



**YiES Youth and Inter Ethnic Schools  
Actions Against Inter Ethnic Violence among Pupils at School**

Mid-term report

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## 1. Introduction

Schools deal with conflicts every day and the presence of adolescents from ethnic minorities and new ethnic minorities due to migration<sup>1</sup> implies that schools must pay particular attention to conflicts involving adolescents belonging to such groups.

Conflicts in adolescence are inevitable during personal and emotional development and brings about needed changes and growth. Indeed, adolescence is the period of identity development and formation. Ethnicity can be important for the development of adolescence identity and can therefore lead to conflicts with peers in school. Schools should manage these conflicts in order to avoid their change into violent events that range from stigmatisation and exclusion to discrimination and physical violence.

Adolescents in schools suffer from this kind of violence and both their education and their personal development are put at risk. Apart from physical dangers they are exposed to, children may lose self-esteem, experience emotional and social difficulties and develop anti-social behaviour. Particularly among young people belonging to ethnic minorities, the phenomena could affect their sense of belonging to their community and alter their identity so that the interaction with the majority group could be influenced leading to a situation of marginalisation, exclusion and affect their success in education and society.

The role of school is therefore important in protecting the rights of each child as are stated in the Convention on the Right of the Child. Referring to the protection of cultural identity of foreign minors art. 29 of the Convention stated that “1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations; (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own; (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin”.

This report aims at providing readers with a background analysis on the problem of racial bullying and ethnic violence at school, involving adolescents from 13 to 16 years old, in four European countries, Germany, Italy, Latvia and Spain. From the view point of ethnic presence the four countries differ broadly as they have been experienced different kind of inter ethnic relations. Germany has a

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<sup>1</sup> U. Enwereuzor, *Analytical report on education, EUMC Italian report*

long history of immigration: it has already faced inter ethnic conflicts at school and experienced policies and tools against the problem throughout anti-discrimination activities as well as conflict mediation. Italy and Spain have recently become countries of immigration but as most of pupils come from countries such as Albania, Romania, Morocco and Tunisia in the Italian case and Morocco, Senegal, Gambia and South America in the Spanish case, countries target of and for which most frequently prejudices arise at the moment the problem of racial bullying at school needs to be deeply analysed. Finally Latvia has experienced years of considerable strengthening of the national identity after independence while facing the problem of protection of ethnic minorities living in the country.

Desk research has resulted in the description of a common approach to ethnicity and ethnic conflicts in schools, paying special attention to ethnic conflicts involving migrant children as well as and children belonging to ethnic minorities. Common definition of ethnicity, ethnic conflict and violence, the relation between ethnic belonging and identity formation in the adolescence period and finally the problem of ethnic conflict and violence at school. Conflict itself is neither bad nor good but is inevitable and sometimes structurally induced. When conflicts are based on discrimination, prejudices and stereotypes could affect emotional and personal development of children. Schools should elaborate the reasons of such conflicts and promote a recognition of both cultural diversities and common values also taking into account power gaps and mechanisms of domination and segregation (Chapter 2).

Due to different backgrounds and ethnic presence the four countries have elaborated different policies to promote mutual understanding and integration. In order to deeply understand the different policies desk researches at the national level have been focused on five main aspects that are context analysis of national school system, data on presence of migrants and ethnic minorities in schools, legislative framework on integration of pupils coming from ethnic minorities as well as new ethnic minorities and the role of school in facing the problem of integration. Finally each country have briefly described good practices in literature characterising their countries (Chapter 3).

## 2. Terms and concepts

To deal with a delicate issue such as inter-ethnic violence in schools, some preliminary clarifications on terms and concepts are needed. Indeed terms like ethnicity (a), conflict and violence (b), adolescence (c) and inter ethnic conflicts and violence at school (d) are strictly related to “identity development”, “ethnic identity”, “social prejudice/stereotypes” that are basic concepts to understand the causes of the problem and find suitable solutions.

a) **Ethnicity** usually refers to a population or a group identifying with a particular collective identity or so identified by others. More specifically, ethnicity is connected to a group of people identifying with “we” on the basis of common features. In general such common features are related to shared nationality, cultural background, language, history, religious faith, habits or physical appearance.

There is a consensus in social science that “ethnic identity” is socially constructed. Subjective criteria are considered in defining ethnic communities and studying inter-ethnic relationships. According to Max Weber ethnicity is a group of people which has a subjective believe to be of common decent. This believe is based on similarities in habits and customs or on shared memories of colonisation and migration.

Ethnic groups could be defined as “categories” and individuals identify themselves in such categories by self-identification: people organise “objective” elements (i.e. similarities) in order to consider themselves to be members of a group and socially interact on the basis of this (self-) identification. More specifically a definition of ethnic identity has been proposed by H. Tajfel (1981) who defines it as “that part of an individual self concept which derives from his/her knowledge, of his/her membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership”.

Self-identification implies a process of categorisation of otherness. Social interaction is therefore an identity categorisation process implying inclusion and exclusion of others. Contacting and interacting with other people individuals could become aware of differences identifying themselves as bearers of a different culture/values.

Ethnic identity construction reflects social interactions. As a consequence subjective criteria play a central role: basic elements of ethnic identity and belonging are those elements people involved consider as relevant and “subjective” elements are clearly more important than “objective” elements.

Some differences between members of ethnic groups can be “objectively” negligible, but they could become important for the members of an ethnic group and even be stressed.

In short ethnicity is a social construction or a day by day interaction process among individuals having different cultural backgrounds and different values as well as different customs, habits, language, history, religious faith, physical appearance. Ethnicity is also the result of interactions among individuals along “boundaries”. Where different ethnic groups meet each other there social boundaries are: social boundary is an overall criterion determining inclusion/exclusion from ethnic groups, a criterion of membership. Although starting from “objective” differences, the definition of social boundaries is based on the importance (not their quality or “objectiveness”) individuals/groups recognise to such differences. So that a reduction of (cultural) differences does not imply the overcoming of the social boundaries (Barth 1969; F. Nardin 2004).

In this sense, ethnicity is more than a subjective believe, since individuals and groups can be assigned to a certain ethnic group without having any subjective believe of common decent. Ethnicity can be both: a self-categorisation and a social categorization of otherness (Bielefeld 1998; Hormel & Scherr 2003).

Although being socially constructed and based on a subjective element, ethnic identity and ethnicity have important political and social implications. As categories of otherness they determine public policies and influence social behaviours of groups in all contexts, also in the educational system.

b) **Ethnic conflicts and violence.** Conflict is generally speaking a situation in which an individual or group is in conscious opposition to one or more individuals or groups because of opposing goals. We may think conflict as an indicator of dysfunction and disorder within social system or in schools, expression of contradictions and it maybe interpreted as the expression of uneasiness, an indicator of a problem to be solved. Indeed, conflicts are unavoidable and they must not be repressed. Therefore, they must be understood and elaborated: solving a conflict does not mean to cancel differences.

Inter-ethnic conflicts are those where ethnic differences are the basis for opposing positions (cf. Wimmer & Schetter 2002). This does not necessarily allow the conclusion that every conflict where members of different ethnic groups are involved are necessarily inter-ethnic violence: opponents in a conflict can be part of different ethnic groups, while the differences in their interests are not about cultural values or ideas of heritage (cf. Garhammer 2003). It is quite difficult to distinguish genuine inter-ethnic conflicts from others, if parties from different ethnic groups are involved. On the one hand, arguments on ethnic differences often mix with those from other fields. On the other hand,

some conflicts are claimed to be ethnic conflicts from one party, while another claims it is about other issues.

Many factors lead to conflicts, at times to ethnic conflicts: social representation of foreign people, prejudices and ethnic bias. Conflicts and particularly ethnic conflicts should be resolved indeed: that means the true underlying issues (goals, interests, values and needs) have to be addressed. Conflicts are managed when dispute resolution mechanisms, such as mediation, arbitration, or other processes, are implemented to address conflicts as they emerge.

Unsolved conflicts can lead to their most extreme manifestation: violence. In this work “violence” refers to such an event that could be defined as repeated attacks - physical, psychological, social or verbal - by those who are in a position of power, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless and can not resist. As soon as conflict turns violent, its nature changes. Immediately, concerns about security and survival form a layer on top of the matrix of conflictual but, until then, non-violent competition over interests and needs. Resolving violent conflict must take into account these two dimensions – underlying interests and needs and the dynamics and consequences of violence. Often, trying to put a rapid end to violence, this latter takes precedence over the underlying causes of conflicts: addressing issues of insecurity then takes precedence over achieving just relationships in society.

c) The age range under study, **adolescence, the age of identity formation** implies clarifications as well. Adolescence means the transitional period of development between childhood and maturity when young people search for a personal identity. During such period of growth belonging to peer groups, which is often as changing as totalizing, can be of great importance for young people.

Adolescents are faced with the large task of establishing a sense of identity. The new cognitive skills of maturing adolescents give them the ability to reflect on who they are and what makes them unique. Identity consists of two components: self-concept, the set of beliefs about oneself (including attributes, roles, goals, interests, values and religious or political beliefs and self-esteem how one feels about one’s self-concept). The process of developing a sense of identity involves experimenting with different ways of appearing and behaving and each adolescent approaches this exploration in his or her own unique way.

Referring to the process of identity formation, young people belonging to ethnic minorities and new minorities generated by recent migration could explore several patterns such as a strong ethnic identity or a bi-cultural identity, assimilation into the majority culture, assimilation into majority culture or

alienation from the majority culture. Also in the process of identity formation, social interaction with other people make individuals aware of differences and make identifying themselves as bearers of a different culture/values.

Concerning ethnic differences, for many adolescents this may be the first time that they consciously recognize their ethnic identity. Feeling positive about one's ethnic identity can be important to the self-esteem of an adolescent. For adolescents from minority cultures this can be a difficult challenge, if they are often faced with negative stereotypes about their culture.

Generally, achieving a sense of identity is a basic need for every teen-ager. Identity development is a complex task for all adolescents, since personal identities are constructed based on a vast array of elements. *Ethnicity* is one of those elements to consider in personal and emotional development of adolescents and it can be particularly important for adolescents belonging to ethnic minorities: their identity development is influenced by both their membership in the group of origin and in mainstream culture(s), so they are between their parents' values and the culture of the country they live in. This element could be source of personal conflict and it should be add to those typical elements characterising adolescent self-identity development. Cultural origin, history, religious faith, habits, physical appearance and language as well as cultural norms and values, social stereotypes, parents' misconceptions and fears could negatively affect identity development of children and their social life.

d) **Ethnic conflicts and ethnic violence at school** Conflicts in adolescence are inevitable during personal and emotional development and they bring about personal changes and growth. Schools deals with conflicts between pupils and conflicts between pupils and teachers every day. With reference to school contexts, facing conflicts and ethnic conflicts implies a comprehensive approach to diversity. As discussed above, ethnicity can be important element to consider in personal development of adolescents as well as their belonging to the group of origin and their interaction with the mainstream culture. Belonging and segregation, identification and stigmatisation are categories relevant to educational contexts where adolescents live and conflicts based on ethnicity need to be analysed when relationships are unbalanced. Thus, conflicts dealing with ethnic differences must not be repressed in the school context but they must be expressed throughout dispute resolution mechanisms, such as mediation, arbitration, or other processes, are implemented to address conflicts as they emerge. Therefore school must make conflicts explicit, understood and elaborated otherwise unsolved conflicts could lead to its extreme manifestation, i.e. violence.

In this context, young people coming from ethnic minorities and migrant communities are at high risk of being involved in violence as victims as well as actors of violence in school context.

Ethnic conflicts in schools are related to relationships between pupil, pupils and teachers, between school and family and among families. In such relationships ethnic belonging (besides gender, class, income and other differences) can either foster conflict, or represent an opportunity for mutual exchange and consequently for a personal and social improvement. On the one hand, conflict between adolescents and adults represents a break in family's normal relations, a break with intimate family culture and habits, and also the search for a belonging that is not imposed but results from a personal choice and affinities between pairs. On the other, conflict between adolescents (or groups of adolescents) seems to be necessary to explore possible identities. Ethnicity can therefore be considered as an additional factor of conflicts in adolescence, since ethnic belonging may be as totalizing as others since it involves at the same time the individual, the family, the ethnic group and the ethnic group's role in society.

Referring to school system two levels of ethnic conflicts could be identified:

Interpersonal: characterised by "face to face" relations, it appears with regard to independence, personal achievement, self-expression and personal choice on topics of personal interest. We may distinguish between direct and indirect conflict (for instance change of insults, expressions of anger, racial act of verbal violence, racial and ethnic epithets and slurs, vandalism, malicious destruction of properties, threats and intimidation, hate-motivated offences, use symbols of ethnic hate such as swastikas or racist graffiti in the restrooms or in other places on the building).

Structural: structurally-caused conflict is almost always invisible, embedded in social structures, normalized by stable institutions and regular experience. It occurs whenever people are disadvantaged by political, legal, economic or cultural traditions. Because they are relatively persistent, structural inequities usually seem ordinary, the way things are and always have been. In general it refers to unequal access to resources, to political power, to education, to health care, or to legal standing and is less visible and exist in various forms infused in the existing social hierarchies. There may not be a clearly identified source of conflict within this construct. We should also distinguish ethnic conflicts happening at school in conflicts with teachers and conflicts among peers.

Prejudice plays an important role in these processes. A prejudice<sup>2</sup> is a psychological process essential for the projection: unaccepted thoughts, feelings and drives are attributed to minority groups that are

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<sup>2</sup> We do understand that *prejudice* "refers to a negative or hostile attitude toward another social group, usually racially defined. Prejudice is a faulty and inflexible generalization precisely because it's purely arbitrary, not subject to change, and usually develops prior to any actual real contact with the object of the prejudice" (G.Allport 1954).

negatively featured. Subjects who are frustrated by difficult situations may vent their aggression on groups they see as “different” or “inferior”. Since it is not always easy or possible to remove causes of frustration, the energy accumulated may be discharged on targets usually chosen out of the own group. This may also happen among children at school. Besides resolving an internal conflict, prejudice strengthens the cohesion between the subjects and thus creates and maintains social groups. As an important part of self-image is developed on the basis of social belonging and on the other’s feed-back, positive comments to an individual’s social group can represent a source of stability for personal identity. Self-praise strengthens self-image. Who is “different” tends to be unappreciated because he/she is perceived as a threat for self-esteem.<sup>3</sup> The evidence that in this process individual characteristics are not taken into consideration shifts the attention to stereotypes (*stereos*: rigid; *typos*: track). In ethnic conflicts stereotypes represent the conceptual core of prejudice and is usually applied to high visible and recognizable features. The cognitive association of the stereotype drives the perception to assimilate the particular case to the general image. Stereotypes and prejudices in ethnic conflicts are therefore characterised by their rigidity both when they are mechanisms of defence and when are analysed as the results of a cognitive categorisation process<sup>4</sup>. The acquisition and the maintenance of self-esteem are factors that explain the social identification with a group. Prejudices based on physical and cultural characteristics or representations connected to nationalistic stereotypes keep transmitting discriminatory behaviours, from ironic and sarcastic comments to more explicit kinds of exclusion. But a prejudice does not necessarily lead to an explicitly or visibly discriminatory behaviour.

Psychologically, the perception of a threat (whether real or imagined) causes a response. The response can be physical, economic, social, cultural, or take the form of a security threat. Furthermore, children and adolescents, tempted by violence in situations of poverty and conflict and numbed by too many images of death and destruction on TV and media, can see that peace is not an easy choice. This distortion should be redressed in order to avoid feeding the prejudice and discriminatory behaviours. Not all assertions of ethnic identity are conflictual. Most children/adolescents can be themselves without impinging on another’s sense of self. When one can be oneself only at the expense of another conflict arises. Even when ethnic or racial identities no longer serve as a basis for group cohesion, they may continue to make individuals feel special and part of a community. Ethnic group membership may also exclude members of certain groups from friendship cliques, social activities, or may limit their status and popularity. This can lead to racial and ethnic conflicts, which can help establish an alternative

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<sup>3</sup> D’Alessandro V., Sciarra M., *Multiethnicità, pregiudizi, intercultura. Nuovi scenari e problematiche per le istituzioni formative*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2004.

<sup>4</sup> D’Alessandro V., Sciarra M., *Multiethnicità, pregiudizi, intercultura. Nuovi scenari e problematiche per le istituzioni formative*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2004.

sense of identity. Indeed conflicts change relationships in predictable ways, altering communication and social organisation patterns as well as our image and image we have of others. Depending on the social contexts where ethnic conflict arises, different classifications may exist.

Conflict with teachers influence students' learning process and results. Students interact with teachers as well as with other staff within educational structures. As the latter are based on predefined values they influence children's emotional and cultural development. Schools are "microcosms of the mainstream society" (LaBelle, 1976): in their procedural norms, codes of behaviour, structural arrangements, distribution of power, privilege and responsibility schools reflect cultural values of society. While teachers, school administrators, and policymakers carry their cultural experiences and perspectives into their educational decisions and actions, foreign students coming from different cultural backgrounds do likewise in their learning attitudes and behaviours. The coexistence of such differences in multicultural classrooms could lead to cultural conflict that, if is not deliberately mediated, can influence the effectiveness of educational process. Cultural contents and implications of educational activities and programmes could inadvertently imply different treatment of students on the basis of their cultural background. The way the teacher reacts to student behaviours, the nature of classroom control mechanisms, the topics and issues chosen for classroom study, the schedule of activities in terms of the amount of time devoted to particular aspects of the school day, the spatial organization of the classroom are culturally defined and they could pass on messages that reinforce certain student behaviours and discourage others. Teachers should take into consideration the multicultural identity of the student population in order to define educational programmes and learning methods. The following theories gain importance in this context: theory of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, which states that some psychological needs must be satisfied before others can be addressed; Erikson's principles of identity development; the notion that for educational experiences to be relevant they must be perceived as personally meaningful to students; the negative effects that stress and anxiety can have on academic efforts and achievement; and the extent to which school learning follows procedural rules and guidelines that are compatible with those students are accustomed to in their cultural communities. Embedded in these principles is the recognition of the fact that any process of learning involves more than intellectual ability and mastery of cognitive content. It also includes the psycho-emotional disposition of students and teachers and environmental settings or climates in which teaching and learning take place. If students feel that the school environment is alien and hostile toward them or does not affirm and value who they are (as many students may believe), they will not be able to concentrate as thoroughly as they might on academic tasks. The stress and anxiety that accompany this lack of support and affirmation cause their mental attention, energy, and efforts to be diffused between protecting their selves and attending to academic tasks (G. Gay 1994).

Students from minorities are sometimes assigned to a lower class in the formal school structure. Due to this decision they may also experience social segregation. Additionally ethnic boundaries may be more or less important depending on school context, income and age of the student and social and economic conditions in the society.

Conflicts may also create leadership roles for students. When groups fight, the best fighters may gain in peer status. As a result of the conflicts, group members may feel less alienated. The potential for conflict increases as students perceive benefits of racial and ethnic group membership, feeling like they belong to a group of loyal friends. Students learn in different ways and under different conditions, many of which depend on by their cultural socialisation. Thus, sometimes deep ethnic conflicts might lead to concrete academics problems or, in case of complex personal situations contribute to the drop out phenomenon.

The power issue can not be overlooked when discussing on ethnic conflict breaking out and management: some ethnic groups are indeed strong and prestigious and their origin, language and culture are highly valued. Power gaps always characterize relationships between natives and migrants affecting the solution of inter-ethnic conflicts.

Schools should promote recognition of cultural diversities and common values by taking into consideration the different balance of power (some groups "belong" more than others) and mechanisms of domination and segregation. School should foster safe and respectful environments where fair interethnic relationships could be developed by respecting dignity and equality, dialogue and mutual understanding.

### 3. National contexts

Desk research at the national level has resulted in the description of the four national contexts focused on five main aspects that are:

- context analysis of national school system
- national data on presence of migrants and ethnic minorities in schools
- national legislative framework on integration of pupils coming from ethnic minorities as well as new ethnic minorities
- the role of school in facing the problem of integration
- good practices in literature characterising the four countries.

#### 3.1 German context by Holk Stobbe, Zoom e.V.

##### 3.1.1 Context analysis: brief description of the national secondary school system and data on migrants and ethnic minorities in schools

Education in Germany is administrated by the federal states, so there are some significant differences within Germany. Nevertheless, in all federal states the school system consists of three components: *Grundschule* (primary school, mostly four years, i.e. age 6-9), first level of secondary schools (mostly six years, i.e. age 10-15) and second level of secondary schooling (Age 16-18). After primary school, children (or rather their parents) have to decide between four types of secondary schools: *Hauptschule* (secondary general school), *Realschule* (intermediate school), *Gymnasium* (grammar school) or *Gesamtschule* (comprehensive schools).

*Hauptschule* provides basic education until class 9 or 10. *Realschule* prepares pupils with average learning abilities for medium level occupations and ends after class 10. For pupils of *Hauptschule* and *Realschule*, the second level of secondary education usually consists in vocational training: training on the job in combination with attending public vocational schools. *Gymnasium* covers the first and the second level of secondary schooling, i.e. classes 5 to 12/13. The final certificate of these schools is the *Abitur*, which enables pupils to continue higher education at Colleges and Universities; also, some professional trainings require *Abitur*. Finally, *Gesamtschule* combines the curricula of the other three types of secondary schools. Depending on the school certificate they seek, pupils leave comprehensive schools after class 9 (equivalent to *Hauptschule*), 10 (equivalent to *Realschule*) or 12/13 (*Abitur*).

#### Chart: The German School System

Elementary 1-4 year		first level of secondary education 5-9	10	second level of secondary education 11,12	13
	<i>Gymnasium</i>				

	<i>Realschule</i>		vocational training
	<i>Hauptschule</i>		vocational training
	<i>Gesamtschule</i>		

obligatory
  optional/varying

In 2002, some 1.1 Mio. pupils went to *Hauptschule*, 1.3 Mio. to *Realschule*, 1.6 Mio. were at the first level of secondary education in *Gymnasium* and 0.5 Mio. were at the first level of secondary education in *Gesamtschule* (Federal Statistical Office 2004: table *Allgemein bildende Schulen*). Thus, secondary general schools, intermediate schools and grammar schools have equal shares of pupils, only comprehensive schools have less pupils. This is due to the fact that in some federal states there are no or only few comprehensive schools.

In total, there were about 960,000 “migrants” or non-citizens in all types of public schools in Germany in 2002; they made up 9.8 per cent of all pupils.<sup>5</sup> The three major groups were Italian citizens (6.8 per cent), pupils from countries of the former Yugoslav Republic (11.4 per cent) and Turkish citizens (43.4 per cent) (Federal Statistical Office 2004: table *Ausländische Schüler/innen nach Staatsangehörigkeit*).

Remarkably, the share of migrants differs greatly between the different types of schools. In intermediate and grammar schools, migrants are underrepresented, whereas in secondary general schools, they are heavily over-represented. In 2002, at *Hauptschule*, migrants made up 18.2 per cent and in *Gesamtschule* 12.5 per cent, while in *Realschule* they made up 6.8 per cent and in *Gymnasium* only 3.9 per cent (Federal Statistical Office 2004: table *Ausländische Schüler/innen nach Schularten*).

Based on this asymmetrical distribution of non-citizens, Gomolla & Radtke (2002) identify “institutional discrimination” of migrants in the German school system. They are institutionally discriminated, because income and employment opportunities heavily depend upon the educational attainment. Job opportunities for graduates of secondary general schools are rather low and the unemployment rate among grammar school graduates is significantly lower than for those from other types of schools. Gomolla & Radtke argue that teachers and schools not necessarily intentionally discriminate against migrant pupils. Nevertheless, migrants are frequently advised that their children would be best placed in *Hauptschule* - regardless of their general learning abilities. Teachers often expect that migrant children in general have problems with German language. They see language as a key to higher education and thus assume that migrant children will not succeed in intermediate or grammar schools.

Also, since the decision which school to visit is usually not made by the (nine-year old) children, but by the parents, the social standing and expectations of parents plays a major role in the choice of

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<sup>5</sup> „Migrants“ are pupils without German citizenship. A larger share of these “migrants” were born in Germany. There are no statistical figures available on the number of pupils who are citizens, but who were born abroad or whose parents were migrants and thus are often considered “ethnic minorities”.

schools. As the OECD Pisa study (Deutsches PISA-Konsortium 2001) confirms, the educational opportunities are highly influenced by the social status of the parents in Germany. In no other OECD country it is more likely that children of academics become academics and children of workers finish *Hauptschule* and become workers (Auernheimer 2003; Melzer, Schubarth & Ehniger 2004). Many migrants of the 1950's to the early 1970's were contracted as workers with low qualifications. Additionally, legal requirements and labour market regulations commonly restrain migrants and refugees to low income jobs. For example, many qualifications from other countries such as diplomas are not recognized; also, German and EU citizens are privileged for job openings by law, and third country nationals often only receive restricted work permits. Therefore, the overrepresentation of migrants in the lower educational strands mirrors the low social status of most migrants in society (Fechler & Kaletsch 2003).

This over-representation is often seen as a problem and frequently it is claimed that the “disintegrated” children of migrants, especially of Turkish migrants, are a root cause for the poor performance of German schools in international comparison. This is, of course, a confusion of cause and effect: the low educational performance of migrant youth is not the result of their migration background, but of the schools’ perception that a migration background has negative effects on learning abilities. Despite this, children of migrants – and not the educational system – are often seen as the core problem (Attia 2000).

### **3.1.2 National legislation regarding the integration of minorities at school**

In Article 3 (3), the German constitution (*Grundgesetz*) states that no one may be prejudiced or favoured because of sex, parentage, race, language, home and origin, their faith or religious or political opinions. Based on this Article, legal efforts for the integration in schools are organized.

As has been explained earlier, education and schools are part of the legislation of the federal states (*Bundesländer*). Therefore, there are only a few national laws which directly address the integration of minorities in schools. One of them is the Immigration Law of 2004 (*ZuWG*) which calls for integration courses for all migrants, including minors. These (rather short) courses include language training and teaching of basic knowledge on the constitution, culture and history.

Apart from these rather minor national efforts for integration in schools, more detailed laws and decrees can be found on the level of the federal states. One of the most prominent examples for debates on issues of integration in schools is the one on the issue of wearing scarfs at schools. In most of the debates, headscarfs are seen as a symbol for sympathizing with a certain form of Islam. In contrast to e.g. France, pupils are allowed to wear them at schools in all federal states. But in some states, teachers are not allowed to wear them, because here headscarfs are rather seen as a political than a religious symbol. Political symbols – in contrast to religious symbols such as crucifixes – are not

allowed in schools. Opponents of scarfs in schools claim that banning them will help female migrants to integrate, because it liberates them from an oppressive patriarchal symbol. Those who want to leave it to pupils and teachers whether they wear a scarf or not claim that with banning scarfs, integration efforts will fail, because such bans prove that being visually different is not accepted in schools.

In all federal states, there are decrees on the integration of migrants and ethnic minorities at schools (e.g. the *Erlass "Integration und Förderung von Schülerinnen und Schülern nichtdeutscher Herkunftssprache"* in the State of Lower-Saxony). In these decrees, various measures are detailed out, such as bilingual education, additional German courses and co-operation of schools and migrant parents.

All of these measures target children with a migration background and provide funds for additional language courses and teaching. German laws on integration in schools therefore make integration to an issue that addresses minorities, but not schools, pupils or society in general.

The schools themselves quite frequently have a different approach to the issue of integration. Many schools have school programmes or "school contracts" which make differences in origin, cultural values and beliefs to a central part of school life. Integration is not only seen as an achievement of migrants, but as something that everybody in school, regardless of their family background, has to accomplish.

### **3.1.3 Analysis of conflicts at schools**

#### **Types of inter-ethnic conflicts**

Conflicts and violence span a vast array of phenomena at school, depending on the definition. All definitions of violence consent in that physical violence is at the core of the phenomena (Filsinger 2004). Many definitions also include psychological violence, i.e. one person harms another with insults, exclusion from a group or event, defamation etc. Apart from these interpersonal forms of violence, some theories also include structural and institutional violence (Huisken 2003).

Structural violence can be observed when a person is discriminated by another due to social norms and values, even though the discriminating person is not aware of these "social structures" and does not intend to discriminate (Klewin, Tillmann & Weingart 2002). Institutional discrimination is a specific form of structural violence. A party is discriminated against due to legal norms (such as citizenship rights, foreigners laws etc.) or institutional settings (selective school system in Germany), regardless if the discriminator intends to discriminate or not (Gomolla & Radtke 2002; Kailin 2002).

Even though minorities such as children of migrants face obstacles in their daily lives due to social norms and institutional discrimination and even though these forms of violence might be the root cause for some conflicts at schools, they are very hard to measure. Also, they cannot explain why some pupils get involved in conflicts more often than others.

In our study we therefore concentrate on conflicts in schools that become evident through physical and psychological violence, while keeping in mind that these occur against a background of frequent structural and institutional discrimination of minorities.

Repeated physical and psychological violence are also known as bullying (Klewin, Tillmann & Weingart 2002: 1079). Physical violence includes pushing, beating, thumbing, torturing and the use of weapons, whereas psychological violence consists of insulting, ridiculing, excluding from participation in school and other social activities, use of discriminating and racist language, avoiding social contacts, sexualised and racist harassment etc.

### **Who is involved**

Conflicts are part of daily life. This is especially true in schools, where children from different social backgrounds come together and are required to share an important part of their lives. Therefore, it is a vital element of the educational efforts in schools to teach how to effectively cope with conflicts, how to respect differences and specific interests of others and how to find adequate solutions. Since learning to cope with conflicts is a life-long learning process and children are only at the beginning of it, harsh conflicts with at times violent breakouts are unavoidable, especially when gender roles or social norms expect children to be “tough”.

In these conflicts, it is very hard to distinguish who is victim and who is offender (Melzer & Ehninger 2002). Is the child who reacted to a racist insult by hitting the insulter a victim or an offender? What about the insulting child? He or she possibly just repeated what another person already said before and meant it as a joke without understanding the racist implications of this “joke”. Is that child an offender or a victim?

In other cases, the roles might be clearer defined. Some children are repeatedly target of bullying and attacks by fellow classmates, others are notorious for discriminating and insulting behaviour. In consequence, all children have some encounters with conflicts and violence in schools, but only a rather small number (less than 10 per cent) are severely or even constantly affected by violence. The vast majority of children feels rather safe in their social environment and does not fear harassment in schools or in their pastime (Filsinger 2004). There are, though, some significant characteristics which determine how children are involved in various types of conflicts: gender, age, type of school, social background and – migration background.

Apart from sexualised harassment, boys make up the vast majority of the pupils involved in physical violence. If at all, the claim that a certain culture proliferates physical violence can be empirically sustained only for “boys’ cultures”. Violence and physical domination is part of their naive concept of masculinity and male assertion. Empirical findings demonstrate that in more than 80 per cent of the physical violence incidents at school, only boys are involved. Showing strength by

dominating others and asserting one's own interests is seen as the ideal male behaviour for many boys (and adults, as well).

This does not imply, though, that women are less aggressive or have less conflicts at school (Mohr 2004). Rather, they use other means to cope with conflicts. Especially psychological forms of violence are common among girls. And even though psychological harassment or social isolation is often not perceived to be as serious as physical violence, its effects are by no means harmless. Constant mockery and maltreatment can lead to severer damages than a physical confrontation. Nevertheless, physical violence is more obvious and will cause faster and stricter reactions from society. Therefore, conflicts at school are often perceived as a boys' problem only.

Age is another factor for determining groups involved in acts of physical violence. Empirical studies show that the majority of conflicts in schools happen in the same age group. Also, they are mostly confined to teenagers of age 14 to 17.

Important factors are also the type of school and the social background of the pupils. Both have an influence on the way how children learn to cope with conflicts. In Germany, types of schools and the social background of the children are closely intertwined (see above). Statistically, physical violence is more common in *Hauptschule* and less in *Gymnasium* (Filsinger 2004: 21). But this does not mean that conflicts do not exist in *Gymnasium*. Here, dominance is more often shown e.g. with status symbols (clothes, hobbies) and psychological violence such as mobbing is rather common (Mohr 2004). Pupils in *Hauptschule* often get reminded that they are confined to the lower ranks of society. Violent behaviour is therefore closely tied to social disintegration and lack of perspectives (Reinders 2003).

Nevertheless, considerable differences can be observed between schools of the same school type. In the literature this is explained by "school culture" (Melzer & Ehninger 2002). If schools, i.e. pupils, teachers and headmasters actively work on ways to cope with conflicts productively, accept differences and ban violence e.g. in a school programme, many forms of violence – physical and psychological – can be avoided. If a good school climate is created and pupils acknowledge that learning efforts have a positive effects on their lives, conflicts are less likely to appear.

So how does migration background fit into this picture? Many authors identify in a quite simplifying manner cultural difference as a root cause of conflicts (cf. e.g. Keck 2004, Korn & Mücke 2000). According to a representative survey among 10,000 teenagers in Germany, two thirds of all accounts of physical violence among pupils occur between members of different ethnic groups (Wilmers et al. 2002), i.e. children with migration background are over-represented in this type of conflicts. This finding does not allow to draw the conclusion that migrants are potentially more violent, though.

First of all, the study does not differentiate between victims and offenders in violent conflicts. It does stress, though, that racist aggressions and attitudes continue to be quite common – more than 20

per cent of the German youth conforms with racist statements (cf. also Benz 1999). Hence, it can be assumed that children with migration background are more often victims than offenders in violent conflicts if they are based on racist slurs.

Secondly, due to stereotypes, i.e. processes of “othering”, conflicts in which ethnic minorities are involved are more frequently perceived as acts of violence, whereas a conflict among autochthon youth is seen as a harmless tussle and might not show up in the survey.

Thirdly, as has been mentioned earlier, by far not all conflicts in which minorities are involved are necessarily ethnic conflicts. Many of them are about opposing social and individual interests or about establishing an image of masculinity. If social and family status are taken into consideration the study shows that there are no significant differences between the aggression potential of migrants and autochthon youth (Wilmers et al. 2002).

Fourthly, children of migrants are heavily over-represented in lower social groups and in schools with low opportunities for educational attainment. Empirically, children of migrants do not show more or less deviant behaviour than their peers in class, despite facing institutional discrimination (Gomolla 2000).

In short, violence at German schools is characterized by the fact that it is highly gendered, that there are disparities between different types of schools and that it is contained to a certain age group. Migration background or culture lose their explaining power if the characteristics of the pupils involved are broken down to types of violence, social background and affiliation to cultures with narrow concepts of masculinity.

### **3.1.4 The role of the school in facing the problem (methodological strategies, choices of didactic programmes)**

As much as school types and school culture have an influence on violence and the ways conflicts are solved in general, schools play an important role in creating or preventing inter-ethnic violence (Böhnisch 1994). Like no other public institution, schools can reach all societal groups alike and influence their socialization at a young age. Apart from family and peers, schools are therefore central for children when learning about conflict solving strategies. Also, school is the place where most children are faced for the first time with social, cultural and other differences. The way that schools address (or ignore) these differences fundamentally shapes pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

Almost every school in Germany adopted at least one programme or conducted one project to cope with conflicts in school and to talk about intercultural life in classes and on the school yard. Many schools implemented a programme as an integral part of the school culture, such as “school rules”/“school contracts” or an annual school project day/week. Inter-ethnic conflicts as such, though, are usually not addressed as an isolated phenomenon. Coping with these types of conflicts is usually

part of strategies against violence in schools in general or addressing diversity in various dimensions (gender, social-economic, cultural difference, taste etc.).

Even though neither the actors in schools nor observers from the outside focus on specific programmes or strategies, issues of diversity are also dealt with in the daily curriculum. Language classes, religion/ethics, social sciences, history, geography, but also sport instructions or music lessons are all fields where differences between individuals or social groups are discussed. Teachers intentionally and unintentionally cope with inter-ethnic differences when presenting the lessons. Since they are faced with the fact that a substantial number of their pupils have parents that were not born in Germany, teachers are trained during their academic education and in seminars to be sensitive on cultural issues and perceived differences. Nevertheless, in the daily routine it is hard for teachers and pupils to always be aware of their behaviour and the way they talk about cultural difference.

Programmes that explicitly address cultural difference and strategies to cope with conflicts in a productive way are therefore not only more visible to outsiders, they play an important role for the actors in school, as well. Breaking the daily routine, these programmes allow to focus on specific problems in class or the general school atmosphere. If done well, they have a lasting impact on the way how pupils see and treat each other and they decrease racism and violent conflicts in schools. Some of these programmes that are copied with small variations by many schools and are judged to be successful approaches by schools and pedagogical experts alike will be presented in the following.

### 3.1.5 Good practices in the literature

There is a vast array of theory and description of practice in the literature on conflicts, prevention of violence as well as migrants and interculturalism in schools (cf. Pfetsch 2004; Melzer, Schubarth & Ehninger 2004; Programm ‚entimon‘ 2003). Different approaches can be distinguished by the addressees and the level of intervention (Schubarth 2002). Accordingly, each approach consists of a different mix of methods (rather than one sole method).

Addressees can be pupils, teachers, principals, school social workers/psychologists, headmasters, parents and members of the community (youth clubs etc.). The level of intervention ranges from the individual to groups of peers, classes, age groups, schools, communities and cities.

**Chart: Approaches to inter-ethnic conflict**

<b>Addressees</b>	<b>Level of intervention</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● pupils</li> <li>● teachers</li> <li>● principals</li> <li>● school social workers/psychologists</li> <li>● headmasters</li> <li>● parents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● individuals</li> <li>● groups of peers</li> <li>● classes</li> <li>● age groups</li> <li>● schools</li> <li>● communities</li> </ul>

• community members	• cities
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In the following, seven approaches will be presented which have been adopted in many schools and which are part of larger programmes against violence, racism and other forms of bullying and discrimination. Mediation, intercultural exchange, historical learning, gender training, media work, the Olweus intervention programme and promotion of a democratic school culture can be considered the most popular methods in schools. Each of them comes in a range of variations, though the core ideas are usually the same and can be considered good practice due to their successful implementation and effectiveness in various contexts.

## Mediation

In the 1990's, mediation became a popular, if not the most popular method to cope with conflicts at schools – especially if pupils with a migration background are involved. Mediation seeks to offer parties of a conflict to find a consent in a non-violent, communicative way which respects the other parties interests. An important prerequisite is that both parties participate voluntarily and accept the decisions of the mediation group on free will (Simsa & Schubarth 2001).

Mediators have to be trained in order to facilitate an open and fair settlement of interests. These mediators can be teachers, parents, school social workers or other adults. But increasingly, pupils themselves are trained to be mediators for their own age group or for pupils of younger age groups. There are two quite obvious reasons for promoting “peer mediation”. First, children are closer to the social realities of their fellow pupils than adults and are therefore more easily accepted as insiders and thus as fair mediators. Secondly, the training for the mediators already is a part of improving school cultures. When schools decide to train pupils, the idea has to be discussed in the classes, pupil volunteers have to be found in each class, the training has to be prepared etc. This way, not only the method gets known, also the aim of the method – solving conflicts non-violently with consent – is circulated. Children learn that violence is not wanted at school, that the school gets active in the field and that alternative ways to articulate interests and to solve conflicts exist. This process can even be improved if a room within the school is turned into a mediation room and conflicts are mediated in this room during class hours.

Mediation is a good way to solve conflicts where an intercultural background is assumed, because it is not about stressing differences, but on the contrary on acknowledging various types of differences (Korn & Mücke 2000), accepting the interests and values of others and nonetheless trying to find a common solution through communication. In order to facilitate mediation in conflicts where “cultural difference” is made into a problem, migrants themselves are ideal mediators. Not only do they often speak at least two languages fluently. From their own experience they also know how to identify and cope with differences. Also, they know how interests that at first sight seem to be based in cultural

traits can be broken down into negotiable, non-essentialised values. This assists the process of finding a consent on a solution (Fechler 2003).

Mediation is usually not only used in one class, but in whole schools. Nevertheless, the level of intervention is the individual or a group of peers (mediation, training of mediators) and the class (introduction and implementation of mediation approach). It addresses pupils, but also teachers and school psychologists/social workers.

### **Intercultural exchange**

Many schools try to make the migration background and experience of their pupils (and increasingly of their staff, as well) into a central part of school life. Diversity is turned into a trademark which is promoted in school culture. This way, pupils and teachers should learn not only to accept differences between each other, but to perceive it as an enrichment of life and therefore celebrate difference. The cultural background of all pupils is made visible in the school e.g. by exhibiting art from various countries or by celebrating holidays from different religious and cultural traditions. Some schools have an “intercultural day” each year, where theatre plays are shown, workshops on the social and political situation in other countries are offered, specialty food is prepared or traditional games played. In class, pupils tell each other how things are done in their family and try to understand why certain things are done differently. The experience of the children also plays a mayor role in standard lessons, e.g. in geography classes, language instruction or courses on world religions or ethics (Kloeters 2003).

This approach has to deal with one mayor difficulty. By celebrating diversity, differences between certain groups of pupils are constantly stressed (Gomolla 2000: 49). In the experience of pupils, differences of any kind do not only “enrich” life, but can make it more difficult, as well. Just by knowing how and why other pupils do things differently, it does not necessarily make them like each other – it rather might give them further arguments not to accept each other. By stressing that having different cultural backgrounds is an outstanding matter (and not something completely normal), pupils might learn that conflicts are based on these “essential” differences, and not on differing interests. Many schools with programmes for intercultural exchange realize this problem and try to address it (Auernheimer 2001). They remind that differences between the pupils are not the result of static cultures. Being “different”, i.e. being an individual, is rather a result of personal experiences. Any pupil / person has a concept of personal identity that is in itself contradictory and constantly contested by its environment. Addressing intercultural differences is therefore always about addressing any type of difference between identities and interests of all pupils (Weber 2003: 13; Avci-Werning 2004).

### **Historical learning**

Using history to address pupils' concepts on how to cope with conflicts is becoming an increasingly elaborated approach. Historical epochs, most importantly the time of the Nazi regime in Germany, are used as a "detour" for pupils in secondary schools to talk about the creation of "ethnic differences" and its brutal consequences (Programm ,entimon' 2003). When talking about the mass killings committed by Germans during WWII, pupils can more easily abstract from their own everyday life and think about why certain people are socially excluded, persecuted, and why people kill others and legitimate this with "being different". Many schools visit historical sites, e.g. memorials in former concentration camps, in order to study historical material, actively help to maintain the memorial (e.g. garden work, painting etc.) and speak to witnesses of that time (e.g. former inmates and other victims) and other experts. Some pupils will be able to tell about their grandparents' or other family members' role during WWII (even though it is hard to find out about the offenders this way, because either the children don't know about what their grandparents did or they don't want to admit it).

Children with a migration background have an active role in historical learning. They can make clear to their class mates how it feels to be constantly seen as being different, even though they feel like part of their class, schools etc. Also, they might be able to share experience from their parents' country of origin, e.g. on war, persecution or racism.

This way, pupils can talk about key issues concerning ethnic differences and coping with conflicts. Children can learn that ethnicity is always a social construct, just as much "the Jews" were a constructed ethnicity before and after WWII. Also, they can experience that conflicts should be about negotiating interests. It is shown that blaming "culture" to be the cause of conflicts doesn't open possibilities for solutions and therefore rather aggravate than resolve conflicts.

### **Gender training**

The most significant indicator when looking at physical violence at school is gender. Violent forms of conflict management are almost solely confined to male children and adolescent – as offenders, victims or both. There are some exemptions, though: Sexualized violence often threatens girls, and there are some findings that show that even though female pupils are in the minority in physical forms of violence, some nevertheless are involved in it. Also, as has been noted earlier, girls tend to use other forms of violence in conflicts, such as social isolation, psychological pressure or rudeness. Boys, on the other hand, are by far not all involved in physical violence. Many choose to solve conflicts non-violently or use similar types of non-physical violence as female pupils. Even though this is a common perception (cf. Olweus 2002: 39), these gender differences are not (as the term "gender" already indicates) a result of biological differences between the children, but rather of socialisation and the social structure of society (Weber 2003).

Gender training in schools tries to address this problem by looking at socialisation and gender roles (Programm ,entimon' 2003). Usually, it is done in separate courses for boys and girls, since these two groups have particular cultures, i.e. perceive and discuss social phenomena according to distinct social norms. There are, though, some coeducation elements, as well, since many issues are common for male and female pupils alike.

Boys with a migration background are often treated as outsiders by their fellow pupils and see their only chance of achieving acceptance by following what they believe is the ideal of a “strong male”. This role model, which approves physical violence as a method to enforce their interests, is often idealized and justified as being part of a cultural tradition. Sometimes, boys from migrant families accept this role model because it is the only way they are expected to behave by their fellow pupils, teachers and family (Reis 1998; Garhammer 2003: 191ff.). Gender training tries to show boys different and more successful ways to solve conflicts. They point to the fact that there is a variety of male role models and that most male role models are not consistent at all, but show many ambivalences. Also, such training discusses that certain male role models are not tied to a particular cultural background and that consenting to physical violence does not win other pupils respect, but rather the opposite.

Girls learn in gender training that there is not one single “female” way of coping with conflicts, especially when they face physical violence in conflicts. Gender training tries to build confidence in girls, raises their awareness for alternative ways of coping with violence and practises different behaviour and strategies (e.g. showing solidarity, standing up for ones interests by arguing etc.). As much as boys, it is the goal of gender training for girls to show them that there are a great variety of role for girls, which often overlap with those of boys and that there are productive and less productive ways of coping with conflicts.

### **Media work**

Media work is another prominent approach to conflicts and interculturalism at schools. In interdisciplinary courses (e.g. language instruction, art and social studies), but also in school project days and in after-class courses, media is used to teach coping with conflicts productively, living with respect for each other and building self-confidence. Mostly, pupils design a homepage, but other devices such as video, audio or printed media are used, as well. For example, a film or a radio show can be recorded or a newspaper for pupils can be designed (Programm ,entimon' 2003).

Media work is not only about writing scripts or articles, choosing pictures and other footage, and drawing illustrations. The pupils decide what they want to publicise and how they are going to present it. The aim of media work is therefore not only to teach pupils certain techniques, but to give them a chance to reflect on their school life and make them think about problems in their life and possible solutions. The process of finding an interesting topic to cover and reflecting about it allows a

different form of interaction than during usual school instruction and lets the children, not the educators, decide about form and content of social learning. If done well, pupils can learn that differences between the pupils improve rather than hinder a media project, because everybody can bring in different ideas and abilities. This of course applies to other self-organized school projects, as well, but in media projects the discussion process is usually strongly represented in the “product”, i.e. the newspaper, homepage etc.

Some media projects explicitly focus on the issues of racism or the experience of pupils with migration experience in Germany. These projects want to empower children of minorities by building confidence e.g. through media competence and other qualifications (e.g. programming internet pages). But even without such a focus, pupils tend to learn more about each other in media projects than during class. Since they have to co-operate in order to finish a project and since they have to consent on topics and form, they already practice productive ways of coping with conflicts. They learn to articulate their interests and to address problems in a way that is transparent and comprehensible for others.

Media work is usually a short or medium term intervention in schools and therefore has to be embedded in other forms of conflict education. A more comprehensive programme is e.g. the Olweus programme.

### **The Olweus Intervention Programme**

The Olweus Intervention Programme is a multi-level approach to prevent violence at schools and has been fully or partially adopted by many schools throughout Europe. Dan Olweus designed the programme in Norway in the 1970s and evaluated and refined it in various ongoing panel studies in Scandinavia (Olweus 2002). Its focus is not inter-ethnic conflict, but rather the prevention of bullying in general, i.e. preventing continuous physical or psychological violence against individuals or a group of pupils. Nevertheless, schools and pedagogical scholars particularly recommend this programme and its specific combination of methods to address conflicts where migrant children are involved.

“Multi-level” means that the Olweus Intervention Programme addresses a number of target groups and different levels of intervention. In doing so, it is by far not original (most anti-violence actions involve different actors and levels), but it is one of the most prominent multi-level approaches in Germany. In the programme involved are head masters, teachers, pupils and parents. Various elements intervene on the level of the school, the class, the individual and, as a part of the community, the parents. It has to be noted that the programme asks for an active involvement of teachers and, to a certain degree, of parents; in fact, it is usually initiated by them or the head master. Pupils, on the other hand, do not have an overly active part in the programme.

The programme is usually introduced to schools by the head master or by active teachers in order to do something against a particular incident of bullying in school. First steps to be taken in the programme are 1. a survey among all pupils in order to get a picture of the *status quo* and 2. a teacher conference in which the teachers agree to adopt a “school programme against violence”. Also on the school level are steps in the programme such as increased controls on the school yard during breaks, meetings with the parents’ representative body and workshops with teachers or parents in order to seek ways to improve the school culture.

Further steps address the class level and the individual. Each class talks about violence, tries to draft “class rules against violence” and agrees on (positive as well as negative) sanctions. Class activities also include role games, co-operative learning, regular class meetings where pupils can talk about their experience with conflicts at school as well as joint class activities in order to built trust and self-esteem.

On the individual level, the Olweus Intervention Programme includes teacher-pupil talks with victims and offenders. Often, the parents of both parties of a conflict are invited in order to change the pupils’ conduct and making the parents aware of their role in their children’s behaviour. For some parents, help is provided if they face difficulties in coping with their children. If a pupil cannot be stopped from bullying others by individual discussions or by other sanctions, they can be transferred to other classes or even schools.

Goal of the programme is that violence is banned from daily conflicts in school. Offenders, victims and observers of violent conflicts should build self-esteem to cope with conflicts differently, and pupils should get to know each other and build a sense of community by common activities apart from the usual curriculum (Melzer & Ehninger 2002).

While the Olweus programme primarily concentrates on bullying and other forms of violence at schools, it is used to decrease racism and to address intercultural differences at school, as well. School programmes and class rules can include measures to ban racism and activities in class usually try to teach respect for others and their way of doing and seeing things. Nevertheless, the Olweus programme, as much as other multi-level approaches, never exclusively focuses on conflicts due to racism or intercultural difference. It tries to cope with all types of conflicts by implementing a non-violent school culture and by teaching respectful ways of coping with conflicts.

### **Promotion of a democratic school culture**

In the Olweus Intervention Programme and many other approaches, pupils are put in a rather passive role as victims, bystanders or offenders in conflicts and thus have to be taught how to solve conflicts and to view cultural difference differently. Obviously, a strategy against violence at school needs the active support of teachers and other staff of the school in order to be successfully implemented (Project CREE 2004). But often pupils themselves have clear ideas on better ways to

cope with conflicts and should thus be encouraged to play an active role in changing school culture. In many cases, pupils perceive their conflicts differently than teachers or parents, e.g. they are not seen as a result of ethnic difference, but rather of social difference. Thus, as insiders they can develop different strategies in coping with these conflicts than adults. One way to use the strategic potential of pupils is to introduce participatory elements and by enabling them to create their own projects on coping with conflicts or addressing diversity at school.

To a certain degree, peer mediators can be a highly participatory element to cope with conflicts. Mediators are not only taught how to solve problems, but they come up with their own strategies. Peer mediators can facilitate solutions to conflicts in a creative way it is left to them how, where and when to mediate between conflicting parties. E.g. mediators can agree in a meeting themselves on which principles to follow during mediation and how to address conflicts which are perceived to be based on cultural difference.

One of the largest programmes in Germany with participatory elements is the “*Schule ohne Rassismus*” (“School without Racism”) programme. Mostly pupil activists or members of the pupils’ council decide to adopt the programme and try to become a certified “School without Racism”. In order to receive this certificate and celebrate it in a ceremony, at least 70 per cent of all children and teachers have to sign a “school contract” to ban racism from school. Also, a programme has to be developed to implement a democratic school culture. Pupils are asked to become active not only by signing the school agreement, but also by developing ideas for the school programme in order to cope with conflicts and racism at school.

Other programmes explicitly try to empower children of migrants and other minority groups. During project days, these pupils get a chance to decide on a project, plan and perform it with a high degree of self-organization. They are asked how cultural difference should be addressed in school or discuss how conflicts can be solved productively. Result of such projects could be a conference in school, a media product such as newspapers or websites or new participatory elements such as a council of minority pupils etc. Problematic about such approaches is that children with a migration background are treated differently by confining them to these empowerment projects, which might increase their social isolation. Nevertheless, if the goal of the empowerment programme is achieved, children of migrants win a lot of self-esteem and prestige in the school community and can contribute to a democratic school culture.

### **3.1.6 Conclusion**

The vast array of approaches to conflicts and interculturalism at school shows that these programmes address a large spectrum of problems in diverse contexts. If an approach is successfully

implemented and shows effects (and thus can be labelled as “good practice”) heavily depends on the context and the motivation of the addressees. Nevertheless, all of the portrayed approaches have to deal with two difficulties: If cultural or ethnic differences are over-emphasised, these differences become essentialised and obstructs parties in a conflict to perceive each other as equal in order to negotiate interests. On the other hand, if differences due to a migration background, e.g. different legal and social status, are ignored, there is no possibility to cope with conflicts that pupils assume to be based on this difference. To cope with these two difficulties, approaches that empower children, build self-esteem and open alternative concepts of a multi-faceted personal identity seem to be most promising in order to improve school culture and to teach ways of solving conflicts non-violently without essentialising cultural difference.

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## **3.2 Italian context by Cras Onlus**

### **3.2.1 Context analysis brief description of the national secondary school system and data on migrants and ethnic minorities in schools**

The Italian schools system is currently based on three cycles: primary (or elementary) school (age 6-11), lower-secondary (or middle) school (11-14) and upper-secondary (or high) school (14-18). Education is compulsory for children from 6 to 14.

In March 2003, the Italian Parliament approved a reform of the schools system with Law no. 53/2003 that has been implemented by legislative decrees (last in March 2005). Main changes include a new combined school/work path for students between 15 and 18, personal choice and decentralisation. The reform redefines the age limits for compulsory education and guarantees to everybody the 'right to education and training for at least 12 years or until the acquisition of a qualification (18 years of age)'.

One of the most important innovations of the law is that it lowers the age of access to school: on a voluntary basis, children can attend nursery school when they are aged two-and-a-half instead of three, and primary school when they are five-and-a-half instead of six.

School education will be divided into two cycles, preceded by nursery school and followed by possible attendance at a university or institute of 'higher technical education and training' (Istruzione e Formazione Tecnica Superiore, IFTS).

Children who turn six years of age by 30 April of the school year will be able to enter the eight-year first cycle of school education. The first cycle is divided into primary school (five years) and lower-secondary school (three years). Primary education will involve an opening year and two two-year periods. At the end of the five years of primary school, students will attend lower-secondary school, where the education will be divided into a two-year period and then a third year that will serve as a link with the second cycle. At the end of the first cycle, the student will have to pass a state examination. The second cycle of school education (after the eight-year first cycle), will provide two possibilities: going to high school (liceo), of which there will be eight different sectors - artistic, classical, human sciences, economic, linguistic, musical, scientific and technological; or attending a vocational training school. All students will have the possibility of changing the type of school chosen within the high school system. High school education will be managed by the central state in collaboration with regions, while vocational training schools exclusively by the regions.

High-school education will be divided into two two-year periods plus a fifth year, at the end of which students wishing to attend university will have to pass a state examination. A state examination will not be necessary for access to higher technical education and training (IFTIS). Students that choose

vocational training schools will have the option of completing their entire training path between 15 and 18 years by 'alternating school and work periods'.

The Italian Ministry of Education (MIUR) has recently published two surveys of the presence (see “Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana – Scuole statali e non statali”, September 2004) and of the progress (see “Indagine sugli esiti degli alunni con cittadinanza non italiana”, January 2005) of foreign pupils, particularly giving information and data on pupils not having Italian citizenship, that is to say children born of non-Italian parents (in Italy or abroad) enrolled in Italian schools (adoptees, children of “mixed” couples, nomadic children having Italian citizenship are not included).

Both surveys are of great importance to understand how Italian schools are changing into “privileged laboratories on social inclusion and a place to meet sharing and exchanging opinions” or into “schools of citizenships: European as for inspiration but including several local identities. A framework where different cultures can meet each other”<sup>6</sup>.

In 2003-2004 school year pupils not having Italian citizenship were 282.683, that is the 3,5% of the whole school population. In 1992-1993 school year they were about 30.000. Pupils come from 191 different countries: minority groups from Albania, Morocco and the former Yugoslavia are still the most representative even if minorities from Romania and Ecuador are considerably increasing. Romania (27.627) and Ecuador (10.674) rank third and fourth for total number of pupils. Romanians nearly doubled, being the first minority in schools in the following provinces: Roma, Viterbo, Latina, Torino e Padova. Ecuadorians live mainly in Central and Northern Italy (in the province of Genova they are 50% of foreign pupils). On the other hand Argentineans tripled in the last years (from 1.233 to 3.298): nowadays, especially after socio-economic crisis of 2001, many Italians born in Argentina (descendants of 3 millions Italian migrants from 1830 to 1950) want to come back to Italy.

Pupils not having Italian citizenship are enrolled both in public (90,5%) and in private schools (9,5%). They are mainly in the primary school (40%), in the Northern East Italy (6,1%), particularly in Emilia-Romagna region (7%).

Distribution by macro-regions is the following:

- Northern West Italy : 5,7%
- Northern East Italy: 6,1%
- Central Italy: 4,8%
- Southern Italy: 0,9%
- Islands: 0,7%

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<sup>6</sup> Freely adapted from: MIUR, *Alunni con cittadinanza non italiana – Scuole statali e non statali- Anno scolastico 2003-2004*, Rome, September 2004, Introduction by Minister Moratti.

Milano (Northern West Italy) is the chief-town with the highest incidence (10,2%). Anyway some northern provinces have the highest values: Mantova (9,3%), Prato (9,1%), Reggio Emilia (8,7%), Piacenza (8,3%) e Modena (8,1%).

Italian school has changed very quickly, while other European countries have been gaining a long experience in dealing with immigration: some ten years ago many small cities and little towns did not experience any presence of foreign pupils while nowadays Italy is building a “decentralized” multicultural society where small cities and little towns get more and more involved.

The survey of the presence of foreign pupils in Italian schools presents data at local level describing such a “decentralised” model: it can be noticed that in Cuneo (Northern West Italy), Treviso (Northern East Italy), Macerata (Central Italy) and Siena (Central Italy) provinces percent values of foreign pupils in schools are quite higher than in Venezia (Northern East Italy), Bari (Southern Italy), Napoli (Southern Italy) and Palermo (Islands), which are cosmopolitan cities and important ports in the Mediterranean Sea.

Further important information are about places of origin. Foreign pupils come from 191 different countries (out of 194 in the world). Such a composition features Italian schools not only in big cities: in Bergamo province (Northern West Italy) pupils are from 118 different countries, in Perugia (Central Italy) from 109, in Pesaro (Central Italy) from 90, in Siena (Central Italy) from 80, in Latina (Central Italy) from 78, which directly affects pedagogical methods and school organisation.

In 2003 regular migrants in Italy were about 2.500.000 or 4% of total population: Italy is quickly approaching European standards (little more than 5%). Migrant population lives in the Northern East (19%), in the Northern West (12%), in Central Italy (8%). Southern Italy seems to be the way to Central and Northern Italy: migrants usually pass through southern regions to go northward and settle. Immigration from Eastern Europe is clearly increasing so that Italy is currently the second European country in the European Union (nearly 900.000 migrants). Growing immigration makes foreign pupils incidence on school population higher:

- from 1983-84 to date 276.579 more foreign pupils attend Italian schools (+79.418 from 1983-84 to 1998-99; +197.161 from 1998-99 to 2003-04);
- foreign pupils incidence in Italian schools shifted from 0,06% (1983-84) to 3,49% (2003-2004);
- extra-European population is always the majority of foreign population in Italian schools (55,7% in 1983-84, 53,6% in 2003-04, more than 60% in the period from 1988 to 93).

Foreign pupils attend both public and private schools. Out of 282.683 foreign pupils 90,46% are in public 9,54% in private schools. In lower-secondary 97,67% attend public school while in upper-secondary 95,66%.

Data on incidence by class shows how foreign pupils' school careers develop. Data on the distribution (%) of pupils not having the Italian citizenship by class and geographical area (2003-04 school year) outlines a detailed framework on foreign presence in the secondary school.

In lower-secondary school the incidence by class is the following: 4,2% (1st year); 3,9% (2nd year); 3,8% (3rd year) while by macro-regions is 6,4% (Northern West); 6,8% (Northern East); 5,6% (Central); 1% (Southern); 0,77% (Islands).

In upper-secondary school the incidence by class is the following: 3,2% (1st year); 2,2% (2nd year); 1,8% (3rd year); 1,2% (4th year); 0,9% (5th year). The incidence by macro-regions is 3,2% (Northern West); 3,5% (Northern East); 2,7% (Central); 0,55% (Southern); 0,4% (Islands). The incidence by sections is 0,9% (classical, scientific, linguistic); 1,9% (technical); 3,6% (vocational); 1,6% (artistic).

In Italian schools 191 different citizenships are represented. Immigration from the Eastern Europe is steadily increasing. The largest minority is from Albania. Romanians are making relevant progress but the most remarkable increase in 2003-04 is for Ukrainians (2.300 to 4.414) and Moldavians (1.300 to 3.133), that mainly consists of women working as maids. Presences from Serbia-Montenegro, FYROM, and Croatia are quite significant. Factors determining such an immigration from Eastern Europe are geographical nearness, strategic location of Italy, cultural, linguistic and religious features in common with some of these countries, political changes, approaching strategies to the European Union. The most significant data on pupils having African citizenships refers to Moroccans (2nd at national level), Tunisians, Ghanaians and Egyptians. Tunisians have increased from 5.929 (2002-03) to 8.000 (2003-04). As for American citizenships Ecuadorians represent the most relevant group (5th at national level), while Peruvians, Brazilians and Argentineans have clearly increased over the last years. In Italian schools Chinese represent the first Asian citizenship by number, while Filipinos, Indians and Pakistanis are gradually increasing. Germans represent the largest European minority (2.634 pupils).

For 2003-04 school year the most representative non-Italian citizenships are the following:

- Albanian (49.965)
- Moroccan (42.126)
- Former-Yugoslavia\* (24.358)
- Romanian (27.627)
- Chinese (15.610)
- Ecuadorian (10.674)

[\* Data for Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia-Montenegro aggregated for statistical purpose].

There are clear connections between place of origin and place of settlement as well as an ethnic characterization of Italian regions. Geographical distribution of foreign pupils little changed over the last years: the largest number of foreign pupils still lives in Lombardia (Northern West), Veneto and Emilia-Romagna (Northern East) while percent values (i.e. ratio of foreign pupils to total school population) show a different concentration:

- Emilia-Romagna (7,01%) – Northern-East
- Umbria (6,57%) – Central Italy
- Marche (5,88%) – Central Italy
- Lombardia (5,76%) – Northern-West
- Veneto (5,62%) – Northern-East
- Piemonte (5,38%) – Northern-West

Some values by region and sector are in the table below:

<b>Region/Geographical area</b>	<b>Lower-secondary school %</b>	<b>Upper-secondary school %</b>	<b>Total %</b>
Piemonte	6,02	2,91	5,38
Lombardia	6,59	2,91	5,76
Veneto	6,61	2,6	5,62
Friuli Venezia-Giulia	6	3	4,9
Liguria	6,88	3,58	5,28
Emilia-Romagna	7,62	4,68	7,01
Toscana	6,79	2,87	5,36
Umbria	7,97	3,66	6,57
Marche	6,79	3,28	5,88
Lazio	4,29	2,18	3,59
Abruzzo	3,25	1,09	2,43
Molise	1,09	0,34	0,71
Campania	0,62	0,19	0,48
Puglia	0,95	0,49	0,84
Basilicata	0,7	0,32	0,58
Calabria	1,08	0,42	0,9
Sicilia	0,82	0,32	0,7
Sardegna	0,65	0,28	0,51
Northern-West	6,46	2,28	5,61
Northern-East	6,87	3,44	6,05
Central	5,65	2,68	4,73
Southern	1,02	0,41	0,83
Islands	0,78	0,31	0,66
Italy	4,01	1,87	3,49

Local-level data confirms the Italian “decentralised” model. Despite an ethnic characterisation of some regions always provinces and municipalities present a number of citizenships. Major metropolitan cities (Milano, Roma, Torino) have the largest number of foreign pupils and citizenships. Nevertheless smaller provinces such as Treviso e Vicenza (Northern-East), Brescia e Bergamo (Northern-West) present the same incidence in migrant population.

Province	Foreign pupils (total number)
Milano	20.690
Roma	17.872
Torino	14.216
Brescia	10.072
Vicenza	8.693
Treviso	8.123
Firenze	8.080

As for the ratio of foreign pupils to total school population it should be noted that top provinces are quite small: Mantova (9,32%), Prato (9,06%), Reggio Emilia (8,70%) e Piacenza (8,30%). Some citizenships concentrate mainly in provinces having specific socio-economic features (e.g. Indians in Cremona province, Ecuadorians in Genova, Mauritian in Catania, Tunisians in Ragusa and Trapani, Macedonians in L’Aquila and Macerata, Bangladeshis in Palermo). It is well-known that Chinese community is in the majority in the provinces of Prato and Firenze while Romanian minority still has the majority in five provinces (Roma, Torino, Padova, Latina e Viterbo).

Province	Foreign pupils (% total school population)
Mantova	9,32
Prato	9,06
Reggio Emilia	8,7
Piacenza	8,3
Modena	8,14
Alessandria	7,39
Asti	7,21
Brescia	7,18
Perugia	7,13
Treviso	7,1

Municipality	Foreign pupils (% total school population)
Milano	10,17
Prato	9,08
Reggio Emilia	8,31
Alessandria	8,21
Perugia	8,05
Modena	7,77
Torino	7,72
Piacenza	7,43
Bologna	7,41
Rimini	7,29

A number of different citizenships also characterises schools in fringe areas and smaller towns. Little schools and single classes often have pupils coming from different countries: 30.403 schools have at least one foreign pupil (56,94%); 2.890 have from 11 to 20 foreign pupils coming from 5 to 10 different country; 131 schools have at least 40 foreign pupils and 20 citizenships. As a consequence of this complexity welcome strategies, organisational patterns and teaching materials are highly requested.

Schools are laboratories for social inclusion to open the way to a peaceful living together and create paths for integration: therefore it is important to develop both educational methods to make the most of every pupil and good practices to turn cultural differences into opportunities for all to learn. School progress is a main indicator of social integration.

Data on progress in school career among foreign pupils makes the gap between native and foreign population clear at all levels.

Gaps in success rates between natives and foreigners are as follows:

- primary school - 3,36
- lower-secondary school -7,06
- upper-secondary school -12,56

Progress differ in all sectors of upper-secondary school: in classics, scientific and linguistic schools foreign pupils' promotion rate is 80,3% while in vocational schools 70,4% (rates of Italian students are 90,51% and 78,9% respectively). It is important to say that 40% of all 45.000 foreign pupils

attending upper-secondary schools are enrolled in vocational. School careers often depend on the place of settlement: the gap in promotion rate differs among and within regions and provinces.

Foreign pupils clearly make best progress in schools located in the Centre and in the North of Italy (especially in primary and lower-secondary). In some northern regions the gap in promotion rate is low (Friuli Venezia-Giulia -1,13 in the primary school; Emilia-Romagna -4,94 in the lower-secondary school; Piemonte -9,92 in upper-secondary school). The gap in lower-secondary school ranges between -3,36 in Bologna province and -14,42 in Prato province (Central Italy).

Foreign pupils promotion rates at national level are:

- primary school 96,19% (-3,36)
- lower-secondary school 89% (-7,06)
- upper-secondary school 72,66% (-12,56)

In upper-secondary schools gap may be differentiated: in classical, scientific, linguistic schools -10,21; in technical schools -11,11; artistic schools -11,96; vocational schools -8,50. It should be noted that the majority (40%) of foreign pupils attending upper-secondary school go to vocational schools and there they have the best results.

Place of settlement do influence school progress and differences between regions are quite remarkable.

In lower-secondary schools the gap at national level is -7,06% and values ranges from -4,94 (Emilia-Romagna – Northern-East) to -17,24 (Molise – Southern).

Lowest regional gaps:

- Emilia-Romagna -4,94
- Sicilia -5,65
- Liguria -6,16
- Sardegna -6,54

Highest regional gaps:

- Molise -17,24
- Calabria -16,09
- Basilicata -11,77
- Campania -11,41
- Marche -10,65

In upper-secondary schools the gap at national level is -12,56 and the range of values go from -2,59 (Sardegna – Islands) to -20,17 (Basilicata – Southern).

Lowest regional gaps:

- Sardegna -2,59
- Calabria -4,29
- Molise -6,74
- Puglia -7,48
- Abruzzo -8,11

Highest regional gaps:

- Basilicata -20,17
- Marche -17,18
- Lombardia -16,10
- Emilia Romagna -15,64
- Friuli Venezia Giulia -14,73

### **3.2.2 Legislative framework on integration of non-Italian pupils at school and the role of school system in facing the problem**

The issue of non-Italian pupils is taken into account in national legislation on integration and anti-discrimination provisions. By focusing on possible causes of inter-ethnic violence at school, such as discrimination and marginalisation, Italian legislation aims at preventing both structural and interpersonal violence. Integration indeed aims at furthering the acquisition of means and skills (linguistic skills for instance) as well as at improving interpersonal relationship and capabilities in mutual exchange and understanding. At the same time integration means protecting *integrity* of pupils: they should be supported in improving knowledge on their own history, language and culture of origin in a dynamic and changing process so that on the one hand they are not hostage of culture of origin and on the other they do not have to deny their cultural belonging in order to be accepted by their peers. Therefore intercultural pedagogical approach has been chosen to improve positive social interaction between children of different cultures. It is based on making the most of cultures of origin of non-Italian pupils attending the class, improving dialogue and mutual understanding among different cultures. This approach reflect the necessity of preventing decriminalisation and improving integration as well as the need to protect the cultural identity of non Italian pupils and guarantee their emotional and psychological development in the respect of their cultural background.

Legislation on integration of foreign pupils has been defined during the last decades. Until 80s general provisions on integration of disabled people had been adapted to migrants demands. From the 80s the problem of non-Italian pupils at school has been addressed in the Italian legislation by means of anti discrimination legal instruments and provisions on integration strategies. Both immigration and education legislation define important concepts for fighting against discrimination and improve integration of non-Italian pupils in the schools system. Target of legislation on this issue are pupils not having Italian citizenship.

Italian Constitution states the right to education to for all children on national territory. Art. 34 states “Schools are open to everyone. Elementary education, imparted for at least eight years, is compulsory and free”. The right to education stated in art. 28 Convention on the Right of the Child, has been transposed in art. 38 Italian Law - D. Lgs. n.286/1998. The provision defines the right – duty to study for all foreign minors on national territory, apart from their status on residence permit. Foreign pupils under the age of 18 should attend compulsory education, elementary as well as low secondary school. State, Regions and local entities have to guarantee the effectiveness of right to education throughout implementation of courses on Italian language with the aim of supporting non-Italian pupils in attending public compulsory courses.

The protection of cultural identity of foreign minors is stated in art. 29 of the Convention on the Right of the Child: “1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (a) The development of the child's personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations; (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own; (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin”. This provision has been transposed both in the Immigration Act (so-called “Testo Unico”, i.e. consolidated law), Law No. 286 of 15 July 1998, and in education legislation. Immigration Act states in the art. 38 ‘Education of foreigners. Intercultural education’ that “school community welcomes linguistic and cultural differences as a fundamental value to the mutual respect, cultural exchange and tolerance; to this aim it promotes initiatives aiming at the protection of culture and language of origin and realisation of intercultural activities”.

From the early 1980s immigration became an “issue” in Italy. The needs of integrating children of ‘migrant workers’ as it came out at the European level has affected the key terms of integration policies. In 1982 the decree D.P.R. n.722 "*Implementation of E.E.C. directive n. 77/486 on vocational and educational training for migrant workers* " defined the framework on education of the children of ‘migrant workers’ with the aim ‘principally to facilitate their possible reintegration into the Member-State of origin’. As is clear from this formulation, the provision excluded all immigrant children originating from non-EU countries, although these children formed the large part of foreign children in Italian schools. The decree defined the key term of educational path for EU migrants: adaptation of Italian language education to children’s needs, improvement in teaching language and culture of origin and attendance of general curriculum. In 1982 Single Act on Education applied these provisions on educational path for immigrant children to non-EU countries.

Intercultural approach is defined in details in legal instruments as well as in ministerial memorandum. Immigration Act defines intercultural education as the approach to promote mutual respect and tolerance (art. 38). This provision states that school regards foreign languages and cultures as a fundamental value. It recognises the role of school in promoting dialogue and mutual understanding among different cultural and linguistic groups as well as in protecting language and culture of origin of non-Italian pupils. Moreover art. 38 introduces *cultural mediator*, an external teacher contacted by the school to implement specific activities related to language mediation and education of language of origin. Key responsibilities on integration and conflict mediation are in fact delegated to this role.

Ministry of Education issued two key memorandums on integration of foreign pupils in public schools: memorandums n. 301/1989 and n. 205/1989. Ministerial memorandum n. 301/1989<sup>7</sup> affirms that the presence of non-Italian pupils in class should affect the definition of class curriculum: general courses should be combined with specific projects on intercultural education and individual paths on culture and language of origin defined on foreign pupils’ needs<sup>8</sup>. Non-Italian pupils could make the choice of not attending catholic courses as well as Italian pupils but public schools could not provide non- Italian pupils with courses on a different religious: this issue is not regulated in conventions Italy signs with religious representative organisations.

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<sup>7</sup>Ministerial memorandum n. 301/1989, "*Integration of foreign pupils in compulsory education: coordination of initiatives to promote the right to education*"

<sup>8</sup> Ministerial memorandum n. 205/1990, "*Compulsory education and foreign pupils. Intercultural education*"

Ministerial memorandum n. 301 states 'relational climate' itself should be used to improve integration of non-Italian pupils in class and school. Pupils belonging to different ethnic groups, particularly those arrived recently in the country, have to receive language inputs from their pairs other than migrants of the same age, who are already familiar with the language, and adults able to communicate both in Italian and foreign language. In addition to language, teachers should promote different communicative activities such as playful activities so that pupils could identify the most effective and suitable communication channel for them. Compulsory education should define didactic activities making the most of cultures of origin of non-Italian pupils. Ministerial memorandum n. 205/1990 defined the content of intercultural education at school. The analysis of migration flow points out differences between educational needs of foreign people living on a permanent basis and those who chose for a temporary presence. Different migration plans as well as cultural, social and economic background affect educational needs and expectations of non-Italian families. Indeed these factors affect interest on Italian language and culture and needs for valorisation of language and culture of origin. Whereas on defining suitable individual educational path it is important to make a distinction between non-Italian pupils and Italian pupils, memorandum points out that foreign pupils have to be seen as children firstly with their own personality and characters so that belonging to a different ethnic group is one of the elements to take into consideration. Indeed other elements should be taken into consideration such as cognitive, psychomotor, social and emotional characteristics. Linguistic integration has to be addressed as well. In elementary and secondary school supporting activities should carry out in order to improve language skills of foreign students. Profitable results come from strategies based on alternation of presence of foreign pupils in common classes and activities of foreign pupils in language laboratory. Foreign pupils in a class should be no more than 4-5 units in order to facilitate linguistic integration with Italian pupils. Memorandum defines what intercultural education means for the Ministry of Education. Indeed the presence of non-Italian students in Italian school system calls for intercultural activities as a structural condition in a multicultural society. Educational system in multicultural society has the specific task of promoting mediation between different cultures of pupils: mediation that means not only dialogue between cultures but also a constant exchange. Intercultural education aims at promoting cultural diversity as a positive resource in a democratic society. Main objective of intercultural education is encouraging constructive cohabitation of different ethnic groups in a multicultural society. It implies not only acceptance of diversity but also recognition of cultural identity in a constant pursuit of dialogue, comprehension and collaboration in a perspective of mutual enrichment. Even though intercultural education stimulates an acculturation process, it brings out different cultures of origin. It is a demanding task because unavoidable acculturation process should not be linked to ethnocentric prejudices. Western cultural models should not be considered paradigmatic values and elements foreign pupils should comply with. Each activity based on this

approach even though in the core curriculum, history, geography and science, aims at preventing the spreading of stereotypes and prejudices towards foreign people and different cultures. Moreover, it must support the abandoning the ethnocentric approach and the adoption of human rights based education that aims at a mutual understanding of pupils coming from different cultural as well as social and economic backgrounds. School should play a key role in promoting socialisation between children belonging to different ethnic groups and in improving mutual understanding, solidarity and mutual respect of values and behaviours of children belonging to different regional and national ethnic groups. Moreover, school should play a key role in the preventing and contrasting elaboration of stereotypes and prejudices towards people belonging to different cultures. Lower secondary school in particular should play a key role in educating pupils to cultures and problems of different societies in order to get through one-sided perspectives. In order to implement these declarations the Ministry has defined the framework for training activities in order to improve skills and knowledge of teachers working in the field of insertion of non-Italian pupils' cultures and social problems within the national school framework. Training activities for teachers should be focused on intercultural education, Italian as second language and valorisation of culture of origin. In order to face with the problem of integration didactic strategies have to be defined at the local level so that they could be based on a punctual knowledge of needs and resources available. Following competences have been assigned to local education offices (Provveditorati agli Studi - Ufficio di riferimento per le problematiche degli alunni stranieri): coordinating all institutional and non institutional actors such are Regions and local entities, professional associations, trade unions and representatives of foreign communities; defining needs and planning interventions; gathering and spreading information on implemented and on going activities and bibliographic information; coordinating updating training activities for teachers. An important role is played by regional institute on educational and teaching research (IRRSAE) implementing technical assistance activities and updating courses for teachers.

Two ministerial memorandums on discrimination and intercultural activities should be considered: the CNPI advice on intercultural education, April 1992, and the memorandum n. 122/1992. These two documents affirm that schools should play a key role in supporting young people with cultural, ethic and psychological means to combat against stereotypes and prejudices. Indeed schools have to face with theoretical and practical difficulties in order to define and implement integration programmes by respecting and making the most of diversities. School has traditionally defined their programmes referring to the national culture and now needs to define a new balance between national identity and the intercultural dimension. School should not only welcome different pupils as holder of different cultures but also make the most of different cultures as goods pupils have the right to benefit from. Teachers have to support the development of students' personality by

conveying culture and supporting them in the elaboration processes. In the intercultural approach the valorisation of those elements of culture of origin, values and rights that are important to personal development is combined with the recognition of the limits of different cultures in order to make the dialogue and exchange possible. Indeed intercultural education aims at: improving knowledge and comprehension of processes throughout our and other cultures have defined themselves; spreading mutual respect of different histories and promoting the definition of a common history as well; furthering education to mutual exchange and interaction among different cultures. More solid these basis are, better results in overcoming difficulties linked to cohesistance of different cultures in order to avoid racist behaviours. In order to implement intercultural education CNPI identifies the reform of school programmes as key step as well as the improvement of teachers skills to face with a multicultural environment. Another key element is the improvement of dialogue with foreign families and ethnic communities.

In 1997 Law n. 59 on school autonomy has been adopted. Art. 21 of the Law and the relevant DPR 275/1999<sup>9</sup> aim at providing schools with autonomy in the fields of administration, organisation, pedagogy research and testing new teaching models notwithstanding the competences in defining the general framework of school programmes that remain at the national level. By recognising legal status to single public schools national legislator has provided schools with the competences in organising ad hoc activities on the basis of local and students' needs. Indeed concerning curriculum development we have to distinguish between primary - lower secondary school and upper secondary school. Primary and lower secondary school general curriculum is nationally determined and adapted to local needs by each school. Curricular content, targets, teaching methods and possible links between the various subject areas are determined for each subject. At primary level, the core curriculum comprises Italian, a foreign language, mathematics, sciences, humanities, social studies, art, music and physical education. Religious education is an optional subject. At lower secondary level, technical education is added. Teachers select teaching methods, textbooks and materials. Concerning upper secondary education, central government determines basic curricula for each type of education and gives guidance on teaching methods. Core subjects common to all institutions are Italian, history, a modern foreign language, mathematics and physical education. Law recognises financial autonomy in order to organise human resources and activities. Schools receive funds from Ministry of Education meanwhile they could take advantage of other financing channels (local entities, associations and organisations) so that they can plan and organise different didactic activities: from individual courses on Italian language to common activities aiming at improving mutual understanding and respect. In addition to core curriculum schools define specific programmes to be realised in school. From 1999, *ad hoc* teachers

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<sup>9</sup> Decree n.275/1999 Implementation decree on school autonomy law art. 21 L. 59/1997

(funzioni obiettivo) in order to implement such programmes and coordinate coherent activities. *Funzioni obiettivo* are responsible for planning the overall programme for integration of non-Italian students.

From 1999 to 2000 school year, schools located where number of migrants is more considerable take advantage of *ad hoc* national funds in order to improve teachers' skills and involve cultural and linguistic mediators in school activities.

Implementation regulation on Immigration Act (Decree n. 394/1999) defines detailed rules on non-Italian pupils integration at school. Art. 45 reaffirms the right to education of non-Italian children as well as the duty to attend compulsory education. On the one hand it defines rules for non-Italian pupils enrolment, on the other states integration should be improved throughout language courses, activities aiming at protecting culture and language of origin, intercultural initiatives.

Guidelines on integration and non discrimination have not been updated from 1999. Today provisions in art. 45 regulate integration and non discrimination issues of non-Italian pupils at school.

The above mentioned education and immigration provisions reflect mainly the following three different needs: preventing discrimination, improving integration as well as mutual dialogue and understanding, protecting cultural identity of non Italian pupils by assuring them that their education will be defined in respect of his cultural background. Those provisions recognise culture and language of origin as additional elements to consider in defining educational path as well as in guaranteeing emotional and personal development of pupils. Belonging to a different ethnic group is an element to be added to other elements of diversity, such as interests, skills, competences and personalities.

Experts stressing on both limits and critical points of integration strategy think such a delay in updating guidelines on integration and non discrimination could mean disregarding school multicultural identity so that cultural assimilation indeed proceeds<sup>10</sup>. Experts express concern on the delegation of key responsibilities in integration and mediation school system to cultural mediator as it is an external role contracted by schools for a short time and to implement specific activities.

In short, Italian legislation does not take into consideration violence in schools: even if conduct marks have been applied for a long time as a penalty of violent conducts they are now quite undervalued. National legislation is indeed based on prevention strategies aiming at furthering anti-discrimination and integration practices.

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<sup>10</sup> Regional meeting "Schools and cultures of world. Local entities, networks and schools", 26 of may 2004, Parma

### 3.2.3 Good practices in literature

Italian schools cope with inter-ethnic conflicts from a conflict-prevention perspective: such an approach focuses on the role of both principals and teachers in the implementation of welcome and integration strategies mainly stressing on flexible didactic methods and good relationships. Schools turn into places to meet, share knowledge and exchange opinions so different cultures can meet each other: mutual understanding, personal interaction and cultural exchange are key expressions for effective intercultural education and prevention of inter-ethnic conflicts at school.

For foreign pupils integration schools must widen knowledge about differences and pay special attention to mediation and exchange of experiences. From the foreign pupils' point of view a good integration implies not only formal acquisition of competencies but also good relations and peaceful interaction with natives (both young and adults) in an everyday-process and on a voluntary basis. They need to preserve their own cultural identities being aware their cultures can represent an opportunity for all to learn.

Italian set of rules and principles conceive of school as a learning community where integration can be realised through cultural exchange. Rules and principles are actually practiced in different ways since the introduction of new organisational and didactical methods often depends on financial and human resources as well as agreements with external organizations.

Teachers have a great responsibility to prevent or face with every lack of understanding (among children and/or between school and parents) and make dialogue easier. As a consequence their feelings range from taking upon themselves the whole responsibility to denial or delegation: on the one hand teachers are requested to have further professional competencies enabling them to respond to new pedagogic patterns and relationship needs; on the other the definition of common guidelines or a model for integration (new organisation, new didactic approach, language needs analysis, methods for preventing conflicts) seems to be urgent.

Although welcome strategies nationwide often show schools operators' openness and willingness there is still a strong need for flexibility in dealing with education in multicultural classrooms. Provisional actions implemented to address some critical situations were lacking systematic approach to cultural exchange, intercultural education, integration.

The Italian school system presents critical points such as lack of common references in dealing with multiculturalism/interculturalism, biased social representation of immigrants, new school

organisational patterns (financial restraints weaken school autonomy) and school population (classes and/or schools for socially/culturally homogeneous students).

Nevertheless a number of projects has been implemented over the last ten years to further welcome and integration strategies. The following examples of good practices mainly refer to actions to improve intercultural education and teaching/learning of Italian as a second language in multi-ethnic schools (some of them are included in the CD-ROM on intercultural education published by the Italian Ministry of Education).

1) *Interculturalmente* is a project realised by Scuola Media Statale<sup>11</sup> “Padre Costanzo Beschi”, SMS “Don Milani”, Municipal Elementary School (Castiglione delle Stiviere, Mantova, Northern-West Italy). As 147 foreign pupils coming from different non-European countries in local schools were suffering the consequences of unprecedented immigration in Castiglione delle Stiviere, teachers felt the importance of meeting special needs (learning difficulties, relationship difficulties) as well as of correctly evaluating behaviours and progress of children. The project aimed at establishing personal relationships, improving language skills, enhancing cultural exchange. Priorities were the following: Italian language learning, social integration of pupils and their families, better relationships, intercultural communication and mutual understanding, children aware of diversity and stop cultural harassment, supremacy and exploitation of ethnic groups. The project has been carried out according to three main steps: 1) analysis and discussion with children on main issues (welcome, knowledge and understanding, dialogue, key competencies, i.e. language, relationship, social behaviours); 2) workshops on actual socialisation, integration, re-integration; 3) meetings with experts or cultural facilitators. The project has involved pupils, teachers and a permanent expert for about 50 working hours. Municipal Administration, the Association of Parents and Islamic associations co-operated.

2) *Integrazione linguistica e culturale degli alunni stranieri* (“Linguistic and cultural integration of foreign pupils”) is a project realised by SMS “Lorenzetti” (Rosia – Sovicille, Siena, Central Italy). The number of foreign pupils in local schools was increasing: 60 children in elementary schools and 20 in SMS for 19 different citizenships, most of them coming from Albania and the former Yugoslavia. School operators felt unprepared to encourage good relationships and to adapt didactic methods for their lack of knowledge about strategies on cultural diversity management and cultural exchange. The project aimed at enhancing multicultural, intercultural and linguistic competency among teachers, improving welcome strategies and the quality of socialisation process, developing communication skills of foreign pupils. Methodologies on multiculturalism in education were used to further dialogue.

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<sup>11</sup> SMS or Middle School (lower-secondary education)

Foreign pupils were expected to gain a good command of Italian language and take part in class activities, while Italian students to behave respectfully toward foreign pupils, improve their own knowledge of different cultural identities and learn to dialogue and co-operate. The project consisted of three phases: 1) welcome and inclusion of foreign children; 2) development of linguistic competencies (i.e. Italian as a second language) and realisation of activities on interculture (films, discussions, intervention of cultural mediators); 3) evaluation (interviews with children and their parents, evaluation of impact on Italian pupils).

3) *Io e gli altri* (“Me and the others”) is a project realised by SMS “Lorenzetti” (Rosia – Sovicille, Siena, Central Italy). The number of foreign pupils in local schools is increasing: 60 children in elementary schools and 20 in SMS for 19 different citizenships, most of them coming from Albania and the former Yugoslavia. The project aimed at furthering knowledge of and respect for different cultures through the involvement of teachers, pupils and experts from the University for Foreigners of Siena. The project consisted of three main activities: 1) a refresher course for teachers; 2) intercultural activities in nursery-school and elementary schools; 3) definition of new didactic paths.

4) *Mosaico: una scuola per tutti* (“Mosaic: a school for all”) is a project realised by Istituto Comprensivo di Via Giusti (Milano, Northern-West Italy). Context analysis showed a pressing need for: a) further integration of foreign pupils through schooling and language empowerment (L2); b) better interactions between natives and migrants; c) training on computer literacy; d) permanent guidance; e) an improved co-ordination between schools; f) addressing all socio-cultural category represented in the school. The project therefore aimed at integrating foreign pupils by means of three main actions: L2 and interculture, multimedia, guidance (i.e. language skills development, respect of cultural identity, interaction, intercultural approach, conflict management and good relationships, multimedia literacy, guidance activities for children and their families). Intercultural activities consisted of games (elementary), visits to places where different ethnic groups live and work (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year of lower-secondary school), artistic creation (3<sup>rd</sup> year of lower-secondary school). The project has involved 5 facilitators for L2, one multimedia operator, one tutor for guidance activities. Children and teachers were targeted.

5) *Progetto TAKIM* (“TAKIM Project”) is a project realised by SMS “Galileo Galilei” (Monopoli, Bari, Southern Italy). In the early 90s a large number of Albanians reached the southern region of Puglia. Schools become soon aware of how school unattendance and vagrancy could lead to social uneasiness and marginalisation. Since 1991 many young Albanians were enrolled in SMS “Galileo Galilei” even if they could not provide any documentation and in 1995 the school twinned with Meto

Meto School (Kuc, Valona, Albania). Integration practices have been improved since then on the basis of a multicultural approach. The project aimed at furthering welcome strategies, mutual understanding, dialogue and cultural exchange, diversity education, tolerance, solidarity, knowledge of Albanian history, cultural exchange with twinned Albanian schools, financial support to twinned Albanian schools. The project has been implemented through curricular and didactic activities, extra-curricular activities, agreements (with other schools, associations or non-profit organisations), twinnings, the production of new didactic materials, programmes and training. Over the years have been realised important activities such as twinnings (with SMS “Skanderberg”, S. Demetrio Corone, Cosenza, Southern Italy in 1994; with “Meto Meto School”, Kuc, Valona, Albania in 1995), the publication of a school review (“Inchiostro vivo”, 1994), hospitality provided to “22 Tetori School” of Berat, Albania (1995), equipment to the Meto Meto School (1995), didactic agreement with families and associations (1997-98), definition of a training programme for intercultural education (1997-98). Children, their families, teachers, civic and social associations, Albanian schools have been targeted.

6) *Zorba, Fortunata & Co.* is a project realised by SMS “Giacinto Bianco” (Brindisi, Southern Italy). Teachers wanted to make the most of foreign presence (an Albanian girl) improving both children relationship abilities and willingness to co-operate for common goals. Teachers were inspired by and based their work on *The Story of a Seagull and the Cat Who Taught Her to Fly*, a novel by Luis Sepulveda that stresses on how diversities can enrich each other. Common reading was therefore the reason why all children were invited to improve language and communication skills as well as to learn intercultural approach and responsibility for environment. The Albanian girl clearly represented the “seagull” in class-room reality so two lessons were learned: 1) the affective dimension makes communication easier reducing the impact cultural stereotypes can have on pupils’ relationships; 2) there is a difference between “integration” and “identification”, or everyone must be himself/herself even if inter-acts with other cultures. Children in SMS “Giacinto Bianco” and in the elementary school were targeted.

7) *Da Babele all’Arcobaleno* (“From Babel to the Rainbow”) is a project realised by SMS “Martiri di Belfiore” (Mantova, Northern-West Italy) addressing the need for communication in the welcome phase. The project aimed at fostering integration of children in both school and social life through language skills development. The implementation has involved one teachers of humanities (3 hours per week) and two foreign pupils (from India and Albania). After preliminary survey of place of origin, cultural features and present condition children were taught Italian language basics (written and oral) in order to gradually improve communication skills: 1) understanding simple phrases/texts; 2) producing

simple phrases/texts; 3) expressing himself/herself in speaking/writing. At the end of course children had a good command in Italian and ability to use foreign language to easily study.

8) *Studiare la storia per avere radici e ali* (Studying history to have strong roots and wings) is a project realised by ITC (Technical school) "P. F. Calvi" (Padova, Northern-East Italy). The study of ancient history intended to lead foreign pupils to an in-depth knowledge of both their own origins and the place where they lived: the study of civilizations is therefore considered as a starting point to promote intercultural exchange and the definition of common goals. Multimedia have been widely used in the implementation of the project: hypertexts, interactive pages, images and audiovisuals made learning easier, and represented a good way to practice language. Pupils could listen to and read abstracts on the issue in the following languages Italian, English, Spanish, Romanian, Albanian, Chinese, Russian and Arabic.

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### 3.3 Latvia context by Baltic Institute of Social Science

#### 3.3.1 Description of context

##### A description of Latvia's education system general information<sup>12</sup>

The Latvian state guarantees equal rights to an education to every citizen and permanent resident of Latvia, anyone who has the right to hold a non-citizen's passport, as issued by the Republic of Latvia, anyone who has a permanent residency permit in Latvia, and anyone who is a citizen of the European Union and has been given a temporary residency permit.

##### Basic education

Children usually begin their basic education during the course of the year when they will turn seven years old. They continue until the age of 16. In certain cases, the basic education can continue until the age of 18. Basic education in Latvia is mandatory, and the education programme lasts for nine years. The mandatory content of the education programme is specified by national standards which also cover preschool activities.

The aim of the basic education is to allow young people to gain the basic knowledge and skills that are needed in life and in one's surrounding society. The aim is also to allow young people to make their way through value systems which exist in their world.

The education programmes are implemented by educational institutions which are called **elementary schools**. The first four years of the programme can also be handled by **primary schools**. High schools, too, can offer the full basic education programme. Other institutions which can do so are known as trade schools, special educational institutions, evening (shift) schools, residential schools, institutions for social or pedagogical adjustment and education, or other education institutions in which the basic education programme is instituted in full or in part.

In primary school (grades 1 to 4), children are not given grades with respect to their knowledge and skills. From the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and forward, knowledge and skills are graded on a 10-point scale.

When students complete elementary school, they take centralised examinations, the number and content of which are defined by the Ministry of Education and Science. Those who pass all of their subjects and all of the national tests receive a certificate to confirm their basic education and the grades which they received.

Evaluations in those subject areas in which there is a centralised examination are confirmed in basic education certificates.

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<sup>12</sup> See <http://www.izm.gov.lv/default.aspx?tabID=20&id=550&lang=1>.

These documents allow young people to continue their education in education programmes at the secondary level.

If a student has not been given a grade in a subject area or a national exam, he or she receives a report card. This allows the student to enrol in professional basic or trade education programmes.

### **Secondary education**

There are two kinds of education programmes at the secondary level in Latvia – the general and the professional secondary education. General education programmes are academic in nature, their aim is to prepare students for ongoing studies in the future. Professional secondary education programmes are more aimed at professional skills, helping students to enter the job market and/or to pursue a further education. When students are admitted to secondary education programmes, educational institutions can insist on entrance examinations in accordance with basic education standards. They may not, however, examine students on subjects in which they have already received their basic education certificate.

The mandatory content of the general secondary education programme is defined by national standards in this area. General secondary education programmes are offered in the following areas:

- A general education, which is offered without any specifically emphasised subjects of study;
- The humanities and social sciences direction, where the education programme particularly accents subjects in those areas;
- The mathematics, natural sciences and technologies direction, where the education programme particularly accents subjects in those areas;
- The professional direction, where the education programme particularly accents a professional area (art, music, business, sports, etc.).

In all of the aforementioned cases, there are eight subjects of study that are mandatory for everyone. Each programme direction has three to six other subjects that are mandatory. Schools can offer various electives, and these can account for 10 to 15% of a student's time at school. There can also be opportunities for a more in-depth study of one of the mandatory subjects. The general secondary education programme in a specific direction can also be merged with a minority education programme, including the student's native minority language, as well as courses which have to do with the identity of ethnic minorities and their integration into Latvia's society.

General education programmes are implemented at **high schools** and **gymnasiums**. High schools are institutions where the full basic education programme, too, is offered. Gymnasiums usually offer only the general secondary education programme, although they sometimes accept students from

the 7<sup>th</sup> grade forward. Gymnasiums must offer at least two or three educational programme directions. Students in a single class follow a single education programme.

Centralised exams are mandatory for students who wish to graduate their secondary education programme. The content and procedures related to these exams are defined by the Ministry of Education and Science and approved by the Cabinet of Ministers. Would-be grads have to take five centralised examinations. One subject is defined by the ministry, the second is determined on the basis of the programme direction which the student has been following, the third is determined by the school, and the fourth and fifth can be selected by the student himself or herself.

Students who have received a grade in all of their subject areas and in the national exams receive a certificate of secondary education and a printout of their grades. Assessment in those areas of study in which there is an organised centralised exam is confirmed in a general secondary education certificate.

These documents, which confirm the completion of a general secondary education, allow the student to continue his or her education at the level of higher education. If the student has not received a grade in a subject of study or on one of the national exams, he or she receives a report card.

### **Vocational secondary education**

The aim in professional education is to allow the student to continue with his or her education after being graduated from the basic education programme or from high school. Students are given a chance to develop initial professional qualifications, to develop themselves for professional ongoing education, or to gain the right to go on to a higher education. Professional education institutions offer education programmes in all areas of economic activity.

The modern job market places serious demands on people – good contact skills, knowledge about maths, the natural sciences and the social sciences, skills in foreign languages, and the ability to use modern information technologies. All of these are subjects that are covered in the relevant education programmes. During a professional education, moreover, there is a serious focus on business development, environmental protection, intercultural issues, and self-development among young people – these are all subjects which help students to develop a successful life and career. The teaching process is organised so that theoretical lectures intermingle with practical activities in workshops and laboratories. Students in their later years of study can also serve internships at companies or institutions.

The content of professional secondary education programmes is determined in a standard on the subject, but also in professional standards. The professional secondary education programmes are implemented in accordance with all areas of economic activity in Latvia.

A professional secondary education is available at **trade schools** and **trade high schools**.

Trade schools offer professional basic education programmes which last up to three years. There are also trade education programmes which last for two or three years. In both cases, students are admitted if they have completed their basic education. In some exceptional cases this is not necessary, but in that case the student can be admitted no sooner than during the calendar year when he or she turns 15. Those who have not completed their full basic education by the age of 15 can complete their studies in the content of the basic education programme once they have been admitted to the trade school. This is done in parallel with the professional training which the student undergoes.

The difference between the two programmes is that professional basic education programmes are aimed at professional preparedness which will allow the student to handle very simple tasks, those that correspond to the lowest level of professional qualifications (*Level one — skills and knowledge are learned at an educational institution or in practical work. This level of professional preparedness allows the individual to handle very simple tasks under the supervision of others.*) The trade education programmes for people who have completed their basic education are aimed at the second level of professional qualifications, knowledge and skills (*Level two — preparedness which allows the individual to do the work of a qualified worker independently. The individual is responsible for his or her work, which is done in accordance with instructions, and is able to work in a group.*)

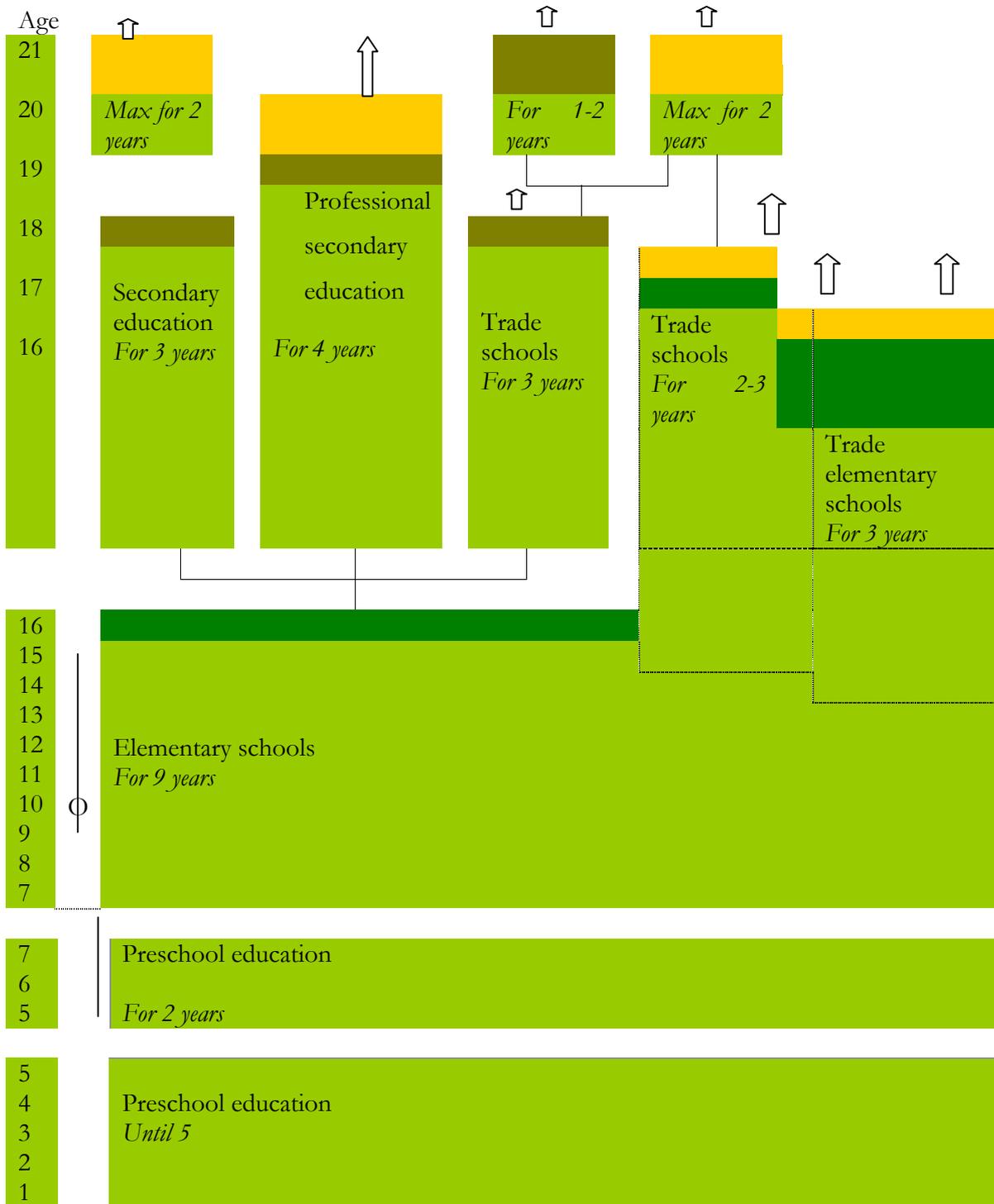
The content of trade education programmes integrate general subjects at a level which allows graduates to continue their education in professional secondary education programmes where they can achieve a level of knowledge and skills which corresponds to the third level of professional qualifications. Alternatively, graduates can continue their education in a general secondary education course which is aimed at allowing them to catch up with students who completed their general secondary education earlier. This course lasts for one year, and successful graduates can then pursue a higher education.

A trade high school (sometimes known as a *trade gymnasium* or *technical school*) offers professional secondary education programmes which last for four years after the student has completed his or her mandatory basic education, or one to two years after the student has completed a trade education.

Professional secondary education programmes are focused on the knowledge and skills that are needed for the third level of professional qualifications (*Level three — preparedness which allows the individual to do work which involves planning and organisation of the work. After gaining practical work experience, the individual can take responsibility for the distribution of resources and the work of other workers.*) The professional secondary education programme covers subjects from the basic education programme at a level which allows graduates to pursue a higher education.

Table 1 shows the general secondary education system in Latvia.

TABLE 1. GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION SYSTEM IN LATVIA



<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:darkgreen;"></span>	Elementary schools exams
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:yellow;"></span>	Secondary schools exams
<span style="display:inline-block; width:15px; height:10px; background-color:olive;"></span>	Trade schools qualification exams
○	Mandatory education
▲	Continuation of education
↑	Labor market

Data source: Home Page of *Ministry of Education and Science*

## **Minority education**

### **Language of instruction**

Classes at all state and local government education institutions are taught in the state language – Latvian. Education in other languages is available at private education institutions, as well as those state and local government education institutions where minority education programmes are being pursued. The state language is taught in all cases, including those when a student is pursuing his or her basic or secondary education in another language. The Latvian language examination is administered in accordance with national rules.

Government-financed secondary education in Latvia is offered in eight minority languages – Russian, Polish, Hebrew, Ukrainian, Estonian, Lithuanian, Roma and Belarusian. In 2004/2005, there were 724 schools in Latvia in which classes were taught in Latvian, 155 schools where classes were taught in Russian (a bilingual education programme is being offered in those schools), and 108 where classes were taught in Latvian and in Russian (these are dual flow schools where there are both Latvian and minority classes). There are four schools where classes are taught in Polish, and one apiece where students study in Ukrainian and Belarusian. At one Estonian and one Lithuanian school, certain subjects are taught in the minority language. The Roma language is taught as an elective at two schools.

TABLE 2. NUMBER OF SCHOOLS BY LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

School year	Total	Latvian	Russian	Dual flow schools - Latvian/Russian	Polish	Ukrainian	Belorussian
2004. /05.	<b>993</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
2003. /04.	<b>1009</b>	<b>729</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
2002. /03.	<b>1017</b>	<b>720</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
2001. /02.	<b>1029</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
2000. /01.	<b>1037</b>	<b>724</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
1999./00.*	<b>1057</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>* 2</b>
1998. /99.	<b>1074</b>	<b>728</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	

\* int. al. 1 Lithuanian school

Data source: Home page of *Ministry of Education and Science*.

<http://www.izm.gov.lv/default.aspx?tabID=20&id=550&lang=5>

Over the last 10 years, there has been an increase in demand for an education in Latvian, and there has been a correspondingly lower level of demand for an education in Russian. In 2003/2004, 74.4% of preschool children began their studies in Latvian, and in the 2004/2005 school year that percentage was up to 75.2%. This is mostly because non-Latvian parents increasingly want their kids to have an education which will later offer them greater opportunities to study at the university level and to become more competitive in the labour market.

TABLE 3. NUMBER OF STUDENTS BY LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

School year	1995/ 1996	1999/ 2000	2000/ 2001	2001/ 2002	2002/ 2003	2003/ 2004	2004/ 2005
Latvian	203 607	239 163	242 475	242 183	237 425	230 212	214 855
Russian	132 540	120 925	116 009	108 454	101 486	95 841	84 559
Other minority*	1513	1344	1344	1352	1397	1305	1253
Total	337 660	361 432	359 818	351 989	340 308	327 358	300 667
Study in Latvian (%)	60.3	66.2	67.4	68.8	69.8	70.3	71.5

\* Study language in most minority schools is Latvian or Russian.

Data source: *Ministry of Education and Science*

TABLE 4. NUMBER OF COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL MINORITY STUDENTS BY NATIONALITY

School year	Russians	Belorussians	Poles	Ukrainians	Lithuanians	Roma	Jews	Estonians
2003/04	75 144	5494	5314	4184	2455	1508	676	162
2002/03	78 345	6844	5546	4326	2512	1591	723	178
2001/02	83 686	6464	5742	4690	2649	1317	762	183
2000/01	88 506	6702	6090	5219	2757	1187	867	166
1999/00	91 745	6910	6081	5158	2707	1067	877	176

Data source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2003 (Ministry of Education and Science)

Table 5. COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL STUDENTS PERCENTAGE BY NATIONALITY (%)

School year	Latvians	Russians	Belo-russians	Poles	Ukrainians	Lithuanians	Roma	Jews	Estonians
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2003/04	68.9	24.1	1.8	1.7	1.3	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.1
2002/03	68.5	24.1	2.1	1.7	1.3	0.8	0.5	0.2	0.1
2001/02	68.0	24.5	1.9	1.7	1.4	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.1
2000/01	68.0	25.7	1.97	1.8	1.5	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.1
1999/00	66.2	26.4	2.0	1.8	1.5	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.1

Data source: Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2003 (Ministry of Education and Science)

### 3.3.2 Legislation regarding integration of minorities in schools

Following legislative documents regarding the education of ethnic minorities have been passed by the Latvian Parliament (Saeima):

- Satversme (Constitution) of the Republic of Latvia (1918);
- Law On Education (1998);
- Law On General Education (1999).

Republic of Latvia has also adopted several international documents regulating the education of ethnic minorities:

- UNO General Declaration On Human Rights (1948);
- UNESCO Convention On Discrimination In Education (1978);
- European Council General Convention On The Protection of Ethnic Minorities and extended report (1995).

### Development of education system for ethnic minorities in Latvia (1990 – 2005)

Until 1995 actually two systems of schools existed: education institutions with the Latvian language of instruction and education institutions with the Russian language of instruction. From 1990 till 1992 the first ethnic minority schools (Riga Polish Secondary School, Riga Ukrainian Secondary School, Daugavpils Polish Secondary School) and classes (Lithuanians, Estonians, Roma) were established.

In 1995 the first amendments to legislation concerning education of ethnic minorities were made (*Amendments to the Law On Education*), determining that in general basic education 2 subjects shall be studied in the state language and in general secondary education 3 subjects shall be studied in the state language. A request was addressed to international organizations asking for assistance in the

implementation of the requirements set by legislation, i.e., to work out suggestion and methodic for education in Latvian in Russian schools.

In 1996 the activities of National programme for Latvian Language Training (LVAVP) commenced. The main target of these activities were to prepare teachers and teaching resources for teaching Latvian language in Russian schools.

From 1998 teachers of the schools for ethnic minorities are required to prove the achievement of the advanced level in the attestation of the state language skills (there are three levels to evaluate the language proficiency). Also a new legislation on education was adopted in 1998: the Law on Education anent to minority education (int.al. schools with education in Russian language) determines the use of language in the process of education.

In 1999 implementation of education programmes for ethnic minorities was introduced, determining the use of two languages – Latvian and ethnic minority's – for the acquisition of curriculum. Transition to bilingual approach in teaching and learning has been commenced in basic education, setting a 3 year transitional stage.

In 2001 in jurisdiction of Ministry of Education and Science the Consultative Council for Ethnic Minorities' Education Affairs was established and 4 centres of bilingual education were set up (in Daugavpils, Liepaja, Riga, Rezekne).

In 2003 Cabinet of Ministers revised a model programme of general secondary education, stipulating the use of state language and ethnic minority's language ratio for acquiring subjects (60% in the state language, 40% in the ethnic minority's language).

In 2004 it has been envisaged to commence the implementation of the requirements set by the state in grade 10 (i.e. up to 60% of the total curriculum of general secondary education must be acquired in the state language in the education programmes for ethnic minorities), setting a 3 year transitional stage.

### **Transitional stages in the education for ethnic minorities**

There are several important transitional stages in the development of basic and secondary education of ethnic minorities:

#### Basic education:

- from the school year of 1995/1996 – studying of at least 2 subjects in the state language;
- from the school year of 1999/2000 – bilingual teaching and learning in grade 1;
- from the school year of 2002/2003 – bilingual teaching and learning in grades 1-9.

#### Secondary education:

- from the school year of 1995/1996 – studying of at least 3 subjects in the state language;
- from the school year of 2004/2005 – in 10<sup>th</sup> grade 60% of subjects must be taught in the state language and 40% in the ethnic minority's language;
- from the school year of 2007/2008 - from 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade 60% of subjects must be taught in the state language and 40% in the ethnic minority's language.

#### **State guarantees for the education of ethnic minorities**

The Latvian state has declared the following principles for the education of ethnic minorities:

- The possibility to acquire basic education and to learn the native language at the same time, to keep and develop the cultural values, shall be provided for the residents representing ethnic minorities who are at the age of compulsory schooling.
- The bilingual approach used in the implementation of general basic and general secondary education programmes for the acquisition of curriculum enhances competitiveness in the labour market, ensuring not only the knowledge, but also skills to use both languages in different situations.
- The implementation of education policy for ethnic minorities facilitates the integration of the society of Latvia, providing guarantees for the rights of ethnic minorities and ensuring the requirements set by international documents.

#### **Main areas of activities in the education for ethnic minorities**

Since the restoration of independence of Latvia the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science in collaboration with several other state and non-governmental actors has carried out many activities around the following main areas:

- development of education programmes for ethnic minorities;
- development of bilingual education methodology;
- training of teacher trainers of bilingual education methodology;
- provision of teaching and learning resources for bilingual education;
- devising of teaching and learning resources for the subjects of social studies as for a single and uniform cycle of social studies;
- conceptual and content development of a programme for citizenship education

- promotion of intercultural education;
- facilitation of cooperation among education institutions;
- teacher pre-service and in-service training;
- development of the assessment system of educational achievements.

### **General education programme models for ethnic minorities**

Since 1999 each educational institution has the possibility to choose one of the four general minority basic education programme models offered by the state. In following the proposed models are characterised.

#### Model 1

- In grade 9 teaching and learning mainly takes place in the Latvian language, the acquisition of the ethnic minority's language and literature is provided in the form of separate subjects.
- Depending on parents' wishes, the education institution provides the possibilities for keeping national culture.

#### Model 2

- In grade 9 the state language and ethnic minority's language is purposefully used for the acquisition of curriculum.
- The possibility to take national examinations and tests in any of the two languages of instruction is provided for students.
- The acquisition of the ethnic minority's language and literature provided in the form of separate subjects.
- Depending on parents' wishes, the education institution provides the possibilities for keeping national culture.

#### Model 3

- In grade 9 – a gradual transition from teaching and learning in the ethnic minority's language to Latvian language is being implemented.
- The acquisition of the ethnic minority's language and literature provided in the form of separate subjects.
- Depending on parents' wishes, the education institution provides the possibilities for keeping national culture.

#### Model 4

- In grade 9 at least 10 - 11 subjects are studied in the state language or bilingually; at the beginning in grades 1- 4 the language of instruction is the language of ethnic minority only
- The acquisition of the ethnic minority's language and literature provided in the form of separate subjects
- Depending on parents' wishes, the education institution provides the possibilities for keeping national culture

### Individual model

Educational institutions can also develop their own models for minority education. A programme developed by an education institution must fulfil the following conditions:

- in grade 9 the use of state language in the acquisition of curriculum shall be within 50 – 70%;
- the acquisition of the ethnic minority's language and literature provided in the form of separate subjects;
- depending on parents' wishes, the education institution provides the possibilities for keeping national culture

Below the preferences of education institutions for general basic education programme models for ethnic minorities are shown as made in 2001:

○ Model 1	15% of education institutions
○ Model 2	13% of education institutions
○ Model 3	42% of education institutions
○ Model 4	11% of education institutions
○ Individual model	19% of education institutions

In 2002, experts who were surveyed by the Baltic Institute of Social Sciences under the auspices of a study called “Analysis of the Introduction of Bilingual Education” said that the introduction of bilingual education in elementary schools, which began in 1999, was a process that was organised in too great hurry. It was only three months before the beginning of the school year (on May 27, 1999), that the Ministry of Education and Science approved four sample education programmes for minority schools. The models were selected in a great hurry and without much thought. Many schools chose the programme which would require the fewest changes in the existing education process.

### **Description of conflicts in schools**

#### ***Education Reforms and the Problems of Ethnic Conflicts in Latvia***

Since 1999 several studies on education reforms and problems of ethnic conflicts have been carried out. The main studies in this field are following:

1) Implementation of Bilingual education policy 1999. Baltic Institute of Social Sciences.

The aim of the project is to discover the readiness of minority schools to introduce bilingual education, to study attitudes of teachers, students and their parents towards bilingual education, education reform, towards Official Language Law. Totally situation in fifty schools around all country were studied. The practical aim of the project was to develop Education policy regarding schools of minorities.

2) Analysis of the implementation of bilingual education 2002. Baltic Institute of Social Sciences.

The aim of this study was to see how successful the Education Ministry has been in implementation of bilingual education, as well as to look at the extent to which minority schools have been preparing successfully for the next phases in this process. Bilingual education has been implemented in all classes of elementary school in the 2002/2003 school year, while minority secondary schools have shift toward a system in which most classes are taught in Latvian in 2004. The study covers all of the major stakeholders in the field of education policy, including those who shape the policies and the target audience for education reforms.

3) Latvian Education reform in the context of the existing and possible models of bilingvism in Latvia: an evaluation of the dual flow schools as examples of bilingual education 2003. Baltic Institute of Social Sciences.

Short term aim of the project was to evaluate current situation at the dual flow schools in order to use the experience of the dual flow schools for accomplishment of minority education. Long term aim of the project was to mark out possible future models of bilingual schools basing on the experience of dual flow schools and the existing and predictable bilingvism in the Latvian society.

4) Integration of minority youth in the society of Latvia in the context of the education reform, 2004. Baltic Institute of Social Sciences.

The aim of the project was to study the way in which minority education reforms have helped to shape the political views and positions of students vis-à-vis the Latvian state, its policies, their sense of belonging to the state, ethnic relationships and integration into Latvia's society. To develop an understanding of the factors which are promoting the integration of minority schoolchildren and students into Latvia's society, along with the factors, which, on the contrary, may be facilitating political dissatisfaction and more in-depth conflicts.

The studies done in this realm have shown that in analysing the attitudes of students and teachers vis-à-vis education reforms, we must separate out attitudes toward bilingual education and toward the transfer of minority high schools to a situation in which 60% of classes will be taught in Latvian and 40% will be taught in the minority language. Study done in 1999 showed that students and teachers had a positive attitude toward bilingual education, believing that it represents a compromise in terms of minority education reforms. Dominant attitudes of pupils, teachers and parents about the shift toward a system in which most classes are taught in Latvian, however, were negative.

During the latter phase of education reform implementation, negative attitudes among target groups, particularly students, have been exacerbated. In 2002, the BISS conducted a study that was called “Analysis of the Introduction of Bilingual Education” and found that 40% of students, 42% of teachers and 42% of parents supported the shift toward a system in which most classes at the high school level are taught in Latvian. In 2004, however, the transfer toward a system in which 60% of classes are taught in Latvian and 40% - in the minority language was supported only by 15% of students, 13% of parents and 30% of teachers. In interpreting these data, it is very important to keep the socio-political context of the study firmly in mind. In 2004, while the research was being conducted, there were important socio-political events in Latvia, which surrounded the education reform issue - the education law was amended, there was vast public debate about those amendments, there were various kinds of protests. In this context it has to be noted that only 10% of those students who did not take part in any protests said that they support the need for reforms.

The discourse analysis that was used in analysing qualitative data revealed the fact that students base their critical attitudes on argumentation schemes that are disseminated in private (family) and public (the mass media, schools) situations. They parrot views that have been formulated in the past. Typically, students did not analyse or reveal their own experiences and related attitudes. Instead, they used the transfer tactic in speaking about “others” who, as a result of the reforms, are losing their native Russian language and culture, as well as their competitiveness in higher education and the labour market. Young people, in other words, are confirming solidarity with their linguistic community, but on the other hand, they are also justifying their negative attitudes by shifting the responsibility on to the shoulders of “others”.

In the group discussions, students expressed the certainty that the reforms have caused inter-ethnic relations in Latvia to become harsher, thus promoting an ethnic split in the country. This idea is based on the commonly held belief among non-Latvians that those who are organizing education policies are all ethnic Latvians. This means that opposition against the political elite and its decisions indirectly manifests a dislike of the Latvian speaking community in Latvia. Survey data confirm this conclusion. When asked to agree or disagree with the statement that “over the last six months, my relations with Latvians have worsened”, 20% of students agreed, as opposed to just 8% of parents and 4% of teachers. The application of discourse analysis made it evident that at the level of ideas, negative ethnic relations result in conflicts. At the discourse level, this is identified as an ethnic conflict, but in essence it is an ethno-political conflict, because it is based more on political than purely on ethnic interests.

If we analyse statements which students made about ethnic relations, we can define two different viewpoints. Some students pointed to ethnic relations at the level of the society (the general or global level), while others spoke of ethnic relations within their own social networks (the concrete or

local level). Typically, when students spoke about interethnic relations at the general level, they had negative things to say and spoke of conflicts. When speaking of their personal relations with Latvians, however, the non-Latvian young people spoke in friendly or neutral terms. This supports the assumption that conflicts in ethnic relations exist primarily at the level of political discourse and the mass media, not at the level of everyday practice.

A vivid example of the linguistic self-sufficiency of the Russian language can be found in the city of Daugavpils. The Eastern Slavic community there has greater solidarity than is the case in Riga, because there are no significant external groups (i.e., the Latvian community) with a different discourse. This means that interethnic relations are assessed from an alienated viewpoint, from a certain social distance:

*I have noticed that there is an unhealthy attitude toward Russians in Riga. When people find out that I am a Russian, I immediately feel that I am being rejected. (Daugavpils)*

*It is very hard in our city to feel any negative tensions, because the Latvian population here is very small. My acquaintances tell me, though, that the criminal situation really will increase in Riga, because Russians and Latvians frequently meet, they are starting to spit in each other's faces for no reason, and that leads to fights. (Daugavpils)*

Participants in the discussions tended to differentiate between “Latvians” (“them”) and “Russians” (“us”). The way in which young people spoke about the two groups pointed to a polarisation in society – each group has its own discourse.

Young respondents described ethnic relations on the basis of their own, individual experience. We can define two types of relations. The comments made by young people when asked about their experience with ethnic relations do fall into these two basic types, and this indicates that the principles of binary logic are in place when it comes to attitudes and evaluations among young people in the area of interethnic contacts.

First of all, there is the issue of conflicting ethnic relations. Researchers took note of a xenophobic discourse among the surveyed young people – intolerance, dislike of Latvians as an external group, as aliens. Respondents interpreted Latvian attitudes in a way which suggests that Latvian attitudes vis-à-vis Russians are also xenophobic. There was a very distinct division between “us” and “them”:

*More than 50% of the people in Bolderāja are Russians. If you've lived there your whole life, then it is easy for you to live there, you know everyone, no one will touch you. God forbid, however, if a stranger arrives. God forbid! We have problems with Latvians. In our neighbourhood they are hated, they are disliked, they are not respected. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*We are people of our own specific kind, we know how to stand up for ourselves, and she [the homeroom teacher of the class, an ethnic Latvian] understands us. She is the only one who does. I have tried to find common ground with Latvians, yes, and most often I have found it, but I have been successful only until the moment when they*

*have quietly and properly put me down. Then I came to understand that those people are not of my breed. (Riga, Group 1)*

The statements by the young people suggest that ethnic relations between the two largest communities in Latvia have become more fraught in the context of education reforms. The following statements make it perfectly clear that at the level of discourse, the reforms are associated with Latvians.

*Since the meetings, there has been increased negativity in relations between Russians and Latvians. I have friends in Mežciems and Purvciems, there are harsher conflicts there. (..) The same was true before the reforms, but since the reforms were instituted, there has been increased negativity vis-à-vis the Latvian community. (Students, Riga, Group 2)*

*I am scared about the fact that the community is no longer patient. Now [i.e., after the protest demonstrations; the discussion took place on February 23, 2004] there can be ultimatums. The day is not far off when certain groups of Latvians and Russians will become carried away with nationalism, may pick up weapons and create conflicts. (Students, Riga, Group 2)*

*If someone attacks me or my family, if I have to protect myself and my relatives, then I will go and fight. This is an issue of survival, no longer is it an issue of language or ethnicity. It is purely a matter of survival. It is a movement that cannot be controlled. There has been an emotional push because of ethnic considerations, and this can no longer be controlled. (Students, Riga, Group 2)*

Second, there is the issue of friendly ethnic relations. It was interesting that some respondents who were talking about relations with Latvians and saying that mutual understanding is usually present in those relations actually applied the concept of friendship to an “us” group which involved both Latvians and Russians. Another respondents, however, differentiated between “us” and “them”. There were respondents who had weak links of interaction with Latvians – they spoke of Latvians who are acquaintances. Respondents, who used the “us” form, had strong interactive links. They talked about Latvians who were their friends.

*I have lots and lots of Latvian friends, I have attended countless events at which most of the people are Latvians, and we have always found common ground. There have been lots of Latvian girls, I have had normal conversations with them, there haven't been any problems. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I have outstanding contacts with Latvians. I have lots of friends and acquaintances. My best friend is a Latvian. (..) We work together to organise dances at our school, we have a small business of our own. We have never had any differences of opinion. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I have acquaintances who are Latvians. They speak with me in Russian, and when I feel that it is too hard for them, I start to speak Latvian, because I have to take the tests. They helped me. I have never seen myself as being superior to them. Neither have I ever felt any aggression on their part. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

The interethnic contacts that were described by the students allow us to define several causes for conflicting relations. These can be analysed in the broader context – as reasons for a socio-linguistic split in Latvia:

**(1)** Attitudes among Latvians when it comes to the need to know and speak the Latvian language. Language is one of the most important elements in the views of students about issues which split up Latvia's society. It is particularly in statements about the Latvian language that there is a differentiation between “us” and “them.” In the schemes of the arguments that are presented, a positive self-image and a negative image of “the other” is the strategy that is most often brought to bear:

*I want to say that each and every Latvian speaks Russian. Even older people, they all speak the Russian language. They have no problems in expressing themselves in Russian. I guess that they simply do not want to speak Russian, but they speak the language. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I personally think that Latvians often think too highly of themselves and look at the Russian people down their noses. You Russians don't speak the Latvian language, even though you live in Latvia, and you should speak the language – that's what is claimed. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I think that the Latvian language will not bring the two nations closer together. If the Russians are forced to study the Latvian language, they will hate the Latvian language even more. (Students, Daugavpils)*

**(2)** Historical experiences with contacts. Some students expressed the view that an ethnic split in Latvia's society “is nothing new” and “has always persisted”. Respondents tended to speak to the years of Soviet governance in Latvia, and they suggested that this is a characteristic of the local society – two communities existing in parallel spaces. Some respondents said that integration of society (primarily in ethnic terms) is not possible in Latvia.

*It is inevitable. No merger is possible. If we couldn't merge during Soviet times, then that is all the more true right now. (Riga, Group 1)*

*Who splits us? Why are Latvians of a different breed?*

*That has always been the case.*

*It's a matter of history, now it's just continuing as a tradition. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

**(3)** Ethnicity as a mark of demarcation. Young people spoke about negative attitudes vis-à-vis the other ethnic group both in terms of Latvians and in terms of Russians. Possible causes for such conflicting relations and splits in society include the xenophobic attitudes which students have toward “the other” – an external group which is unified by a different ethnic belonging than is the case in the “us” group.

*Both among Russians and Latvians there are people who beat up a person of the other nationality when they spot such a person. There are Latvians who are hostile to Russians and Russians who are hostile to Latvians. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*We heard the view here that Latvians think of Russians as being inferior. Sorry, but hasn't anyone heard Russians saying ... look, I don't want to offend anyone, but Russians have sometimes said that being a Latvian is not a nationality, it is a diagnosis. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*People seldom get beat up for being a Russian, but it happens to Latvians more frequently. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I have an international name – Anna. Sometimes I'm asked whether I'm a Latvian. No, I'm a Russian. Then they look at me strangely. If I didn't say that I'm a Russian, no one would know. There have been incidents in which attitudes change simply because you are of the other nationality. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

Some students in the group also expressed an alternative discourse which is in line with the discourse of multiculturalism which prevails today. These students confirmed ethnic tolerance not only vis-à-vis Latvians, but also in relations with other ethnic groups.

*I have never cared whether someone is Latvian or Russian. My people are people. Who cares about the ethnic group to which someone belongs? (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I don't think that you can divide people up according to nationality or skin colour, I don't know. I think it's foolish. People are the kind of people that they are, and then it makes no difference whether he's Latvian or Russian, white or black. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*When people meet, they don't ask, 'Are you a Russian, a Latvian, a Pole, a Ukrainian?' First of all they look at the person as such. (Students, Daugavpils)*

**(4)** Political decisions on issues such as citizenship, language and education apply to minority nationalities in Latvia, and they are another serious cause of disintegration, both in the vertical and the horizontal level. Students think that a series of these decisions discriminate against ethnic minorities in Latvia and, therefore, have a deleterious effect on attitudes vis-à-vis Latvians as the majority. They cause problems, say respondents, in interethnic relations, both at the individual and the community level. Because political decisions are taken by politicians, respondents typically argue that ethnic disintegration in Latvia is their fault:

*As far as the split between races in Latvia is concerned, I completely agree with (X), who said that the split was created by our politicians. Until 1991, Latvia was a part of the USSR, and Latvians think that Russians have to leave just because someone said so on television. (Students, Daugavpils)*

*I am a non-citizen, for instance, and there are probably other violations of my rights, as well. The main and grossest violation of my rights, however, is that I am not a citizen of Latvia. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I am not a citizen, but I wanted to volunteer for the army. I went down to the recruitment centre, and they rejected me. I don't understand the difference between citizens and non-citizens – they are all people. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*The point isn't money, it's not the effort. The point is that you have to take an oath when you undergo naturalisation. Latvians of our age don't have to take the oath to this country. They're citizens automatically, but we have to take the oath. That means that we are undertaking a certain level of responsibility. That's discrimination – we have to take responsibility by swearing an oath to this country. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I think that Russians and Latvians have the same problems, there shouldn't be a split like this. It's politicians who divide us up and position us against one another. (Students, Riga, Group 2)*

*I have friends who are Latvians. We don't believe that we should go out and fight. Politicians fire us up. (Students, Riga, Group 2)*

*Leave us alone. Don't sow the seeds of hatred, because there won't be aggression without reason, no physical aggression, no other kind of aggression. Knowing the Russian people, the aggression will be self-defence. I think that compromise has to be sought, we can live together peacefully, we can be friends. I can't understand why politicians are trying to make us hate one another. (Students, Riga, Group 2)*

If one analyses the causes for increasingly tense interethnic relations and for the split among ethnic groups in society, one finds that these are more likely to be conflicts of a political nature, ones that are based on different political interests and interpretations of ethno-political issues (citizenship, language, education).

Researchers did not ask directly about ways in which the split can be reversed or the gap between society and the political elite can be minimised, but the respondents did touch upon these issues in their answers. Respondents said that it is necessary to improve the overall level of welfare in Latvia. This idea was also expressed by parents and teachers, and it suggests that there is a correlation between social status and material welfare on the one hand and political tolerance on the other (this assumption was tested in the quantitative phase of the research).

*I would wish economic progress for Latvia so that it can achieve the level of the United States and Germany. Many problems occur not only because people don't speak the language, but also because of the economy. That's no secret to anyone. (Riga, Group 2)*

*I wish for unity and cohesion, I don't want people to be divided up among Latvians and Russians. We should understand that we have one country, we are strong when we stand together. Then we can achieve economic growth and democracy – the things about which people in Latvia are so worried. (Students, Riga, Group 2)*

*The government must seek to ensure that people, both Russians and Latvians, understand one another, are not divided up, that there is no aggression amongst them. Then there will be fewer problems. If people feel happy, they will not want to do anything bad. (Students, Riga, Group 2)*

It is positive that young people want Latvia's society to be unified and integrated. Some statements suggested that students see themselves as being responsible for integration. Such respondents were more likely to make loyal statements vis-à-vis Latvia and the Latvian language. These are people who engage in ongoing interethnic conflicts, and that fully corresponds to the idea of a hierarchy of positions in socio-political attitudes.

*Listen to us, sitting here and debating. At school, we decided to establish an organisation, "Vector in Europe", to bring together five schools with various nationalities. Everyone smirked at first. We wrote up the first project proposal, it was called "We Are So Different, Yet the Same", and a European organisation gave us EUR 1,500. We rented facilities, invited lots of people, and put together a programme which brought people together. People do draw closer together. (..) It all depends on us, on the younger generation. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

*I want us to be the generation that changes something, instead of just talking, we need really to do something. Our thoughts and judgments should not be based on stereotypes. If we are really talking about integration in society, then we have to set up organisations, organise events at which Latvians and Russians can come together, make contacts – so that they're not strangers. (Students, Riga, Group 1)*

### **Attitudes against other ethnic groups and religions**

The main studies touching upon the question of relations between Latvians and other ethnic groups but Russians are done during the last years and they are:

- 1) Integration of Romany representatives in the Latvian society, 2003. Latvian Centre for Human Rights and Ethnic Studies (LCESC)

The aim of project was to explore obstacles for social integration of Romany representatives in the Latvian society. Five focus group discussions were organized with Romany representatives at the respondents' city, town of residence (Riga (2 groups), Talsi, Ventspils, Jelgava).

- 2) Ethnic tolerance and integration of the Latvian society, 2004. Baltic Institute of Social Sciences.

The aim of project was to study biases which dominate Latvian public thought and the level of tolerance toward various ethnic and religious groups; to discover the mechanisms which lead to the emergence of xenophobic attitudes and the factors which determine the tolerance of Latvia's residents or lack thereof.

TABLE 6. THE BREAKDOWN OF THE PERMANENT RESIDENTS OF LATVIA AS TO ETHNICITY. 2004.

	<b>Citizens of Latvia</b>	<b>Non-citizens</b>	<b>Foreigners</b>	<b>In total</b>	
Latvians	1 355 067	2 536	936	1 358 539	58.6%
Lithuanians	16 977	13 662	1 382	32 021	1.4%

Estonians	1 466	776	307	2 549	0.1%
Belarussians	25 939	62 148	1 829	89 916	3.9%
Russians	327 293	321 755	19 362	668 410	28.8%
Ukrainians	10 974	45 232	3 613	59 819	2.6%
Poles	40 209	16 488	495	57 192	2.5%
Jews	6 443	3 176	308	9 927	0.5%
Others	18 483	15 579	5 019	39 081	1.7%
<b>In total</b>	<b>1 802 851</b>	<b>481 352</b>	<b>33 251</b>	<b>2 317 454</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs. Statistics, [http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/?p=351&menu\\_id=117](http://www.pmlp.gov.lv/?p=351&menu_id=117), date of visit: 2004-12-04

Research „Ethnic tolerance and integration of the Latvian society” conducted in year 2004 reveals, that between Latvians and Russians there is lower level of ethnic prejudice than between main nations of Latvia and newcomers from Africa, Middle East, South Asia. When participants of group discussions talked about other ethnic groups such as Africans, Arabs and others, they often evidenced unjustified biases and intolerance, a fear of the other. At the same time, however, there were also clear desires to be “politically correct” and tolerant. This was seen in statements during which negative views were expressed: *“I’m probably not tactical here, but ...”, “I was ashamed of myself, I guess I’m a racist”, “There are good people and bad people in every nation”, “Each culture has its own geniuses and its own scoundrels - more in one nation, fewer in another”, “Although there are good people among them, too ...”*. The approach of critical discourse analysis suggests that the respondents were thus trying to set up a positive self-presentation so that listeners would not get the idea that the speaker is a racist or highly biased (Van Dijk, 2000).<sup>13</sup>

The ethnic and religious groups vis-à-vis which participants most often expressed negative views were Africans, Chechens, Azerbaijanis, the Roma, Arabs, Turks and Muslims. The dominant xenophobic discourse was typified by a statement that was heard from one of the participants in the Latvian group of young people in Riga: *“I’m no racist, but I hate Negroes.”* This is an absolutely textbook example of what theory calls “apparent denial” (Van Dijk, et al, 1997:170).<sup>14</sup> According to this theory, the statement indicated an attitude that is xenophobic and somewhat racist. It has to be added that this mood was found in nearly all of the groups, except only for the Latvian group of middle aged and older people in Riga.

In the Russian group of young people in Riga, distinctly negative attitudes were expressed toward Islamic people. Several respondents said that Islam should be banned: *“I favour religious discrimination specifically against Islam. This religion might even be banned in Latvia”, “That is not permissible, it has to be regulated*

<sup>13</sup> Van Dijk, T.A. (2000) *Ideology and discourse. A multidisciplinary introduction*. English version of an internet course for the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC). July 2000. In: <http://www.discourse-in-society.org/teun.html>

<sup>14</sup> Van Dijk, T.A., Ting-Toomey, S., Smitherman, G. and D. Troutman (1997). “Discourse, Ethnicity, Culture and Racism”, in van Dijk, T.A. (ed.). *Discourse as Social Interaction. Discourse Studies: A Multidisciplinary Introduction*, Vol. 2. London: Sage, pp. 144-180.

*by law*”, “*This religion should be hauled into court!*” Less radical respondents said that people can believe what they want, but non-traditional religious groups in Latvia should be banned from appearing on television or agitating on the streets. Essentially this is a call for limitations on freedom of speech and religion.

It has to be noted, however, that in each group discussion there was at least one respondent who tried to uphold the “multiculturalism discourse”, emphasising all of the interesting things that can be learned from people of other nationalities, or talking about positive and pleasant experiences that the respondent had had in contacts with people of other nationalities or religions.

### **Attitudes among various social groups in Latvia from the point of view of foreigners**

In the study „Ethnic tolerance and integration of the Latvian society” there were in-depth interviews with people of different appearance and religious belief conducted. The aim of this part of the research was to find out experience of people of different appearance in Latvia and about the everyday attitude of Latvia’s residents toward them. Respondents were found through national cultural associations in Latvia, as well as via the “snowball” method (with one interviewee nominating the next one).

According to this study foreigners usually encounter positive or neutral attitudes, and most respondents stress that most of the people of Latvia are friendly and helpful. On the other hand, it often takes a longer time to form a closer relationship. In comparing the attitudes of various social groups vis-à-vis foreigners with a different visual appearance, respondents most often talked about different attitudes among young people and older people. Nationality and place of residence did not seem to be of any decisive importance here.

#### Age

In comparing the attitudes of young people and older people vis-à-vis foreigners, interviewees said that young people are more open and tolerant. Here we should remember, however, that most of the respondents are also young people, which means that it is more likely that they will encounter other young people, and it is easier for them to form contacts. First of all, young people tend to be more open to that which is new and unknown, they have more frequent contacts with the people and culture of other countries, both because of the mass media and because of travel. Foreign language skills are of great importance, because a lack of such skills hinders contacts between foreigners and older people.

*Younger people are more open, it's easy to contact. Older people don't want to be open. We feel that on trolley buses and ordinary buses, for instance.*

*That's the attitude of older people, those who are older than 50 or 60. Younger people talk to you, they smile, they're interested in your country, it's interesting to them. Middle aged people change their attitudes, too, but when it comes to older people - pensioners, for instance, it's not all that easy.*

*They stare at us, they feel uncomfortable because of our skin colour. That's particularly true among older women.*

*Once I was in the trolley bus, and I wasn't even sitting up front. Two old women got on and started to talk to one another, Just look, just look - too many blacks in this country. They didn't think that I understood. I said, Why are you talking about me? That's not polite. They were shocked, they blushed. And then one of them started to speak to me in Russian.*

*I don't think that there are problems with racism among the younger generation, these are people who have black friends. I don't think that they can hate us or anything like that. I don't think that they have problems with racism, I don't think that they criticise others. No, I don't think so. The situation with older people can change, but other people are just super!*

*I visited my girlfriend's grandmother, I think that she had never seen a black person in her life. How she loved me! She gave me a whole sack of fruit. I didn't want to take it, but my girlfriend said, Please, take it. And she gave me fruit and vegetables. She prepared dinner, we went into the forest to pick mushrooms. It was wonderful. The grandmother was so nice!*

### Nationality

Upon arriving in Latvia, many foreigners are surprised to learn that the country is actually populated by two major ethno-linguistic groups with different cultures. For full contacts with the people of Latvia, one has to learn both Latvian and Russian. Foreigners are fairly quick to notice various differences in behaviour and attitudes. Foreigners describe Latvians as being quiet, peaceful, closed-off and polite, while they describe Russians as being friendly, active and open.

Foreigners in Latvia report meeting more or less equal numbers of Latvians and Russian speakers. Those who have lived here for 15 years and more, however, have mostly become a part of the Russian speaking environment, and only in the last few years have they started to develop more extensive contacts among Latvians. The same difference is also seen in language skills - those who

have been here for a longer time usually speak very good Russian and poorer Latvian, while those who have arrived in recent years tend to have a better command of Latvian.

Some respondents said that it's easier to make contact with Russians:

*I think that recently foreigners have been feeling closer to Russians than Latvians, because Russians also feel as if they're foreigners. Russians are also more active than Latvians. We're closer on an everyday basis. When you talk to a Russian, you move, you jump around. Latvians think slowly, they check out everything about you before they take the next step. In business, for instance - we need something tomorrow, but the Latvian will say that he will think it over, he needs guarantees. The Russian will take the decision quickly.*

*Russians have more money, they travel more. They support the Arabs, in political terms, too. Latvians are afraid of Russia, and so they chose the American position. I don't want to say that they're against us, but your [Latvian] behaviour, your temperament - you're peaceful people. It's hard for someone who is accustomed to doing everything quickly.*

Asked to compare the attitudes of Latvian and Russian speaking residents vis-à-vis foreigners, most respondents said that people from both groups are nice and friendly, adding that there are good and bad people in every ethnic group. Most foreigners reported friends among Latvians and Russians alike. When talking about racist statements and physical threats, however, foreigners more often spoke of Russian speakers, usually young ones.

### Place of residence

Most foreigners in Latvia live in Riga and seldom visit other places in Latvia. That means that those residents of Latvia who are not residents of the capital city very seldom meet people from other countries and, particularly, from other continents. That allows us to understand why foreigners attract much more attention in other parts of the country than in Riga. Foreigners said that in other places in Latvia they attract a greater number of looks. One respondent who is very different in appearance, however, said that he doesn't feel that people are staring at him outside of Riga in particular. Most foreigners don't feel that this interest is anything negative, that it disturbs them in any way. They demonstrate understanding and say that the searching looks are based on the fact that rural people have never seen anyone of a different race. Outside of Riga, moreover, foreigners do not usually encounter racist statements or behaviour, perhaps because they do not spend much time in other locations or because they tend to be there with their friends.

*I didn't feel bad. I was definitely the first Chinese person they had ever seen, and so they just looked at me and wondered at what I was doing there. (..) There was nothing negative, however, I felt nothing of the sort. Everyone smiled - particularly the girls.*

*I once was taking a bus to visit my friend's grandmother. (..) There were young people on the bus, they were all staring at me, and I became embarrassed, because they were staring at me as if I was a black ghost. Then I smiled, and they all calmed down.*

Asked to compare the attitude of various groups in society toward visually different foreigners in Latvia, respondents in the interviews stressed that young people tend to be more open and favourable than older people. Some foreigners reported that it is easier for them to make friends with Russian speaking residents, because they are more open and active, thus closer to the mentality of the foreigners. Conflict situations, however, are also more common with Russian speaking young people. When comparing people in Riga to people in other parts of Latvia, respondents said that foreigners attract more attention outside of the capital city, but there are no fundamental differences in attitudes.

In government institutions (foreigners most often encounter the Citizenship and Migration Board), foreigners mostly find proper attitudes, and that is particularly true with respect to the police. Universities which are attended by foreign students devote particular attention and care to them.

Most people in Latvia know little about various distant countries, their religion and culture, and that can cause them to behave in a reserved or rejecting way. It has to be stressed, however, that many people are interested in other countries and would like to learn more about them.

A lack of information and negative stereotypes about people from other countries and their culture can create the idea that there are exaggerated differences between various people and their habits. This creates dislike and fear - usually unjustified, because the behaviour and habits of foreigners who live in Latvia are usually in line with locally accepted norms of behaviour. This means that experience with contacts with people of different nationalities is of paramount importance here. Contacts allow one to get rid of one's fear of the unknown. People find those things that they have in common, and relations are based less on one's origin, but rather on one's individual personality and on the common interests that one has with another. This means that a contact is no longer perceived as a contact between two ethnic groups, but rather as one between two individuals. This is usually a more positive thing than a contact at the group level.

It seems in general that attitudes and behaviour of people in Latvia sometimes have racist properties, which are often hidden - instead of distinctly negative behaviour, it is manifested through an absence of positive and favourable attitudes. Help is not given in an unclear situation; negative information about an ethnic group is accepted unquestioningly. Also of importance here is the so-called “new racism”,<sup>15</sup> defined as the view that the culture and lifestyle of certain nationalities are too different to be merged into one’s own society. Latvia has been a multi-ethnic country for centuries, but many people still believe that a culturally homogenous society is the norm and the ideal which should be pursued. This hinders the acceptance of people of other nationalities, particularly if they are visually different and have expressed a desire to live in Latvia.

As the availability of information about various cultures and countries expands, however, and as contact experiences with people of various nationalities become more common, the attitude of Latvia’s residents is gradually becoming more tolerant and open.

### **Attitudes toward the Roma in schools**

The historical situation of the Roma people in Latvia has been different from that of other ethnic groups. The main factor here is not language, it is the stereotypes that persist vis-à-vis the people who have also been known as Gypsies. A study on the situation of the Roma in Latvia was conducted in 2003, and attitudes vis-à-vis Roma children at Latvian and Russian schools were discussed as a part of that study.<sup>16</sup>

There were focus group discussions with the Roma, with some participants arguing that there was no discrimination against Roma children at school. These were respondents who said that Roma children were treated just like everyone else by students and teachers alike. This view was most commonly heard in Riga and Talsi.

*It depends on the child’s behaviour. If he is respected by the class, then there are no differences. If the child merges into the collective, the class, then there can be no arguments. Perhaps it is different for boys. It wasn’t a problem back in my day.*

*I didn’t feel any discrimination of that kind.*

In Ventspils, however, and particularly in Jelgava, there was also talk of incidents in which Roma children felt a negative attitude toward themselves at school, manifested both in spoken and in physical

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<sup>15</sup> See Barker, M. (1981). *The New Racism*. London: Junction Books.

<sup>16</sup> “Integration of Roma people in Latvian society”, 2003, Baltic Institute of Social Sciences.

form. In some cases, children no longer wanted to go to school because of this discrimination. Respondents had the following things to say about the matter:

*I can tell you about my granddaughter. There are times when she says that she has had it with school. She says that she doesn't understand what others want from her, she studies just like everyone else, she dresses like everyone else, and hardly anyone can tell that she is a Gypsy. But then kids walk up to her and start to pinch her. You Gypsy girl, you – that's what they say.*

*I have a school-age granddaughter, and the teacher once swore at her, in part because she is Roma. She doesn't want to go to that school. My sister's daughters say the same thing.*

*It wasn't that terrible back during Russian rule. There were different attitudes, people didn't yell at you and poke you because you're a Gypsy. That didn't happen back then, but in independent Latvia, that's how things are.*

*They really suffer from the fact that they are mocked and pushed aside. The teachers, too – they push the children away to an even greater extent.*

*They don't complain, she just says that when she's in the hall, other kids bump into her, the bigger boys. I tell her to step aside, don't let them bump into you, but they do. The kids are horrible, yes, they are – spoiled, spoiled, spoiled. You must understand that Roma children are never as spoiled as Russian and Latvian children. It's terrible.*

Parents and grandparents said that teachers have a great role to play when it comes to attitudes which students display toward the Roma, and they were surprised when teachers did nothing to hinder negative attitudes among other students. Teachers, say the parents and grandparents, are right there with the kids, they see how the Roma children are treated by others.

*It depends on the teacher, on what the teacher thinks.*

*She went up to the teacher and told her what happened, and the teacher yelled at her. Where can she go to complain?*

*My granddaughter – during the winter, in the cold, children tore off her hat. It was very cold, and she came home with no hat. No one did anything, even though the teacher was standing right there. No one said a word, no one cared. The Roma are a suffering people.*

Respondents were asked about the possibility of establishing special classes or schools for the Roma, and the view seemed to prevail that such schools are not necessary. Respondents said that it is in the

interests of the Roma children to attend Latvian schools. It cannot be denied, however, that classes for the Roma have an important role to play when it comes to the education of Roma children. There are many children who don't speak Latvian well enough when they start school. In such cases classes for the Roma help them to start their education in a timely way and with adequate Latvian language skills to continue their education at a Latvian school.

When it comes to negative attitudes toward Roma children at Latvian schools, it has to be said that the attitudes are not found at all schools, and also that such attitudes can be encountered by any student, whether Latvian, Russian or Roma. Furthermore, the isolation of Roma children in separate schools would not solve the problem, it might well exacerbate negative attitudes of various kinds outside the home – at school and in various public places. It must be remembered, furthermore, that parents and grandparents were the ones who spoke about attitudes toward Roma children. If we wish to come up with a firm understanding of discrimination against Roma children at Latvia's schools and of the way in which such discrimination affects the education of Roma children, we will need an in-depth study which involves several target groups – Roma children who go to school, students from other ethnic groups, as well as teachers.

### **3.3.3 The role of schools in resolving conflicts**

#### **The Open School**

Various methodological and pedagogic programmes have been drafted for Latvia's schools so as to prevent conflicts or to reduce the seriousness of any conflicts that may have emerged already. One of the most extensive projects was called "Open School", and it was financed by the Soros Foundation.

In 1999, the Soros Foundation selected 10 schools where Russian was the language of instruction and seven where classes were taught in Latvian, making the selection on the basis of an open competition. The Foundation also chose 14 kindergartens with Latvian or non-Latvian attendees. As the project expanded, another 10 Russian schools and 10 Latvian schools were brought into the process in 2000, as were seven pedagogical universities. Each educational institution was represented by three or four employees. Particular attention was devoted to the need to inform the public about integration, intercultural education, and bilingual education. The "Open School" project also produced a series of TV broadcasts, "Open". There was a bilingual magazine for students, *Tilts* (Bridge), and there was also a handbook for parents – "Bilingual Children".

During the course of the project, some 200 people were trained to introduce bilingual and intercultural education in schools. These were people who work for regional support structures – schools, universities and preschool educational institutions throughout the country.

Sustainability of the project was ensured by the development of adult training programmes in 2002. Courses on introducing bilingual and intercultural education were developed and tested.

The courses are offered to teachers, preschool instructors, parents and other interested parties. A total of 15 programmes have been designed and tested for teachers who work in bilingual classes and ethnically diverse environments. Each runs for 36 hours.

The Internet homepage of the Centre for Educational Development has a section on the “Open School” project – <http://atvertaskola.iac.edu.lv/>. The Public Integration Fund provided financing for the homepage. The goal is to provide information about bilingual and intercultural education, about tested experiences and theories.

### **Dual flow schools**

A special aspect of Latvia’s educational system is the fact that there are so-called “dual flow” schools – these are schools at which some children study in Latvian and others in Russian. Most of these schools date back to the early 1960s, when the government began to shut down so-called “small schools”. Large ones were established instead.

Many of the dual flow schools were shut down in the very late 1980s and early 1990s. That was particularly true in the city of Riga. In most cases, the educational institutions were simply split up, and the explanation was often that there was not enough room for everyone. The result was the emergence of separate schools for Latvian and Russian-speaking students.

The Baltic Institute of Social Sciences has conducted a study that is called “Education Reforms in Latvia in the Context of Existing and Possible Models of Bilingualism: Dual Flow Schools as an Example of Bilingual Education.” The authors of the study found that the role and place of dual flow schools have been understood to an insufficient degree when it comes to the emergence of integration policies. This was confirmed by experts who were interviewed during the research, as well as by an analysis of relevant documents.

Experts from volunteer organisations told researchers that the dual flow schools represent a miniature model of Latvia’s society at large and can serve as an example of how an integrated and

multiethnic community can be assembled. The existence of dual use schools, said these respondents, should be encouraged:

*From the perspective of the issue of integration, where we have to think about various mentalities, perceptions about life and co-existence of cultures, dual flow schools are, of course, the optimal option. (NGO representative)*

*Dual flow schools are the future of the Republic of Latvia, (...) [they represent] a platform for integration. (NGO representative)*

NGO representatives think that dual flow schools represent a way of bridging the gap among various ethnic groups, because they allow students to learn more about one another and to determine interests which they have in common.

*Dual flow schools do have a future, because children really do have to grow up together, they must learn about one another so that they no longer differentiate between “our people” and “aliens”. This cannot be overcome just by transferring to the Latvian language. We will never be able to bridge the gap in that way – students have to meet one another, they must see that their interests are the same, that they are all people, that they all live in Latvia, that they were all born here. They are the future of Latvia, and Latvia is their future, kids must understand that. (NGO representative)*

Principals and teachers at linguistically mixed dual flow schools also said that such schools are very appropriate for Latvia’s situation:

*It’s a normal thing, Latvians and Russians both need these schools, because otherwise each group stays apart. People lose some of their opportunities in that case, because people can, after all, take a broader look at the world, have a broader world view. The dual flow school provides such an opportunity if the two sides want to converse, to see one another, to make friends. I don’t think there are too many alternatives in our present-day society, and that is at least one of the alternatives. (Teacher, Daugavpils)*

*We’re proud of our school, we’re a model for the rest of Latvia. If kids at our school learn to get along, then they will find their lives to be easier in the future. (Principal, Kurzeme)*

*We cannot split the kids apart, if we want a unified society, then we cannot allow them to be separated. If we keep separate Latvian schools and Russian schools, then we will absolutely be creating a society in which there are two separate communities. (Teacher, Iecava)*

When it comes to civic education in dual flow schools, principals and teachers say that the process is a very successful one, that there are no ethnic conflicts at their schools.

*People ask about patriotic education at our school. Everything is just fine. I tell people to listen to how our kids sing “God, Save Latvia” [the Latvian national anthem]. Any more questions? (Principal, Kurzeme)*

*No matter whether we plan to live in Latvia or plan to live somewhere else, Latvia is still Latvia. It is our motherland, and we must know about it. (Student, Viļāni)*

The research shows that dual flow schools are a key element in the emergence of an integrated society. First of all, linguistically mixed two flow schools are schools at which bilingual education programmes are being introduced in the context of a multi-cultural and multi-linguistic social environment. Second, dual flow schools in which minority children study in a bilingual system and in Latvian must be emphasised, because these schools emerged from the “grassroots” – it was the parents of minority children who spoke up about the language of education that would be preferred. This indicates that parents are interested in Latvian language learning. Parents understand the role which language will play in the integration of their children into Latvia’s society.

To summarise the role of dual flow schools in the context of integration policies, we must conclude that the way in which these schools encourage cultural interaction and integration of the local society has not been fully understood. This argument was presented by the authors of education policy, by representatives of NGOs which seek to defend the interests of minority ethnic groups, and by school principals and teachers.

There are also issues which cause doubts about whether dual flow schools really set a positive example for people in Latvia. First and foremost there is the fact that attitudes vis-à-vis dual flow schools were negative in Soviet times, when the system was forced upon everyone. The bottom line was that Latvian schools were Russified. It is believed by many people that dual flow schools present an environment which encourages or creates conflicts. Many parents are not prepared to support a situation in which Latvian and non-Latvian children study at one and the same schools. This was also pointed out by experts.

Most of the interviewed experts said that during the Soviet period, mutual understanding and examples of positive co-existence were not particularly common at dual flow schools.

*In the context of the Soviet culture, [dual flow schools] essentially established an antagonistic system of values for children and adolescents who attended such schools. The emphasis was not on co-operation, but (..) on mechanical*

*unification (..) at the psychological level. The entire life of the school was based on the fact that “our own” and “aliens” were studying under the same roof. They had to battle, the relationship between the two groups was very (..) aggressive.*

Experts talked about tension and conflicts when the flows are strictly kept apart, arguing that there was no co-operation and dialogue among students in the two groups. Dual flow schools during the Soviet period were described by several experts as examples of “disintegration”, and this has been seen as one of the main reasons for why such schools need to be broken apart.

*There was this tension between the two flows, sometimes it led to hatred. (..) The flows existed in one building, but they were absolutely isolated. I don't see you, and you don't see me until there is some kind of incident. (Expert-politician)*

*There was just a single roof, and there were conflicts. (..) Never was there any joint work [at these schools]. (Researcher: History, ethno-politics, ethno-psychology)*

If we look at dual flow schools at places in which Latvian and minority children communicate with one another, then we find principals who say that the differences of opinion and the examples of intolerance which existed during Soviet times are now gone. Some principals who have run dual flow schools since Soviet years said that even back then, there were no serious conflicts.

*We absolutely had no problems, back in the so-called Russian era we did not have anything of that kind [differences of opinion, intolerance] between Russians and Latvians. Long, long ago there were such problems, but we have had completely normal lives over the past 10 years. (Principal, Zemgale)*

The other major explanation that is heard for why dual flow schools have been split apart is that the Latvian national renaissance was a political process:

*It [dividing up the dual flow schools] was a purely political process, it coincided with the renaissance. It not only coincided with the renaissance, it was created by the renaissance – nothing is good at those schools, people said, bilingualism is forced upon the children. Children have to grow up in their own environment, case closed. (NGO representative)*

There were some experts who said that the breaking up of the dual flow schools represented “something in the way of revenge against the Soviet government and the totalitarian regime.” “Back then, for political reasons, there was a great deal of talk about the idea that these schools were thought up and created by the Soviet

government, that their aim was to Russify Latvians, that the schools had to be broken up. (...) I do not remember a single specific document to this effect at the Education Ministry, but the idea was that the schools had to be divided up, that they were bad schools, and that they were a leftover of the Soviet government and the totalitarian regime. (Expert-politician)

Several experts and principals from dual flow schools have also said that the reason for breaking the schools up was based on rational considerations related to the technological and material capacity of schools and the amount of space in the schools. Some schools were simply too small for dual flow instruction.

*I think that [the dual flow schools] were split up because there was no room. There were few classrooms, and it was possible for some students to be moved elsewhere. I don't think that the point was that Russians and Latvians were studying in a single school and that one side wanted the other to leave. I have never thought that this was true, I would never agree to or permit such a situation.* (Principal, Latgale)

The idea that schools were too small is upheld by demographic data. Because of recent migration and natural growth rates in the population, the number of children of school age at that particular point in time was larger than had been the case before.<sup>17</sup>

### 3.3.4 Examples of how schools are actively involved in the integration of young people

Several schools in Latvia have become involved in the integration processes of young people with the support of various funds. Several projects were financed by the Soros Foundation-Latvia. In 1999 and 2000, there was a project called **“Establishing a Network of Bilingual Centres in Latvia”**. The project involved information exchanges and seminars, bringing together the No. 8 High School of Liepāja, the No. 3 High School of Daugavpils, and the Riga Classical Gymnasium. A creative camp was organised for bilingual teachers and students from the aforementioned schools in Pāvilosta in 2000.

Special issues of the Liepāja inter-school newspaper *Paralēle* (a bilingual publication) and the magazine *Tilts* were published. Students write articles for both publications (see <http://www.8vsk.lv/school/index.htm>).

The Krāslava Gymnasium<sup>18</sup> organised a project aimed at promoting naturalisation and integration among young people. The project was called “My Country and Me.” The aim was to help young people to discover a sense of belonging in Latvia and to promote ethnic harmony among people of various ethnic groups. A total of 35 high school students from Krāslava and Daugavpils

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<sup>17</sup> LR CSP Latvijas Statistikas gadagrāmata 2002/2003 (Latvian Statistical Annual, Central Statistical Board). See Eglīte, P. “Padomju okupācijas ilglaika demogrāfiskās sekas” (Long-term Demographic Consequences of the Soviet Occupation), [http://vip.latnet.lv/LPRA/2002konf/p\\_eglite.htm](http://vip.latnet.lv/LPRA/2002konf/p_eglite.htm).

<sup>18</sup> See <http://web142.deac.lv/index.php/lv/?id=65&tid=7&prjid=199&pid=51&date=2001>.

were involved in the project, 14 non-citizens among them. The students attended a meeting at the Daugavpils branch of the Latvian Naturalisation Board, learning about the content and procedures of the naturalisation process. They also met with people who had become naturalised citizens. The students conducted research on the process of naturalisation, and the results of their study were published in the school newspaper. The young people also visited the Occupation Museum in Riga, learning more about Latvia's 20<sup>th</sup>-century history and the tragedies that have occurred. The students also visited Parliament, where they learned about how laws are passed. This enhanced greater interest in social and political issues in Latvia.

At the Rainis No. 6 High School of Daugavpils, there was a project to integrate non-Latvian teachers and students into the Latvian environment.

The No. 1 Elementary School in Preiļi organised a whole series of events seeking to enhance dialogue among cultures in the Preiļi District – “We Are All in Preiļi – a Colourful Mosaic of Nations”.

At the Riga No. 49 High School, research was conducted among young people to learn about obstacles against the integration of Latvia's society.

The Lāči Elementary School in the Naujene Parish of Daugavpils District organised an intercultural week of events from February 18-22, 2002. Culture days events were held at the school, covering the culture and traditions of Russians, Poles, Lithuanians and Belarusians. At the conclusion, it was time for the Latvian culture day. Latvia was presented as a country in which people of various cultures live together. Students learned about the culture and history of various nations, and they met their peers from schools where classes are taught in a variety of languages. The materials that were collected during the course of the week were assembled into an exhibition which featured the culture, traditions, folk costumes and national symbols of the various nations.

Many of the school projects which were aimed at ethnic integration were implemented with the support of the Society Integration Foundation (<http://www.lsif.lv/lv/?id=4>).

<b>Year</b>	<b>Schools which take part in project</b>	<b>Project title</b>
2002	Daugavpils Polish Secondary school/ Daugavpils 1. gymnasium	Folklore – bond of the pupils of different nationalities
	District of Jelgava extramural teaching secondary school/ Jelgavas vespertine secondary school	Reflection of nationalities character in masks (tale, ornament, color)
	Daugaviešu Elementary school/ Nagļu Elementary school	Development of pupil conception about common and different in latvian and russian cultures
	Maltas 2. Secondary school/ Maltas	Power in unity

	1. Secondary school	
2003	A.Puškina Secondary school No 2. of Liepāja; Rēzeknes Secondary school No 6.; Rīgas Gymnasium of Zolitūde; Jelgavas Secondary school No 6.	School as a integration process promoter
	Classic gymnasium of Riga; Riga Secondary school No 10.; Riga Secondary school No 13.	Individualized training of teaching in Latvian for Secondary school teachers
	Valdorfa free school of Adazi; Mihaila Lomonosova school of Rīgas	Collaboration project of 5 Latvia nationality schools – national work shops and trail “Green Peak”
	Rīnūžu Secondary school of Riga; Riga Secondary school No 28.; Gymnasium of Smiltenes	Idealistic and realistic way to integration of nowadays youth
	Preiļu Secondary school No 2.; Šampētera Elementary school of Riga; Riga Secondary school No 55.; Liepas Elementary school of Cesu district; Daugavpils Secondary school No 10.; J.Pilsudska Polish secondary school of Daugavpils; Preiļu Elementary school No 1.	“Language is given to people not to declare war, but to understand each other” (Z.Mauriņa)
	Ezernieku Secondary school; Daugavpils Secondary school No 12. vidusskola; Classic gymnasium of Riga	Teenagers integrating summer camp of study of local history "Ezernieki"
	Sabiles Secondary school; Rainis No. 6 High School of Daugavpils	Ethnic integration in Sabiles Secondary school and Rainis No. 6 High School of Daugavpils students exchange
	Bēnes Secondary school of Dobeles district; Bēnes Elementary school	Shaping of dialogue between latvians and minority pupil in Benes civil parish
	Carnikavas pamatskola; Suntažu sanatorijas internātpamatskola	Different minority pupil opinion about summer solstice
2004	Jelgavas vespertine secondary school; Secondary school of Augstkalne	Popularisation of roma and latvian cultures
	Classic gymnasium of Riga; Riga Secondary school No. 64./ Riga Secondary school No 84./ Riga Secondary school No 74./ Riga Secondary school of Jugla / Riga Secondary school No 45./ Riga Secondary school No 49./ Riga Secondary school No 100. / Riga Secondary school No 85.	Latvian and minority school teacher cooperation in proces of shaping qualitative transition to education in latvian language in 10 <sup>th</sup> grades . (school year 2004./05.)
	Varavīksne Secondary school of Kraslava; Council of Kraslava district / Elementary school of Sauleskalna / Elementary school of Andrupes	"Latgale Latvian and minority school history: yesterday, today, tomorrow "

### **3.3.5 Identification of the fieldwork sample on the basis of the defined criteria**

To realize aims of this research we have chosen five schools in which focus groups and in-depth interviews will be held. One of the main factors which influenced choice was schools activities in stimulating integration process. Research objects were chosen among the schools which in past few years have taken membership in school cooperation program “Ethnic integration program” E.2 (subprogram: „Support to school cooperation”). These criteria can filter schools which try to solve their problems and are active. Relying on these criteria schools from project „Latvian and minority school teacher cooperation in process of shaping qualitative transition to education in Latvian language in 10<sup>th</sup> grades (school year 2004./05.)” were selected:

1. Riga Secondary school No 84;
2. Riga Secondary school No 74;
3. Riga Secondary school of Jugla;
4. Riga Secondary school No 49;
5. Riga Secondary school No 100.

In selecting schools in account was taken main nationality of school pupils and locus of selected school. With such filter schools were selected so that there were representatives of different nationalities and they represented different districts of Riga.

If a school will refuse to take apart in research process then this school will be exchanged with a different school with same characteristics.

### **3.4 Spanish context by *Fundacio Ser.Gi***

#### **3.4.1 Context analysis**

##### **A description of the secondary education system**

From the legal perspective, the Spanish education system is governed by the General Education Act (LOGSE) which was passed in 1990. It was the first law on education to come into effect since Spain became democratic and allowed certain historical and more modern principles to be placed within a legal framework. Of these, I would like to mention:

1. Universal education.
2. The principle of comprehensive education and constructivism appeared.
3. The belief that we live in an “axiologically plural society” took hold.
4. Significant compensation for inequalities in education was included in the law.
5. Education became a more personal process: school assessment took into account pupils’ starting point and effort.
6. Schooling was made compulsory until the age of 16.
7. It provided for the autonomous regions of Spain: transfer of powers, teaching Catalan and the possibility of partially modifying the school curriculum.
8. A higher vocational qualification was set up.
9. For the first time, subjects in the performing arts and art and design were thoroughly regulated.

The new law generated great expectations among many teachers as it seemed to expound progressivist educational principles.

Implementing these changes was said to require a considerable time (a forecast ten years) and major investments in resources which in time never materialised. However, there was one thing that called for a turnaround in first and secondary schools, the backlash of which was to call the law into even further question (although it has to be said that any law would have been shaken!). In the academic year 1993/1994, there were 50,076 foreign pupils enrolled in Spanish schools (‘foreign’ designating those who are not Spanish nationals), whilst in 2001/02 there were 207,252. It is worth pointing out that this number had almost doubled by the year 2003/04, when it stood at 398,187.

This influx of immigrant pupils outdated the law (the preamble, for instance, makes no reference to foreign pupils joining schools) or inapplicable if schools were to abide by the principles it promoted. For example, managing diversity and the compensation offered took on such an unforeseen force and

scale as to exceed all allocated resources. Teachers had not been trained in these issues and xenophobic and racist views began to rear their heads amongst parents, pupils and so on.

However, the problem was not only one of resources. Difficulties already experienced in managing diversity in the classroom burgeoned when pupils from abroad joined the groups. Teachers had not been adequately trained for this, particularly those in schools that taught the former BUP (integrated upper-secondary education).

In terms of the fight against inequality, the law also buckled under a phenomenon typical to migration: immigrants did not spread themselves evenly over all regions or even within one region itself. In some areas (hotspots of industrial and commercial wealth – particularly the area surrounding Madrid and in Catalonia), the high concentrations of immigrants had the effect, among others, that many families took their children out of the local state schools and enrolled them in private schools (or tricked their way into other schools), because of the increase in foreign pupils. The upshot of this gradual process is the ghetto schools – state schools in which there is a far higher percentage of foreign pupils than in the surrounding neighbourhood or area.

It was to this social and legislative backdrop that a panoply of political changes came about that thwarted further development of the law. In 1996 the Partido Popular (People's Party) came into power with the support of the Catalan party *Convergència i Unió* (Convergence and Union). This marked a change in the political scene which came to a head in 2000 when the People's Party won an absolute majority without *Convergència i Unió*, revealing to some extent the trend of the Spanish right-wing.

That was the state of Spain when in 2002 the government passed a new law on education: the Organic Act on the Quality of Education (LOCE), which overruled the 1990 law and was a significant step backwards in terms of the values it went back to. Among other things, the LOCE promoted:

1. An education system that had no room for making teaching and learning processes personal
2. Religious studies was a compulsory assessed subject
3. Pupils' starting points were ignored
4. The private education system was reinforced
5. A belief that equality is guaranteed through access to education alone and not through other strategies such as adapting the curriculum, etc. This belief is, then, an example of discrimination.

6. The first stage of pre-primary education (0-3 years) was no longer part of the formal education system.

The law caused a good deal of social alarm, particularly among more progressive circles. Teachers were split, or at the very least expressed their approval of parts of the law and not of others. The government's proposal was that the law would start coming into effect in 2004-2005. However, when the Spanish Socialist Party (PSOE) won the general election in March 2004, one of its first actions was to block implementation of the law.

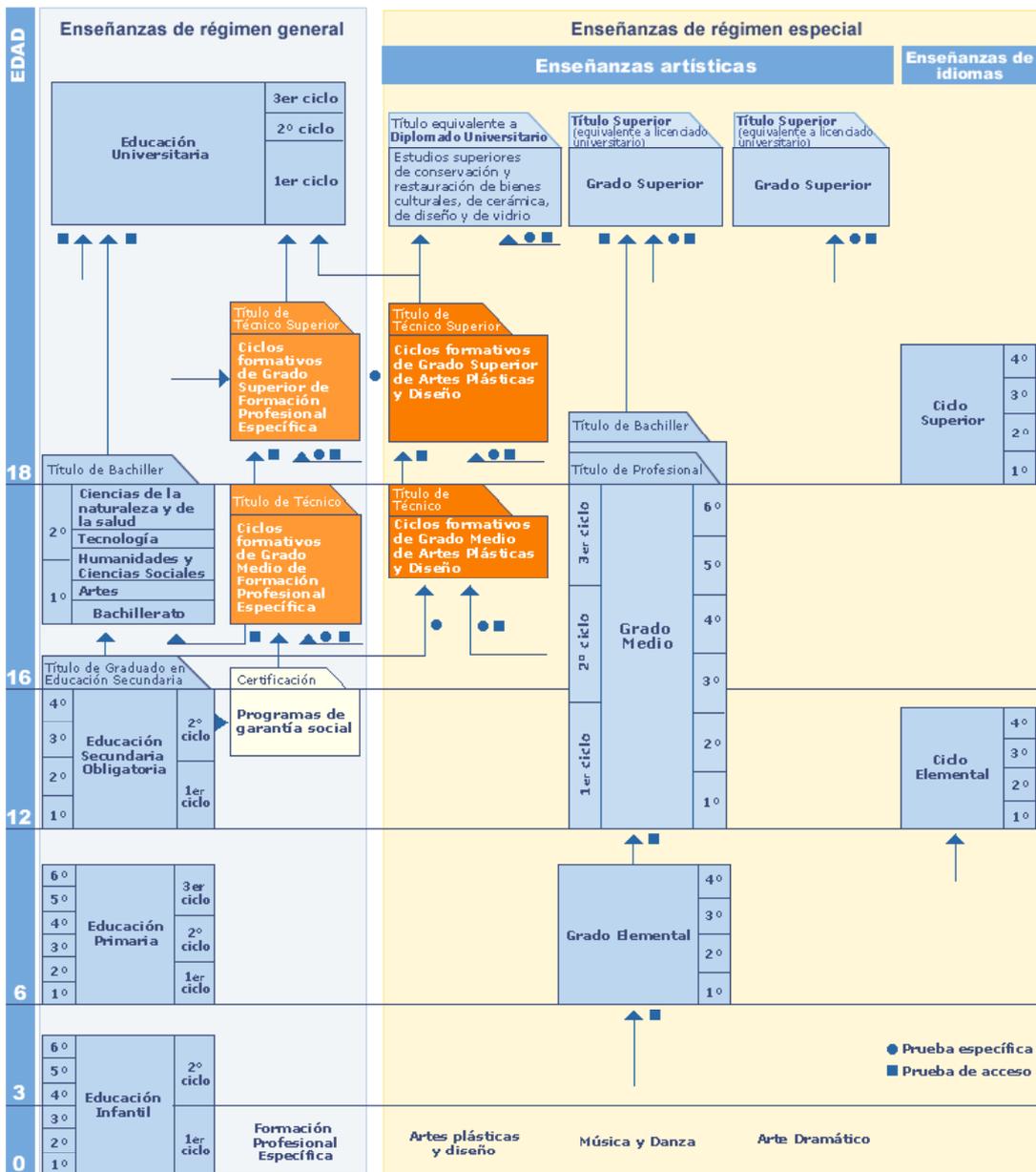
Since that time, it has worked on drawing up a new law; a bill was recently passed by the Council of Ministers on July 22, 2005 and is currently pending approval from parliament. (Part of the statement of motives is included in the appendix.)

To sum up, the old LOGSE, with only slight modifications, is still the legislative framework in use at present. The description of the education system and more specifically of ESO (compulsory secondary education) are based on this.

## **Organigram**<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> You'll shortly have a translation of this organigram



## Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO)

Because the target groups will be aged between 13 and 14 (ie. in compulsory secondary education), I shall go into more detail on this.

### Legal framework

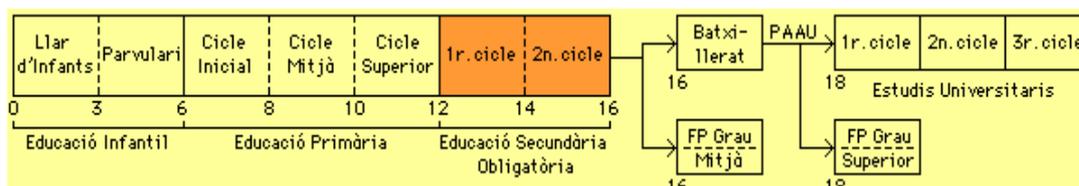
*LOGSE: Article 18*

The aim of compulsory secondary education is to equip all pupils with basic knowledge of culture, train them to accept their duties and exercise their rights, and prepare them either to start work, do an intermediate vocational training course or continue into further education.

*LOE Bill: Article 22*

The aim of compulsory secondary education is to equip all pupils, boys and girls, with basic knowledge of culture, particularly in the fields of humanities, arts, science and technology; develop and consolidate work and study habits; prepare them to continue into further education and to join the labour market, and train them to exercise their rights and obligations in life as citizens.

### Official description<sup>20</sup>



Playschool	Nursery	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 1	Stage 2	Integrated Upper-Secondary	University Entrance Test	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
									University		
Pre-primary Education		Primary Education			Compulsory Secondary Education		Intermediate Vocational Training		Higher Vocational Training		

Compulsory secondary education is aimed at pupils of between 12 and 16 and is split into two stages, each made up of two academic years.

<sup>20</sup> Located at: <http://www.gencat.net/educacio/estudis/frame3.htm> (08/08/05)

The aim of this level of schooling is for all pupils to gain access to basic aspects of culture in the framework of personal development which consolidates the essential education received at primary level and completes their cultural learning.

*The entire curriculum is organised into credits – teaching units with a duration of 35 hours that last for one term if the classes are 3 hours per week. Of the credits, 65% are common (compulsory for all pupils) and 35% are variable (optional subjects). The opportunity to choose options means that each young person can make up their own curriculum.*

There must be enough optional credits on offer to ensure that pupils can make a choice and that they are spread over the various subject areas.

Students at this level must also take a general credit which entails a series of teaching/learning activities that are designed to assess the extent to which they have achieved the overall aims set out in each area of the curriculum.

At the end of compulsory secondary education pupils receive a school attendance certificate, and, if they have achieved the required marks, a Secondary School Graduate certificate.

If a student passes the course and wishes to continue studying, s/he can either go into the second level of vocational training or do BUP (integrated upper secondary). Students are also eligible to leave school and join the labour market as they have reached the minimum age to work.

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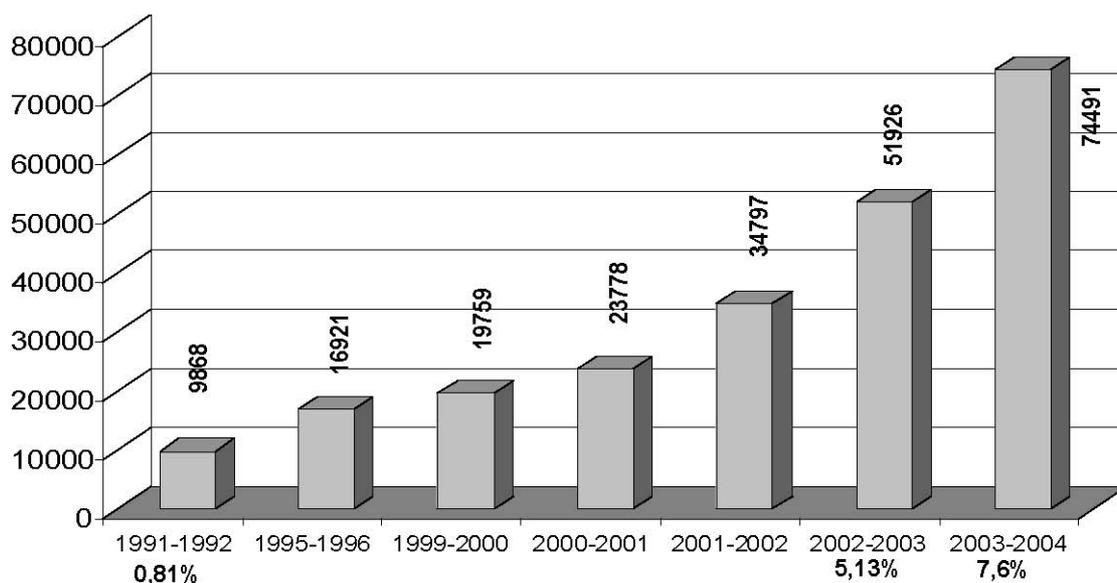
### **Data on migrants and other ethnic minorities in schools**

The data given here refers only to Catalonia, not the whole of Spain. The text cited is from the *Language and Social Cohesion Plan* (Department of Education, Regional Government of Catalonia, 2004).

“As can be seen in the graph below, the figures for foreign pupils have shot up in the last ten years: for the 1991-1992 academic year there were 9,868 foreign pupils out of a total of 1,218,879 pupils in compulsory and further education. By 2003-2004 this had risen to 74,491 out of a total 974,381<sup>21</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Source: Department of Education. Statistics and Documentation. Education Statistics. Figures for 2002-2003 are provisional



Accounting for the overall decrease in the numbers of pupils and despite the absolute figures, there has been a nine-fold increase in the percentage of foreign pupils (rising from 0.81% to 7.6%). The following table shows the overall figures and percentages for the last four academic years<sup>22</sup> in pre-primary, primary and compulsory secondary education:

Academic year	Pre-primary education			Primary education			Compulsory secondary education		
	Foreign pupils	Total pupils	Average	Foreign pupils	Total pupils	Average	Foreign pupils	Total pupils	Average
1999-2000	3,678	208,820	1.76%	8,002	347,457	2.30%	6,338	266,467	2.38%
2000-2001	4,804	216,393	2.22%	9,618	346,604	2.77%	8,177	267,318	3.18%
2001-2002	7,519	224,892	3.34%	14,656	348,665	4.20%	11,103	253,340	4.38%
2002-2003	9,640	177,219	5.44%	22,634	354,075	6.39%	15,002	254,232	5.90%
2003-2004	15,088	187,368	8.05%	32,760	362,872	9.03%	20,267	257,031	7.89%

Although the overall figures are low compared to other European countries, if migratory flows continue to increase at the current pace, foreign pupils may be around 10% of the total number at all levels by 2005-2006, which would be closer to the European average.

Despite there now being more foreign pupils in private education, the vast majority (84.6%) are still to be found in state schools. Moreover, the figures vary significantly from region to region: in some regions they are less than 5% whilst in others they are over 10% (in the Alt Empordà, for example, the figure is 15.3%). In the Ciutat Vella district of Barcelona over 30% of pupils are foreign in most state and some semi-private schools, whilst in some schools this figure is as high as 60%.

<sup>22</sup> Source: Department of Education. Statistics and Documentation. Education Statistics (further education not included). Figures for 2002-2003 are provisional and do not include the first year of pre-primary education.

Academic year	State Sector			Private Sector			foreign pupils as % of total pupils
	Foreign pupils	Total pupils	% of total	Foreign pupils	Total pupils	% of total	
1999-2000	(*) 16,293	448,884	3.6%	(*) 3,466	329,856	1.0%	2.2%
2000-2001	20,278	446,353	4.5%	3,500	326,104	1.1%	2.7%
2001-2002	29,355	451,651	6.5%	5,442	324,281	1.7%	4.0%
2002-2003	43,370	465,194	9.3%	8,556	324,224	2.6%	6.0%
2003-2004	62,992	596,873	10.6%	11,499	377,508	3.0%	7.6%

The following tables show foreign pupils' regions of origins<sup>23</sup>. As can be seen, the Maghreb and Central and South America are by far the most common regions in absolute figures.

Academic year 1999-2000	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Compulsory Secondary Education	Total foreign pupils	Overall % of foreign pupils
Rest of European Union	539	842	580	1,961	10.88%
Rest of Europe	151	378	297	826	4.58%
Maghreb	1,568	3,857	3,093	8,518	47.27%
Rest of Africa	398	436	149	983	5.46%
USA	50	84	40	174	0.97%
Central and South America	665	1,876	1,647	4,188	23.24%
Asia and Oceania	307	529	532	1,368	7.59%
<b>Total foreign pupils</b>	<b>3,678</b>	<b>8,002</b>	<b>6,338</b>	<b>18,018</b>	<b>2.19%</b>
<b>Total pupils</b>	<b>208,820</b>	<b>347,457</b>	<b>266,467</b>	<b>822,744</b>	

Academic year 2000-2001	Pre-primary education	Primary education	Compulsory Secondary Education	Total foreign pupils	Overall % of foreign pupils
Rest of European Union	562	905	669	2,136	9.45%
Rest of Europe	234	520	452	1,206	5.34%
Maghreb	1,877	4,251	3,739	9,867	43.66%
Rest Africa	514	583	177	1,274	5.64%
USA	52	64	51	167	0.74%
Central and South America	1,188	2,660	2,458	6,306	27.90%
Asia and Oceania	377	635	631	1,643	7.27%
<b>Total foreign pupils</b>	<b>4,804</b>	<b>9,618</b>	<b>8,177</b>	<b>22,599</b>	<b>2.75%</b>
<b>Total pupils</b>	<b>216,393</b>	<b>346,604</b>	<b>257,318</b>	<b>820,315</b>	

<sup>23</sup> Source: Department of Education. Statistics and Documentation. Education Statistics (further education not included).

Academic year 2001-2002	Pre-primary education*	Primary education	Compulsory Secondary Education	Total foreign pupils	Overall % of foreign pupils
Rest of European Union	717	1,116	816	2,649	7.96%
Rest of Europe	500	1,055	742	2,297	6.90%
Maghreb	2,477	5,166	4,392	12,035	36.17%
Rest Africa	584	663	248	1,495	4.49%
USA	72	110	77	259	0.78%
Central and South America	2,615	5,632	4,026	12,273	36.88%
Asia and Oceania	554	914	802	2,270	6.82%
<b>Total foreign pupils</b>	<b>7,519</b>	<b>14,656</b>	<b>11,103</b>	<b>33,278</b>	<b>4.02%</b>
<b>Total pupils</b>	<b>224,892</b>	<b>348,665</b>	<b>253,340</b>	<b>826,897</b>	

Academic year 2002-2003	Pre-primary education*	Primary education	Compulsory Secondary Education	Total foreign pupils	Overall % of foreign pupils
Rest of European Union	696	1,433	854	2,983	6.31%
Rest of Europe	774	1,968	1,289	4,031	8.53%
Maghreb	2,899	6,302	4,903	14,104	29.83%
Rest Africa	657	999	309	1,965	4.16%
USA	59	146	62	267	0.56%
Central and South America	4,064	10,591	6,594	21,249	44.95%
Asia and Oceania	491	1,195	991	2,677	5.66%
<b>Total foreign pupils</b>	<b>9,640</b>	<b>22,634</b>	<b>15,002</b>	<b>47,276</b>	<b>6.02%</b>
<b>Total pupils</b>	<b>177,219</b>	<b>354,075</b>	<b>254,232</b>	<b>785,526</b>	

Academic year 2003-2004	Pre-primary education*	Primary education	Compulsory Secondary Education	Total foreign pupils	Overall % of foreign pupils
Rest of European Union	911	1,834	1,048	3,793	5.6%
Rest of Europe	1,234	2,872	1,929	6,035	8.9%
Maghreb	4,735	8,768	5,607	19,110	28.1%
Rest Africa	1,045	1,399	442	2,886	4.2%
USA	73	162	84	319	0.5%
Central and South America	6,308	15,978	9,673	31,959	46.9%
Asia and Oceania	782	1,747	1,484	4,013	5.9%
<b>Total foreign pupils</b>	<b>15,088</b>	<b>32,760</b>	<b>20,267</b>	<b>68,115</b>	<b>8.4%</b>
<b>Total pupils</b>	<b>187,368</b>	<b>362,872</b>	<b>257,031</b>	<b>807,271</b>	

\*Not including first year.

The amount of pupils arriving from each region has varied greatly in recent years: some collectives have only risen slightly whereas the number of pupils from non- European Community countries has increased seven-fold. By 2001-2002, there were more pupils from South and Central America than from the Maghreb, the previous leader, and this trend has continued (from 4,188 pupils in 1999-2000 to 31,959 in 2003-2004).”

### 3.4.2 Legislation and strategies on integrating minority groups in schools.

There are no laws, either national or in the autonomous region, on integrating minority groups in schools. Below is a description of some of the strategies that have come from the regional government (Generalitat) of Catalonia's Department of Education, some of which have a significant level of mandatory compliance.

The Generalitat of Catalonia has developed a whole raft of measures to tackle conflict in the classrooms and to alleviate discrimination in the education system (particularly with regard to inserting foreign pupils in schools). In 2003 the previous government's Department of Education drew up a document entitled *Coexistence in high schools. Programme and proposals*, which served as a working guideline on how to address the burgeoning conflict in high schools and find a positive solution to coexistence<sup>24</sup>.

In 2004, the Generalitat of Catalonia's Department of Education acted more decisively in producing the *Language and Social Cohesion Plan* which was an effort to address the problems that were arising as a considerable number of foreign pupils were admitted to Catalan schools. The instructions on insertion support and fighting discrimination in first and secondary schools have been based on this Plan.

Some of the strategies have been taken into consideration in the *Instructions on organising and running state and private schools for 2005-2006*, edited by the Generalitat of Catalonia's Department of Education. That is to say that they are not circumstantial but structural and complimentary. I shall now discuss these instructions before going on to look briefly at the 2003 coexistence document since this outlines schemes that have been implemented by a considerable number of Catalan high schools.

#### **Instructions on organising and running state and private schools for 2005-2006<sup>25</sup>**

The two main priorities are:

- “Use of Catalan as the language of instruction and communication in schools.

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<sup>24</sup> To my mind this document was produced as an urgent response to rising conflict that had not been foreseen and the looming elections that the government of the day would very possibly lose.

<sup>25</sup> The text quoted below can be found at: [http://www.gencat.net/educacio/conthome/pdf/instruccions\\_0506/secundaria\\_publics.pdf](http://www.gencat.net/educacio/conthome/pdf/instruccions_0506/secundaria_publics.pdf)

- Integrative schooling for all pupils with a global approach taken by the school to meet pupils' learning needs and to ensure, wherever possible, that participation in ordinary school environments is maximum.”

The instructions set out a number of aims that are in line with these priorities. It is specified that in order to achieve the “**pupil’s integration in school and society**”, it is necessary to:

- “Consolidate Catalan and, where applicable, Aranese, as the mainstay of a multilingual scheme.
- Provide intercultural education based on equality, solidarity and respect for cultural diversity in a context of dialogue and coexistence.
- Foster equal opportunities as a means of eradicating all marginalisation.”

With reference to the second of these statements it is further specified that:

*“Intercultural education entails an educational model that champions a culture of dialogue and coexistence and that instils in pupils a sense of equality – a necessary condition for learning about and respecting cultural differences.*

*The main aim of the school is to ensure that all pupils, both from the majority and minority cultures, can in all areas of the curriculum develop the attitudes and skills needed to live in a multicultural, multilingual society such as our own.*

*In order to achieve this, the school must:*

- *Enable all pupils to feel that they belong to Catalan society, without abandoning their own culture*
- *Encourage open-mindedness to facilitate personal and cultural enrichment. Help to break down stereotypes and prejudice regarding people from different groups. Underline similarities and stimulate respect for the values, beliefs and behaviour of diverse cultures laid down by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Children’s’ Rights.*
- *Make cross-cultural issues an explicit part of the syllabus.*
- *Develop critical attitudes towards all cultures, both pupils’ own and others*
- *Encourage all pupils and their families to participate in school, avoid all kinds of marginalisation and promote coexistence and cooperation between pupils from culturally different families, both in and out of the school*
- *Develop skills for coexistence, necessary to participate in a multicultural society and concern for the socio-affective integration of all pupils.”*

With regard to the third statement:

*“The right conditions must be created in schools to ensure equal opportunities to good quality education and to avoid all forms of marginalisation and exclusion.*

*In order to achieve this aim the school must:*

- *Guarantee all pupils’ integration in school and society, with particular attention to those most at risk of social exclusion, using available tools and having positive expectations of pupils’ potential in order to boost their performance*
- *Adopt preventive measures to tackle truancy and monitor it closely*
- *Detect pupils’ specific needs (physical, affective-relational, psychological, cognitive and social) and set up effective mentoring. Monitor affective, emotional and relational issues with special emphasis on pupils at risk of social exclusion.*
- *Eradicate discrimination on financial grounds by informing families of and helping them to apply for the various grants and subsidies available to them and ensuring that all pupils have the required school materials and can access complementary and extra-curricular activities on offer at the school*
- *Promote the social integration of pupils and their families by networking with associations and businesses in the community in order to achieve educational continuity and, if applicable, push forward the development of a Local Education Plan.”*

Based on these considerations, the document then sets out a series of processes and strategies that will enable these aims to be fulfilled. For the purposes of this research, the most relevant of these are:

1. The Local Education Plans
2. Strategies to attention diversity
3. Strategies to support new immigrant pupils

### ***Local Education Plans***

*“The Local Education Plan is a system of educational cooperation set up to address the multiple needs of our society by boosting, promoting and developing coordinated action in the formal, informal and non-formal spheres. The aims underlying it are to provide pupils with comprehensive education and to promote social cohesion through cross-cultural education and use of Catalan in a multilingual framework.*

*Despite its inherent limitations, the school is the cornerstone in teaching children to be citizens, enabling all pupils to be independent and to develop in the framework of a plural Catalan society.*

*Although many schools do not yet have a Local Education Plan, the gradual implementation scheme entails all schools setting up collaboration with the community and networking at the regional level in order to provide a joint, coherent response to pupils' needs and to ensure educational continuity in all spheres.*

Some of the actions set out by the Plan for schools include:

- *Promote participation amongst members of the school community in making decisions regarding the Local Education Plan*
- *Coordinate and liaise with the school network: educational services and schools in the region*
- *Adapt the school education principles to the common local project, striving for continuity in the values taught at the school and those learnt in other activities – sports, culture and leisure*
- *Participate effectively in the community and liaise with various municipal services and other local institutions or bodies to set up and run joint actions that promote use of Catalan, cross-cultural education and social cohesion*
- *Encourage pupils and their families to participate in the Local Education Plan activities and actions*

### ***Strategies to attention diversity***

“Attending the diversity in pupils' educational needs and helping all pupils to acquire the skills that will allow them to develop personally and at school is a common principle running through all stages and levels of compulsory education. Teachers must prepare their classes with their pupils' characteristics and diverse needs and learning rhythms in mind.

The actions set out under this strategy are:

*a) creation of a attending diversity committee in schools*

which must “define what action will be taken to address pupils' specific learning needs, the procedures used to determine these needs and suggest curricular modifications or individual intensive programmes for new pupils when necessary, and outline the organisation and methodological criteria deemed most suitable”. In organisational terms, it is important to highlight that an as yet undetermined number of teachers will be allocated to attend diversity and schools will

- Make achieving basic skills a priority, in particular: oral and written comprehension and expression, forging positive and interdependent bonds with classmates and teachers, and building positive, realistic expectations.

- Combine individual learning schemes for one or more pupils with the need to integrate these pupils in mainstream activities, ensuring that all pupils, provided that it is possible and appropriate, take part in the mainstream teaching/learning activities. This may be done with the support of another teacher in the classroom if necessary.
- Refer to the overall area aims, the overall level aims and basic skills when planning activities. This approach avoids these special activities either resulting in a parallel curriculum and organisation that is unsuitable for the age group (at the stage of compulsory education) or becoming fun activities with no educational or social purpose.

b) *Open classrooms*<sup>26</sup>

At the second stage of compulsory secondary education it is possible to organise school environments in which a broader approach is taken and activities are more functional so as to keep pupils more motivated and enable them to acquire the basic skills. This can be offered to pupils who for whatever reason have dropped behind in their learning, have low self-esteem and a lack of motivation regarding school and therefore need methodologies and organisation that differ considerably from the mainstream, or for pupils whose mental state requires a more interactive methodology.

These environments, or curricular adaptation units, must be set up as open classrooms, with emphasis on the following criteria:

- Combining activities in the special classroom with activities with the mainstream group
- Comprehensively organising basic skills and knowledge in each area using more practical methodology with more functional, interactive activities.
- Cutting the number of teachers involved with one teacher taking an interdisciplinary approach to cover more than one subject area
- Using ICT as a learning tool in all areas
- Promoting cooperative work
- Reinforcing individual attention in order to boost self-esteem and offer school and careers guidance

This means of organisation has the following fundamental aims:

Developing basic skills: oral and written comprehension and expression, agility in numeracy and problem-solving, essential knowledge in social studies and science, and being able to work independently at school

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<sup>26</sup> These are linked to the 'TAE' – School Entry Support

Establishing positive personal relationships, striving to boost pupils' self-esteem, motivation to learn and future expectations

Pupils should feel that they belong to and are welcomed by the school, that they can have input and demonstrate their own skills in various ways

Developing skills to join school, society and the labour market

Achieving the required marks to obtain the Secondary School Graduate Certificate

c) *Shared school units (UEC)*

In order to ensure that we meet the special educational needs of pupils who have not adjusted to school life, those who in addition to being behind in their learning jeopardise coexistence at the school through continuous and repeated misbehaviour, unjustified absenteeism or rejecting the school, will be given the chance to take some of their classes in 'shared school units' (UEC) where specific activities will be adapted to their needs. For such pupils it is important to make certain that their tutors at the mainstream school monitor their progress.

***Strategies to support new pupils***

New pupils are defined as being those who have joined the Catalan education system for the first time in the last twenty-four months.

Bearing in mind the emotional shock that children may experience on being thrust into a completely new society and culture, the school must plan specific strategies to ensure that such pupils feel welcomed and respected for their own language, culture and beliefs. Likewise, it must enable pupils to catch up with the curriculum as quickly as possible and to become personally independent in their school and social lives<sup>27</sup>. The school must give a personalised response to ensure that new pupils can learn the language and access the common curriculum and socialisation processes, and establish the methodological criteria and curricular materials needed to facilitate integration into mainstream classes from the outset.

The diversity committee is responsible for defining what action will be taken to meet the learning needs of these pupils and for outlining the organisation and methodological criteria deemed most suitable.

Action:

a) *Insertion and integration*

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<sup>27</sup> This raft of measures has been called the Insertion and Integration Plan: "a systematic series of actions applied by the school to incorporate all pupils"

One of the prime responsibilities of the school and all its staff is to ensure that all pupils are welcomed and integrated into the school.

In order to achieve this aim, particularly in the case of new immigrant pupils, the school must:

Give families the right information on the Catalan school system: how the schools works, treatment and use of languages, available resources, grants on offer, the process of pupil integration at school, achieving the grades, and so on.

Ensure that communication with the family is efficient, using the interpretation service if necessary, in order to detect the pupil's needs (physical, affective, emotional, cognitive, social...) (...)"

b) *Insertion scheme*

The insertion scheme is a point of reference and an open working framework in constant interaction with the dynamics of the school which provides individual emotional and curricular support for new pupils and intensive classes in Catalan. It must deal appropriately with new pupils' needs and progress in relationships and language, without them losing contact with the class-group in which they have been placed. The methodology used on the insertion scheme must entail a comprehensive approach to organising learning, functional activities, promoting cooperative work and establishing positive personal relationships.

Ideally, the insertion scheme timetable will not interfere with other areas that new pupils can share with their classmates, and pupils will gradually be brought off the scheme as they make progress. Under no circumstance must a pupil spend the entire school day on the insertion scheme. New pupils' shift into the mainstream class requires special educational attention in order to progressively increase normal learning with enough support to ensure academic success.

The scheme is 'open' in the sense that pupils must be able to join at any point during the year and must also be able to leave to go into the mainstream class when it is deemed most appropriate. (...) The mainstream class-group tutor must coordinate tutorials for pupils who spend part of their day on the insertion scheme with the insertion scheme tutor.

c) *Adapting the curriculum*

One of the primary needs of pupils who join schools in Catalonia and do not speak Catalan is to learn the language of the school. Therefore, in addition to classes that are

directly aimed at teaching Catalan, the entire educational community must help to facilitate learning.

New immigrant pupils often join mid-year and are unique with regard to the range of ages, origins and previous schooling, and particularly because their time at school is split between an insertion scheme or other support structure and the mainstream class. Each pupil therefore has a specific learning process which requires intensive individual plans to be drawn up with guidelines on the curriculum (specific schemes, etc.) and assessment. These must acknowledge pupil diversity and the shared responsibility of all those involved in teaching them.

If a pupil has special learning needs besides the language, an individually adapted curriculum (ACI) will either be made up or, if appropriate, modifications to the normal curriculum proposed.

### **Promoting coexistence (2003)**

In 2003, the former Generalitat of Catalonia published a document entitled *Coexistence in high schools. Teaching scheme and proposals*<sup>28</sup>, which included some strategies that are preventive and others to deal with conflict in secondary schools. It was one of the first texts aimed at addressing the problems of violence and conflict. Although some of the strategies were applicable, the text made little reference to the issue of cross-cultural conflict in schools.

The strategies were split into three categories:

- training on coexistence;
- preventing problematic behaviour;
- responding to conflict;

Two strategies are fundamentally put forward in this document: a *social skills* scheme to improve interpersonal relationships and consequently prevent and serve as a therapy for social and interpersonal problems, and *mediation* as a practice that helps to resolve conflicts. It also includes files entitled *Protocols for addressing bullying*.

These strategies have provoked considerable discussion amongst the educational community and various high schools have already applied them, which has led to a wealth of related literature. I shall now examine social skills and mediation in more detail.

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<sup>28</sup> This document is located at: <http://www.gencat.net/educacio/depart/pdf/convivencia/convi.pdf>

### ***The social skills scheme***

This scheme provides training in social skills and is based on the following premise:

Education based on rote learning and teaching concepts that are split into subject areas is outdated and leads to rejection, or at the very least radical indifference, among young people and teenagers. It is ever more evident that instructing them is not enough; we need to teach them. Rote learning is increasingly available on computer programmes, but no computer can effectively teach youngsters to be people. The upshot of this is that in recent years new teaching schemes have come about, some of which have been successful across the globe. Some of these schemes focus on teaching young people to think and develop cognitive skills, whereas others are aimed at emotional education and acquiring moral values.

All of these competences (developing cognitive skills, working on moral reasoning and emotional education) are covered in the one scheme, which entails a rather global approach<sup>29</sup>.

### ***Mediation***

Training in mediation is presented as follows in the document mentioned above:

*“Broadly speaking, mediation is a procedure used to reach voluntary agreements between the parties involved in a conflict by spreading the responsibility of maintaining a positive relationship and working climate. Some of its most important characteristics include:*

- *The mediator brings the conflicting parties together and explains how they will work on changing the situation*
- *Participation is always voluntary and everything said confidential*
- *The mediator does not judge, give advice or make decisions: s/he has no power*
- *The conflicting parties decide how they are going to restore harmonious coexistence*
- *The mediation service is an educational and preventive approach to conflicts*
- *The mediation service can be offered to all members of the educational community*

*Mediation helps to enhance coexistence because at the same time as teaching values it allows us to manage any conflicts that arise. For these reasons, training mediators:*

- *Does not take up more time but less. Conflicts are positively channelled and do not interfere with teaching at the school*

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<sup>29</sup> I would like to add that having briefly gone over the scheme it is evident that although these aspects are all included together, they are completely disjointed and there is little linking them up. There has been no overall approach taken to it.

- *Does not challenge authority but makes it unnecessary to wield power. Because mediation is voluntary it favours free decision-making and agreements become effective without constantly having to impose sanctions*
- *Does not replace internal rules but is preventive. Using mediation in a conflict allows us to deal with it from the moment it breaks out.*
- *Does not mean that the school is conflictive but that it values coexistence. In the most sensitive contexts, involving everybody in improving coexistence is when mediation really comes into its own.*

*Training in mediation is aimed at the following collectives:*

- *Members of senior management teams, specifically heads of years and coordinators and teaching coordinators*
- *Teachers most involved in teaching attitudes, values and rules, particularly tutors*
- *Pupils with positive leadership qualities, particularly year delegates*
- *Administration and other staff.*
- *Pupils' families”*

In terms of implementation:

*“Using mediation to redress conflict is part of the current juvenile justice system and has afforded excellent results in both Catalonia and most of the surrounding countries. Furthermore, experience in school mediation in numerous high schools around Catalonia has confirmed its usefulness in managing conflict and in contributing to the all-round education of pupils. It is for these reasons that the Catalan Office of Organisation and Innovation in Education, more specifically the sub-Office of Ongoing Training and Teaching Resources, has decided to draw up a specific scheme to provided training in mediation at high schools.*

*In our discussion of “Training for coexistence” we have already mentioned school mediation. In schools, mediation does not only mean learning how to tackle conflicts but also entails a mechanism to regulate coexistence and to be truly effective in conflict interventions. Such is this true that mediation will be included in the school regulations at some high schools as a known, accepted and practiced means of addressing conflicts throughout the educational community.*

*Mediation is a legally recognised and tested educational process and one which is worth including in school regulations provided that it clearly sets out:*

- *what is understood by mediation,*

- *when and how it is used,*
- *what are the prerequisites for requesting mediation,*
- *how mediation is positioned in relation to sanctioning procedures.”*

### 3.4.3 Cross-cultural conflicts in high schools

Young people start high school at an age (12 years) when personal identity begins to spread beyond the family unit as they start seeking out other relationship environments and other models of identification. The extent to which personality has been consolidated when young people reach adolescence, the relationships they strike with their peers, acceptance from adults, the connotations of the school structures and so on, condition personality and generate attitudes and behaviour that will define their insertion into society as adults.

Because the high-school day is so long, secondary education should not only be thought of as providing knowledge and attitudes related to teaching and learning, but must entail other values that have to do with young peoples’ identities. Sometimes, the background to these values lies in youth culture traditions, which is where we can find some of the foundations of cross-cultural conflict and an unequal distribution of violence.

#### a) **The school map and double system of formal education in Catalonia. Ghetto schools**

In Catalonia, as in the rest of Spain, there are both state (public) and private education systems. In addition, some private first and secondary schools also have an agreement with the government by which they provide teaching at all levels of compulsory education and receive substantial state subsidies (covering all staffing costs); these schools are known as ‘state-subsidised private schools’. Therefore, although the state guarantees schooling for all children until the age of 16, parents can also choose to send their children to a non-state school, either private or state-subsidised private.

It is important to state that all children of school age are assigned a state school on the basis of various factors, one of which is their catchment area. Under current law, pupils are not allowed to choose whatever state school they prefer<sup>30</sup>.

It is worth stressing this point because ‘local’ families in numerous areas and neighbourhoods around Catalonia that are host to immigrants whose children have enrolled at the state high

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<sup>30</sup> See Carbonell, F. *Educar en temps d'incertesa*, p. 56

schools, have used a range of ploys to get their children into other state schools (such as registering them under the grandparents' address). The alternative is to send them to a private school, usually one that is state-subsidised<sup>31</sup>.

The excuse they give is that high numbers of foreign pupils brings down the academic level at the school so their own children will not have learnt all they should have by the end of the school year.

In other words, the arrival of immigrants in certain areas and neighbourhoods has resulted in a skewed distribution of foreign and 'local' pupils in schools. In some high schools 80% of pupils are of foreign origin, yet barely 25% of the population in the area is foreign.

The upshot of this phenomenon is that in the last few years, first and high schools that have a massive percentage of immigrants and pupils from other cultures have been labelled 'ghetto' schools. Pupils at these schools experience social and/or community discrimination and their entry into the host society by means of the school is therefore blocked. It would also be worth examining motivation amongst staff at these schools and looking into what expectations they have of their pupils.

The consequence of this process of ghettoisation is to split pupils into those who are financially empowered and those who are not, with the first group attending private or private state-subsidised whilst the latter go to the state schools. The vast majority of foreign pupils attend a state school<sup>32</sup>. Unfortunately, the schools with the most resources and highest level of teaching are the private schools.

What all this boils down to is that *whilst the overwhelming majority of underprivileged foreign pupils go to underprivileged state schools, the private schools are attended by empowered 'local' pupils*. This is clearly, therefore, a two-tier system with some intermediate rungs.

**b) Definition of the class-group and variable credits. Same-ability groups and teacher attitudes.**

The General Education Act (LOGSE) sets out a system of compulsory and variable credits at secondary level in an attempt to provide comprehensive and at the same time personalised

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<sup>31</sup> It is important to note here that state-subsidised private schools used to form part of the state system when it came to pupil distribution and accepting new foreign pupils after the enrolment deadline. Until very recently the government had done very little to ensure that this law was enforced.

<sup>32</sup> See below for data on immigrants and other ethnic minorities in schools

education for all pupils. In some cases the autonomy given to high schools to organise themselves better has provided an excuse to stream pupils according to ability, thereby creating differentiated itineraries within the same schools.

This differentiation is based on the premise that same-ability class-groups have a positive impact on academic success, despite this belief having been proved false.

Furthermore, differentiated itineraries do not address discrimination in school but reproduce it: “streaming by ability used to go hand in hand with flagrantly unequal education caused by differences in teachers’ motivation, skills and their expectations of whether the boys and girls would fail or succeed, along with differences in pupils’ self-esteem and expectations and their families’ expectations, on which belonging to group C has a negative impact”<sup>33</sup>.

Of particular importance is the concentration of late-enrolment pupils in classes that were initially supposed to be temporary and coordinated with the main groups but do not end up being so.

### **c) Spatial and organisational placing of groups and reinforcing discrimination.**

Although this phenomenon has been witnessed at various high schools, we do not have much objective data on it. One of the mechanisms set up in the education system to redress the diversity in compulsory secondary school levels are what is known as Shared School Units (UEC) and Curricular Adaptation Units (UAC). UECs are located outside of schools and pupils on these courses rarely go to their mainstream school, whilst UACs are located in the school, although they are sometimes tucked away in a corner. Logically, this gives rise to discrimination, which is added to the discrimination discussed above. It also means that pupils attending a UAC are labelled by the others.

As is the case for pupils who enrol late, these supposedly temporary classes, both UEC and UAC, end up being permanent and far removed from the rest of the school. The tutors and professors are practically excluded and have little relations with other staff.

### **d) Academic failure among cultural minorities**

One of the clearest corroborations of ethnic discrimination is seen in academic failure rates among pupils from cultural minorities and those from the majority. In the area surrounding Girona, this

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<sup>33</sup> CARBONELL, F., *Educar en temps d'incertesa*, pp72-73. Group C refers to the class-group of pupils who are expected to achieve least academic success.

phenomenon has been studied in the town of Besalú among others. Some of the reasons behind it, suggested in as early as the 1970s<sup>34</sup>, focus on cultural resistance and the school as an institution that represents the majority.

For Ogbu, minorities may be involuntary or voluntary: the former have experienced social and ethnic subordination from the majority group for generations and question the school as a path to social success; whilst the latter, who have recently migrated of their own will, have never suffered subordination and, on the contrary, see the school as being the main route to achieving social success.

Following on from Ogbu, Serra writes of involuntary minorities:

The lack of confidence that the majority (including the school as its representative institution) has in the minority and their own scepticism of the advantages of the school, its rules and practices, fed by previous negative experiences, makes it unlikely that minority families and communities in general will teach their children to accept, understand and abide by school rules and practices. As the children get older it is increasingly harder for them to understand and abide by these rules, even if they broadly recognise the importance of education. Aware of the fact that they may not prosper socially through education (which furthermore is usually of poorer quality), minority pupils will invest their time in alternative survival strategies<sup>35</sup>

This is very clear in the case of gypsies.

Mass migratory waves began in Catalonia at the start of the 1980s and the sons and daughters of the families who migrated are just at school age now. Nevertheless, I believe that the above quote is also relevant for other cultural minorities who have arrived in more recent migratory waves. It seems evident that immigrants from the Maghreb and sub-Saharan Africa in particular have come up against great resistance to their social integration and experienced subordination from the outset that has also been felt by their children.

#### **e) Truancy.**

Truancy from school is a clear manifestation of some pupils' rejection of school and the school system. As such, it is not a single-cause phenomenon but one which may be based on various grounds.

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<sup>34</sup> Ogbu and Wright

<sup>35</sup> Serra, p. 351

In relation to the topic under discussion here, it is worth highlighting the following:

- Parents do not value National Curriculum education highly, which may increase truancy. Although this is a possible cause, it is not a particularly common one. In informal surveys, parents of truants very often claim to appreciate formal education, giving other reasons for the child's behaviour (see above)
- Parents do not rate the education system highly or the values it propounds. This belief that the education system does not prepare young people for adult life (or at least an adult life based on other cultural parameters) is the first point of conflict between opposing values
- Some pupils experiencing a series of difficulties do not adapt well to the system and skip school because they feel unhappy, unmotivated and frustrated. For instance, it is evident that pupils who enrol late are not given enough support on arriving at their new high school
- A teenage desire to challenge structures organised by adults

One recurring theme with regard to truancy is how to tackle it at school. It is generally thought to be an issue that goes beyond the high school itself and which must be addressed comprehensively, with coordination between social services and educational services. Traditionally, teachers have been unwilling to take any action outside the school and have left intervening in the young person's social environment to other professionals<sup>36</sup>. Community teaching schemes have also been important here, whether they be to tackle truancy, open young centers, sports schemes and so on.

Nevertheless, one of the key moments is when the pupil goes back to the school – that is, the support that s/he is offered. Schools that base their response on the idea that the teenager needs help to overcome their misgivings will be more successful than those that 'punish' the truant for his/her absence. There have been cases in which pupils who have gone back to school after a long period of absenteeism have actually been excluded for that very reason.

#### **f) Disorientation in foreign pupils: straddling the school and family cultures**

Personal identity is partly constructed on the basis of cultural reference points with the groups with whom we are related and their acceptance, among other things. Teenagers tend to reject their parents and all that they represent (their values, customs and social habits), and are rejected by the culture in which they want to integrate themselves. This barrier, the product of non-egalitarian policies and poor practices in coexistence, gives rise to certain attitudes and behaviour that

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<sup>36</sup> In fact, this is currently thought to be the duty of the local authorities, whilst organising the system falls to the government of the autonomous region.

characterise the adolescent. One of these is taking refuge in the imagined purity of their ancestors' culture; a purity which sometimes results in groups of youths who are all struggling to find their identity committing violent acts.

It is important to note that the way in which girls tend to react to the same problem is by withdrawing and cutting themselves off from the rest of the group. The conflict is thus played out internally rather than externally, although it remains unresolved all the same.

**g) Blaming social difficulties on immigrants (scapegoating)**

The dynamic of some youth groups is clearly to challenge the adult system by means of violent conduct, displaying highly unconstructive forms of social relations. Although there may be several reasons underlying their evident distress (personal disorientation, feeling vulnerable, lack of boundaries, etc.), they focus their anger on people whose social position makes it hard for them to complain or seek justice, using ethnic and/or racist arguments. Foreign pupils from Africa, Asia and South America tend to be among these people. As I have already argued, an action should not be considered racist or xenophobic, at least initially.

The most important consequence of this is that the more young people there are who are subject to aggression and other forms of discrimination, the more they close ranks as a means of defending themselves from the others. Different groups are therefore formed within schools and become increasingly disconnected, making it harder to establish relations and improve the atmosphere at the school.

A possible second consequence is that behaviour becomes more and more intense, eventually erupting in violence. So, challenging or discriminatory behaviour results in a reaction that is at least as intense, if not more so. The reaction to that reaction follows the same dynamic and this chain of events is only broken when one party ignores the challenge because reacting would do harm than good (bear in mind that, as I have said, immigrants are in a socially weaker situation), or when the school implements plans to resolve real conflicts<sup>37</sup>.

In addition to group dynamics, some young people repeat ideas they have heard from adult relatives or others, accusing immigrants of causing the social problems that affect them: low standing and social success, unemployment, poverty, the belief that the school is paying more attention to

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<sup>37</sup> The parties involved in such conflicts go to the same school, although the conflict takes place outside of school.

immigrants and ignoring them, and so forth. This is the foundation of racist discourse<sup>38</sup>. Such an attitude, which often takes the form of ostracising other pupils, has a negative bearing on the integration of immigrants or other minorities as they are refused a place in the society and trusting relationships. Furthermore, this attitude undermines any schemes that the school may have set up to help foreign pupils integrate.

#### **h) Reproducing nationalist prejudice in high schools: Spanish and Catalan nationalism.**

In administrative terms, Catalonia is an Autonomous Community of Spain. As such, its cultural and national legacy are recognised and it enjoys a series of rights and powers such as official use of Catalan, application of Catalan civil law and legislative power in some areas (social services, for instance), though not all in others (such as compulsory education)<sup>39</sup>.

But beyond the legal issue are the various nationalist sentiments that can be found in Catalonia and Spain regarding Catalan identity. A strong sense of being Catalan exists which is seen in varying stances ranging from independentism to federalism to defending the characteristics that differentiate Catalans and that should result in greater self-government. In Spain a strong anti-Catalan sentiment has recently developed, particularly among certain political elites and parts of the media, which manifests itself in misinterpretations of what currently goes on in the country. For instance, when a metro tunnel that was being dug in the Carmel district of Barcelona collapsed, certain people from outside Catalonia asked why the Catalans were being helped – if they didn't know how to build tunnels that was their problem. Another example: when Gas Natural (a company with historic links to Catalonia) announced their takeover bid of utilities provider Endesa (located in Madrid), some politicians from the right-wing People's Party suspected that the regional government of Catalonia had some dark ulterior motive.

This sentiment feeds a populist discourse that has made Catalonia a focalpoint for the difficulties and upsets currently experienced in Spain that have taken root to a greater or lesser extent among the various sectors of the population. Although on a very small scale, this discourse has also taken root in Catalonia, which explains how the causes of discontentment in Catalan society and its institutions are located. To some extent, it has also been reproduced amongst high school pupils.

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<sup>38</sup> See Martucelli

<sup>39</sup> I hardly need say that the debate on whether Catalonia should be independent is a long-standing one, as is whether Spain should have greater or fewer powers, what mechanisms should be implemented to have more certain self-government, what the system of financing should be, and so on.

### 3.4.4 Bibliography – Spanish context

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