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Educational Approaches for Integration of Migrant Children at Schools in Spain

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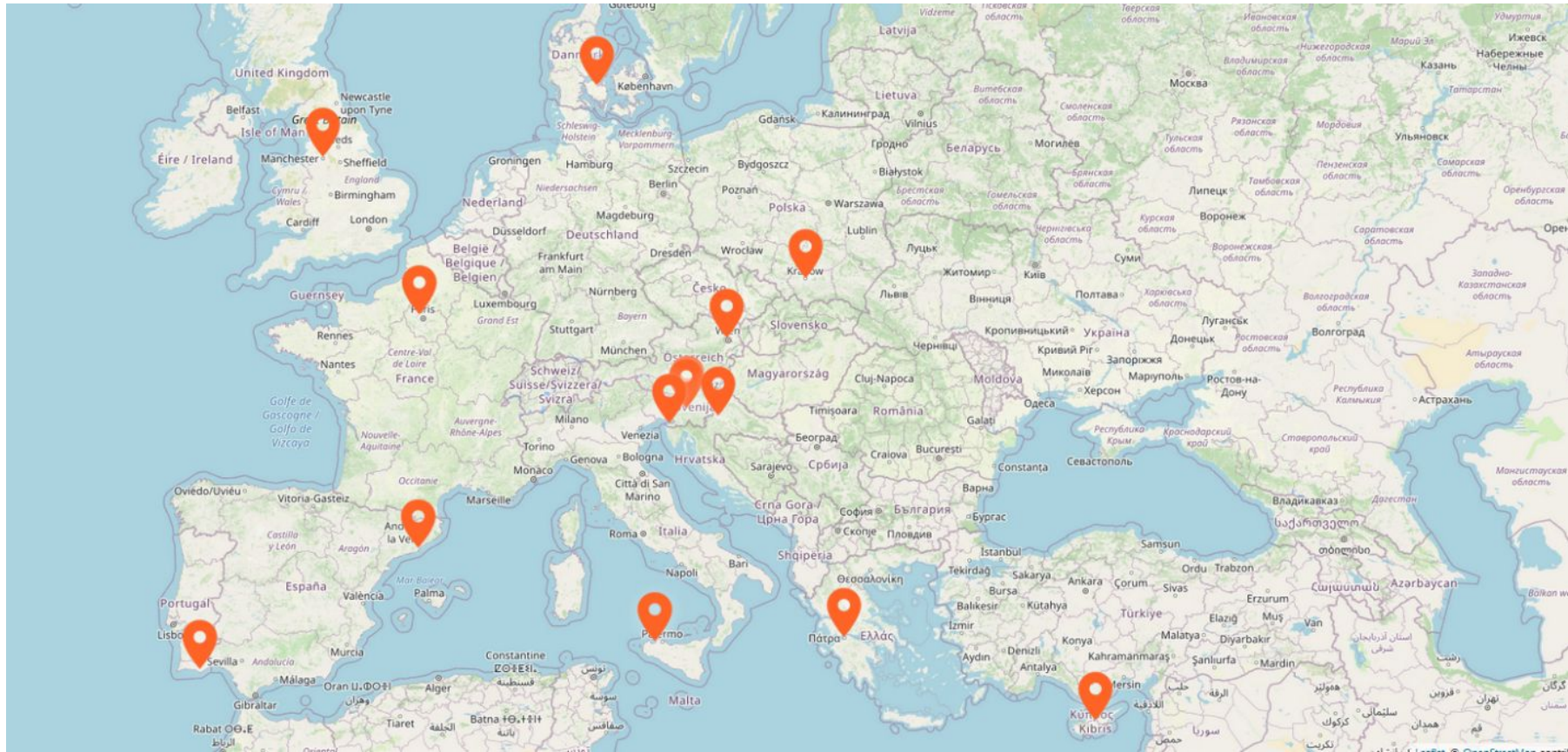
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Migrant Children and Communities in a Transforming Europe

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Integration of migrant children at schools in Spain

- The European Commission (2019, p. 9) highlights the process of migrant integration in Europe as a problem.
- Authors such as Bajaj et al. (2017) and DeNicolo et al. (2017) note that it is urgent more investigation to detect the needs of newcomer students.
- This contribution aims to explore educational proposals for better integration of migrant children at schools in Spain.



Equal opportunities for academic and employment success

To promote equal opportunities for academic and employment success, we have four objectives:

1. To make significant educational proposals.
2. To specify practices that respond.
3. To highlight the difficulties in satisfying.
4. To point out possibilities for improving.



Interviews to experts and stakeholders

“School plays an important role in social integration for every student”
(Harju-Autti & Sinkkonen, 2020, p. 65)





Methodology, methods and research instruments

- Qualitative research design. We adopted an inclusive research perspective (Nind, 2014).
- Semi-structured interviews with a selected sample of stakeholders (professionals, authorities and experts from concerned ministries, state agencies, teachers' unions, migrants' associations, NGOs, and researchers).
- The interviews covered 5 topics: 1) general information; 2) integration policies assessment; 3) migrant children's needs; 4) knowledge of integration; 5) other issues.
- Chain sampling technique, to obtain a richer sample.
- The data analysis was a thematization. Themes were related with 4 objectives of the research.



Results

Migrant children's needs:

- Balancing languages
- Recognition and belonging into their communities (for them and for their families)



Practices to respond to their needs:

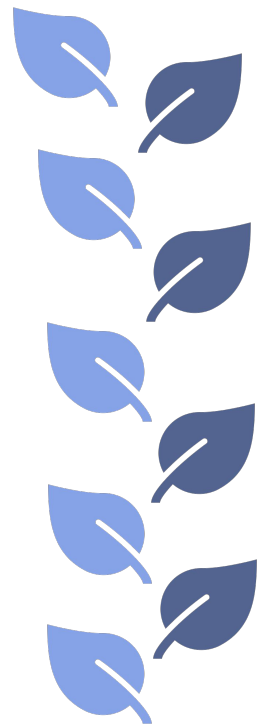
- Local and national programs to learn the host country language but also practice the mother tongue
- Initiatives and proposals that seek to reinforce, consolidate or strengthen ties with community
- Mentoring programs and programs to foster migrant children's access to first jobs



Results

Difficulties to respond to these needs:

- Professionals do not have enough knowledge about these issues.
- Low family involvement in schools.
- Difficulties in national regularization and regrouping families in processes of migration.
- There is little well-grounded research about the topic.





Recommendations

- 1) More flexibility towards migrant children's integration into schools.
- 2) To propose practices that involve as much as possible the community and close entities.
- 3) More long-term studies and more collaborations between large- and small- scale institutions and administrations.



- 4) Educational proposals aimed at furthering the integration of migrant students: welcoming atmosphere, effective leadership, holistic programming, evaluation programs, child-centered learning, rethink the curriculum, learning the host country's language by migrant students, to promote teacher training in multi-diversity or intercultural competence, the sense of belonging and identity.



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Thank you for your attention!



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