

SIRIUS WATCH 2026

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Bridging the Gap: Strengthening Language Support and Multilingual Education

Insights from 16 EU Member States

May 2026



Acknowledgements

The SIRIUS Watch 2026 report is produced by the Migration Policy Group (MPG): Mojib Rahman Atal, Integration Policy Analyst (Text & Analysis), and Alexander Wolffhardt, Deputy Director (Project Coordination).

We would like to thank all SIRIUS national partners listed below for their valuable work in identifying efforts and practices related to migrant education in their respective countries. This report would not have been possible without their contributions.

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Atal, M. R. (2026). *Bridging the gap: Strengthening language support and multilingual education - Insights from 16 EU Member States*. SIRIUS Watch Report 2026. Migration Policy Group.



About SIRIUS

SIRIUS is the international Policy Network on Migrant Education, active since 2012 and co-funded by the European Commission. Its overall objective is to support leading education policy debates with evidence by analysing and co-creating knowledge on the main challenges and policy approaches for inclusive education in Europe and by mobilising migration and education policy stakeholders and building the capacity of migrant and grassroots education initiatives. SIRIUS Watch is one of the network's tools for achieving this objective. It monitors and informs policy development and implementation at different governance levels in the field of inclusive education, with a focus on migrant and refugee learners.



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Co-funded by the European Union

Executive Summary

Across Europe, increasing linguistic and cultural diversity in schools has intensified the need not only for comprehensive education policies, but for their consistent and effective implementation. This report examines approaches to comprehensive language support and teacher preparation in 16 selected European education systems, with particular attention to policies that strengthen both the language of instruction and learners' first or family languages. Building on previous SIRIUS work, this report focuses on both policies and their implementation, examining how they operate in practice across education systems.

The findings show that most assessed education systems recognise the importance of strengthening proficiency in the language of instruction. Therefore, several education systems, including **Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia** and **Spain (Catalonia)**, have established frameworks for language support, including preparatory classes, additional language instruction, and targeted programmes for newly arrived students. However, in practice, the availability, duration, and quality of such support vary significantly across regions, schools, and student groups, often depending on local capacity rather than guaranteed national entitlements.

The report also highlights that, while policy discourse increasingly recognises the value of linguistic diversity, structured support for migrant learners' first or family languages remains limited, fragmented, and often dependent on extracurricular or project-based initiatives. In most countries, support for these languages is optional, extracurricular, or dependent on local initiatives rather than integrated into mainstream education systems. Yet maintaining and developing first languages is widely recognised as beneficial for cognitive development, identity formation, well-being, and the acquisition of additional languages.

A shortage of qualified language teachers continues to affect the quality and sustainability of language support programmes, and teacher preparation for multilingual classrooms remains uneven. Training in second-language pedagogy, multilingual education, and intercultural competence is frequently optional rather than systematically embedded in teacher education programmes.

Overall, the findings suggest that while European education systems increasingly acknowledge the importance of inclusive and multilingual education, stronger institutionalisation of language support policies, teacher training, integration of migrants into the teaching workforce, and recognition of linguistic diversity is required to ensure equitable educational opportunities for migrants and migrant learners across Europe.

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List of Acronyms

- **BAMF** – Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Germany)
- **CASNAV** – Centres Académiques pour la Scolarisation des Nouveaux Arrivants et des enfants du Voyage (Centres for Academic Support for Newly Arrived Allophone Students, France)
- **CEFR** – Common European Framework of Reference for Languages
- **CIO** – Centres d’Information et d’Orientation (France)
- **CPD** – Continuing Professional Development
- **DASPA** – Dispositif d’Accueil et de Scolarisation des Primo-Arrivants (Belgium, French Community)
- **DEL F** – Diplôme d’Études en Langue Française (Diploma of French Language Studies)
- **EAL** – English as an Additional Language
- **EANA** – Élèves Allophones Nouvellement Arrivés (France)
- **EAF C** – École Académique de la Formation Continue (France)
- **EILE** – Enseignements Internationaux de Langues Étrangères (France)
- **ELCO** – Enseignement de Langue et Culture d’Origine
- **EMN** – European Migration Network
- **EU** – European Union
- **INVALSI** – Istituto Nazionale per la Valutazione del Sistema Educativo di Istruzione e di Formazione (National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System of Instruction and Training, Italy)
- **IILT** – Integrate Ireland Language and Training
- **ITE** – Initial Teacher Education
- **LIC** – Llengua, Interculturalitat i Cohesió Social (Catalonia, Spain)
- **LCO** – Langues et Cultures d’Origine (Belgium, French Community)
- **MIM** – Ministry of Education and Merit (Italy)
- **MPG** – Migration Policy Group
- **NCCA** – National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (Ireland)
- **NGO** – Non-Governmental Organisation
- **OECD** – Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- **OKAN** – Onthaalonderwijs voor Anderstalige Nieuwkomers (Belgium, Flemish Community)
- **OLC** – Ouverture aux Langues et aux Cultures (Belgium, French Community)
- **PEE** – Plans Educatius d’Entorn (Catalonia, Spain)
- **PLNM** – Português Língua Não Materna (Portuguese as a Non-Native Language)
- **POD** – Primary Online Database (Ireland)
- **P-POD** – Post-Primary Online Database (Ireland)
- **PPLI** – Post-Primary Languages Ireland
- **PSAK** – Primary School Assessment Kit (Ireland)
- **SET** – Special Education Teaching
- **SMILE** – Strengthening Migrant Family Integration
- **UNESCO** – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- **UPE2A** – Unité Pédagogique pour Élèves Allophones Arrivants (France)

Key Takeaways

1. Fragmentation remains a defining feature of language support systems.

Language support is present across all assessed education systems, but its delivery is highly uneven and inconsistent. In the absence of clear national standards, provision often depends on local capacity, leading to unequal access and outcomes for learners with similar needs.

2. Assessment systems exist, but need standardisation and alignment.

All countries assess migrant learners upon entry, yet decentralised approaches result in inconsistent placement and support decisions. Assessment, monitoring, and support are often insufficiently aligned, limiting responsiveness to learners' evolving needs.

3. Multilingualism is recognised in policy, particularly at the EU level, but is weakly implemented in practice.

While linguistic diversity is increasingly valued in policy discourse, structured support for first and family languages remains marginal across assessed countries. In most systems, provision is optional, extracurricular, or project-based rather than embedded in mainstream education.

4. Teacher capacity represents a structural constraint within the system.

Teacher training in multilingual education and intercultural competence is frequently optional and uneven. As a result, mainstream teachers are often underprepared to support linguistically diverse classrooms, affecting the quality of instruction across subjects. This shortfall in preparedness is likely to affect educational attainment among migrant learners.

5. Bringing migrants into the teaching workforce across countries is largely ad hoc and underdeveloped.

Most countries rely on document recognition procedures and general supply measures rather than proactive recruitment and structured integration pathways, limiting the contribution of migrant teachers.

6. Data systems are fragmented, limiting evidence-based policymaking.

Although many countries collect data on migrant learners, national data systems are often incomplete, non-comparable, or not publicly available. This constrains effective planning, resource allocation, and evaluation of language support policies.

Policy Recommendations

The following recommendations address the five systemic challenges identified in this report and outline priority actions to move from fragmented provision to coherent and equitable education systems.



1. Reduce fragmentation through national standards and entitlements.

To address uneven provision, education systems should move from localised, project-based approaches to clearly defined national frameworks.

Actions:

- Establish minimum national standards for language support across all schools;
- Guarantee access to support as a universal entitlement based on educational need;
- Ensure provision across all stages of education, including upper secondary level; and
- Maintain flexibility at the local level within a clear national framework.

For promising practices, see: *"Promising Practice – Newcomer Education, the Netherlands"*, p. 29; *"Promising Practice – LIC, Spain (Catalonia)"*, p. 33.

2. Standardise and align assessment, monitoring, and support.

To improve consistency and responsiveness, assessment systems must be better structured and connected to support measures.

Actions:

- Introduce standardised language assessment frameworks aligned with CEFR;
- Move from one-off entry assessments to continuous monitoring systems;
- Ensure assessment results directly inform:
 - placement decisions, and
 - type and intensity of support; and
- Strengthen coordination between schools and education authorities.

For promising practices, see: *"Promising Practice – Monitoring language progress at school level, Croatia"*, p. 17; *CEFR-aligned monitoring systems (e.g., Ireland and Catalonia) (see section: "Monitoring Language Progress"*, p. 17).





3. Institutionalise multilingual education, including first and family languages.

To move beyond symbolic recognition, multilingualism must be embedded in education systems.

Actions:

- Develop national or regional frameworks for first/family-language support;
- Integrate multilingual approaches into:
 - curricula,
 - teaching materials, and
 - school environments;
- Move from extracurricular or project-based provision to stable public programmes; and
- Support schools in using linguistic diversity as a pedagogical resource.

For promising practices, see: *“Promising Practice – Integration of plurilingualism within curriculum, Ireland”*, p. 42; *“Promising Practice – Language-Sensitive Teaching, Belgium (Flanders)”*, p. 48.

4. Strengthen teacher capacity as a core system priority.

Teacher preparedness is central to effective implementation across all dimensions.

Actions:

- Make compulsory in initial teacher education training in:
 - second-language pedagogy,
 - multilingual education, and
 - intercultural competence;
- Expand accessible, continuous professional development for all teachers;
- Provide practical support through:
 - coaching,
 - mentoring, and
 - classroom-based guidance, and
- Develop targeted strategies to recruit and integrate teachers with migrant backgrounds.

For promising practices, see: *“Promising Practice – Keelesamm programme, Estonia”*, p. 27; *“Promising Practice – Language-Sensitive Teaching, Belgium”*, p. 48.

5. Build robust and transparent data systems.

Effective policymaking requires stronger, more coherent data infrastructures.

Actions:

- Establish national data systems that track:
 - assessment outcomes,
 - participation in support measures, and
 - learning progress and transitions; and
- Ensure data is:
 - comparable.

1. Introduction

European education systems are experiencing increasing linguistic and cultural diversity due to migration, mobility, and demographic change. Schools are becoming multilingual environments where learners bring diverse linguistic repertoires, educational experiences, and cultural backgrounds. For education systems, this diversity presents both opportunities and challenges. While diverse and multilingual classrooms can enrich learning environments and foster intercultural understanding, they also require policies and practices capable of supporting students who are still acquiring the language of instruction. In this context, the [SIRIUS Clear Agenda for Migrant Education in Europe](#), introduced in 2014, provides guidance for governments and education authorities on developing more comprehensive and inclusive educational environments.

Language proficiency plays a central role in migrant learners' educational trajectories. Without sufficient command of the language used for teaching and learning, students may struggle to follow lessons, demonstrate their knowledge, or participate fully in classroom activities. Research shows that limited proficiency in the language of schooling can affect academic performance, increase the risk of educational disadvantage, and hinder long-term educational and social integration (see Chapter 3). Providing effective language support is therefore essential for ensuring equal access to education and preventing structural inequalities within increasingly diverse school systems.

At the same time, contemporary approaches to education increasingly recognise the importance of multilingualism and linguistic diversity. International organisations such as the OECD, UNESCO, and the European Commission emphasise that supporting learners' first or family languages can contribute to cognitive development, identity formation, and academic achievement (see Chapter 3). Multilingual education policies should seek to balance the need for proficiency in the language of instruction with recognition of learners' linguistic resources and cultural backgrounds.

The European Union's legal and policy framework reflects this commitment to linguistic diversity and equal treatment. The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union affirms respect for cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity and prohibits discrimination based on language (see Chapter 4). In addition, European education policy initiatives encourage Member States to develop inclusive education systems that support multilingual classrooms and ensure equal opportunities for all learners, including those with a migrant background.

Within this context, teachers and educational institutions play a crucial role. Teachers are responsible not only for delivering subject knowledge but also for creating inclusive learning environments where students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds can succeed. Fulfilling this role requires competences in second-language pedagogy, differentiated instruction, intercultural communication, and collaboration with families and communities. However, many education systems still struggle to provide teachers with sufficient preparation and resources to meet these demands.

This report examines how the selected European education systems address these challenges. It analyses policies and practices in 16 countries, including **Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain (Catalonia)**, related to four key dimensions:

1. Assessment of migrant learners' language proficiency;
2. Access to language support in the language of instruction;
3. The promotion of first or family languages; and
4. Teacher preparation for multilingual classrooms.

By comparing approaches across countries, the report identifies common trends, promising practices, and remaining gaps in policy development and implementation.

The report aims to contribute to a better understanding of how education systems can better support migrant learners and promote inclusive multilingual education. By highlighting both strengths and challenges in current policies, the report seeks to inform policymakers, educators, and researchers interested in improving educational opportunities for migrant and multilingual learners across Europe.

Methodology

The SIRIUS Watch 2026 report is based on a structured, collaborative data-collection process involving national experts from participating countries. A standardised questionnaire was developed as the primary data-collection tool to ensure comparability and consistency across national contexts. The questionnaire consisted of five sections and a total of 24 questions (Annex I). These sections covered: (1) assessment of language proficiency, (2) access to language support, particularly regarding the language of instruction, (3) measures aimed at strengthening and promoting first or family languages, (4) teacher-related aspects including qualifications and capacity, and (5) innovative and promising practices, which aimed to capture relevant initiatives and examples. A final section invited national experts to describe the methods they used for data collection at the country level.

The data-collection period ran from the end of October 2025 to 9 January 2026, with a data cut-off date of 31 December 2025. During this time, the questionnaire was distributed to national country experts, who were responsible for compiling and submitting the required information. To complete the questionnaire, experts employed a mixed-methods approach, including desk-based literature reviews and semi-structured interviews with relevant stakeholders, including public authorities, practitioners, and subject-matter experts.

Once completed, the questionnaires were submitted to the coordinating research team at the Migration Policy Group (MPG). The research team conducted a thorough review of all submissions, performing consistency checks and identifying any ambiguities or gaps in the data. Where necessary, follow-up communication with national experts was undertaken to clarify responses and obtain additional information.

Following this validation process, a draft version of the report was prepared and shared with national experts for a final review. This step aimed to ensure the accuracy of the information presented, as well as to avoid duplication or misinterpretation of data. Feedback received during this stage was incorporated into the final version of the report.



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2. Assessing Language Proficiency



Assessing the language proficiency of migrant learners upon arrival is crucial for ensuring equitable access to education and effective learning pathways, as early assessment enables education providers to place learners in appropriate programmes and levels of support, thereby preventing both unnecessary remediation and premature placement in mainstream education without sufficient linguistic preparation (OECD, 2019). Moreover, early language assessment is likely to support the development of individualised learning plans and the efficient allocation of resources, including targeted language instruction, bridging courses, and literacy support. Aligning assessments with recognised frameworks such as the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) is likely to promote more transparency, facilitate the portability of skills, and support continuity across education and training systems (Council of Europe, 2020).

2.1 Language Assessment upon Entry

Migrant learners' language skills are assessed upon entry into education in all assessed education systems. However, there are variations in the type of assessment. In the following selected cases, for example, in **Belgium**, the assessment is a structurally embedded practice in both the Dutch-speaking and French-speaking education systems, although its organisation and level of standardisation vary across Communities and educational levels. In the Flemish system, language assessment in primary education is systematic but largely decentralised at the school level, where schools evaluate Dutch proficiency within their language policy to determine the need for additional support, while in secondary education, the process is more formalised through the reception programme (*Onthaalonderwijs voor Anderstalige Nieuwkomers*, OKAN). In the French-speaking system governed by Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, newly arrived students are assessed to determine their French proficiency and possible placement in reception structures (e.g., *Dispositif d'Accueil et de Scolarisation des Primo-Arrivants*, DASPA). Overall, in both Communities, entry assessments play an important role in determining placement and access to language support, although practices are generally more standardised in secondary education and remain more school-dependent in primary education.

In **Croatia**, the assessment of migrant or foreign-language students' proficiency in Croatian is a formal requirement conducted before or upon their inclusion in mainstream education. The evaluation, carried out by a professional body (schools) within the educational institution, determines the student's level of Croatian language knowledge and informs placement in the appropriate type and level of schooling near the student's residence. Students with insufficient language skills are entitled to preparatory Croatian language classes, which schools are legally required to provide and which typically consist of around 70 hours of instruction during the cycle (students may be required to attend multiple cycles per year if necessary).

Supplementary classes are organised after completing preparatory classes if students still have difficulties understanding the language, for one or two hours per week over the course of a year, with prior approval from the ministry.

In **France**, migrant learners' language skills are assessed as a mandatory step upon entry into the education system, as established by a 2012 circular from the French Ministry of National Education. The initial assessment is carried out under the responsibility of the CASNAV (Centres for Academic Support for Newly Arrived Allophone Students), although procedures may vary by department. In primary education, the school or a CASNAV representative usually conducts the reception and language assessment, while in secondary education, reception is generally organised by the Information and Guidance Centres (CIO) before CASNAV supervises or conducts the evaluation. In some departments, such as Hérault and Gard, specialised CASNAV reception centres manage the entire intake process. Regardless of whether the assessment has already taken place, the inclusion of the student in schooling remains mandatory.

In **Germany**, primary education students take a mandatory test one year before school entry that also assesses German language skills. For children entering the education system after grade one, the results largely determine the type of school the child is recommended to attend or whether they are placed in an integration/transition class before entering regular school. However, all of this varies significantly across regions. In **Ireland**, migrant learners' language skills are assessed upon entry into the education system. Primary schools typically use the Primary School Assessment Kit (PSAK) for EAL to establish an initial language proficiency benchmark and to inform teachers and, where relevant, EAL and/or special education resource allocations. The PSAK is based on the Integrate Ireland Language and Training (IILT) English Language Proficiency Benchmarks (revised version, September 2003) and is structured around three proficiency levels (1, 2, and 3). At the post-primary (secondary) level, schools commonly use the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment's *EAL Post-Primary Assessment Kit*. This resource is aligned with CEFR bands to identify a learner's starting point and appropriate interventions, and assessment is recommended across the four domains of reading, writing, listening, and speaking in English. The assessment should also "take into consideration the capabilities of the peer group of native English-speaking students and be appropriate to age and year groupings".

In **Portugal**, all state schools conduct sociolinguistic assessments and placement tests to identify pupils' skills and needs upon entering the education system, including for pupils learning Portuguese as a non-native language. Language proficiency is evaluated according to the CEFR and national guidelines. Students may be placed at Level Zero (complete beginners), A1/A2 (beginner), or B1 (intermediate), based on essential learning outcomes, approved assessment criteria, and teaching monitoring plans. Level Zero is for students with no prior knowledge of Portuguese or those not yet ready for A1.

Across the assessed education systems, assessment is predominantly decentralised. Although some countries, as discussed above, provide national guidance or frameworks, methods are typically determined at the school or local authority level and may include interviews, teacher observations, or diagnostic tests. Consequently, practice varies considerably across schools.

2.2 Type of Assessment

In Bulgaria, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, and Slovenia, speaking, listening, and writing skills are assessed. In Belgium, Finland, France, and Spain (Catalonia), literacy in the first or family language is also assessed, in addition to speaking, listening, and writing. Moreover, in France, mathematical and foreign-language skills are also assessed.

2.3 Mandatory and Optional Assessments

Regarding whether the assessment is mandatory or optional, language assessment is optional in Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Poland, and Spain (Catalonia), while it is mandatory in Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece,¹ Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Slovenia.

2.4 Monitoring Language Progress

In all surveyed countries, language-learning progress is monitored over time. Monitoring commonly includes continuous classroom assessment, periodic language tests aligned with curricula, individual learning plans, and feedback during the transition into mainstream classes. However, the degree of structure and standardisation varies across systems: while some countries implement mandatory frameworks for regular evaluation, others rely more on teacher-based or school-level practices, and in some cases, monitoring is concentrated mainly during the initial integration phase. Consequently, although progress monitoring is generally present across education systems, its frequency, methods, and level of systematisation differ significantly.

For instance, in **Bulgaria**, Ordinance No. 3 of 6 April 2017 stipulates that the school committee appointed to carry out the initial assessment also monitors the progress of minor foreign learners who have sought or been granted international protection. The committee prepares a report for the coordinating team at the end of the academic year and whenever necessary. However, this monitoring is often incomplete in practice, as Bulgaria frequently serves as a transit country and many migrant students leave the school before the end of the academic year. In **Croatia**, monitoring of migrant students' Croatian language learning occurs mainly during the initial preparatory phase. Schools organise 70-hour preparatory Croatian language classes for students with insufficient language proficiency and assess their progress during and at the end of the programme, submitting individual reports to the relevant authorities. If students do not reach sufficient proficiency, the preparatory programme may be repeated. However, once students enter mainstream education, there is no nationally standardised system for ongoing language monitoring, and progress is generally followed informally by teachers within regular classroom practice. In **Spain (Catalonia)**, the language progress of newly arrived students is continuously monitored through assessments aligned with CEFR levels (A1, A2, and B1) that cover both oral and written communication skills. These

¹ Host language assessment upon entry is mandatory only in specialised educational structures for refugees and migrants, like reception classes (3), not in general formal education. Continuous monitoring of language on the other hand is mandatory for all students, as part of the formal curriculum.

assessments enable schools to adjust educational support during the reception process and determine when specific language support can end, once students reach B1 level in all competences.

In **Germany**, language progress is monitored systematically through an obligatory language assessment conducted one year before school entry. For newcomer students in integration classes, regular assessments are also carried out. However, for migrant students in regular classes, language assessment is more dependent on local regulations and school-level practices. In **Greece**, monitoring of Greek as a second language for non-native speakers takes place twice a year, at the beginning and end of the school year, but only for students attending reception classes or intercultural schools. The tests are standardised by the Ministry of Education, though their timing and location are determined by individual schools and are reserved specifically for students in these programmes. In **Ireland**, monitoring of pupils learning English as an Additional Language (EAL) takes place over time through both class-based and increasingly whole-school approaches, particularly in schools with higher numbers of EAL learners, with strong collaboration between language/support teachers and mainstream teachers to support and track progress. At primary level, assessment tools such as the PSAK are used to monitor development across CEFR levels from A1 to C3, with level B1.3 indicating readiness for integration into mainstream teaching in specific skills; however, language support is understood as a long-term process, as conversational fluency may develop within around two years, while academic proficiency can take five to seven years. Progress is tracked using a combination of teacher-designed tasks, pre- and post-assessments, literacy interventions, and standardised tests, with records retained to inform planning, scaffolding, target-setting, and review cycles. At post-primary level, monitoring is typically coordinated by EAL support teachers in collaboration with subject teachers, with an emphasis on whole-school systems, CEFR-informed descriptors, staged progression, and ongoing review.

In **Poland**, foreign children subject to compulsory schooling are covered by the same educational progress monitoring procedures as Polish children. Under the education law, they are subject to compulsory schooling on an equal footing with Polish citizens. This means that their academic progress – including in the Polish language – is assessed according to the general rules applicable in the Polish education system. At the same time, to ensure equal opportunities, they are entitled to additional free Polish-language classes for up to 24 months (which may be extended to 36 months). Their overall educational progress is therefore monitored on the same basis as that of other students, with additional language support provided. State exams are adapted, exempting migrants from Polish-language tests while assessing mathematics and foreign languages (Mapuj Pomoc, 2024; Skorupa-Wulczyńska, 2025). In **Slovenia**, the language progress of migrant students is systematically monitored by the school's Slovene language teacher. The system provides a framework for integration, including individual learning plans, two years of intensive Slovenian courses, and optional delayed grading if it is in the student's interest. However, schools have considerable autonomy: support and integration measures depend on organizational decisions, staff engagement, the number of migrant students, and participation in optional programmes that offer additional assistance. Within this framework, schools may extend language support beyond two years and adjust grading or promotion decisions, including promoting students with one failing grade if they perform well in other subjects.



Promising Practice

Monitoring language progress at school level, Croatia

A promising practice comes from Prva srednja škola Beli Manastir, where a Croatian language teacher, Mirna Glavan Grbeš, used an online virtual collaboration board (Miro) to monitor and support the language development of migrant and other non-native-speaking students. Through tailored materials such as vocabulary cards, a dictionary of everyday communication, and glossaries of subject-specific terminology, students quickly acquired the language skills needed for everyday communication and successful participation in school life. This example also reflects a broader situation in many schools, where effective language support for migrant students often relies on teachers' motivation, creativity, and resourcefulness, as well as on their specific skills in language teaching, for which ongoing professional development and training are essential. In many cases, such initiatives are developed through teachers' voluntary engagement and personal commitment, rather than through formally established programmes, highlighting both the strength of grassroots practices and the need for more systematic support.

2.5 Data Collection on Migrants' Language Proficiency and Support Personalisation

In Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy,² Lithuania, the Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain (Catalonia), data on migrant learners' language proficiency are collected but are not publicly available. In Belgium, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain (Catalonia), these data are used to personalise support or to track systemic outcomes.

For instance, in **Belgium**, both the Flemish Community and Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles use language assessment data mainly to personalise support and placement for migrant learners, with aggregated data serving system-level monitoring of reception programmes. In Flanders, assessments guide additional Dutch support and transition from OKAN to mainstream education, while in the French-speaking system, they inform placement in DASPA and learning trajectories. Individual proficiency scores are not used for public accountability; overall, assessment serves pedagogical and planning purposes rather than high-stakes evaluation, reflecting decentralised governance and school autonomy.

Similarly, in **Croatia**, schools assess migrant students' language skills upon entry to determine eligibility for preparatory Croatian classes and submit individual reports to the authorities.

² It should be noted that in Italy, many aspects of teaching are entrusted to individual local schools, which independently monitor and assess the skills of students with a migrant background.

These assessments are mainly used for administrative and placement purposes, and while teachers may use them to guide classroom support, the data are not aggregated or systematically monitored over time to inform broader policy or track long-term integration outcomes. In **Finland**, data on migrant learners' language proficiency are collected locally by schools for teaching and support purposes, but are not part of a unified national system. Information is documented in school records, individual study plans, and preparatory education files. At the national level, only limited data are gathered through sample-based evaluations and thematic projects by the Finnish Education Evaluation Centre and the Finnish National Agency for Education. In **France**, data on migrant learners' language skills are systematically collected at the school level to guide teaching. Specialised UPE2A (French as a foreign language) teachers communicate the proficiency levels of newly arrived allophone students (EANA) to other teachers through school reports and inclusive personal booklets. Diploma of French Language Studies (Diplôme d'Études de Français, DELF) results provide additional indicators of proficiency. However, there is no formal institutional transmission of this information beyond the school.

In **Germany**, family-language indicators are assessed annually through the Microcensus, and similar data are included in the Socio-Economic Panel. However, there is **no comprehensive statistical record of migrant learners' language competences**, and while some federal states (*Länder*) may maintain regional records, these are typically **not publicly available**. In **Greece**, the results of host language assessment tests are not publicly released. They are kept in school archives and shared with the Education Supervisor at each Local Educational Authority. The results are used to determine the need for reception classes, and the quantified demand is communicated to the Ministry of Education, which then centrally recruits the required number of teachers for Greek as a second language nationwide.

In **Ireland**, data on pupils learning EAL are systematically collected at both school and system levels, serving different but complementary purposes. Schools maintain detailed individual records, including baseline and follow-up assessments, to support planning, monitoring, and applications for additional teaching support. At the system level, the Department of Education and Youth collects pupil-level data through the POD and P-POD systems, which are used for policy development, resource allocation, and funding, with annual returns submitted each October. These datasets include information such as EAL status, nationality, ethnicity, religion, and eligibility for Irish language exemptions, which may be granted to certain migrant pupils meeting specific criteria. In **Italy**, language assessments for migrant students are conducted both locally and nationally through **INVALSI tests**,³ which evaluate comprehension, writing, and reading in Italian. INVALSI, a public research body supervised by the Ministry of Education, compiles annual reports that include data on students' migrant background, geographical distribution, qualifications, and access to different school levels. These assessments provide a systematic national overview of language proficiency and educational outcomes for migrant learners.

In **Lithuania**, there is no strategic or systematic monitoring of migrant learners' language proficiency to assess integration effectiveness, and publicly available data are lacking.

³ The National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System of Instruction and Training (INVALSI) is a research body with legal personality under public law that inherited the legacy of the European Centre for Education (CEDE), established in the early 1970s (National Institute for the Evaluation of the Education System of Instruction and Training [INVALSI], n.d.).

While the Ministry of Education receives some information from the National Education Agency, this data is limited to national assessments or examinations and does not provide a comprehensive overview of language skills for foreign children. In the **Netherlands**, partial data on migrant learners' language proficiency is collected at the school or local level, but there is no national, centralised system to track progress over time. At the national level, data are often not disaggregated by migration status due to privacy regulations and policy decisions. In **Portugal**, schools assess Portuguese language proficiency for students whose first language is not Portuguese and assign them to Portuguese as a Non-Native Language (PLNM) levels based on diagnostic results, ensuring school-level collection of language data for individual tracking. Aggregated data from learning monitoring tests are publicly available, including scores and the number of students needing language support. For example, in basic education, 19.1% of foreign students enrolled in PLNM courses, and in secondary education, 13.8% did so. However, there is no national-level system reporting individual proficiency results, and national statistics focus on enrolment, nationality, or migrant background rather than language proficiency.

2.6 Parental Involvement in Language Learning

In Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain (Catalonia), practices exist to involve migrant learners' parents in the language-learning process.

For instance, in **Belgium**, parental involvement in migrant learners' language acquisition exists in both the Flemish Community and the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, but practices vary by local context, school initiative, and partnerships with integration actors. In Flanders, primary schools integrate parents through multilingual communication, interpreter-supported meetings, workshops on supporting reading at home, and collaborations with civic integration agencies; in secondary-level OKAN, parental guidance is critical during intake and transition to mainstream education. In the French-speaking system, parental involvement is linked to DASPA and FLA (French as a language of learning) structures, with intake meetings, parent-school mediation, and partnerships with community organisations, particularly in Brussels. Across both Communities, interpretation services facilitate communication, and supporting parents' own language learning is increasingly seen as reinforcing children's outcomes. While widespread, practices are not uniformly standardised, and their effectiveness depends on local resources, interpreters, mediators, and school-community partnerships, reflecting a broader view that language acquisition extends beyond the classroom. In **Spain (Catalonia)**, the education system provides institutional reception and family involvement measures, particularly for newly arrived families, including initial interviews, information on school functioning, communication channels with schools, and written materials translated into multiple languages to facilitate school-family relations. These measures are embedded in reception plans, start-of-year regulations, and school coexistence projects to promote integration and educational success. Additionally, family participation organisations such as aFFaC offer multilingual guidance materials and resources that help newly arrived families understand the education system and participate in the educational process. However,

available documentation does not indicate specific programmes directly targeting family involvement in learning the language of schooling, beyond general educational participation (aFFaC, 2024; XTEC, n.d.).

The **Finnish** National Agency for Education provides guidance and support for migrant children, including collaborating with families and recognising pupils' language backgrounds (Finnish National Agency for Education, n.d.). Several notable projects support family involvement and language development, such as Migrant Youth Helsinki, Learning the Language of Participation, SMILE – Strengthening Migrant Family Integration, and the Government Integration Programme 2024–2027, all aiming to enhance integration and participation of migrant children and their families in education (Cities of Service, n.d.; Council of Europe Development Bank, n.d.; Finn Church Aid, n.d.). In **France**, the Opening School to Parents for the Success of Children (OEPRE) programme is implemented locally to support newly arrived non-French-speaking immigrant parents. Its training aims to help parents understand the school system and its expectations, reinforce knowledge of the values of the Republic, and develop French-language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) to engage effectively with schools. This training includes understanding school documents (report cards, timetables, communication books) and participating in discussions, parent-teacher meetings, and community activities. OEPRE is linked to the Ministry of National Education's priority education initiatives and aligns with migrant student reception efforts, encouraging parental participation in neighbourhood associations (Ministry of National Education, 2025).

In **Germany**, several programmes aim to strengthen parents' ability to support their children's language learning. For example, the Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge [BAMF] Parents Integration Course provides language and orientation training specifically for parents (BAMF, n.d.). At the kindergarten level, projects such as Frühstart, Rucksack, and MITsprache involve parents in children's language development. Comprehensive overviews and analyses of these initiatives are available through the German Education Server and research publications (Deutscher Bildungsserver, n.d.). In **Poland**, parents of migrant pupils are increasingly engaged in supporting language learning through various school and community-based initiatives, although participation is voluntary and strongly context- and time-dependent. Examples include the "Welcome Pack for Pupils and Parents", preparatory classes (*oddziały przygotowawcze*) with intercultural assistants, parent-child workshops, family-language clubs, and school-led guidance on home-language support. EU-funded projects like SCHOOLinHUB provide practical tools, songs, rhymes, apps, and gamified activities for children aged 4–7 and their parents, while methods such as JES-PL (Polish as the language of schooling) and initiatives by the Centre for Research on Migrant Education (UJ Kraków) offer structured parent modules and mobile apps for home learning. Overall, these programmes adopt a family-centred approach, combining pedagogical support, cultural integration, and active parental participation (SCHOOLinHUB, n.d.; JES-PL Method, n.d.), but their uptake varies between schools and regions. In **Ireland**, the Irish constitution recognises the family as the primary and natural educator of the child. The Primary Curriculum Framework emphasises partnerships between schools, families, and communities to enrich children's learning, with parental and family engagement actively encouraged. These practices are often more developed in DEIS/urban contexts.⁴ Common approaches include translation and interpretation supports for

4 DEIS is Ireland's programme to address educational disadvantage through additional resources.

enrolment and school-home communication, multilingual notices, digital translation tools, curriculum and assessment materials translated by the NCCA, and induction/orientation meetings for newly arrived families. Some schools also support first-language use and family literacy initiatives. In **Croatia**, a newer initiative comes from the Administration for National Minorities, which launched a support programme for the Ukrainian community of the City of Zagreb, which entails active cooperation with students' families.



Table 1. Assessing Language Proficiency

Assessing Language Proficiency	Type of Assessment	Monitoring Learning Progress	Mandatory or Optional Assessment	Data Collection	Data for Personalised Support	Parental Involvement
Belgium	Speaking, listening, writing, and literacy in the first/family language	Yes, systematically	Optional	Yes, it is publicly available	Yes	Yes
Bulgaria	Speaking, listening, writing	Yes, occasionally	Mandatory	Yes, but not publicly available	Yes	No
Croatia	Speaking and listening	Yes, occasionally	Mandatory	No		Other
Estonia	No unified approach	Yes, occasionally	Optional	No		No unified approach
Finland	Speaking, listening, writing, and literacy in the first/family language	Yes, systematically	Optional	Other	Yes	Yes
France	Speaking, listening, writing, and literacy in the first/family language (math, foreign languages)	Yes, systematically	Mandatory	Yes, but not publicly available	Yes	Yes
Germany	Speaking, listening, writing	Yes, systematically	Optional	Yes, but not publicly available	No	Yes
Greece	Speaking, listening, reading and writing	Yes, occasionally	Mandatory	Yes, but not publicly available	No	No
Ireland	Speaking, listening, and writing	Yes, systematically	Optional	Yes, but not publicly available	Yes	Yes
Italy	Speaking, listening and writing	Yes, systematically	Optional	Yes, and it is publicly available	Yes	No
Lithuania	Speaking, listening and writing	Yes, systematically	Mandatory	Yes, but not publicly available	No	Yes
Netherlands	Speaking, listening and writing	Yes, systematically	Mandatory	Yes, but not publicly available	Yes	Yes
Poland	Speaking, listening and writing	Yes, systematically	Optional	No	No	Yes
Portugal	Speaking, listening and writing	Yes, systematically	Mandatory	Yes, and it is publicly available	Yes	Yes
Slovenia	Speaking, listening and writing	Yes, systematically	Mandatory	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spain (Catalonia)	Speaking, listening and writing, literacy in first/family language	Yes, systematically	Optional	Yes, but not publicly available	Yes	Yes

3. Access to Language Support (Language of Instruction)



Access to targeted language support in the language of instruction is essential for migrant learners' educational inclusion and academic success, because proficiency in the host-country language enables learners to comprehend teaching, participate meaningfully in class, and demonstrate their knowledge across subjects rather than being disadvantaged by limited linguistic skills (OECD, 2019, 2023; UNESCO, 2025). Research shows that a lack of proficiency in the language of instruction can impede understanding of lessons and contribute to poorer academic outcomes, lower engagement, and even behavioural challenges if not addressed through adequate support measures (Bernhofer & Tonin, 2022; Mansour et al., 2024; OECD, 2019; Tanyu et al., 2020). Providing structured language support, such as dedicated language classes, in-class assistance, and tailored instruction, helps migrant learners bridge gaps between their current competencies and the language demands of the curriculum, fostering inclusion and reducing performance disparities with native speakers. Evidence from comparative education research indicates that well-designed language support programmes enhance both academic performance and participation, particularly for newly arrived learners and those with limited exposure to the language of instruction (EMN 2024; Jeon, 2019; OECD, 2019).

Such support also aligns with broader education policy and practice frameworks that emphasise multilingual and inclusive approaches to teaching and learning in increasingly diverse classrooms, recognising language support as a key component of quality and equitable education for all learners (Council of Europe, 2020; European Commission, 2017b). These frameworks stress that developing proficiency in the language of schooling is essential not only for academic success but also for social inclusion, participation, and a sense of belonging in education systems serving migrant and linguistically diverse populations (European Commission, 2017a; OECD, 2023).

3.1 Availability of Language Support

When examining the availability of different types of language support across surveyed education systems, Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, and Spain (Catalonia) appear to offer more comprehensive language support. Croatia, Estonia, France, Greece, Italy, and Slovenia can still improve access to language support by introducing more components, as shown in Table 2.

In **Belgium**, language support for migrant learners is organised through a multi-layered system combining preparatory reception programmes, in-class language support, and complementary local initiatives, with differences between the Flemish Community and the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles education systems. In Flanders, the main structured mechanism is OKAN, an intensive reception programme in secondary education that provides up to one year of Dutch-language instruction before transition to mainstream schooling, while in primary education, pupils are usually integrated directly into regular classes with additional support. In the French-speaking system, reception support is organised through the DASPA, which operates in both primary and secondary education and combines intensive French-language learning with gradual integration. In both systems, language-sensitive teaching, additional instructional support, extracurricular tutoring, and mentoring initiatives, particularly in cities such as Brussels, Antwerp, and Ghent, complement these structures, with variation mainly in the degree of institutionalisation and school-level implementation. In **Bulgaria**, Migrant and refugee children are entitled to additional Bulgarian-as-a-foreign-language instruction delivered outside the regular school timetable for up to 12 months. The support is flexible (individual or group-based), tailored to the child's needs, and follows standardised curricula aligned with European language levels.

In **Finland**, language support for migrant learners combines preparatory education, second-language instruction within mainstream schooling, and complementary support measures. Preparatory classes provide intensive instruction in Finnish or Swedish, gradual integration into mainstream classes, and support across multiple subjects through individual study plans. Once integrated, students may attend Finnish or Swedish as a second-language classes delivered alongside mainstream education. Additional support includes part-time special education adapted to second-language learners, often organised in small groups. Complementary initiatives also exist outside the school system, including language courses organised by NGOs and migrant organisations.

In **Germany**, language support for migrant learners varies across the country's federal states (*Länder*) but generally combines preparatory classes, additional language instruction within mainstream education, and locally driven mentoring initiatives. Preparatory classes are commonly organised for students entering the school system after primary education and usually last one to two years, combining subject teaching with intensive German language learning before or during gradual integration into mainstream classes. In early childhood education, separate support for migrant children is limited, as language training is typically provided to all pupils, while primary and secondary schools often offer additional language support classes. Extracurricular language support is not systematically organised nationwide and depends largely on the involvement of civil society organisations at the local level. Several mentoring programmes support language development and broader integration, including **HIPPY**, **Balu und Du**, **MENTOR – Die Leselernhelfer**, and **Cleverly**, alongside volunteer mentoring initiatives in different cities. Overall, the availability and scope of support measures depend significantly on regional policies and local engagement.



In **Ireland**, language support for migrant learners is primarily delivered through EAL within mainstream education rather than via a dedicated national programme. At both primary and post-primary levels, support combines targeted teaching (withdrawal or in-class) with integration into mainstream classes, temporary EAL allocations for newly arrived pupils, and mainstream Special Education Teaching (SET) resources, addressing EAL needs alongside other learning needs. Whole-school approaches, promoted by Oide – a support service for teachers and school leaders, funded by the Department of Education – encourage language-responsive pedagogy, inclusive classroom strategies, and coordinated planning and assessment across teachers and leadership, reflecting a broader policy of mainstreaming inclusion. At the post-primary level, support extends to examination accommodations, such as permission to use bilingual dictionaries and consideration of language background, to ensure fair access during the transitional period of language acquisition.

In **Lithuania**, language support for migrant learners is relatively flexible and largely organised at the school or municipal level. Schools may establish **compensatory classes** that provide intensive language instruction when at least eight migrant pupils are enrolled, although integration measures can also include individualised support delivered by teachers, social workers, or psychologists, as well as tailored learning tasks for students. Additional Lithuanian language classes can be organised when needed, and some language support is available through minority or second-language schools, including public schools operating in Russian, Polish, Belarusian, Ukrainian, or Jewish educational traditions, as well as private language-based schools. Pupils also receive two hours per week of ministry-funded extracurricular time, which schools can allocate to activities such as language-learning support, particularly where migrant populations are larger, although national data on the use of these hours for language support is limited. Peer and community engagement may also contribute to language integration, as students from grade five onwards complete “social hours” through volunteering or school activities, which can include supporting migrant peers. Overall, the scope and form of language support depend significantly on individual school initiatives and local context.

In **Poland**, language support for migrant learners includes preparatory classes (*oddziały przygotowawcze*), introduced into the education system as a formal support mechanism in 2016–2017 under the new education law. These classes are intended for students with limited knowledge of Polish, difficulties adapting to cultural or educational changes, or those affected by crises such as armed conflicts or humanitarian emergencies. Preparatory classes can be created during the school year if a significant number of migrant students enrol. Since 2022, the **“Mapuj Pomoc Network”** project has mapped preparatory classes for Ukrainian pupils, identifying around 150 units nationwide, mainly in provincial cities (Izdebska-Długosz, 2024; Markowska et al., 2025; Ministerstwo Edukacji Narodowej [MEN], 2024, 2025). These classes combine intensive Polish-language instruction with broader educational support to facilitate integration into mainstream schooling.

In **Portugal**, support for migrant learners includes the provision of PLNM in primary and secondary education. PLNM is a curricular support measure based on diagnostic assessment and differentiated proficiency levels, designed to ensure access to the mainstream curriculum rather than to function as a bilingual model. Educational policies on teaching Portuguese to non-native speakers date back to 2006–2007, but recent reforms, including the **2024 Strategic Plan for Learning Portuguese as a Foreign Language**, aim to expand access and improve effectiveness across different life stages, complementing school-based provision and promoting integration. Digital support has also been developed, notably through the **Ciberescola** platform, which offers interactive online courses and resources tailored to various proficiency levels. Some schools also implement peer mentoring programmes, such as at a School Cluster in Tavira, to support migrant students’ language development and integration, although PLNM implementation still varies by school capacity and local context.

In the **Spanish** education system, **Catalonia** provides multiple language support mechanisms for newly arrived students within an inclusive framework. **Reception classrooms** offer intensive initial instruction in the language of schooling. Students in reception classrooms spend a maximum of 50% of their schooling time there, with the remainder in mainstream classrooms. As teachers assess their progress in linguistic competence, newly arrived students gradually increase their time in mainstream classrooms until they integrate fully. Language support is also embedded within mainstream lessons through curricular adaptations and teaching strategies that allow students to learn the language alongside subject content, acknowledging the linguistic dimension of all subjects. Beyond school hours, **Educational Environment Plans (PEE)** provide out-of-school community activities that reinforce language use and promote social inclusion, such as sports, arts and crafts, music, cultural traditions, or leisure activities. Additionally, institutional **mentoring programmes** for unaccompanied migrant adolescents link volunteer mentors with young people to support social, educational, and linguistic integration; however, these programmes are primarily managed by social services and are not a generalised school-based provision for all migrant students (El Masnou, n.d.; Projectes XTEC, n.d.; XTEC, 2025).



Promising Practices

Keelesamm programme, Estonia

Keelesamm is a government- and EU-funded initiative developed in the context of the transition to Estonian-language education, but its measures are also relevant for newly arrived migrant students (NAMS) and for teachers with a migrant background. The programme aims to expand opportunities for learning Estonian and to improve the quality of Estonian-language instruction. It provides free Estonian-language training for education professionals with different first languages, alongside methodology and didactics training, including integrated language and subject teaching approaches. Keelesamm also develops teaching materials, e-assessment tools, and digital resources to support multilingual learners' acquisition of Estonian. The initiative also offers consultancy services to schools operating in diverse, multilingual settings.

AROÍ Project, Portugal

The **AROÍ Project**, developed at the Coronado and Castro School Group in Trofa under the leadership of António Monteiro, is a collaborative initiative that supports the linguistic and social inclusion of students of foreign origin. Initially created within the framework of Portuguese as a Non-Maternal Language (PLNM), the project has expanded through the involvement of a broad network of PLNM teachers from multiple school clusters. Its core objective is to equip learners, particularly those with some prior knowledge of English or other languages, with essential Portuguese language skills needed for successful participation in education and society. A key strength of the initiative lies in its open-access model, as teaching materials are freely available and can be flexibly adapted by schools and families according to their specific needs (Projeto AROÍ, n.d.). The project promotes linguistic inclusion through Portuguese as a Host Language instruction, multilingual resources, and game-based learning strategies, while curricular inclusion is supported through individualised learning plans, differentiated pedagogies, and close collaboration among teachers. Importantly, the active involvement of families is recognised as a critical success factor, enhancing both learning outcomes and broader integration processes.

3.2 Language Support Delivery

Language support for migrant learners is provided through a combination of preparatory or reception classes, second-language instruction within mainstream classrooms, after-school, online or digital tools or extracurricular programmes, peer/mentoring initiatives, and other complementary activities, as observed in Belgium, Finland, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, and Spain (Catalonia), offering a relatively comprehensive framework for language support.

For instance, in **Poland**, language support for migrant children is primarily provided through school-based programmes mandated by education law, complemented by NGO and community initiatives. Non-Polish pupils aged 7–18 have the right to free additional Polish lessons (2–5 hours per week for up to 12 months), with placement based on a diagnostic language assessment that may lead to mainstream classes, preparatory classes (up to 24 months), or remedial small-group support. Since 2024, intercultural assistants may support schools through translation and cultural mediation. NGOs such as Fundacja Dialog, Fundacja Ocalenie, Polish Migration Forum, and Polish Centre for International Aid also offer Polish-language courses, integration workshops, and peer support, while community initiatives contribute to social inclusion and confidence-building. In **Portugal**, language support for migrant learners is mainly provided through PLNM courses organised by proficiency level (from Nível Zero to B1), usually in small groups or within regular classes when separate groups cannot be formed. Students are grouped by language proficiency rather than school year, and those at higher levels (B2–C1) follow the national Portuguese curriculum with possible additional support. PLNM functions as curricular support to facilitate access to mainstream learning, with gradual integration into regular classes while subject teachers adapt instruction to students' language levels. Schools may also employ linguistic and cultural mediators, promoted under the national migration policy framework, to support language learning and communication with families. Complementary measures include tutoring, mentoring, extracurricular activities, and digital learning tools, such as courses offered by Ciberescola, that support Portuguese language development and educational inclusion (Direção-Geral da Educação, n.d.).

Moreover, countries such as Croatia, Estonia, France, Greece, and Italy have the potential to strengthen their provision by incorporating additional components and expanding the diversity of support mechanisms to ensure more consistent and inclusive delivery across educational levels. In **Croatia**, all migrant learners have the legal right to enrol in school once their status and documentation are verified, with refugees and those with international protection usually enrolled more quickly to support rapid integration. Students are typically placed in mainstream classes while attending preparatory Croatian language lessons (70 hours per cycle) if needed. After the preparatory phase, students may attend one to two hours of **supplementary classes** weekly for a year. Additionally, they can receive **learning support** in Croatian and other subjects as part of the standard school curriculum. Teachers adapt lessons, use informal assessments, and provide extra support until students gain sufficient language proficiency, while after-school and NGO programmes (e.g., Are You Syrious, Jesuit Refugee Service Croatia, “Croatian for Refugees”) offer additional voluntary language and mentoring support. Digital resources like Croaticum or the HR4EU platform offer beginner Croatian courses with instructions in widely spoken languages, and teachers frequently supplement these with online tools, highlighting a combination of legal frameworks and practical, often voluntary measures to effectively integrate migrant learners.

In **France**, support for migrant learners varies by setting. In regular classes, trained teachers (who are rare) can provide translations. In special language classes, students may attend UPE2A (French as a foreign language) for less than 50% of the time. After-school programmes such as *Devoirs faits* offer dedicated time for middle school students to complete homework with guidance, scheduled during the school day according to the hours allocated by the

school. Online or digital tools are available, currently primarily for Ukrainian students, and some high schools or the National Centre for Distance Education (CNED) allow students to study languages not offered in their school, including courses for the baccalaureate exam. International high schools or dual-degree programmes exist, but they are rare.

In **Ireland**, in-class support (co-teaching or team teaching) involves the EAL support teacher collaborating with the class or subject teacher to scaffold tasks, pre-teach vocabulary, and support participation; this approach is strongly promoted in whole-school guidance. Withdrawal (short, focused sessions) is used most frequently for newly arrived students at early proficiency levels, particularly to develop oral language and foundational literacy. Small-group support is also common in both sectors for targeted language objectives and confidence-building. Whole-school, language-aware approaches emphasise that EAL is not “owned” solely by the EAL teacher; rather, mainstream teachers (at primary level) and subject teachers (at post-primary level) retain responsibility for ensuring access to the curriculum.



Promising Practice

Newcomer Education, the Netherlands

A notable good practice from the Netherlands is its comprehensive, multi-level approach to supporting newly arrived students through a combination of structured newcomer education, inclusive school practices, and community-based support. Specialised models such as Taalklassen and ISK (International Transition Class) provide intensive Dutch-language instruction alongside gradual integration into mainstream classrooms, ensuring a strong foundation for language acquisition when transitions are well supported. Complementing this, schools increasingly adopt whole-school approaches that value multilingualism, inspired by initiatives such as Language Friendly School, and invest in language-aware teacher professionalisation across subjects. At the local level, buddy systems and peer mentoring programmes enhance informal language learning and foster social inclusion, while public libraries contribute through multilingual resources and family-oriented activities. Additionally, initiatives such as Docentvluchteling.nl support refugee teachers in re-entering the profession, addressing both labour shortages and diversity in the education workforce. Despite some challenges related to segregation in newcomer settings, the overall model demonstrates how combining targeted language support, inclusive pedagogy, and community engagement can effectively promote both educational success and social integration.

3.3 Duration and Effectiveness of Language Support

The duration of language support for migrant learners varies across education systems and is often linked to learners' progress. In several countries, preparatory or reception programmes typically last around one school year, such as in Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, and Greece, although extensions may be possible in certain cases. In **Spain (Catalonia)**, reception classroom support may last up to 24 months, extendable to 36 months in exceptional situations. In **France** and **Germany**, preparatory language classes generally last one to two years, depending on the learner's progress. Some systems provide support through a fixed number of instructional hours, such as in **Croatia**, where preparatory classes usually consist of around 70 hours per cycle, and a student may be required to attend multiple cycles per year if necessary. Supplementary classes are organised after completing preparatory classes if students still have difficulty understanding the language (1–2 hours per week over the course of a year). In **Poland**, initial additional language support is provided for up to 12 months, with preparatory classes lasting up to 24 months in more complex cases.

The duration of language support is sometimes adjusted based on learners' linguistic development and educational needs. For example, in **Ireland**, the duration of language support for migrant learners varies by individual need, proficiency, and resources, but policy recognises it as a multi-year process. While conversational fluency may develop in about 2 years, academic language can take 5 to 7 years, requiring long-term planning even as formal EAL hours decrease. Support is typically most intensive upon arrival, followed by a gradual shift to mainstream classroom scaffolding with targeted "top-up" support. Although the visibility of EAL provision may diminish over time, responsibility for language development remains embedded across subjects and school years. Language support in reception classrooms for newly arrived students in the Spanish education system in **Catalonia** is designed to be temporary and flexible: students can receive additional linguistic support for up to 24 months and a maximum of 50% of the daily school time, with extensions up to 36 months in exceptional cases to accommodate greater linguistic distance or need, and this is always coupled with progressive integration into mainstream classrooms after monitoring and assessment. The specific duration of support depends on each student's linguistic and educational progress and is reduced or discontinued once sufficient competence to follow the mainstream curriculum is achieved (e.g., CEFR A1–B1).

When it comes to effectiveness, existing language-of-instruction support is generally only partially effective: it consistently enables initial integration and the development of basic communicative language skills through reception classes, preparatory programmes, and immersion or in-class support models, but is significantly less effective in ensuring sustained academic language proficiency and reducing long-term achievement gaps. Moreover, to assess whether the planned support programmes are effective and suitable for adoption or extension, students' language acquisition is evaluated at the individual level rather than at the programme level in Croatia, Finland, France, Italy, and Portugal. While early gains in everyday language are widely reported across countries, learners in most systems continue to face difficulties with academic and subject-specific language after transitioning into mainstream education (e.g., Belgium, Ireland, Germany, Poland). Effectiveness varies considerably depending on school capacity, teacher expertise, funding levels, and the continuity of support

beyond initial reception phases, leading to irregular implementation both within and across national systems. Countries with more integrated, whole-school approaches, such as Finland's continuous immersion model, or more systematically embedded approaches, tend to achieve better outcomes, whereas systems relying on short-term, fragmented, or under-resourced provision, as seen in varying degrees in Croatia, Greece, Lithuania, and Poland, show a more limited impact. Overall, across all assessed contexts, the evidence indicates that language support is beneficial for early acquisition but remains insufficient to ensure equitable long-term educational outcomes for migrant learners.

3.4 Learners' Status and Access to Language Support

Across the education systems examined, migrant learners' legal or migration status generally does not determine access to language support in compulsory education. Access is instead guided by educational need, recency of arrival, and language proficiency, with structured reception or preparatory programmes (e.g., OKAN in Belgium, DASPA in Wallonia) applying objective, status-neutral criteria. However, in some cases, legal status can temporarily restrict access, as in **Germany**, where asylum seekers living in certain accommodation centres (ANKER centres) cannot immediately attend regular schools, thereby limiting their access to formal language support. While formal access is guaranteed in principle, practical barriers such as administrative procedures, housing instability, local school capacity, or geographical availability can affect the continuity and quality of support. In upper secondary or post-compulsory education, admission rules or language requirements may introduce additional limitations, but these are generally linked to educational readiness rather than migration status. Overall, compulsory schooling policies reflect a commitment to inclusive education where all children, regardless of legal status, are entitled to language support, though implementation may vary locally. Similarly, in **Ireland**, access to language support is formally equal for all pupils, regardless of migrant status, but varies in practice due to eligibility criteria, school capacity, and administrative factors. While most migrant groups can access mainstream education, logistical challenges such as limited school places, transport issues, and housing instability can disrupt continuity of support.⁵

3.5 Availability of Qualified Language Teachers

Across the assessed education systems, there is a persistent shortage of qualified language teachers for migrant learners, particularly in urban areas, reception programmes, and secondary education. This shortage is noted in **Belgium, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania**, the **Netherlands**, and **Poland**, while countries such as Bulgaria, **Ireland, Slovenia, Portugal**, and **Greece** have training frameworks but still face regional disparities

⁵ Roma pupils face additional barriers, including irregular attendance, discrimination, and limited prior schooling. To address these challenges, schools and authorities use supports such as the Home School Community Liaison (HSCL) service, the School Completion Programme (SCP), and community liaison initiatives, alongside new community link worker roles under the Traveller and Roma Education Strategy (TRES) 2024–2030, which aim to strengthen engagement between schools, families, and communities.

or placement challenges. Reliance on generalist teachers, short-term contracts, or NGO-supported staff, combined with uneven distribution, high workloads, and limited intercultural training, hampers both the intensity and continuity of language support. Structural measures to increase recruitment, professional development, and resource allocation remain essential to ensure all migrant learners receive effective language instruction. For example, provision of suitably prepared teachers for EAL in **Ireland** is uneven and varies by region, school context, and sector, rather than reflecting a clear systemic shortage. There is no mandatory qualification for teaching EAL or Gaeilge mar Theanga Bhreise (Irish as an Additional Language), and EAL is typically delivered by generalist, support, or subject teachers. While the system supports professional development, expertise is not consistently distributed. Pressures arise in areas with high numbers of migrant learners and at the post-primary level due to timetabling constraints. Overall, outcomes depend more on whole-school, language-aware approaches and coordinated planning than on the presence of formally specialised EAL teachers.

3.6 Qualification of Regular Teachers to Instruct Migrant Learners

Across the education systems examined, regular teachers are generally not adequately prepared to teach students learning in a second language. While initial teacher education increasingly includes components on diversity, inclusion, and language-sensitive teaching (e.g., Belgium, Finland, Spain/Catalonia), systematic and compulsory training in second-language pedagogy is limited or optional in most contexts. This gap is particularly pronounced in mainstream subject teaching, where teachers are expected to support learners who are still acquiring the language of instruction, yet often lack methodological tools, intercultural competences, and academic language-teaching strategies. Countries such as **Belgium, Croatia, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, and Spain (Catalonia)** illustrate this pattern, with professional development opportunities available but unevenly distributed and not universally mandatory.

For example, in **Poland**, regular teachers are generally not specifically trained or adequately prepared to teach students learning in a second language, including migrants and refugees, despite holding general teaching qualifications. While teachers are qualified to teach their subjects, current regulations and university curricula focus on general teaching rather than second-language instruction, intercultural pedagogy, or bilingual education. The growing number of students with limited Polish proficiency, particularly following recent migration trends, highlights the urgent need for systematic teacher preparation in second-language acquisition and multilingual classroom strategies. Although postgraduate courses and professional development opportunities exist, they are voluntary and not universally accessible, leaving many teachers without the specialised skills required to effectively support learners who are still acquiring Polish. Strengthening pre-service and in-service training in second-language pedagogy, intercultural education, and language-sensitive teaching is therefore essential to ensure equitable educational outcomes for all multilingual students in Poland.



Promising Practice

LIC, Spain (Catalonia)

The LIC (Llengua, Interculturalitat i Cohesió Social) service represents a well-structured and territorially integrated good practice that operates in public and publicly funded schools across Catalonia, including Barcelona. It is managed by the Department of Education and Vocational Education of the Government of Catalonia (Generalitat de Catalunya) and, in Barcelona, coordinated through the Consorci d'Educació de Barcelona. The service provides pedagogical guidance to schools on reception, language support, intercultural education, and coexistence, contributing to the coherence of actions at the school level. By combining language support, intercultural education, and social cohesion strategies within a coordinated school-based model, the LIC service strengthens equity and inclusion in compulsory education. Through close collaboration with schools and multidisciplinary educational teams, it promotes inclusive pedagogical approaches, supports students from diverse and newly arrived backgrounds, helps prevent educational exclusion, and contributes to improved educational quality and cohesive school communities.

3.7 Additional Funding or Targeted Resources

Across the countries examined, additional funding and targeted resources are provided to support language acquisition for migrant learners, including teacher training, reception classes, pedagogical materials, and tailored support services. Systems such as those in **Belgium** (Flemish Community and Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles), **Croatia**, **Estonia**, **Spain (Catalonia)**, **Finland**, **Poland**, **Portugal**, and the **Netherlands** allocate funds through structured mechanisms, project-based initiatives, or EU-supported programmes. Overall, while professional development opportunities and culturally responsive teaching materials are increasingly available, participation is often voluntary, temporary, or project-based. Ensuring systematic, sustainable, and centrally coordinated funding for both teacher preparation and learner support remains critical to provide equitable and effective language instruction for all migrant students. The effectiveness of these supports depends on school-level capacity, regional disparities, and teacher availability. Ensuring systematic, sustainable, and centrally coordinated support for both teacher preparation and learner outcomes remains essential to provide equitable and effective language instruction for all migrant students.

In **Ireland**, support is primarily delivered through staffing allocations and school-profile-based resourcing rather than through ring-fenced per-pupil grants. At the primary level, targeted resources include temporary EAL teacher allocations, most notably via the Prim-EAL process, and consideration of high concentrations of pupils with EAL needs alongside core Special Education Teaching (SET) allocations. At the post-primary level, additional teaching posts can be allocated through sector-specific staffing circulars, subject to demonstrated need, timetable feasibility, and staffing capacity.

Table 2. Access to language support (language of instruction)

Access to Language Support (Language of Instruction)	Availability of Language Support	Delivery Mode	Duration	Effectiveness	Legal Status Affects Access to Language Support	Availability of Qualified Language Teachers	Qualification of Teachers to Instruct Migrant Learners	Responsible Unit	Funding
Belgium	Preparatory classes, second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, peer/mentoring programme, and other	In regular classes, in special language classes, after school or tutoring, by a language assistant, online or digital tools, other	Depends on learner's progress	Partially	No	No	No	Local government, regional government, and non-government actors	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services, other
Bulgaria	After-school or extracurricular programme	In special language classes, after school or tutoring	Less than one year	Partially	No	Yes	Yes	Regional government, national government	Recruiting and training language teachers
Croatia	Preparatory classes; second-language instruction to a certain extent integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programmes	In regular classes, in special language classes, online, or digital tools	Depends on learner's progress	Yes, students' language acquisition is evaluated	No	No	No	National government, local government, regional government	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials
Estonia	Second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, an after-school or extracurricular programme, or peer/mentoring programme	In regular classes, in special language classes, online, or digital tools	Depends on learner's progress	Partially	No	No	No	Local government, national government	Recruiting and training language teachers

Table 2. Continued.

Access to Language Support (Language of Instruction)	Availability of Language Support	Delivery Mode	Duration	Effectiveness	Legal Status Affects Access to Language Support	Availability of Qualified Language Teachers	Qualification of Teachers to Instruct Migrant Learners	Responsible Unit	Funding
Finland	Preparatory classes, second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, peer/mentoring programme, and other	In regular classes, in special language classes, after school or tutoring, by a language assistant, online or digital tools, other	Depends on learner's progress	Yes, students' language acquisition is evaluated	No	No	No	Local government, national government	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services, other
France	Preparatory classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, other	In special language classes, after school or tutoring, online or digital tools	1–2 years	Yes, students' language acquisition is evaluated	No	Yes	No	Regional government	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services
Germany	Preparatory classes, second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, Peer/mentoring programme, other	In special language classes, after school or tutoring, online or digital tools	Depends on learner's progress	Partially	Yes	No	No	Local government, regional government	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services
Greece	Preparatory classes, second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes	Second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, online or digital tools, other	1–2 years	Partially	No	Yes	No	National government	Recruiting and training language teachers, other

Table 2. Continued.

Access to Language Support (Language of Instruction)	Availability of Language Support	Delivery Mode	Duration	Effectiveness	Legal Status Affects Access to Language Support	Availability of Qualified Language Teachers	Qualification of Teachers to Instruct Migrant Learners	Responsible Unit	Funding
Ireland	Second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes	Second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes	Depends on learner's progress	Yes	No	Yes	No	National government	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services
Italy	Second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or tutoring, by a language assistant	In regular classes, after school or tutoring, by a language assistant	Depends on learner's progress	Students' language acquisition is evaluated	No	No	No	Local government, national government	Other
Lithuania	Preparatory classes, second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, peer/mentoring programme, other	In regular classes, in special language classes, online, or digital tools	Depends on learner's progress	Partially	No	No	No	Local government, regional government, national government	Recruiting and training language teachers,
Netherlands	Preparatory classes, second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, or other	In regular classes, in special language classes, after-school tutoring, online, or digital tools	1–2 years	Partially	It depends on which group they belong to	No	No	Local government, National government	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services, other

Table 2. Continued.

Access to Language Support (Language of Instruction)	Availability of Language Support	Delivery Mode	Duration	Effectiveness	Legal Status Affects Access to Language Support	Availability of Qualified Language Teachers	Qualification of Teachers to Instruct Migrant Learners	Responsible Unit	Funding
Poland	Preparatory classes, second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, peer/mentoring programme	In regular classes, in special language classes, after school tutoring, by a language assistant	Depends on learner's progress	Partially	No	No	No	Local government, regional government, national government, non-governmental actors (civil society & NGOs)	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services, other
Portugal	Preparatory classes, second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, peer/mentoring programme	In regular classes, in special language classes, after school tutoring, by a language assistant, online and digital tools, other	Depends on learner's progress	Students' language acquisition is evaluated	No	No	No	National government, non-governmental actors (civil society & NGOs)	Developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services
Slovenia	Second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, peer/mentoring programme	In regular classes, in special language classes, after-school tutoring, online, and digital tools	Depends on learner's progress	Partially	Yes	Yes	Yes	National government	Recruiting and training language teachers
Spain (Catalonia)	Preparatory classes, Second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes, after-school or extracurricular programme, peer/mentoring programme	In regular classes, in special language classes, after-school tutoring, by a language assistant, online, and digital tools	Depends on learner's progress	Partially	No	No	No	Local government, regional government	Recruiting and training language teachers, developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials, providing tailored support services

4. Strengthening and Promoting First/Family Languages



Strengthening and promoting first and family languages directly contributes to inclusive integration, social cohesion, and respect for the human rights principles embedded in the European Union’s legal and policy framework. The EU recognises linguistic diversity as a fundamental value and attaches importance to the protection of minorities and their languages as an integral part of this diversity (European Commission, n.d.; European Parliament, 2025). Linguistic diversity is framed not only as a cultural asset but also as a component of equality, inclusion, and democratic participation within the Union (European Union, 2024).

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union further enshrines linguistic diversity and minority protection. Article 22 states that “the Union shall respect cultural, religious and linguistic diversity”, thereby providing a clear legal basis for recognising and valuing family and heritage languages, including those spoken by linguistic minorities and migrant communities (European Union, 2012). In addition, Article 21 of the Charter explicitly prohibits discrimination on grounds including language and membership of a national minority, reinforcing language as a protected characteristic within the EU’s fundamental rights framework (European Union, 2012).

In its language policy, the EU emphasises that respect for linguistic diversity extends beyond the official EU languages and includes support for regional, minority, and other languages spoken within its territory. The EU works with Member States to protect linguistic minorities, notably by aligning its approach with the Council of Europe’s European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which serves as a key framework for safeguarding historical and lesser-used languages (European Parliament, 2025; Council of Europe, n.d.).

4.1 National or Regional Policy Promoting First/Family Languages

Across the assessed countries, the promotion of migrant learners’ first or family languages varies widely, with most countries prioritising the language of instruction while treating home-language support as optional or complementary. In countries such as **Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Slovenia,** and the **French-speaking Community of Belgium**, some official frameworks exist that recognise and, in some cases, structurally support first-language maintenance, often through elective classes, after-school programmes, co-financed initiatives, or local school capacity and resources. In the Flemish Community of **Belgium, Croatia, Spain (Catalonia), the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal,** and **Italy**, policies largely focus on the acquisition of the language of instruction, with first-language support either absent, limited to NGO or community projects, or dependent on voluntary school-level implementation.

Some historical or bilateral programmes, such as ELCO in France or minority-language provisions in Poland, offer structured options, but these are usually targeted, optional, or outside the mainstream curricula.

Finland has established policy frameworks that support the development of pupils' first or home languages, including those of migrant origin, although such provision is generally encouraged rather than mandated. The recognition of pupils' own languages is embedded in the national core curriculum, which emphasises multilingualism and acknowledges the role of home languages in learning and identity formation. National education policies recognise students' linguistic backgrounds as an important educational resource and encourage schools to support multilingual development.

Within this framework, several measures aim to strengthen migrant learners' linguistic resources and integrate them into educational practice. These include mother-tongue instruction, subsidised home-language teaching, language-aware whole-school strategies, and broader policy initiatives promoting plurilingualism. Education in a pupil's mother tongue is understood to support active plurilingualism, foster lifelong language development, and contribute to integration. The "language-aware school culture" is a key element of Finnish policy, in which all teachers share responsibility for recognising linguistic diversity and using students' home languages as learning resources. This approach reflects a broader pedagogical commitment to multilingual education, where supporting first languages is considered complementary to learning the language of instruction and beneficial for academic development, identity formation, and social integration. As reported in the 2025 SIRIUS Watch report, "if a teacher has at least four pupils, they can request to provide instruction in the pupils' mother tongue". Funding can be granted for up to two hours a week in primary and lower secondary education. However, it should be noted that the provision of home-language instruction is not universal and depends on local demand, municipal organisation, and available resources.

In **Belgium**, both the **Flemish Community** and the **Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles** recognise linguistic diversity and the value of pupils' first or family languages, but their policy approaches and levels of institutionalisation differ. In the Flemish Community, policy promotes multilingualism mainly as a pedagogical resource within a framework that prioritises Dutch as the language of instruction. Schools are encouraged to adopt inclusive language policies (taalbeleid), acknowledge pupils' home languages, and use multilingual classroom strategies. However, there is **no system-wide programme for teaching first/family languages, and support is generally indirect and largely dependent** on individual schools, projects, or community initiatives. In contrast, the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles has a **more structured approach**, historically through the *Langues et Cultures d'Origine (LCO)* programmes and more recently through *Ouverture aux Langues et aux Cultures (OLC)*. These allow schools, often in partnership with foreign governments or cultural organisations, to offer classes in pupils' languages of origin either within or alongside the school timetable. Although participation is voluntary and implementation varies, these initiatives constitute a formal policy mechanism for supporting heritage languages. Across both Communities, extracurricular heritage-language courses are often organised by community organisations, and public or school libraries in diverse areas frequently provide multilingual materials. While these measures reflect increasing recognition of linguistic diversity, **the dominant policy objective remains**

mastery of the language of instruction (Dutch or French). As a result, support for first/family languages is generally complementary rather than part of large-scale bilingual education models, with institutionalisation significantly stronger in the French-speaking system than in the Flemish Community.

Ireland has no standalone statutory policy for first or family-language support for migrant learners, but national frameworks and curricula promote linguistic diversity, interculturalism, and plurilingual approaches. The Intercultural Education Strategy (2010–2015) and *Languages Connect* support respect for home languages and the inclusion of heritage languages in schools, while the Primary Language Curriculum (2019) explicitly embeds plurilingualism, encouraging teachers to draw on children’s full linguistic repertoires and use translanguaging and metalinguistic strategies. Practical support occurs primarily through school-level practices, culturally responsive pedagogy, and initiatives such as Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) and the “Say Yes to Languages” programme, which has reached over 1,300 primary schools.

In **Slovenia**, the Ministry of Education supports migrant learners’ first/family languages through the co-financing of *supplementary teaching of mother tongues and cultures* in primary and secondary schools, organised through a formal call for applications. The programme is implemented as an extracurricular activity by schools that voluntarily apply and meet specified conditions (e.g., at least 60 hours of instruction per year, groups of up to 15 learners, and eligibility based on the use of a non-Slovene language in the home, basic proficiency, learner interest, and parental consent). State support is limited mainly to a small per-learner lump sum (e.g., EUR 50 in the 2025/26 school year) intended to cover premises and materials, while teachers’ salaries and travel costs must be financed by partner states, parents, or other sources. Although this represents an official policy instrument, its scope depends on voluntary school participation and external co-funding, and therefore it does not constitute a universal entitlement or a fully state-funded provision of family-language education. By contrast, bilingual education programmes exist only for constitutionally recognised minorities: Italian in the south-western part of Slovenia and Hungarian in the north-eastern part of the country.

The availability of teaching and learning materials in migrant learners’ first/family languages is limited and sporadic. Such materials are not centrally provided by the Slovenian education system; instead, teachers are generally expected to use textbooks prescribed by the country whose language is being taught and may also prepare their own materials aligned with the relevant curriculum. Access to books in these languages in school libraries is rare and largely depends on the initiative of individual school librarians or teachers. Public libraries offer a somewhat wider but still limited selection, particularly in Serbian, Bosnian, and Croatian, which correspond to the languages spoken by a large share of migrants in Slovenia.

Overall, Slovenia lacks a comprehensive policy framework to strengthen the first/family languages of migrant learners. Nonetheless, a limited form of systemic support exists through the regulated possibility of organising supplementary language classes in schools.

In practice, many gaps are addressed by migrant cultural associations, individual initiatives, and engagement from teachers and other educational professionals.

Among the assessed countries, Germany and France stand out as notable case studies.

In **Germany**, the **Bundesländer** are responsible for organising tuition in migrants’ family



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languages, leading to considerable regional differences. Some *Länder* provide classes in schools, while others rely on consulate-organised courses. Availability and language options vary widely, and a minimum number of parents often must request the courses. These programmes mainly occur at the primary level and represent a formal, though regionally dependent, approach to first-language support (Deutsches Schulportal, 2025).

In France, **ELCO courses** were historically offered through bilateral agreements, with teachers from migrants' countries of origin providing classes outside regular school hours. Although ELCO officially ended, the **EILE programme** and other initiatives continue to support first-language learning for students whose families request it. Classes are regulated nationally, often in urban areas, and grades are not counted in the general evaluation, reflecting a structured approach to maintaining heritage languages alongside mainstream schooling.

In sum, while a growing recognition of multilingualism and cultural diversity is evident in policy discourse, systematic, universally accessible, state-funded first-language instruction for migrant learners remains rare, and provision is highly dependent on regional, school-level, or community initiatives.

4.2 Measures and Practices Supporting First/Family Languages

Measures to strengthen migrant learners' first or family languages vary widely in scope, institutionalisation, and accessibility. In some contexts, such as **Finland** and the French-speaking Community of **Belgium**, formal policies, curricula, and government subsidies actively support mother-tongue instruction, integrating it into school practice and promoting plurilingualism. **Ireland's** approach is policy-enabled but practice-dependent: first and family languages are valued within strategies and curricula, but sustained provision relies on local school capacity and resources. In other countries, including **Croatia**, **Spain (Catalonia)**, the **Netherlands**, **Portugal**, and **German Länder**, support is largely extracurricular, community-driven, or NGO-led, with limited systemic provision and reliance on voluntary participation or local initiatives. Resources such as teaching materials, libraries, and after-school programmes exist but are often unevenly distributed. Overall, while recognition of home languages as an educational resource is growing, first/family-language support generally remains complementary to learning the language of instruction, with fully structured, universally accessible programmes being relatively rare across Europe.



Promising Practice

Integration of plurilingualism within the curriculum, Ireland

The integration of plurilingualism into curriculum reform is a promising practice, particularly through the Primary Language Curriculum (2025) developed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). By explicitly recognising children's full linguistic repertoires and encouraging translanguaging, language comparison, and metalinguistic awareness, the curriculum legitimises home languages as learning resources rather than barriers. While implementation varies across schools, this represents a significant shift from deficit-oriented EAL models toward asset-based language education. The Regional EAL teams, established in response to the arrival of Ukrainian refugees in the Irish school system, represent another promising practice. At post-primary level, the work of PPLI constitutes a key infrastructural support for lesser-taught languages, including those spoken by migrant communities. Through curriculum guidance, teacher networks, and alignment with Languages Connect, PPLI enables schools to respond flexibly to multilingual demand, supporting both language maintenance and positive linguistic identity, even where formal first-language instruction is not universally available.

4.3 Local or School-level Initiatives

Across assessed countries, support for migrant learners' first or family languages varies widely. As mentioned earlier, while countries such as **Finland** and the **French-speaking Community of Belgium** provide formal policy support, and many others, including the **Flemish Community of Belgium, Croatia, Spain (Catalonia), the Netherlands, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Germany, Poland, and Slovenia**, practical support largely occurs through local and school-level initiatives. These include extracurricular language classes, heritage-language workshops, multilingual classroom projects, storytelling, and collaboration with NGOs or cultural associations, often embedded in broader intercultural or literacy programmes. Such measures are most common in urban areas with high migrant populations and rely heavily on school leadership, voluntary engagement, and temporary funding, resulting in uneven availability and sustainability. For example, in **Ireland**, practical supports include home-language resources in school libraries, symbolic and cultural practices that normalise multilingualism, and involvement of parents and communities in storytelling and cultural activities. At the post-primary level, Post-Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI) provides guidance and teacher support, and aligns with *Languages Connect*, while bilingual dictionaries may be permitted in state examinations to support equitable assessment. Professional learning encourages the use of home languages through translanguaging and plurilingual practices.

Overall, even in the absence of systemic policy, these initiatives seem to help maintain pupils' home languages, but they are insufficient to provide comprehensive first- or family-language instruction, highlighting the need for official policy support and structured programmes.



Promising Practice

Romani–Plurilingual Policy Experimentation, Slovenia

The **Romani–Plurilingual Policy Experimentation**, launched in March 2022 within the framework of the Council of Europe language policy programme, applied the principles of plurilingual and intercultural education to strengthen the educational inclusion of Roma pupils in primary schools in Greece, Slovakia, and Slovenia (Romani – Language Policy Programme). The initiative demonstrated that multilingual education is both feasible and beneficial, with positive impacts on students, teachers, families, and local communities, while also emphasising the importance of listening to students' voices in shaping inclusive school practices. The project was implemented intensively in four participating schools in Slovenia: Janka Padežnik Primary School in Maribor, France Prešeren Primary School in Črenšovci, Leskovec Primary School, and Fran Metelko Primary School in Škocjan. Although the activities were carried out in a highly systematic manner during the project period, continuation may vary in intensity now that the project has concluded, even though some schools had already engaged in similar practices beforehand. The Educational Institute of Slovenia plans to integrate the project's experience into future teacher training programmes linked to the implementation of new curricula that incorporate plurilingual and intercultural approaches. A project video documents both the broader context of Roma inclusion and the concrete school-level activities developed within the initiative (Ministrstvo za vzgojo in izobraževanje, 2025).

Table 3. Strengthening and promoting first/family languages

Strengthening and Promoting First/Family Languages	National or Regional Policy	Existing Measures	Local or School-level Initiative
Belgium	Yes	First/family language is taught as a subject, extracurricular or community-based language programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages, other	Yes
Bulgaria	No	No	No
Croatia	No	Extracurricular or community-based language programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages	Yes
Estonia	Yes	First/family language is taught as a subject, extracurricular or community-based language programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages	Some ad hoc school-level initiative
Finland	Yes	First/family language is taught as a subject, bilingual education programmes, extracurricular or community-based language programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages, other	Yes
France	No	Availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages	Yes
Germany	Yes	First/family language is taught as a subject, extracurricular or community-based language programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, other	Some ad hoc school-level initiative
Greece	No	Extracurricular or community-based language programmes,	Yes
Ireland	No	First/family language is taught as a subject, extracurricular or community-based language programmes, libraries offer books in first/family languages	Yes

Table 3. Continued.

Strengthening and Promoting First/Family Languages	National or Regional Policy	Existing Measures	Local or School-level Initiative
Italy	No	Extracurricular or community-based language programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages	Yes
Lithuania	No	First/family language is taught as a subject, extracurricular or community-based language programmes, bilingual education programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages	Yes
Netherlands	No	Extracurricular or community-based language programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages, other	Yes
Poland	No	Bilingual education programmes, libraries offer books in first/family languages, other	Yes
Portugal	No		Yes
Slovenia	Yes	Bilingual education programmes, extracurricular or community-based language programmes, availability of teaching materials in first/family languages, libraries offer books in first/family languages, other	Yes
Spain (Catalonia)	No	Extracurricular or community-based language programmes,	Some ad hoc school-level initiative (please explain)

5. Teachers and Teacher Qualifications



Children and young people with a migrant background may arrive with varying levels of prior schooling, different literacy practices, and unequal familiarity with the language of instruction. This growing heterogeneity is no longer an exception and has become an integral feature of education systems across the European Union.

Without appropriate pedagogical responses, linguistic and cultural differences can translate into educational disadvantage, lower attainment, and reduced participation. Conversely, when diversity is recognised and effectively addressed, it can enhance learning outcomes, foster inclusion, and strengthen social cohesion. Teachers therefore play a decisive role in mediating the impact of migration-related diversity on educational equity and quality (Brion et al., 2025; Dzerviniks et al., 2024; Dockrell et al., 2022; Mäe & Ümarik, 2025).

In this context, it is essential that **teachers are appropriately qualified to work in diverse and multilingual classrooms**. Teacher qualifications must go beyond subject knowledge to include competences in inclusive pedagogy, second-language acquisition, differentiated instruction, and intercultural communication. Educators need to be able to assess learners' needs accurately, adapt teaching strategies, and create supportive learning environments that value pupils' linguistic and cultural resources while ensuring access to the curriculum (Dzerviniks et al., 2024; Volkant & Licandro, 2024).

Initial teacher education and continuous professional development are key instruments for equipping teachers with these competences. Training should prepare teachers to understand how migration experiences and language backgrounds affect learning processes, classroom interaction, and student well-being. It should also support teachers in working collaboratively with families, cultural mediators, and specialist staff, and in addressing unconscious bias and structural inequalities within education systems (Eurydice, 2019; European Commission, 2022; EACEA, 2023).

5.1 Components of Pre-Service and In-Service Teacher Training

When it comes to components included in teacher education, pre-service and in-service training programmes aimed at better preparing teachers for working in diverse classrooms, in Bulgaria, **Estonia, France, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Poland, Slovenia, and Spain (Catalonia)**, various components such as language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, and responsive pedagogy are included in teacher education. While in **Finland**, language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, and responsive pedagogy are included; in **Greece**, differentiated instruction and responsive pedagogy; in **Italy**, differentiated instruction and targeted support for new students; in the **Netherlands**, language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, and responsive

pedagogy; and in **Portugal**, language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, and targeted support for new students.

Overall, while most countries include components to address diversity and multilingual classrooms, the scope, depth, and mandatory nature of these components vary, highlighting differences in how teacher education systems prepare educators to meet the needs of migrant and multilingual learners. For instance, in **Bulgaria**, teacher preparation for linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms is mainly supported through in-service training, often organised by the Ministry of Education, UNHCR, and other organisations. While these initiatives offer practical guidance, they are typically project-based and not part of a unified national framework. Specialised university programmes, such as those at Sofia University and recent Master's degrees in teaching Bulgarian as a second language, provide relevant expertise. However, these remain limited in scale and are not a standard pathway in teacher education.

In **Ireland**, teacher education increasingly addresses diverse and multilingual classrooms, including language-sensitive teaching, differentiation, support for newly arrived learners, and culturally responsive pedagogy, but the provision varies across institutions and schools. Initial Teacher Education (ITE) is regulated by Céim standards, which require preparation in inclusive practice and language-aware pedagogy; however, discrete EAL-focused modules are not mandated, so the depth of training varies. In-service professional development, provided by bodies such as Oide and PPLI, offers seminars, webinars, and school-based support on EAL and intercultural teaching, helping teachers build practical competence despite the absence of mandatory EAL qualifications. Modern foreign-language teachers contribute to multilingual awareness and cross-language transfer, but their role is complementary rather than as EAL specialists. Overall, Ireland's approach sets clear policy expectations for inclusive, language-responsive teaching, but the quality and consistency of preparation depend on CPD participation, school context, and collaboration rather than mandatory specialist pathways.



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Promising Practice

Language-Sensitive Teaching, Belgium

Language-Sensitive Teaching (Taalgericht Vakonderwijs) – Flemish Community: Although not a single programme, the structured promotion of language-sensitive subject teaching (taalgericht vakonderwijs) represents a systemic pedagogical innovation in Flanders. Rather than isolating language acquisition from subject teaching, this approach integrates explicit vocabulary instruction, scaffolding of academic discourse, structured interaction tasks, and visual and contextual supports. Pedagogical guidance services across Flanders have developed extensive toolkits and professional development modules supporting teachers in implementing this approach. It is particularly relevant for schools with high concentrations of multilingual learners, as it supports academic language development across subjects rather than limiting support to Dutch-language classes. This model reflects a shift from viewing language support as remedial to embedding it in mainstream pedagogy.

5.2 Developing Intercultural Competence

Training in developing intercultural competences in teacher education or in-service programmes is mandatory in Belgium, whereas it is **elective** in **Bulgaria, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, and Spain (Catalonia)**. In **Germany, Ireland, Portugal, and Slovenia**, the situation differs. For instance, in Germany, most universities offer related courses, but at some these are voluntary, at others mandatory. In Ireland, it is partly mandatory and partly elective, varying by career stage and school capacity. In **Belgium**, intercultural competence is a mandatory component of ITE frameworks in both the Flemish Community and the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, although the depth of implementation differs across institutions.

In **Finland**, intercultural competence is widely recognised as an important professional quality for teachers; however, it is generally not implemented as a mandatory standalone course across all teacher education programmes. Instead, teacher education typically incorporates themes such as multicultural awareness, intercultural understanding, and inclusive pedagogy within broader pedagogical studies. The extent to which these topics are addressed varies between universities and degree tracks. Consequently, while diversity and interculturality are acknowledged within the overall framework of teacher education, related modules are often offered as elective courses or integrated components rather than compulsory elements of pre-service training (Dervin et al., 2012).

In several other contexts, including **Lithuania** and systems with substantial university autonomy, the inclusion of intercultural training largely depends on the specific university or teacher education programme.

In-service training opportunities related to intercultural competence exist in most countries but are usually voluntary rather than compulsory. This is the case in countries such as **Croatia, Poland, and Spain (Catalonia)**, where teachers can attend seminars, workshops, or professional development courses, often organised by ministries, training agencies, or external organisations. Language teachers and those working with newly arrived or multilingual students tend to have greater access to targeted training in intercultural competences, but structured and consistent training pathways remain limited. Overall, despite growing policy attention to diversity and inclusion, the institutionalisation of intercultural competence training across teacher education systems remains uneven.

In **Ireland**, intercultural competence is a core policy priority in Irish education, as emphasised by the Intercultural Education Strategy (2010–2015). Pre-service teacher training (Céim) integrates intercultural understanding and inclusive practice, though usually within broader coursework rather than as a standalone module. In-service training is voluntary but widely supported through Oide and CPD programmes, with language teachers engaging more explicitly, while additional elective opportunities exist via support centres and professional bodies.



Promising Practice

Teach4Integration, Greece

Teach4Integration is a free, large-scale teacher-training programme in Greece designed to equip educators with the skills to effectively support refugee and migrant students and promote inclusive, high-quality education. Implemented through a partnership among Greek universities, UNICEF, and the Ministry of Education, under the supervision of the Institute of Educational Policy, the programme provides approximately 400 hours of blended learning combining online and face-to-face components. Its curriculum focuses on key areas such as teaching Greek as a second language, managing culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms, offering psychosocial support to students with potentially traumatic experiences, and applying inclusive, differentiated, and digital teaching methods. By strengthening teachers' professional competencies and fostering more responsive and supportive school environments, the initiative contributes to improving educational access, participation, and achievement for refugee and migrant children, while also aligning with broader European efforts to advance integration through education and social inclusion.

5.3 Funding Teacher Training

Across the countries reviewed, responsibility for providing and funding teacher-training programmes is generally shared between national or regional education authorities and higher education institutions. ITE is typically delivered by universities or accredited higher education institutions and funded mainly through public budgets. This model can be observed in **Belgium, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, and Portugal**, where ministries of education or regional authorities define qualification standards and provide funding, while universities design and implement the programmes. In decentralised systems such as those in **Belgium** and **Germany**, regional authorities (e.g., linguistic Communities or Länder) play the main regulatory and funding roles.

For in-service teacher training (continuing professional development), responsibility is usually more decentralised and involves multiple actors. Ministries or regional education authorities often set policy priorities and provide funding, while specialised training agencies, schools, or accredited training centres organise and deliver professional development. This is the case in several countries, including **Croatia** (via the Agency for Education and Training and the Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education, which are financed from the state budget, with the ministry playing a supervisory role), **Poland** (teacher-training centres and the Ośrodek Rozwoju Edukacji), **Portugal** (Centros de Formação de Associação de Escolas), Spain (Catalonia) (Department of Education and XTEC), and France (through academy-level training and specialised centres such as CASNAV). In some countries, non-governmental organisations and project-based initiatives also contribute to training provision, particularly in **Croatia** and **Poland**, where NGOs often complement official programmes by offering additional training related to inclusion, intercultural education, or migrant student support. Overall, teacher-training governance across these countries reflects multi-level systems that combine state funding, institutional delivery, and school-level autonomy, with varying degrees of decentralisation. **Ireland** has a centralised education system with clearly defined roles across policy, funding, regulation and delivery. The Department of Education and Youth leads on policy and allocates funding for continuing professional development, while the Department of Further and Higher Education funds most ITE through the Higher Education Authority, with some exceptions. The Teaching Council is responsible for professional standards, accreditation and teacher registration, including pathways for internationally qualified teachers. Higher education institutions deliver ITE programmes, and continuing professional development is mainly provided by Oide and its partner organisations. As Ireland does not have a regional or municipal education layer, responsibility for implementing and sustaining teacher learning largely falls to individual schools, supported but not managed by national bodies.

5.4 Bringing Migrants into the Teaching Workforce

Across the countries reviewed, measures to bring migrants into the teaching workforce exist on an ad hoc basis and vary widely in scope, scale, and effectiveness. In **Belgium**, mechanisms such as foreign diploma recognition, bridging programmes, alternative entry pathways (zij-instroom), and diversity action plans facilitate access for individuals with a migration background, although there is no centralised, large-scale affirmative recruitment programme. Similarly, **Finland** provides recognition of foreign qualifications, targeted funding, and training pathways, but these are integrated into broader professional and immigration policies rather than dedicated migrant-teacher programmes. In **Ireland**, measures to integrate migrant teachers operate primarily through regulatory and supply-driven pathways rather than dedicated recruitment programmes. The Teaching Council manages registration for teachers trained abroad, with conditional routes requiring adaptation, additional coursework, or curriculum familiarisation where gaps exist, while the Department of Education and Youth supports wider teacher-supply policies and funds initiatives such as the **Migrant Teacher Project** at the Marino Institute of Education, which provides practice-based support, evidence generation, and policy input. Complementing these efforts, higher education institutions, **Oide**, and schools play a key role in embedding professional learning and facilitating integration, but Ireland lacks a national infrastructure for targeted recruitment or guaranteed bridging pathways, leaving the system highly centralised and dependent on coordination among regulators, institutions, and schools.

In **Poland** and **Portugal**, specific measures exist, including diploma-notification programmes, language support, and facilitated entry for Ukrainian educators, reflecting responses to recent migrant inflows. **Germany** also offers lateral-entry programmes and support projects, such as Lehrkräfte PLUS, although bureaucratic barriers remain.

In other countries such as **Croatia, Estonia, Lithuania, Spain (Catalonia)** and **France**, there are no systematic national measures to integrate migrants into the teaching workforce. Access for migrants in these contexts depends largely on individual initiative, local school needs, or civil society support, such as NGOs providing guidance or training. Overall, while some countries have formal mechanisms that lower structural barriers (e.g., recognition of foreign qualifications, bridging courses, language support), dedicated, large-scale recruitment strategies targeting migrants are rare, and practical challenges, including language requirements, credential comparability, and limited integration programmes, continue to constrain the inclusion of migrant teachers.

5.5 Availability of Intercultural Mediators in Schools

Intercultural mediators are available in some schools across assessed countries, but their presence is generally uneven, ad hoc, and dependent on local initiatives rather than being systematically embedded in national education systems. In **Belgium**, mediators are more common in linguistically diverse urban areas such as Brussels and Antwerp, often recruited from migrant communities and supported by integration agencies, external services, or municipal programmes. In **Ireland**, there is no nationally mandated, permanent “intercultural mediator” role within the education system. Instead, mediation-type supports tend to arise through time-bound, project-based or locally brokered initiatives, often linked to integration programmes, DEIS support or partnerships with NGOs and community organisations. In **Poland**, intercultural assistants are formally recognised from September 2024, but their employment is optional and depends on school decisions and available funding. **Portugal** has recently introduced linguistic and cultural mediators in some schools as part of targeted inclusion measures.

In contrast, in countries such as **Croatia, Estonia, Lithuania, Catalonia (Spain), France, Finland**, and the **Netherlands**, intercultural mediation is not systematically provided. When present, it often relies on NGO projects, local initiatives, or temporary positions, and recruitment from migrant communities is possible but not guaranteed. Overall, while the use of intercultural mediators can enhance school integration and support for migrant students, their availability remains limited, sporadic, and heavily dependent on local resources and school-level decisions, rather than being a standard feature of education systems.



Promising Practice

Intercultural portfolio method, Poland

The intercultural portfolio method is a pedagogical approach that combines language learning with the development of intercultural competence. In this model, students systematically compile a portfolio of materials produced in Polish-language classes, including creative assignments and collaborative tasks. This portfolio serves a dual purpose: it documents learners’ progress in acquiring Polish as a second language while simultaneously fostering reflection on cultural diversity and strengthening intercultural awareness. Through interactive and group-based activities, the method promotes learning-by-doing, enhances social skills, and supports peer interaction and integration. Importantly, the portfolio also functions as a bridge between school and home, enabling parents, guardians, and intercultural assistants to follow the student’s development and engage in the learning process. The collected materials further act as a resource for families to learn about Polish culture and traditions, thereby extending language acquisition and intercultural learning beyond the classroom. Overall, this approach illustrates how reflective and participatory tools can support both linguistic development and social inclusion in diverse educational settings (Młynarczyk-Sokołowska & Szostak-Król, 2016).

Table 4. Teachers and teacher qualifications

Teachers and Teacher Qualifications	Components Included in Teacher Education	Development of Intercultural Competence	Funding Teacher Training	Bringing Migrants into the Teaching Workforce	Availability of Intercultural Mediators
Belgium	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy, other	Mandatory	Responsibility lies primarily with the Communities (Flemish Community and Fédération Wallonie–Bruxelles), with implementation by higher education institutions and complementary support from school networks and pedagogical guidance services	Yes	Yes
Bulgaria	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy, other	Elective	Ministry of Education at national level, universities and international organisations	No	No
Croatia	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy, other	Elective	MOE	Some ad hoc measures	No
Estonia	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy, other	Elective	MOE	Some ad hoc measures	No
Finland	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, responsive pedagogy	Elective	Ministry of Education and Culture	Some ad hoc measures	No
France	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy, other	Elective	Ministry of Education, EAFC, CASNAV	Some ad hoc measures	No

Table 4. Continued.

Teachers and Teacher Qualifications	Components Included in Teacher Education	Development of Intercultural Competence	Funding Teacher Training	Bringing Migrants into the Teaching Workforce	Availability of Intercultural Mediators
Germany	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy, other	Other	Bundesländer	Some ad hoc measures	Yes
Greece	Differentiated instruction, responsive pedagogy, other	Elective	Universities and personnel	Some ad hoc measures	Available on ad hoc basis
Ireland					
Italy	Differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students	Mandatory	Ministry of Education and Merit (MIM) and universities	No	No
Lithuania	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, Targeted support for new students, Responsive pedagogy	Elective	Higher Education Institutions and ministry and Vilniaus lietuvių namai	No	No
Netherlands	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, responsive pedagogy	Elective	National government	Some ad hoc measures	Available on ad hoc basis
Poland	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy, other	Elective	National, regional and local authorities	Some ad hoc measures	Yes
Portugal	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students,	Other	Ministry of Education	Yes	Yes
Slovenia	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy	Mandatory and elective (depending on programme)	National government	No	Available on ad hoc basis
Spain (Catalonia)	Language-sensitive teaching, differentiated instruction, targeted support for new students, responsive pedagogy	Elective	Regional government	No	Available on ad hoc basis



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Annex I

Questionnaire used to collect information

	Questions	Answers (please select)		Explanation
	Assessing Language Proficiency			
1	Are migrant learners' language skills assessed upon entry into the education system?	Yes		
2	Which language skills are typically assessed? (Check box for what applies). Please elaborate on whether the assessment also examines subject-specific literacy.			General comments:
		Speaking	✓	
		Listening	✓	
		Writing	✓	
		Literacy in first family language	✓	
		Other (please explain)	✓	
		None (please explain)	✓	
3	Is language-learning progress monitored over time? (if yes, please explain by whom?)	Yes systematically	✓	
4	Are language assessments mandatory or optional?	Optional		
5	Is data on migrant learners' language proficiency systematically collected?	Yes and it is publicly available (please explain)		
6	If yes, is the assessment data used to personalise support or to track systemic outcomes (e.g., integration success)?	Yes (please explain)		
7	Are there any practices aimed at involving migrant learners' parents in the language-learning process?	Yes (please explain)		

Questionnaire Continued.

	Questions	Answers (please select)	Explanation
	Access to Language Support (language of instruction)		
8	What types of language support programmes are available for migrant learners? (Check box for what applies)		General comments:
		Preparatory classes	✓
		Second-language instruction integrated into mainstream classes	✓
		After-school or extracurricular programme	✓
		Peer/mentoring programme	✓
		Other (please explain)	✓
		No language support (please explain)	✓
9	How is language support delivered? (Check box for what applies)		General comments:
		In regular classes	✓
		In special language classes	✓
		After school or tutoring	✓
		By a language assistant	✓
		Online or digital tools	✓
		Other (please explain)	✓
No language support (please explain)	✓		
10	What is the usual duration of language support?	Depends on learner's progress	

Questionnaire Continued.

	Questions	Answers (please select)	Explanation
11	<p>Does the existing support for the language of instruction effectively improve migrant learners' language acquisition? (Check box for what applies)</p>	<p>Yes (please explain) ✓</p> <p>Partially (please explain) ✓</p> <p>No (please explain) ✓</p> <p>Students' language acquisition is evaluated (please explain) ✓</p>	<p>General comments:</p>
12	<p>Does migrant learners' status affect access to language support?</p>	<p>No (please explain)</p>	
13	<p>Are there enough qualified language teachers to teach the language of instruction to migrant learners?</p>	<p>Yes (please explain)</p>	
14	<p>Are regular teachers adequately qualified to teach students who are learning in a second language?</p>	<p>No (please explain)</p>	
15	<p>Where does responsibility for language support rest? (Check box for what applies)</p>	<p>Local government ✓</p> <p>Regional government ✓</p> <p>National government ✓</p> <p>Non-governmental actors (civil society & NGOs) ✓</p>	<p>General comments:</p>

Questionnaire Continued.

	Questions	Answers (please select)	Explanation	
16	Additional funding or targeted resources are provided for (Check box for what applies):		General comments:	
		Recruiting and training language teachers	✓	
		Developing culturally responsive/sensitive teaching materials	✓	
		Providing tailored support services	✓	
		Other (please explain)	✓	
		No additional funding or targeted support	✓	
Strengthening and Promoting First/Family Languages				
17	Is there an official national/ regional policy that promotes first/family-language support of migrant learners?	Yes (please explain)		
18	What measures or practices are currently implemented to strengthen first/family languages of migrant learners? (Check box for what applies)		General comments:	
		First/family language is taught as a subject	✓	
		Bilingual education programmes	✓	
		Extracurricular or community-based language programmes	✓	
		Availability of teaching materials in first/family languages	✓	
		Libraries offer books in first/family languages	✓	
		Other (please explain)	✓	
		No measures (please explain)	✓	

Questionnaire Continued.

	Questions	Answers (please select)		Explanation
19	If no policy exists, are there local or school-level initiatives supporting first/ family languages?	Yes (please explain)		
	Teachers and Teacher Qualifications			
20	Which components are included in teacher education, pre-service and in-service training programmes to better prepare teachers for working in diverse classrooms? (Check box for what applies) Please comment on provisions for language teachers in particular.			General comments:
		Language-sensitive teaching	✓	
		Differentiated instruction	✓	
		Targeted support for new students	✓	
		Responsive pedagogy/ies	✓	
		Other (please explain)	✓	
		None (please explain)	✓	
21	Is training on developing intercultural competences in teacher education or in-service programmes mandatory, elective, or not included? Please comment on provisions for language teachers in particular.	Mandatory		
22	Who is responsible for providing and funding teacher-training programmes?	Please explain		
23	Are there measures in place to bring migrants into the teaching workforce?	Yes		
24	Are intercultural mediators available in schools, and if so, are they recruited from migrant communities themselves?	Yes (please explain)		

Questionnaire Continued.

	Questions	Answers (please select)	Explanation
	Innovative and Promising Practices		
25	Please share any promising practices in your country or region related to the topics above, including policies or peer/mentorship programmes promoted at the local, regional, or national level for language support.	Please explain	
	Methodology		
26	Please explain the data-collection methods applied, specifying the sources, participants, and procedures.	Please explain	

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