

INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS STUDENTS GUIDELINES FOR TEACHER

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Introduction

Those guidelines are not chronological. They start with a global view on the problem of integration, so that teachers can get acquainted with this issue (steps 1 to 3), and then review specific aspects that teachers should take into account and behaviours they should adopt to help immigrant students integrate in their new school: the levels on which to act (step 4), conceptions and attitudes (step 5), the objectives and methods (steps 6 and 7) and communication (steps 8 and 9). The last step suggests teachers share their experience.

Get Information on the Problem

Teachers should first be informed about the general problems immigrant students might encounter, and what existing (internal and external) services or programs can be implemented to help them.

1. Identify the multiple barriers immigrant child might feel at school and understand your own barriers to their full integration.
2. Learn about appropriate educational support for immigrant children at your school and in your region. Get acquainted with school support systems.
3. Check if your school has a home/school/community liaison coordinator within the school. He/She may facilitate contact of immigrant children and parents with the school.
4. Find out about the services for immigrant children who attend school (such as transition classes in Belgium) or homework support services.
5. Find out about how immigrant children can have their previous learning acknowledged by the school system (for example: diploma recognition).
6. Find out about extra classes immigrant children may attend in school to improve their language and other skills in order to integrate better into the school level they are attending.

Training Sources

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [How do immigrant students fare in disadvantaged schools? PISA in Focus 2011/2012](#) (Europe)
- [Do immigrant students succeed? Evidence from Italy and France based on PISA 2006](#) (Europe)
- [DASPA, Service to welcome and educate newly arrived students](#)
Ministry of compulsory education – Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (Belgium).

Success Stories

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Welcoming and Planning](#) (Italy)
A story told by a teacher on how to welcome immigrant children and their families.
- [Guiding a student from a "bridging class"](#)
A success Story in Belgium.

Publications

From the School Safety Net Portal

- ['Welcoming and Integrating' Guide for teachers who received a newly-arrived child](#) (Luxembourg)

Websites

- [Fédération Francophone des Ecoles de Devoirs](#)
Homework support services.
- [Diploma recognition services](#) (Belgium)

Reports

From the Routes Portal

- [Belges et étrangers](#)
"Dans quelle mesure les Belges sont-ils tolérants par rapport aux minorités ethniques?" (March 2009)
"Quelles perceptions les minorités ethniques ont-elles de la Belgique?" (November 2009)

Search Resources

National and international resources can inform you on existing programs or help you find ideas and methods.

1. There are national platforms to promote and support immigrant student integration and immigrant student support. These are connected with local authorities who may help you find resources for the classroom.
2. Check also the availability of specific immigrant student programmes in municipalities and schools that you may recommend the students/parents to.
3. Work in partnership with associations (who can act as mediators with families).
4. Collaborate with community services or street social workers who can act immediately when young people need it.
5. Check some tools for managing diversity in the classroom.
6. Check the Migration Integration Policy Index (MIPEX - <http://www.mipex.eu>) in your country and act accordingly.

Training Sources From the School Safety Net Portal

- [A Handful of Kids. An Experiment in Intercultural Education](#)
Project about the social and school integration of Gipsy communities in two Alentejo villages in Portugal through a series of activities that take place in Gipsy camps, with families or in neighbourhoods (street libraries, parental training, school and family mediation).
- [Act Towards New Paths](#)
A guide for educators that focuses on the development of personal and social skills of young people aged 14 to 18 years.
- [I respect. Active citizenship, cultural diversity and positive tolerance](#)
An eLearning Awards 2004 winner web portal on active citizenship, cultural diversity and positive tolerance.
- [The school in the French-speaking Community of Belgium: Guide for parents of immigrant children](#)
Red Cross of Belgium.
- [Meeting the other](#)
Migrations and welcoming migrants (Belgium).

Websites

- [The Migration Integration Policy Index \(MIPEX\)](#).
Integration policies across 31 countries that address the multiple factors that influence the integration of migrants into society.
- [Infos Belgique](#)
Official website with information about life in Belgium addressed to immigrants who settle in Belgium. One section is dedicated to the education system.

Reports From the Routes Portal

- [Transnational Report](#)
The Routes Portal aims to open a common reflection at the European level on the theme of migration and integration of migrants to help European teachers and students better understand past and current migration-related issues and achieve a wider awareness on the theme of the citizenship and extension of rights.

Publications From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Mainstreaming diversity](#)
Analytical collection of intervention tools to foster diversities published by IRFAM (Belgium).
- [Helping unaccompanied under-aged immigrants setting roots in school](#)
Magazine «Prof» for education professionals, published by the Ministry of education in the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles (Belgium).

Analyse True Life Stories of Immigrant Children at School

Learn about immigrants' stories from their point of view, told in their own words.

1. Read about stories of immigrant children at school, what they felt was difficult and how they were able to manage their initial difficulties (socio-economic deprivation, high concentration of immigrant children, low educational levels of parents, lack of interest in school, learning difficulties).
2. Understand the role of headteachers, teachers, other school educators (social carers and psychologists) in those stories.
3. Understand the role of other institutions and key people outside school that may be called upon to help students overcome the multiple barriers they may experience to full integration in school.
4. Identify risk factors in these stories and propose how you would deal with them.
5. Concentrate on the role of the class teacher in these stories and what you consider useful and not so useful in their approach to immigrant children.

Online Manuals From the Routes Portal

- [Partire è un po' morire?](#) ("To leave is a bit like to die", an Italian proverb).
This resource focuses on the contradictory feelings associated with the experience of migrating to another country from the point of view of children and adolescents. It gives relevance to learning a language and its personal, emotional and cultural implications.
- [Home far away from home](#)
A second life in the new countries: to find a job, to learn a language, to meet new people...

Success Stories From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Foreign students and disability: recognizing learning disabilities beyond the language problem](#) (Italy)
Identification of learning difficulties due to cognitive impairments in foreign pupils is not always easy to detect or frequently described and requires the involvement of student, teacher and parents.
- [Out of Africa](#) (Portugal)
A typical story of racial prejudice and discrimination that is overcome by engaging students in producing a newspaper article on comparing cultures, their traditions, expectations, gender roles, etc.

Publications From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Interviews on migration issues](#)
The interviews collected, from the Routes Portal (Log-in: teacher – pixel), were made with Migrants and Natives who have been in contact with immigrants. The interviews focus on the experiences, points of view and attitudes of the two groups in order to identify similarities and differences among nationalities and throughout the years.
- [Interviews on prevention of early school leaving](#)
A Section of the School Inclusion Portal is dedicated to Interviews made, in five different European countries, with counsellors in charge of educational policies, headteachers, teachers, parents and students dealing with the prevention of early school leaving.

Identify the Different Levels to Act

To address the risk of early school leaving by immigrant students, you can act at the level of the system, of the classroom and of relational aspects.

1. Try to know and understand the institutional mechanisms that engender school inequalities, such as concentrating immigrant students in schools that are crowded with socio-economic disadvantaged students.
2. Understand that the disruptive behaviour of students can be explained by difficulties to grasp a new culture. Work in the classroom on the values of citizenship, solidarity and mutual respect.
3. The student's background can have an impact on their behaviour/studies. The teacher and/or educational counsellor should know about the reasons of the migration (a war refugee could be traumatised) and the circumstances in which the migration took place (one or both parents may have stayed in the country of origin...)
4. Be aware that success, particularly with immigrant students, is based on a triple "authorisation": (1) to be different from one's parents; (2) the adult must allow it; (3) the child cannot allow their parents to stay what they are and be proud of it.
5. Take the personal and social skill development of immigrant students into consideration; if your students are at risk of dropout you may want to focus on feelings management, assertiveness training, conflict management skills and self-knowledge as well as on social rules.

Training Sources

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Immigrants pain](#)
A documentary based on the stories of Greek immigrants.
- [Immigrant Children and Youth: Enabling Their Success at School](#)
Online publication on integration of immigrants students
- [Agir Para Novos Caminhos](#)
A guide for educators that focuses on the development of personal and social skills of young people aged 14 to 18 years.

Publications

From the School Safety Net Portal

- ["Melting classes" Journey through the interculturality school](#)
The book proposes a five-step path in the country of interculturality.
- [The psychopathology of children of migrant workers and the use of mental health services](#)
The purpose of this research is to explore the psychopathology of children of economic migrants.
- [Helping unaccompanied under-aged immigrants setting roots in school](#)
From the Magazine «Prof» No 13, magazine for education professionals, published by the Ministry of education in the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles.

Success Stories

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Social and educational integration](#) (Portugal)
The manifold aspects that may impact on an immigrant student's success at school and how it requires the action of many actors inside and outside school.

Websites

- [Cities of migration](#)
Exemplary implementation of the National Diversity Plan in Sweden - Integration through education.

Act on Conceptions and Attitudes in the Classroom

Mutual ignorance and lack of understanding are the causes of many misunderstandings and blunders. These may hinder successful integration of immigrant children at school and may be an obstacle to effective communication and to the learning progress.

1. Recognise that all children can be educated and believe in it.
2. Realise that immigrant children's values are different from those of the school. It does not mean that the school has to consent to everything and adapt constantly, but it helps explain and provide codes and keys to understand how the school works for those students and families who do not know them spontaneously.
3. Apply the three steps of the intercultural approach: (1) Detach yourself by asking 'who am I, from a cultural point of view?' This is important to get rid of one's prejudices and stereotypes. Ask also: 'What are my sensitive areas?' (2) Try to know and understand the other culture by asking 'Who are you?' This implies to address the other with curiosity and interest, to recognise differences, and acknowledge what makes sense for the other in their culture; (3) Negotiate: respect for different cultures, without giving up one's own.
4. Adopt a pluralistic, multicultural commitment to integration. Diversity is a resource and an asset.
5. Develop trust among all parties involved (parents, pupils and teachers).

Training Sources

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [All Kids are VIPs: Immigrant Integration at School](#) (Canada)
A video about integrating students coming from other places to schools, which emphasises that all children are privileged.
- [Strategies for Success: Engaging Immigrant Students in Secondary Schools](#)
Online publication on integration of immigrants students.

Publications

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Melting classes, Journey through the interculturality school](#)
The book proposes a five-step path in the country of interculturality.
- [When school lessons are different from home lessons](#) (Belgium)
A psychosocial approach to Muslim immigrants' children's relations to knowledge.
- [Mainstreaming diversity](#) (Belgium)
Analytical collection of intervention tools to foster diversities.

Success Stories

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Give One More Chance to You](#) (Turkey)
After a year out of school, the whole school environment, with the help of the student's parents, finds ways to integrate the student and motivate her for learning.

Websites

- [Taking the Swedish National Diversity Plan to School](#)
Special teaching methods designed for multicultural learners are applied to take students of migrant origin to the same language skill level as their native peers.
- [A Scholarship for the Entire Family](#)
A scholarship for greater immigrant success at school becomes a passport into mainstream society for the whole family.

Define Learning Outcomes

Adapting the lesson content and rhythm might help immigrant students succeed.

1. Be attentive to your impact as teacher: time and learning rhythm management, the effects of teacher's expectations (a teacher will be more effective when convinced that the students can progress), a realist vision of the students' level and keeping a certain level of expectancies, relations, emotional skills ... All these effects produced by the teachers have a significant impact on students' success.
2. Take the historical dimension into account: learn about the history of migrations (see the "[Routes portal](#)" in the references).
3. Recognise and value the mother tongues of immigrant students and create room for them.
4. In curricula, make links with the immigrant students' original cultures. Use narration, tales, and the filmography of their countries of origin.
5. Base your approach and materials on the immigrant students' families, in a co-educational approach for success (see "[ATD Quart Monde](#)" in the references).
6. Understand what makes sense for the immigrant students in your class individually and collectively and define learning outcomes accordingly.
7. It may make sense to work on gender equality with some immigrant students.
8. Coordinate with after school mentoring programs and programs for parent cooperation.

Training Sources

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [I respect. Active citizenship, cultural diversity and positive tolerance](#) (UK)
A portal with easy to access activities that are connected to particular minority groups, such as ethnic minority children, African and Caribbean children, and Traveller children.
- [Strategies for Success: Engaging Immigrant Students in Secondary Schools](#) (USA)
This digest discusses 10 principles for developing effective teaching and learning contexts for immigrant adolescents and profiles one program that has been successful in promoting the academic success of its students by implementing these principles.
- [Meeting the other](#)
Migrations and welcoming migrants (Belgium).

Success Stories

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [A good example of respect for cultural traditions](#) (Spain)
A student from a minority group (Gipsies), of low economic strata and caught in a gender-specific culture tries to reconcile her cultural traditions with compulsory school attendance. Flexible solutions had to be found for her case.
- [Mentoring: Help for Parents](#)
A success story in Belgium.

Online Manuals

From the Routes Portal

- [On Line Manual on the History of Migration](#)
Addressed to secondary schools teachers and students, analyzing the main aspects of the migration issue: history, the point of view of migrants, the point of view of natives who are in contact with immigrants, best practices.

Websites

- [Cities of migration](#)
Exemplary implementation of the National Diversity Plan in Sweden - Integration through education.
- [ATD Quart Monde](#)
Croisement des savoirs et des pratiques.

Publications

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Melting classes](#)
The book proposes a five-step path in the country of interculturality.

Other Sources

From the Routes Portal

- [History of immigration in Belgium](#)

Define the Method

Both the content of the lessons, and their organisation and your teaching methods can have an impact on students. Conditions should be favourable so that immigrant students participate actively in class.

1. Keep the pedagogy visible: make your expectancies explicit, present clear objectives, use explicit language, point out the purpose of the activities, make links between activities and learning (making a difference between “do” and “learn”).
2. Build a school and class culture the immigrant student may be proud to belong to.
3. Give priority to basic learning (that also needs to be explicit).
4. Stimulate immigrant students’ assertiveness, communication skills, self-knowledge and knowledge of others, acting on social rules and ability to manage conflict situations if your students are at risk of dropout.
5. Favour group work as this strategy promotes the ability of being able to relate to others and may enable students to develop skills among peers.
6. Plan for classroom diversity through several materials and pedagogic tools.
7. Articulate classroom activities with non-formal activities carried out outside the classroom by social mediators and psychologists.
8. Review and analyse difficult moments (situations) with colleagues.

Training Sources

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Webinar: Opening Doors: Innovative Strategies for Immigrant](#)
A webinar to learn about winning educational strategies and practical lessons for immigrant student success.
- [A Handful of Kids. An Experiment in Intercultural Education](#)
A project about the social and school integration of the gipsy communities in two Alentejo villages in Portugal.
- [Agir Para Novos Caminhos](#)
A guide for educators that focuses on the development of personal and social skills of young people aged 14 to 18 years

Success Stories

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Sports and School](#) (Greece)
This story told by an immigrant student highlights his need to articulate school with non-formal activities and how sports helped him to integrate more successfully.
- [Courses of Italian as L2 - from student to tutor](#) (Italy)
This story tells about the pride an immigrant student felt to be invited to help students like him to learn the host language.
- [From the Chinese school to the Italian final certification](#)
Academic success of a Chinese girl who came to Italy at the age of 13.

Publications

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Welcoming and Integrating](#) (Belgium)
Guide for teachers who received a newly-arrived child
- [Melting classes](#) (Belgium)
The book proposes a five-step path in the country of interculturality.

Relate to the Students

Immigrant students can feel lost or isolated in their new class and may require particular attention to gain confidence.

1. Foster young people's participation and speech and listen to them. They must feel listened to, have their interests respected, and be the focus of any approach that concerns them.
2. Value the students' skills rather than expecting success in all subjects and showing disappointment when they the students fail. Many students in difficulty feel that their flaws are emphasised and this may have a big influence on the decisions that concern them. It would be fairer that decisions concerning them be based on their positive development at school. Education based on solidarity and success rather than on competition and failure seem indispensable to keep students at school.
3. Optimise support and create trust relations with immigrant students. Students need trustful, respectful and stable relations with adults; they need them to be present and to be supportive.
4. Give students individualised help for their specific learning difficulties.
5. Know when it is not your role anymore to support a student. Some external services are better equipped to deal with certain issues and can do so more efficiently than schools or individual teachers in the classroom. Your role is to cooperate with them unconditionally.

Publications

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Intercultural skills at school: between diversity and equality](#) (Belgium)
- [The Word Makes Equal](#)
A book which analyzes and discusses some aspects of human communication which are still current.

Success Stories

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Language Barrier](#) (Greece)
The integration of immigrants in normal school practice is a difficult process, especially regarding language barriers to learning. This is the story of a young pupil with high cognitive skills in certain areas that experienced difficulties because of the language of learning. This was solved through the personal intervention of the board of parents.
- [Mentoring: Help for Parents](#)
A success Story in Belgium.

Interviews

From the School Inclusion Portal

- [Interviews with pupils](#)
A section of the School Inclusion Portal is dedicated to interviews made, in five different European countries, with counsellors in charge of educational policies, headteachers, teachers and students dealing with the prevention of early school leaving.

Websites

- [Donner la parole aux jeunes](#) ("Let young people speak")
Report by the general delegate for children's right in the French-speaking Community, November 2011 (Belgium).
- [Tutorat by Schola ULB](#)
Mentorship programme.

Relate to the Parents

The relationship with immigrant students' parents may be difficult for a series of reasons: their lack of interest in school, lack of knowledge of the language and cultural barriers, preconceptions of teachers as well as of parents, low academic achievement and inability of parents to communicate needs and to access school discourses or even to come to school.

1. Many immigrant families withdraw from public places and stay away from school; they do not come to the parents' evenings. Find ways to reach them and to invite them into the educational system. This has to do with a sense of security. They feel secure only in the restricted areas they inhabit, so it is important that they feel school is a safe environment.
2. Invite the parents to visit the school library and to sessions where the educational system is explained. This can be done through parents' days, parents' associations and immigrant groups. The success of immigrant students falls back on the personal relationships of the family with the school that show appreciation. Welcome the families in big ceremonies, for example.
3. Many of these families need a personal companion to institutions, they need a personal relationship to the education system; but once they have established this relationship, they get on their way together with their children.
4. It is important to create opportunities for children and parents of immigrant extraction. You may offer them excursions with the whole family, accompaniment of teacher discussions, holiday courses.
5. If language is a barrier, make sure you have your notes to parents translated or adapted.
6. Do not presume that all immigrants are of low socio-economic background and have low academic records. Some don't and they can be empowered to lead others.
7. Parents often misunderstand what is expected of them in school. They may presume, for instance, that it is the teacher's job to educate the student and that parent involvement should be kept to a minimum. Explain clearly what is expected.
8. You can carry out surveys and personal interviews with the parents of your immigrant students in order to gain inside information on them.
9. Together with other teachers and with parents you can create a Parent Resource Centre through which parents could seek information on the school context and give advice to their children as well as empower themselves into better understanding the host culture.

Training Sources

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Welcoming Traveller Children in your school](#) (UK)
Training guide on integrating travellers' children with a clear section on the feelings of parents: "Why do Traveller parents have anxieties about school?"
- [Communication between the school and parents who do not speak French](#) (Belgium)
- [The school in the French-speaking Community of Belgium](#)
Guide for parents of immigrant children.

Publications

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Building Partnerships with Immigrant Parents](#) (USA)
This article describes the many partnerships that can be created with parents of immigrant children through school.
- [The Word Makes Equal](#) (Italy)
A book which analyzes and discusses some aspects of human communication which are still current.

Success Stories

From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Unity is strength](#) (Italy)
The story of how opportunities can be created for immigrant of low social and economic backgrounds through a network of agencies.

Websites

- [Dr. Roland Kaehlbrandt: Don't forget the Families!](#)
Dr. Roland Kaehlbrandt speaks about strengthening immigrant families by showing them appreciation.
- [Infos Belgique](#)
Official website with information about life in Belgium addressed to immigrants who settle in Belgium.

Make Your Experience Known to Others

Your successful and less successful experiences can be of interest for colleagues faced with similar situations.

1. Share your experiences through involvement in several initiatives aimed at integrating immigrant students and tackling segregation.
2. Take part in mentoring projects for teachers and students, advanced classroom management training for teachers, increased reading competency through reading groups, and regular teacher training on these issues.

Training Sources From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Programme for peer training and against discriminations and prejudices](#)
EPTO encourages 15 to 25 year-old people to take their own responsibility when faced to discriminations and prejudices.
- [Meeting the other](#)
Migrations and welcoming migrants (Belgium).

Websites

- [Exemplary implementation of the National Diversity Plan in Sweden - Integration through education](#)
Learn about the many initiatives developed through this diversity plan, which includes 'ideas schools' for diversity, mentoring programs and parents' programs as well as partnerships with several social actors.
- [Université de Paix](#)
Training modules proposed by "Université de Paix" (Belgium).

Success Stories From the School Safety Net Portal

- [Mentoring: Help for Parents](#)
A success Story (Belgium).