

## 5. Reduce the concentration of disadvantaged youth with immigrant parents

### WHAT and WHY?

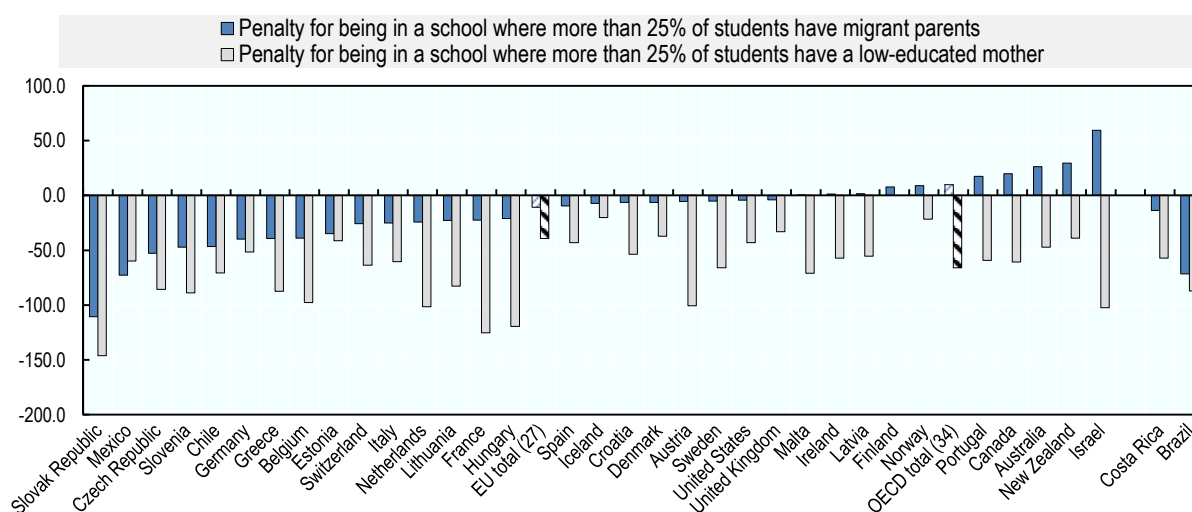
Youth with migrant parents are often concentrated in certain neighbourhoods and schools. Evidence on the impact of concentration of youth with migrant parents in schools is not clear-cut. The literature for the United States and Europe suggests that this concentration hinders the school performance of other youth with migrant parents. However, such concentration seems to have little to no impact on youth with native-born parents (Schneeweis, 2015<sup>[45]</sup>). A key variable in this context is not the migrant status in itself, but the large share of youth who come from socio-economically disadvantaged households and the resulting concentration of disadvantage in schools.

The concentration of disadvantaged youth with immigrant parents in schools is a particular challenge in European OECD countries, where significant shares of the immigrant population lack basic qualifications. For instance, in France, Germany, Greece and Belgium, students with migrant parents in schools with a high concentration of students with migrant parents perform around 40 points lower in mean PISA scores than their peers in low-concentration schools – the equivalent of one year of schooling (OECD, 2017<sup>[3]</sup>); in some countries the gap is even significantly larger. However, this gap largely disappears when the socio-economic background of their parents is taken into consideration. An example is Denmark, where the performance of youth almost evens out once these characteristics are controlled for (Beuchert, Christensen and Jensen, 2020<sup>[46]</sup>). In practice, however, it is difficult to disentangle the two, as migrant families often account for a disproportionate share of the most disfavoured. By contrast, in Australia and Canada, where immigrants are overrepresented among the highly educated, children – whether with immigrant or native-born parents – perform better when they find themselves in a school with many children of immigrants.

### WHO?

OECD-wide, almost three in four 15-year-old students with migrant parents go to schools where at least a quarter of their classmates also have migrant parents, and more than one in five where over three-quarters do. Such concentration can be detrimental if – and only if – coupled with low education background of the parents (OECD/EU, 2018<sup>[1]</sup>).

Figure 5.1. How different factors affect academic performance



Note: Difference in PISA mean scores for 15-year-old pupils in schools above the 25% threshold and those in schools below the 25% threshold, 2015.

Source: OECD/EU (2018<sub>[1]</sub>).

## HOW?

Policy efforts to address the problems associated with a concentration of children of immigrants from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds in the same schools can broadly cluster into two approaches:

- preventing the concentration of disadvantaged youth with migrant parents in the same schools
- mitigating the negative consequences of such concentration, including through additional funding and teaching support

Policy attempts to *prevent concentration* can take various forms. Some countries have established mechanisms to allocate students equitably across different schools. For example, countries can design school areas in such a way that they include a heterogeneous mix of more and less affluent neighbourhoods. Another approach is to transfer students between schools if the concentration of specific socio-economic characteristics becomes too high. Policies can also influence (enhance or limit) the possibility for parental school choices.

In the municipality of Aarhus, Denmark's second-largest city, all bilingual pupils about to enrol in school are required to take a Danish language test. If they test below a predetermined threshold they lose their free school choice and the municipality assigns them to a school. If the school lies outside the student's school district, local authorities provide free bus services between home and school. A recent evaluation of this policy finds that this forced form of busing has a negative effect on the academic performance and well-being of bilingual pupils (Damm et al., 2020<sub>[47]</sub>). Italy also aims to achieve a balanced distribution of foreign-born students across schools and classes through agreements between schools, the formation of school networks and co-operation with local authorities. Schools and classes where more than 30% of students do not speak Italian are identified as targets of intervention. However, meeting or exceeding this target level does not result in an automatic intervention.

Limits to the extent to which popular, oversubscribed schools can select students based on performance or socio-economic status is another way to ensure an equitable distribution of students across schools.

One way to do so is to make school choice plans subject to simple lotteries (Godwin et al., 2006<sup>[48]</sup>). Another way is to provide financial incentives for oversubscribed schools to accept students with migrant parents. For example, several countries allocate funding, amongst others, based on the socio-economic characteristics of the school's student population.

The success of such measures partly depends on the degree of discretion that public authorities have over parental decision-making (OECD, 2010<sup>[5]</sup>). Immigrant parents may find it difficult to enrol their children in the most appropriate school due to language barriers, resource constraints, lower levels of education or lack of knowledge of the country's school system. In a system with free choice, the issue of concentration should hence also be addressed by raising awareness among immigrant parents and enhancing their access to information about the educational choices available. An example is the city of Rotterdam in the Netherlands, which organises bus tours for parents to visit local schools and discuss enrolment options (Brunello and De Paola, 2017<sup>[49]</sup>).

In Denmark, the city of Copenhagen has made attempts to encourage immigrant parents to choose a school with a predominant student population without children of immigrants. Participating schools provided specific preparation and training for teachers and provide for an integration specialist or a translator with a migration experience. The same approach has also been tried vice-versa, namely encouraging non-immigrant parents to send their children to schools with many students who have migrant parents. Copenhagen, for example, not only targeted migrant parents but simultaneously initiated publicity campaigns and collaborations with kindergartens in order to convince native-born Danes to enrol their children in local schools with a significant immigrant population. A similar example is the project 'School in zicht' in the Flemish part of Belgium, which motivates native-born parents to enrol their children in local schools with a high concentration of migrant students.

*Mitigating negative impacts of concentration* of disadvantaged students on students' learning is an important focus. OECD countries have taken different steps to improve the learning environment and the quality of education in schools where the concentration of disadvantage is already above the national average. Such steps may include allocating additional funding or supplementary teaching staff, attracting qualified teachers to schools in need, and qualifying teachers to better respond to the needs of students with migrant parents.

Many countries provide additional government funding and resources to schools with a high share of students from low-educated or immigrant families. Depending on the country, such financing may be only available for specific purposes such as language training or reception classes or freely attributable according to each school's needs.

In Switzerland, schools in the Canton of Zurich receive professional support and funding of around EUR 34 000 per year if more than 40% of their students are foreign nationals (excluding Germans and Austrians) or speak another language at home than one of the official Swiss languages. The funds are allocated in the framework of an obligatory area-wide model of quality assurance entitled 'Quality in multicultural schools-QUIMS'. The scheme aims to raise the quality of schools with large shares of students with migrant parents (OECD, 2018<sup>[2]</sup>). An evaluation suggested that the scheme improved the writing proficiency of students across all grade levels and positive outcomes in reading ability and transition to secondary education and vocational training. However, QUIMS schools still underperform compared with other schools in both respects (Roos, 2017<sup>[50]</sup>; Canton of Zurich, 2017<sup>[51]</sup>).

New Zealand allocates funding to schools for additional initiatives to meet the needs of students whose parents are refugees. Such financial support includes bilingual tutors in mainstream class programmes as well as education co-ordinators and liaison workers to assist schools in making contact with families and communities, and supporting refugee homework centres. Funding can also target specific projects rather than schools. In Austria, the nation-wide "Lerncafe" project offers free tutoring, homework support and afternoon care programme for 6 to 14-year-old children from a disadvantaged background, of which the vast majority have migrant parents. In 2016/2017, 95% of the participating children completed the school

year successfully. Evidence on the previously described busing policy in Aarhus, Denmark, suggests that school resources can more than compensate for potential negative peer effects in schools with high concentration of youth with migrant parents (Damm et al., 2020<sup>[47]</sup>). Teachers are the most important resource of schools and ensuring high-quality education in disadvantaged schools requires the best teachers. Teaching staff can make a difference in the learning and life outcomes of otherwise similar students. Yet, disadvantaged schools often struggle to attract and retain the best prepared and experienced teachers (OECD, 2018<sup>[52]</sup>; Hanushek, Rivkin and Schiman, 2016<sup>[53]</sup>). Several OECD countries introduced incentives such as higher salaries or more attractive working conditions, to attract and keep qualified teachers at schools serving disadvantaged students. The evidence on the effectiveness of such schemes is mixed. Evaluations of a bonus scheme in France in the early 2000s found that boni had no effect on turnover rates and attracted mostly inexperienced teachers (Bénabou, Kramarz and Prost, 2009<sup>[54]</sup>). In contrast, evidence from the United States suggests that higher salaries increased teacher mobility. However, the research also finds that teacher mobility is much more strongly related to student achievement and ethnic background (Hanushek, Kain and Rivkin, 2001<sup>[55]</sup>). Yet, if salary increases are substantial, they can make a larger difference. In North Carolina (United States), a USD 1 800 retention bonus for certified teachers who work in disadvantaged schools reduced teacher turnover by 17%. Retention of teachers results in savings of roughly USD 36 000 per teacher who did not move schools (OECD, 2012<sup>[56]</sup>). Korea, too, attracts teachers into disadvantaged schools through additional salary. Besides, smaller class size, less instructional time, extra credit towards future promotion and the ability to choose the next school where one works play a role. Evidence suggests that disadvantaged students in Korea are more likely than advantaged students to be taught by high-quality mathematics teachers (Schleicher, 2014<sup>[57]</sup>).

Financial and other incentives are only effective if teachers are competent to work with immigrant students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Results from the OECD's Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) indicate a need for professional development in this area (OECD, 2015<sup>[17]</sup>). While teacher training usually addresses topics associated with teaching in a multicultural setting, there is rarely a coherent and systematic curriculum for this. A country that has made efforts to change this is the United Kingdom. In 2004, the Department for Children, Schools and Families introduced a professional development programme to increase primary teachers' confidence and expertise to meet the needs of bilingual students. The scheme produced promising results in language skills but did not affect math and sciences competencies (Benton and White, 2007<sup>[58]</sup>). Norway, too, has encouraged competence development regarding multicultural issues in the education sector.

Beyond financial and training support for the regular teaching staff, some countries also provide additional support staff in schools with many youth of immigrant parentage. In Canada, the federally funded Settlement Program provides an array of settlement and integration supports for newcomers to Canada, including targeted supports for youth and their families. The Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) initiative places settlement workers in schools with large newcomer populations to act as liaisons between newcomer students, their families, the school system, and the broader community. SWIS workers provide a variety of supports, including outreach to newly arrived families; information and orientation; and needs assessments and referrals. In addition, Settlement Program services can include social connection, recreational, and employment supports targeted to newcomer youth.

**Table 5.1. Additional funding for schools with disadvantaged students in OECD countries, 2016**

	Yes/No	Budgeted costs	Targeted education or age level	Eligibility criteria for receiving additional funding
Australia	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	Funds are allocated through the 'English Language Proficiency loading programme', which targets students with limited English language proficiency (students must come from a language background other than English)

	Yes/No	Budgeted costs	Targeted education or age level	Eligibility criteria for receiving additional funding
				and have at least one parent who completed school education only to year 9 or below)
Austria	No (but additional teaching staff for schools with high share of non-German speaking students)	/	/	/
Belgium	Yes	EUR 8 002 412	Kindergarten, primary and secondary educations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Per capita income</li> <li>• Level of education</li> <li>• Unemployment and activity rates</li> <li>• Recipients of the minimum guaranteed monthly income</li> <li>• Professional activities</li> <li>• Housing standards</li> </ul>
Canada	No	/	/	/
Chile	No	/	/	/
Czech Republic	Yes	n.a.	Primary school	Request for subsidies filed by school
Denmark				
Estonia				
Finland	Yes (so-called “positive discrimination funding”)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
France	No	/	/	/
Germany	Yes (but earmarked for personal of reception classes and support offers for students in mainstream classes)	n.a.	Primary and secondary education and vocational schools	Students’ need for specific support, presence of recently arrived students
Greece				
Hungary	Yes (provided by the Institution Maintenance Centre (KLIK) from its own centralised budget)	n.a.	n.a.	Needs based (e.g. for employing teachers for Hungarian as a foreign language)
Iceland				
Israel				
Ireland	Yes	EUR 110.27 million (2016)	Pre-school to second-level education (3 to 18 years)	Level of disadvantage in school
Italy	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EUR 1 million (2015/16; Ministry of Education)</li> <li>• EUR 13 million (2014-20; AMIF)</li> </ul>	Primary and secondary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of specific projects eligible for funding</li> <li>• Share of foreign-born youth in school (for funds from Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, AMIF)</li> </ul>
Japan	Yes	JPY 140 000 000	Kindergarten to secondary education	Request from local government
Latvia	Yes (Social and Pedagogical	EUR 927 656 (Jan – Aug 2016)	Grade 1 -12	Schools with children from disadvantageous families and juvenile offenders (funding depends on number of

	Yes/No	Budgeted costs	Targeted education or age level	Eligibility criteria for receiving additional funding
	Adjustment Programmes)			students in adjustment programs; coefficient 1.1 is applied to calculate public funding for adjustment programs)
Lithuania	Yes	EUR 1 742 per student	Primary or secondary education (for immigrants or returnees during first year at school)	Earmarked for integration classes (if there are at least 5 migrant students) and support measures in mainstream classes
Luxembourg	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EUR 45 665 980</li> <li>• EUR 188 588 (for schools enrolling asylum seekers)</li> </ul>	Primary and secondary education	High share of socially disadvantaged learners in community/school (high correlation with migrant population)
Mexico	No	/	/	/
Netherlands	Yes		Primary education	Socio-demographic characteristics of the student population measured via parental education level
New Zealand	Yes	NZD 859 000 +GST (additional refugee specific initiatives)	Secondary education (9 – 13 years)	Students with refugee background status
Norway	No	/	/	/
Poland	No	/	/	/
Portugal	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	Disadvantaged context, high rate of school failure and dropout
Slovak Republic	Yes	n.a.	n.a.	Students requiring additional language training
Slovenia	Yes (for add. teachers, learning materials, field-trips, bilingual instruction, Slovenian language training)	n.a.	Basic schooling (ISCED 1 and 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of Roma students</li> <li>• Number of bilingual classes</li> <li>• Number of SEN students and the scope of determined support</li> </ul>
Spain	No (but existed until 2011)	(n.a.)	(Primary and secondary education)	(Foreign-born profiles of the education institution)
Sweden	Yes	n.a.	Pre-, primary and upper secondary school	Compensation to municipalities for immigrant students is built into the municipal equalisation system to ensure equal financial footing
Switzerland	Yes (not systematic)	Varies across cantons	Varies across cantons	Varies across cantons
Turkey	No	/	/	/
United Kingdom	Yes	GBP 2.5bn in 2016 (GBP 1 320 per primary age and GBP 935 per sec. age student)	Primary and secondary education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupil premium for disadvantaged students (mainly pupils from low income households)</li> <li>• Separate discretionary local funding for students classed as having <i>English as an Additional Language</i>, who have been in the school system for a maximum of 3 years)</li> </ul>
United States	Yes	USD 737 400 000 (incl. funds earmarked for reception classes, add. teaching staff in main-stream classroom and targeted offers for late arrivals)	Primary and secondary education	Number of immigrant and English language learner students in each State

Note: n.a. = information not available; / = not applicable. In many OECD countries such as Germany and the United States, education is predominantly a subnational competence. The measures mentioned here might only apply to some states/entities.  
Source: OECD questionnaire on the integration of young people with migrant parents 2016.

**Table 5.2. Allocation of additional teaching staff in the mainstream classroom and incentives for teachers to work in schools with disadvantaged students in OECD countries, 2016**

	Additional teaching staff in mainstream classroom		Incentives for teachers	
	Yes/No	Criteria for allocation	Yes/No	Type of incentives
Australia	No	/	Yes ("Teach for Australia" programme placing high quality candidates, known as Associates, in disadvantaged secondary schools)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced teaching load</li> <li>• Support and training</li> <li>• Award of accredited postgraduate teaching qualification</li> </ul>
Austria	Yes	Total number of recently arrived students with insufficient German language proficiency in a federal state	No	/
Belgium	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary schools: selected disadvantaged schools benefitting from special resources (<i>encadrement différencié</i>)</li> <li>• Primary schools: criteria not specified</li> </ul>	n.a.	n.a.
Canada	Yes	Number of English/French language learners and students requiring enhanced language support	No	/
Chile	No	/	No	/
Czech Republic	No (but assistants (not prof. teaching staff) can be added at primary schools; plan to introduce prof. teacher co-workers)	/	Yes	Additional salary
Denmark				
Estonia				
Finland	Possible (but not systematic)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
France	No	/	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional salary</li> <li>• Smaller class size and better student to teacher ratio</li> <li>• Less instructional time</li> <li>• Facilitation of future promotion</li> </ul>
Germany	Yes (in many federal states)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimum share of foreign-born in classroom</li> <li>• Minimum share of students in need of language training, regardless of background</li> </ul>	No	/
Greece				
Hungary	No	/	Yes	Bonus pay schemes
Iceland				
Israel				
Ireland	Yes	Enrolments	No	/
Italy	No	/	No (but teachers involved in specific projects for migrant	/

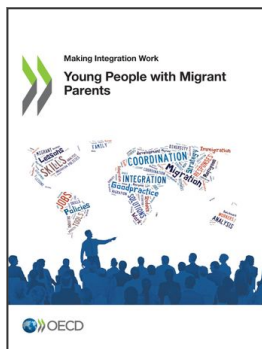
	Additional teaching staff in mainstream classroom		Incentives for teachers	
	Yes/No	Criteria for allocation	Yes/No	Type of incentives
			students receive an hourly reimbursement)	
Japan	Yes	Decision of local board of education	No	/
Korea	n.a.	n.a.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional salary</li> <li>• Smaller class size</li> <li>• Less instructional time</li> <li>• Additional credit for future promotion</li> <li>• Choice of next school</li> </ul>
Latvia	No	/	No (but specific training is provided for teachers working in multicultural contexts)	/
Lithuania	Not systematic	/	n.a.	n.a.
Luxembourg	Yes	Newly arrived students with insufficient proficiency of instruction language (Luxembourgish at preschool level, German / French at primary level)	Yes	Reduced number of students per class (15 instead of 25)
Mexico	No	/	No	/
Netherlands				
New Zealand	No (but funding for bilingual tutors to support mainstream class programmes)	/	No	/
Norway	No (but mainstream policy)	Mainstream policy targeting primary and lower secondary schools with >20 students per teacher and scores below national average (not migrant specific)	No	/
Poland	Yes	No specific criteria (students in need of support are entitled to a teacher assistant in their native language for 12 months)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bonus for difficult working conditions</li> <li>• Smaller class size</li> <li>• Additional teacher with qualifications in special education</li> </ul>
Portugal				
Slovak Republic	Yes (assistant teachers)	Students with language barriers	Yes	Personal awarding
Slovenia	No	/	Yes	Smaller group size in schools (or lower child/adult ratio in ECEC)
Spain	No (but existed until 2011)	(Foreign-born profiles of the education institution)	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smaller class sizes</li> <li>• Recognition of extra-work ("merits") to facilitate transits to other schools</li> </ul>
Sweden	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student's needs</li> <li>• Decision of the head teacher</li> </ul>	Yes	State grants for additional salaries for skilled teachers in certain urban areas with a high level of exclusion
Switzerland	Yes (not systematic)	Varies across cantons	No	/
Turkey	No	/	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smaller class sizes</li> <li>• Bonus payment for teaching language courses to foreign students</li> </ul>



	Additional teaching staff in mainstream classroom		Incentives for teachers	
	Yes/No	Criteria for allocation	Yes/No	Type of incentives
United Kingdom	Yes (not systematic)	School's decision based on specific student needs	Yes (not systematic)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach First programme</li> <li>• Payments, financial assistance, support or benefits</li> </ul>
United States	Yes	n.a.	No (not systematic across the country)	/

Note: n.a. = information not available; / = not applicable. In many OECD countries such as Germany and the United States, education is predominantly a subnational competence. The measures mentioned here might only apply to some states/entities.

Source: OECD questionnaire on the integration of young people with migrant parents 2016.



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