

EFEE

THE EUROPEAN  
FEDERATION OF  
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EUROPEAN TRADE UNION COMMITTEE  
FOR EDUCATION – COMITE SYNDICAL  
EUROPEEN DE L'EDUCATION



## **ETUCE and EFEE Proposal for a Quality Framework for an Effective Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees in Education**

*Brussels, 2 December 2019*

This text outlines the fundamental proposals for an EU-wide *Quality Framework for an effective inclusion of migrants and refugees* emerging from a 2-year joint project work between ETUCE and EFEE on the theme. The work has benefited from synergies with social partners from other sectors, civil society organisations and international agencies. Therefore, the proposals are based on evidence collected through extensive research and dialogue between the social partners and all those involved in their daily work into addressing the needs, removing the obstacles and enabling the enjoyment of the rights of newly arrived students. It will form the basis for further discussion with policy makers at European level and it results from a fruitful discussion with several of those actors actively involved in the reception and inclusion process, who share the responsibility for catering for the needs of newly arrived migrant and refugee learners. At the occasion of the Public Hearing 'Education and Migration', held on 15 October 2019 at the European Parliament, education social partners and civil society organisations shared a common advocacy message at EU level for:

- the need for synergies between policy fields and the promotion of a holistic, structured approach among all relevant Directorate Generals of the European Commission to address the issues of migration and inclusion;
- spending on education to be seen as a growth-enhancing investment, not as costs;
- and the call for adequate EU funds to promote investment in this field.

This text further considers all international frameworks and legal acts as regards the right to education and the protection of the children in migration, which put the human rights of the child at the center of any action, starting from Convention on the Rights of the Child.

For ETUCE and EFEE, newly arrived migrant and refugee learners are first and foremost learners, although their education and learning is inevitably conditioned by their past and present life experiences. As every learner, they should be enabled to reach their full potential through quality and inclusive education and training. For no children to be held back, in the schools and in society, by his or her migrant background, however, rights need to be reinforced via specific regulatory measures. Therefore, it is a matter of great importance that support that targets inclusion in schools and all other educational institutions to be organized and funded based on the following priorities:

- **Focus on support-based inclusion**, encompassing the development of a EU-wide policy framework that protects and promotes inclusive access to quality education regardless of the legal status of minors and young adults throughout a full educational cycle. Promoting fast-

track inclusion in mainstream education and learners' resilience through support-based inclusion, based on high expectations boosting self-esteem, second language acquisition and learning;

- **Address the temporality of the children's and families' status**, by ensuring communication between countries (origin, transit and destination) to tailor pedagogical approaches;
- **Assess, recognise, value and nurture migrant and refugee students' past experience and first language** as a vehicle for learning. Research<sup>1</sup> has shown that if this is organised and pedagogically structured, it will be successful;
- **Recruit, train and value teachers with a migrant and refugee background**;
- **Ensure sufficient and sustainable investment to fund initial and continuous professional development of teachers, trainers and school leaders** to cater for newly arrived migrant and refugee learners' needs, including components of multicultural aspects in education and reward teachers, trainers and school leaders' work for inclusion;
- **Increase the share and coherence of European funds dedicated to manage diversity in schools** and to ensure the educational inclusion of migrants and refugees' learners. These should contribute to all the necessary costs for targeted measures at community level to be put in place for an effective reception and educational support;
- **Promote good governance and synergies** between social partners and all key stakeholders from the education sector and other relevant sectors (specialised staff in care and health, translators, cultural mediators, etc.), including the political-administrative levels (governments, local authorities, etc.) in order to adopt a comprehensive approach to migrant and refugee learners' rights encompassing reception, socio-economic and educational inclusion of newly arrived;
- **Encourage dialogue between the educational community and parents** based on mutual respect, basic understanding of how cooperation can benefit children together with some organisational aspects (e.g. time, space, transport, etc.) are among the main enabling factors for a successful educational experiences.

This Proposal for a Quality Framework has been adopted by the European Sectoral Social Dialogue in Education (ESSDE) Plenary meeting on 2 December 2019.

Brussels, 2 December 2019

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<sup>1</sup> Bunar, N. *'Promoting effective integration of migrants and refugees in education. Experiences from Spain, Serbia and Belgium'*, 2019, ETUCE and EFEE, second edition.