



## What can international comparisons of outcomes and policies tell us about 'good practices' of migrant education?

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### Abstract

There has been much attention on immigrant education as immigrants represent a growing share of the EU's future labour force. Today, we see persistent lower achievement of immigrants in education compared to non-immigrants in almost all OECD countries. However, to make the comparison between groups and between countries meaningful, numerous factors have to be taken into account.

In this paper, I will provide a snapshot of what we currently know about comparing outcomes and policies of migrant integration internationally. Additionally, I will describe the numerous factors that have to be considered when comparing education of immigrants across countries: the migrant population, general education systems and specific integration and targeted education policies. Subsequently, I will discuss the issues and the usefulness of using outcome and policy indicators to identify 'good practices'.

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## Introduction

The success of immigrants in EU school systems is crucial to the future European labour markets. It is also paramount for maintaining social equality and cohesion in societies that seem to become more divided. Immigrants are disadvantaged in most education systems across the EU. Poor education results often lead to fewer, less quality jobs. A lack of social mobility in many EU countries will eventually increase further overrepresentation of immigrants among the low-skilled population. This is why there has been much focus during the last decade on how schools can better promote immigrant integration.

When we compare the education of immigrants to non-immigrants, especially across countries, there are numerous factors that have to be taken into account. Immigrants are in many ways in a distinct situation. Only by explaining these differences and by looking at all relevant factors, we can provide a meaningful picture of migrant integration.

Immigrants usually face additional obstacles to better education than non-immigrants: lack of language skills at age of arrival, lower human capital of the parents, lower educational attainment in the country of origin, different household structures and discrimination by school peers and teachers. A fair comparison between immigrants and non-immigrants must take these differences into account.

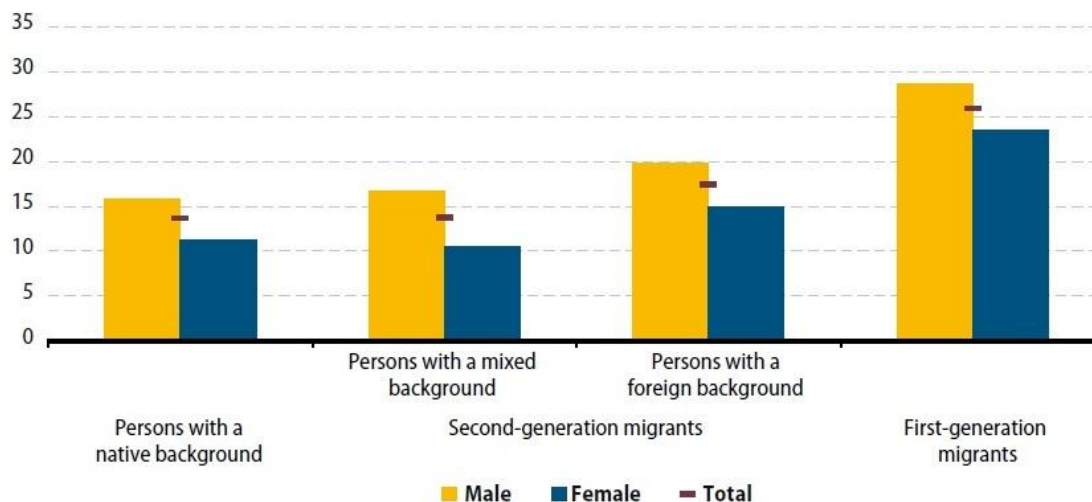
The migrant population varies significantly across countries, so do education systems, policies and funding for education. The average educational attainment of migrants and their children varies across countries. Some countries attract more high-skilled labour migration such as Ireland and the United Kingdom, other have more low-skilled

migrants due to past guest worker programmes such as the Netherlands, Austria and Germany. Some countries receive more humanitarian migrants, others larger shares of students. The statistics on the composition and education of migrant populations across the EU has improved significantly in recent years; however, there are still many blank spots.

## Comparing education outcomes

The early school leaver rate and the reading level of 15 year olds are two indicators for international comparison of education outcomes. Across the EU, we see that first generation migrants, especially males, more often leave school without a basic degree. However, more negative outcomes persist for the persons with a migrant background (second generation) compared to non-immigrants.

Early school leavers' rate by type of background and gender, EU-27, 2008

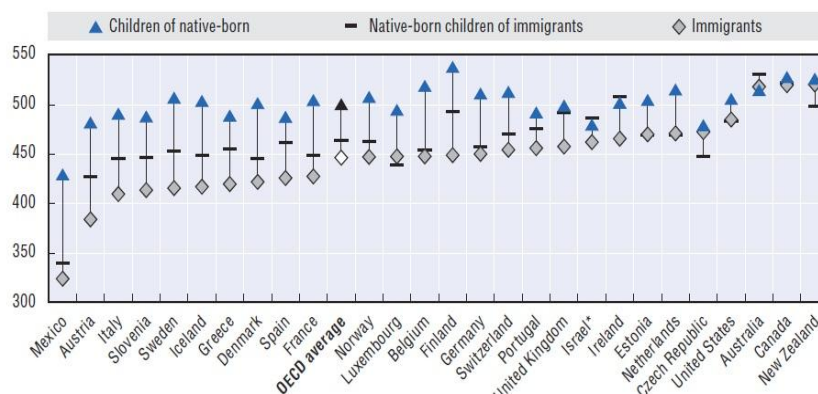


Source: Eurostat, LFS 2008 ad hoc module

Performance of immigrants in schools can be measured by their reading skills at the age of 15 compared to the performance of non-immigrants. The figure below shows the performance gaps for the first and second generation. We see that immigrants perform worse in all EU countries. In Australia, Canada and New Zealand, immigrants reach similar results than non-immigrants. Regarding the situation of the second generation,

Belgium, Norway, Germany and Switzerland are an interesting case as differences between the performance of the first and second generation is rather small. Second generation immigrants reach much higher results compared to first generation immigrants in Finland and Spain, two countries that have comparable overall results for non-natives.

Mean PISA reading scores by place of birth and parents' place of birth, 2009



StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932735008>

Some countries attract a high share of immigrants who speak the language of the host country, for example Spain, Portugal, the UK and, to some extent, France and Belgium. Excluding language acquisition before immigration exacerbates the outcomes for Belgium. Only Finland, Luxembourg and Portugal have larger gaps between immigrants and non-immigrants than Belgium.

The outcomes for second generation immigrants are particularly relevant indicators over time. Immigrants that were born in the country and have gone through the school system as long as their non-immigrant peers should have better outcomes than foreign-born immigrants. We see very little differences between the first and second generation in Switzerland, Germany and Belgium. In Finland and Sweden, the reading scores improve considerably for the second generation. In Ireland, the United Kingdom and Australia the second generation performs similar to or even better than the non-immigrant average.

Another indication for 'good integration' is convergence over time. Between 2000 and 2009, the reading score of second generation immigrants has improved in only a few countries, including Belgium, as well as in Denmark, Luxembourg and Germany. They decreased in Greece, Sweden, France and Italy.

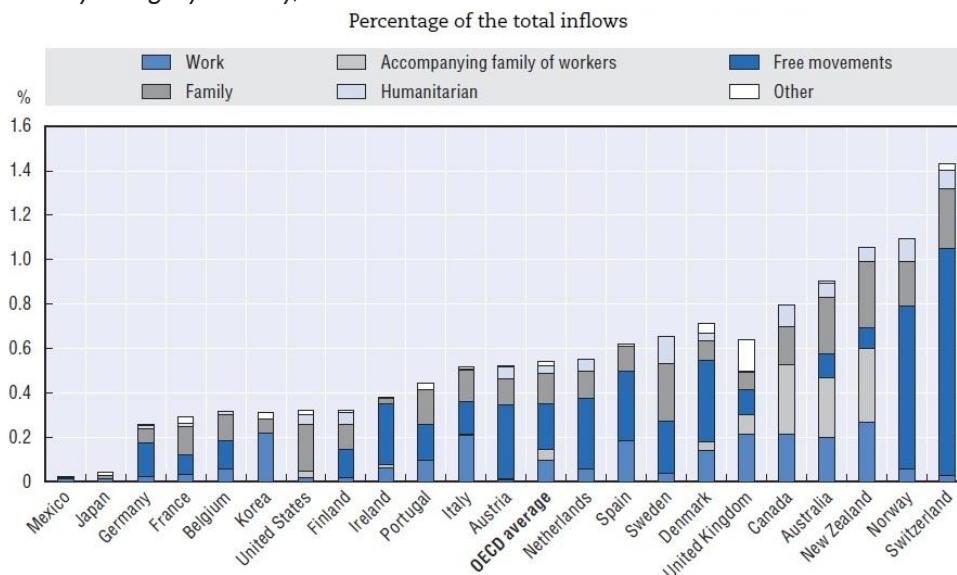
Only looking at group averages comes with a risk. Outcomes of the second generation and trends over time give us a good indication of whether education is promoting the integration of immigrants. However, we should not jump to conclusions on 'good practices' too easily. Comparing outcomes across countries becomes more meaningful, if we take into account differences in the migrant population and differences in policies.

## Different migrant populations

The immigrant population can differ in many ways, relating to the years of residence in the country, birth in the country, country of origin, family status, household composition and educational background. Most of these factors will still influence the second generation immigrants born in the country. Socio-economic status of the parents is the most important factor for performance of the second generation immigrants in schools.

The following graph shows the composition of the migrant population in all OECD countries by the channel of migration (the reasons that immigrants have reported for their entry). In 2010, the largest shares in Belgium are EU citizens and family migrants uniting with their family members. Work migration takes a smaller share of total migration flows compared to Mediterranean countries and traditional immigration countries such as Canada and Australia.

*Permanent inflows by category of entry, 2010*

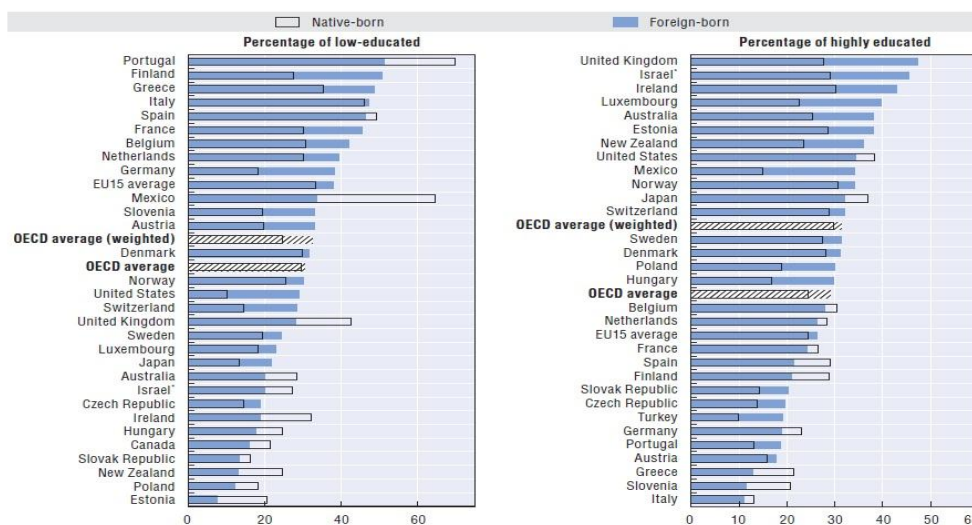


Source: OECD (2012), *International Migration Outlook*.

Among EU countries, Belgium has a high share of low-educated immigrants of the immigrant populations, considerably higher than the Netherlands even though the share of native-born population that is low-skilled is similar to

the share in Belgium. The bars also indicate that immigrants are overrepresented among low-skilled workers and underrepresented among the highly skilled compared to non-immigrants.

*Educational attainment of the population aged 15 to 64 by place of birth, 2009-10*  
Percentage

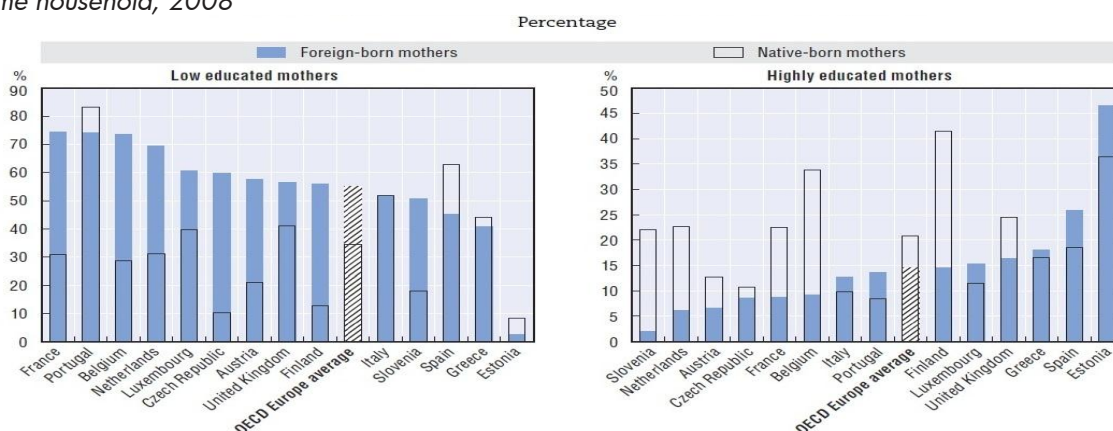


Note: Foreign and national populations in Japan instead of the foreign- and native-born.  
\* Information on data for Israel: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932315602>.  
Source: US Current Population Survey; other non-European countries, Finland and the United Kingdom: Database on Immigrants in OECD Countries (DIOC) 2005-06; other European countries: European Union Labour Force Survey (Eurostat).  
StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932734438>

Belgium has a considerable share of second generation immigrants. Thus, it is particularly interesting to consider the education of immigrants and non-immigrant mothers. The figure illustrates that Belgium is among the countries with the highest shares of low-skilled foreign born

mothers. The difference between immigrants and non-immigrants is particularly pronounced for higher qualifications. Belgium, Portugal and France are the only EU countries where up to 75% of low educated mothers were foreign born.

*Educational attainment level of foreign- and native born mothers of native-born children aged 13 to 17 living in the same household, 2008*

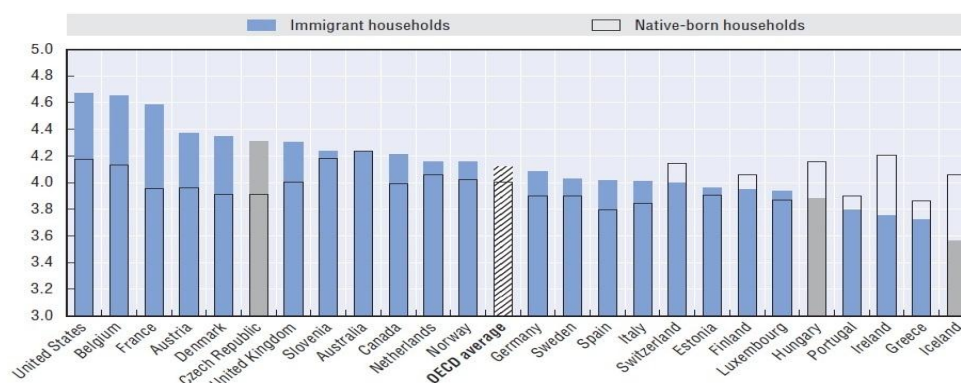


Source: European Union Labour Force Survey, 2008 ad hoc module (Eurostat).

The last graph in this section describes the household size of immigrants compared to non-immigrants. Belgium has the highest share of immigrant households with children among EU

countries. This share is considerably higher than in the Netherlands which has a similar rate for native-born households than Belgium.

*Average size of immigrant and native-born households with children and more than one adult, 2009*



Note: Estimates shaded in grey should be interpreted with cautious due to sample size issue.  
Source: European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC); Swiss Household Panel (SHP); Household Income and Living Dynamics in Australia (HILDA); Canadian Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics (SLID); American Community Survey (ACS).



As the figures have indicated, Belgium has a large second-generation immigrant population, large share of family migrants, heavy overrepresentation of migrants among low-skilled workers and more migrant families with children. These population characteristics are the first set of background information that has to be kept in mind when comparing the education situation of immigrants in Belgium to other countries.

## What determines outcomes?

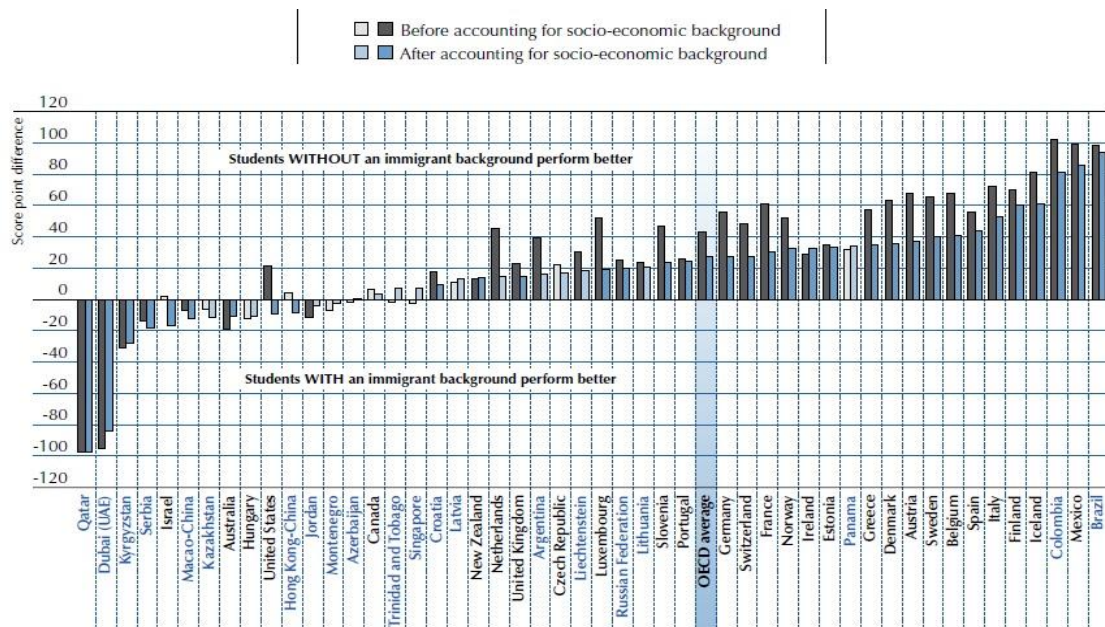
The general composition of the migrant population in one set of factors which are a necessary backdrop for comparing countries. Additional factors, such as individual characteristics, general policies and specific integration policies, will

be outlined in the following:

According to OECD analysis, the differences in *language spoken at home and socio-economic background* (measured by income, field of occupation and highest educational level of parents) account for a large part of the performance gap between native and immigrant students. However, even after accounting for these two factors, significant performance gaps still remain (see graph below).

We see that after accounting for socio-economic background, some countries more than others succeed in bringing the performance of immigrants closer to the levels of non-immigrants. Especially Netherlands, but also France and Germany show much smaller gaps when immigrants are compared to non-immigrants with the same socio-economic background.

Reading performance by immigrant status, before and after accounting for socio-economic background:



Note: Score point differences that are statistically significant are shown in a darker tone.  
Countries are ranked in descending order of score point differences after accounting for the economic, social and cultural status of students.  
Source: OECD, PISA 2009 Database, Table II.4.1.  
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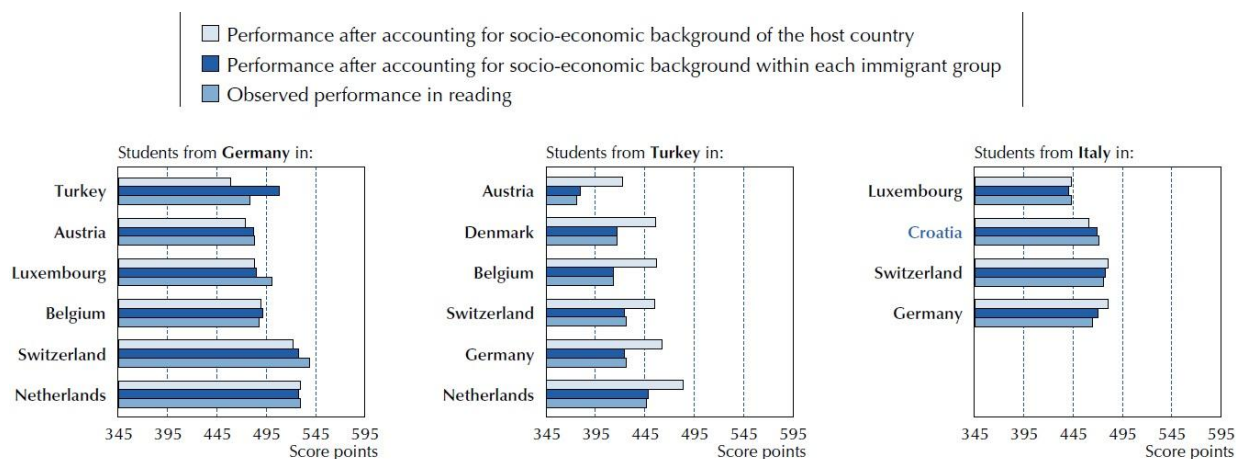
The OECD finds that other factors associated with a better educational performance for immigrant students include, for example, participation in early childhood education and care, early home reading activities, more hours for learning language at school, educational resources at home and a lower concentration in schools of students with a low socio-economic background.

Cultural factors refer to different national, religious or ethnic backgrounds that might affect integration processes. Some researchers find that immigrants' general attitudes towards education and motivational orientations may support or hinder the integration process. Cultural factors have also been used to account for differences in school success between immigrant groups.

This research often focuses on the relatively high achievement levels of students from some Asian countries and lower achievement levels of immigrants from Muslim-majority countries.

As mentioned before, the relatively low performance of students with an immigrant background cannot be attributed solely to their country of origin. The figure below contains data from several countries on the performance of students with the same immigrant background, before and after accounting for socio-economic background. These figures highlight how performance varies across different countries for students with the same country of origin. This indicates that general policies in the country of residence have a significant impact on outcomes.

*Reading performance in host countries by students with an immigrant background from OECD countries*



Source: OECD (2010), PISA 2009 Results: Overcoming Social Background – Equity in Learning Opportunities and Outcomes



We see that immigrants with the same socio-economic background perform much better in Netherlands than they do in Austria or Denmark.

Another relevant factor is the *years of schooling in the country* of residence (measured by age of immigration). Migrant children with a longer education in the country are assumed to perform better in school. Time alone cannot be expected to resolve all the challenges associated with being an immigrant in a country. Still, first-generation students who arrived in the country at a younger age outperform those who arrived when they were older. The size of the gaps, however, varies considerably across countries and across groups. Education systems are better able to improve student performance when they have a longer opportunity to shape the learning outcomes of immigrant students.

Migrant populations are not only different in each country; they also face different challenges in each country. National contextual factors also help to explain the education situation of immigrants.

Several studies show that students with an immigrant background tend to face the double challenge of coming from a disadvantaged background themselves and going to a school with a more disadvantaged profile (*measured by the average socio-economic background of a school's students*) - both of which are negatively related with student performance.

The impact of tracking - where students are grouped in different school tracks at different ages according to their abilities - is a vast debate in research. According to the OECD, almost all of the countries with large performance gaps tend to have greater differentiation in their school systems: for example, four or more school types for 15-year-olds, such as lower, middle and

advanced tracks. Many studies have found evidence that early division of students into tracks increases outcome gaps over time. Some researchers have found that students in schools with generally poorer students do better in comprehensive systems (one-track) than in multi-tracked systems. In short, poorer students in schools with on average poorer classmates benefit most from comprehensive schools systems.

*Institutional discrimination* is often mentioned as a considerable disadvantage to the education of immigrants, especially when other factors are insufficient to explain persistent gaps. This discrimination may occur in terms of grade repetition rates, tracking decisions, and referral to special education programmes. In addition, textbooks and teaching materials may not reflect the diversity of students' cultural and language backgrounds. However, measuring discrimination is difficult and limited to case studies, which are difficult to compare across countries.

Migrant education indicators are not evaluations of the immediate impacts of integration policies but rather a monitoring of long-term effects. Migration and integration policies are difficult to use as explanatory factors due to limited comparative data. Most factors are calculated by researchers on a case-by-case country level. Across the EU, there are generally few comparative policy evaluations, especially in terms of large-scale quantitative research. In part, this is because many policy initiatives in migrant education have only recently been launched. The available source of comparative policy indicators on migrant education policies, the Migration Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), compares EU government's policies towards access, support and monitoring of immigrants from pre-primary to higher education along 22 sub-indicators. The EU Eurydice Network provides thematic reports

on education policies and statistics on a wide range of issues for the EU. The newly founded EU-funded SIRIUS network provides similar overviews with a particular focus on migrants in a forthcoming report.

An OECD literature review ('What works in migrant education', 2009) cited some examples of general education policies that affect education outcomes for the general population: expenditure per student, hours of language instruction per week, compulsory school years or the age when students are selected for different tracks of schooling. Several national studies have shown that *teaching quality* is one of the most important school-level factors influencing student outcomes, regardless of socio-economic and demographic factors. While the impact of smaller classes on mainstream students seems to be modest, a substantive body of literature shows that *class size* reductions do have a large and significant effect on disadvantaged students, including migrant, ethnic minority and low-income children with low-educated parents. Moreover, the effect is greatest for younger children in earlier grades, particularly from kindergarten to third grade. OECD analysis of 2003 PISA data shows that *participation in pre-school* is strongly associated with better education outcomes at age 15, even when socio-economic background is considered.

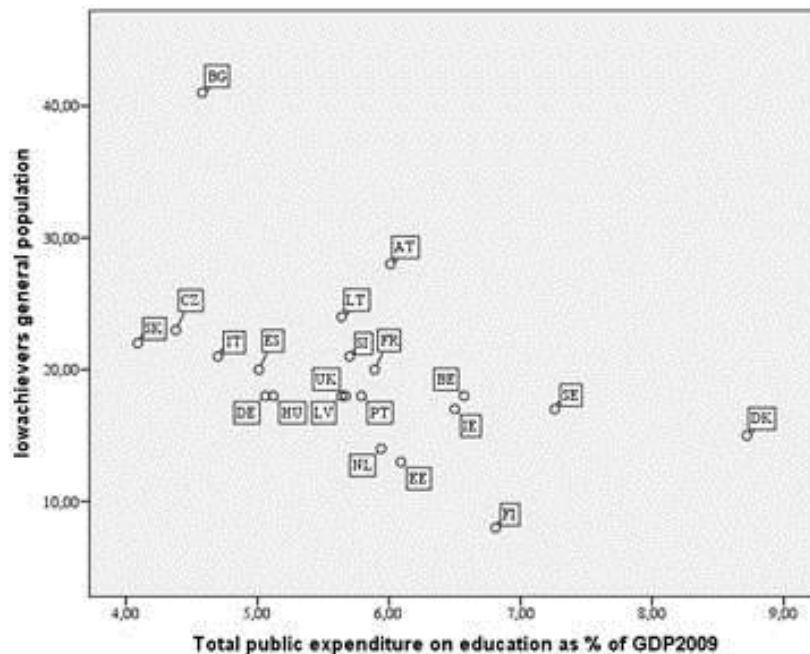
According to an OECD literature review, evidence from individual countries highlights potentially successful policies for migrant student outcomes: sustained language support across grade levels; centrally developed curriculum documents; trained teachers in second language teaching; individual assessment of student needs and progress with adequate diagnostic materials; early language interventions and parental involvement in language instruction; a focus on academic language; integration of language

and content learning; and the valuing of mother tongues. However, it would be more difficult to establish which, for example, of the different language support programmes contribute to the relative achievement levels of immigrant students across all countries.

*High levels of immigration*, according to the OECD, do not affect students' outcomes in schools. That is, the performance gap tends to be smaller in countries with higher proportions of immigrants. This pattern is likely to be due to a number of factors, such as differences in the composition of immigrant populations across countries. Some of the countries with high levels of immigration through diverse channels also have extensive support measures for immigrant students in place (e.g. in USA, Canada and Australia), which may contribute to the relative success of this group.

As analysis by the Free University of Brussels for the Migration Policy Group has shown, within the general population across EU countries, there are fewer underachieving 15-year-olds and more university graduates in countries with better funded and more equal school systems.

*Proportion all pupils in PISA-samples not reaching the minimal level two for reading and proportion of GDP spent on education in 2009*



A strong negative correlation emerges between the GDP spent on education and the total proportion of underachievers in schools as well as the share of the population with a tertiary degree. The share of underachievers is also significantly associated with the level of social segregation within the schooling system (using 2009 PISA data and the 2004 Hutchens index). The more schools that are socially segregated, the more underachievers there are in a country. We also find more early school leavers and fewer university graduates (among 24-65 year olds) in countries that have more socially segregated school systems. Similar results emerge with another measure of school segregation—the PISA index of social, economic and cultural status of students (ESCS) within schools. There are more underachieving students in countries with greater socio-economic segregation between schools.

Immigrant pupils in particular tend to underachieve in countries where there are many underachievers within the general population. When focusing on achievement gaps, it is well known that underachievement is more common among foreign-born youngsters than among their peers in almost all EU Member States. It is less well known that the level of underachievement among immigrant pupils and the general population are linked. As a general trend, the share of underachievers among immigrant pupils is higher in countries with more underachievers within the general population. We have also found that the share of the foreign-born with a university degree is higher in countries with more university graduates within the general population. Furthermore, more migrants leave school early in countries with a larger share of early school leavers within the general population. This performance correlation across all four indicators

implies that the general educational situation is a major factor for the general population, including for migrants. Where the general population fares better, migrants generally also do better.

The difference (gap) between immigrants and the general population is greater in countries with greater levels of wealth and equality within the general population. There are often more underachievers among immigrant students than among the general student body in countries where natives have a relatively high socio-economic position (measured by PISA). This pattern holds even after controlling for the proportion of immigrants, but disappears when we take into account the level of inequality in the country (measured by the GINI-Index). This finding means that a country with a wealthier, equal, and educated general population will likely have greater student achievement gaps between the general population and the foreign-born. In poorer and more unequal societies, native pupils are often just as affected by underachievement as migrant pupils. These correlations suggest that even though migrants generally do better in countries where the general population also does better, the differences between migrants and natives appear to be larger in countries where the general population has better conditions for high performance. Generally, this analysis finds different situations in many North and Northwest European countries in comparison to many Central and Southern European countries.

The achievement gaps are also more important in the wealthier and equal countries because they often have larger immigrant student populations. North and Northwest European countries tend to have higher proportions of 15-year-olds with an immigrant background (measured by PISA). Immigrant pupils are a more visible group among under-achieving pupils in these countries.

In contrast, the levels of immigrant underachievement may be overlooked in Southern and Central Europe, since the gaps with native pupils and the numbers of immigrant pupils are relatively small.

## From outcomes to policies

The previous sections have looked at the education situation of immigrants across countries. Subsequently, I have discussed numerous factors that determined education outcomes of immigrants.

Available policy and outcome indicators in the area of education serve monitoring purposes. They describe a situation at a given point in time. For example: 'How many more immigrants leave school without a degree?' Monitoring over time can track positive changes ('Are there less immigrants that leave school without a degree in 2010 than there were in 2000?') or flag up new challenges. Monitoring is very useful for policy planning, development and adaptation.

The next question for policy-makers then becomes whether their approaches have an impact on education outcomes of immigrants. Monitoring does not allow assessing, however, whether a positive change of one indicator has occurred due to (only) a certain policy such as extending early childhood education. As I have mentioned above, it could be that there are just less immigrants with low socio-economic background in the country; that classes have become smaller; that schools are less segregated or that some other policy has actually done the trick instead.

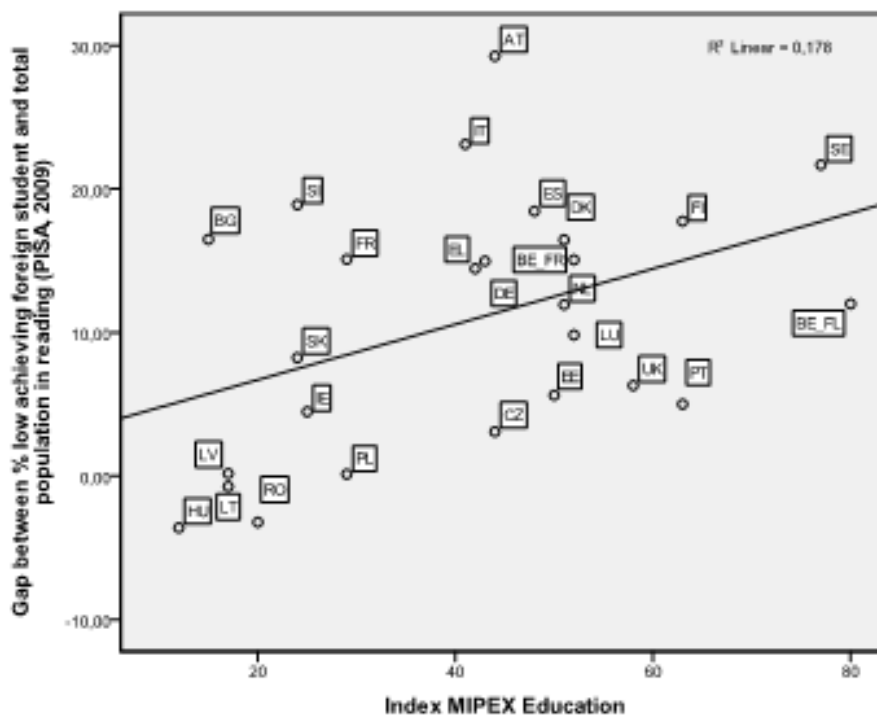
The Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) is currently the best measurement of education policies that is available. The indicators are based

on solid assumptions from international research about which policies produce a beneficial environment for migrant education. Measurements of policies are often called 'input' indicators. They are intended to assess how likely policies are to be favourable for immigrants. How ambitious are targeted education policies to accommodate the situation of immigrants? Which services do they provide? The Migrant Integration Policy Index measures the education policies for all EU

countries according to access, targeted needs, new opportunities and intercultural education for all (see annex for full list of indicators).

Interestingly, our research has shown that wealthier European countries have not only more immigrant pupils and wider achievement gaps, but also more targeted education policies to help immigrant pupils achieve, as shown below.

Gap between % low achieving foreign student and national students in reading (PISA, 2009) and MIPEX III score for education (2010):



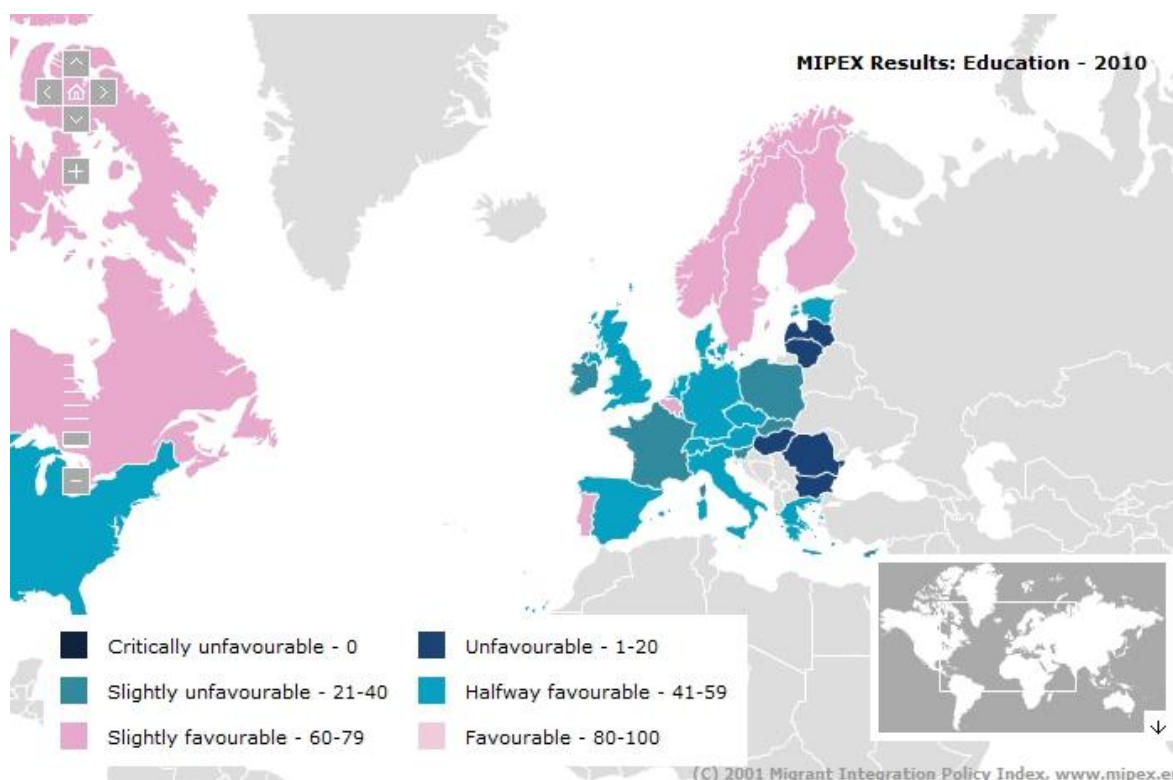


Narrower gaps, smaller immigrant populations, and lower socio-economic levels are associated with weaker migrant education policies. Countries with greater resources, larger numbers of immigrant students, and wider achievement gaps tend to adopt more ambitious migrant education policies, as measured by MIPEX. Indeed, migrant achievement gaps are often a justification for changes in policy, as noted in the MIPEX III country profiles. Migrant education indica-

tors can therefore serve as a tool for analysis, awareness-raising, and policymaking in major European countries of immigration.

The map below shows countries with unfavourable policies in black/blue and favourable in pink. We observe that Scandinavian countries, traditional immigration countries such as Canada and Australia, as well as Portugal and Belgium provide favourable policies for immigrants.

*MIPEX results – education strand (21 indicators)*



The MIPEX report describes the positive results for Belgium by pointing to special provision for socially disadvantaged schools, specific support for refugees and newcomers from developing countries, general language support. Dutch and French-speaking schools score similarly on access to education and interculturalism in schools (see Annex for a list of MIPEX education indicators). Dutch speaking schools have more translated information and migrant parent outreach (e.g. Minderhedenforum projects). Both communities have generally good data on migrant pupils. There also have been some projects attempting to diversify school composition.

We see that some countries show low outcomes for education indicators (e.g. reading score) and, at the same time, very positive results for targeted policies (MIPEX). Two assumptions can help to explain this potential gap between outcomes and policies: First, many of the policy changes have only been adopted in the last 5 years and are unlikely to be reflected in outcomes already. For example, if a country has heavily invested in early-childhood education, this will only be reflected in the early school leaving indicator after more than 10 years. Secondly, the link between MIPEX and available outcome indicators is not always direct. Why?

Common education outcome indicators can measure similar but distinct things than the MIPEX indicators. For example: Reading skills at age 15, early school leaving rates and educational attainment each take into account different shares of the population which not always correspond directly to MIPEX indicators. Some MIPEX indicators include provisions for 'intercultural education' which are associated with better education. This does not mean, however, that they are reflected in reading scores or dropout-rates. For example, MIPEX measures access to

education for different groups of immigrants at different stages. In terms of outcome indicators, less access to education could actually increase some of the scores.

Education is more than attainment and achievement (certificates and scores). Education is also about shaping characters, teaching norms and values, as well as transferring social and civic skills that are all necessary to equip young immigrants and non-immigrants to succeed in our societies.

In short, we have to be careful to jump to conclusions when we look for the link between outcome indicators and policies. We have to look closely at what policies are intended to achieve and whether outcome indicators are capable of measuring it.

## From policies to impact

As I have explained in the previous chapter, indicator-based monitoring of both policies and outcomes are important tools that are needed to inform discussion about complex processes such as integration. We have to take a close look at what outcomes policies are designed to achieve and whether, on a case by case basis, available education outcome indicators are suitable to reflect a change of that outcome.

The most direct way of assessing the link between a certain policy and a specific outcome are 'impact evaluations'. This technique relies on sophisticated econometric methods. They can only be used when the objective of a policy is clearly defined and measurable in quantitative terms. Rigorous impact evaluations are able to take into account any observable and non-observable

vable factor that could determine the outcomes. Such experimental studies have the advantage of being able to measure largely unbiased relationships between policies and outcomes. They compare outcomes of individuals with similar background characteristics assigned randomly to either experience a particular policy or to be assigned to a control group that does not experience this policy. The major weakness of these studies is that they typically involve small and unrepresentative samples. Experiments in many fields of education policy regarding migrants are still very rare.

Findings from impact evaluations are difficult to generalise for other contexts such as different countries and different target groups. However, the more impact evaluations in different countries find that, for example, 'extending early childhood education' reduces early school leaving rates, the broader the evidence base to suggest the success of the policy in general.

Impact evaluations are another tool that is necessary to provide evidence about specific policies and programmes. No single tool will tell us what integration is and whether it is working or not. All of them are needed to have a more productive discussion about 'good policies'.

## Conclusion: 'Good practices' of what?

Identifying 'good practices' is complicated: First, it requires a clear definition of what we deem 'good practices' to be. Secondly, it requires knowledge of which outcomes policies are set up to achieve and whether these objectives can be reflected in an outcome indicator.

According to the Migrant Integration Policy Index, Sweden and Canada could be considered 'good practices'. Both countries produce a favourable environment for migrant education. In Sweden, each student in the system is legally entitled to general and targeted support that addresses their individual needs and new opportunities: from interpreters welcoming newcomer families, to 'equal respect and tolerance' curricula, and the right to high standard Swedish-as-a-second-language and mother tongue tuition. In some municipalities immigrants may benefit from multicultural pre-schools, teacher diversity campaigns and National Board of Education projects e.g. 'Better results and decreased differences'. In Canada, all children in the country, regardless of their status, have the right to an education. When newcomers arrive in most provinces, students have their prior learning assessed, while parents and children receive a full introduction to school life. Barriers to access only arise when undocumented students want to go to university. Provinces could consider more targeted measures if migrant children are not achieving or participating like peers with similar abilities and social backgrounds. Those with language difficulties can master English or French because they have the right to high quality second-language courses. Provincial governments tend to provide extra training for teachers and funding per student, and sometimes extra guidance or support.

In Canada, as in Belgium, Norway, Portugal, Sweden and the United Kingdom, most students learn in school about how to live in a diverse society. Students with an immigrant background can learn about their 'heritage' language and culture, either during the school day or afterwards. Individual schools decide whether or not to adapt their foreign language offer and school schedule so that all students could learn about the language and culture of their immigrant peers. In Canada, Denmark, Germany, Norway, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, some provincial policies try to diversify teacher recruitment or address potential residential segregation.

In terms of outcomes, it is more complicated to identify 'good practices'. Should 'good practices' be countries with small gaps between immigrants and non-immigrants or countries which have shown the largest positive change over time?

In Australia, Canada and New Zealand, there are virtually no performance differences between migrant students and their native peers. Migrant students perform better in these countries than in the rest of the OECD, even when socio-economic background is controlled for. In the US, immigrants perform better on average than non-immigrants after accounting for socio-economic background. In the EU context, the 'ethnic penalty' seems small the United Kingdom. In Switzerland, students of Turkish origin perform significantly better than students of Turkish origin in Germany and Austria despite their otherwise similar background characteristics. In Sweden, second-generation migrants make greater gains vis-à-vis first-generation students than in other OECD countries.

As I have mentioned before, we have to be cautious drawing such conclusions because different

countries face very different contexts and every outcome indicator only tells one part of the story.

Based on rigorous impact evaluations, we can identify certain ‘good practices’ in terms of policies or programmes where impact has been proven in certain circumstances for certain target groups. Based on international literature reviews of impact evaluations, we can find large evidence for a positive effect of early childhood education, parental involvement programmes and class size reductions on the education outcomes. There is modest evidence for positive impact of postponing the age of ability grouping in schools (tracking) and increasing teacher quality. There is mixed evidence for reducing school composition through allowing school choice, paying teachers higher salaries, hiring teachers with a migrant background and language support programmes. There has been very little evidence yet on the impact of intercultural education in terms of diversity in curricula and teaching materials as well as reducing school tracks entirely.

In conclusion, I hope to have made clear that comparing the education of immigrants across countries is a very complex exercise – both in terms of methodological considerations and interpretation of results. Outcome indicators, determining factors, policy indicators and impact evaluations have all contributed a lot to the debate on migrant integration. We already know much more compared to a decade ago. Each element brings something vital to the debate: Outcomes can tell us about the situation and driving factors

of immigrant education, MIPEX can tell us about ‘favourable’ targeted policies for migrant education and impact evaluations can prove which specific policies and programmes have a measurable impact. Despite the interconnectedness and usefulness of each measurement, we have to be cautious when drawing conclusions about the links between them.

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## Further reading

Eurostat (2011): Migrant in Europe. A statistical portrait of the first and second generation  
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## ANNEX

### Common Education Indicators

1. Educational attainment measured by the share of the population with tertiary, secondary and primary or less than primary education
2. Reading performance of 15-year olds
3. Tertiary education (e.g. university)
4. Early school leavers (drop-out rate)
5. Early-childhood education and care
6. Life-long learning

### MIPEX education indicators

- 1) ACCESS
  - Pre-primary education
  - Compulsory education as legal right
  - Assessment of prior learning
  - Support to access secondary education
  - Vocational training
  - Higher education
  - Advice and guidance
- 2) TARGETING NEEDS
  - Induction programmes
  - Support in language(s) of instruction
  - Pupil monitoring
  - Targeted technical and financial assistance
  - Teacher training on migrants' needs
- 3) NEW OPPORTUNITIES
  - Option to learn immigrant languages
  - Option to learn about immigrant cultures
  - Promoting social integration & monitoring segregation
  - Support to parents and communities
- 4) INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION
  - Inclusion in curriculum
  - State supports information initiatives
  - Modifying curricula to reflect diversity
  - Adapting daily life
  - Bringing migrants into teaching staff
  - Teacher training on intercultural education