



**DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION  
EDUCATION POLICY COMMITTEE**

**EDU/EDPC/MI/M(2008)1  
For Official Use**

**Group of National Experts on the Education of Migrants**

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1ST MEETING OF THE GROUP OF NATIONAL EXPERTS ON THE  
EDUCATION OF MIGRANTS**

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Declassified

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1<sup>ST</sup> MEETING OF THE GROUP OF NATIONAL EXPERTS  
ON THE EDUCATION OF MIGRANTS**

**1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

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1. The Group **ADOPTED** the agenda.

**2. OPENING REMARKS**

2. Mr. Aart de Geus, Deputy Secretary-General responsible for education welcomed participants. He highlighted the fact that migration is a top priority for the OECD and while migration patterns and experience across countries are diverse, all education systems and policies face complex challenges in integrating migrants. He emphasised that the economic and social costs of inaction are high and that political sensitivities can make adoption and implementation of effective reforms difficult. He concluded that there is a great need to identify 'what works' in migrant education policies.

3. On behalf of the Director of Education, Mr. Bernard Hugonnier, Deputy Director launched the Thematic Review on Migrant Education. He stressed that issues related to immigrants and their children are cross-cutting themes of the Education Directorate's work and he emphasised that successful integration of immigrant students in education systems is crucial to their integration in society at large. He invited countries to participate actively in the meeting to define the scope of the project in line with their needs and expectations.

**3. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

4. The Group of National Experts elected Mr Jan Levy (Norway) as Chair and Ms. Breda Naughton (Ireland) and Ms. Nadine Prost (France) as vice-chairs.

**4. INTRODUCTION TO THE THEMATIC REVIEW ON  
MIGRANT EDUCATION AND DISCUSSION ON  
EXPECTED DELIVERABLES AND TIMELINE**

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5. Ms. Miho Taguma introduced this item. To increase the impact of policy reviews for the EDPC, the project will aim to improve its working method by: 1) streamlining the process, 2) delivering timely outputs and 3) carrying out a focused exercise. She also emphasised that the countries and the Secretariat need to work together to develop an effective communication strategy to maximise the impact of this exercise.

6. Mr. Christian Lamhauge Rasmussen of Denmark took the discussant role. He emphasised the importance of integration especially in education, supported by a strong political will in the country. He stressed the need for the OECD review as part of the decision making process on migrant education policies and called for *action-oriented outputs* with a strong policy orientation. He considers country background reports as a good source of information to learn from other countries. The country notes are expected to deliver policy recommendations based on knowledge and facts, not on opinions. He

supported the new approach that the Secretariat will write the country notes as a way to ensure that they are policy-oriented. He emphasised that Denmark expects to receive concise, factual and information quickly from the OECD and is in favour of the synthesis report primarily serving as input into concrete decision-making, targeting policy makers.

7. The discussion focused on the purpose, direction and contents of each output. There was general agreement with the comments made from the Danish discussant. Several delegates asked if all countries could be invited to prepare a short country report (not a full country background report), which would collect a wide range of country experience. A couple of delegates stressed that the interdisciplinary and local phenomena aspects of the theme should be reflected in the policy recommendations in country notes. The synthesis report is expected to be a concise, strongly policy-oriented report, citing publications such as the OECD equity report and the OECD/EU handbook for policy makers on career guidance as an example.

8. The Group of National Experts on the Education of Migrants:

- **AGREED** to the proposed outputs that implied:
  - Country background reports should collect information as an opportunity for countries to learn from one another: *e.g.* a descriptive part (what kind of problems are emerging, what policy initiatives have been taken, and what results have been observed) and an analytical part (what works and what does not work, and why).
  - A short questionnaire should be prepared to which all countries will be invited to respond in order to ensure diversity in the findings.
  - Country notes should identify where problems lie and suggest policy recommendations based on evidence, knowledge and solid research – not pre-formulated opinions.
  - Country notes should focus on action-oriented policy recommendations, which will help decision-makers to act realistically – to make a reform or policy adjustment happen, balancing between a holistic approach and a targeted approach in its analysis.
  - Final synthesis report should primarily target policy makers and be delivered in a concise form.
- **AGREED** to the proposed process and timeline that implied:
  - The Secretariat will prepare the guidelines for a country background report, questionnaire for all countries, and a draft communication strategy by the end of March 2008.
  - Countries will comment on the draft communication strategy by the end of April 2008 and work with the Secretariat to increase the impact of the outputs within the countries and with the wider public audience.
  - Countries receiving a visit will submit the country background reports by the end of May 2008.
  - Other countries are invited to respond to a short questionnaire by the end of July 2008.

- Country reviews will start from October 2008 *i.e.* after the knowledge base is established based on the country background reports, fact-finding field work and other desk-based research.

**5. SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE  
INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS: IMPLICATIONS  
FOR EDUCATION POLICIES**

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9. This item was introduced by Mr. Georges Lemaitre. He informed the Group about work on migration undertaken by DELSA. He emphasised the link between education and labour market outcomes for immigrants and stated that children of less-educated immigrants have a double disadvantage related to the educational handicap of their parents and to their immigrant status. The key issues to be addressed are: 1) how to offset this double disadvantage, 2) how to address the underrepresentation of immigrant children in vocational educational streams, and 3) how to facilitate transition into the labour market. In response to questions, he explained that children of immigrants with above average education may have comparable educational outcomes with native children, but this does not guarantee comparable labour market outcomes.

**6. WHAT WORKS IN MIGRANT EDUCATION? -  
FINDINGS FROM OTHER WORK IN THE  
DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION AND THE  
LITERATURE REVIEW**

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10. This session provided information on other work of the OECD Education Directorate related to migrant education. Ms. Claire Shewbridge summarised relevant key findings from PISA 2003 and 2006. She reported that PISA can offer robust internationally comparable evidence on educational outcomes for immigrant students compared to native students and to students in other systems. Additional relevant data provided by PISA includes country of birth, socio-economic background, language spoken at home, and how these factors are associated with learning outcomes. PISA does *not* provide information on ethnicity and only limited information on nationality.

11. Mr. Francisco Benavides introduced the CERI's project on Teacher Education for Diversity, a two-year project that runs parallel to the Migrant Education Review aiming to provide "teacher friendly" information on teaching strategies to address diversity. Mr. Bruno Della-Chiesa reported on the CERI's project on globalisation and linguistic diversity, which focuses on key factors shaping successful language learning and effects of linguistic competencies on labour market and social outcomes. Ms. Tracey Burns presented the findings from the literature review on education and diversity carried out under the framework of the Central Priority fund of the Secretary-General.

12. The Chair noted the importance of collaboration between these different projects and the migrant education review. The Group confirmed the relevance of the work undertaken. Some delegates emphasised that the migrant education review will have to go beyond analysing PISA data and complement it by additional national data on factors such as ethnic origin and nationality of immigrants. Several delegates expressed reservations about the restrictive criteria used in the literature review and agreed that more research published in languages other than English needed to be considered.

**7. COOPERATION WITH THE EUROPEAN  
COMMISSION**

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13. Laura Cassio of the European Commission introduced this item. The European Commission will publish a Green Paper on Education and Migration in April 2008. It will focus on immigrant

students from low socio-economic backgrounds and be based on a broad definition of immigrant students including minority students. Philia Thalgott of the Council of Europe presented related work undertaken by the Council of Europe and provided information on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages and the language policy reviews.

14. The discussion focused on issues of definition and terminology. Several delegates stressed the need to clarify whether minority students and internal migrants should be considered in the Migrant Education Review. It was pointed out that the Migrant Education Review should not focus only on students with low socio-economic status to provide a fair picture of the overall situation of immigrant students. Concerns were expressed about the use of the term 'integration', which has very different connotations in different countries.

**8. COUNTRY EXPERIENCE: WHAT POLICIES?  
WHAT OUTCOMES?**

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15. This session provided opportunities for countries to share their experiences on policy evaluation in migrant education. Mr. Gaby Hostens of Flanders (Belgium) briefed the Group on Flemish approaches to migrant education policy: Flemish policies in this domain focus mainly on proficiency in the language of instruction, enhanced participation in ECEC, funding of schools on the basis of SES indicators, strengthened school leadership and teacher competences for diversity.

16. Ms. Frances Kelly of New Zealand explained the major measures undertaken to improve educational outcomes of migrant students in New Zealand: policies include language learning, teacher support and appointment of refugee education coordinators. The evaluation of these policies relies on monitoring programmes assessing student progress at different ages.

17. Ms. Katherine Daly of England (UK) presented information on the New Arrivals Excellence Programme (NAEP), which provides guidance tools to support schools in improving provisions for newly arrived students. It is too early to measure the impact of the programme, but pupils are assessed by teachers at different ages and an ethnic monitoring system was introduced in 2003.

18. Ms Rosario Sánchez Núñez-Arenas of Spain provided information on how the Spanish autonomous communities deal with the new phenomenon of high immigration. Programmes include intensive language classes (two hours a day), attention to families and communities, teacher training for diversity, and observatories to deal with discrimination. She explained that there are no statistics on immigrant students, partly because this is a new phenomenon and partly because it could lead to discrimination.

19. Ms. Anne Brit Udahl of Norway emphasised the Norwegian government's focus on promoting linguistic and cultural diversity as a resource in education. The government has introduced a new curriculum for basic Norwegian, a new curriculum in mother tongue education, a standardised assessment tool to test language proficiency and guidance material for teachers to teach basic Norwegian. There is also a strong emphasis on early intervention in pre-school. To measure effectiveness, Norway has reintroduced national tests that allow disaggregated data for immigrant students, established an expanded set of relevant data and initiated research on the impact of these policies on learning outcomes.

20. The Group confirmed the importance for countries to learn from each other, but some delegates called for caution concerning the comparability of situations across countries. The Group

discussed national differences in integration policies. Some viewed information on nationality and ethnicity as crucial to design appropriate policies while others emphasised that such data are less relevant than data on socio-economic status of immigrants. Several countries argued that a distinction should be made between immigrant students and linguistic minorities while others considered that they may be seen as one group.

21. A number of delegates stressed the importance of integrating immigrant students in mainstream education to avoid segregation. Several countries highlighted that multicultural learning environments are beneficial for both to native and immigrant students in acquiring social and intercultural competences. It was mentioned that school choice may lead to segregation, or concentration of immigrant students in certain schools, despite other policies to promote integration.

22. Language learning evolved as a major issue in the discussion. Specific points of discussion included timing and duration of language programmes, integration of basic language instruction in all classes and ways to target diversity material at different subject teachers. Some delegates emphasised the importance of promoting bilingualism while others underlined that mother tongue education should primarily aim at helping children to learn the language of the host country.

#### **9. THE NEW OECD STRATEGY FOR THE OECD WEBSITE, OECD FORUMS, AND MCM, WITH RESPECT TO 'MIGRATION'**

23. Mr. John West of the Public Affairs and Communications Directorate (PAC) introduced this item. He presented the OECD website on migrant education and reported on PAC's new strategy for the OECD web, OECD Forums and MCM, with respect to migration. He raised awareness of the OECD's overarching topic of 'political economy of reform' and suggested that the Migrant Education Review focuses on how reform can best be implemented in this area. He also informed the Group that the migrant review team will collaborate with PAC in the development of a communications strategy.

#### **10. COUNTRY EXPERIENCE: EXPERIENCE OF A SENDING COUNTRY**

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24. Ms. Li Renzhu of China introduced this item to explore the case of Chinese migrant students both within China and internationally. She reported that China has very large internal flows of temporary migrants which brings special challenges to the education system, both in terms of keeping 'schooling records' of migrating students and in terms of adequately integrating them in the school system. She also addressed policy issues related to the large flows of Chinese students migrating internationally. Several countries confirmed the relevance of China's experiences for their own countries as receiving countries and emphasised the ongoing relationships and mutual responsibilities between sending and receiving regions and countries.

#### **11. KEY POLICY QUESTION(S) FOR THE THEMATIC REVIEW**

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25. Ms. Miho Taguma presented this item. She set out proposals to define the focus of the activity and introduced an overarching policy question - what policies are most successful in integrating immigrant students in the education systems? Three criteria were set out as the main focus - access, participation and student performance; an analytical approach; qualitative and quantitative indicators; and the targeted scope including dimension, groups, levels, stakeholders and policy interventions.

26. Mr. Anders Widholm of Sweden was invited to react on the proposals as a discussant. He asked for more countries to participate so that each country could learn from other countries through this exercise. Overall, he agreed on the proposals as they fit with the Swedish context. He emphasised the importance of the three criteria to be maintained in the interest of streamlining the review. He then reacted to seven points. First, he called for a need to take into account the mix and structure of immigration patterns in each country. Second, he emphasised the need to define 'access' with respect to legal obstacles, segregation, housing, etc. Third, he stressed that the biggest challenge to 'participation' is for the school systems to cope with new 'waves' of immigrants. Fourth, Sweden has been generously offering mother tongue tuition as a way to promote multiculturalism and to support better student performance. But, there is uncertainty in the government how to handle this issue in the future. Fifth, he argued that the analytical approach should not limit itself to targeted interventions but include some comprehensive policies directed to all and that were of great benefit for immigrant students. Sixth, he agreed with the proposed indicators but suggested that gender be added. Seventh, he suggested focusing on international migration and separating the issue of indigenous minorities from this review exercise.

27. The group welcomed the overall proposals with general satisfaction. They agreed that access, participation and student performance are the essential criteria to measure educational outcomes, and suggested going beyond the legal framework and examining both barriers and success factors. They also agreed on most of the proposed indicators and suggested some additional indicators. However, a number of countries expressed concerns about the overarching policy question due to the use of the term 'integration'. The issue of terminology (e.g. immigrant status in general, the distinction between 1st and 2nd generations, minorities, indigenous students, and the status of Roma students) was raised by several delegates. Several delegates expressed their reservations on the collection and selection of indicators, concerning measurability, comparability, availability and usability. While a few delegates expressed interest in expanding the scope to the integration of immigrant students into society at large measuring social skills and key competencies presented by the OECD DeSoCo study, others were cautious about the feasibility and the limited timeframe and suggested focusing on education outcomes.

28. Countries that will participate in the country review joined Sweden to invite more countries to be involved in the activity. Other countries supported the idea of participating in the activity in some form such as actively participating in the meeting discussions and responding to a questionnaire, even without taking part in the reviews.

29. Ms. Deborah Roseveare proposed two alternatives to the proposed overarching policy question to avoid the term 'integration'. The Secretariat noted the different policy priorities in different countries and reiterated that, while the overarching policy question is set to streamline the analysis process, the focus of country review will be determined by individual countries, in consultation with the Secretariat so as to address the most important country-specific issues.

30. The Secretariat thanked the group for their input which would be used to draft the guidelines for country background reports. The Secretariat emphasised the importance of a wide range of country engagement in the activity and encouraged all countries to respond to a short questionnaire, which the Secretariat will prepare as one component of the country background report. The Secretariat clarified that the migrant education review is part of the overall output result of the programme of work on '*Education and Diversity*', which has indigenous education as a separate strand and this was in response to the request of the indigenous education community. The issue of terminology was noted and the Secretariat will adopt the categories and terminology used for PISA or DELSA's work. Secretariat will consult further with an *ad hoc* group of interested countries on the collection and selection of indicators, which will be incorporated in the guidelines for country background reports.

31. The Group of National Experts on the Education of Migrants:

- **AGREED** that the overarching policy question will be: what policies will promote successful education outcomes for first and second generation migrants?
- **AGREED** that the focus should not only be on targeted interventions but also on comprehensive policies, from which immigrant students could greatly benefit.
- **AGREED** that the Secretariat would consult further with interested countries on data collection and selection of indicators.
- **AGREED** that questions concerning access, participation and student performance are the most relevant and that issues of segregation need to be specifically addressed.
- **AGREED** that the main focus should be on pre-school, primary and secondary education, but to also include access/transition issues to higher education, where these are relevant.

## 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

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32. The Chair noted that TUAC had asked to participate in the work of the Group and the Group **AGREED** to invite BIAC and TUAC to attend the meetings of the Group.

33. The Chair presented the draft conclusions of the meeting. He announced that the next meeting is scheduled to take place in October 2008 in Paris.

34. Ms. Miho Taguma presented the action plan with specific next steps to be taken by the Secretariat and the countries to ensure the mutual respect for deadlines. Ms. Deborah Roseveare reminded delegates that the deadline for participation in country review visits is 28 March and the cost of participation is EUR 65 000.



**ANNEX 1: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

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THEMATIC REVIEW ON MIGRANT EDUCATION**

**21/1/2008 - 22/1/2008**

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