STRENGTHENING LOCAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS FOR NEWLY ARRIVED ADULTS AND CHILDREN

EMPOWERING CITIES THROUGH BETTER USE OF EU INSTRUMENTS

MIGRATION POLICY INSTITUTE
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Paper produced for the Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees, part of the Urban Agenda for the EU

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This scoping paper was commissioned by the Urban Agenda's Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees to examine the challenges and bottlenecks that cities across the European Union face when helping new arrivals access education and training.

Helping newcomers settle in and thrive through education is critical to reducing strains on local services, fostering social cohesion, and strengthening the local economy. But cities only have competence over limited areas of education policy, leaving many unable to respond quickly to rapid population changes or make structural changes—such as to teacher recruitment and training—to adapt to the needs of diverse populations. This lack of flexibility has become both more apparent and more pressing as localities address the changes brought by the 2014–15 migration and refugee crisis. Many cities are facing significant capacity and infrastructure challenges associated with large-scale arrivals, from children arriving midway through the school year to oversubscribed language programmes. Other municipalities are struggling to stretch budgets that were established on the basis of population figures that are routinely out of date.

Despite these constraints, municipalities have developed innovative ways to support newly arrived migrants as they enter the education system and local labour force. Various cities provide two-generation and co-located services through which parents and children can access childcare, health and social services, and language training in one location. Others have developed 'whole-place' approaches that work across all local services to address the whole education-to-work pathway. And as housing is often provided some distance from urban centres, cities have promoted training that doesn't require a physical presence, including coding schools and online distance learning.

A number of barriers hinder smooth cooperation between the European and the local level.

In theory, the European level could both help mitigate these multilevel governance challenges (for instance by addressing bottlenecks in local services) and scale what works. Indeed, the European institutions offer a host of programmes for funding, sharing of best practices, and disseminating training. However, a number of barriers hinder smooth cooperation between the European and the local level:

1. *Funding does not prioritise the local level.* Only a tiny portion of EU funds (e.g., those from Erasmus+) reaches the local level, and several key working groups omit municipal actors. And while the European Union has established special funding streams—such as the Asylum, Migration & Integration Fund (AMIF)—to manage migration emergencies, municipalities are not permitted to receive direct funding from most of these sources.

2. *Funding is not designed to help sustain and scale projects.* Funding from various EU-level sources tend to flow to small-scale, short-term initiatives. Because of the structure of funding rules and the appeal of programmes that deliver immediate, if short-term, result, these funds are not used to support city-level service transformation or the evaluation and scaling up of projects that have proven results.

3. *Opportunities for cities to feed into higher level networks are limited.* Although there are a number of integration-focused city networks, local stakeholders are often excluded from those that address education. Municipalities are also limited in their ability to influence the EU education agenda.

The Urban Agenda Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees could consider the following strategies to better support cities in their immediate response to large migrant influxes:

- *Campaign to improve the flexibility of funding for local education needs.* This could be done by reserving a percentage of Erasmus+ funding for municipalities, allocating follow-on funding for existing initiatives in need of support, and introducing rapid-response funding for local governments.

- *Strengthen local involvement in EU-level policy vehicles.* Increased input from city-level representatives could take the form of participation in EU working groups and the European Semester, or the development of new national-local coordination structures.

- *Support municipalities in the monitoring of educational initiatives.* Supporting data exchange between municipalities and other levels of government would enable informed, evidence-based policymaking that accurately reflects the communities it seeks to serve.

I.   INTRODUCTION

Equipping newcomers for local jobs is essential to reducing strains on local services, allaying anxieties among local populations about immigration, and strengthening local economies. But cities have competence over limited pieces of the education policy landscape. Most decisions—including those about funding—are made at the regional or national level. Cities thus face the challenge of supporting old and new groups of immigrants as they learn the host-country language and develop the skills that local employers need, all within the constraints of limited competence over education and of financial inflexibility.

These multilevel governance tensions have become more salient since the escalation of the migration and refugee crisis in 2015, with many cities facing significant capacity and infrastructure challenges. At the heart of this tension is the fact that although asylum policy is set at the national level, the effects of substantial inflows are often felt most acutely at the local level where the ability of newcomers to adapt to host societies becomes a concern primarily of municipal governance. Because localities deal with the fallout of decisions made at national level, cities across Europe have recently faced unpredictable flows, congestion in housing, and bottlenecks and capacity problems in local services.[1] This situation has exacerbated many existing education challenges, from placing and supporting children who arrive throughout the school year to finding ways to expand oversubscribed language programmes.[2] The crisis has also exposed limitations in funding allocations, with cities locked in to budgets established on the basis of population figures that change rapidly.[3] Cities on Europe's periphery are among those most affected by the crisis, with some facing these capacity challenges even as they battle persistent economic woes. In such areas, municipal governments risk losing the

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1   Capacity and infrastructure pressures have decreased the ability of local authorities to quickly find permanent accommodation for asylum seekers, hindering easy access to education services. See Maria Vincenza Desiderio, *Integrating Refugees into Host Country Labor Markets: Challenges and Policy Options* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/integrating-refugees-host-country-labor-markets-challenges-and-policy-options.

2   In 2015 alone, the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of Germany expected schools to absorb 325,000 new students from refugee families. See European Commission, 'Commission Staff Working Document, Country Report Germany 2016: Including an In-Depth Review on the Prevention and Correction of Macroeconomic Imbalances' (staff working document 75 final, 26 February 2016), 77, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/cr2016_germany_en.pdf; Bruce Katz, Luise Noring, and Nantke Garrelts, 'Cities and Refugees: The German Experience' (discussion paper prepared for the Cities and Refugees forum, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC, September 2016), www.brookings.edu/research/cities-and-refugees-the-german-experience/.

3   For instance, the city of Helsinki allocated 10 million euros of its own budget in 2016. Genoa and Gothenburg also spent upwards of 15 million euros in both 2014 and 2015. See EUROCITIES, *Refugee Reception and Integration in Cities* (Brussels: EUROCITIES, 2016), 8, http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/RefugeeReport_final.pdf.

trust of local populations or stoking resentment if newcomers are perceived as receiving support or access to scarce resources over existing populations also facing hardship.[4]

This paper aims to support the Urban Agenda Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees in its goal of enhancing the urban dimension of European politics through better regulation, use of financial instruments, and exchange of knowledge.[5] The first part of the paper examines the multilevel governance challenges that have arisen as education systems adjust to the needs of newly arrived youth and adults, and explores how cities are working within their constraints to develop innovative programmes. The section that follows analyses the effectiveness of the European institutions in helping cities overcome these challenges and adapt to rapid population change. The paper concludes by outlining some recommendations that could form the basis of the Urban Agenda Partnership's action plan on migrant and refugee inclusion.

II.   THE ROLE OF CITIES IN SUPPORTING THE EDUCATION OF NEW ARRIVALS

Newly arrived migrants, especially those who arrive through humanitarian protection channels, often have difficulty achieving success in host-country education systems.[6] Several factors help explain why first-generation immigrants lag behind their native counterparts. First, the vast majority does not speak the language of academic instruction at the same level of proficiency as their native-born peers, leaving students struggling to keep up with classes. Second, many adults and older children who enter the education system as refugees or asylum seekers have had interrupted school trajectories. Newly arrived families face a range of unfamiliar cultural norms and educational standards that may leave them unable to effectively advocate for their children in complex educational bureaucracies. And unaccompanied minors, and the services that attempt to assist them into education, often face barriers unique to their situation (see Box I).

Many adults and older children who enter the education system as refugees or asylum seekers have had interrupted school trajectories.

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4   For instance, in 2016, the families of Greek schoolchildren contested a national government decision to allow refugee children to begin integrating into public schools. See Niki Kitsantonis, 'Plan to Let Migrant Children Attend School Enrages Many Greeks', *The New York Times*, 25 September 2016, www.nytimes.com/2016/09/26/world/europe/greece-migrant-children-school.html.

5   This paper defines education policy as anything relating to the practice of educating or training of youth or adults. It does not include issues relating to the recognition of qualifications and prior learning, which are beyond its scope. Because of major role the migration crisis has taken on in discussions of integration challenges in recent years, the paper focuses on newly arrived adults and children; however, many of the adaptations of education policies and programs recommended to meet the needs of newcomers will also benefit existing migrant groups.

6   On the 2012 PISA standard mathematics exam given to 15-year-old students, for instance, the achievement gap between native- and foreign-born pupils was more than 25 percentage points in six EU Member States. See European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *PISA 2012: EU Performance and First Inferences Regarding Education and Training Policies in Europe* (Brussels: European Union, 2013), http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/strategic-framework/doc/pisa2012_en.pdf, 11.

Box 1. Challenges in the Education of Unaccompanied Minors

Integrating unaccompanied children into local schools systems presents several unique challenges:

- **Unstable living situations.** Reception systems are often overwhelmed, with a limited number of foster places available for unaccompanied minors (UAMs). As a result, UAMs often live in large facilities with few specialised support structures and limited supervision, leading many to run away. When coupled with long processing times and time-consuming assessments (such as age assessments), these obstacles can delay access to education indefinitely.
- **Complex protection and psychological needs.** After long journeys, during which UAMs may have been separated from family and/or witnessed violence, many require individualised support to adjust to a new culture, language, and society. In some shelters, there may be as few as six staff members for 100 children, rendering such support impossible.
- **Lack of preparedness among schools.** Even when UAMs are able to enter school, poor coordination between the institutions that manage their cases can result in their academic records being lost, meaning schools have to begin from scratch.

These challenges test cities in a number of ways. From an administrative standpoint, municipalities may be under considerable pressure to register UAMs for schools. For minors who are beyond the age of compulsory schooling, by contrast, there is a credible risk that UAMs do not enter education at all and instead turn to the informal labour market or even criminality. There is a critical need for greater coordination in the accommodation and education of UAMs. Municipalities could play a role by providing special transport to and from schools, and by actively supporting and training guardians.

Sources: Susan Fratzke, 'Sweden', in *Forced Migration in the OIC Member Countries: Policy Framework Adopted by Host Countries* (Ankara: Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Coordination Office, 2016) http://ebook. comcec.org/Kutuphane/Icerik/Yayinlar/Analitik_Calismalar/Yoksullugun_Azaltilmasi/Toplanti8/index.html#2; Eurochild, *Turning the Tide for Children on the Move* (Brussels: Eurochild, 2016), www.eurochild.org/fileadmin/public/05_Library/Turning_the_tide_children_on_the_move.pdf.

A.   Competences over Education Policy

The local educational systems that receive these newcomers face a variety of structural and system-wide challenges as they look for ways to help these students get up to speed. Table 1 maps the education competences of different levels of governance in the eight European countries taking part in the Urban Agenda Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees. As the table indicates, municipalities have responsibility for relatively few competences in the education system, with many important decisions taken at levels both above and below them.[7] For example, decisions in the areas of curricula, teaching standards, and workforce training and development—across school and adult education—are generally set at the national or regional level.

Most cities also have some responsibility for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)— programmes that are critical to the future educational success of young arrivals.

However, local authorities do often have competence in maintaining and constructing schools, which is extremely important in the management of rapid inflows, as a result of which large numbers of children must be quickly placed into the existing infrastructure. Most cities also have some responsibility for Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC)—programmes that are critical to the future educational success of young arriv-

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7   This paper focuses on local or municipal government and uses 'local authority', 'city', and 'municipality' interchangeably. However, the situation is not straightforward. In Sweden, for instance, municipalities are often smaller than large cities; in the United Kingdom, local authorities are sometimes coterminous with cities (e.g., Bristol, Birmingham, Sheffield); and in Germany, three of the largest cities are 'city-regions' (*Stadtstaaten*), meaning they are both cities and *Länder*—the regional unit of government.

als, as attendance from an early age can support social integration and language learning.[8] However, despite municipal competence to set policies in these areas, ECEC services and the expansion of infrastructure are often funded by national- or regional-level grants, leaving certain local actions dependent on higher levels of government.[9]

Table 1. Education Competences of Different Levels of Governance in Eight EU Countries

	Denmark	Finland	Germany	Greece
National Level	Core Curricula, Funding, Quality Assurance, Teacher Salary, Teacher Standards ECEC (*funding*), VET (*funding*)	Core Curricula, Funding, Teacher Standards, ECEC (*funding*), VET (*funding*)	ECEC, VET (*standards*)	Core Curricula, Funding, Number of Schools, Quality Assurance, Teacher Salaries, Teacher Standards, ECEC (*teacher salary*), VET
Regions		Number of Schools	Number of Schools, Funding, Quality Assurance, Quality Standards, Teacher Salary, Teacher Standards, Core Curricula, ECEC (*core curricula*), ECEC (*standards*), VET (*standards*), VET (*funding*)	Quality Assurance
Municipality	School Maintenance and Transportation, Quality Assurance, Teacher Standards, Teacher Salary, Funding, Specific Curricula, ECEC, ECEC (*funding*)	School Maintenance and Transportation, Teacher Standards, Teacher Salary, Funding, Specific Curricula, ECEC (*specific curricula*), ECEC (*funding*), VET	School Maintenance and Transportation	School Maintenance and Transportation, Resource Allocation, ECEC, ECEC (*funding*)
School Board	Specific Curricula, Resource Allocation, School Maintenance & Transportation, VET, ECEC (*specific curricula*)	Specific Curricula, Resource Allocation, Quality Assurance, Quality Standards	Specific Curricula, Resource Allocation	Specific Curricula, Resource Allocation, Quality Assurance, ECEC

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8   European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *Education and Training Monitor 2016* (Brussels: European Union, 2016), 9, https://ec.europa.eu/education/sites/education/files/monitor2016_en.pdf.

9   Of the eight countries surveyed, only municipalities in Finland have the explicit capacity to collect taxes to be used on educational initiatives. See European Commission, 'Eurydice—Finland—Early Childhood and School Education Funding,' updated 9 December 2015, https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Finland:Early_Childhood_and_School_Education_Funding.

Table 1. Education Competences of Different Levels of Governance in Eight EU Countries (continued)

	Italy	Netherlands	Portugal	Spain
National Level	Core Curricula, Funding, Quality Assurance, Teacher Salary, Teacher Standards	Core Curricula, Funding, Quality Assurance, Quality Standards, Teacher Salary, Teacher Standards, ECEC (*funding*), VET (*funding*)	Core Curricula, Funding, Number of Schools, Quality Assurance, Quality Standards, Teacher Salaries, Teacher Standards, ECEC, VET	Core Curricula, Teacher Standards, VET (*funding*)
Regions	Number of Schools, Allocation of Resources, VET (*funding*)	Number of Schools		Number of Schools, Funding, Quality Assurance, Quality Standards, Teacher Salaries, Specific Curricula, ECEC (*core curricula*), ECEC (*quality standards*), ECEC (*quality assurance*), VET
Municipality	School Maintenance and Transportation, Quality Assurance, ECEC	ECEC (*quality standards*), ECEC (*specific curricula*), VET (*specific curricula*)	School Maintenance and Transportation, Quality Assurance	School Maintenance and Transportation, ECEC (*funding*)
School Board	Specific Curricula, Resource Allocation, VET	Specific Curricula, Resource Allocation, School Maintenance & Transportation	Specific Curricula, Resource Allocation	Specific Curricula, Resource Allocation

ECEC = Early Childhood Education and Care; VET = Vocational Education and Training
Note: Unless specifically noted as ECEC or VET, all categories of competence refer to the primary/secondary school level.
Source: Eurydice country reports for Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, and the Netherland, available at European Commission, 'Eurydice—Countries: Description of National Educational Systems', updated October 2016, https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Countries; Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Education Policy Outlook: Netherlands* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2014), www.oecd.org/edu/EDUCATION%20POLICY%20OUTLOOK_NETHERLANDS_EN%20.pdf; OECD, *Education Policy Outlook: Spain* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2014), www.oecd.org/edu/EDUCATION%20POLICY%20OUTLOOK%20SPAIN_EN.pdf.

B. Multilevel Governance Challenges

Although the situation varies widely from country to country (and across different areas of education), a number of common themes and challenges flow from this distribution of competence.

- *Funding problems.* The scale of the 2014–15 migration crisis has forced municipalities to play a significant role in the initial reception and integration of newcomers, even in areas where they lack a legal mandate. In many cases, this has involved bridging funding gaps.[10] For instance, in 2015 Helsinki spent 10 million euros from the city's own budget to hire new staff (receiving none of the EU emergency assistance funding allocated to the national government). Similarly, Hamburg spent 586.2 million euros in 2015, with only 50 million euros refunded by the federal government during that year.[11] The timing of budgetary planning decisions can also create problems. Localities (or schools) must present plans to funding authorities months to years in advance, which can hinder local efforts to adapt rapidly to unanticipated population changes.[12] Moreover, in many countries these short-term funding gaps arrive on the back of year-on-year austerity cuts that have required local authorities to do more with less.[13]

- *Dependence on higher levels of government for decisions about curricula and staffing.* Structural decisions that affect the appropriateness of the education new arrivals receive are generally not taken by cities. Competence for setting school curricula, for instance, is frequently split between the national or regional government and individual schools, which develop curricula according to national or regional guidelines. Teaching standards are often determined by national legislation, and upheld at the national or regional level, the latter of which is also responsible for the payment of teacher salaries. Because municipalities lack control over teacher salaries, they may be unable to respond adequately to their local context by, for instance, hiring specialists trained in intercultural communication or recruiting bilingual staff.[14] In countries that were already facing crippling workforce shortages before the crisis,[15] schools in areas with a high concentration of immigrants—viewed as less desirable by many teachers—are poorly staffed.[16] A major exception to this distribution of authority is Scandinavia, where municipalities do have control over funding, hiring, and teaching decisions, and have greater scope to respond to the needs of diverse populations (see Section II.C.2.).

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10 EUROCITIES, *Cities and Migrants II: Implementing the EUROCITIES Integrating Cities Charter* (Brussels: EUROCITIES, 2015), http://solidaritycities.eu/images/ICC-report-2015.pdf.

11 EUROCITIES, *Refugee Reception and Integration in Cities*; Katz, Noring, and Garrelts, 'Cities and Refugees'.

12 For instance, while schools in Spain and Portugal obtain yearly funding on the basis of the educational plans they present to higher level authorities, in Italy schools must present plans for three years, severely limiting their ability to adjust the budget as a result of unforeseen population growth. See the Eurydice country reports on Italy, Portugal, and Spain available at European Commission, 'Eurydice—Countries: Description of National Educational Systems', updated October 2016, https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Countries.

13 Over the 2015–16 period, national governments have directly cut funding for education in Finland and the Netherlands, and decreased local government budgets in Denmark, Greece, and Spain. See Marianne Doyen and Alfonso Lara Montero, *Connecting Europe with Local Communities*: *Social Services Priorities for the European Semester 2017* (Brighton: The European Social Network, 2016), www.esn-eu.org/raw.php?page=files&id=2288.

14 Deborah Nusche, Gregory Wurzburg, and Breda Naughton, *OECD Reviews of Migrant Education: Denmark* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2010), 27, www.oecd.org/denmark/44855206.pdf.

15 For instance, Portugal has an aging teacher population and a Greek ban on hiring civil servants has further decreased the overall number of teachers, contributing to rising class sizes and insufficient support for new teachers. See Doyen and Lara Montero, *Connecting Europe with Local Communities*.

16 For instance, in the Netherlands, it has been difficult to keep teachers in schools with a higher concentration of migrant students, and many express the desire to work elsewhere. See Claire Shewbridge, Moonhee Kim, Gregory Wurzburg, and Gaby Hostens, *OECD Reviews of Migrant Education: Netherlands* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2010), 49, www.oecd.org/netherlands/44612239.pdf.

- ***Poor data sharing and quality assurance.*** There is a dearth of data on specific barriers to educational achievement for students with a migrant background, in part because of the complexity of multilevel governance structures.[17] In many cases, quality assurance is undertaken by individual schools, which may lack resources to thoroughly compare their findings with those of other institutions. In other cases, agencies operating at the national or regional level undertake monitoring activities, though these have faced difficulties creating central data hubs without municipal input.[18] Without sufficient data about the specific barriers to educational achievement that students in their jurisdiction face, municipalities lack the means to design programmes that are responsive to the needs of these populations.

- ***Difficulties adapting to population changes.*** Unpredictable influxes of migrants and refugees (for instance, as a result of the establishment of a new reception centre) can make it difficult for localities and schools to adapt quickly enough to the needs of new arrivals. As large numbers of new students enrol in schools, physical premises often need to be renovated, expanded, or otherwise modified to prevent overcrowding. However, though cities have competence over school maintenance and in some cases construction, they generally must wait for higher levels of government to approve the building of new schools—or dip into funding for other programmes.[19] Another issue is a widespread lack of clarity over who is responsible for newly arrived children. For instance, in Sweden, schools are required to enrol newly arrived children within a month of arrival, but most municipalities lack formal systems to seek out children not enrolled in school.[20] And in countries such as Greece and Italy, where new arrivals have faced delays in registration and extended periods in temporary housing, student enrolment has been significantly delayed.

- ***Limited ability to manage the distribution of migrants across schools.*** The concentration of migrant and socioeconomically disadvantaged children in certain schools, may lead to less successful education outcomes.[21] In Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, roughly 70 per cent of refugee children attend schools where the majority of their classmates are also immigrants.[22] In trying to manage this uneven distribution, some municipalities—such as Aarhus in Denmark and Gouda in the Netherlands—have set limits for the number of migrant-background pupils permitted in a single school.[23] However, in most cases the demographic make-up of a school reflects that of the local population, which is overwhelmingly the result of national immigration, asylum, and refugee dispersal policies.

- ***Fragmentation in school-to-work pathways.*** It is rare that one level of government has competence over early childhood, school, and adult vocational education. In Denmark and Italy, for instance,

17 Margie McHugh and Julie Sugarman, *Transatlantic Symposium Report: Improving Instruction for Immigrant and Refugee Students in Secondary Schools* (Washington DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2015), 3, www.migrationpolicy.org/research/transatlantic-symposium-report-improving-instruction-immigrant-and-refugee-students.

18 Julie Sugarman, Simon Morris-Lange, and Margie McHugh, *Improving Education for Migrant-Background Students: A Transatlantic Comparison of School Funding* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/improving-education-migrant-background-students-transatlantic-comparison-school-funding.

19 Some local authorities have been forced to find ways to expand capacity in aging, though existent, buildings. See EUROCITIES, *Refugee Reception and Integration in Cities*, 5, 8. See also the Eurydice country reports for Greece, Italy, and Portugal available at European Commission, 'Eurydice—Countries: Description of National Educational Systems'.

20 As of April 2016, the Migration Agency estimated it could take between 30 and 70 days for children to start school, depending on the municipality. See Susan Fratzke, 'Sweden', in *Forced Migration in the OIC Member Countries: Policy Framework Adopted by Host Countries* (Ankara: Standing Committee for Economic and Commercial Cooperation of the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation Coordination Office) http://ebook.comcec.org/Kutuphane/Icerik/Yayinlar/Analitik_Calismalar/Yoksullugun_Azaltilmasi/Toplanti8/index.html#2.

21 OECD, *Helping Immigrant Students to Succeed at School – and Beyond* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2015), 8, www.oecd.org/education/Helping-immigrant-students-to-succeed-at-school-and-beyond.pdf.

22 *The Economist*, 'Learning the Hard Way', *The Economist*, 2 January 2016, www.economist.com/news/europe/21684830-integrating-migrants-schools-will-not-be-easy-learning-hard-way.

23 *The Economist*, 'Learning the Hard Way'; Shewbridge, Kim, Wurzburg, and Hostens, *OECD Reviews of Migrant Education: Netherlands*, 38.

different levels of government are responsible for lower and upper secondary school education. As a result, some educational standards, pedagogical methods, and procedures may be significantly different as students move from one level of education to the next. For immigrant students and their families, this may require further adaptation to new structures and put them at risk of falling behind.[24]

Frequent reforms of national education systems can also make the division of competences more complex, leading to confusion over different actors' responsibilities and jeopardising the continuity of support for newly arrived children.[25] Recent changes have also tended towards devolution of decision-making all the way down to the school level, a side effect of which is the limitation of cities' ability to share knowledge of what works across schools.

C.   Cities' Activities Supporting Education for Newcomers

There is huge variation in how cities work within their limited competencies to design and develop programmes to support newcomers. Some larger cities with experience receiving newcomers have invested heavily in supporting them, with some having developed ways to plug gaps in national funding provision. Others, including smaller cities and those less used to immigration, have pioneered innovative approaches that link education to other policy areas critical to integration. City activities that support newcomers have focused on the areas of ECEC programming, primary and secondary schools, as well as vocational and language training for newly arrived adults.

1.   Early Childhood Education and Care

Across the European Union, ECEC is divided into two cycles, the first being for children between the ages of 0 and 3 years old, and the second for children between 4 and 6 years old. Above and beyond the benefits ECEC offers all children, these services are particularly beneficial for children of immigrants who speak a different language at home than the one they will use throughout their educational career.[26] However, the first cycle of ECEC is sometimes not considered to be part of the education system and is rarely compulsory.[27] Children from ethnic minority and low-income families are often registered for ECEC at lower levels than their native peers, and often in programmes of a lower quality.[28]

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24 See the Eurydice country reports for Denmark and Italy, available at European Commission, 'Eurydice—Countries: Description of National Educational Systems'.

25 Doyen and Lara Montero, *Connecting Europe with Local Communities*; Eurydice country reports for Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain, available at European Commission, 'Eurydice—Countries: Description of National Educational Systems'.

26 For a discussion on access challenges for children from ethnic minority and low-income families, see Michel Vandenbroeck and Arianna Lazzari, 'Accessibility of Early Childhood Education and Care: A State of Affairs', *European Early Childhood Education Research Journal* 22, no. 3 (2014): 327–35.

27 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *Education and Training Monitor 2016*, 56; Eurydice country report for Italy, available at European Commission, 'Eurydice—Countries: Description of National Educational Systems'. As of 2014, average participation in this first cycle of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) was 28 per cent across the European Union, below the Barcelona objective of 33 per cent. The Barcelona objectives, established in 2002, include 'to provide childcare by 2010 to at least 90% of children between 3 years old and the mandatory school age and at least 33% of children under 3 years of age.' See European Commission, *Barcelona Objectives: The Development of Childcare Facilities for Young Children in Europe with a View to Sustainable and Inclusive Growth* (Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2013), 4, http://ec.europa.eu/justice/gender-equality/files/documents/130531_barcelona_en.pdf.

28 Participation in the second cycle of ECEC stood at 94.3 per cent, just below the Europe 2020 benchmark of 95 per cent. See European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *Education and Training Monitor 2016*, 2, 9.

Measures to improve the accessibility and appropriateness of ECEC include:

- ▪ *Two-generational and co-located services.* Programmes that serve both immigrant parents and their children or that offer a combination of services (such as language and skills training, mental health services, and ECEC) can help reach low-income parents, and help families as a whole move towards economic and social stability.[29] Examples include Sweden's Family Centres, which co-locate maternal health, child health, preschool, and social welfare; the United Kingdom's Sure Start centres, which offer advice on parenting, health services, links with employment services, and early learning and childcare; and Eindhoven in the Netherland's Broad Schools, which combine primary school, preschool, daycare, and parenting support.[30] However, two-generational programmes may face challenges in attracting and maintaining funding, particularly when funds for ECEC and adult language learning comes from two different sources. New programmes may also find it difficult to draw from more than one funding source if the children they serve do not share the same immigration status as their parents.[31] Moreover, the outcomes of these programmes are difficult to measure; narrow definitions of success, such as employment rates, often do not capture their broader social impact on a family as a whole.[32]

- ▪ *Tailoring provision to the needs of the local population.* Where the city's population differs demographically from the national population, cities can help childcare providers adapt curricula to the needs of local children and communities. For instance, some programmes have been tweaked to support native language development or bilingual classrooms, while others have sought to appeal to minorities by making services culturally appropriate (e.g., by adjusting opening hours and holidays) or hired people with similar linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Cities have also developed innovative ways to engage families in the education of their children, for instance through parent counsellors who visit parents of two-year-olds in Rotterdam.[33] Here, tensions can arise between different levels of government, including when curricula advocate host-country language only service provision.

With much of the innovation happening at the level of service providers, sharing lessons can be difficult, especially when capacity pressures determine the use of limited funds. Where providers are responsible for monitoring and evaluation, they may lack resources to measure their own impact or the incentives to share granular information about what works for particular populations with other services.[34] Cities have shown they can play an important role here. After the 2001 'PISA shock' to the German education system, Berlin

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29 For a discussion of the more longstanding history of these programmes in the United States, see Maki Park, Margie McHugh, and Caitlin Katsiaficas, *Serving Immigrant Families Through Two-Generation Programs: Identifying Family Needs and Responsive Program Approaches* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/serving-immigrant-families-through-two-generation-programs-identifying-family-needs-and.

30 International Child Development Initiatives (ICDI), *Parental Involvement in Early Learning: A Review of Research, Policy, and Good Practice* (Leiden, the Netherlands: ICDI and Bernard van Leer Foundation, 2012), http://icdi.nl/media/uploads/publications/parental-involvement-in-early-learning.pdf.

31 In Europe, European funding is explicitly tied to programmes that serve third-country nationals, though participants' children can be citizens. See Meghan Benton, Elizabeth Collett, and Helen McCarthy, *The Practice of Mainstreaming: Immigrant Integration Policies at European Level* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe and UPSTREAM, 2014), 39, www.eur.nl/fileadmin/ASSETS/fsw/Bestuurskunde/onderzoek/upstream/WP4_MPI-_Eu_report.pdf. For a discussion of legal status and service access in the U.S. context, see Park, McHugh, and Katsiaficas, *Serving Immigrant Families Through Two-Generation Programs.*

32 Ibid.

33 ICDI, *Parental Involvement in Early Learning.*

34 For a broader discussion of the challenges of evaluating childcare programmes, see Transatlantic Forum on Inclusive Early Years (TFIEY), *Evaluation Issues in Early Childhood Education and Care: Choices and Implications for Diverse Populations* (Lisbon: TFIEY, 2014), www.europe-kbf.eu/~/media/Europe/TFIEY/TFIEY_Synthesis-Reports/Synthesis-Report_TFIEY4_Amsterdam.pdf. See also TFIEY, *Successful Parent and Family Engagement in the Early Years: Reaching out to Immigrant and Low-Income Families* (Lisbon: TFIEY, 2014), www.europe-kbf.eu/~/media/Europe/TFIEY/TFIEY_Synthesis-Reports/Synthesis-Report_TFIEY3_Lisbon.pdf.

decided to task an interdisciplinary research institute with developing a curriculum for ECEC and established a system of regular quality monitoring.[35]

2. Children and Schools

Given that central and regional governments tend to be responsible for the allocation of school funding, local areas are often left dependent on centrally determined decisions about how to target resources. Many countries have a system for allocating additional funding to schools facing exceptional needs, but these funds do not always reliably reflect the degree of additional costs a school may face. For instance, many schools use economic disadvantage as a proxy measure for the concentration of migrant-background students (in part to avoid the political pushback that often accompanies programmes targeted specifically at immigrants), but this may not capture the extent of language needs in the classroom.[36]

Local areas are often left dependent on centrally determined decisions about how to target resources.

In some places, such as Sweden and Denmark, municipalities have responsibility for funding, hiring, and teaching decisions. As a result, these localities are able to ensure their workforce has the skills and training necessary to meet the needs of their student populations. For instance, the city of Copenhagen has introduced programmes to set standards for and incentivise continued professional development, including by providing higher salaries to teachers with intercultural and language skills.[37] Similarly, in Gothenburg, the municipal language centre provides mother tongue language and literacy lessons to children whose guardians do not speak Swedish as a native language.[38]

But where schools have considerable latitude to respond to the needs of their population (e.g., to attract specialised or bilingual staff, add after school or catch-up classes, or design intercultural training), they may also face additional costs. For instance, in Sweden, schools have an obligation to provide refugee children with any additional support they need, such as a tutor in their mother tongue. And in the United Kingdom, schools have a statutory obligation to take steps to accommodate home languages, which can become onerous and costly for schools with dozens of different languages.[39]

Examples of good practice at local level include:

▪ *Area-based approaches to the school-to-work pathway.* Area-based or 'whole-place' approaches consider how education interacts with other services and measure progress across the whole continuum of education to employment. For instance, Rotterdam Zuid has taken an area-based approach that focuses on supporting several generations within families to yield better educational and ultimately

35 OECD, *Starting Strong IV: Monitoring Quality in Early Childhood Education and Care* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2015), www.keepeek.com/Digital-Asset-Management/oecd/education/starting-strong-iv_9789264233515-en#page56, 56.

36 Sugarman, Morris-Lange, and McHugh, *Improving Education for Migrant-Background Students.* For a broader discussion of mainstreaming, see Elizabeth Collett and Milica Petrovic, *The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe: Mainstreaming Approaches for Inclusion* (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2014), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/future-immigrant-integration-europe-mainstreaming-approaches-inclusion.

37 Nusche, Wurzburg, and Naughton, *OECD Reviews of Migrant Education: Denmark*, 27.

38 Göteborgs Stad, Språkcentrum, 'Modersmål', accessed 16 December 2016, http://goteborg.se/wps/portal?uri=gbglnk:20151139299586.

39 Meghan Benton, Helen McCarthy, and Elizabeth Collett, *Into the Mainstream: Rethinking Public Services for Diverse and Mobile Populations* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2015), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/mainstream-rethinking-public-services-diverse-and-mobile-populations.

employment outcomes for children. Through partnerships with employers, Rotterdam Zuid can offer guarantees of work if children choose to participate in vocational track programmes (in contrast to the routes more commonly chose by children of a migrant background, which are sometimes perceived to be either easy or academic, and which have more limited potential as pathways to local jobs).[40]

- ▪ *Recruiting and training educators with intercultural skills.* Developing intercultural awareness can help teachers and other staff members cater to the needs of students from different backgrounds. Hamburg is training 'intercultural coordinators' to lead anti-bias trainings in their own schools and to develop tolerant school cultures.[41] Similarly, Riga runs four-day trainings on migration and human rights for all civil servants, including teachers. Another approach is to recruit teachers from immigrant communities, as is done in Vienna's internship program for teachers from an asylum-seeker background.[42]

- ▪ *Planning for mid-year arrivals.* A major challenge for many schools is the inflexibility of budget allocations based on student population data that are often out of date (and become more so as the school year progresses). Some cities have been working to improve the responsiveness of data to population fluctuations. The city of Barcelona, in cooperation with the region of Catalonia, promotes an even distribution of immigrant students and aims to maximise its capacity to absorb mid-year arrivals by requiring two spaces per class to be reserved for students with 'special educational needs' who arrive after formal registration.[43] And the city of Rotterdam has modified the timing of its annual student counts for the purpose of determining their budget needs so that they now occur three times per year.[44]

Despite these innovations, many of the structural features of education systems cannot be altered without action from regional or central governments. For instance, most of the main efforts to mainstream immigrant integration into education policy have been made at higher levels of government. These include altering educational tracks to avoid curtailing opportunities for children from diverse backgrounds, who were historically streamed into lower ability classes because they had arrived at a later age or lacked fluency in the language of instruction. These changes have also included adjusting the teacher training curriculum to include intercultural competences.[45]

3.   Supporting Newly Arrived Adults and Youth

Most integration, vocational training, and language programmes, especially those for newly arrived refugees, are organised at national level. Over the course of the 2014–15 period, many countries began to support labour market integration at an earlier stage in the settlement process by providing support measures even in reception centres.[46] However, municipalities play a key role in organising and delivering services, and in many cases (e.g., Sweden) have responsibility for certain types of adult education. Cities have also worked with civil society partners to plug gaps (e.g., in language class provision) and to pioneer new models of training. These municipalities also play a key role in helping newcomers navigate what can be a complex landscape of adult education and skills training.

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40 Ibid.
41 McHugh and Sugarman, *Transatlantic Symposium Report,* 7.
42 EUROCITIES, *Cities' Actions for the Education of Refugees and Asylum Seekers* (Brussels: EUROCITIES, 2017), 7, http://nws.eurocities.eu/MediaShell/media/Education%20report_Final%20Version.pdf.
43 María Bruquetas-Callejo, *Educational Reception in Rotterdam and Barcelona: Policies, Practices and Gaps* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2014), 154, www.imiscoe.org/docman-books/323-educational-reception-in-rotterdam-and-barce-lona-policies-practices-and-gaps/file.
44 Ibid., 101.
45 See Collett and Petrovic, *The Future of Immigrant Integration in Europe.*
46 For an overview, see Desiderio, *Integrating Refugees into Host Country Labor Markets.*

The role of cities in supporting adults and youth has included:

- ▪ *Creating on-ramps to apprenticeships.* Such programs often offer the best path into mid- and higher-skilled work, but may be hard to access for new arrivals unfamiliar with the system. A number of cities in Germany are partnering with local firms to develop internships and apprenticeships for asylum seekers. For instance, the city of Erlangen has partnered with Siemens to offer paid internships, combined with workplace orientation and skills training, to asylum seekers with graduate degrees.[47]

- ▪ *Improving access to services.* As with co-located family services, one-stop shops seek to reduce barriers new arrivals face in accessing a range of services. For instance, in Portugal one-stop shops help public and private service providers better serve third-country nationals by offering intercultural mediation, translation, mentoring, and information about local services. Although the Portuguese model is designed at a national level, it helps cities co-locate services under one roof.[48]

- ▪ *Reducing the time between arrival and work.* In some cases, municipalities have found innovative ways to work within their obligations to deliver language training. For instance, Swedish for Professionals was a programme developed by municipalities in the wider Stockholm area, which agreed to pool resources so that they could offer higher-value language training for the workplace instead of more generic language services, as is common practice.[49] Another recent example of how cities can adapt to situational needs can be seen in Lillehammer and Gausdal in Norway. In these two cities, a project places newly arrived refugees in work even though they have limited Norwegian language proficiency, with the aim of encouraging language learning through social interactions and work. This marks a significant departure from the previous approach of encouraging newcomers to attain a certain level of fluency before seeking work.[50]

- ▪ *Innovations to improve access to training for asylum seekers.* Because asylum seekers are increasingly housed in rural areas and away from the best job and training opportunities due to urban housing constraints, distance learning and remote training programmes may provide an alternative means of helping newly arrived adults step onto the pathway to work.[51] A number of intensive coding schools have been developed in the tech clusters of Amsterdam and Berlin, for instance, pointing to the important role played by nongovernmental actors. Another Berlin-based initiative, Kiron Open Higher Education, offers asylum seekers access to higher education through Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that they can then convert into credit at brick-and-mortar universities once they receive asylum status and have a more permanent address.[52] Elsewhere, adult education centres are using distance learning as a complement to offline language courses, as in the Akmene District Youth and Adult Education Centre in Lithuania and the International Language School SRL in Italy.[53]

Again, these innovative practices must work within the constraints of national decisions—local providers are often unable to address some of the structural barriers new arrivals face in accessing adult vocational

47 Siemens AG, 'Siemens Introduces Sustainable Program for Integrating Refugees' (press release, 29 September 2015), www.siemens.com/press/en/pressrelease/?press=/en/pressrelease/2015/corporate/pr2015090359coen.htm.

48 High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue, 'One Stop Shop: A New Answer for Immigrant Integration', accessed 6 December 2016, www.oss.inti.acidi.gov.pt/.

49 Meghan Benton, Madeleine Sumption, Kristine Alsvik, Susan Fratzke, Christiane Kuptsch, and Demetrios G. Papademetriou, *Aiming Higher: Policies to Get Immigrants into Middle-Skilled Work in Europe* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute and International Labour Office, 2014), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/aiming-higher-policies-get-immigrants-middle-skilled-work-europe.

50 Vibecke Wold Haagensen and Erlend Moe, 'Flyktninger får jobb fra første dag', NRK, 12 November 2015, www.nrk.no/ho/flyktninger-far-jobb-fra-forste-dag-1.12648879.

51 See Meghan Benton and Alex Glennie, *Digital Humanitarianism: How Tech Entrepreneurs Are Supporting Refugee Integration* (Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute, 2016), www.migrationpolicy.org/research/digital-humanitarianism-how-tech-entrepreneurs-are-supporting-refugee-integration.

52 For an overview of digital education courses, see ibid.

53 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *Schools, VET and Adult Education Helping Newly-Arrived Refugees in Europe: Challenges, Ideas and Inspiring Practices* (Brussels: European Commission, 2015), http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/documents/school-vet-adult-survey-refugee_en.pdf.

education, such as difficulties getting prior qualifications recognised. Arguably, some of the most significant structural reforms, such as moving to a more modularised educational system (a key debate in Germany), have to be made at the central government level. But for many innovations that originate at the school or local level, the central challenge is to turn successful pilot projects into more sustainable structural changes through coordination across each level of government.

Some of the most effective efforts at the city level are in blending different services.

In theory, European level decisionmakers could play a key role in helping scale and sustain these innovations through funding and knowledge exchange. However, some of the most effective efforts at the city level are in blending different services, for instance through whole-place and multigenerational approaches. These do not easily lend themselves to traditional funding streams, which tend to fall into policy siloes, or even to the sharing of best practices, which more often focuses on standalone initiatives rather than broad approaches. With these challenges in mind, the next section analyses the extent to which the European level has supported cities in these efforts.

III. EU SUPPORT FOR EDUCATION

The European institutions possess an array of tools that can be used to strengthen and support Member State systems, as well as guide policy via goal-setting and monitoring.

A.   European-Level Programmes

Because the European Union does not have competence to legislate to require Member States to amend national laws in the area of education its primary role has been to support, coordinate, or supplement the actions of the Member States. For instance, the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) supports signatory countries in understanding and comparing qualifications awarded in different countries, which could in turn ease newcomers into appropriate training or employment positions; however, EU Member States are not required to participate.[54]

EU regulations do, however, govern access to education for beneficiaries of international protection, as this intersects with asylum policy. Article 27 of the Qualification Directive of 2004 and its 2011 recast version requires Member States to 'grant full access to the education system for minors granted refugee or subsidiary protection status, under the same conditions as nationals.'[55] It also grants adult protection beneficiaries access

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54 Twenty five countries have linked their qualifications levels to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Countries outside of the European Union are eligible and encouraged to participate in the framework, particularly those neighbouring the European Union.

55 'Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 on Minimum Standards for the Qualification and Status of Third Country Nationals or Stateless Persons as Refugees or as Persons Who Otherwise Need International Protection and the Content of the Protection Granted', Art. 27(3), *Official Journal of the European Union* 2004 L304/12, 30 September 2004, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:32004L0083:en:HTML; 'Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on Standards for the Qualification of Third-Country Nationals or Stateless Persons as Beneficiaries of International Protection, for a Uniform Status for Refugees or for Persons Eligible for Subsidiary Protection, and for the Content of the Protection Granted', Art. 28, *Official Journal of the European Union* 2011 L337/9, 20 December 2011, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32011L0095.

to the general education system and training programmes, but under the same conditions as legally resident third-country nationals.[56]

Other than regulations, EU-led programmes in the area of newcomer education and training can be classified according to three categories: soft law; funding; and platforms for sharing best practices, research, and guidelines. These mechanisms are spread across all education levels, including early childhood programmes, primary and secondary schools, vocational and adult education, and specific language training. Several examples are highlighted below.

1.   Soft Law

- ▪ ***The Strategic Framework for Education and Training 2020.*** This framework is used by the European Union to set an overall agenda for education across the bloc. The programme conducts its activities via thematic working groups, which bring together national authorities, Commission experts, and international organisations to discuss Member State progress towards common benchmarks, as well as solutions to ongoing challenges.[57]

2.   Funding

A number of different funding pots exist to support education, including:

- ▪ ***Erasmus+.*** This programme has replaced the Lifelong Learning Programme as the central EU initiative for funding education projects during the 2014–2020 period. With a budget of 14.8 billion euros, Erasmus+ supports three central objectives, known as Key Actions: mobility of learners, exchange of best practices, and policy reform.[58] Within each of these categories are more targeted programmes, such as eTwinning and Sector Skills Alliances, which continue the work of initiatives from previous funding cycles in connecting education practitioners across Europe. Strikingly, the Erasmus+ programme has not broadly addressed issues of immigrants in education, as only 6.4 per cent of its projects have included the goal of supporting refugees or migrants.[59]

- ▪ ***The Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF).*** This fund provides additional financial support for national programmes and special projects related to the management of migration flows. It aims to further common EU objectives on strengthening asylum systems, return processes, solidarity with Member States under the most pressure, and legal migration and integration policies. Specifically, 88 per cent of AMIF funding supports national programmes, while 12 per cent subsidises EU

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56 'Directive 2011/95/EU', Art. 27.

57 European Commission, 'Strategic Framework – Education & Training 2020', accessed 9 December 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/strategic-framework_en.

58 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *2015 Annual Work Programme for the Implementation of 'Erasmus+': The Union Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport* (Brussels: European Commission, 2014), 2, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/more_info/awp/docs/c_2014_6856_en.pdf.

59 Authors' calculations based on a search of key terms in project descriptions. The search term 'migrant' was mentioned in 3.7 per cent of projects, 'migration' in 2.7 per cent, and 'refugee' in 2.4 per cent of projects. Because a number of projects mention more than one of these terms, the unduplicated total number of projects to include one or more of these terms is 3,450, or 6.4 per cent of all projects.

actions and special projects for emergency assistance.[60] Education and language initiatives are eligible for AMIF funding, but thus far most of the emergency funding has been allocated to accommodation and reception services.[61]

- ▪ ***The European Social Fund (ESF).*** By providing funding to Member States, the ESF aims to support employment and skills development to strengthen the European workforce. One of the four programmatic themes of the fund is 'Better Education', in which projects combat early school leaving, support lifelong learning, and provide more opportunities to obtain tertiary education.[62] Though the ESF traditionally flows to projects more closely related to labour market integration than to education, ESF funding has been used to cover the cost of kindergarten for disadvantaged families, as well as to fund individual projects in schools and early education.[63]

- ▪ ***The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).*** This structural fund is dedicated to reducing economic disparities between regions through infrastructure projects and employment.[64] Though not specifically directed toward education programs, several initiatives have crossed into this field, including projects funded by the Urban Innovative Actions (UIA) programme. Many of the projects to receive UIA funding support innovations in multi-agency or place-based services, such as Nantes' 5Bridges one-stop shop for homeless residents, which combines housing, health care, job opportunities, and social services. Rotterdam's BRIDGE programme, which offers vocational education and training (VET) students guarantees of a career start in a growth sector, is another example.[65]

- ▪ ***The European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF).*** These funds predominantly focus on supporting business, investing in infrastructure, and upgrading the skills of the European workforce.[66] They may be used to support education initiatives, for example, through the European Agriculture Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), which can upgrade or expand school infrastructure in rural municipalities that are receiving migrants.[67]

In theory, both Erasmus+ and AMIF funding can be used to support newly arrived immigrants and asylum seekers, even before the latter are granted refugee status. However, other major initiatives can only be used to support migrants with legal status (and, in the case of the ESF, only if they are entitled to work).[68]

60   European Commission, Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs, 'Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)', accessed 9 December 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/asylum-migration-integration-fund/index_en.htm.

61   European Commission, 'Direct Award of Action Grants to Provide Emergency Assistance under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund' (list of awarded projects, 31 December 2015), http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/asylum-migration-integration-fund/union-actions/docs/amif_emas_list_of_awarded_projects_en.pdf.

62   European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 'European Social Fund: What is the ESF?' accessed 17 January 2017, http://ec.europa.eu/esf/main.jsp?catId=35&langId=en.

63   Benton, Collett, and McCarthy, *The Practice of Mainstreaming*.

64   Ibid.*,* 4, 12.

65   Urban Innovative Actions, 'Nantes: 5BRIDGES – Creating Bridges between Homeless and Local Communities', accessed 17 January 2017, www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities/nantes; Urban Innovative Actions, 'Rotterdam: BRIDGE – Building the Right Investments for Delivering a Growing Economy', accessed 17 January 2017, www.uia-initiative.eu/en/uia-cities/rotterdam.

66   European Commission, 'European Structural & Investment Funds', updated 21 June 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/funds_en.htm.

67   European Commission, *Contribution of the European Structural and Investment Funds to the 10 Commission Priorities: Migration* (Brussels: European Commission, 2015), 4, http://ec.europa.eu/contracts_grants/pdf/esif/key-migration_en.pdf.

68   In addition to the funds listed above, several other funds are dedicated to the social inclusion of socioeconomically disadvantaged communities, including new arrivals. These funds predominantly focus on integration through employment, but may have some overlap with education via training initiatives. Key funds include the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EASI), with a budget of approximately 919 million euros, which promotes employment and social protection, and has a component to combat social exclusion; the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), with a budget of 5.7 billion euros, cofinances projects to develop coastal communities and the fishing industry; and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD), which has a budget of 3.8 billion euros to cofinance material assistance and social inclusion measures to help the most impoverished people in the European Union move out of poverty.

3.   Platforms, Guidance, and Toolkits

- ***The Education and Training Monitor.*** This publication, produced annually by the Commission using Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Eurostat data, reports on Member State progress toward European benchmarks set through the Strategic Framework.[69] Since the European Union lacks a mechanism to bind Member States to this framework, the Monitor acts as an important vehicle for promoting common objectives by providing data to inform national policy-making and discussion at Open Method of Coordination working groups.

- ***The SIRIUS Network.*** This policy network was funded under the European Commission's Lifelong Learning Programme through 2014. It convened policymakers, researchers, practitioners, nongovern-mental organisations (NGOs), and representatives of migrant communities to exchange knowledge and best practices in the education of migrant-background children. The network focused on the themes of policy implementation, classroom interactions, and community involvement in education.[70]

- ***The European Platform for Adult Learning (EPALE).*** This platform is an open membership community for academic practitioners, researchers, and policymakers in the field of adult education. The goals of this community are to share best practices and broaden professional networks to encourage joint programming in adult education.[71] Through EPALE, members may join discussions, share research and training resources, and organise conferences, including on the subject of immigrants in adult education.[72]

- ***European Toolkit for Schools.*** This online portal provides support resources to school leaders, teachers, and parents, and serves as a forum for the exchange of best practices to combat early school leaving. The portal links to studies and recommendations in the area of school governance, continuing professional development for teachers, as well as assessments, language training, and targeted support for learners.[73]

B.   *Bottlenecks in Cities' Effective Engagement with the European Union*

Though the European Union provides numerous vehicles to support education systems across Member States, municipalities and cities have had difficulty accessing EU funding or contributing to the overall European agenda in the field. The following are some of the key challenges that prevent cities from receiving adequate support from EU programmes:

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69   European Commission, 'Strategic Framework – Education & Training 2020'.
70   SIRIUS Network, 'About the SIRIUS Network', accessed 17 January 2017, www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/about-us/.
71   European Commission, 'Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe: About', accessed 1 December 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/about.
72   European Commission, 'Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe: Immigrants', accessed 1 December 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/themes/immigrants.
73   School Education Gateway, 'Background to the European Toolkit for Schools', accessed 9 December 2016, www.schooleducationgateway.eu/en/pub/resources/toolkitsforschools/general/background_esl.htm.

1. Funding Does Not Prioritise the Municipal Level

European funding does not currently offer rigorous support to municipalities with rapidly changing educational needs. Municipalities do have the opportunity to take advantage of programmes at the European level, for instance by applying for Erasmus+ funding. However, most funds (e.g., those from Erasmus+ and the ESF) are distributed through national agencies, which have sole authority to approve or deny applications.[74] Thus, projects are subject to scrutiny not from European actors, but from an agency within the national government that is unlikely to approve funding for programmes that do not align with national education priorities. This intermediary step may also increase the time it takes for municipalities to access funding, hampering its use as a response to rapid inflows.[75]

Most funds … are distributed through national agencies, which have sole authority to approve or deny applications.

As a result, very little Erasmus+ funding reaches the local level. According to Migration Policy Institute (MPI) Europe analysis, over three years of Erasmus+ projects, only 988 grants (approximately 1.8 per cent of all grants) have been awarded to local public bodies; meanwhile 42.1 per cent was given to individual schools or nongovernmental actors.[76] Since these organisations operate below the municipality, they rarely possess the capacity to systematically evaluate and scale their initiatives to reach a wider audience. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of Erasmus+ funding supports learning mobility (87 per cent in its first three years), with only 10 per cent supporting best practice exchange and 2 per cent supporting policy reform. This falls far short of its original targets (63 per cent for learning mobility; 28 per cent for best practice exchange; and 4 per cent for policy reform).[77]

2. Funding is Rarely Designed to Help Sustain and Scale Projects

As a result of the tendency to award funds to actors below the municipal level (primarily schools and local NGOs), European funding has mainly benefitted small-scale projects. It has been far less frequently used to help governments and educational institutions scale up pilot projects or bring together services (e.g., through co-located services) to better serve immigrant families.[78]

Moreover, many recent projects have been short-lived. Out of 18,196 Erasmus+ programmes funded in the year 2014, 65.5 per cent finished within two years.[79] Such projects may be attractive to donors because they show tangible benefits within a short timeframe. However, they may not have the capacity to effect lasting change for the long-term improvement of immigrants' educational outcomes. In the United States, recognition of the limitations of projects with a short-term focus led the U.S. Department of Education to issue guidelines

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74 European Commission, 'ERASMUS+, EU Programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport: About', accessed 20 November 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/about_en#tab-1-2.

75 Underuse of funds due to time it takes to access them has been reported in Denmark and the Netherlands. See Doyen and Lara Montero, *Connecting Europe with Local Communities*.

76 Authors' analysis of Erasmus+ project overviews. See European Commission, 'ERASMUS+ and Former Programmes Projects Overview', accessed 9 November 2016, http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-projects-compendium/.

77 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *2015 Annual Work Programme for the Implementation of 'Erasmus+'*, 26.

78 Sugarman, Morris-Lange, and McHugh, *Improving Education for Migrant-Background Students,* 28.

79 Authors' analysis of Erasmus+ projects overview. See European Commission, 'Erasmus+ and Former Programmes Projects Overview.'

in 2016 that all professional development programmes must be part of larger, sustained initiatives.[80] A similar revolution in the way funding is allocated has not happened in Europe. However, AMIF's December 2016 call for proposals on the topic of the integration of third-country nationals is designed to support partnerships to help innovations scale—a promising step towards addressing this gap.

3.   Bureaucratic Processes Hinder Responsiveness of Funding

European funding is also not well structured to support municipalities dealing with unexpected educational challenges. For instance, while AMIF is intended to help alleviate unexpected integration challenges and plug gaps in national funding, municipalities are not listed as eligible direct recipients of grants from this programme.[81] AMIF reserves 12 per cent of its budget for EU actions and emergency projects, but the majority of such projects in the 2014–15 period have been conducted by national ministries and focus on border control and reception.[82] As a result, cities have little choice but to wait for funding to trickle down through national authorities, leading to significant up-front costs while awaiting reimbursement, and limited flexibility to respond to unexpected challenges. The aforementioned December 2016 AMIF call for proposals also takes a step toward addressing this issue, since it calls for the creation of multistakeholder partnerships that include municipalities as participants (albeit still led by national stakeholders).[83]

4.   Barriers to Data Collection and Sharing

Good data sharing is critical for a number of reasons. Reliable data can help to identify specific disadvantages affecting students in order to develop systematic, evidence-based solutions as opposed to ad-hoc programmes.[84] It can also inform policymakers about the levels and types of student need, making it possible to shift appropriate resources and shape broader policy agendas.

Municipalities may be best placed as the focal point of data collection and sharing efforts, as some cities, such as London, are already collecting data about their immigrant communities outside of the education system in order to monitor equality gaps between minority and majority populations.[85] Cities also have the capacity to coordinate between numerous schools within their jurisdictions, while covering geographic areas manageable enough in size that collection can be done systematically and using well established coordination channels.[86] But many municipalities lack competence over educational quality assurance, leaving them unable to collect critical data on the background or educational needs of students, or the success of various education initiatives.[87]

80   U.S. Department of Education, *Non-Regulatory Guidance Title II, Part A*: *Building Systems of Support for Excellent Teaching and Leading* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 2016), 11, www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiipartaguidance.pdf.

81   EUROCITIES, *Refugee Reception and Integration in Cities*, 16.

82   European Commission, 'Direct Award of Action Grants to Provide Emergency Assistance'; European Commission, 'Asylum Action Grants: Call for Proposals 2014' (list of awarded projects, accessed 9 December 2016), https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/asylum-migration-integration-fund/union-actions/docs/asyl_list_of_awarded_projects_2014_en.pdf.

83   European Commission, 'Research & Innovation, Participant Portal—TOPIC: Integration of Third-Country Nationals', accessed 17 January 2017, http://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/amif/topics/amif-2016-ag-inte-01.html.

84   McHugh and Sugarman, *Transatlantic Symposium Report*; Sugarman, Morris-Lange, and McHugh, *Improving Education for Migrant-Background Students.*

85   See EUROCITIES, *Cities and Migrants.*

86   European Commission, 'Country Report The Netherlands 2016, Including an In-Depth Review on the Prevention and Correction of Macroeconomic Imbalances' (staff working document 87 final, 26 February 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/cr_netherlands_2016_en.pdf; Katz, Noring, and Garrelts, 'Cities and Refugees'.

87   See Table 1 of this report.

EU level decision-making may also be constrained by the failure to engage local governments in a data collection and monitoring role. While the annual Education and Training Monitor uses data from Eurostat and the OECD to encourage Member States to work towards education benchmarks, this data may be too macro to permit the closer study of successful education initiatives that is needed to establish how they may be replicated and scaled.[88]

5.   Lack of Municipal Participation in Sharing Platforms

EU platforms for sharing best practices are, in theory, excellent vehicles for municipalities across Europe to discuss what works in education, and for municipalities more experienced with immigration and integration to guide others newer to these issues. While a host of networks supported by the European institutions exist to encourage sharing in the realm of integration (e.g., EU Urban Agenda Partnerships, European Migration Network, European Website on Integration, EUROCITIES, and URBACT), these do not explicitly address education, creating the risk that education and other integration issues will be kept in separate policy silos. Moreover, education-specific platforms routinely overlook municipalities. For example, the platform EPALE, which promotes adult education, has a membership of 518 organisations, 92 of which are government organisations, but only three of which represent local governments.[89]

Education-specific platforms routinely overlook municipalities.

Similarly, European level programmes to conduct research and establish practice guidelines are often directed at actors either above or below the municipal level. Programmes such as the European Platform for Investing in Children and the European Semester (through which the European Commission makes annual country-specific recommendations) focus their research on developments at the EU Member State level, without providing analysis, performance targets, or guidelines for municipalities.[90] Meanwhile, the training platforms promoted by the European Union, such as the European Toolkit for Schools, aim to share training programmes and techniques directly between educators.[91]

6.   Absence of Bottom-Up Feedback Mechanisms

Several countries, including Germany, Italy, and Spain, have standing committees for feedback and joint decision-making between the regional and national level.[92] However, few opportunities exist for municipalities to feed information up to these higher levels of government.[93] In Germany, it has been noted that a direct vertical line of communication from municipalities to the federal government would greatly improve the efficiency of immigrant reception and integration overall.[94]

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88 European Commission, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, *Education and Training Monitor 2016*.
89 European Commission, 'Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe: Organisations', accessed 1 December 2016, https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/organisations.
90 European Commission, Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, 'European Platform for Investing in Children', accessed 9 December 2016, http://europa.eu/epic/about/index_en.htm; European Council, 'European Semester', updated 16 January 2017, www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-semester/.
91 School Education Gateway, 'Background to the European Toolkit for Schools'.
92 Eurydice country reports for Germany, Spain, and Italy, available at European Commission, 'Eurydice—Countries: Description of National Educational Systems'.
93 Nusche, Wurzburg, and Naughton, *OECD Reviews of Migrant Education: Denmark*, 33.
94 Katz, Noring, and Garrelts, 'Cities and Refugees'.

Municipalities are also limited in their ability to influence the EU education agenda, as they are absent from several multilevel coordination bodies. For example, the Strategic Framework for Education and Training 2020 (ET 2020) draws together experts from the Commission, national policymakers from Member States, and international organisations to discuss current challenges. However, these working groups do not include any representatives from local government.[95]

Moreover, across EU initiatives, most exchange of best practices is organised around academic themes, while crucially neglecting the sharing of best practice for system structure and organisation. Where this theme is addressed, for instance in the ET 2020 2016–18 Working Group on Schools, discussions do not include municipalities.[96]

IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The European institutions frequently engage national governments to support education initiatives, obtain information about the state of their education systems, and help set the EU agenda. However, these same bodies routinely overlook a crucial link in the problem-solving chain: local government. The following recommendations can be used to form an action plan for the Urban Agenda Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees.

A. Funding

The amount of EU funding for education that reaches the local level is small. Bureaucratic processes limit the ability of cities to use funding to alleviate short-term challenges, while the siloed nature of different pots of funding (each with their own rules, reporting requirements, timeframes, and target groups) undermines efforts to support innovative whole-place and multi-agency services such as two-generational or co-located services. Moreover, funding tends to be awarded to new, innovative small-scale projects instead of to efforts to sustain or scale those that have been proven to work or to help transform services at the city level.

To improve the flexibility of funding for localities' education needs, the Urban Agenda Partnership could consider:

- advocating for a portion of Erasmus+ funding to be reserved for municipalities and/or for public service transformation (instead of for use by individual initiatives);

- devising methods for local services to combine different streams of funding (for instance from AMIF, ESF, and Erasmus+) to support innovative services that bridge different priorities, such as co-located services that serve adults and children;

- advancing the goal of providing more follow-on funding for existing practices that need support to grow; and

- campaigning for the introduction of 'rapid response' funding that local governments could apply for and use to meet emergency needs in a much shorter timeframe than traditional funding mechanisms allow.

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95   European Commission, *Education and Training 2020: Working Group Mandates 2016–2018* (Brussels: European Commission, n.d.), http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/strategic-framework/expert-groups/2016-2018/et-2020-group-mandates_en.pdf.

96   Ibid.

B.   Coordinating and Convening

Platforms for sharing best practices often operate at a superficial level, giving local governments the chance to share small-scale innovations while refraining from expanding to a deeper level of policy influence or a rigorous evaluation process. Many of the most effective changes to education policy (such as on workforce training, curricula, and ability streaming) have to be made at a higher level of government. Giving cities a vehicle to influence this agenda would allow for heightened coordination and the more rigorous sharing of lessons gained at the local level (for instance, on classroom innovations and the organisation of the school day).

The Urban Agenda Partnership could therefore consider:

- supporting the participation of local partners in formal EU policy vehicles, such as the ET 2020 working groups;

- encouraging cities to contribute to the European Semester process; and

- making recommendations to countries on the establishment of better national-local coordination structures.

C.   Data and Monitoring

Local demographics often differ widely from those of the country as a whole. Granular, up-to-date data on local populations is essential to good planning for everything from budgetary decisions to targeted policy interventions. Cities are often sitting on high quality data on the distribution of immigrant populations—or are best placed to collect it—but lack the incentive or tools to share it.

To facilitate the improved collection and distribution of data, the Urban Agenda Partnership could consider:

- encouraging cities to evaluate promising local initiatives, including by advocating for additional funding for evaluation;

- supporting data exchange between municipalities (horizontally) and with other levels of government (vertically); and

- developing a standard monitoring instrument that cities throughout Europe could use to evaluate the impact of integration initiatives over time.

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