German EU presidency and the Berlin Declaration, in: CAP Aktuell 6/2007, http://www.ssoar.info/ssoar/bitstream/handle/document/11118/ssoar-2007-seeger-communicating_european_values.pdf?sequence=1, 14.1.2018

⁶ <http://www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu/>



and they influence levels of interpersonal trust or concerns for the environment.⁷ With regard to gender relations and women's rights, the Eurobarometer from 2016 reports that 18% of the interviewed said that touching a colleague in an unwanted or inappropriate way should not be illegal, and 11% said that forcing a partner to have sex should not be against the law (p. 5). Claims that violence against women is often provoked by the victim are especially widespread in Eastern areas of the European Union (p. 6), and in the EU "more than a quarter of respondents think that sexual intercourse without consent can be justifiable" (p. 5).⁸ In 2014, the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights reported that one out of three women in the European Union older than 15 years have been exposed to physical and/or sexual violence, and that 67% of women affected by violence have not reported these incidents to the police.⁹ With regard to education, an extensive comparative study about teaching values at secondary school in different countries of the European Union shows that the European Union "stresses relevance of values of democracy and tolerance for Europe as a community as well as for its Member States" (p. 9), but that teaching these values tends to be restricted to teaching *about* these values (p. 61). School culture itself implicitly fosters values (p. 60), and mixed student populations as well as mixed teacher populations are important for learning to live together. However, socially and ethnically segregated classrooms dominate, and policies that challenge these segregations are hardly ever in place (p. 61-62).

The UK has been leading in developing the idea of specific "British values" and has defined them as "democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance of those with different faiths and beliefs".¹⁰ While these "British values" call for respect and tolerance towards all religions, the *Prevent Strategy* targets specifically members of the Muslim minority and hence contradicts the very values it pretends to promote. In Germany, similar discussions around the concept of a "guiding culture" arise repeatedly¹¹. In spite of the idea of the separation of the church and the state and equal rights for all, several European countries concede a privileged position to one specific church, e.g. the Church of England or the Greek Orthodox Church.

At the same time, many studies coincide that the values of democracy and tolerance are not unique to Europe.¹² Universal values have been expressed in UN human rights documents as well as in documents like the "Declaration Towards a Global Ethic"¹³, adopted by the Parliament of Religions in 1993. These documents stress equal rights for all human beings as

⁷ Sieben, Inge & Halman, Loek, 2011, Differences within countries: The impact of age, education, gender, religion, income, and urbanisation on values.
<http://www.atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu/new/docsfm/en/Impact%20of%20age%20gender%20religion%20income%20urbanisation%20EN%20-%20Logo%20-%20LOGO-Jori.docx>, 14.1.2018

⁸ European Commission, 2016, Special Eurobarometer 449, Summary. Gender-based Violence.
<http://ec.europa.eu/COMMFrontOffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/75838>, 2.5.2018

⁹ <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2014/violence-against-women-eu-wide-survey-main-results-report>, 2.5.2018

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/guidance-on-promoting-british-values-in-schools-published>

¹¹ The German term is *Leitkultur*

¹² Veugelers, W, de Groot, I & Stolk V, 2017, Research for CULT Committee – Teaching Common Values in Europe. European Parliament. Policy Department for Structural and Cohesion Policies, Brussels.
http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2017/585918/IPOL_STU%282017%29585918_EN.pdf, 14.1.2018

¹³ https://parliamentofreligions.org/pwr_resources/_includes/FCKcontent/File/TowardsAGlobalEthic.pdf



well as peaceful conflict solution, solidarity and the need for a global order that allows everyone to enjoy all human rights. The “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, agreed upon by the member states of the United Nations in 2015 as a follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals, includes the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4): Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.¹⁴ Target 7 of this SDG stipulates: “By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development.”

This project aims at supporting primary school teachers to transmit the knowledge and skills to promote the values enshrined in SDG 4.7. The term “European Values” has controversial political and historical connotations and tends to be used to emphasize an alleged European superiority, i.e., the contrary of the idea of equality and respect. We consider that “European Values” as incorporated into the title of the project cannot mean anything else than a localized version of the universal human values as expressed in SDG 4.7, and we prefer to speak about universal human values. Reservation towards the term “European values” is also based on a realistic assessment of the values transmitted in and by European societies.

II.2. Values transmitted in European societies

European societies tend to claim human rights and equality as basic values. At the same time, discriminatory practices are widespread. Experiencing discrimination means experiencing that in a specific context, not all human beings are considered to be equal in dignity and rights. For children, the first institutionalized places where they experience predominant values of a society are nurseries and schools. It is there where they learn whether they are considered to pertain to a society or to be “different”. This learning process builds on the perceptions transmitted by their parents and other family members: children are likely to perceive consciously or unconsciously whether their parents and siblings feel marginalized by society – be that due to their socio-economic situation, their ethnicity, their religion or their attire, among others. Children suffer from socio-economic deprivation but also from depreciative glances or even worse, insults or physical violence against their parents in the public space. Such experiences also influence the children’s approach to educational institutions.

With the end of the Cold War, the category of social class receives less attention in public discussions, whereas ethnicity and religion have gained more influence on how people are perceived and categorized. This development has been encouraged by the publication of very popular pamphlets like Samuel Huntington’s “Clash of Civilizations?”.¹⁵ Ethnic and religious movements have become more visible and pronounced. In 1997, the Runnymede Trust described a growing phenomenon that would receive the name of islamophobia.¹⁶ Subsequent terror attacks have been used to justify physical violence and discriminatory laws against Muslims. Pupils, their parents, extended families and communities experience exclusion and discrimination when identified (or misidentified) as Muslims. Similarly, antigypsyism, antisemitism, racism against people of African descent and others are on the rise in many European countries. The very same political currents which promote hostility

¹⁴ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

¹⁵ In subsequent publications, the question mark was eliminated. For a discussion of the pamphlet see e.g. Edward Said, *The Clash of Ignorance*: <https://www.thenation.com/article/clash-ignorance/>

¹⁶ The Runnymede Trust. 1997. *Islamophobia a challenge for us all*. London.



towards people of diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds, tend to advocate for traditional heteronormative family values and oppose women’s rights.

Given the specific selection of countries and cities for this study and the involved pupils, we will now focus mainly on islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism.

III. Anti-Muslim racism

III.1. Understanding the phenomenon

In 2010, Thomas Hammarberg, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe raised the following concern: “European countries appear to face another crisis beyond budget deficits – the disintegration of human values. One symptom is the increasing expression of intolerance towards Muslims. Opinion polls in several European countries reflect fear, suspicion and negative opinions of Muslims and Islamic culture. These Islamophobic prejudices are combined with racist attitudes – directed not least against people originating from Turkey, Arab countries and South Asia. Muslims with this background are discriminated against in the labour market and the educational system in a number of European countries.”¹⁷

An important aspect of anti-Muslim racism is the constantly high overestimation of the Muslim population in European countries (and beyond). In the countries participating in the consortium of this project, the reliable data and the perception by the public in 2016 were¹⁸:

Country	Real numbers in 2016	Average estimation by the public 2016	Projection for 2020	Average estimation for 2020 by the public
Belgium	6%	22,5%	8%	21%
Germany	5%	21%	7%	30%
Italy	3%	20%	5%	30%
UK	5%	15%	6%	22%
Greece	5,7% ¹⁹	---	---	40% ²⁰

Contrary to widespread prejudice, several statistics including the European Social Survey show that Muslim respondents tend to have higher trust in democratic institutions than the rest of the population, they express less discomfort with someone from their family marrying

¹⁷ Quoted in: Amnesty International. 2012. Choice and prejudice. Discrimination against Muslims in Europe. London: AI., p. 4

¹⁸ Pamela Duncan, Europeans greatly overestimate Muslim population, poll shows, The Guardian. 13.12.2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/datablog/2016/dec/13/europeans-massively-overestimate-muslim-population-poll-shows>, see also James Stannard, The Perils of Perception 2017, 6.12.2017. <https://www.ipsos.com/ipsos-mori/en-uk/perils-perception-2017>

¹⁹ PEW Research Center in www.news247.gr

²⁰ Katsanevas Thanasis in www.triklopodia.gr



a non-Muslim than vice versa, and they tend to have more diverse friendships than non-Muslims do.²¹

Due to the development of the theoretical discussions as well as a more structural approach to anti-Muslim racism, 20 years after the ground-breaking report “Islamophobia – A challenge for us all”²² the Runnymede Trust has adopted the following definition:

“Islamophobia is anti-Muslim racism” and “Islamophobia is any distinction, exclusion, or restriction towards, or preference against, Muslims (or those perceived to be Muslims) that has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.”²³

This definition reflects discussions criticizing the term “phobia” as pathologizing social behaviour and not reflecting emotions like hate or outright hostility. This hate and hostility tend to be directed against very real human beings, not against an abstract concept of “Islam”. Racism, on the other hand, has increasingly been defined as reflecting and justifying social structures and relations of power, i.e. as a phenomenon much more powerful than the mere existence or expression of prejudice and stereotypes. This interpretation of racism corresponds to current discussions and definitions both in academia and the human rights system, e.g. of the United Nations.

Anti-Muslim racism and other forms of racism limit equal opportunities in all areas of life, including employment, housing, health services, participation and representation in the media, treatment by the police or within the judicial system and education, and access to political representation. It also includes experiencing the vandalizing of property, verbal abuse or physical assaults (ibid. p11). Exclusion and discrimination can be experienced due to one’s skin colour or other physical features, one’s name, specific attire or other characteristics.

Several reports give account of incidents of physical violence against Muslims or people perceived as Muslims during many years, and such incidents are on the rise in some countries. Political parties as well as the media exploit anti-Muslim stereotypes especially during election campaigns.

Anti-Muslim racism and resentments are highly gendered and affect Muslim women disproportionately. This includes discrimination within and exclusion of Muslim women from educational institutions, the labour market or public space, and the specific exposure of visible Muslim women to verbal and physical abuse like spitting, hitting or acid attacks outside their homes. Muslim women with and without headscarf are especially confronted with obstacles when exercising their freedom of movement or accessing the labour market, education, health services, etc.

The rise of political parties exploiting anti-Muslim resentments during the last decades has also led to legal restrictions or intents of legal restrictions with regard to the practice of religious freedom, e.g. the prohibition of the use of specific clothes, the slaughtering of animals according to religious prescriptions, etc.

²¹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, 2017: Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS II). Muslims – selected findings. Luxembourg, p. 17. Available at: <http://fra.europa.eu/en/publication/2017/eumidis-ii-muslims-selected-findings>

²² See FN 1

²³ Elahi, Farah & Khan, Omar (Ed.). 2017. Islamophobia. Still a challenge for us all. A 20th-anniversary Report. The Runnymede Trust. London, p. 1



In the following section we provide an overview of the problem of anti-Muslim racism in the countries of the partners (III.2). The problem of anti-Muslim racism and racism in European school systems will be treated separately in chapter III.3.

III.2. National contexts of Anti-Muslim racism and racism in general

All the countries of the consortium are observing the rising power of white nationalism expressing itself in specific political parties like the Belgian Vlaams Belang; the German Alternative für Deutschland AfD, the Nationaldemokratische Partei NPD, the Christlich-Soziale Union in Bayern CSU; the Italian Northern League, Forza Nuova, Casa Pound, Partito Anti-Islamizzazione; the Greek Golden Dawn or the British United Kingdom Independence Party Ukip, Britain First, English Defense League, BNP, the English Brotherhood or Ban Islam, etc. For all countries of the consortium a variety of reports on racism and, specifically, anti-Muslim racism, are available.

The following paragraphs resume important aspects of the information available in the countries of the partners of the project.

III.2.1. Belgium

During 2017, Belgium has seen increasing anti-Muslim hate speech and action, as well as state based anti-Muslim policies, legal initiatives and propaganda. This includes the unanimous vote for a ban of halal and kosher slaughter in the provinces of Wallonia and Flanders.²⁴ Incidents of physical violence against Muslims have declined in 2017 but continue on a high level. They include the stabbing of a Muslim man at a mosque in Ougrèe, Liège, by a neighbour or an attempted arson attack against the Al Ihsan Islamic Cultural Centre in Herstal, also Liège. Discourses by politicians describe Belgian Muslims as “others” and insist on an alleged need for legal regulations against them.

“A worsening environment of Islamophobia was identified with respect to media content, political discourse and experiences of discrimination indicating the new and increasingly acceptable hostility”²⁵.

On September 26th 2017, the “Counter-Islamophobia-Kit” (CIK) was presented at the European Parliament in Brussels²⁶. The CIK is the result of a project co-funded by the Rights, Equality & Citizenship Programme of the EU, and was led by the University of Leeds (UK). It has been elaborated based on reports about initiatives of combating anti-Muslim racism in eight countries of the European Union²⁷. The event was organised in cooperation with the Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI), the Green/EFA party and the European Commission, and was part of a one-day intensive programme on the occasion of the European Day Against Islamophobia. The initiative aims at influencing European policies against anti-Muslim racism.

Since 2014, the “Collectif Contre l’Islamophobie en Belgique” (CCIB) has been listing Islamophobic acts committed in Belgium and on the Internet. The acts identified and analyzed

²⁴ Easat-Daas, Amina: Islamophobia in Belgium. National Report 2017. In: Bayraklı, Enes and Farid Hafez (eds.): European Islamophobia Report 2017. Ankara, Istanbul, Washington DC, Kairo: SETA, 2018, p. 87-108, available at: <http://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Belgium.pdf>

²⁵ Personal communication from a local expert on islamophobia

²⁶ <https://cik.leeds.ac.uk/events/cik-toolkit-launch-european-parliament-brussels/>

²⁷ The final booklet can be downloaded here: <https://cik.leeds.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2018/09/2018.09.17-Job-44240.01-CIK-Final-Booklet.pdf>



in these reports were either communicated by the victims themselves or reported by CCIB members. These figures represent only the tip of the iceberg and are far from giving a real representation of this xenophobic phenomenon - alongside other manifestations of hatred - in the country. In 2017, these acts included the desecration of places of worship (mosques), physical aggressions towards people perceived to be Muslims, open incitement to hatred on social networks, manifestations of xenophobic and Islamophobic groups, etc. When presenting its first annual report on Friday 7th of Sept 2018²⁸, CCIB denounced that women are the main victims of anti-Muslim incidents. According to the 2017 CCIB files, the most denounced Islamophobia is that expressed in the media and on the internet (29%), in society (17%), in education (16%) and in connection with a job (14%). The association also notes its resurgence in the political discourse (9%).²⁹

One of the challenges of the fight against Islamophobia is to be able to build a positive discourse on the effective contributions by Belgian Muslims. This discourse is urgent to develop, as people are exposed to a never-ending flow of media, political, international and local information that feeds negative stereotypes about Muslims.

III.2.2. Germany

Discrimination of Muslims as well as Roma and Sinti and other members of minority groups is widespread in Germany. Anti-Muslim stereotypes are frequently considered to be justified and expressed as self-evident truth. This tendency is supported by popular publications (e.g. Thilo Sarrazin's "Deutschland schafft sich ab" (~ Germany is abrogating itself) and frequent talk shows where Muslims and Islam are discussed as problematic and intruding into German society and culture. Individuals that grew up in a Muslim family and/or country but later rejected Islam are particularly promoted, and they receive over proportional attention by the media and the public in general. The use of physical violence against persons considered to be Muslims has been reported frequently. In 2017, 268 refugees were physically injured during racist attacks (Youness: 2018: 266)³⁰. Non-refugee victims of increasing violence and brutalization include the 22 year-old student Shaden Mohamed al-Gohray from Egypt who was killed in a hit-and-run incident and, according to witnesses and friends, was insulted in racist ways while lying on the street and dying (Youness 2018: 275). Violent attacks have also been reported against politicians and supporters of refugees' rights (Younes 2018: 267).

In 2015 official data report 1,031 politically motivated crimes against asylum shelter, and in the same year, the Amadeo Antonio Foundation reported 1,082 violent attacks against asylum seekers (Amnesty International 2016: 8f)³¹. Amnesty International has raised concern about the high level of impunity that accompanies cases of racist violence as well as the lack of risk-assessment and corresponding measures of protection of the concerned population (Amnesty International 2016: 9). The human rights organization argues that the (lack of) research of the right-wing group National Socialist Underground NSU whose members killed ten people between 2000 and 2007, constitutes institutional racism. Both the UN Committee

²⁸ This is the first year that its resources allow CCIB to write a report on the state of Islamophobia in Belgium, focusing on the French-speaking area.

²⁹ Colectif Contre l'Islamophobie en Belgique, 2018, Rapport Chiffres 2017, http://ccib-ctib.be/wp-content/uploads/CCIB_PUBLIC_PDF_RapportChiffresCCIB/CCIB_RapportChiffres2017_Septembre2018.pdf, 15.3.2019

³⁰ Younes, Anna-Esther: Islamophobia in Germany. National Report 2017. In: Enes Bayraklı and Farid Hafez (eds.): European Islamophobia Report 2017. Ankara, Istanbul, Washington DC, Kairo: SETA, 2018, p. 249-281, available at <http://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Germany.pdf>

³¹ Amnesty International. 2016. Living in insecurity. How Germany is failing victims of racist violence. London



on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights have raised the same concern (Amnesty International 2016: 17). The final verdict on the case in July 2018 leaves many questions concerning the involvement of a possibly extended network of supporters of the murders unresolved.

Victims of racist violence often cannot count on effective measures taken by the relevant instances, rather on the contrary, they have to fear further discrimination during the process. Contrary to common beliefs and media reports, racist mobilization and political movements are not limited to specific areas of the country. The political party AfD presents an over proportional percentage of upper class membership (39%), many of which own high academic credentials (Easat-Daas 2017: 257).

III.2.3. Greece

In Greece, the Muslim population can be divided into three different groups: a Muslim minority of historic descent, migrant workers and their families, and refugees. The first group includes approximately 100.000 to 120.000 people in the region of Thrace who descend from the Muslim minority officially recognized in the 1923 Treaty of Lausanne. Local religious leaders and migrant activists estimate that approximately 150.000 Muslim immigrants and foreign workers from South-Eastern Europe, South Asia, South-Eastern Asia, the Middle East and North Africa live in and around Athens in clusters according to their countries of origin. The UN High Commissioner for refugees estimates that approximately 49.000 migrants and asylum seekers remain on the territory of Greece, mostly from Muslim majority countries.

The constitution recognizes Greek Orthodoxy as the “prevailing religion” in Greece, and it is equated with the Greek national identity. Its influence is strong especially at the level of education. In 2014, for the first time the Jewish community and the Muslim minority in Thrace were recognized as legal entities. Beyond these three groups, other religious groups have been seeking legal recognition and at least 28 religious communities are officially registered. Since 2014, the Catholic Church, the Anglican Church, two evangelical Christian groups, the Ethiopian, Coptic, Armenian and Assyrian Orthodox Churches are among the religious groups that have been recognized as religious legal entities. However, The Greek Orthodox Church and, to a lesser extent, the Muslim minority of Thrace and the Catholic Church receive some government benefits not available to other religious communities. The 1923 Treaty of Lausanne allows the Muslim minority in Thrace to maintain mosques and *awqafs*, namely social and charitable organizations. Each position of a mufti is filled twice, being one a selected by the community and one by the government. The muftis elected by the government then appoint imams at the mosques. These muftis are allowed “*to render religious judicial services in the area of family law, and provide bilingual education for the Muslim Minority*”.³² The oath taken by civil servants, cabinet and parliament members can be based on one’s belief or secular. The same applies in court. The constitution provides the Muslim minority in Thrace, among others, with the inviolable freedom of religious conscience, the right to worship in their own mosques, the appointment of muftis, and nine years of compulsory education to all children in the region. There are Greek-Turkish bilingual schools and two Islamic religious schools with their own religious instructors. A law passed in August 2017 allows students from primary and secondary education to be excused absent for Eid-al-Fitr and Eid-al-Adha day. The same law establishes an annual 0,5% quota for admission of Muslim students to universities, technical institutes and positions in the public sector.

³² US Department of State, 2016, Greece 2015 International Religious Freedom Report, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/256407.pdf>, 15.3.2019



Additionally, 2% of students attending the national Fire Brigade school should be from the Muslim minority in Thrace.³³

According to the National Islamophobia Report 2017, Islamophobia in Greece exists more at the level of hate speech towards Muslims rather than at the level of physical violence. Three main sources have been identified as responsible for the production of Islamophobia: politics, i.e. political parties belonging to right and the extreme right, religious leaders and the media. Islamophobic resentments are triggered by the influx of refugees as well as terrorist attacks in Western societies³⁴.

III.2.4. Italy

Also Italy is a country at the EU external boarder and based at the Mediterranean Sea, i.e. the deadliest boarder of the world. The country also had a colonial relationship with African countries now crucial for refugee movements, i.e. Libya, Eritrea and Somalia. Other countries of the European Union are reluctant to support Italy, one of the poorer countries of the EU characterized by significant internal inequalities e.g. between the North and the South, with the resettlement of refugees.

In the last years, anti-Islamic rhetoric and a generic aversion against a multi-ethnic society and religious pluralism have become more evident, and the flow of refugees has provoked public events organized by extreme right-wing movements, and episodes of physical attacks on migrants in 2018, in several parts of the country. However, xenophobic attacks are not generally based on religious prejudices but are motivated by a generic intolerance towards non-Italians from poorer countries.

The Italian Constitutional Court has regularly rejected bans on mosques in Lombardy. Similarly, local courts in several towns of Northern Italy governed by the Lega Nord have invalidated unlawfully implemented ordinances to prohibit the wearing of the veil and hijab. There is a lack of data on physical violence against people perceived as foreigners or Muslims as well as against centres for asylum seekers.³⁵

In 2017, the Italian Government started a structural dialogue with the Muslim communities and signed the “National Pact for an Italian Islam, Expression of an Open and Integrated Community, Adhering to the Values and Principles of the Italian Legal System”³⁶. It was elaborated by the Council for Relations with Italian Islam and adopted by the Italian Ministry of Interior. This document for the first time recognises Islam in Italy and concedes certain rights to Muslims like the establishment of legally recognised mosques. At the same time, restrictions imposed discrimination against them: no other religious group, for example, is obligated to preach its sermons in Italian.

³³ US Department of State, 2018, Greece 2017 International Religious Freedom Report, <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/281156.pdf>, 15.3.2019

³⁴ Huseyinoglu, Ali & Sakellariou, Alexandros: Islamophobia in Greece. National report 2017. In: Enes Bayraklı and Farid Hafez (eds.): European Islamophobia Report 2017. Ankara, Istanbul, Washington DC, Kairo: SETA, 2018, p. 285-304, available at: <http://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Greece.pdf>

³⁵ Alietti, Alfredo & Padovan, Dario: Islamophobia in Italy. National report 2017. In: Enes Bayraklı and Farid Hafez (eds.): European Islamophobia Report 2017. Ankara, Istanbul, Washington DC, Kairo: SETA, 2018, p. 345-359, available at: <http://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Italy.pdf>

³⁶ http://www.interno.gov.it/sites/default/files/patto_nazionale_per_un_islam_italiano_en_1.2.2017.pdf



Italy was a country of massive emigration until the 1970s, and people of Italian descent living outside Italy outnumber those living in Italy³⁷. In 1970, Libya expelled all Italian occupiers and settlers and requested reparation payments³⁸. Most immigrants to Italy live in the North of the country, and the highest number of foreign nationals are from Romania³⁹. Several depopulated towns in Southern Italy strive to attract national and foreign migrants⁴⁰ but continue to have the lowest rates of immigration of the country. Palermo for example has 3.8% of foreign population as compared to the national average of 8.5%⁴¹. Local perceptions in Southern Italy, however, differ from these numbers and the proportion of immigrants tends to be overestimated significantly.

III.2.5. United Kingdom

Although they are underreported, hate crimes against Muslims form the overwhelming majority of religiously aggravated crime, and they are increasing in the UK both in number and in severity⁴². Overall, the number of attacks on Muslims reached its highest extent yet in 2017⁴³. They included terrorist attacks on Muslim properties and places of worship, including the Finsbury Park Mosque attack which left one dead and ten injured (Kallis 2018: 678). Attacks on Muslims are strongly gendered, with most of the perpetrators being males and most of the victims, women. Although perpetrators often say that they are against a religion, not the people, Islamophobia in practice is also associated with racism: the analysis of the language used on online forums and webpages shows that hate is directed towards Muslims, and one of the most common words of abuse used is 'Paki'⁴⁴. Forty percent of British Muslims are from a Pakistani background.

Hate Crime has been shown to spike after trigger events such as terrorist incidents like the Manchester Arena attack, which saw a five-fold increase in Islamophobic hate crime in the region⁴⁵ (Kallis 2018: 691), and media reports of crimes such as child sexual abuse scandals involving men of Pakistani Muslim backgrounds (Awan & Zempi 2015). There was also a large

³⁷ https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Italy

³⁸ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/4380360.stm>

³⁹ <https://openmigration.org/en/analyses/from-morocco-to-romania-marocco-how-immigration-to-italy-changed-in-10-years/>

⁴⁰ E.g. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/sep/11/underpopulated-italian-region-molise>

⁴¹ <https://www.istat.it/en/archivio/223017>

⁴² Faith Matters, 2018, Beyond the Incident: Outcomes for Victims of Anti-Muslim Prejudice <https://tellmamauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/EXECUTIVE-SUMMARY.pdf>, 15.3.2019

⁴³ Awan, Imran & Zempi, Irene, 2015, We Fear For Our Lives. Offline and Online Experiences of Anti-Muslim hostility. <https://tellmamauk.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/We-Fear-For-Our-Lives.pdf>, 15.3.2019

⁴⁴ Awan, Imran, 2015, Islamophobia on Social Media, A Qualitative Analysis of Facebook's Walls of Hate. In: International Journal of Cyber Criminology, Vol 10 Issue 1, June 2016, 1-20, <http://www.cybercrimejournal.com/ImranAwanvol10issue1IJCC2016.pdf>, 15.3.2019

⁴⁵ Kallis, Arisstotle: Islamophobia in United Kingdom. National Report 2017. In Enes Baytakli and Farid Hafez (eds.): European Islamophobia Report 2017. Ankara, Istanbul, Washington DC, Cairo: SETA, 2018, p 673-706, available at: <http://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/UnitedKingdom.pdf>.



spike following Brexit. The Leave campaign had played heavily on anti-immigrant feelings, such as a poster showing a queue of refugees with the slogan, “Let’s take back our borders”⁴⁶.

Increased use of social media has been shown positively correlating with an increase in attacks on refugees in other countries like Germany⁴⁷. Facebook has been criticised for failing to tackle hate crime effectively, but also because its algorithm filters people into like-minded groups so that it encourages users to think that their views are widely shared. The mainstream media and politicians too have been accused of creating a climate in which Islamophobia is acceptable. According to a news report cited by Faith Matters in *We Fear for Our Lives*, young people believed that the media was second place in promoting Muslims in a negative light, after terrorism⁴⁸. A recent example of this is an article on the 12th of October 2018 by Richard Littlejohn, in the Daily Mail, juxtaposed next to a silhouette of a young woman wearing a headscarf, about an extremist who has repeatedly rejected accommodation offered to her by the state following her release from jail, while 1.1 million families are homeless⁴⁹.

Islamophobic remarks form part of the mainstream political discourse. Baroness Warsi, a former chair of the Conservative party, has persistently accused the party of having an Islamophobia problem at all levels⁵⁰. In particular, the campaign against London Mayor Sadiq Khan in 2016 played to prejudices and fears. The Muslim Council of Britain compiled a 42 pages dossier of Islamophobic comments from the Conservative Debating Forum⁵¹. Following Boris Johnson’s high-profile comparison of women wearing niqab with letterboxes, there was an increase of attacks on Muslim women.⁵² The MEP and leader of UKIP, Gerard Batten has made several outrageous claims about Islam, including claiming that it is a ‘Death cult’⁵³. He recently spoke at a rally in support of Tommy Robinson, a jailed far right leader. There are also reports of some Labour party figures making Islamophobic remarks.

Muslims continue to face disadvantage in employment in terms of earnings and career progression. A report published by the Social Mobility Commission on the adult careers of

⁴⁶ Bartlett, Evan 2016, People are calling out Ukip’s new anti-EU poster for resembling “outright Nazi propaganda”, <https://www.indy100.com/article/people-are-calling-out-ukips-new-antieu-poster-for-resembling-outright-nazi-propaganda--WkTYUB18EW> (16.6.3016), 15.3.2019

⁴⁷ Müller, Karsten & Schwarz, Carlo, Fanning the Flames of Hate: Social Media and Hate Crime (May 21, 2018). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3082972> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3082972>

⁴⁸ Allen, Chris, 2012, A Review of the evidence relating to the representation of Muslims and Islam in the British Media. University of Birmingham: Institute of Applied Social Studies, School of Social Policy, <https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/IASS/news-events/MEDIA-ChrisAllen-APPGEvidence-Oct2012.pdf>, 15.3.2019

⁴⁹ Littlejohn, Richard, 2018, A jihadi wife rejected seven houses because they weren’t big enough, while 1,1m families are stuck in the social housing waiting list... so why is there always cash for these nutjobs?, Daily Mail 12.10.2018, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/debate/article-6267423/RICHARD-LITTLEJOHN-cash-jihadi-nutjobs.html>, 15.3.2019

⁵⁰ Bienkow, Adam, 2018, The Islamophobia scandal in the Conservative party goes “right up to the top”, 11.6.2018, <http://uk.businessinsider.com/islamophobia-scandal-conservative-party-goes-right-up-to-the-top-baroness-warsi-interview-2018-6>, 15.3.2019

⁵¹ <https://mcb.org.uk/press-releases/tories-accused-of-turning-blind-eye-to-islamophobia-in-the-party-amid-fresh-new-revelations/>

⁵² <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/boris-johnson-burqa-muslim-women-veil-attacks-islamophobia-letterboxes-rise-a8488651.html>

⁵³ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2018/feb/18/ukip-gerard-batten-islam-muslims-quran>



children of Bangladeshi and Pakistani origins showed that, despite strong academic performance, they were far less likely to gain professional or managerial occupations.⁵⁴ Over 50% of young British Muslims of both genders are economically inactive. Of all minority groups, Muslims experience the worst discrimination⁵⁵. Within the workplace, Muslims have come under increasing scrutiny and suspicion due to the duty on public sector workers to refer under the Prevent legislation⁵⁶. Muslims tend to suffer from deprivation when it comes to housing. Almost half of Muslim households live within the bottom ten percent of most deprived households in England (Social Mobility Commission Report, 2017); Muslims are excluded from the labour market and discriminated against at all levels. Poverty in the Muslim community, at 50% is far higher than the national average of 18% (Quoted in Runnymede, (2017), Islamophobia revisited).

III.2.6. Summary

Anti-Muslim racism as well as other forms of racism are present in the partners' countries both at the level of individual discrimination and exclusion as well as a structural phenomenon. Extreme right-wing parties gain substantial numbers of votes in all these countries by applying anti-Muslim and anti-immigrant discourses. In all concerned countries, the population systematically overestimates the percentage of the Muslim population and subsequently foresees a much higher increase than what can reasonably be expected. Discrimination and exclusion are reported in all areas of life, including work, housing, the health sector or education. Anti-Muslim racism, as well as other forms of racism, expresses itself in all countries – though in different degrees – also in attacks against places of worship and physical violence. The latter is especially directed against Muslim women. In the virtual as well as in real life, Muslims or people considered to be Muslims are exposed to specific forms of hostilities and discrimination.

III.3. Anti-Muslim racism, discrimination and exclusion within the educational system

The experiences pupils make in the educational system are of crucial importance not only for their academic formation but also for their self-understanding as citizens of the country they live in. It is at public kindergartens and schools where the State transmits to children which role(s) society assigns them, and where they experience inclusion or exclusion, respect and dignity or discrimination.

While in several European cities children from ethnic minority families perform worse than their counterparts from the dominant ethnic group, these differences disappear or even reverse when other indicators like social class are taken into account (Open Society Institute 2010: 93)⁵⁷. Valuing and respecting the ethnic, religious and linguistic background of a child has an important impact on his or her attitude towards education (ibid.: 102). The segregation of children from different backgrounds obstructs their educational success (ibid.: 108).

⁵⁴ "Race Disparity Audit? Labour Market." Muslim Engagement and Development, 14 Nov. 2017, mend.org.uk/news/race-disparity-audit-labour-market/.

⁵⁵ Khattab, N & Johnston, R, 2015, 'Ethno-religious identities and persisting penalties in the UK labour market'. *Social Science Journal*, vol 52., pp. 490-50

⁵⁶ Farid Qurashid, The Prevent Strategy and the UK 'war on terror': embedding infrastructures of surveillance in Muslim communities. 2018. <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41599-017-0061-9>

⁵⁷ Open Society Institute, 2010: Muslims in Europe. A report on 11 EU Cities. New York, London, Budapest. Available at: https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/a-muslims-europe-20110214_0.pdf



Exclusion and discrimination at school also affects teachers. Teachers of minority groups discriminated against constitute a disproportionately small group in the teachers' staff rooms. They often experienced discrimination and exclusion during their own learning career, and they are likely to have internalized discriminatory attitudes and behavior. At the same time, as teachers, they are often discriminated against by their colleagues, pupils and parents.

For all the partners country reports on discrimination within the school system are available.

III.3.1. Belgium

In the case of Belgium, reports indicate discrimination and problems of access to the school system for women who are visibly recognizable as Muslim women. This includes an extensive public discussion on a possible prohibition of long skirts (Easat-Daas 2017: 95) and a limitation for women to access course exams (Easat-Daas 2017: 96).⁵⁸

The Centre interfédéral pour l'égalité des chances UNIA is an independent public institution which combats discrimination and promotes equal opportunities⁵⁹. It commissioned a study about equal opportunities in schools in Belgium. The resulting Diversity Barometer Education⁶⁰ is the final part of a triptych. The first two parts dealt with discrimination in employment (2012) and housing (2014). The study is the result of long-term scientific research by the KU Leuven, UGent and ULB (Brussels). The research was supported by the Ministers of Education of the three linguistic communities (French, Flams and German) and by the Minister for Equal Opportunity of the French speaking community. The discrimination criteria selected for the study were ethnic background, social background, disability and sexual orientation. The report provides information about the three recognised linguistic communities in Belgium, i.e. the French, Flemish or German speaking population:

In the analysis of the *French speaking community*, discrimination is understood as a process that encompasses collectively reduced rights as well as a differentiated individual treatment based on prejudice against people characterised by one of the above mentioned criteria. The study distinguishes between direct and indirect discrimination. Direct discrimination is understood as distinguishing in a way that leads to one person being treated in a less favourable manner than another person in a comparable situation, without any other possible justification. Indirect discrimination refers to measures that are apparently neutral (regulation, organisational culture, etc.) but which have the effect of creating disadvantages for people who present one of the discrimination grounds.

According to UNIA, in both primary and secondary schools, respondents highly favoured the ban on visible religious symbols in school. Social class as measured by the Socio Economic Index (SEI) influenced such attitudes and sanctions: there are relatively few such bans in the free public (essentially Catholic) schools and relatively few bans in schools with a higher SEI. Respondents approve strict rules regarding the use of French in their schools, whether in class or during school breaks. However, a compositional effect and SEI strata comes into play: Strictness rises when the proportion of students of foreign nationality is larger. There is relatively less importance given to the use of French at school by multilingual students in the

⁵⁸ Easat-Daas, Amina: Islamophobia in Belgium. National Report 2017. In: Bayrakli, Enes and Farid Hafez (eds.): European Islamophobia Report 2017. Ankara, Istanbul, Washington DC, Kairo: SETA, 2018, p. 87-108, available at: <http://www.islamophobieurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Belgium.pdf>

⁵⁹ UNIA is independence and engagement in favour of human rights is recognized by the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions. The organisation has inter-federal competence. <https://www.unia.be/>

⁶⁰ The report is available at: <https://www.unia.be/en/publications-statistics/publications/diversity-barometer-education-2018>



more advantaged schools. At both primary and secondary school levels, respondents appear to make little use of translation, interpreters, or the diverse language skills of the staff in the contact with non-French-speaking parents. In both primary and secondary schools, more measures are taken in favour of linguistic diversity when the foreign population is larger.

The UNIA study emphasises that the management of diversity by institutional actors at school is partially determined by the position of the schools within the hierarchical and competitive situations that are created through the functioning of the educational system. Not all the schools are dealing with the same target groups and some of them specialise in the management of specific populations. The application of a study combining the qualitative and quantitative approach indicates that those schools occupying more disadvantaged positions within the competitive marketplace of schools respond to the specific needs of their target groups, specifically students of foreign origin and students with a disadvantaged social background.

For the *Flemish speaking Community* the study shed light on the discrimination in the Flemish schools that affected different categories (LGBT, ethnic groups, people with reduced mobility or from families with a poorer socio-economic background). According to the available literature, it appears that Flemish education ranks among the top internationally with regard to quality and performance. However, the Flemish (and likewise, the French-speaking) education system ranks among the lowest in Europe in terms of social justice. Students with a migration background, with a functional disability or from more disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds more often have to repeat a year, are less prevalent in highly valued forms of education, are more likely to leave school without a diploma, and are less inclined to pursue higher education than students with none of the above-mentioned characteristics do.

Students with a migration background are in a highly vulnerable position, and they perform markedly poor on various indicators for school success. This can be explained partially by the fact that these students must often contend with a combination of challenges, in which their poorer socio-economic background has a particularly strong impact. This interplay of indicators is a general observation in the analysis. For example, a disproportionate number of children in special-needs education have a migration background and/or poorer socio-economic background. It can therefore be concluded that focusing at the start of the school career on a high-quality care and remedial learning system could make a significant difference for these target groups.

Moreover, Flemish schools are characterised by a high degree of segregation where students with a functional disability, with a migration background or from families with a poorer socio-economic background are concentrated in certain schools. This segregation in education can to some extent be linked to problems with the current policy on enrolment, funding of education and lack of school infrastructure.

In the UNIA study, the authors attempted to gain further insight into this matter by focusing on the orientation policy and practices in secondary education. Secondary education in Flanders is characterised by a combination of guidance (tracking) at an early age, and an unequal social status of different forms of education. This combination can lead to the reproduction of social inequality through socio-economic differences in the study programmes chosen. The guidance at an early age can in fact mean that such decisions are based not so much on the talents and interests of the students, but rather on the preferences of the parents as well as on the preferences and recommendations by teachers and schools. Social differences are thus reinforced by opting for less ambitious school tracks. For their part,



teachers tend to base their recommendations on performance and attitude towards learning (in order to form homogenous subgroups) rather than on interest or talents. At the age of 12, performance can also be strongly linked to the social background of students, and hence the guidance towards educational choices perceived as higher in status easily becomes influenced by a strong social selection process.

III.3.2. Germany

In Germany, legal restrictions against female Muslim teachers (and other officials) using hijab have been revoked in most parts of the country but continue to be discussed repeatedly by political parties and in the media. In his extensive study about racism towards teachers, Karim Fereidooni concludes that teachers repeatedly experience at schools that a teacher is supposed to be white and should speak without an accent from outside of Germany (2016: 322)⁶¹. Non-white teachers get different tasks assigned than white teachers and are judged based on stricter criteria than white teachers (ibid.: 323). The discrimination of teachers within the educational system – often by other teachers – illustrates the gap between political public calls for diversity among teachers and dynamics of exclusion in the educational system (ibid.: 15).

With regard to pupils, several studies have shown that when marking one and the result of an exam, teachers tend to mark pupils with Turkish surnames more strictly than students with German surnames. In a study testing the grading of dictations, it turned out that “[a] positive attitude toward individuals with a migrant background led to worse grading than a negative attitude toward individuals without a migrant background”.⁶² As a reaction to the 2017 #MeToo campaign, in Germany the hashtag #MeTwo was used to denounce experiences of racism. Many of these experiences referred to schools and degrading treatment by teachers.⁶³

Given the federal system of German’s educational system, it is difficult to make general statements. However, comparative research has shown that in Länder with an early selection of pupils according to their performance, migrant students had less opportunities to reach medium or high level qualifications as compared to Länder with a more comprehensive school system (p. 97).⁶⁴ Several Länder of Germany have implemented a so-called backpack-project. The idea was taken from a Dutch model in Rotterdam and adapted to the local circumstances. The idea of the project is to provide mothers with teaching materials of topics important at school in their mother tongues and train them in small groups to support their children by developing language skills in their first language. The method allows both the empowerment of the mothers and an increase of the linguistic capacities of the children.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Fereidooni, Karim, 2016: Diskriminierungs- und Rassismuserfahrungen im Schulwesen. Eine Studie zu Ungleichheitspraktiken im Berufskontext. Springer VS, Wiesbaden.

⁶² Bonfeld Meike & Dickhäuser Oliver: (Biased) Grading of Students’ Performance: Students’ Names, Performance Level, and Implicit Attitudes. In: *Front. Psychol.* 9:481. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2018.00481

⁶³ Klovert, Heike: #MeTwo in der Schule. Wenn Lehrer zu Rassisten werden. In: *Spiegel online*, 31.7.2018, <http://www.spiegel.de/lebenundlernen/schule/metwo-in-der-schule-wenn-lehrer-zu-rassisten-werden-a-1220852.html>

⁶⁴ Open Society Institute, 2010: Muslims in Europe. A report on 11 Cities: https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/sites/default/files/a-muslims-europe-20110214_0.pdf

⁶⁵ Regionale Arbeitsstellen zur Förderung von Kinder und Jugendlichen aus Zuwandererfamilien, 2004, Rucksack-Projekt. Ein Konzept zur Sprachförderung und Elternbildung im Elementarbereich: https://www.early-excellence.de/binaries/addon/74_rucksack.pdf



Public discussions with regard to education and Islam include the use of a hijab by pupils and/or teachers, obligatory swimming courses, the use of a burqini, halal food and the participation of Muslim girls at school activities with overnight stays away from home. In spite of wide spread prejudice against Muslim pupils, and especially male Muslim pupils, statistics show that the performance at school depends first of all on the socio-economic background and urban segregation, not on ethnicity or religion.⁶⁶

III.3.3. Greece

As a response to the arrival of refugees in 2015, the Greek government launched a special education programme for approximately 20.300 refugee children hosted in the country in October 2016. This programme of afternoon preparatory classes (Δομές Υποδοχής και Εκπαίδευσης Προσφύγων, DYEP) addresses children aged 4 to 15 and is implemented in public schools near to refugee camps⁶⁷. These classes are accessible by children living on the mainland and implemented by substitute teachers appointed by the Ministry of Education. During one year of transition, pupils are taught Greek language, mathematics, English and ICTs, artistic activities and sports. They are then supposed to join mainstream classes in public schools. In the school year 2016/2017, 2.613 children attended 145 classes in 111 schools.

Schooling of refugee children is still poor on the Eastern Aegean islands and especially problematic in the Northern Aegean. No official data are available about the schooling rate on the Eastern Aegean islands. According to Human Rights Watch, fewer than 15% of migrant children on the Greek islands were enrolled in formal education by the end of the 2017/2018 school year (ibid). NGOs implement non-formal activities on the islands.⁶⁸

Refugee and migrant children living in urban areas have attended morning “Reception Classes” addressed to pupils with limited knowledge of the Greek language, characterised as Zones of Educational Priority (ZEP). These classes are part of the formal educational system and, approximately, 2000 children have joined them.

In January 2019, out of an estimated number of 27.000 refugee and migrant children in Greece, an estimated 11.700 children (aged 4 to 17) were enrolled in formal education⁶⁹, i.e., 43.3%. In 2017, approximately 3.500 children (aged 6 to 17) out of an estimated number of 12.000 refugee and migrant children of that age were in formal education⁷⁰. i.e. less than 30%.

The determination of the Greek government to include refugee children into the public schooling system has caused strong reactions from Greek parents, but with decreasing intensity.⁷¹ The extreme right wing political party Golden Dawn GD supported these protests.

⁶⁶ Bundesministerium für Bildung und Forschung, Pressemitteilung 067/2016, „Bildung in Deutschland 2016“: <https://www.bmbf.de/de/bildung-in-deutschland-2016-3010.html>

⁶⁷ Greek Council for Refugees, Access to education. 2019: <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-education>

⁶⁸ ESPN (EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY NETWORK) FLASH REPORT 2017/67. Dimitris Ziomas, Capella Antoinetta, Konstantinidou Danai, /July 2017.Ministry of Digital Policy Telecommunications and Media

⁶⁹ <https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/greece/reception-conditions/employment-and-education/access-education>

⁷⁰ <https://www.unicef.org/eca/press-releases/greece-back-school-refugee-migrant-children>

⁷¹ Huseyinoglu, Ali & Sakellariou, Alexandros: Islamophobia in Greece. National report 2017. In: Enes Bayrakli and Farid Hafez (eds.): European Islamophobia Report 2017. Ankara, Istanbul, Washington DC, Kairo: SETA, 2018, p. 285-304, available at: <http://www.islamophobiaeurope.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Greece.pdf>



Similarly, the introduction of new textbooks for religions education by the Ministry of Education in 2017, met with resistance both by parents supported by GD and the church and theological circles. These new textbooks include information about several religions, including Islam, and some parents considered them as “unacceptable” and returned them to the Ministry of Education (Huseyinoglu & Sakellariou 2018: 294).

Religious classes are included in both, primary and secondary education in the curriculum; but students of different religion may be exempted upon request. By law non-Greek Orthodox religious classes are allowed in public schools, except for those in Thrace for the Muslim minority and the Catholic religious classes on the islands of Tinos and Syros in Cyclades. It also funded awareness raising activities for non-Jewish students to Holocaust remembrance.⁷²

The Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs issued permits for seven houses of prayer and provides free of charge places of worship during Ramadan to some groups of Muslims.

II.3.4. Italy

According to article 34 of the Constitution, education is open to all. Italian Constitution guarantees the right to education to all, without any discrimination whatsoever based on citizenship or on the regularity of stay in the country nor the socioeconomic situation of the parents.

In order to guarantee a real inclusion in the community, the Ministry of Education provides specific indications with reference to the percentage of foreigners in Italian classes. The *Circolare n. 2 08/01/2010*⁷³ for the integration of students with non-Italian citizenship, establishes that foreign pupils per class cannot exceed 30% of the total number of pupils. The regulation was aimed at ensuring a balanced and functional structure of the school and effective conditions of equality and generalized and access to education. In 2012, the National Guidelines for Kindergarten and the First Cycle school⁷⁴ were published. In the document, with reference to schools in a multicultural society, it is established that the aim of the school “is to enhance the uniqueness and singularity of each student’s cultural identity” (ibid. p 19).

The document assumes that the presence of children and adolescents with different cultural roots is a structural phenomenon of Italian school and can no longer be considered episodic: it must become an opportunity for everyone. For this reason it states that “it is not enough to recognize and preserve the pre-existing differences, in their pure and simple autonomy” (ibid. p 10). Instead, the school must actively support interaction and integration through the knowledge each other cultures, in a process that does not exclude issues such as religious convictions, family roles, and gender differences.

The Ministry of Education also published “Guidelines” for the integration of foreign students in 2014⁷⁵. The document points out that foreign minors are first of all people and thus they have rights and obligations no matter what their origins are. The guidelines state that no legal requirements is requested from refugees or newly arrived migrant minors in order to access education. They can enrol even without documents because irregularity cannot prevent their right to education. The document is therefore a milestone for the action of schools and is part

⁷² Greece International Religious Freedom Report for 2015 & 2017. USA Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor

⁷³ Ministry of Education, University and Research, Circular Letter no. 2 of 8th January 2010.

⁷⁴ Indicazioni nazionali per il curricolo della scuola dell’infanzia e del primo ciclo d’istruzione, Annali della Pubblica Istruzione, Numero speciale 2012

⁷⁵ MIUR Circular letter n. 4233/2014 “Linee guida per l’accoglienza e l’integrazione degli alunni stranieri”



of the measures that in recent years have underlined the particular programmatic attention towards inclusive practices of the Italian school system.

Foreign minors in the Italian territory are subject to free-of-charge compulsory education. As from the moment in which foreign minors turn 16, those among them who did not fulfil their education obligations may attend the Provincial Education Centres for Adults (CPIA) providing courses including Italian, but also cultural activities and training for adults, as well as basic notions in civics and on the rights and duties of citizens. There are no restrictions with regard to religious attire at school though the face has to be visible in public places.

III.3.5. United Kingdom

A study looking at the attainment of Muslim children showed that Muslim children are attaining as well as non-Muslim children.⁷⁶ In the UK, children from Bangladeshi and Indian backgrounds now outperform white British children, and Pakistani children have narrowed the gap, performing better than Afro-Caribbean children, but still fall short of the standard attained by white British children⁷⁷ (Gillborne, 2016). Girls perform better than boys do. However, many newspaper headlines have highlighted the fact that white working class boys perform worse than any other ethnic group, although this claim has been made by examining only those eligible for free school meals and ignoring Gypsy, Roma and Traveller students completely. The claim that white working class students are the worst performing group has led to a change in attitudes to anti-racist programmes with increasing claims that such initiatives are racist, according to Gillborn (2016)⁷⁸.

For most Muslim parents, academic attainment is their priority as it is seen as a route to social mobility. Only a minority of students go to Islamic schools and some parents see them as divisive. Muslim children are overwhelmingly educated in secular, state-funded schools.⁷⁹ However, the uneven distribution of the Muslim population means that many are highly segregated. There are 2000 schools where more than half of children have English as an additional language (EAL), and 60% of ethnic minority children are educated in schools where ethnic minority children are in the majority.⁸⁰ Parents are concerned that their children are brought up with Islamic values and practices⁸¹. Sometimes this has led to tensions where such views are seen as at variance with a Britain that is becoming increasingly secular. There are more and more calls to circumscribe the teaching and practice of religion within schools,⁸²

⁷⁶ Nabil Khattab & Tariq Modood (2018) Accounting for British Muslim's educational attainment: gender differences and the impact of expectations, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 39:2,242-259, DOI: [10.1080/01425692.2017.1304203](https://doi.org/10.1080/01425692.2017.1304203)

⁷⁷ http://soc-for-ed-studies.org.uk/documents/GillbornD-et-al_Race-Racism-and-Education.pdf

⁷⁸ Gillborn, D, 2016, The Monsterisation of Race Equality: How hate became honourable, in *The Runnymede School Report; Race, Equality in Contemporary Britain*, p 6-8.
<https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/The%20School%20Report.pdf>

⁷⁹ http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/education/creid/Reports/32_MFEES_FinalRpt.pdf

⁸⁰ Integrated Strategies Green Paper, March 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/696993/Integrated_Communities_Strategy.pdf

⁸¹ http://www.docs.hss.ed.ac.uk/education/creid/Reports/32_MFEES_FinalRpt.pdf

⁸² <https://www.tes.com/news/ban-hymns-and-prayers-schools-say-academics>



and controversial issues such as the use of halal meat in schools are exploited by the far right to provoke tensions between communities.

Some schools with large numbers of Muslim students have been faced with increasing suspicion and criticism. The Trojan Horse scandal, where a group of schools in Birmingham were accused of attempting to introduce a Salafist curriculum into schools, or to adopt religious practices in secular schools, stirred up many allegations of discriminatory practices, although no concrete evidence of a conspiracy to take over schools was found. This led to a requirement to teach British values in schools, and a situation in which a large number of faith schools have been found to be less than good when inspected by the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills OFSTED over this issue, with Muslim and Jewish schools facing the most negative judgments.

Against this backdrop, the head of OFSTED, Amanda Spielman made a speech where she stressed the importance of an integrated approach to the teaching of British values (defined as democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and religious toleration), in order to promote community cohesion and integration. Whilst praising faith schools, including Muslim ones, she raised concerns about attempts to interfere in what children are taught, participate in or wear.⁸³ For this reason, Spielman defended the decision to allow inspectors to question the wearing of headscarves by young children.

British values were first introduced as part of Prevent, the government terrorism prevention strategy which also lays down a duty upon all government employees to report concerns about radicalisation. Whilst acknowledging that far right terrorism is also a threat, a Muslim child is 44 times more likely to be referred to Prevent than a child from a different background. The twentieth anniversary report on Islamophobia by the Runnymede Trust, and the Just Yorkshire report⁸⁴ have both declared Prevent to be systemically racist and islamophobic.⁸⁵

One other issue which is causing concern in the UK at the moment is the mental health crisis amongst young people. Britain ranked 13 out of 26 in terms of life satisfaction for young people⁸⁶. 22% of girls aged 14 have self-harmed, according to a Children's Society Survey. There are indications that black and ethnic minority (BEM) communities can suffer from higher rates of mental illness, but more research needs to be done into exactly how support for mental health can be provided in all communities.

III.3.6. Summary

Children of an ethnic and religious minority background are confronted with discriminatory practices and mechanisms of exclusion in all school systems of the partners' countries. Girls and women who are visibly recognizable as Muslims are especially vulnerable both to

⁸³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/amanda-spielman-speech-to-the-policy-exchange-think-tank>

⁸⁴ <http://rethinkingprevent.org.uk/>

⁸⁵ <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/uploads/Islamophobia%20Report%202018%20FINAL.pdf>.

⁸⁶ England recently ranked 13th out of 16 countries for children's life satisfaction.
<https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/jun/01/britain-at-economic-and-moral-crisis-point>



interpersonal hostilities and to structural exclusion due to discriminatory laws and regulations.

Teachers who are members of ethnic and religious minority groups are also targets of discrimination by their colleagues, pupils and parents. Also here, female teachers recognizable as Muslims are special targets to intents of exclusionary practices and regulations. Teachers who pertain to majority groups as well as those who are members of minority groups are likely to transmit stereotypes to pupils and also treat them accordingly.

IV. National school contexts

IV.1. General overview

School contexts vary significantly with the OECD countries. For example, until the end of lower secondary school, i.e. in most cases the first nine years of formal education, a child in Latvia or Hungary receives about half of the hours of instruction time (6000 hours) as compared to a child in Denmark or Australia (approx. 11.000 hours). In the countries of the partners of the consortium, pupils receive relatively little instruction time: In Belgium and Italy, lower secondary school ends after eight years. During this time, Flemish speaking Belgium, children on the average receive a bit less than 7000 hours of instruction time, in French speaking Belgium slightly more than 7000 hours and in Italy more than 7500 hours. In Greece and Germany, lower secondary school finishes after nine school years, during which in Greece children receive about 7000 hours of instruction time, in Germany more than 7500 hours (OECD 2017: 334, no data for the United Kingdom).⁸⁷

The average class size and teachers per class vary in the countries of the partners: In primary schools, the average ratio between teachers and pupils is one teacher for 21 pupils in Germany, for 19 pupils in Italy, for 18 pupils in Greece, for 27 in the United Kingdom (ibid.: 350, no data for Belgium). In the United Kingdom, one class can count with more than 1,5 full time equivalent teachers; in Germany with 1,4 and in Italy with more than 1,5 (ibid.: 353, no data for Belgium). These ratios vary significantly between public and private schools.

The starting age of pupils entering primary school varies significantly between the partner organizations' countries: In the United Kingdom start the schooling process at the age of four to five years, in Greece at the age of five, and in Belgium, Germany and Italy at the age of six years (OECD 2017: 423).

Several studies have shown that the pupils' success within most European school systems highly depend on the schooling level their parents had achieved (OECD: 2017: 76). This means that these school systems do not support intergenerational educational mobility.

IV.2. Specific national contexts

In spite of many attempts to harmonize the educational systems within the European Union, significant differences exist with regard to school enrolment, teaching hours, the ratio between teachers and pupils, the infrastructure of schools or practices of segregation, among others. The partner organizations of this project work in specific national contexts.

⁸⁷ OECD, 2017: Education at a Glance 2017: OECD Indicators, OECD Publishing, Paris, available at: <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/eag-2017-en.pdf?expires=1536154629&id=id&accname=ocid177371a&checksum=86E753176FCA8EA2CB895F7B9C681C80>



IV.2.1. Belgium

Education in Belgium is managed, controlled and financed by one of the three communities, i.e. the Flemish, French or German speaking community. Each community's educational system operates as a distinct federal region around the language of that community, i.e. French in the Federation Wallonia and Brussels, Dutch in the Flemish community, and German in the German speaking community. The three communities have an integrated school system with minor variations from one group to another. The federal government determines the age for compulsory schooling and also indirectly finances the communities. There are three types of education in Belgium: the official one, which is subsidised and free, subsidised schools without fees both faith based and non-faith based, and private schools which are not subsidised.

Education in Belgium is mandatory between the ages of 6 and 18, this includes both secondary school education and vocational education. All the three communities have the following levels of education with slight difference: basic education (Dutch: basisonderwijs; French: enseignement fondamental), secondary education and higher education.

Basic education encompasses *preschool education* (kleuteronderwijs; enseignement maternel) and *primary school*. Preschool education is for children until the age of 6 years and it is not obligatory. Primary school is for children from 6 to 12 years. *Secondary Education* (In Dutch: secundair onderwijs; French: enseignement secondaire) addresses students aged 12 to 18 years. *Higher education* (Dutch: hoger onderwijs; French: enseignement supérieur). Higher Education in Belgium comprises the university (universiteit; université) and polytechnic / vocational university (hogeschool; haute École)

Pre-school education in Belgium is free and it aims at supporting the development of the children's cognitive, communication and creativity skills in a playful manner. Approximately 90 per cent of children attend preschools during their formative years. They are a preferred choice of many parents due to the expensive costs of private crèches. Primary Education is also free and focuses on reading, basic mathematics, writing, and also covers a few topics of history, biology, religion, music, and so on. Primary education is divided into 3 cycles (Dutch: graden; French: degrés) of a duration of two years. Pupils in the Brussels-Capital Region start learning the second official language, i.e. French or Dutch, in their third year of primary school. Some primary schools also offer language immersion classes, i.e. certain subjects such as history or geography are taught in a second language.

At the end of primary school, pupils' knowledge in literacy, mathematics, science and history is assessed through a national exam. The closer these exams approach, teachers tend to focus the content of their teaching on topics relevant for the exams. Arts or physical skills are not examined. The degree of inclusion of arts into the teaching process relies heavily on the willingness of the schools and teachers.

III.2.2. Germany

Germany's provinces have autonomy in questions related to education, and local school systems vary considerably. In most provinces, after four years of primary school pupils are divided among those who will follow four to five years of lower secondary school, and those who continue eight to nine years of secondary school and earn the right to study at a university. Such an early separation of children at the age of ten which decides so significantly about their educational future has been criticized repeatedly as increasing the educational gap. In Berlin, primary school has been extended to six years. In most parts of the country 12 years of education are compulsory.



Kindergarten is not obligatory in Germany, but parents have the right to make use of childcare institution. However, there are not enough available places for children. Regulations on preparatory languages classes for children who do not speak German depend on the provinces.

Germany suffers from a profound lack of teachers. A recent study shows that until 2025, 35.000 primary school teachers will be lacking (Klemm & Zorn 2018: 7)⁸⁸. The vast majority of primary school teachers are women, and they work part time. Many of them would need better day care for their children in order to be able to increase their teaching time. The planned expansion of the system of all-day schools will generate additional need for tutors and other persons in charge of the children. Due to this lack of teachers, many people teaching nowadays are not trained teachers, but career-changers.

Due to the localization of the school system, there is not one rule of how to deal with linguistic diversity in the school context, in the different provinces there are different policies in place with regard to the repression or additional support in the languages spoken by the pupils and their parents.

Ghettoization is a significant problem in the bigger cities of Germany. It is reinforced by the housing market, i.e. both rental fees and the maintenance of living areas with restricted access for people based on their name, skin colour or attire. Schools replicate this ghettoization, there are no mechanisms in place to achieve a better social intermix.

Arts and music education do not have high social status, especially not in the Northern provinces of Germany. Several initiatives try to promote the idea of doing theatre at school. At the level of primary schools, this mainly refers to puppet theatre or sketches related to Christmas.

IV.2.3. Greece

The Greek educational system has a versatile character and each government wishes to make changes and to offer education that caters for all students in the country. It is centralised and the administrative agency is the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs, which regulates issues such as curricula content, staff recruitment and funding⁸⁹. Greek public education is free to all citizens including immigrants, and free textbooks are provided to all students. Furthermore, free transport is available for students that live far away from their school.

Compulsory education starts at the age of six (primary school) and ends at the age of fifteen (lower secondary school). Children should be enrolled in primary schools when they reach the age of six. Religious education is one of the obligatory subjects during all years of primary school because there is no legal separation between the state and the Greek Orthodox Church⁹⁰. All Greek primary schools follow the same curriculum but there are some termed as “experimental” because they are supervised by university departments and follow experimental education practices. Others cater for students with physical or mental impairment, or special needs⁹¹.

⁸⁸ Klaus Klemm & Zorn, Dirk, 2018: Lehrkräfte dringend gesucht. Bedarf und Angebot für die Primarstufe. Bertelsmann Stiftung. Available at: https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/fileadmin/files/BSt/Publikationen/GrauePublikationen/BST-17-032_Broschuere-Lehrkraefte_dringend_gesucht_GESAMT_WEB.pdf

⁸⁹ Greece - Eurydice

⁹⁰ www.justlanded.com/english/Greece/Greece-Guide/Education/Public-education-in-Greece

⁹¹ www.fullbright.gr/en/study-in-greece



Teaching of Arts, Music and Drama is obligatory within the curriculum in primary education in Greece.

Arts: The general purpose of the course is to get the students acquainted with visual arts through balanced research and design activities. It also aims at acquiring knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon of art in order to cultivate the students as creators and as amateur spectators.

Music: The objective of the course is that the children develop musical skills and knowledge. This is achieved through the implementation of experiential and energetic musical activities with specific targeting and organized framework. These classes also aim at enhancing the integral development of the personality of the child and the young, the cultivation of attitudes and values and even the connection of music with the broader society, the history of man and his environment (natural and man-made).

Drama (Theatrical Education): It is important to understand that the primary role of theatrical education is treatment through theatre and drama. Its goal is to involve children in a process of investigating social issues that concern them, and through this process to acquire key competences and cultivate values, attitudes, behaviours that make up modern democratic citizenship⁹².

However, the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs has reduced, recently, the classes of Music and Theatrical Education in Primary Schools due to the reformation of the daily schedule.

IV.2.4. Italy

The Italian education system is mainly a public state system and education is organized at the national level. Some regions have special regulation and their own legislative power for some aspects of education. In addition to the state system, private subjects and public bodies can establish education institutions. Such non-State schools can be either equal to State schools (called *scuole paritarie*) or merely private schools.

The education system in Italy is organized according to the principles of subsidiarity and autonomy of institutions. The State has exclusive legislative competences on the general organization of the education system, this means that they are responsible of fixing minimum standards of education, including school staff and quality assurance, and to provide the financial resources. The State identifies the essential levels of the performance of the school system and defines the general lines of the teaching design, contained in the National Guidelines for Kindergarten and First Cycle and the National Guidelines and Guidelines for Second Cycle Schools. *Regions* share responsibility with the State in some sectors of the education system and they are responsible, for example, of the school calendar and on the distribution of schools in their territory. *Local* authorities are responsible of all the services to support and maintain the right to education (i.e. maintenance of premises, transport of pupils, school canteen).

Schools have a high degree of autonomy: they define curricula, widen the educational offer and organize the teaching (i.e. school time and groups of pupils). Every three years, schools draw up their own Plan for the Educational Offer (PTOF - Piano Triennale per l'Offerta Formativa).

⁹² Institute of Educational Policy



Teachers in Italian schools are mainly female, in particular in the lower grades, and most of them, according to the last Eurostat survey (2015), are aged over 50, significantly older than the teachers in the other European countries.

Infant school (3-6 years) is not compulsory but families can freely access it. Pupils of all nationalities are grouped together and follow the same program of activities. No special language program for pupils whose mother tongue is not Italian is offered at this stage. Special rules have been defined to guarantee a real inclusion through a maximum percentage of foreign pupils in each class. Nevertheless, in the main cities, some areas or districts are mainly inhabited by immigrants and the schools of those areas have to receive a higher number of foreign pupils.

During the first eight years of school, *Art and image* is a compulsory subject, replacing since 2003 *Image education* in primary schools, and *Arts education* in lower secondary schools. *Music* is also a compulsory discipline.

As for upper secondary education, a reform law issued in 2008 introduced major changes in the education system also as far as arts and cultural education are concerned. The most relevant was the creation of an upper secondary school devoted to Music and Dance disciplines (*liceo musicale e coreutico*).

In recent decades, attention has been growing towards cultural and landscape heritage and their educational use in Italy, and this has inspired educational activities within museum institutions. In *Per l'educazione al patrimonio culturale. 22 tesi*⁹³, the authors have highlighted the revolutionary potential of cultural and artistic heritage in historical, aesthetic, and citizenship education. The book, addressed to school educators, as well as museums and cultural institutions, has offered a new approach to the use of heritage in education.

The importance of artistic disciplines for the harmonious development of the personality is recognized by the *National Guidelines for Kindergarten and the First Cycle school*⁹⁴. These guidelines emphasize the contribution of arts and music in order to grow and educate a "citizen" capable of expressing himself/herself in different ways and of using in a conscious way the artistic, environmental and cultural assets, recognizing their value for social and cultural identity and the need for their protection.

At *infant level*, Italian school curriculum considers working in the area of *Image, sounds and colours*⁹⁵. The idea is that art represents an opportunity for the kids to look at the world around them with different eyes. They explore the materials with the senses, experiment and share different techniques in the atelier of the school, take part in visits which allow them to observe places (squares, gardens, landscapes) and works (paintings, museums, architectures) in order to improve their perceptive skills, cultivate the pleasure of fruition, production and invention and to approach culture and artistic heritage.

⁹³ Adriana Bortolotti, Mario Calidoni, Silvia Mascheroni, Ivo Mattozzi, *Per l'educazione al patrimonio culturale. 22 tesi*, Franco Angeli ed., 2008

⁹⁴ Indicazioni nazionali per il curricolo della scuola dell'infanzia e del primo ciclo d'istruzione, Annali della Pubblica Istruzione, Numero speciale 2012

⁹⁵ Ibidem p.26



At *primary level* kids learn *Art and image* which aims to develop and enhance the capacity of the pupil to express and communicate in a creative and personal way, to observe, read and understand images and different artistic creations, to acquire a personal aesthetic sensibility and an attitude of conscious attention to the artistic heritage.⁹⁶

The National Guidelines describe the contribution of the discipline to the development of the pupil's personality through the integration of its core aspects, namely *sensory* (development of the tactile, olfactory, auditory, visual dimensions), *linguistic-communicative* (the visual message, the signs of the iconic and not iconic codes, their functions, etc.), *historical-cultural* (art as a document to understand history, society, culture, religion of a specific era), *expressive / communicative* (production and testing of diversified techniques, codes and materials, including new technologies), *cultural* (the museum, the cultural and environmental assets of the territory).

According to National Guidelines "*Music*" carries out specific interdependent formative functions. On a *cognitive-cultural* level pupils can exercise the symbolic representation of reality, develop a flexible, intuitive, creative thinking and participate in the heritage of different musical cultures; they use the specific skills of the discipline to grasp the meanings, mentality, ways of life and values of the community to which they refer. Through its *linguistic-communicative* function, music educates pupils to communicate and express themselves using a specific language with specific tools and techniques. Moreover, the National Guidelines underline the *emotional-affective function* of music and its important role as a symbolic formalization of emotions. It is also assumed that music plays an *identity and intercultural function*, helping pupils to become aware of their belonging to a cultural tradition providing them at the same time with the tools for the knowledge, comparison and respect of other cultural and religious traditions.⁹⁷

In addition, many agreements have been signed during the last 25 years between schools and museums or local administrations in order to cooperate for the training, innovation and experimentation of curricula. *Heritage education*, through a close partnership between schools and museums, has been the focus of a number of initiatives/programmes promoted by regional and local administrations like, for instance "*Panormus: la scuola adotta la città*", an initiative promoted by the municipality of Palermo and aimed at making young people know the history of their territory and transmit it.

In order to promote a better knowledge and appreciation of the heritage through a close collaboration between individual school institutes and the Regional *Departments of Arts and Culture*, in May 2014 the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities (MIUR and MIBACT) signed an agreement, entitled "*Creating opportunities for a knowledge society by developing new synergies between education and culture*"⁹⁸ in which they recognise the knowledge and understanding of cultural heritage as important factors for the education of young people, "by promoting a mature and informed relationship with one's own territory and cultural resources".

⁹⁶ Ibidem p.73

⁹⁷ Ibidem p. 71

⁹⁸MIUR and MIBACT Protocollo d'Intesa "Creare occasioni di accesso al sapere attraverso la messa a sistema di istruzione e cultura", Roma 2014 http://www.istruzione.it/allegati/2014/protocolloMIUR_MIBACT280514.pdf



More recently, following a proposal of MIUR and MIBACT, the Prime Minister issued a document that reaffirms that the practice and study of arts are a fundamental component of growth and knowledge, in the full inclusion of all, as a complete educational experience, where mind and body, creativity and skills, practice and theory, uniqueness and sociability, meet harmoniously in a constant and virtuous dialogue⁹⁹.

Schools, single or organized in networks, are in charge of analysing needs, prepare a map of professional, instrumental, organizational, educational and financial resources, with the aim of designing theoretical and practical activities to be realized in the school curriculum.

The Plan of the Arts indicates very precisely some objectives, declined in specific actions, and the related investment for two million euros a year for three years.

IV.2.5. United Kingdom

All four countries in the UK have a separate education system. Education is compulsory from the age of five in all of the countries, apart from Northern Ireland where it begins at age four. It continues until the age of 16 (18 in England). There is some selection in some areas at the age of 11, when children who pass a test may go to a grammar school. School attendance is not compulsory, and home education is permitted. There is limited government funding for nursery places, but nursery education is not compulsory. Education is divided into five stages: early years, primary, secondary, further education and higher education.

In England and Wales, the National Curriculum provides a framework for state schools, whilst some academies and private schools do not have to follow it. Religious education syllabus is devised at the local level according to local needs.

Community schools are under the control of the local authority, but academies and free schools, which may be set up by groups of business, parents, communities, or faith groups, are responsible directly to the Secretary of State for Education. In the primary sector, 60% are non-denominational community schools, 37% are either voluntary aided or voluntary controlled and the majority of these are Church of England or Roman Catholic faith schools (6,029). Many Muslim children attend Church of England schools as they tended to be built in areas with large urban immigrant populations.

There is a shortage of teachers in certain subject specialisms and certain specialist areas. There is also a problem with teacher retention, with many considering leaving the profession, complaining of long hours and constant appraisal. Nearly half of teachers in London schools leave within five years.¹⁰⁰ Many inner-city schools, where ethnic minority pupils tend to live, struggle to recruit staff, as do remote rural areas. There has been a rise in unqualified teachers and in teachers who do not have a degree in the subject they teach.

One in six primary school pupils in England do not have English as a first language. There are 1300 primary schools where more than half of the pupils speak English as an additional

⁹⁹Decreto del Presidente del Consiglio dei ministri 30-12-2017 – Adozione del Piano delle arti, ai sensi dell'articolo 5 del decreto legislativo 13 aprile 2017, n. 60

¹⁰⁰ <https://www.theguardian.com/education/2018/oct/04/teacher-crisis-hits-london-as-nearly-half-quit-within-five-years>



language¹⁰¹. Students who speak another language at home form a majority in 11% of schools. As ethnic minority students tend to congregate in certain areas, 60% go to schools where more than half of students are from an ethnic minority¹⁰². This has led to schools in some areas with high migration to establish EAL¹⁰³ units to support the learning of English.

Drama as well as art and music are a statutory part of English in the National Curriculum for England: “All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.”¹⁰⁴

IV.2.6. Summary

National and even provincial school systems vary significantly among the partner countries. Arts, music and drama are also integrated (or not) in very different ways. Drama is a statutory part of the curricula in the UK and Greece, for example, and not included in Germany. The quota of pupils per teacher, the extend of the lack of teachers and restrictions for teachers who wish to teach drama vary significantly. This has an important influence on the capacity of schools to implement drama in their teaching.

V. The experience of implementing theatre and arts in primary school education and beyond

Our project was inspired by the primary school Parkinson Lane P.C. School in Halifax, in northern England. Situated in an impoverished neighbourhood inhabited mainly by descendants of immigrants from Pakistan, the school has a high percentage of children who do not speak English at home and whose parents have often little experience with the UK school system and no academic background. Exclusion and discrimination are an everyday experience for the parents of these children. Nevertheless, the school succeeded from being in danger of being closed down due to its very poor academic output to become one of the best schools of the country. We wanted to have a closer look at this extraordinary success story and learn from it by implementing its approach in other schools in similarly difficult environments. These efforts had to be adapted to the specific national circumstances, both with regard to the concerned population and the structures of the school systems. #

The partner organizations were invited to indulge into these specific contexts, learn about the specific challenges the children and their parents face, and document the process of the implementation of the key method of Parkinson Lane: theatre and music as a method of boosting both the self esteem of the children, their social competences and their language

¹⁰¹ <http://www.naldic.org.uk/research-and-information/eal-statistics/eal-pupils/>

¹⁰² Integrated Strategies Green Paper, March 2018

¹⁰³ English as an additional language

¹⁰⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>



skills. This was achieved by asking pupils and teachers of all involved schools to answer questionnaires before and after the implementation of the theatre experience.

V.1. The model school – Parkinson Lane P.C. School in Halifax, UK

When its current headmaster G Ahmed took over office nearly 20 years ago, Parkinson Lane primary school was about to be closed down. The academic achievement of the pupils was low, and the school faced many problems within the community, being one of them repeated vandalism by criminal groups in the surroundings. Big changes would happen now in the school. They included the rearrangements and changes to the building, transforming it into a welcoming place for children, teachers and visitors, creating space for arts, music, libraries, etc., install space for working groups, the setting of a sophisticated lightening which allows to inspire tranquillity or boost the spirits. And it included a change in methodology which would make the school famous: theatre as a way of teaching and learning. What was an experiment at this stage was the result of the reflections about the usefulness of drama and theatre for learning purposes the headmaster had developed in his thesis at university. Years of hard work finally lead to official recognition: in 2011, the school received “outstanding” in seven categories in the corresponding Ofsted report, which made the school be part of the top six per cent of the primary schools in the country¹⁰⁵. Parkinson Lane now attends to more than 600 pupils and keeps being among the best schools of the country. In addition to the obligatory classes, teachers provide a variety of clubs in the afternoon which allow the children to develop their motoric, artistic or scientific skills. The sports groups are famous for bringing home many medals and awards.

The participants in this DEVIPS project had the opportunity to pass several days at the school in Parkinson Lane and learn from this experience. The many happy children, their openness and eloquence as well as the depth of their reflections impressed the visitors deeply. The children also were able to describe experiences of racism, to reflect about them and develop counter strategies.

Each end of the school year, all pupils of Parkinson Lane participate in a theatre play with is attended by their parents and the broader community. Each year, the school chooses a new topic, based on discussions with the children and the teachers. Each grade presents a theatre play suitable to this topic. The teachers receive specific training for the topic and then develop the theatre play for their grade. Certain aspects of the content of the theatre play are integrated into the curriculum of all subjects. During the development of the play, also the children have their say. Teachers keep track of the development of each of the children and document the progress both with regard to reading and writing skills and soft skills like the capacity of concentration, cooperation, overcoming shyness, etc. The parents support the process with making creative costumes. The theatre plays include music and dancing, and they allow each child to experience success and pride for his or her achievements. The increase of the active and passive vocabulary happens casually and playfully.

In 2017, the theatre plays dealt with conflict resolution and included *Beauty and the Beast* (grade 1), *Oliver Twist* (grade 2) or *La Historia Perdida* about the Spanish civil war (grade 5). Theatre plays in 2018 dealt with stories about strong women role models, drawing on

¹⁰⁵ <https://www.halifaxcourier.co.uk/education/gugsy-s-school-is-labelled-outstanding-seven-times-1-3967006>



examples both from Europe and South Asia. The theatre plays are distributed online on the school's YouTube channel¹⁰⁶.

The approach of the school was externally evaluated in 2018/2019, analysing the effect of drama on the language skills of the children¹⁰⁷ through observation, questionnaires for teachers and support staff, and by revising internal documentation of the school. All teachers found it easy to include the work on the dramas into the curriculum, and while this did increase their working load, no-one said it was too much work. All teachers observed an increase of confidence as well as an increase in the vocabulary and language used by the children. All the involved staff would recommend the use of drama to other schools and found its effects very beneficial for the learning process. 120 children also answered questionnaires before and after the community event where they showed their drama. The level of self-confidence rose significantly, and they also stated that their knowledge of words and language had increased. Some also referred to an increase in their capacities as singers and dancers. 117 out of the 120 children considered that while there was extra work, this was not too much. 117 also stated that they had enjoyed the learning.

For the purpose of this document, trainee teachers asked the pupils of Parkinson Lane about their perception of the school and the dramas. The pupils were able to reflect about their experience and express themselves both about the content of the stories, the knowledge acquired in geography and history, and about their personal development. Only the pupils of the 6th grade were disappointed that they had to leave for secondary school and hence could not participate any more in the dramas and the corresponding community event¹⁰⁸.

V.2. Belgium

Through the project partner Ecole du Dialogue, three schools were involved in the project: the Catholic Ecole Saint Ursule¹⁰⁹, the Muslim La Vertu,¹¹⁰ and Athénée Royal de la Rive Gauche¹¹¹.

Organisational difficulties at Athénée Royal de la Rive Gauche included communicational problems with the pupils' parents who mainly speak Romanian and Spanish, as well as time restraints. The process of drama implementation was led by the headmaster, and this top down methodology provoked resistance. Not all teachers who were supposed to participate felt motivated to do so. The school tried to tackle the topic ghettoization and clan building with their drama but feels to have failed to transmit related messages.

The Ecole Saint Ursule noted an increase in the self-confidence of the involved pupils, in one case a boy suffering from stammering simply lost this handicap when performing. The children supported each other while learning their roles and during the rehearsals. The

¹⁰⁶ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCneNZkfk2cwX-Ty4w1heO_Q

¹⁰⁷ Daniel Frost, 2019, Can drama be used to improve confidence and language of children with English as an additional language? (EAL). Unpublished paper.

¹⁰⁸ Summary of evaluation by EdEducation, UK

¹⁰⁹ <https://www.ecole-sainte-ursule.be/>

¹¹⁰ <http://www.lavertu.be/>

¹¹¹ <http://www.ar-rivegauche.be/>



teachers reported a notable increase of soft skills among the children, including increased respect and teamwork. The school hired a specialist for staging. He taught the children for example to greet each other before starting to work on stage, a skill the teachers had never thought about. Also, in this school, a top down approach and the pressure that all teachers should get involved created problems among the teachers. A lot of energy was spent on trying to involve unwilling teachers. Another problem was that the school does not have a proper space for enacting the drama, so ordinary classes had to be arranged each time the drama was rehearsed. As a result of the visit to Halifax, one teacher is now taking English classes. And the children wish to continue next year.

It is at Ecole la Vertu where the deepest involvement was observed. Attending 45 children from different migration backgrounds, the school opted for parting from the destiny of Alan Kurdi, a Syrian refugee child who perished by drowning in 2015 in the Mediterranean Sea when the family fled war. The children of the school investigated their family's migration stories and interviewed their grandparents. Parts of the videotaped interviews were included into the performance and translated by the pupils into French. The topic of migration was dealt with in classes of history and geography, in religious instruction the migration of Moises was viewed from a theological point of view. The children developed all parts of the drama, and as a result, all children were able to play all roles and could replace each other. The performance had a positive impact both on the learning capacities of the children, the group building process and the behaving. A very shy and soft-spoken girl spoke up very loudly and clearly on the stage while on the other hand pupils who tended to interrupt teaching processes became calmer and concentrated better. The teachers aimed at supporting each child and recognise their specific identities and are satisfied that the pupils built a real working group and collaborated positively. The teachers had opted to put the value of solidarity in the centre of the drama, and the subsequent responsibility to participate in the creation of one's environment and system. The drama also impressed the pre-school children at école la Vertu who were able to recall details of the presentation. And also the teachers report team building and increasing cooperation among themselves as a result of the theatre project.

V.3. Germany

In Germany, the Institute for Didactics of Democracy of the Leibniz University of Hannover participates by accompanying the process of the implementation of the project in the partner countries from an academic point of view, elaborating methods for evaluation as well as developing conclusions and recommendations.

As explained earlier, there are many structural obstructions in Germany towards implementing a theatre project in schools: performing dramas is not part of the curriculum neither at primary school level nor at secondary school level, schools suffer from severe shortage of teachers and at the same time, access to teaching positions is sternly restricted. Under these conditions, theatre projects are most likely to be implemented in structures outside the mainstream school system.

One school type which allows experiments and alternative teaching methods are classes at vocational schools serving young adults at the age of 15 and 16 years without a school leaving certificate. These classes have the aim to support young people who were, for example, expelled from different schools, who could not attend school regularly nor graduate due to



severe family problems, psychological problems, psychosomatic diseases, etc. No person can be expelled from such a class which aims at integrating young people into formal learning processes and preparing them for vocational training. I.e., pupils of these classes often do not master basic skills of emotion control, they interrupt the teaching process frequently, and offensive as well as violent behaviour is not the exception. Their concentration capacity is very low. Special classes also serve to support the language learning process, if necessary, and help to position newly arrived adolescent migrants adequately in the formal school system. Two teachers at the Vocational School in Stadthagen¹¹² analysed the model from Halifax and elaborated a strategy to adapt it for their needs. Given the very difficult circumstances of the pupils served by these specific classes, it was very clear that the pupils would not be able to respond to the high challenges of elaborating a drama. It was therefore decided to make very small steps, preparing the pupils to speak in front of others, and initiate discussions about values and behaviour, parting from the level of the pupils. In order to increase their capacities to express themselves and develop creativity, each week the pupils are asked to perform a short pantomimic. E.g., one week each pupil was asked to present an occupation in a pantomimic way, while the others had to guess the occupation. Asked about what was important to them, the young adults listed a lot of money, a car, nature and its beauty, animals, respectful people, graduating, a good life, food and going on holiday with their favourite singer. Asked about what makes them angry, the young adults referred to very punctual episodes (colleague X said Y, etc.), no abstractions were made. All of them stressed the need for rules in the classroom, they collectively agreed on rules, wrote them down with the help of the teachers, and signed them. Abstract concepts like “respect” were discussed and defined, in this case as politeness, orderliness, supportiveness, accepting other people the way they are, respect the rights of others and do not obstruct them. Sticking now to these rules implies an ongoing process of discussion. However, this process and the discussions were utilized to accustom the pupils to speak in front of their colleagues. Given the interests of the young people as well as their very low level of concentration capacity, the lack of emotion control and very limited capacity to articulate themselves in a differentiated way, the teachers decided to lower the expectation of the output: the aim of the year is to create short video clips where the pupils express themselves in an artistic way about issues related to fashion and sustainability.

This case shows the dramatic results of a lack of appropriate support within the school system for marginalised pupils at an early age. The majority of these young people come from ethnic dominant white lower-class families and have German as their first language.

By the time of the end of the project, the implementation phase has not been finished. The teachers are very enthusiastic to continue the experiment and extend it to future classes. As these classes only function for one year, it is very unlikely that they will ever be able to perform a drama. However, the small steps leading to preliminary forms of presentations do serve the purpose to raise issues of values and support the self-esteem of these young people.

¹¹² <https://bbs-stadthagen.de/>



V.4. Greece

In Greece, the Directorate of Primary Education of Western Thessaloniki was responsible for implementing the project. Four schools participated in the project: the 5th Primary School of Ampelokipi, the 1st Primary School of Sindos, the Primary School of Neochorouda and the Refugees' School in Apollonia¹¹³. The schools are located in the western part of the city, where the economic and social status of the inhabitants is quite low. A large number of pupils in this area are immigrants, expatriated Greeks and refugees. The values transmitted through the project coincide with those of the Greek educational system. The project was adjusted to the curriculum. In addition to the textbooks, the teachers also draw on other resources.

The 5th Primary school of Ampelokipi : at this school, a 6-week project was implemented by the teachers and the 6th graders. Drama, art, music and dancing were the tools in order to achieve cognitive and pedagogical goals in the subjects Greek language, history, citizenship and geography. The European Enlightenment and independence movements of European countries during the 18th and 19th centuries are important parts of the 6th grade history curriculum and relate to the concept of European values. Pupils and teachers decided to travel back in time in order to show the European values and ideas, as they emerged from the liberation struggle of the Greeks that led to the creation of the modern Greek State. In this journey they were accompanied by multimodal texts, works of art, songs, music, dances, and their own authentic texts which were the main part of their performance at the school celebration for the 25th of March National Holiday. The methodology followed was based in the use of interactive exploratory learning, collaborative method, ideograms, conceptual charts, internet research, cross-thematic approach. In particular, the pupils studied the text, carried out their own research, evaluated the information, made decisions, took on roles, wrote their own texts - working individually and sometimes in groups - and presented the results of their work in the whole class. This approach was enriched by targeted worksheets.

At the beginning of the project pupils identified the literary aspect of Greek traditional songs, and especially "Tou Vasili", a song which refers to the grade desire for freedom from the Ottoman Empire. Particular emphasis was given to relevant objectives of each subject in Language and History enriched by drama practices and Music activities. Later on, pupils studied Greek Enlightenment and Rigas Fereos - a very important Greek Enlightener – emphasizing on its connection to the European Enlightenment. Basic human rights such as freedom, equality, freedom of religion, freedom of thought and expression, justice, security and education, have been explored in Rigas' writings, enabling pupils to formulate their own laws. These laws formed primary material for the creation of comics in Art classes. They also created a conceptual map and dealt with values through a variety of tasks such as word-search, comprehension questions, targeted worksheets and even an "interview" by the author himself. Among other things, pupils learned how to read a map and how to combine historical events and geographical data. In the class on citizenship, the concept of state and the different systems of governance were examined, with emphasis on the basic principles of the democratic system. Pupils also worked out a variety of activities in foreign Languages (English and French or German). The final product of the project was a theatrical performance

¹¹³ The schools in the districts are organised by numbers. The information for the evaluation was provided by Dr. Christos Gregoriou and his team.



based mainly on pupils' authentic texts, songs and acting. It was presented in March as an event for the celebration for the national anniversary of the Greek Revolution in 1821.

The 1st Primary School of Sindos: A mixed group of pupils (Greeks and refugees) participated to the project. Learning through Art (Drama) has reinforced their self-esteem and helped them to work effectively with mutual understanding as a team. They realized that they could overcome language barriers and expressed themselves freely by dancing, moving and acting. They also understood the importance of values such as freedom, education, justice, equality etc. Their performance was a great example for a world without prejudices for a better future among all races, religions and gender.

The Primary School of Neochorouda: Pupils of grade 5 and 6 worked on this project during English classes. P6 dealt with human rights and during this journey they discovered that all people, no matter their race, religion or political beliefs have a right to these values. Finally they prepared posters presenting the values they stand for and at the same time to think of what you value worthy of standing for. P5 focused on refugees since this is a crucial issue in Greece nowadays. They saw videos, read texts and stated that their engagement to this project changed their attitude towards discrimination, xenophobia and racism. They felt that values such as: respect, peace, education, freedom, equality and justice should dominate human life, especially children's. Learning through art (music) was enjoyable and interesting. They expressed their feelings by writing the lyrics of the song "the sun of peace" and dedicated it to all refugees, especially children.

*«They came from afar with sorrow and loneliness
With fear in their eyes and hope in their hearts
They got through here without any help
For a better that will heal their souls
War and loneliness never to encounter again
A bright future to come to live in peace
I want the war to stop, the sun of peace to shine
In this world I live in I'll never stop trying
we will defeat the sorrow and we 'll bring the world together
Families will be reunited and love each other again
I will bring peace to all the wounded people
To make a fresh start for a new life
War and loneliness never to encounter again
A bright future to come to live in peace
I want the war to stop, the sun of peace to shine
In this world I live in I'll never stop trying».*

Both teachers and pupils reported a positive impact of the project. Pupils' attitude to school routine and to acquiring knowledge has impressively improved. They appreciated the co-operation, the effort as a group, the active participation, different ways of learning and



satisfactory outcomes as a result of their work. The project changed their attitude towards others, improved their tolerance towards diversity, reinforced their self-confidence and self-esteem, helped them to realize the significance of values and to consider how to apply them in their lives as future citizens of the world. Some of the authentic words pupils used to define the project were: “Perfect. Great. Unique. Teamwork. Unique Experience. True. Creative. 2019 Bestseller. Dream team!”.

Although sceptical at the beginning of the project, teachers stated the following: Even though their participation required a lot of additional working time, they enjoyed teaching through art and they feel ready enough to do it again, because the cognitive, pedagogical and emotional goals have been achieved and pupils’ hidden talents and skills have been revealed.

Refugee School of Apolonia: This school provides reception classes to refugee children during the afternoon. The children are brought from a nearby refugee camp by bus to the school and are then brought back to the camp. The children participating in the project were, on the one hand, taught Greek songs and dances, and on the other hand performed songs and dances from their specific national and ethnic backgrounds. Greek children did not participate in the presentation.

V.5. Italy

The Ufficio Scolastico Regionale per la Sicilia supported three schools to participate in the project: the Istituto Comprensivo Statale ad Indirizzo Musicale “Rita Atria” in Palermo¹¹⁴, the Istituto Comprensivo Statale “Borsellino-Ajello”¹¹⁵ and the 3o Istituto Comprensivo “Santa Lucia” in Stracusa¹¹⁶.

The theatre projects of the schools chose as topics inclusion, the history of the community, and knowledge of other cultures.

The *IC Rita Atria* in Palermo chose the story of *The Small Tin Soldier* by Hans Christian Andersen which was performed by the children and also depicted in a book made by the children. The teachers observed a reduction of dropouts, i.e. attendance of the pupils rose to 98%. They also noted an improvement of teaching competencies, a greater opportunity for teacher cooperation, and improved relational skills and competences for both pupils and teachers.

The teachers of all three schools observed an increase of self-confidence of their pupils as well as an increased motivation to learn and an increased participation in the learning activities. The communication skills of the pupils improved, and they created better relationships in the group and developed more empathy towards each other. The teachers had aimed at transmitting the values of respect, inclusion, global citizenship, acceptance of different perspectives, curiosity towards each other, the exploration of different possible worlds, solidarity and cooperation. All stressed the importance of group work and cooperative learning. Teachers observed also among themselves personal and professional growth, increasing readiness to listen, more constructive confrontations, better planning and

¹¹⁴ <https://www.icritaatrria.edu.it/>

¹¹⁵ <http://www.icborsellinoajellomazara.gov.it/>

¹¹⁶ <https://www.3icsr.edu.it/>



decision-making capacities, increasing awareness towards different teaching styles, and the development of empathy. They felt that the project has helped them to develop a group identity and expand their networks with the local communities. The project increased the sense of belonging to a local community. Teachers wished to be able to organise travels so that the pupils could share their experiences with the pupils of other schools involved in the project.

Before the start of the project, pupils did not like of their school that they were not esteemed by classmates, that they felt not understood, that others made fun of them and that there were conflicts among pupils. None of these problems were mentioned after the implementation of the theatre projects. Asked about what they liked in their school, before the start of the project they named the gym, the wide classrooms, the brightness of the school, the teachers and the multicultural composition of the class. After the project, pupils referred to their classmates, collective activities, lessons, projects, eating together, their teachers and activities outside of the school as things they liked of their school. I.e., they referred to much more items related to interpersonal relations and group activities than before the project. The children stated that the drama projects had helped them to know each other better, increase their number of friends and increase their self-confidence and strength. They observe that also their classmates have become more sociable, that conflicts have decreased, that they treat each other in kinder ways, that they play together much more, that they are all friends now and that they smile more than before.

Both before and after the drama projects, pupils claim similar values and rules as important for living together in a peaceful way, e.g., respect, justice, freedom, communication or friendship. It is at the level of their behaviour and their own reflection of their behaviour where changes can be observed.

VI. Conclusions and recommendations

The different examples of implementation of drama and theatre in primary schools and beyond show a common set of results:

At school level:

- ✓ Children enjoy theatre as well as other forms of artistic expression. As one child put it, “more children smile now”. In all cases, this has increased the children’s joy with school and learning processes in general.
- ✓ It has also increased processes of group building and the development of related soft skills, i.e. the capacity to express oneself, recognize the improvements of others and oneself, and to give positive feedback, among others.
- ✓ It takes more effort to convince the teachers than to convince the children to get involved in the experience.
- ✓ Also, teachers learn from the implementation of the dramas. This learning process embarks both planning and artistic skills as well as soft skills like better communication among colleagues, etc.
- ✓ Also, teachers enjoyed the method and were happy about the results.



- ✓ Bottom-down approaches in schools did not prove to boost the development of the theatre projects. At the contrary, initiatives by a small but committed group of teachers proved more efficient and successful.
- ✓ The theatre projects had positive effects on the teachers, the children and the parents.
- ✓ The projects encouraged and increased communication among and between these three groups.
- ✓ Pupils with the experience of discrimination and exclusion have shown to be very open towards more democratic and egalitarian learning experiences.
- ✓ The most difficult phase of the project is its beginning. Reservations were reported to come first of all from other teachers.
- ✓ It is very important to start such a project with small steps. Frustration rose when teachers tried to implement big projects, including too many teachers, etc.
- ✓ As soon as the projects started, they developed a dynamic of their own. Children (and teachers) felt very motivated to go ahead and also to continue the use of drama beyond this ERASMUS+ project.
- ✓ The evaluation showed that it makes a big difference on the value systems of the children whether they are taught *about* values in an abstract way or experience these values in the way they are treated themselves. Children learn from the adults' examples, not their words.
- ✓ In one-year's programs, it is difficult to measure the success of the children in a quantitative way, e.g. the increase of knowledge of vocabulary.
- ✓ Similarly, after only one year it cannot be expected that children from deprived neighbourhoods can eloquently articulate experiences of exclusion and develop counter strategies.
- ✓ Being exposed to the model school Parkinson Lane and its staff as well as its pupils has proven to be very motivating and inspiring. It also allowed the teachers from other schools to experience the positive long-term effects of the method. Several teachers stressed the importance of this exposure.

At structural level within the school systems:

- ✓ Time restrictions and a lack of teachers are limiting factors. Implementing dramas does need time, and overworked teachers understandably show little interest in increasing their workload.
- ✓ These restrictions also have negative effects on the possibility to increase the exposure of teachers and pupils to model schools or to increase the exchange of experience among schools in general.
- ✓ A lack of inclusion of drama in the curriculum limits the possibilities to draw on this method. This is even more true when time and human resources are very limited.
- ✓ The earlier drama is implemented as a part of the learning experience, the better its success can be traced, and bigger success can be achieved over the years. The later such an experience happens, and the more frustrating experiences pupils have already made within the formal school system, the more difficult it is to motivate the pupils



and to implement any method of teaching, including drama. Nevertheless, the latter does show positive results.

- ✓ A thorough training of the teachers is paramount. This is especially important in order to avoid that teachers reinforce ethnic and religious stereotypes and to impart knowledge about and raise awareness of the country's colonial history (where applicable) as well as hierarchical relations between countries expelling and receiving migrants.
- ✓ It is crucial that teachers receive a training which allows them to understand their crucial role in transmitting to the children whether they belong or do not belong to the school community and hence to the broader society.
- ✓ It is also important that teachers learn to address issues of discrimination and exclusion and that they learn to support children to develop resilience against these aversive experiences.
- ✓ The different school systems have different effects on the educational success of children from deprived socio-economic backgrounds and with less language skills of the dominant language. School systems which separate children at an early age (Germany, etc.) inhibit access of disadvantaged children to secondary and higher education. When highly segregated school systems meet with little appreciation for arts, drama or music in the learning process, its effects are even more damaging.

At society level:

- ✓ Anti-Muslim racism as well as other forms of racism and exclusion due to the socio-economic status are a problem in all countries.
- ✓ Many children, and especially Muslim children, experience exclusion and discrimination at school. At the same time, they are confronted with a contradictory discourse of 1) supposed values of equality and 2) an assumed supremacy of the dominant society because of these values. But it is by example that children learn, not by words.
- ✓ The segregation of residence – i.e., policies of rental prices – have significant influence on the concentration of children from poor families in some schools.
- ✓ This correlates with a lack of knowledge of the parents on how to support the education of their children. There is a lack of positive ways of involvement of these parents into the learning process.
- ✓ The perception of children as a danger and problem influences their perspectives at school. Labelling children from specific backgrounds – and their parents and communities - in a discriminatory way has negative effects on their learning process and their achievements. It is therefore of uttermost importance that discriminatory tendencies in society as well as discriminatory rules and practices are combated and abolished.