

Fostering intercultural awareness among teachers should be a reflection of continuous and repetitive professional, occupational support and training, which would be organized in sets of training modules. The content of modules can be structured according to the above-mentioned indicators in order to build immediate practices and to share teaching experiences, challenges, difficulties and dilemmas in operationalizing intercultural interventions.

Teaching staff in both class and subject teaching can make use of models of activities, practicum, manuals and e-platforms as an additional and auxiliary resource in designing and building intercultural cross-curricular strategies for primary education.

Support for the teaching staff should be designed both in the direction of professional and in addition to personal transformation, which would be a prerequisite for fostering the impartiality and openness of teachers, as fundamental assumptions for intercultural action.

References

- Bartulović, M., Kušević. B. (2016). *Što je interkulturalno obrazovanje? Priručnik za nastavnike i druge znatiželjnike*, Zagreb: Centar za mirovne studije
- [Bartulović, M., Kušević. B. (2016). *What is Intercultural Education? Handbook for Teachers and Other Interested Parties*, Zagreb: Centar za mirovne studije]
- Bias Busting for Beginners* (2021). Belfast: Northern Ireland Council for Integrated Education
- Guidelines for Intercultural Education* (2006). Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
- Intercultural Education in the Primary Schools* (2005). Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
- Концепција за интеркултурно образование (2016). Скопје: МОН
- [*Concept for Intercultural Education* (2016). Skopje: Ministry of Education and Science] (<http://www.mon.gov.mk/images/Koncepcija-mk.pdf>)
- Sablić, M. (2014) *Interkulturalizam u nastavi* Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak
- [Sablić, M. (2014). *Interculturalism in the Classroom* Zagreb: Naklada Ljevak]
- UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education* (2006). Paris: UNESCO
- Vodič za unapređenje interkulturalnog obrazovanja* (2007). Beograd: Grupa Most i Fond za otvoreno društvo
- [*A Guide to Advancing Intercultural Education* (2007). Beograd: Grupa Most i Fond za otvoreno društvo]

BUZAR Mirsad

Service for Foreigners' Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina

BAŠIĆ Ilarija

Danish Refugee Council Bosnia and Herzegovina

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF EDUCATING MIGRANT CHILDREN IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Abstract: Most of the migrant children currently residing in Bosnia and Herzegovina have been on the move for a long time, changing their countries of residence, and different education systems. Some children did not even get an education, while some of them had interruptions in their education for several years. UNICEF's Manual for the Inclusion of Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Migrant Children in the Education Process in Bosnia and Herzegovina highlights the need to overcome a number of challenges. This research paper aims to analyze the forms of education of migrant children in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to show positive examples of integration of children on the move in the education system, but also the shortcomings of the inclusion of migrant children in B&H society. Using the content analysis, comparative, descriptive, and interview methods, we intend to deepen the understandings that are present worldwide, including in

B&H, concerning the guaranteed right to education on the principles of non-discrimination, in accordance with the Convention on Child Rights. It is considered how and in what way the education of migrant children is planned, how preschool medical checkups are made, and how successfully migrant children are integrated into the educational system in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The research results indicated a number of challenges that these children face in the education process, from difficulties in enrolling in schools due to the lack of identity and previous education evidence, insufficient knowledge of the local language, and inability to complete education because of their constant move.

Keywords: Migration, Migrant children, Education, Integration

Introduction

Since the beginning of 2018, the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH), as part of the Western Balkan migrant route, has become very attractive for mixed migration movements to the European Union (EU) countries. According to the data of the Service for Foreigners' Affairs of BiH a total 85.206 migrants were registered in BiH in the period 2018-2022, most of them coming from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq and other countries, while 80.437 migrants expressed their intention to seek international protection in BiH. During 2021 BiH had made a significant step forward in the migration management process, especially in the area of more efficient control of movement and stay of migrants within the territory of BiH, closing "informal camps" where migrants stayed, and strengthening cooperation with local communities in which the Migrant Reception Centers (MOCs) where migrants were located, where BiH Ministry of Security and the Service for Foreigners' Affairs of BiH played a special role. A total of five temporary reception centers for accommodation of migrants are currently open in BiH: three in the Una-Sana Canton and two in the Sarajevo Canton, where, in the past 5-6 months, resided between 1.800 and 2.200 migrants, which represents the smallest number of migrants residing in the territory of BiH since 2018.

Mixed migrations bring many challenges, and one of them is lack of or unhindered access to the education system for migrant children. The constant movement of migrants to their desired destination in the EU countries prevents families with children or unaccompanied minors from staying longer, and endangers the basic rights of children who are unable to join the age appropriate education or often have to interrupt formal education. It could be said that every country has its own method for including migrant children in the education system and integration into society that depends on the political, economic, but also developmental factors of that country, as well as the attitude towards mixed migration. Migrant children come from different cultural and even religious backgrounds, and language barriers, traumas and losses should be taken into account. Therefore, it is crucial to create an environment in which migrant children feel safe and accepted to be able to have a successful integration into the society of the host country. The European Commission has been supporting EU member states to integrate migrants into their education systems – from pre-school education to higher education since 2016. The Action Plan of the Commission for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (European Commission, 2016, 7-8) identifies three priorities for education:

- the fastest possible integration of newly arrived migrants into standard educational structures,
- preventing the achievement of poorer results among migrants,
- preventing social exclusion and encouraging intercultural dialogue.

Methodology

The goal of this research is to deepen the understanding of the challenges and benefits of including migrant children in the education system in BiH. Although there is a significant amount

of research on the topic of mixed migration in the Western Balkans, few are dedicated to the importance of the aspect of education within mixed migration. The integration of migrant children into the social flows of the host country is recognized in the system of international relations and the law, while in BiH this topic is at the infancy stage. The paper will point out the challenges and opportunities for the integration of migrant children from culturally diverse backgrounds into the educational process, but also highlight good practices that can lead to greater integration of migrant children into the education system, which is their guaranteed right regardless of their ethical, cultural and other background. The main and auxiliary hypotheses were determined in line with the paper's goal.

The main hypothesis is: Migrant children have the right to education in BiH.

Auxiliary hypotheses are:

H1a: An obstacle to the inclusion of migrant children in the education system in BiH is the constant movement to the desired destination.

H1b: An obstacle to the inclusion of migrant children in the education system in BiH is the lack of documents on previous levels of education and identity.

H2: The education system in BiH has been successfully adapted for the inclusion of migrant children.

H3: Children and parents, both national and migrant, accept cultural differences positively and as an advantage.

The following methods were used in this paper: content analysis, comparative and descriptive method, as well as interview. Due to the multidisciplinary nature of the topic, the results of the research will be useful to the academic community, representatives of the media, non-governmental and educational sector.

Discussion and Results

We could say that the 20th century is the century in which the need to respect children as individuals and create an environment in which all children will feel accepted despite the differences between them was mostly promoted. It is a century focused on emphasizing the importance of protecting human and child rights. Today, it is considered that a child is a being who has its rights both in terms of its position in society and in terms of meeting children's needs. From birth to adulthood, a child has the right to a childhood within which the child will meet all its needs, and the role of adults is to provide conditions, opportunities and assistance in finding and realizing all their potentials (Maleš and Stričević, 2003). Bašić (2011) talks about a doctor and pedagogue named Janusz Korczak, better known as the "father of children's rights", and his main contribution is that he is actually the creator and originator of the idea of promoting children's rights and full equality of children. His concept of upbringing is focused primarily on the child who has its rights, just like an adult. Among the more important elements, he emphasizes the rejection of any kind of violence, and in the whole system he assumes that the child has the right to privacy, respect, ignorance, failure, opinion and property. According to him, the comprehensive educational process is focused on the individuality of each child, which means that great importance is attached to the child's wishes, needs and feelings.

In 1924, the League of Nations adopted the Geneva Declaration, which highlighted the rights of the child in five points. For many years, work was done on further expansion and editing of the document, and in 1959, that editing reached a goal. The United Nations General Assembly adopted the Expanded Geneva Declaration as the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, but it was not binding for signatory states. The most suitable form was the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on November 20, 1989, and contains the fundamental rights and freedoms of the child that the child acquires at

birth. These are universal standards that the states that have signed and ratified it must guarantee to every child, and the document was written by “adults for adults”. That is, the Convention primarily talks about the obligations of adults towards the child, the obligations of many societies that are obliged to provide protection to the child, and then about the rights of the child that has the right to enjoy them, independently or through parents, guardians, institutions. The rights of the youngest are generally divided into survival rights, development rights, protection rights and participation rights known as “4P”, all of which are directly or indirectly described and established by a series of international documents that benefit children. According to Maleš and Stričević (2003), the Convention on the Rights of the Child adopts the concept of “best interests of the child” through 54 articles, of which the first 41 define the concept of the child and obligations that the state is obliged to undertake and implement by ratifying the document. Articles 42-45 relate to the monitoring of the application of the Convention, and Articles 46-54 contain formal provisions related to the entry into force of the Convention. Hrabar (2007, according to Šeparović, 2014) says that the Convention contains a system of children’s rights that can be systematized as personal, social, educational, health, social, economic, cultural and judicial rights. The same author (Hrabar, 2007, according to Šeparović, 2014) states that there are other divisions of children’s rights, depending on the area in which they are applied, so for example the psychological approach to children’s rights distinguishes three groups of rights or “3S” are security, care and participation (Kuna, 2019, p. 15).

Every child in the world, regardless of economic and social conditions, religious and national affiliation, skin color, has the right to a happy upbringing and a quality childhood. The education system should offer diverse and comprehensive educational programs that enable children with complete development. Families, educators, educational institutions, the state and society participate in the upbringing, development and education of the child, and their role is to recognize the needs of children and respond in accordance with their interests and abilities, thus respecting children’s rights and teaching them to seek that their rights are respected. Early and preschool education institutions must be focused on meeting all children’s needs. Kuna (2019) states in her paper that the needs that must be met include the areas of physical and psychomotor development, socio-emotional development and personality development, cognitive development, speech, communication, expression and creativity. A. H. Maslow (1982) points out: “Fundamental human needs are physiological needs, the need for security, belonging, love, self-esteem and respect by others, and the need for self-actualization.” He says that it is necessary to satisfy all needs because the absence of satisfying one need results in the absence of satisfying other needs (Maleš et al., 2003, p. 107).

Not only children born in a country deserve this treatment, but also those with the status of a migrant, refugee or asylum seeker. The integration of children and young people into the school system is a central component of any migration and integration policy, thus improving the prospects for successful absorption into the society of the host country for present and future generations. (Sinai et al., 2012, p. 57). However, obstacles often hamper successful integration of migrant children into a country’s education system due to the complexity of adapting the education system related to migration management at the state level and the lack of a clear policy for integrating migrants into society. In these cases, practices from neighboring countries or the adoption of European practices are most often resorted to, which is again challenging because there is no unified migration management policy in the European Union. Every country that has faced mixed migration has faced the need to address the aspect of education because education provides continuity and encourages personal development of children migrants/refugees/asylum seekers and thus facilitates their position in the local community and enables faster and better interaction and integration (Đurović Radoš, 2015, p. 26). Numerous practices show that linguistic and cultural differences can be an obstacle, but also an advantage of integrating migrant children into a country’s education system – an obstacle due to insufficient understanding of others and different, and

an advantage due to the fact that differences can enrich both local and migrant children. An approach to integration that highlights the importance of tolerance and acceptance, while not without its flaws and challenges, leads to mutual respect, openness, and broadening horizons among different groups (Sinai et al., 2012, p. 57).

Recognition of the specific vulnerability of children asylum seekers and refugees depends to a large extent on the political will and compliance with the obligations set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which must be respected and implemented by all signatory states. Consequently, in defining laws and policies relating to children, including asylum-seeking and refugee children, signatories must follow the four basic principles of the Convention on which children's rights are based:

- The principle of non-discrimination according to which children must not be discriminated against “regardless of race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, developmental difficulties, birth or other status of the child, his parents or legal guardians”,
- Children have the right to life and development in all aspects of life, including physical, emotional, psychosocial, cognitive, social and cultural development,
- In making all decisions or carrying out actions that affect the child or the children as a group, the welfare of the child must be paramount. This applies to decisions made by government, administrative or legislative bodies, as well as to decisions made by the family,
- Children must be enabled to take an active part in resolving all issues that affect their lives and be allowed freedom of expression. They have the right to express their views that must be taken seriously (Ćuća, 2021, pp. 2-3).

Integration of Migrant Children into the Education System of Bosnia and Herzegovina

UNICEF, in cooperation with the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the Cantonal Ministries of Education, has adapted a handbook for the inclusion of children refugees, migrants and asylum seekers from the Republic of Serbia in the Bosnian context. This handbook has been finalized and is available to all Ministries for use in creating plans for the inclusion of refugee children, migrants and asylum seekers in educational processes. UNICEF and Save the Children organized a seminar in 2019 attended by representatives of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of Una-Sana Canton and seven schools from Una-Sana Canton and Sarajevo Canton that integrated children refugees, migrants and asylum seekers in regular educational process in order to identify the main challenges in the inclusion of these children in the educational process, as well as to provide recommendations and answers to existing challenges. The language barrier and cultural differences are listed as some of the biggest obstacles proposed to overcome by intensive language courses for children, development of textbooks for language learning, workshops and socializing with other children, as well as organizing additional classes. Teachers emphasized that they also face challenges such as the lack of information about children and their parents, and that they need additional support and education in working with migrant children. An individual approach to each child, regular parent-teacher meetings and descriptive assessment are some of the proposed solutions (UNICEF, 2019).

Timely inclusion of children on the move in the education system is one of the great challenges due to the constant movement, but also the lack of documents that testify to the age of children and the previously acquired level of education. Additional reasons that affect this are certainly the inability to adequately socialize and learn the local language, as well as overcoming the trauma that the child has acquired either in the country of origin or during the trip. Refugees and asylum seekers in all situations emphasize language as a key dimension for integration (Ajduković, 2019,

p. 79). According to the Manual for the Inclusion of Children Refugees, Asylum Seekers and Migrants in the Education Process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is important to keep in mind that children have been on the move for a long time, changing countries and thus different education systems. Some were not even in the process of education, and some had interruptions for several years. Adolescent groups are one of the most sensitive challenges for the environment in which they find themselves. For these young people, education becomes an opportunity for a new and better life (UNICEF, 2020, 12).

According to a World Bank report from August 2019, learning outcomes in BiH are weaker than those achieved in the EU and the region, and there is a gap between the skills provided by the education system and those required by the labor market. There is also great public dissatisfaction with the quality of primary and secondary education. Several key problem areas in the education system in BiH were highlighted, which should be improved for the benefit of the local population, and in this context it is certainly important for the integration of migrant children into the education system in BiH. Schools involving refugees/asylum seekers and migrants are becoming places where different cultures meet and coexist, and it is often emphasized that it is children who become the bearers of their parents' integration into society. Every school that accepts refugees and migrants should choose a proactive approach and it is necessary to make a plan that includes a number of activities:

- Professional development of teachers and professional associates for working with refugee children,
- Preparation of students (in homeroom classes) and parents (at parent meetings, Parents' Council) for the arrival of refugees (lectures for parents of domicile children, meetings of parents of refugee children with domicile parents, development of intercultural dimension of the school through workshops, workshops against discrimination and prejudice, development of joint projects of children and parents),
- Organizing educational work (additional language classes; shortened curricula; individual classes, organizing additional classes and extracurricular activities),
- Realization of cooperation with external associates (international organizations and non-governmental sector, social services, health institutions),
- Monitoring and evaluation of the process (regular meetings of school coordinators with school management, pedagogical advisors and external associates).

The school plan for the inclusion of children refugees/asylum seekers and migrants in the educational process should be simple and clear and include: activities, expected results, performers, responsible persons, performance times (UNICEF, 2020, p. 22). The process of including migrant children in the education system is also difficult due to the lack of textbooks that would be adapted to the needs of migrant children to learn the local language as a foreign language. However, in BiH, despite the complexity of society, there are positive examples of the social inclusion of migrant children currently residing in this country:

- Preparatory activities for arrival of new pupils in the Primary School "Harmani II" in Bihac School preparations began with the departure of the pupils of the journalism section to the reception center Sedra with teacher N.D. to make the first contact and meet refugee/asylum seekers/migrant pupils who will attend the same school. The Parents' Council unanimously adopted the Plan for the Inclusion refugees/asylum seekers/migrants at a meeting organized by the school principal and thus became part of the process. During the preparatory activities, materials for parents were prepared, and workshops were also held for domicile pupils on the arrival of new peers in the classes of the Harmani II school. (UNICEF, 2020, p. 20)
- School plan activities in PU Primary School "9.maj" Pazarić, Sarajevo

The mission of the PS “9. maj“ “Pazarić“ is for school to be the place of joy for all the children, an environment where everyone feels safe and that the school community is an example of good school practice. Main activities within the Children Inclusion School Plan are:

- assessment of children’s needs and determination of educational status/level of school knowledge and skills;
 - learning Bosnian language as a foreign language;
 - psycho-social support program;
 - inclusion of children in regular classes and afterschool activities;
- Cooperation with parents/guardians (UNICEF, 2020, p. 23).
- Extracurricular activities in PS “Harmani II“, Bihać, Una-Sana Canton

In addition to regular classes, refugee, asylum seekers and migrant children are also involved in extracurricular activities with their peers, which helps in socialization and faster psychological recovery. By the end of the second semester in the 2018/19 school year, a total of 53 students went through the educational process. (UNICEF, 2020, p. 24).

- Activities for inclusion of refugee/asylum seeker children in the educational process in PS “Harmani II“

1. The adaptation period – includes the period spent in the HEART classroom (from two weeks up to one month). During this period, it is necessary to determine the level of knowledge of Bosnian language and general knowledge, and on the basis of that plan the following:

- intensive learning of the language of the community
 - adapted and additional classes
2. Inclusion in regular classes with individualization (IPP)
 3. Involvement in other educational activities
 4. Family/guardian involvement
 5. Cooperation with representatives of Save the Children (cultural mediators) and escort
 6. Monitoring pupil progress (UNICEF, 2020, p. 30).

Cultural mediators also play an important role in the successful integration of migrant children into the education system, enabling them to overcome language barriers, clarify crucial material for children in their mother tongue, but also mediate in bringing cultures closer and better understanding others. In October 2021, about 60 children were enrolled in schools in BiH. Senadija Hadrović, a pedagogue at the Prva Osnovna Škola in Ilidža, who is also the coordinator of the Children on the Move project, expects better results than in 2019, when they were pioneers in the education of migrant children in BiH: *“We tried to accept children with our hearts and show them that they are welcome and to truly integrate them into the educational process. To be honest, we have better experiences with children than with their parents. They always had that sense of temporary residence and did not motivate children to attend and learn the language. And now the focus is on parents learning with their children ... Migrant children learn our language and culture, and our children and teachers learn their languages and cultures”* (Radio Free Evropa, 4 October, 2021).

The first two months focused on psychosocial integration, educational art and sports workshops and the initial study of the Bosnian language, as well as involving children in the regular process with local children. A spokeswoman for the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), Nineta Popović, emphasized that education is one of the basic human rights and that this UN organization is trying to ensure that right for migrant children as well: *“This is not easy because the participation of numerous actors is required, from the authorities through schools to all those who provide support to the refugee and migrant families. Since the beginning of the migrant crisis, about 1,600 children have enrolled in schools. Some also missed four years of education. A*

curriculum has been developed for each child and additional classes have been provided in the camps in which they live, where numerous informal activities have been organized, including language learning. They also receive psychosocial support there. They were also provided with an escort and translators, all in order to fit in with the lessons as easily as possible.” Children were provided with school supplies and medical examination, transportation, and their current knowledge level was assessed (Radio Free Evropa, 4 October, 2021).

The Danish Refugee Council, with the support of UNICEF, takes care of the health of children, both temporary reception centers and those staying in informal locations. Systematic medical examinations for regular inclusion in the teaching process, as well as immunization of children according to the calendar prescribed by the relevant public health institutes, are part of health care. Thus, in the period from 1 January to 11 December, 2021, 212 school-age children were vaccinated, who are staying in temporary reception centers in BiH accompanied by their parents or children without parental care. Out of 161 children who passed the regular systematic examinations for enrollment in school, 123 children successfully passed the necessary tests for unhindered integration into the BiH education system.

Results of the Research

The primary research question concerned the possibilities and ways of educating migrant children in Bosnia and Herzegovina. The paper used a combined method – the quantitative method determined the existence of integration of migrant children into the education system, while the qualitative method gained broader insights into the ways of education. The sample of research in this paper is semi-structured interviews, and the answers to research questions that indicate how classes are implemented in practice for migrant children residing in Bosnia and Herzegovina are the unit of analysis. We obtained additional information through interviews with UNICEF representatives in order to clarify certain questions that cannot be answered by the interviewed school representatives.

Following the influx of more refugees, migrants and asylum seekers, UNICEF conducted a rapid assessment of the educational needs of the children who arrived. Then, a discussion was initiated among the relevant government institutions on the main findings and recommendations, and an initial plan for including these children in the education system in BiH was created. Children were included in the first semester of 2019 in Sarajevo Canton (SC) and Una-Sana Canton (USC). During that year, a total of 522 children were included in the formal education system and attended classes with their peers. In 2020, a total of 727 children were enrolled in primary schools in the USC area, while children did not start school in SC due to the fact that families did not stay in this canton for long. In 2021, the enrollment of children in schools in the USC continued, and work was underway to reintegrate children into primary schools in the SC. In October 2021, about 60 migrant children were enrolled in schools in BiH, which is a result of the reduced number of people on the move in BiH. On its official Facebook page, UNICEF had on April 12, 2022 announced that they, in cooperation with the World Vision in BiH, are supporting the Sarajevo Canton Ministry of Education in providing access to a secondary vocational training program for migrant and refugee children. The first group of 25 children started courses for hairdressers and cooks on April 11. The training programs are implemented by the Secondary School Center Hadžići, and UNICEF provides support by providing cultural mediators who will support teachers and children during classes. In addition, UNICEF assists in the procurement of school supplies and provides additional support in learning through daily non-formal education at the Ušivak Reception Center. IOM BiH will support the transportation of children to school. The training will take place every day, and a total of 80 hours per child is planned. UNICEF had during 2021 provided access to formal and non-formal education for 1.314 children on the move.

UNICEF also supported education authorities in Sarajevo Canton and Una-Sana Canton in providing access to inclusive formal education for 312 migrant children.

The public institution “Prva osnovna škola” Ilidža in Sarajevo was the first school on the territory of this canton to integrate migrant children into the teaching process, which was preceded by discussions with representatives of the local community and parents of local children. This school employs teachers who speak several languages: English, Arabic and Turkish, and before they started working with migrant children, they underwent training with the NGO “Save the Children” and one of the used methods is the HEART method of working with children. In addition, they exchanged experiences with colleagues in Bihać (USC), but also with colleagues in Belgrade who have extensive experience in including migrant children into the education system. They emphasize that local children and parents showed an exceptional level of understanding and empathy towards migrant children and warmly accepted them. Migrant children feel a sense of belonging in this multicultural school, which they have further enriched with their arrival.

“We currently have a new concept of teaching children on the move, every day for two school hours. Classes are held by seven teachers, and the number of students varies from day to day due to the movement of families to their final destination. The biggest challenges we face are the language barrier and overcoming the trauma that children had experienced during the trip. With the Charter of Human Rights and the Rights of the Child, and guided by the fact that every child has the right to education and that we are obliged to provide protection and care at all times of life, we tried to make our school the first to open doors and give children the opportunity to socialize with other children and to gain new experiences. Given that the laws at the level of BiH are not harmonized with the cantonal ones, this additionally creates difficulties in the inclusion of children who are on the move, and the biggest problems are created by the administration that does not recognize this type of inclusion in the regular teaching process,” stressed Arif Čelović, school principal.

The school says that the role of non-governmental organizations that provide technical support is important in order to provide migrant children with medical examinations, school supplies, hygiene products, as well as transportation from the reception center to the school. Some of the good examples emphasized is the fact that children on the move master Bosnian language in a very short time and that they can apply what they learn in BiH in another country once they join the education system. It is therefore important that they have an adequate document that they can take to other countries as proof of their level of education and inclusion in teaching.

Cultural mediators who help children to fully integrate into the education system and enable the translation of school materials into their mother tongue emphasize that the biggest obstacles, but also challenges for including children in the education system in BiH, are short stays in reception centers and bad experience children had in some of the countries during the trip, when included in the classes. However, despite the short time spent in BiH, cultural mediators recommend the greatest possible integration of migrant children into the education system, as they testify to the fact that this means a lot to children and brings positive changes in their daily lives. The children are looking forward to going to school, they are excited, and for many it is their first contact with an educational institution. Cultural differences are considered neither an obstacle nor an advantage because children adapt to change, accept change and anything that is different if they feel it is good for them. Cultural mediators believe that the education system in BiH is enriched by the inclusion of migrant children because local children help migrant children, accept them, just as children on the move accept local children and motivate them to learn foreign languages, learn about other cultures and show understanding to those who are different, which sometimes includes difficult life stories.

Conclusion

Although Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a member of the European Union, it strives to respect the rights of migrant children to education, and the existing system enables the psycho-physical

development of children, learning and a supportive school environment. The need was expressed to strengthen the capacity of teaching staff and adapt educational materials to the needs of migrant children. The UNICEF Handbook on the Inclusion of Refugee, Migrant and Asylum-Seeking Children, adapted to the BiH context of mixed migration, is available to all Ministries for use in creating plans for the inclusion of refugee, migrant and asylum-seeking children in educational processes. The biggest challenge, and at the same time an obstacle for migrant children to be included in the education system in BiH, is the lack of documentation, both on their identity and on the previously acquired level of education. It is equally important to emphasize the constant travel to the desired destination, which prevents a longer stay of the child in BiH and integration into society. Insufficient knowledge of the Bosnian language makes it difficult to include these children in the education system, but it is encouraging that children are quick to master the language and have the support of cultural mediators to master the necessary teaching materials. Great support for migrant children is also provided by local children, and good results are achieved in getting to know other cultures, languages, but also in developing respect and understanding through peer education. It is necessary to work on the harmonization of legislation at the state level in order to make the integration of migrant children into the education system easier.

Literature

- Bašić, S. (2011). (Nova) slika djeteta u pedagogiji djetinjstva. U: D. Maleš (ur.) Nove paradigme ranog odgoja (19 – 37). Zagreb: Filozofski fakultet.
- Blog Svjetske banke (2019). *Kako do boljeg obrazovanja u BiH: Ključ za razvoj ljudi i zemlje*. <<https://blogs.worldbank.org/bs/europeandcentralasia/kako-do-boljeg-obrazovanja-u-bih-kljuc-za-razvoj-ljudi-i-zemlje>>. Accessed on 26 March, 2022
- Centar za zaštitu i pomoć tražiocima azila APC/CZA 2015. *Izazovi integracije dece migranata/azilanata u obrazovni sistem u Republici Srbiji*. <<https://www.azilsrbija.rs/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/MIGRACIJE-I-OBRAZOVANJE-izazovi-integracije-dece-migranata-azilanata-f.pdf>>. Accessed on 26 March, 2022
- Ćuća, A. (2021). *Obrazovanje djece tražitelja azila– (Ne)spremnost na kvalitetno uključivanje u obrazovni sustav*. GOOD inicijativa, Centar za mirovne studije Zagreb. <https://www.cms.hr/system/publication/pdf/152/Obrazovanje_djece_tra_itelja_azila_i_izbjeglica_u_Republici_Hrvatskoj_-_novo.pdf>. Accessed on 26 March, 2022
- Đurović Radoš (Ed.), (2015). *Deca tražiocima azila u Srbiji; obrazovanje i prevencija rodno zasnovanog nasilja*. Centar za zaštitu i pomoć tražiocima azila (APC/CZA), Beograd.
- European Union. Hrabar, D. (1996). *Evropska konvencija o ostvarivanju dječjih prava- novi prilog promicanju dječjih prava*. Zagreb: Zbornik Pravnog fakulteta u Zagrebu.
- Hrabar, D. (2016). *Prava djece u obiteljskom zakonodavstvu*. U: D. Hrabar (ur.) *Prava djece- multidisciplinarni pristup* (str. 63-82). Zagreb: Pravni fakultet sveučilišta.
- Kuna, M. (2019). *Poštivanje dječjih prava u ranom djetinjstvu*. Završni rad veučilište u Zagrebu, Učiteljski fakultet. <<https://urn.nsk.hr/urn:nbn:hr:147:546558>>. Accessed on 26 March, 2022
- Maleš, D. Milanović, M., Stričević, I. (2003). *Živjeti i učiti prava*. Zagreb: Filozoski fakultet.
- Maleš, D., Stričević, I. (2003). *Mi poznajemo i živimo svoja prava*. Zagreb: Školska knjiga.
- Maslow, A. H. (1982). *Motivacija i ličnost*. Beograd: Nolit.
- Radio Slobodna Evropa (2021). *Djeca migranti krenula u školu u Sarajevu*. <<https://www.slobodnaevropa.org/a/maloljetnici-medju-migrantima-u-bosni-i-hercegovini/31091973.html>>. Accessed on 14 April, 2022
- Sinai, R., Binhas, A., Rockoff, Y. (2012). *Alatke za rad za integraciju imigranata u Srbiji*. JDC Centar za međunarodne migracije i integracije (CIMI). Međunarodna organizacija za migracije – Misija u Srbiji, Beograd.
- Šeparović, M. (2014). *Dobrobit djeteta i najbolji interes djeteta u sudskoj praksi*. Zagreb: Novi informator.
- UNICEF (2020). *Priručnik za uključivanje djece izbjeglica, tražitelja azila i migranata u odgojno-obrazovni proces u Bosni i Hercegovini*. <<https://www.unicef.org/bih/media/6201/file/Prirucnik%20-%20Bosanski%20.pdf>>. Accessed on 26 March, 2022

UNICEF. Konvencija o pravima djeteta. <https://www.unicef.hr/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Konvencija_20o_20pravima_20djeteta_full.pdf>. Accessed on 26 March, 2022

UNICEF (2022). <https://www.facebook.com/UNICEFBiH/posts/5182031285197207>. Accessed on 14 April, 2022

CHALOVSKA Sonja

Kindergarten “SPIRIT” – Skopje, North Macedonia

PECEVA Vesna

Kindergarten “13th of November” – Skopje, North Macedonia

LAZOVSKI Aleksandar

SmartUp – Social Innovation Lab, North Macedonia

IGNJATOVA Milena

SmartUp – Social Innovation Lab, North Macedonia

INNOVATIVE MODELS FOR MOTIVATING AND CONNECTING THE COMMUNITY FOR BETTER EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Abstract: Current social developments as a result of the global health pandemic have imposed very serious consequences on the educational system and the quality of early childhood development. With the closure of schools and kindergartens, educators took upon the responsibility to organize and implement the program requirements in a different way. Furthermore, parents met with a new parenting dimension – creating a stimulating environment at home and taking on some of the tasks in working with their children. This process of mobilization of educators, teachers and students imposed the need of implementation of ICT in education as a very important opportunity for distance learning.

This paper will present several innovative models aiming motivation and connection of the community involving educational work in the area of early childhood development, in process of development of resources for strengthening the capacities and competencies of educators, as well as models of co-creation and practical application of available materials through the collective portal “EDUINO”.

Through this portal we will conduct a research with the users (educators, parents and children from aged 3 to 10 years old) in order to determine the practical application of the open library of digital educational materials, video lessons, resources, games and educational activities to support the educational process and the effects on the socio-emotional development of children.

Keywords: Innovation, Co-creation, Early childhood development, Digital educational materials

Factors Affecting Early Childhood Development

Every child is born with certain genetic predispositions, which are the starting point for its development. It is known that in early childhood personality development is most dynamic, and therefore, it is the subject of numerous researches. How well the child’s genetic potential will develop depends on several factors that are part of the community of the environment in which the child develops. One of the most important factors is the family, as the most responsible for the proper growth and development of children. Parents/guardians play a significant role in building the personality through their own models of behavior and action, as well as in the developing of basic habits and skills for introduction into practical life. The extended family (relatives and their communication), as well as the social environment in which the child grows up