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### **High-level Governance Analysis**

#### **Comparative Report (WP7)**

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**Project: Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe (GOETE)**

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## Abstract of the GOETE Project

The GOETE project will analyse the role of school in re-conceptualising education in terms of life-long learning by combining a life course and a governance perspective.

In European knowledge societies adequacy of education means a balance of individual, social and economic aspects. This is operationalised by exploring how educational institutions conceptualise and organise individual educational trajectories. The study covers the period from transition into lower secondary education to transition into upper secondary education/vocational education and training, i.e., the age group between 10 and 16 years. Comparative analysis will focus on the regulation of access to education, of support measures for coping with education and of securing the relevance of education for social integration and the labour market.

In 8 EU countries the mixed-method study involves

- surveys with students, parents and school principals;
- comparison of teacher training;
- case studies of local school spaces;
- discourse analysis;
- expert interviews with policy makers and stakeholders.

On a scientific level, the comparison of the regulation of educational trajectories involves re-conceptualising the social aspects of learning and education under conditions of late modern knowledge societies. It reflects the need for formal education to be embedded in social life worlds, enabled by social support, and complemented by informal and non-formal learning. On a practice and policy level, it will provide information about alternative means of providing children and young people with access to education; of supporting them in coping with education and ensuring the relevance of education by communication and cooperation between school, labour market, other educational actors, students and parents.

The communication of findings will include a dialogic model of educational policy planning at local level, training workshops with teachers, youth workers and policy makers, and a European policy seminar.

## The GOETE Research Consortium



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- Barberis, Eduardo & Kazepov, Yuri (2012): *Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe. National Report High Level Governance Italy. GOETE Working Paper.* Urbino: University of Urbino.
- Buchowicz, Izabela & Błędowski, Piotr (2012): *Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe. National Report High Level Governance Poland. GOETE Working Paper.* (in cooperation with Joanna Felczak). Warsaw: Warsaw School of Economics.
- Jahnich, Simon; Loncle, Patricia; Mellottée, Laetitia & Muniglia, Virginie (2012): *Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe. National Report High Level Governance France. GOETE Working Paper.* Rennes: University of Rennes 2 & EHESP.
- Julkunen, Ilse & Salovaara, Veronica (2012): *Governance of Educational Trajectories in Europe. National Report High Level Governance Finland. GOETE Working Paper.* Helsinki: University of Helsinki.
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The national reports are internal working papers of the GOETE project and may be available via contact with the authors through [www.goete.eu/partners](http://www.goete.eu/partners).

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## 1. Introduction: General Aims of the Report

The central importance of the concept of governance in the GOETE project is reflected in the fact that it frames the whole logic of the project:

“The governance perspective implies analysing how different actors (school, employers, administrations, policy makers, youth services, parents and students) on different levels (local, regional, national, transnational/European) interact and communicate on problems of entering into and progressing within education, on students’ legitimate needs of support and responsibilities in providing support inside or outside school and on future skill and competence needs. The specific perspective of the GOETE study is to investigate how such interactions structure individual educational trajectories. The comparative perspective focuses on how institutional and informal mechanisms regulate educational trajectories differently. Transition regimes include networks of communication on educational trajectories between various actors which at the same time represent power relationships. Involving different contexts and education systems across Europe (Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and the UK) helps to understand how national education systems and the different actors within them interpret and address the challenges of access, coping and relevance. These are increasingly associated with the trend towards lifelong learning where schools cease to be the only suppliers of education, and globalisation and ICT change the skills and competencies needed on the labour market, generating new mechanisms of identifying, negotiating and defining relevance.” (GOETE Research Proposal, Part B, p. 21)

As a theoretic-analytical perspective, governance offers us a conceptual tool to understand the interactions of different actors, at the different levels, and with different mandates, competences and with different degrees of leverage power at their disposal in the governance of educational trajectories. Thus, governance is a theme that cuts across the whole project and allows us to discuss issues of access to, coping with and support for as well as the relevance of education in the life course. The different sub-studies (Work Packages 2 to 6, hereafter WP) in GOETE focused on different groups of actors and placed their emphasis on different levels of analysis. The sub-study on ‘high-level governance’ (WP 7) involved investigating educational governance with a view to understanding governing discourses, policies and practices and how they shape and regulate educational trajectories, especially with view of the first two transition points after primary school. Thus, it aimed at the ‘higher’ and ‘wider’ contexts of educational governance that frame, orient and set the challenges and shape the parameters and possibilities at local contexts and practices, hence influencing the outcomes of educational trajectories of individuals (see below).

In order to operationalize this, each participating country produced a national report based on analysis of the national policy contexts via document and discourse analysis and individual interview with experts (see chapter 2)

The main purpose of this comparative report is to give some indication of how this part of the project has been pursued, and to bring to light some of the major findings of that endeavour. This report does provide an opportunity both for testing the robustness of the State of the Art (cf. Parreira do Amaral *et al.*, 2011) at the initiation of the project, and for looking at new ways of addressing the shifting field of educational governance.

This introduction, and the material included in the report, will also indicate some ways that the process has—necessarily—included reappraisal of the conception of governance, an area whose practice has been changing sometimes rapidly, sometimes radically, in the course of carrying out the project. Indeed, one of the major discussion points raised by the report is the need to reconsider the scope and meaning of the term ‘educational governance’, in a period where existing forms of governance that had been assumed to have brought new levels of efficiency and transparency to public administration, broadly conceived, have failed massively, and brought the most powerful nation-states in the world to their knees. These failures did not directly include the education sector—except perhaps through initiatives such as public-private partnerships, which have spread rapidly across European countries—but their consequences have been, and will continue to be, visited on education systems, especially through the public funding they may expect to receive, but also through the reverberations they have set up around the forms and purposes of education, and how it can most effectively be governed. Clearly, these changes are on-going, and will continue to develop in ways that we cannot possibly imagine. These changes also alert us to another quite central feature of the governance of educational trajectories, particularly of socially disadvantaged young people: *that educational governance does not and cannot control the conditions that generate social disadvantage*. The basis of social disadvantage is largely economic, and is strongly linked to labour market opportunities—but also affected by how this disadvantage is addressed by policies. In both its origins and its outcomes, educational governance is expected to respond to the demands of the labour market, pro-actively as well as responsively, but it cannot change the size and shape of the labour market.

But that limitation does not reduce the need for an understanding of how educational trajectories are governed. The crucial contribution of the focus on high-level governance of educational trajectories is that it sheds light on the nature and significance of the main context that frames the organization of those trajectories. To put it another way, the people we have met in the earlier Work Packages, what they were doing, why, for whom and how effectively, are there as a result of explicit or implicit forms of ‘high-level governance’. They do not take the roles they hold, experience the things they do, find themselves in particular places at particular times, with particular others present, entirely by chance, but because the spaces and provision and purposes of those meetings and experiences are the result of some forms of deliberate organization, not necessarily in recent times, or in local places, and certainly not in any great detail, or even necessarily directly associated with education. The participants understand that this is the case, but they seem to comprehend little of the ways that, and the degrees to which it frames, enables and regulates their activities. However, if we want to achieve a more adequate understanding of why educational transitions take the forms they do, and the nature and forms of the ways they help frame the conditions of those trajectories—particularly if we want to change those forms—then some grasp of the nature and place of educational governance is essential.

Providing some elements of such a grasp is one purpose of this report. The report seeks to show how high-level governance shapes the possibilities of educational trajectories, and how the different ways in which they are governed can influence issues of access, coping, relevance and life course for individuals and groups of socially disadvantaged children and young people. In this report we will also try to exploit the possibilities of productive comparison between our eight countries to the full.

A second main contribution of this introduction is to indicate key ways in which the educational governance of the GOETE countries differs from each other. In order to be able to do this, we needed a common basis for comparison of the eight polities, and this is elaborated below (section 1.1). Very briefly, the basis of that comparison is to separate the actors involved in the governance of education in each country, the activities of governing with which they are involved, and the governance levels—national, sub-national, transnational—at which they take place. The basis of this analysis is set out below, in a ‘cube’ diagram that enables the juxtaposition and comparison of the eight countries across these three dimensions. However, while this figure (see figure 1, p. 17) does enable us to recognize the possible combinations of actors, activities and scales involved in the governance of education, it does not tell us much about the relative importance of the different kinds of activities and actors involved in educational governance. Governance also involves processes and practices involved in the coordination of education, how they relate to each other and with what consequences for whom.

These activities of governance can be seen as composed of three—at least analytically—distinct moments. These different moments are evident in the chapter on the ‘Governance of High-Level Governance’ (see sections 4.2), and may be distinguished as *steering* (or policy), *administration*, the apparatus for transforming policy into sets of procedures, processes, programmes, institutions, etc., and *management*, the means of executing the policies, etc. It is also crucial to note that the three moments are differently weighted—relative to each other—in all our countries, and that this is one of the clearer features that distinguish them from each other, and may affect the ways that the nature and outcomes of trajectories; to take perhaps the most obvious example, the French administration seems to have traditionally been the dominant partner in educational governance, while in England, recent governments have effectively wiped it out.

A third, but not directly related, proposition is that the assumption that the coordination of the governance of education is driven by the will to optimize educational outcomes—and that therefore steering is the dominant moment—is misleading, on at least four counts. *First*, education has multiple audiences and objectives that are as likely to be mutually contradictory as mutually complementary. *Second*, and related to this, especially in an electorally high profile field like education, politics plays a crucial part, and implicit or explicit ideological commitments—for instance to state/non-state provision—are as likely to prevail as those that highlight narrower educational outcomes. *Third*, the evidence does not seem to support the necessity or empirical dominance of a linear sequence of Steering-Administration-Management. And *fourth*, steering, administration and management are as likely to be in disharmonious relations as they are to be in harmonious ones, as is evident from most of the country reports.

And finally by way of preamble, we should note that this is almost the only component of the GOETE project whose dominant focus is on high-level governance. It provides accounts of the contrasting ways that the processes and experiences at the level of the school and its neighbourhood are framed, enabled and regulated at the level of national—and sometimes regional—level, in very different ways in different countries. This is neither to say that the national is equally influential in all countries, or that it is in every case the most significant level of educational governance, and certainly not to say that its influence is always direct. Nor are we wishing to advance the idea of a kind of ‘scalar’ hierarchy of educational governance, going ‘down’ from the global to the European to the national, and thence to the regional

and local—though this has become so ‘conventional’ in some ways that it seemed difficult to avoid using it to organise the remainder of this introductory chapter. Rather, these different scales are referred to in a heuristic and systematic manner and do not constitute any hierarchy.

However, all these caveats do not alter the fact that it is at national level that the most fundamental—which does not necessarily mean the most significant—framing and directing of national education systems formally takes place. And, of course, the understandings and enactments of the authority of national governments themselves vary greatly across our eight countries, which is what presents this report with its greatest challenge, to try to compare their nature and outcomes.

Before we set out to describe and discuss our common research basis (section 1.1), the next paragraphs provide a summary and structure of the remainder of the report.

### *The Structure of the Report*

The remainder of this introductory chapter (sections 1.1 and 1.2) describes and discusses the theoretical framework developed to address the questions of high-level governance. It *first* frames what is defined here as ‘governance’ and ‘high-level governance’ and the different activities, institutions and scales involved in the vertical and sectoral division of labour in the governance of educational trajectories. By doing this, the section also points to the changes that led the concept of ‘governance’ to prominence in discussions related to coordination in the education sector. *Second*, it refers to the European dimension on the one hand, and to the national and sub-national level on the other. *Third*, the section discusses the role of the ‘national’ in institutional and discursive terms.

In *Chapter 2*, we examine and dissect the comparative research strategy, the data and the methods of analysis used in the present report; a concluding section summarizes the chapter and discusses the nature of and reliability of that material. The major basis of the work for this report was the series of eight national reports, compiled by national teams, following the development of a broad common template. This was, of course, extremely important in enabling some attempt at comparison to be made. The *research strategy* adopted was to maximise the possibilities of effective comparison between the eight countries. Due to the complex nature of the research questions to be addressed, but also due to the multi-level and multi-sited framework of the GOETE project, comparison could not be done directly, on the basis of the empirical information we had collected, and so the decision was taken to attempt comparison at a different level of abstraction. For instance, rather than comparing outcomes of trajectories – and of transitions as its key components – that are organised in different ways in different places, we decided to operationalize comparison using three main approaches: focusing on two ‘policy frictions’ in the governance of education in each country, distilling the ‘logics of intervention’ in high-level governance and discussing the findings along the five thematic perspectives in GOETE (cf. section 2.1).

*Data selection and collection and analysis* involved using two main methods of qualitative research: Critical Discourse Analysis and expert interviews with representatives from several groups involved in the governance of educational trajectories. The analysis of this data was conducted, however, in close conversation with other data and findings from other WPs in the GOETE project, and especially with WP 6 on local case studies for it complements the scalar division of labour in the governance of education.

*Chapter 3* represents one of the main attempts at a cross-national comparison in the report. It introduces two relatively novel ways of addressing the comparative issue constructively. The first section (3.1) in that chapter presents findings from the participating countries for the governance friction of ‘migration’; after juxtaposing the findings, the importance of ‘national regimes’ are discussed and institutional and discursive pathways and opportunity structures considered. A further step in comparative analysis is the discussion of the ‘logics of intervention’ found in the different countries. In the second part of the chapter a similar procedure is followed for the second set of governance frictions (section 3.2); here, too, the frictions are juxtaposed then the underlying ‘logics of intervention’ are considered. The last part discusses the findings transversally and draws conclusions from the findings (section 3.3).

Following these attempts at cross-national comparison, *chapter 4* is intended to provide a thematic analysis of the governance of educational trajectories, based on the five central themes that have run through the whole project – access, coping and support, relevance, life course and governance, and on how the differences in the patterns and modes of high-level governance contribute to producing and reflecting the differences between GOETE member countries around these issues. After a short introduction into the relation of high-level governance and the GOETE themes (section 4.1), the chapter is structured along the five thematic perspectives focused on in the project.

In section 4.2 the ‘*Governance of High-Level Governance*’ discusses what types of governance discourses influence high-level “activities” and “reforms” and how. The chapter concentrates on the key components of governance arrangements (i.e., actors, territories, challenges) and looks into how they are deployed in the different GOETE countries. In order to do so, the chapter distinguishes what are the constitutive elements of governance in general, and high-level governance in particular.

The theme of *access* and its organisation and distribution is discussed in section 4.3. Access is a key element in responses to, and the allocation at various levels of governance of, social inequalities in educational trajectories. Access is the key—policy—mechanism through which individual decisions and performance based on social disadvantage deriving from class, gender, ethnicity, region and neighbourhood, mutate into differential *opportunities for learning* and consequent life perspectives.

Unequal access and early school leaving are also related to different abilities and resources for *coping* with and *support* for educational demands; this theme is discussed in section 4.4. Success and failure in education depend on how the effects of children’s and young people’s social disadvantage on their learning in school is mitigated by the support they and their parents can mobilise informally or formally – through individualised teaching, private lessons, special needs education, counselling and youth services – and informally through family and peer networks. And this in turn is related to the social embeddedness of education and its interrelation with other areas of social life worlds.

The relevance of education – the theme focused on in section 4.5 – is judged at several different levels—by governments, in respect of their national plans; by employers in respect of the occupational preparation provided; by individuals, in respect of the *relevance* they ascribe to education for their subjective life plans. Yet the relevance of education is not restricted to labour market demands. In democratic societies the *relevance* of education is by definition

also related to the need of providing young people with an understanding of their role as citizens.

In section 4.6, the concept of *Life course* enables us to analyse the adequacy of education for social integration. In modern societies individual lives have been standardised by institutionalising distinct life phases and the transitions between them. On-going differentiation and de-standardisation of life courses have extended the perspective of school learning towards life-long learning.

The chapter closes with a discussion section (4.7) which draws some conclusions from the trans-thematic analysis and a section on some emerging issues (4.8) that cut across the themes discussed in the previous sections but also unanticipated ones.

*Chapter 5 – Discussion and Conclusions* – takes up and elaborates the main substantive and theoretical issues that seem to have emerged from the report as a whole. The chapter provides the opportunity for us to consider its wider educational, governmental, social and theoretical implications. Finally, the report is put into the context of the original aims and purposes of the project and a brief discussion of some of its limitations.

## **1.1 High-Level Governance in GOETE**

In the GOETE project, several sub-studies have focussed on the operation of educational trajectories, at different levels and with emphases on different types of actors and challenges. The sub-study on high-level governance reported here (WP 7)<sup>1</sup> considers the ‘higher’ and ‘wider’ contexts of educational governance that frame, orient and set the challenges and shape the parameters and possibilities those local contexts and practices. Educational trajectories and the transitions they encompass are ultimately—but by no means wholly—shaped by politics and policies, whether explicit or implicit—and the forms taken by these politics, policies and practices are what we understand by the ‘high-level governance’ of educational trajectories.

The adoption of the governance perspective in the GOETE project aims at accounting for the different levels of analysis involved in these processes. The high-level governance of educational trajectories is discussed in this report along three main *scales of governance*, i.e., three different levels at which policy is made that frames, orients, sets the challenges and shapes the parameters and possibilities of local contexts and practices related to educational trajectories. These levels might be divided into supra-national, national, and sub-national levels.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this report is to clarify the nature, causes and implications for educational trajectories and transitions of the ways that they are governed at the level of the polity. At the *national level*, the relevant polity is usually taken to be the nation-state whose taxes largely fund compulsory education, which takes responsibility for its provision and delivery, and which coordinates and regulates that funding and provision. However, as we shall elaborate below, the existence of such influential international tools of educational governance as PISA mean that

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<sup>1</sup> Complementarily, the local case studies (WP 6) concentrated on the local contexts of schools and how they produced and mediated the experiences and outcomes of the key educational transitions that are the focus of the GOETE project.

<sup>2</sup> It is important to emphasize that these levels are not thought in hierarchical ways; they are rather analytical distinctions that enable us to conceptualize the different levels at which educational governance takes place.

the national is not the only relevant level of educational governance. Thus, we have to include the *supranational level* in our analyses. Also, importantly, actors at the *sub-national level* may as well be very influential in shaping educational governance; this is why we need to stipulate ‘high-level governance’ differently in GOETE countries (see below).

One further reason for the adoption of the governance perspective in the GOETE project relates to its usefulness of not only analytically separating different levels at which the governance of education takes place, but also of helping us distinguish among the *different actors/institutions* involved in these processes. Instead of seeing the nation-state as the sole institution responsible for governing education, the governance conception draws attention to other participants as well as to the emergence of new actors and agents alongside the state. Education may be seen as coordinated by combinations of four fundamental types of actors—which are proffered stipulatively and in the interests of parsimony—*state, market, civil society and households*, and again with no intrinsic limitation on the combinations of the actors involved in any of the activities (indeed, ‘hybrid’ combinations of actors are to be expected). And on the basis of this, we can tentatively advance the suggestion that what defines *governance*, and distinguishes it from government, is that it is concerned with the ‘*coordination of coordination*’.<sup>3</sup> Rather than ‘the state doing it all’, the processes and institutions through which ‘education’ is enabled are coordinated through a complex and shifting division of labour between different groups of (institutional) actors (see also: Ball & Junemann, 2012).

Another important analytical distinction enabled by the use of the governance perspective is to recognize that governing education involves a *sectoral* division of labour; minimally including the *activities* of *funding, provision and regulation* and, in most cases, the means through which it is facilitated have to be ‘*owned*’. And the fundamental difference between the government of education and the governance of education is that in the former the default assumption was that all those activities would—and should—be carried out by the state, while governance implies that those activities neither have to be nor are likely to be, carried out by the same institution, group, people, etc. Moreover, the combinations of structures, processes, practices and activities that it involves cannot be reduced to a collection of the most technically appropriate tools and mechanisms, if only because the central importance of education as an institution within a polity means that it is also always the subject of political contestation.

In sum, the concept of governance has thus the advantage of calling our attention to the different dimensions (scalar, sectoral, etc.) involved in the ‘governing of education’; that is, it requires closer attention to *policy* and its ideational and substantive dimensions, to *polity* and the institutional dimension (e.g., the level at which it is formulated and implemented and those involved in it), and not least to *politics*, the processual dimension with its political struggles and negotiation processes necessary to it to take place. Governance, thus, makes it necessary to look into the interaction of actors, mechanisms and contents, and into how these combinations exert influence on the governance of educational trajectories of young people.

Importantly, we have to recognise that governance is one of the most difficult and complex components of the education/political lexicon. There are multiple different conceptions of what it means, but the definition by Patrick Le Galès adopted in GOETE—

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<sup>3</sup> See also Bob Jessop’s discussion of ‘meta-governance’ (Jessop, 2007).

“a coordination process of actors, social groups and institutions that aims at reaching collectively defined and discussed objectives. Governance then concerns the whole range of institutions, networks, directives, regulations, norms, political and social uses as well as public and private actors which contribute to the stability of a society and a political regime, to its orientation, to its capacity to lead, to deliver services and to assume its legitimacy.” (Le Galès, 2004)

—is an effective and useful place to start, while the ways that it has to be, and has been, used in GOETE were set out in the State of the Art report (cf. Parreira do Amaral *et al.*, 2011), and are deftly clarified in section 4.2 of this report.

Accepting a broad definition of governance does not, however, resolve the crucial but frequently puzzling difference between *governance* and *government*. While that distinction can often produce confusion, one effective and appropriate means of trying to get beyond such confusion is to recognise that, in essence, governance and government represent different ways of coordinating the governing of education. Education as an institution and a set of practices does not just ‘happen’; especially when it appears as the only institution in a society through which all members of the society must pass. Indeed, embedding and enforcing the requirement of compulsory attendance might be seen as the core act of governing education, which requires both some form of structure, and the availability of mechanisms through which that structure can operate, as well as actors commissioned with executing it. However, it is crucial to recognize that there is not only one way of coordinating the governance of education.

The default assumption in thinking about how the activities that make up education systems as coordinated derives from the model of the post-war social democratic state in Western Europe. In this model, there is a single agent of governing education, the state, and that form of authoritative governing was associated with the idea of *government*, to the point where that term has become almost exclusively associated with the governing activities of the nation-state. Nation-states have historically been seen as the basis of authoritative decision making within societies and been seen as the basic agency for “the making, implementing and enforcing of rules for the collective, public aspects of social life, that is, politics at the level of government and the state” (Bromley, 2001, p. 6). Note that this definition alludes to ‘government’ as both an activity—of governing—and as the institution for carrying out that activity. *Government* was based on, and assumed, a top down model operated by a dedicated and professional cadre, which operated through the medium of ‘policies’, which it had some (legal) power to enforce, and were disseminated across the relevant territory.

One key reason that the term ‘governance’ has grown rapidly in popularity and scope over the past twenty years or so, was largely as a response to the perceived inability of the concept of *government*, as it was associated with that particular model of governing, to provide effective accounts of *changes* both in the form of new problems confronting states, and of states’ diminishing capacity to respond to them by extending, modifying or radicalizing ‘government’ as their exclusive means of governing them. These new challenges required both new processes and activities of governing, and new—non-state—actors, such as those from civil society, or the economy, taking part in those processes. Moreover, they were exacerbated by the fact that the activities of governing were no longer confined to national territories and nation-states; both transnational (such as the European Commission and other international organisa-

tions) and subnational bodies (such as regional and local authorities) became involved in the processes. Related to his last point, there has been a displacement of not just the ‘machinery’ of the state from a dominant role, but also its national basis. One of the consequences of the changes initiated in the final quarter of the twentieth century was the erosion of the assumption that education was governed and ‘policied’ exclusively at a national level. With increasing economic and political globalization, and the increasing discursive prominence of the idea of a global knowledge economy, the role of international organisations like the EU and OECD became much more prominent—and of course this can be seen most clearly in the frequency with which the OECD’s PISA programme has been referred to in earlier work in the GOETE project. At the same time, with greater emphases on decentralisation and devolution of governance, there develops a more prominent role for sub-national bodies to be involved. Against this background, and cutting across the different levels or scales, the relevance of transnational discourses on education becomes visible as it is seen as an important aspect shaping the governance of educational trajectories.

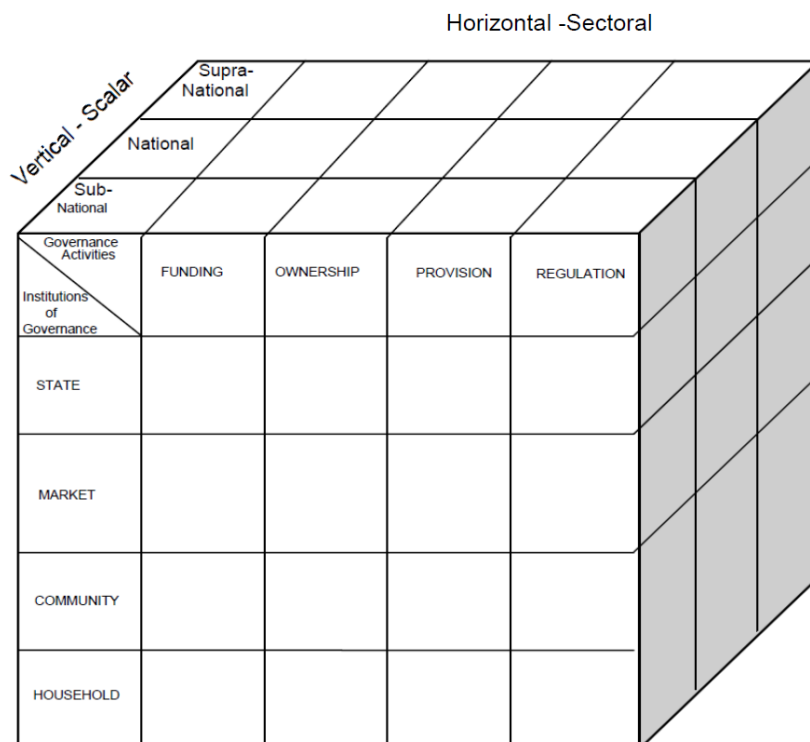
Bob Jessop (1999) most effectively advanced an argument on the nature of these changes. He pointed out that over the period since the ‘golden age’ for social democracy in Western Europe (approximately 1945-1975) we have experienced a fourfold movement in the relationships between politics, economy and society, which together frame the shift from government to governance. The four changes Jessop indicates are: *first*, a shift in *the relationship between the economic and political spheres* away from one that saw the state providing strong support for the (national, production based) economy, particularly through Keynesian techniques of demand management, for instance—and Jessop refers to this relationship as *Keynesian*. He contrasts this with the current situation, where the role of the state is confined to creating a legal and political infrastructure that provides the maximum possible latitude for the development of markets, in what is taken as a global knowledge economy. He characterises this as *Schumpeterian*, after the famous Austrian economist. In terms of the role of education, the nature of this shift can be seen in the shift from a conception of education as providing human capital able to contribute to the national economy, to one where education is a key element of national competitiveness (something also heavily emphasised at the European level). The *second* area of change has taken place in the *form of social security*. Here, Jessop contrasts the earlier *Welfare* state, where the state was expected to provide equality of opportunity, a more equitable distribution of wealth, and a ‘welfare safety net’, from cradle to grave, with what he refers to as the contemporary *Workfare* state, where the role of the state is minimised, as the responsibility for social protection is handed over to individuals. Education was given a central role as a key element and enabler of the Welfare state, whereas in the Workfare state, it is seen more as a responsibility of individuals to make themselves employable by obtaining employment qualifications. The *third* element is the *locus of economic activity*. In the earlier case, this was *national*; economies were—for the most part accurately—taken to be nationally based, but over the past 35 years or so, that has been less and less the case. Jessop refers to this form as *Post-national*. Education is now to see itself as part of a country’s (and in the case of Europe, a global region’s) competitive edge in the global economy; the national good is served by transnational education. *Finally*, the basis of governing changed from a ‘(national) State’, in the traditional social democratic sense, where the state was heavily and directly involved, and assumed to control the key levers of power, to a (transnational) *Regime*, where activities and agents of governing were more likely to be fragmented and geographically dispersed. This whole complex was registered as a shift from a *Keynesian Welfare National State*

to a *Schumpeterian Workfare Post-national Regime*—which itself can be seen as part of a Global Knowledge Economy, with ‘Knowledge’ taken as itself a distinct and necessary factor of production and competitiveness (cf. Bob Jessop, 1999).

The next section presents and discusses a framework to conceptualise the different agents, scales, and sectoral aspects involved in the governance of education.

### 1.1.1 The Scalar and Sectoral Division of Labour in the Governance of Education

In line with the governance perspective and against the background of the changes discussed above, we developed a framework in an attempt to capture the changes and their complexity in relation to the governance of education. There are significant variations in the ways in which the division of labour in the educational governance is achieved in the GOETE countries, in terms of both the activities involved and where they are carried out and by whom. The figure below distinguishes the *activities* of governing—funding, provision, regulation and ownership—from the *actors and institutions* made responsible for carrying them out. These are – for the sake of parsimony – state, market, community and household; whereas the framework assumes that typically responsibility will be taken by hybrid groups of actors, such as state *and* community collaboration in provision, or public-private partnerships in funding, for instance. And the *third* dimension to be taken into account is that of *scale* at which this takes place. Here, the governance of education may be discussed – both in analytical and empirical terms – at the supra- or international level, at the national level or at the sub-national level.



**Figure 1: Activities, Institutions and Scales in the Governance of Education**

The ‘vertical’ (or scalar) division of labour refers to the administrative levels of government at which the responsibility for particular activities rests, running from central government – and indeed, transnational bodies like the EU, or OECD, in some cases – to local neighbour-

hoods. This may be seen as a ‘spatial’ division of labour, between the various scales at which educational governance is carried out. Along this dimension, France has traditionally stood out for the degree of centralisation of responsibility for education, while Germany represents a clear contrast, with considerable autonomy at the level of the different Länder.

The ‘horizontal’ level refers to the degree to which the responsibilities for the activities of education systems are held by and within those systems themselves, and the degree to which they may be shared with other agencies, whether in the labour market, or the area of guidance and counselling, for instance; this may be seen as a ‘sectoral’ division of labour, between education and other agencies. It points, for instance, to the degree to which education is a single ‘silo’, carrying out all elements that fall under the heading of education in some level of isolation from other social and labour market sectors, for instance—which has been the case in Finland and France, for instance, though not in the UK or Netherlands.

As the result of the interaction of these two dimensions – the scalar and sectoral – we may also consider the ‘functional’ division of the labour of educational governance. This aspect comes into prominence when we begin to see apparent examples of ‘privatisation’ of some educational activities. These examples lead us to consider which of the functions of education are, and need be, governed by public rather than private or ‘voluntary’ institutions. It is clear that varying degrees of the responsibility for the functions of education are carried out by non-state bodies in all the countries represented in GOETE. The clearest example of this is the involvement of various religious organisations, usually in the provision of education (e.g., the Netherlands), but there are increasing numbers of other ‘non-state’ forms of educational provision, such as the Academies described in the UK report (cf. Mellor & Dale, 2012). The extent to which this is the case varies across GOETE countries, with the very high levels of functional division of labour found in the Netherlands standing out at one end of the spectrum. No other of our countries under research deploys such a close relationship between the educational system and economic interests of (individual large) firms than Germany – which of course is not surprising, as the German dual apprenticeship system depends on companies. However, it is new how directly new market tendencies are entering the system – with highly ambivalent effects: while serving as a tool of creaming off along highly specified single-firm-needs, it could be the chance for individual cases (cf. du Bois-Reymond et al., 2012).

The next sections will focus *first* on the nature and influence of the European dimension, with special attention to EU work in the broad area of educational governance and transitions between levels of education systems. The EU has been very active in the field of transition from school to employment, as is evidenced most clearly by the publication of a Council resolution about the need to reduce the average level of early school leaving in the Community to below 10%. At the same time, the EU’s new overall programme for education, Education 2020,<sup>4</sup> has several overlaps with the GOETE project’s areas of interest. The section introduces the concept of ‘context of context’ to refer to how the European level impacts on the governance of educational trajectories at national and sub-national levels. *Second*, the national and sub-national levels are discussed along the concepts of ‘institutional’ and ‘discursive’ pathways and opportunity structures. *Third*, an overview of national characteristics of education systems

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<sup>4</sup> See: A strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020"), online at: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/policy-framework\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/policy-framework_en.htm) [last retrieved September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2012].

in GOETE is presented which are related to educational governance; this overview was produced for the State of the Art report in WP 2 (Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011) and reproduced here to highlight the formal structures on the processes and outcomes of different transition regimes.

## 1.2 The European Dimension

It is well known that the European Union's formal and Treaty discretion over its Member States' education policy is limited to "contributing to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between member states and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action" (European Union, 1992 [Maastricht Treaty], Art. 165). It is almost equally well known that it nevertheless has a significant interest in contributing to the agendas around which those policies are formed, and it is clear that in a number of cases its influence has become noticeable (see: Dale & Robertson, 2009; Lawn & Grek, 2012). Through this, it does have some influence over the education policies of its Member States. One example of this is the naming and organization of its education related activities as a programme for *lifelong learning*, which have "represented the citizen as learner, not through being a student, but through being actively engaged in learning in professional contexts as well as in other areas and aspects of life" (Rasmussen, 2009, p. 97). This represents a very good example of an attempt to frame of the discursive opportunity structure for MS education policy, and it is clear in a number of the areas discussed in GOETE generally, that this representation has had some impact on how 'education' as an activity and as an institution have been conceived, in ways that have clear implications for post school transitions and beyond them through the life course.

We would also suggest that what we might call the 'hegemonic project' of Europe constitutes an important element of the context of context for national education governance (see Dale, 2009).<sup>5</sup> That project has gone through three rather distinct phases over the last decade. The *first* was the period following the Lisbon Agenda, which set 'Europe' the task of becoming by 2010, "the most dynamic, competitive knowledge economy in the world, with sustainable growth, more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" (European Parliament, 2000, § 25). The beginnings of what might be seen as a qualitatively enhanced role for education policy in the EU were fundamentally developed as a response to the Lisbon goals and especially the competitiveness agenda, which formed the basis of the concrete future objectives through which education systems would achieve the contribution to the achievement of the Lisbon goals. Lisbon also saw a key role for education in contributing to the European Social Model and European social policy, where the central features were 'investment in people' and 'building an active welfare state' effectively, 'productive social policy'. The first of these meant that "Europe's education and training systems need to adapt both to the demands of the knowledge society and to the need of an improved level and quality of employment." (ibid.)

An important point to be noted here is that the Lisbon summit did "not acknowledge education as a 'teleological' policy area, an area in itself [...it] is part of social policy, labour market and overall economic policy." (Gornitzka, 2005, p. 17) There is also evidence that the

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<sup>5</sup> Of course, it would be important to problematize whose 'hegemonic project' that is, since we cannot take for granted that Europe is a coherent entity which pursues a hegemonic project.

high profile of education is due as much to pressures from the wider social policy area, and especially the employment area, as it is to pressure from Education Ministers, for instance, with the result that “not only the community level sectoral players [...] but also those at the national level [...] could have the feeling that an increasing number of education policy issues are dealt with in the framework of the common employment policy.” (Halász, 2003, p. 7)

The *second* stage, which followed the 2004 Mid Term Review of progress towards the Lisbon strategy, was characterised even more strongly by competitiveness with a heavy emphasis on the need for Europe to move towards becoming a Knowledge Economy in a phase of increasing deregulation, as “the new mantra of European political discourse (became) ‘Growth and Employment.’” (Degryse & Pochet, 2012, p. 86) There was, however, less intensity in the education contribution as “the number of staff working in the field of education (i.e., culture and training) fell from 713 to 561.” (Barbier, 2011, p. 15)

The *third* phase is essentially shaped by Europe’s response to the crisis, with the launch of Europe 2020 prioritising “budgetary reform and growth, without drawing any other lessons from the crisis” (Degryse & Pochet, 2012, p. 88). Europe 2020 does, however, give a prominent place to education, with flagship programmes like ‘Youth on the Move’ which is intended to promote lifelong learning, study mobility in the EU, and take-up of higher education, and help young people make the often difficult transition into work (see: European Commission, 2010).

The crisis has, however, contributed further to ‘market enforcing’ regulation at the European level, with “macroeconomic and fiscal surveillance [...] progress[ing] much faster than social coordination [...] with an average unemployment rate for youth in EU countries of 21.4% in 2010.” (Natali, 2012, pp. 55ff.) Such external pressures can only further contribute to the ‘instrumentalisation’ of education in European policy.

Nevertheless, the EU has in fact in recent years shown considerable interest in issues related to educational trajectories and their governance—albeit with a clear eye to employability issues—in ways that do have an impact on MS education policies in these areas. The most prominent example over recent times has been the issue of Early School Leaving (hereafter ESL), which has risen up the ladder of urgency and EU level of intervention considerably. The rate of ESL was identified in the annual report on education in 2005 as one of the five key priorities for EU work in education and an agreement on reducing the share of early school leavers to less than 10% Europe-wide by 2020 has become a priority target. Most recently, (June 2011), a framework for ‘coherent, comprehensive and evidence based policies against early school leaving’ was adopted as a Council Recommendation, the strongest level of action available to the Commission, which requires MS to act.

Early school leaving is seen in this document as

”a complex phenomenon and reducing it requires strong political commitment. This Communication analyses the *impact* of early school leaving on individuals, society and economies, outlines its *causes*, and gives an overview on the existing and forthcoming EU-level *measures to tackle* it.” (European Commission, 2011, p. 1, emphasis added)

The italicized terms indicate the intended scope of the intervention, and its discursive, if not institutional ambition.

The senior official in charge of this work described the Commission’s contribution as follows:

“It’s going to be something a bit more than the current [...] we will continue to publish the annual statistics in the progress reports and analyze the trends. We are in discussion with Eurostats people to get a regional breakdown because it varies very strongly within member states as well.

The big thing we’re going to be doing is setting up an expert group to accompany the implementation of the recommendation, because it was back in May when member states committed to introducing national strategies on early school leaving based around a comprehensive system on actually what was going on. Then there is this mix of preventative policy measures – intervention at the first sign of problems, which you need to be monitoring. And compensation - re-engagement measures for those who actually have dropped out, but very much with the accent on preventing it.

We’re just in the process of getting the nominations from the member states for a group, which is not just going to be just on education – we want it to be cross-sectoral. We want it to not just be national, but also to have representatives from regional and practitioner organizations. That expert group will report regularly to high level meetings like the Directors General of schools. We’ve also said we’re going to make this a regular feature on the agenda of ministerial meetings, whether in formal council or seminars. So, there will be a constant returning to this issue and updating of what member states have done.

At the same time, as it’s one of the Europe 2020 targets, it’s also regularly a focus of member state reporting under Europe 2020, so we automatically get annual reports from every country on what they are doing on this topic. We have policy overviews from the countries themselves – an official policy overview, and then we use this group to look behind it to see what’s actually working – are these policies well balanced? So, there’s quite a developed mechanism being set up to accompany implementation of the targets and their recommendations.” (Interviewee T-01, policy-maker, supra-national level)

We see here that MS discretion and responsibilities are scrupulously respected, but also that the form of intervention in education that the Treaty does allow the EU—via the ‘contributing to the development of quality education’ clause—is fully exploited. Thus the identification of ESL as a key issue the raising of the profile of EU in education, and the coordination of mechanisms and a monitoring group clearly at the least shapes and seeks to implement a common response to what is presented as a European as well as a national problem.

The other main means of EU involvement on national education policy is possibly less well known, but in some ways possibly more effective, because it provides the main financial means of EU support for education. The European Social Fund (ESF) provides significant help to young people, as the EU’s main financial tool for boosting youth employment, entrepreneurship and the learning mobility of young workers, preventing school drop-out and raising skill levels, as well as contributing more broadly to the reform of Member States’ education and training systems and to lifelong learning. EU countries select their own priorities for ESF investment, in line with national needs, embodied in Operational Programmes (OPs) and implemented through projects. Over the 2007-2013 period, all countries are addressing young people, who are covered in 91% of the OPs, accounting for 68% of the budget. ESF also operates at intra-national/regional levels, and local political, educational, welfare and economy stakeholders can apply for funding. However, it needs to be noted in this context that such funds do not initiate new policies in themselves but are fed into existing structures and decision-making bodies to which local educational networks may belong.

More specifically, given the prominence accorded in chapter 3 to the educational trajectories of migrant young people, we should note that there is a more or less explicit European dimension to the education rights of migrants, though it has changed quite markedly over the past four decades and more. More particularly, European initiatives have been framed in the context of member states' jurisdiction over education policy, so that they have been most effective when any European level rules "interfere as little as possible with substantive education policy" (Cullen, 1996, p. 108), which has meant that the "only Community policy on the education of migrants which could be described as an education right is the guarantee of access to education within a member state." (Cullen, 1996, p. 108) Indeed, in its earlier phases, policy around migration was premised on the assumption that migrants would be temporary inhabitants of EU countries, but as the validity of this assumption changed, there was a recognition that

"if they were to remain in the hosts state, their education [...] would need to enable them to participate in that State's society. Simple access to education had not prepared these children properly for full membership in the community. Subsequently, the Commission integrated policy on educational rights for migrants into the mainstream Community education policy, emphasising cooperation rather than positive rights" (Cullen, 1996, p. 108),

with an emphasis on exchange of best practice and funding of small scale projects rather than the adoption of substantive rights. More recently and more broadly,

"protections for immigrant populations have been developed primarily by domestic courts and institutions, and national NGOs have used these instruments to constrain the action and behaviour of European states which have attempted to control and restrict immigration...(so) all in all, the suggestion that more expansive rights imposed by international accords, courts and institutions, which would severely limit the ability of the state to control immigration and which would change citizenship, have proven to be mostly wrong" (Schain, 2009, p. 109).

Nevertheless, Carrera and Guyer (2009) summarise their study of the EU influence on education of migrant children in the EU as follows:

"It seems to be clear that the level of discretion and actual degree of sovereignty that the state used to hold exclusively over these policy areas is experiencing a process of erosion to the benefit of the European level. The EU is generating a compendium of legal mechanisms, including laws, but also non-legally binding juridical measures such as policy strategies, common principles and coordinated actions, which are influencing legislative reforms and policy priorities advocated at the national arena" (Carrera & Guyer, 2009, p. 5)

though they do also point out that

"EU/EC official documents only very rarely contain any statements naming certain characteristics of school systems and educational reforms that generate or prevent "social exclusion". The general aims of educational policy are often repeated: preventing school failure and social exclusion of pupils with special needs, promoting equal opportunities for girls and boys, fostering integration of migrants, making access to education easier for all, improving the quality of and attractiveness of education, raising the level of literacy and numeracy, greater investment. What is often left unclear, however, is which elements in the education systems could help reach these goals, and which could hamper them." (Carrera & Guyer, 2009, p. 3)

One final significant point to close this discussion of the influence of the European Commission on MS policies and practices with regard to educational trajectories is how ‘Europe’ was treated in the national reports. In half of the eight cases it was never mentioned, and in only two, significantly Slovenia and Poland, were there extensive references to the importance of the European Commission work. Both post-socialist states were very consciously seeking to reform the education systems that they had inherited in fundamental ways, and the body with both expertise and resource for them to turn to was the EU. Indeed, the Slovenian report shows how the major education policy initiative was scripted with EU documents and policies very much in mind, while the Polish report to make reference to EU policies as a model. However, we should not overlook the nature and possible consequences of the silence found in almost all other reports—the major exception was the German report, which did include an analysis of the EC’s Green Paper on migration. The possible impact of the Council Memorandum on Early School Leaving, for instance, which *obliges* all MS to set targets for lowering its incidence, and the follow-up mechanisms described in the interview with the senior EC official, may have greater consequences for national education policies and governance than has so far been registered at national levels.

A multi-dimensional analysis is an effective way of indicating the key changes that have taken place in the governance of education, and associated expectations of the possible contributions of education. And it also opens up ways of recognising what we will refer to as the ‘*contexts of context*’ (Brenner et al., 2010) of the patterning of educational governance, and the most important influences shaping and constraining conceptions, expectations and challenges of education. In a discussion of the different forms the concept of ‘neoliberalization’ has taken throughout the world, Neil Brenner and colleagues refer to the ‘context of context’ as

“the evolving macrospatial frameworks and interspatial circulatory systems in which local regulatory projects unfold. Without consideration of this meta-context, which has been continually reshaped through several decades of market-driven reform projects at the global, supranational, national *and* local scales, it is impossible adequately to understand (a) the inter-jurisdictional family resemblances, interdependencies and interconnections among contextually specific patterns of neoliberalization, as well as (b) their substantive forms and evolutionary trajectories *within* their respective contexts of emergence.” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 202)

The idea of ‘contexts of contexts’ enables us to identify more clearly the limits and possibilities of the governance of education in GOETE countries, and of what is sayable and doable in particular national education systems. Among the key wider contexts that frame the national and local contexts of education governance in Europe are: *the wider structures and discourses emanating from the political-economic level*, particularly at present those emanating from and shaped, to differing degrees, by the educational work of international organisations, such as the OECD (through PISA and its focus on competencies) and EU (through the focus on education for the knowledge-based economy), prioritizing the relationship of education systems to economic and labour market ‘needs’; at a different level by *the discourses of late modernity*, where, as noted in the life course section (section 4.6), ‘life course normality becomes fictitious’; at the level of educational administration, the reductions and mutations—in the direction of operating more along the lines of private business—of the *modus operandi of the central state in forming and implementing education policy*, (though it should be noted at the same time that such institutional opportunity structures are very deeply embedded and re-

sistant to change); and at the level of the school by the promotion of discourses and practices of institutional and personal accountability.

The most significant elements of this context for the particular national contexts we are interested in are: *on the one hand*, a conception of a *global knowledge economy* which frames the ways that the nature of national economies is conceived, in at least two ways. The ‘framing’ global economy is one that is based—to put it over-simply—on ‘knowledge’ rather than production. From the 1980s onwards, the economic framework within which nation-states—and especially European nation-states—operate has changed in two highly significant ways. It has become a global rather than a national framework, and it has become knowledge rather than production-based. In terms of the first, the ability of (European) nation-states to ‘control’ their ‘own’ economies has been transformed over the past four decades—essentially since the first oil crisis of the mid-1970s—from a position rooted in *nationally-based productive industry*, to a position rooted in a *transnationally driven knowledge-* and *services-based sector* (here each of the italicized terms is highly significant).

*On the other hand*, they represent a conception of the *changing nature of governance* (often represented as a shift from government to governance). Here, *government*, represented as the nation-state having control over all key aspects of its national society, essentially through a process of tax and ‘policy’, gives way to ‘*governance*’, especially in the form of New Public Management (NPM). NPM essentially connotes a shift from the ‘tax and policy’ paradigm that characterised the post-war social democratic state to one based very much more on a private sector model of ‘contract accountability’, whose most significant feature in the context of national education systems is a shift from *ex ante* to *ex post* accountability—that is to say, education systems are now held accountable for what they produce—their outputs—rather than for what they aim to, or are expected to produce on the basis of their claims to expertise, etc., to produce.

These ‘contexts of context’ frame what we will refer below to as the ‘the discursive and institutional opportunity structures’ that frame the possibilities for the governance of education at national and sub-national levels.

### 1.3 National and Sub-National Levels

The previous section emphasized that national contexts—the ways that trajectories and transitions are organised and governed—are strongly shaped by broader global contexts. All this said, it becomes very important not to throw out the baby with the bath water, that is, not to assume that because the national state no longer does *everything*, it no longer does *anything*. It is clear from all the national reports—and perhaps even more so from the fact that the project is based on national systems—that the national level remains highly significant, indeed the most significant by far, even if that significance is not as total as it has been historically. The earlier WP reports in the GOETE project<sup>6</sup> all make clear that, and how, the national remains central (usually in relation to the local), while recognising that its scope is somewhat diminished and its monopoly and dominance no longer so great. We might see the problems of the

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<sup>6</sup> For the reports on the remaining WPs in GOETE see: (WP 2) Parreira do Amaral *et al.*, 2011; (WP 3) Cramer *et al.*, 2012; (WP 4) McDowell *et al.*, 2012; (WP 5) Aro *et al.*, 2012; and WP 6) du Bois-Reymond *et al.*, 2012.

governance—the coordination of the coordination—of education systems as framed by four fundamental sets of circumstances— a) their links to the economy; b) their historically developed forms, which are extremely difficult to shift; c) their historic mission of enlightenment, and of severing the links between social origins and destinations; and d) their place as the repository of national culture. While we might see all of these clearly in the GOETE reports, often the link to the labour market can seem all pervasive. The effects of the ways that schools and education systems are organised and embedded with communities was reflected across the other WP reports, such as the individual and institutional surveys with parents, pupils and school principals in particular. The right to the personally and collectively liberating and enlightening fruits of education, and how they might be provided, and for whom, is so clearly present that it hardly needs stating. It is the last of these fundamental sets of circumstances shaping education systems, that demonstrates that education is an irreducibly national issue—even where the definition of ‘national’ may be imposed from outside, or contested from within, and also bearing in mind that the governance of education is a multi-scalar and multi-sectoral matter

The national and sub-national levels are the central dimension of analysis in the GOETE project as a whole and in the sub-study reported here. *First*, and absolutely intrinsic and necessary to the project as a whole—but easily taken for granted—is the fact that it is predominantly at the national level that educational data are collected and compiled. There are exceptions to this in the cases of Germany and UK, for instance, with a federal frame and extensive devolution to regional authorities, but by and large, it is to the national level data that we look as the basis of comparisons, for instance. *Second*, a key theme of this introduction so far has been the central significance of the national as the basis of not just statistical data, but of conceptions of what education can and should be and contribute to the ‘nation’ as a whole. What this means for this report, is that comparisons can be carried out both quantitatively and qualitatively at the level of the national.

The particular approach adopted to open up these issues will be to examine both its institutional and its discursive shaping. In *institutional* terms, we will look at not only the formal structures, processes and practices through which education is governed—in the widest sense—in those eight countries, the activities it involves and the range of different agencies, from national governments to individual families who are involved in those activities. We will consider both the outputs and the outcomes of those activities. The distinction between outputs and outcomes is that *outputs* are the immediate product of an activity, or programme, and *outcomes* are the end goals, or purposes towards which the activity is directed. Education policy may thus be seen as the designation of a particular set of *outputs*—for instance, successful completion by all students of a certain number of years of schooling—aimed at achieving the *outcome* of a more prosperous and cohesive society<sup>7</sup>. Similarly, educational qualifications may be seen as *outputs*, whose main intended outcome is the jobs that they enable their holder to obtain.

However, substantively, we should note that in this example there is no direct relationship between qualifications (as outputs) and jobs (as outcomes). Qualifications as outputs do not

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<sup>7</sup> It should be noted here that EU work in education may be seen as essentially directed at attempting to steer policy towards outputs—at a transnational level—rather than at outcomes, which it cannot strictly pursue.

lead directly to particular kinds of outcome—for instance, particular jobs. Rather, the relationship between them is mediated, and their potential is valorised, largely on the basis of the forms and quantity of social capital they possess. Social capital, which might be defined very simplistically as ‘who you know rather than what you know’, intervenes in a range of ways, most prominently in terms of class, gender and race, to the point where the lifetime earnings of white middle class males far exceed those of non-white, working class females with exactly the same level of qualification. And possession of forms of social capital is very closely related to forms of social disadvantage, which produces another aspect of the ways that high level governance of educational trajectories can affect life chances through the distribution of opportunities and forms of capital. It is not suggested that policy is the only factor affecting the relationship between educational attainments and outcomes, except perhaps in a passive way, where educational administration and management effectively ignore such issues.

As well as tracking these institutional aspects of high-level governance, we will also take into account its *discursive* aspects. This means that we will examine how the activities and agencies of governance are rationalised as representing the optimum means of addressing the problems of socially disadvantaged young people’s educational trajectories, as a means of getting at what are perceived to be the kinds of ‘problems’ they represent, and for whom, why they require governmental attention, and what it is assumed/intended/hoped that will bring about.

The material on which we draw in this chapter comes from the eight national reports prepared for the State of the Art report in Work Package 2, which included a compilation and analysis of institutional, socio-economic and cultural contexts of educational trajectories based on statistical data and recent educational research in a *preparatory phase* of the project (see: Parreira do Amaral *et al.*, 2011). The procedure we followed was to read those reports on the structures and processes of the eight systems in full, and then to concentrate in particular on the final section, where the authors set out what appear as the main features of the high-level governance system. These were then closely scrutinised through both ‘institutional’ and ‘discursive’ lenses, with the above broad questions in mind. On the basis of this scrutiny, brief selections from the national reports were eventually condensed, in an attempt to capture concisely the key ‘sense’ and ‘relevant ‘messages’ that they conveyed.

Koopmans *et al.* (2005) offer a very useful theoretical tool for the analysis both of institutional and of discursive structures. Very simply, these structures frame what can be said and done in a particular political area. Koopmans *et al.* introduce the concept of ‘institutional and discursive opportunity structures’ as follows:

“The basic idea is that collective action does not directly reflect underlying social structures or the extent and nature of social problems and circumstances. Instead, each form of collective action is understood as part of a larger political process and as being shaped by opportunities and constraints offered by its political environment. The impact of social structures, problems, and circumstances—e.g., migration processes and cultural diversification—is, in this view, indirect and conditional to the extent that they lead to a reconfiguration of the political context of mobilization and thereby alter the balance of opportunities and constraints for particular collective actors and demands.” (Koopmans *et al.*, 2005, p. 16)

In our case, the *institutional* opportunity structures open to those wishing to intervene in the governance of educational trajectories and transitions are essentially the structures, policies

and practices that frame the current education systems (which can be expected to differ from one country to another); those complex and multi-layered features set limits to, but do not wholly control or shape current or future policies and practices. In the case of the *discursive* opportunity structure, the boundaries are set by “the political-cultural or symbolic opportunities that determine what kind of ideas become visible for the public, resonate with public opinion and are held to be ‘legitimate’ by the audience” (Kriesi, 2008, p. 72); and as the references to the work and ambitions of transnational organisations make clear, these influences are by no means confined to the national level. As we shall see in chapter 3 of this report, both these opportunity structures are at the same time extremely important and quite implicit (see sections 3.1 and 3.2).

***Institutional Frames of Education Systems in GOETE Countries***

We cannot take for granted that the scope of education policy, the areas it seeks to shape and control, is the same across all eight countries; indeed, we know it is not. However, what may be a significant point of similarity among them from a GOETE perspective is that the most influential, and possibly the most ‘politicised’, element seems to be the first transition, from primary to secondary schools. This is the case irrespective of the level and nature of selection that takes place at that stage, given the clear evidence of differential access to favoured secondary schools in all systems. And of course, this has been reflected in all the reports by the frequency of references to Allmendinger’s distinction between stratified and standardised education systems (Allmendinger, 1989). The ‘location’ of eight different systems on Allmendinger’s standardization/stratification classification, which provides a strong initial means of recognizing salient differences between the countries in the ways that they institutionally frame the two major transitions. These have already been set out clearly in the State of Art report (see: Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011), and the key figures are reproduced below. Allmendinger distinguishes between the dimensions of *stratification*, which is entailed in the difference between comprehensive and institutionally differentiated school systems (especially allocation to different types of secondary education on the basis of various kinds of tests at the end of primary education and early tracking in lower secondary education), and of *standardisation* (especially with regard to vocational training in upper secondary education; Allmendinger, 1989). The latter is also linked to the role of schools and companies in vocational education and training, and to the dominant model of school leavers’ labour market entry between *organisational* – where the level of education plays a greater role – and *occupational* labour markets, where careers depend on standardised occupational profiles.

**Table 1: Stratification and Standardisation in education systems acc. to Allmendinger (1989)**

Standardization Stratification	Low	High
Low	UK, Italy, Poland	Finland, Slovenia

<b>High</b>		France, Germany, Netherlands
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Also, the concept of ‘regimes of youth transitions’ (Walther, 2006) is used in GOETE to refer to different (national) configurations of the regulation of educational trajectories. It has been developed in the context of European comparative research on young people’s transitions from education to work. Regimes distinguish clusters of socio-economic, institutional and cultural factors that interact with individual agency. The notion of ‘regime’ refers to the fact that regulation of life course trajectories – and educational trajectories are one key element of these – expands beyond institutional governance including individual biographical constructions (cf. Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011, pp. 41ff.).

Elaborating this to a considerable degree, and in a sense forming a fundamental template for the exercise of this chapter, is the following typology of Education Systems in GOETE produced in the preparatory phase<sup>8</sup> to provide an overview over the key dimensions connected to the governance of educational trajectories:

- the *degree of differentiation* or tracking (high, middle, low) distinguishes countries according to the extent to which educational trajectories are structured by hierarchically segmented or comprehensive tracks from primary to the end of lower secondary levels. Differentiation is high in Germany and the Netherlands, middle in the UK and low in France, Italy, Poland and Slovenia. This indicator may also be extended to distinguish between internal and external differentiation (e. g. forming classes with different learning paces within comprehensive schools).
- Also, the point in time of the *transition from primary to secondary education* hints at whether segmentation of pupils and/or educational trajectories takes place early or not.
- The duration of compulsory education differs between 9 years in Slovenia and Finland and 12 years in the Netherlands and the UK. In most countries it ends at 16 (except Netherlands) while the age of school entry differs between 4 in Northern Ireland and 7 in Finland.
- Parental *free choice* and the share of the *private sector* may hint at issues of availability, accessibility, and equity of educational options. The availability of free choice (in Finland, Italy, Slovenia and the UK) may be seen as a possibility for individuals to make

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<sup>8</sup> See: Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011, Section F.

subjectively meaningful choices while at the same time contribute socially and ethnically homogeneous schools of different status. The extent to which education is provided by the state or by private actors (as indicated by the share of private schools) may hint at the availability of alternative curricula and pedagogical arrangements (e.g., Waldorf schools in Germany, confessional schools in the Netherlands, etc.). At the same time, although the majority of private schools in the GOETE countries are not-for-profit private schools, a high share of private schools has to be seen as contributing to unequal access to education. The highest level is to be found in the Netherlands, followed by France and the UK, the lowest in Slovenia, Italy, Finland and Germany.

- A key aspect of *educational governance* is the level of centralised policy-making (as opposed to its implementation). While in all GOETE countries there is a division of labour among the different levels, the responsibility for planning policy (i.e. standards, curricula, etc.), for instance, tends to be centralised. Decentralisation is highest in Finland and the UK, followed by the Netherlands but centralised in the other countries with the specificity of Germany where educational governance is centralised at (regional) Länder level.
- *The relation between education and welfare* refers to the cooperation at political, administrative and practical levels, which is seen as a precondition for integrated support mechanisms. Links are tight in Finland and the UK, and at local level also in Slovenia, in France and the Netherlands some bridges do exist while in the other countries both areas are strictly separated.
- As regards the importance of general versus vocational education in upper secondary education (i.e. the primary destinations after the end of lower secondary education) general education dominates in France, Poland and the UK while in the other countries vocational tracks are prevalent.
- This is also reflected by the main objectives and orientations of policy measures aimed at the school to work transitions of young people classified as ‘disadvantaged’. These policies differ between a priority of general education in Finland and Slovenia, (pre)vocational training (Germany, France and the Netherlands), assuring the employability of graduates in the labour market (e.g., UK and Poland), or, as in the case of Italy, providing youth some status whether in education, work or in training in their rather long transition to employment.

- The existence of systematic preparation for transitions (especially from lower to upper secondary level) in terms of vocational or educational orientation and counselling integrated into the official school curriculum is a further item that shows how education systems help pupils coping with education in general, and with transitions in particular.

**Table 2: Characteristics of Education Systems in GOETE**

Countries	France	Germany	Italy	The Netherlands	Slovenia	Finland	UK	Poland
Degree of Differentiation (tracking)	Low	High	Low	Middle	Low	Low	Middle	Low
Level of Standardization	High	High	Low	High	High	High	low	low
Level of Stratification	High	High	Low	High	Low	Low	low	low
Free-choice	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Private sector share (%)	21,6 %	7,1 %	5,9 %	77 %	1,6 %	7,1%	20,6%	8,5 %
Educational Governance (policy-making)	Centralised (nation-state level)	Centralised (federal level)	Centralised (implementation decentralised)	Centralised (implementation decentralised)	Centralised	Decentralised	Decentralised (implementation decentralised)	Centralised (implementation decentralised)
Length of Compulsory education	6/16	6/16	6-16	5/17	6/15	7/16	E: 5/16, S: 5/16, NI: 4/16	6/16
Relation between Welfare and Education	Separated, few bridges	Strictly separated	Very weak	Separated, few bridges	Local level: tight National level: weak	Tight link	Tight	Strictly separated
Patterns of participation in Upper Secondary Education (%) in General: Vocational (school-based/company based)	56% 44%	43% 57%	40% 60%	33% 67%	35% 65%	32% 68%	69% 31%	54% 46%
Transition from Primary to Lower Secondary School	after 5 years	after 4-6 years	after 5 years	after 8 years	No transition	No transition	after 7 years	after 6 years
Focus of transition policies	(pre) vocational training	(pre)vocational training	Provide status: education, work or training	(pre) vocational training	Education	Education	Employability	Employability,
Activation Policies								
Preparation for Transition (coping) (from lower to secondary level)	Not systematic	Not systematic	Not systematic	Systematic	No information	No information	No information	Not systematic
Transition regime	Employment-centred	Employment-centred	Under-institutionalised	Employment-centred	Post-socialist	Universalistic	Liberal	Post-socialist

In addition to this, however, it is evident from the national reports that all the GOETE countries are seen as socially selective on the basis of perceived social disadvantages, in a range of ways, from the relatively egalitarian Finnish system, to the still class dominated English system. Even in comprehensive systems, the likelihood of socially disadvantaged students being able to access the highest performing secondary schools (those with the highest proportions going on to tertiary education, for instance), is much lower than for those from more prosperous backgrounds. Within the schools, they are more likely to find themselves in vocational rather than academic streams, and much more likely to end up as early school leavers, and eventually to be unemployed. Such outcomes are ‘unintended’ but nevertheless persistent and almost universal across the eight countries. This ‘unintended’ quality leads us to ask what it is about the high-level governance of education that leads so consistently to these outcomes, and particularly to ask why the education systems are unable to overcome them. That is, *a key feature of the high-level governance of the education systems we are looking at is that all countries seem to accept and to tolerate that level of inequality. This does not mean that they do not inveigh against such inequalities, but the continuing social divisions created in and through education, and their consequences for those already disadvantaged in particular, are testament to a lack of both political will and appropriate forms of education governance.*

There is in some cases a perceptible shift in the assumptions about the purposes of education for socially disadvantaged young people, where, as the emphasis on its education’s role as promoter of labour market opportunities rings more hollow, so we see a shift towards measures aimed at mitigating/alleviating the disaffection and negative effects of social disadvantage, in and through education, on social cohesion.

One way of probing a little further into this question is to examine the responses to the issue of continuing inequality of access and treatment in education systems of children and young people from various kinds of socially disadvantaged backgrounds. We can see various levels of response, from acknowledging but deploring the fact of continuing inequality, to effectively ignoring it, or not recognising it as a problem for the education system (the response of the current Dutch Minister of Education, who states explicitly that education systems should be concerned with quality, not inequality, and that it is not part of education’s job to tackle wider social inequality, to explicitly addressing it in various ways, which is perhaps the commonest response. However, in most cases—Finland is the clearest exception—the approach to addressing inequality of access and treatment tends to be ad hoc rather than structural, and piecemeal rather than systematic. In the majority of cases, central governments publicly deplore the inequalities, and call for—and sometimes seek to enact—‘solutions’ for it, but without any commitment of resources, and the delegation of responsibility to lower levels of educational governance, often the schools themselves; Italy offers a particularly striking example of his tendency.

If we consider the three basic forms of addressing such problems—prevention, intervention and compensation—we find effectively no examples of preventative action, aimed at nipping the causes of social disadvantage in the bud, apart from some examples of Early Childhood Education, which we see for instance in Germany, and of provision of native language classes for migrant children. As we have just noted, intervention is probably the most common means adopted,

albeit in the kinds of somewhat half-hearted, gestural, forms we have just noted. This leaves compensation, and it is in looking at the forms taken by compensation that we derive some understanding of the kinds of problem that social inequality through education represents. Again with the exception of Finland, *there is little evidence of interventions being justified on the grounds of the intrinsic value, for individuals and society as a whole, of extending social justice by removing or diminishing social inequality. Rather, the responses are more instrumental, and aimed at the unwelcome consequences of social inequality in and through education.* Two features in particular of the perceived consequences are evidenced in the country reports—consequences for labour markets and consequences for social cohesion, with the latter currently the most common, as levels of youth unemployment rise, and collective action protesting against the shortage of jobs for young people grows rapidly, especially in France and England.

#### **1.4 The Role of the ‘National’, Institutionally and Discursively**

We have already alluded to the existence of a number of theoretical issues around the concept of the national level, and emphasized that it is not a zero sum concept—either dominant or irrelevant. The eight national systems also vary across multiple dimensions, rather than just a few. They are historically unique, but one key feature of them all is that they are taken as the key repositories of national culture and national history and identity. It is in schools that children learn what it is to be a citizen of one country rather than another, and this sense pervades their work in myriad unremarked—taken for granted—ways. And this, along with the recognition that the school is the main means of allocation of life chances and possibilities of social mobility is central to the perceived individual, organizational and even electoral importance of education. Thus, the national, broadly conceived, remains a crucial element of educational trajectories. However, its very taken-for-grantedness may mean that it is less likely to be analysed as a factor in processes like educational trajectories, and this is something that the GOETE approach would seek to rectify.

We turn to the wider literature in search of useful elaboration of these issues. The first resort here was to Jean-Claude Barbier’s explanation of what he refers to as the ‘puzzling resilience’ of *nations* in the context of Europeanised welfare states. He points to three features that

“pertain to the actuality of *the nation* that have so far been indispensable to the very existence of any NSSP [national system of social protection/welfare state, the authors]. [...] (1) the nation or *nation-state* [...] sets the frontiers of the *bounded ‘sphere’* within which solidaristic acts can be performed, shared and legitimised; to be operational, a system of public redistribution demands to be built on a type of ‘moral and political logic’ (Rothstein 1998: 29), or what I will term later *political culture* [...]; (2) this logic is tightly linked to citizenship, political rights and political participation commanding the other aspects of citizenship – obviously including ‘social citizenship’; (3) last but not least, a *material, legal and linguistic foundation* is indispensable for any NSSP to merely exist: systems are anchored in territorial, material and linguistic determinations that cannot easily be circumvented, let alone dispensed with.” (Barbier, 2008, p. 2, emphasis added)

Each of the three features signalled by Barbier is clearly of relevance in considering the issues around education. The *first* sets out the space in which any policy must be enacted—“*the bounded ‘sphere’*” within which solidaristic acts can be performed, shared and legitimised” (Barbier, 2008, p. 2)—and the basis of those policies—‘political culture’, itself an historic amalgam of national discursive traditions as well as heir to institutional forms and frameworks. This first stipulation has important implications here, since it designates the national as the level at which these policies are to be designed and implemented. The importance lies in the fact that it is the national and not the European level where these things take place. The *second* raises the issue of citizenship, in what might seem a somewhat question begging way, and that possibility will be addressed later in this report, with the suggestion to take Jenson’s approach to citizenship as the basis on which to proceed (Jenson, 2009). We will move to discuss the implications of that below. The *third* feature, that “systems are anchored in territorial, material and linguistic determinations that cannot easily be circumvented, let alone dispensed with” (Barbier, 2008, p. 2), again points to the national, the clear—and unique—basis of the determinations on which social policy in general rests, with a plausibly strong path dependency.

Barbier goes on to argue that

“social protection links politics, economics and family in a structural way: it is based on social conditions of legitimacy; citizenship and the identification processes linked with it are essential in these processes; and because material, territorial and linguistic constraints bear crucially on the very possibility of implementing social protection programmes.” (Barbier, 2008, p. 5)

The best evidence we have of this in this report comes in chapter 3, where we focus on the educational trajectories of migrant children and young people. Issues of migration are heavily imbricated with all three of the elements that Barbier introduces, particularly for the case of education in the area of language. At its most stark, we see this discursive element at its clearest, in the ways that ‘migrants’ are named—‘foreigners’ in Germany, ‘allochtoon’ in the Netherlands, ‘ethnic minorities’ in UK—and ‘community members’ whose differences cannot easily be named in France. However, more than this, the common, and ‘natural’ recourse to the national as the location at which these issues need to be addressed and settled, may be seen as crucially providing a basis for the comparative analysis of our countries’ policies and practices in the area of migrant education; for there is no reason to assume that these will be the same in all cases. Indeed, the initial readings of the national reports make this very clear (despite the rather different approaches and emphases they contain), where Barbier’s argument is given considerable and persuasive empirical support. Thus we find, for instance, references to ‘the Italian way’, to Slovenian nationalism, French republicanism, German constitutionalism. This suggests that the issue of migration and education may be at least as fully articulated through ‘national’ discourses as through ‘educational’ discourses. Such references suggest that a fundamental basis of the ‘problem’ of migration is what it means for the sense of the nation, a mirror held up not so much to the education system (except perhaps in the case of Germany, where the PISA discourse is so prominent, though that prominence in itself reflects more than a ‘mere’ educational anxiety) as to the nation’s self-understanding more broadly. While education is recognised as a universal right and

value, and as providing a significant contribution both to the economy and to social cohesion, what that actually means and entails is framed and shaped by conceptions of the nation. From this perspective, especially in respect of migrant education, national education systems have a key and basic role in preserving (or possibly redefining) and reproducing the nation's sense of itself, and that seems to be the dominant 'deep' problematic that underlies and shapes political responses to a range of issues. And here, of course, the value of the concepts of institutional and especially discursive opportunity structures becomes quite evident, in exposing, and revealing the contribution of those tacit assumptions.

The major point here, of course, is that in 'framing' the other, we are simultaneously framing ourselves, albeit in often deeply unconscious ways, that reveal a great deal about the assumptions lying behind national educational transition regimes. So, one clear message from these discussions of the national basis of responses to migrants, and the significance of the more extensive and embedded nature of the institutional and discursive opportunity structures associated with them, is the central importance in understanding the governance of educational trajectories of those elements of the national that have not, and essentially cannot be, incorporated into comparative typologies.

While we necessarily emphasise throughout all the GOETE reports the significance of the – largely national—contexts on the ways that transitions are organised and governed, we have also to bear in mind that those contexts themselves, and the options and opportunity structures they hold, are strongly shaped by broader global contexts. The concept of 'context of context' was introduced above to refer to how the high-level governance of educational trajectories are influenced by these global contexts. As we shall see, the eight documents contain a considerable amount of overlap in the ways that they conceive of the relevant problems. At the same time, as we have already pointed out, the approaches the countries adopt are also characterised by very specific national inflections. These apparently contradictory features can, however, be traced to, and explained in terms of, a common 'contexts of context'. That is to say that the context in which they emerged at national levels itself is shaped powerfully by a broader and deeper context, which influences and shapes them all, though by no means equally or in identical ways. So, it is important to note that there are common elements to the context of context in which all European nation-states are operating and that recognizing that context itself is necessary to understanding the emerging differences between them.

We can see here the basis of the tension recognized and experienced in all eight of the GOETE countries and education systems. To put it at its very simplest, they have historically operated according to an ex ante philosophy, where education policy proceeded through shaping the inputs to education, traditionally, the curriculum and finding themselves in an ex post accountability world, with everything they do to be accountable and auditable, creates multiple confusions and difficulties, not least for socially disadvantaged students.

*The key point is that in terms of the educational trajectories, and the people experiencing them, that we are interested in, the evidence of the national reports we are considering here is broadly that while there has been deeply significant and far reaching change at the level of the (global) economy, the responses at the level of the education systems we are interested in has remained to*

*a notable degree within the set of assumptions that surrounded the ‘national economy’ discourse.* This is the basis of the solution to the paradox we noted above, between a ‘*global knowledge economy*’ assumption, on the one hand, and a ‘*national education system, serving national ends*’ on the other. The problem lies in the way we conceive education systems. The ‘orthodox’ conception of national education systems effectively compacts into one apparently homogeneous package, with at least four, quite distinct, functions, and, quite separately, distinct sets of rules for carrying them out. Some of those functions have been historically rooted in an assumption of the centrality of national economies—for instance, that the job of education systems was to provide educated labour for the national economy. One aspect of that function was that education systems would sift and separate the potential workforce, according to ability and potential contribution to the economy. Another assumption was that education systems were basic to the construction of national culture and sense of belonging. Yet another, rather different, assumption, was that education systems necessarily followed particular forms, in both the processes that shaped them and the assumptive basis of those processes. The former of these was constituted by a particular congeries of activities that came to constitute what we can refer to as a ‘grammar of schooling’ (Tyack & Tobin, 1994), the typical forms through which ‘education’ was carried out in the specialist institutions of schools, to the point where ‘education’ came to be essentially identified with ‘schooling’. And as ‘education’ came to be equated with the grammar of schooling, forms of ‘education’ that did not follow the grammar of schooling were found deficient and ‘wrong’. At another level, those assumptions about what ‘education’ should be, were very basically shaped by the discourses of Western modernity, especially around the place of education in the social contract—indeed, the idea of the social contract is itself a fundamentally ‘modern’ concept, and it still underlies and shapes assumptions about what education systems can and should do, and how they should do it.

The most relevant insight for an analysis of high-level governance in this context is, very briefly, that the changes in the context of context have meant that while the goals and purposes of education associated with the global knowledge economy have changed qualitatively, the means and structures available to, and taken up by, education systems in response to them are still, to a notable degree, informed by the existing ‘grammar of schooling’.<sup>9</sup> An excellent example of how this works and its consequences is provided in the German report, when it points out that the structures of schooling and societal rewards moving out of synch with each other. Education systems and schools are still largely structured and organised around the set of assumptions about the relationship between education and the economy that essentially developed in the era of Fordism. These were centred around assumptions of lifelong careers, preparation for (especially male) skilled trades, an economy based on production, etc. These contrast quite starkly with the current reality of services economy, knowledge-based economies, flexible working, the expectation of multiple career changes, and so on. *More broadly, we witness changing assumptions about the wider public role of education, especially in its relationship to the social contract, where the place of education is significantly changed by the changed context of the context within which it operates.* It is no longer involved in contributing directly to the well-being of societies, in a pub-

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<sup>9</sup> This is also evidenced in the comparative report on teacher training in WP3, see: Cramer et al., 2012.

lic good kind of way. Rather it is involved via contributing to a level of economic success that enables trickle down of the benefits it enables to whole populations. One oblique reflection of this persistence of the system is that though there are several mentions of PISA in the national reports, these tend to focus on what the tests tell us about the nature, distribution and outputs of social disadvantage in education; what is scarcely mentioned is the novel nature of the PISA tests' focus on competences rather than content. Despite major changes in the contexts of their contexts, then, education systems remain highly path dependent.

The following chapter presents and discusses the selection, collection and analysis of data used in this report as well as the methodologies used.

## 2. Research Strategy, Data Sample and Methods of Analysis

In determining how we would approach the issue of comparing the forms, scope, scale and especially the governance of educational trajectories, we agreed that direct comparison of the processes involved would not be possible or productive, given the major differences between the processes in the countries involved in GOETE, which all seem to be framed in nationally specific ways. We did, however, recognise the need to produce an outline approach for the structuring of the national reports on the governance of trajectories in ways that might enable them to be usefully compared. The broad approach we adopted to this issue was to attempt to transcend the frequent incommensurability and incomparability of different events and experiences taking place in similar fields, but in different times and places, and under quite different circumstances—a problem clearly threatened by our data —by comparing them at a different level of analysis, which would allow for generalisation and comparison.

Our research strategy combined three approaches to do analyse the data comparatively. *First*, rather than seeking to compare quite different cases, in different countries, directly, we decided to compare them at a meta-level, a different level of abstraction. We used two different means in particular of doing this in the analysis of our data. Here, we have drawn from the idea of ‘friction’ from the work of the anthropologist, Anna Tsing (2005). She refers to frictions as “zones of awkward engagement”. In our case this involved looking at how different histories, interests, understandings and practices come together in responding to and forming particular issues connected with, but not directly integral to, educational transitions. The purpose of this was to be able to observe the governance of trajectories, and reflect on it, from a particular perspective, with the hope of being able thus to shed new light on the forms it took. The aim was not to study the ‘friction’ per se, but to discover what studying the ways in which it is interpreted and addressed reveal that we might not otherwise have been able to discern. The *second* approach was the methodological approach of the ‘*tertium comparationis*’, or of comparing incommensurable ‘cases’ against a common element that they all shared, albeit it took very different forms. As noted above, this enabled us to compare not the *contents* of the various country programmes, policies and practices, which would be effectively impossible to do, but their ‘*logics of intervention*’, the reasons they gave for developing these programmes, etc., rather than others. The *third* approach to assuring comparability involved the discussion of findings across the eight GOETE

countries along the five main thematic perspectives adopted in the research project as a whole. The governance of educational trajectories will be analyzed along the themes of access, coping with and support for, relevance, life course and governance. This strategy is developed in depth in chapter 4 and will be only briefly touched upon in the section below (see section 2.1 below).

The data selection and collection processes as well as the methodologies used for analysis will be described below. Research was carried out using mainly two qualitative methods: document and discourse analysis and expert interviews (see section 2.2).

## **2.1 Comparative Research Strategy: Frictions, Logics of Intervention, GOETE Themes**

### ***2.1.1 Working through Governance Frictions***

In order to operationalize the research in order to allow comparability, we decided to select particular issues and topics—rather than cases as such—to concentrate on in the report through isolating what might be seen as key ‘*frictions*’. It was agreed that in order to avert possibilities of fairly complete randomness of selection of topics from national educational governance, common topics would be addressed by all. It was also agreed that the topics should not be substantive ones, given the strong likelihood of difficulties of translation and comparability just alluded to, but ‘second order’ levels of abstraction. This seemed especially apt, given the ‘diverse and conflicting interactions’ that seemed to emerge from the national reports. So, rather than looking at the object of policy, we would look at the ‘frictions’ it generated. Even where they were very different, we were not just looking at what was taking place, but in what particular areas key issues came together, in ways that could be compared. Each country chose two policy ‘frictions’ that best exemplified current issues in educational governance relating both to transitions and to the GOETE themes – access, coping and support, relevance, life course, and governance – in their countries.

Frictions can be seen as productive sites of encounter, where diverse and possibly conflicting interests, institutions, practices, discourses, etc. come, or are brought, together in multiple and possibly inconsistent or contradictory—but not infinite—different possible articulations to generate new forms of interaction. Anna Tsing suggests, in a metaphor that is especially apt for our understanding of transitions, that

”Roads are a good image for conceptualizing how friction works: Roads create pathways that make motion easier and more efficient, but in doing so limit where we can go. The ease of travel they facilitate is also a structure of confinement. Friction inflects historical trajectories, enabling, excluding, and particularising.” (Tsing, 2005, p 6)

Within this framework national teams identified what were termed governance ‘frictions’, in a context where the friction should refer to an area of policy related to either or both of the educational transitions that has become identified publicly – in national local, official, media discourses – as a clear area of concern for certain policy actors and stakeholders; there is seen to be some

kind of substantive issue that needs to be addressed and solutions are being (or should be) suggested, implemented and/or contested.

As these national frictions did not need to be exactly the same, some overall criteria were applied in order to achieve the greatest possible coherence and to allow for comparative analysis of the cases:

- A friction should concern either or both of the educational transitions in the focus of GOETE;
- They should be critically positioned within the broad GOETE context of how education is being situated within discourses of European ‘knowledge economies’ and ‘lifelong learning’;
- Teams should clearly illustrate how themes of access, coping and support, relevance, and life course are elements of the national frictions, in terms of the problems that are identified, any solutions that are suggested, any existing or planned intervention programmes, and issues and concerns arising (this might even include examples of ‘best practice’);
- Taking these points into account, there was also a consensus within the core group that migration/immigration was likely to be a friction that might be expected to appear in most if not all national context.

Table 3 provides an overview of frictions identified in the participating countries to guide our fieldwork and analysis through WP7; the rationale behind the selection of each topic as explained by the GOETE national partners is explained in detail in chapter 3. . In each of the eight GOETE countries two key frictions were identified and refined after national teams gathered and reviewed policy documents<sup>10</sup> within their own national context.

**Table 3: Overview of Governance Frictions identified in GOETE Countries**

Country	Friction 1	Friction 2
<b>Finland</b>	Marginalization	Equal access
<b>France</b>	Inequalities	Difficulties with reform
<b>Germany</b>	Migration/immigration	All-day schooling
<b>Italy</b>	Migration/immigration	Vocational pathways
<b>Netherlands</b>	Migration/immigration	Early selection
<b>Poland</b>	Lowering of mandatory age (7 → 6)	Expanding definition of special needs
<b>Slovenia</b>	Migration/immigration	Gymnasiums vs. vocational schools
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Migration/immigration	Marginalization

Although three of the national teams did not specify ‘migration’ as a friction, as in the case of Finland, France, and Poland, the authors made sure that their reports did pay extra account to the

<sup>10</sup> A detailed explanation of what is taken as ‘policy’ as well as the different types of policy document selected is given below.

relationship of migration with marginalisation and inequalities respectively in ways that made comparability possible.

Also, the GOETE themes of access, coping and support, relevance, governance, and life course run through these governance frictions. The frictions chosen for analysis have been developed through our knowledge of the policy context in the respective GOETE countries and our initial review of the policy literature regarding educational trajectories. Each of these frictions clearly links to the GOETE themes in various crosscutting ways and it is not possible to disaggregate access, relevance, coping, governance, or life course from each other within each example – indeed, it is the way that they overlap that made the frictions so relevant. However, the weight or significance of each of these themes varied depending on the friction. The frictions therefore represent areas of policy construction, intervention, debate and contestation around substantive social issues where education is seen to be a key space for intervention.

### ***2.1.2 Comparative Analysis via ‘Logics of Intervention’: Problematisation, Solution, Mechanisms***

The *second* approach to a constructive means of comparative analysis of very different cases draws on the comparative methodology of the ‘*tertium comparationis*’.<sup>11</sup> This is effectively an attempt to make some worthwhile kind of comparison across national data that are not of a kind to enable any direct inter-national comparison. The point of the *tertium comparationis* is to provide a third, relevant, common basis of comparison through which the different countries can be compared. In this case, we determined to use the concept of ‘*logics of intervention*’, the reasons for which the different countries problematized the education of children from migrant backgrounds, what were perceived as ‘solutions’, and what were seen as the best ways of realising them.

The use of the ‘logic of intervention’ as a *tertium comparationis* seeks to generate added value in the analysis. The great value of working with the idea of ‘logics of intervention’, especially in comparative policy analyses, is that it helps us transcend the frequent incommensurability and incomparability of different events and experiences taking place in similar fields, but in different times and places, and under quite different circumstances. The idea of logics of intervention enables to compare not the different events and experiences themselves, which we know is not possible, but the (individual or collective) actors’ *reasons* and *justifications* for initiating, or carrying out, or preventing, or obstructing, etc. these events or experiences. The point is that these *are* comparable, in ways and across dimensions that are of interest to students of, say, political processes. There are a number of ways of conceiving of the ‘logic’ of a (policy) ‘intervention’. They all, to a greater or lesser degree, seek to establish three things: why the intervention is done at all, what it aims to achieve, and why it is done in the way it is.

The *first* component of the concept of ‘logics of intervention’ is ‘*problematisation*’, or ‘the theory of the problem’. This defines the problem and asks why it occurs here and now; it broadly but

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<sup>11</sup> ‘*Tertium comparationis*’ is a Latin phrase meaning ‘in the third place, comparison’, which may be translated as ‘the terms of comparison’.

effectively, identifies the problematic to be addressed essentially asking ‘what it is a case of’. The *second* part asks ‘What are the *desired outcomes* of the proposed policy?’ Note here the difference between outcomes and outputs; outputs are essentially what the mechanisms used in intervening are intended to bring about, while outcomes are the broader changes that those outputs are intended to bring about or enable. So, for instance, social cohesion might be the outcome intended for a particular output, such as a policy on reducing tracking in schools. The *third* part is made up of the ‘*mechanisms*’ by means of which it is intended to link the problem and the desired outcome, how political or administrative action can bring about the changes, in the form of outputs, that will lead to desired outcomes. It is crucial to bear in mind here that the three components of the logic of intervention do not appear in any necessary order; it is not a case of the problematic leading to a desirable outcome and the arrangement of mechanisms to link the two. As we know, from the rather different approaches of Kingdon (1995) and Béland (2005), for instance, it is equally possible for existing policies to ‘lead’ the logic of intervention, or for a desirable end state to generate a means of its attainment.

### ***2.1.3 Thematic Perspectives***

The *third* approach along which comparative analysis was attempted made use of the five thematic perspectives focused on in GOETE project. The central rationale behind this approach was to look into how high-level governance exerts influence on issues of access, coping, relevance and life course. Also, attention was given to the issue of the governance of high-level governance, i.e., how is high-level governance perceived in discussions of the governance of educational trajectories. Further, as discussed above (section 2.1.1), the thematic perspectives intersect with the frictions approach in a very productive way.

The sections in chapter 4 aim at discussing these issues comparatively, however, not from a strictly ‘national’ but from a thematic perspective. This allowed us not only to investigate the interaction of high-level governance with the GOETE themes but also to point to emerging issues (cf. chapter 4 below).

## **2.2 Data Sample and Methods of Analysis**

Two main methods were used for data collection in the two different governance frictions, critical discourse analysis and expert interviews. Section 2.2.1 briefly discusses the selection of empirical data sources – here policy documents – for the analysis. The following section (section 2.2.2) presents the rationale for selection of experts and the development of an interview schedule.

### ***2.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Policy Documents***

#### ***Critical Discourse Analysis as Method of Analysis***

After having taken the steps outlined above in order to provide the background ‘story’ and the first level of policy analysis, teams then selected three key documents for each of their chosen frictions in order to conduct a critical discourse analysis (CDA).

We have found Fairclough's general approach to CDA a particularly useful methodological approach to education policy analysis (Fairclough 1992, 2000, 2003). As Robertson (2007, p. 2) summarizes

“Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a particular variant of socio-linguistics developed by (Fairclough, Wodak, van Dijk and others). Each of its three components – critical, discourse and analysis gives us a sense of what it is that makes it a distinctive approach to analysis. It places discourse at the centre as the object of scrutiny and makes claims about the centrality of discourse for modern social life. It argues that through analysis, we can lay bare social relations. And, though mobilizing a critical perspective—that is that social realities are produced, and that particular generative mechanisms both produce and reproduce asymmetrical social relations, we are able to link agents to deeper underlying structures within societies. [...] In education policy analysis this means drawing CDA into critical policy analysis more generally to reveal state power and interests, state projects in education and more widely, the way education mediates the core problems of the state, and so on. Similarly, CDA can be an important tool for text analysis within a wider cultural political economy of education approach – as in the analysis of the construction of the knowledge-based economy (see Robertson, 2007, 2008).”

Our focus in this report has also been on policy seen as ‘text’ that is produced – from international organizations, such as the EU, OECD, etc.; national government agents at different levels, media, social movements, trade unions amongst others – all of which have been analysed in a systematic way using CDA. A detailed explanation of how to use CDA is beyond the scope of this chapter. The most important aspect of the CDA process in GOETE has been the use of the following ‘orienting questions’, which were used to guide a close analysis of each of the chosen documents.

### ***Orienting questions***

1. What is/are the problems that are being addressed? (In what genre(s) is the problem definition and solutions located in and how does this regulate the problem?)
2. How is/are the problem(s) defined, represented, and legitimated? (What discourse or form of representation of the problem is presented, mobilized, etc.? Are there forms of intertextuality? What are the linguistic features of the text (metaphors, text structure, metaphors, cohesion, etc.)?)
3. Who is the reader? (What are the genre, style, and representation? How does this regulate the text?)
4. Is there a subject of the problem? (What style is used to urge the reader to accept the problem definition and solution?)
5. What solutions are generated to the problem? (Is the solution shaped by the field of reference? Orders of discourse? Are there obvious or subtle contradictions in the solutions?)
6. Are some possible solutions discounted? (What orders of discourse frame the problem and absences? What form of classification is being used?)

7. What patterns of language (collocations) are evident that locate the problem within a particular ideological framework? (What order of discourse frames the problem and the solution? Do equivalences and differences get mobilized and how?)

### ***Policy Documents***

Data used to conduct a critical discourse analyses were ‘policy documents. The first decision was to define what counts as a policy? Rather than engaging in a detailed conceptual debate about the nature of policy, for the purposes of the present research we took a policy to be something that is *written and has authoritative status*. This means that only items that took the form of a policy text or set of related texts were designated as a ‘policy’. This provided a necessary methodological boundary that allowed us to address the key GOETE questions from the high-level governance perspective.

We began by including any ‘core texts’ for educational governance at national and regional levels. In addition, we sought other documents that speak to or are in conversation with these core texts and the frictions they seek to address (this is commonly referred to as intertextuality). So, policy documents are seen as those texts that shape or attempt to change the ways that transitions take place; they define and contest the ‘rules of the game’. Seen this way, policy is not simply something static but a contested process of governance, and where possible we were seeking different views on each friction. Under this definition policy documents fall into three broad areas, which in sum make up the policy process:

**Government policy** – These are the policy ‘maker’ documents, core texts that regulate the structure and timing of transitions as part of the broader national or regional education system. These texts carry legal status in national and/or regional territories. They might already provide procedural systems, or they might concern systems that are under development, for example, White Papers that are being debated at governmental level.

**Non-state policy shapers** – These are the policy ‘broker’ documents, texts that are developed by organizations that are beyond central or regional government. They may represent a range of interests in how education is governed. These organizations could be political, think tanks, ‘policy units’, or trades unions for example, or they might be pressure groups organized around particular issues or points of concern. These could include parental groups of various kinds, young people’s organizations, and charities. Additionally, business confederations, companies and private sector employers of various kinds may produce texts of various kinds that are intended to influence the direction of education policy.

**Public policy contesters** – These are the policy ‘commentator’ documents, texts that are produced in the media and that have a high enough profile on appropriate levels of regional or national discourse to provide them with influence. This would include the national, regional and city press and independent commentators, like bloggers. Commentary produced by academics also falls into this category, especially when it presents critically appraisals of transition policies. However, to be eligible to be taken as policy texts, they should be freely and publicly available.

Looking in and across these areas gave each national team a good sense of how the ‘rules of the game’ for educational transitions and trajectories have been formed and are in the process of being challenged in terms of high-level governance. Where ‘chains’ of documents – sequences of texts that speak to each other – became apparent, they may reveal how the chosen frictions are formed and reformed through the policy process. In order to identify and understand the policy process *context* regarding chosen frictions, we adopted the following kinds of questions:

### ***Policy process context questions***

1. How did the current arrangements for transitions come into place?
2. How are these arrangements – and the patterns for transitions they have created – held in place? What are the key regulating texts?
3. How do policy ‘maker’ documents frame the frictions? How do they describe the causes? What solutions do they offer?
4. What are the various broker texts concerning each friction? How are arguments about inclusion/exclusion made within broker texts? How do they describe the causes? What solutions do they offer? How influential are they, and on whom?
5. What range of commentator texts exist about the frictions? How do they frame causes and solutions? How influential are they, and on whom?
6. Who seems to be involved and which interests seem to be excluded in the policy process?
7. How do these documents speak to each other explicitly and implicitly?

Working through this process, each national team was able to build a rich background or context to understand specific policy processes concerning their chosen frictions. While there was no ideal or prescribed number of documents required as a result of this search, the aim was to provide enough background information to explain the ‘rules of the game’, to thicken our understanding, and thereby provide the context for the more detailed critical discourse analysis of a selected number of policy documents (three per problematic, see below).

### ***Coverage***

Since Work Package 7 focuses on high-level governance, downwards ‘flows’ of governance were initially prioritised as the proper scope of levels where policies are designed, implemented and monitored. That is, in WP7 high-level governance focuses ‘downwards flows’ = EU/national/sub-national/regional → down to the ‘local’ level. Particular attention was paid to national variations, since in some contexts local or regional levels might actually function as the ‘highest’ level for certain policies. Therefore, awareness of potential problems the concept of high-level might pose was necessary.

Thus, in terms of the multi-scalar nature of governance, the key guideline for the WP7 research programme has been that high-level refers to the national, sub-national, regional, and/or devolved levels at which policy is created, debated, enacted and commented upon. This guideline helped refine the selection of documents and experts for analysis.

With reference to the main GOETE aims and objectives we also adopted a particular *timeframe* to guide the selection of policy documents. It was agreed that this timeframe should be from 2000 to 2011, as this reflected the environment of post-Lisbon strategy Europe, where the EU was defined as a specific educational and economic space. Policy documents were selected from within this period. However, exceptions arose as teams followed chains of documents in order to find the specific combinations of documents that hold together regulatory arrangements. So, in some cases, in order to properly understand how frictions have been framed, teams also looked at documents from before 2000 in order to provide a full background picture to current policy processes. Such documents, for example, helped illustrate how particular courses of action and solutions had come into being and been supported, especially if they seemed to have influenced who has been included/excluded from the process and how this has materialized over time.

The interpretations of these categories were to be determined on the basis of local usage, rather than against any ‘universal’ criteria. As it turned out, there seemed to be a broad similarity between countries in the kinds of documents they selected for scrutiny, though the status as well as the availability of appropriate documents in all categories did vary quite a lot across countries and categories, which may be of considerable interest in itself, and will be discussed below.

The main selection criteria employed by national teams were rather similar to each other; they were expressed in the French report as ‘to select three documents per friction that had the following characteristics: they had to belong to various genres, they had to be recent, and the selection in each friction had to reflect the main elements of the debate’, and variations of this wording could be found in almost all other reports. The most common category, or genre, of report consulted was that of key national level documents, variously expressed, but typically official (White Paper status). What is also striking about the documents selected is that all but two of them—the EU Green Paper on Migration, analysed by the German team, and an OECD document, analysed by the Dutch team, were nationally based.

In addition to trying to ensure some substantive comparability between national reports, by means of designating ‘frictions’ as the basis of enquiry, with one particular friction common to almost all countries, we also made considerable efforts to try to ensure their methodological comparability, by prescribing a common format and content for all reports.

This format was followed closely in all reports, and though there was a wide variation in their length (from 13,500 to almost twice that length), and their emphases, they all provided a sufficient and commensurable amount of information to enable relatively systematic comparison to be carried out.

### ***2.2.2 Expert Interviews***

Expert knowledge plays a very important part in today’s society. Interviews with exponents of different forms of expertise from those involved in educational governance at different levels were seen in the GOETE context as a means of gaining access to the ‘logics of intervention’ in the two different policy frictions as explained above. According to Meuser & Nagel (2009), experts are individuals who are highly skilled and/or responsible for the development, development

or evaluation/control of policy solutions or strategies. Experts have, thus, privileged access to knowledge, information, interactions and processes related to the phenomenon at hand. Three main types of expert knowledge may be very briefly distinguished: technical, processual, and explanatory. *Technical* knowledge is usually very specific in nature; it provides fine-grained details on the operations, the regulatory frames (for instance, legislation, standards, etc.) and substantial issues that exert influence on the work field. *Process* knowledge relates to experts themselves being directly involved in processes, routines and specific interactions in the respective field. *Explanatory* knowledge refers to subjective – of the particular expert as part of a professional group<sup>12</sup> – interpretations, definitions, causal beliefs, etc. held by the experts that help researchers gain insight on the ideas/ideologies that orient the field of action, but also on the inconsistencies thereof. In the research reported here, the main focus was on the processes and especially on the explanatory knowledge generated in the interviews: we aimed both at gaining insight on the ‘logics of intervention’ produced in the particular field--- that is, how is a ‘problem’ defined, as having which ‘causes’? What ‘solutions’ are generated, which alternative dismissed– and at why and how this is done.

It is crucial to researchers using expert interviews to keep in mind that expert knowledge is not neutral–hence the importance of interviewing different experts expected to hold different views/positions in the field. Also, there is a high level of interaction of the researcher with the researched and the procedures cannot be fully standardized. Therefore, it was important for interviewers to develop some knowledge of the field, to be knowledgeable of the field in which the interviewed expert is active in order for them to be able to participate in the dialogue and to control for the interaction<sup>13</sup> (see also below).

### ***Basis/es of choice of Experts – Who is a policy expert?***

The identification of policy experts went hand in hand with the development of the background story – the policy context – for each of the chosen frictions. According to our definition of policy documents above, these were sometimes the authors of particular documents, researchers frequently quoted, the authority in a particular department able to speak to the policy among others. Therefore, in accordance with section 2.2.1 policy experts also fell into the three categories of ‘policy makers’, ‘policy brokers’, and ‘policy commentators’.

The *policy makers* are the ‘decision actors’ or authorities and they were key interviewees for this work package research programme. However, as with the policy documents, we have expanded our remit in WP7 in order to capture a sense of policy as process and policy as contested. This means that we needed to go beyond decision actors (vital though they remain) and look to include policy brokers and policy commentators. As with broker and commentator doc-

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<sup>12</sup> Meuser and Nagel point to ‘expert knowledge as construction’, i.e., it is a collective project of producing knowledge in processes of negotiation, networking and teamworking (cf.: Meuser & Nagel, 2009, p. 28).

<sup>13</sup> It is possible that the researcher conducting the interview be regarded by the expert as a co-expert, as someone expert outside of his/her field, as a lay person, as authority or as a possible critic. All these types of interaction might have substantial impact of the interview and has to be considered before, during and after the interview (analysis).

uments, these should have a high enough profile on appropriate levels of regional or national discourse to provide them with influence or an expectation that they should be influential (e.g., it ought to be expected that, in the UK, for instance, the Equality Commission would have a strong policy view/position on migration and education issues, and therefore consultation or lack of consultation would be something to be noted by the UK team). These experts were mostly located in one of the following kinds of groups and institutions:

- central government ministries (or regional/local where appropriate, e.g., Germany, UK)
- regional ministries or assemblies
- think tanks
- lobby and advocacy groups of various kinds
- universities
- trades unions
- the national or regional ‘traditional’ media, i.e., commentator journalists
- in the ‘new’ media, i.e., bloggers

The expert interviews were conducted in all GOETE countries according to some *general guiding principles* as noted below:

- Interviews should be between 60-90 minutes duration, although this may depend on the length of appointment given and time available to the participant.
- We want to ask cross cutting questions that go beyond the prescribed roles of the participants (this is not simply a ‘fact finding mission’) to get at how they understand the definitions of transition and trajectory.
- We want to see how they describe the goals and outcomes of secondary education, to see how these are defined and by whom.
- We want to find out who identifies problems with transitions/trajectories are how these problems are defined.
- From here, we want to know how these problems are positioned as being internal or external to education systems, and to what extent they are seen as being the problem of the individual. Are problems positioned as being internal to the processes of education (produced by existing policies or practices), or as being a consequence of external factors (e.g. broader societal and cultural issues), or as personal factors (inadequate students or teachers)?
- We need to find out who has the power to make decisions that change regulations at different levels, and what the history of a particular set of interventions in this area are.
- We want to know how policies are orientated to address and resolve areas of concern – our frictions.
- We want to know about the consequences of these actions and what further arrangements were (or are currently being) considered, organized and/or called for.

### *Designing an interview schedule*

The questions used to develop an interview schedule were necessarily broad due to the range of experts that were to be interviewed. Teams discussed and planned in advance how best to fine-tune the questions to make them most applicable to the expertise and experience of each participant in their own national context.

Since policy experts were likely to assume that interviewers would be ‘well briefed’ and knowledgeable about their organizational role (why would we be interviewing them otherwise?), interviews started with a focus on substantive issues related to the particular expert, institution, or policy level. This is why the policy document phase preceded the interview phase, and why it was vital that all interviewers had a good understanding of the fields of expertise developed through the document analysis – from which to frame their questions. Interviewers also used the interviews to confirm or refine the character of and issues arising from the frictions identified in the document phase. The frictions, thus, provided the researchers with an entry point into the discussion of a particular transition issue. In addition,, they provided us with an opportunity to construct an account or working hypothesis of why, how and for whom this particular policy intervention was supposed to work regarding the GOETE thematic perspectives: access, coping and support, relevance of education, life course and governance. Some example questions for expert interviews are listed below:

- What do you think the purpose of education is in society more generally, and do you think that this has changed in recent years?
- How would you describe the main goals and outcomes of secondary education today? Is secondary education relevant to the needs of today’s society? How would you define those needs? And if it is not relevant, what could be done?
- As young people progress through secondary school, do you think enough is done to prepare them for life outside of school? Does school prepare young people adequately for the various aspects of their adult lives?
- Is enough done to ensure that all young people have equal access to educational opportunities that could benefit them?
- What influence do you/does your organization have on orientating policies in any of these areas?
- What would you consider the most important changes that could be made to improve both young people’s experience of lower secondary school and their achievements within it?
- What do you think are the main differences that parents and children experience on transferring from primary to lower secondary school? How is continuity assured, and how effective do you consider that to be?

Further friction-specific questions were also developed by national teams. One general example is the following vignette, which all national teams tried and used – or adapted to fit with their own frictions. This *vignette* aimed to provide a concrete example of a friction. For instance,

the following vignette enables the interviewer to open up a conversation with a policy maker, broker, or contestor, around the more general friction of immigration/migration.

“Imagine a school in one of your local communities that has recently experienced large enrolments of migrant children. The young people’s language skills are very poor in the language of instruction. Some of these children have had problems with progression and as a result are older than their classmates. The parents also have limited contact with the school, largely for cultural reasons. What policies, programmes and initiatives are in place (or the school should have in place) that would enable student progression, appropriate language support and a means for school to engage the parent in ways that help student coping and support, learning, etc.?”

In total 95 experts were interviewed. Some experts were located at regional level, while others at national, depending on the regulatory and procedural systems operating in different countries. The choice and nature of the frictions chosen by the national teams influenced which experts were seen as relevant and were approached for interview, while some experts were able to speak to both frictions. In general, though, national teams chose most of their experts on the basis of their broad understanding of a range of transition-related issues. It is important to note that, it was *not* an objective of the work package to gain comprehensive coverage of all areas of expertise pertaining to any given friction, as this would imply much more resources as were available to the teams. Table 44 presents an overview of all experts interviewed in WP7 according to the three categories distinguished above:

**Table 4: Overview Expert Interviews in GOETE countries, according to expert category**

Country	Policy makers	Policy brokers	Policy commentators	Total
<b>Finland</b>	6	3	2	11
<b>France</b>	9	6	2	17
<b>Germany</b>	1	5	3	09
<b>Italy</b>	6	3	2	11
<b>Netherlands</b>	4	3	3	10
<b>Poland</b>	3	1	6	10
<b>Slovenia</b>	4	3	3	10
<b>United Kingdom</b>	6	4	7	17
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>95</b>

### 2.3 Summary

The main idea driving the methodology adopted in the preparation of this report was to seek, and execute, means of making the eight national reports comparable in ways that would enable us to draw significant conclusions from them. This meant that in terms of data collection they should cover as far as possible the same ground, in producing accurate and effective accounts of the

high-level governance of educational transitions. This directed us towards as far as possible covering the same ground by means of collecting comparable forms of data: *first*, via the focus on two national governance frictions; *second*, by using the concept of ‘logics of intervention’ in its analysis; and *third*, analysing the data from a thematic perspective. This entailed on the one hand seeking information (policy documents) and expert opinion from broadly comparable sets of sources, and in particular seeking information from national and, where relevant, subnational, policy documents. And on the other hand, it meant selecting experts to be interviewed on the basis of their relationships to three specific groups—of *policy makers*, *brokers* and *commentators*. The interviews with these experts were based on a common list of questions, and as far as possible a common form of analysis. To this end, all national respondents followed a common definition of policy—confining it to ‘policy documents’—which were analysed as far as possible through the common approach of critical discourse analysis.

A further central concern with our adoption of the concept of ‘governance friction’ was to make the eight national reports *comparable* in meaningful ways and add to the value of the analyses. This concern resulted from the need to reduce the size and narrow the range of the issues to be investigated without losing a clear sense of the uniqueness of how national systems worked. Also, it represented a means of dealing with the impossibility of achieving either comprehensive national accounts, or comparable selections from national approaches. Concentrating on specific concentrations of structures, processes and experiences that came together in particular frictions enabled us both to focus more clearly on particular aspects of the transition processes and to shed light on aspects of the specificity of national approaches.

Obviously, it made a lot of sense to try to identify one or more ‘frictions’ that were common to all eight countries. However, and unsurprisingly, it turned out not to be possible to identify one single friction that made sense in all eight countries. Nevertheless, thanks to a great deal of cooperation on the part of national teams, it turned out to be possible to identify one friction that made sense in the majority of our countries—all but Finland, France and Poland. This was the ways that migration was implicated in educational trajectories, and in the event it proved possible to include one of the French and Finnish accounts in the migration friction, as is detailed in the next chapter. As noted above, the ‘second’ frictions covered a broad range of issues, but nevertheless the flexibility of friction as an analytic device did enable valuable and productive comparison.

The *second* means we used to increase the contribution of the empirical work carried out in WP 7 was, again as elaborated above, that of logic of intervention. Fundamentally, this means comparing not so much programmes as the reasons for which the programmes were adopted. So, while it is impossible to directly compare the ways that, say, Slovenia and Germany deal with the issue of migrant children’s educational transitions, it is possible to compare the reasons they give for formulating and implementing those programmes, and what they hoped/intended to get from them.

The *third* approach to comparative analysis – that of thematic perspectives – was adopted with view to the necessity in GOETE not just to provide accurate accounts of how educational trajectories are governed, processed and experienced in the eight countries, but also to show, on the one hand, how these nationally specific congeries are related to the governance of other sectors—economic and social—of the national or subnational public administration of the eight countries,

and on the other, how the distinctive ways of organizing educational transitions might be compared.

There are, inevitably *limitations and reservations* to be entered about the degree to which the evidence on which we were able to draw, and the ways we chose to analyse and present that evidence, enable us to sustain the broader arguments and conclusions of this report. The *first* reservation has to concern the very different means of interpreting, creating, and implementing policy, especially in respect of educational trajectories, in eight countries with very different traditions, for instance, but not only, in the contrasts between their transition regimes identified throughout the project. Associated with this, we have discussed at some length the very national basis of some policies, especially evident in policies towards migrants. We have also already mentioned the –necessarily—less than comprehensive or consensual basis of the assumptions of the scope and meaning of ‘policy’, both in different national contexts and in our different ways of understanding it. Notwithstanding all this, however, we do feel that, on the one hand, the means of analysis we have used to compare the different policies, regimes, practices, and their respective varying implications for the ways that issues of access, coping, relevance and life course, as well as of governance itself, and on the other, the comparability and richness of the data that we collected to base them on, do constitute an effective basis for the development of the substantive chapters which follow in chapter 4.

While the approach just outlined enabled us to generate broad common coverage of the ways that the governance of educational trajectories is itself governed by focusing on two key frictions, and how these are addressed politically across the eight countries, it is important to recognize that there is some methodological price to be paid for this, and to advance effective means of paying that price. The methodology outlined above does give rise to a number of possible, and quite serious issues, especially around the comparability of the sets of national data. This draws our attention to what amounts to the ‘imposition’ of one particular model of what we might call ‘education politics’ across all national teams, irrespective of the fact that it does not fit them all equally; we find quite significant variations in the French, Polish and Slovene cases, as well as the Italian. At the very least, this means that we need to be careful about making claims based not just on the relative effectiveness of models, but on any form of comparability; how far could we be comparing like with like?

This relates to a *second* caveat about the data in the national reports. Many of the documents consulted in the national reports are, quite properly, based on ‘advocacy’ as much as, or rather than on, analysis. This enables us to make some links between inputs and specified outputs, but it does leave open questions of the wider consequences for the elements of educational transitions that we are most interested in. Here, for instance, the relatively low status that seems to be accorded to coping in the majority of the documents is clearly evident—though, of course, that is a significant finding in itself. A further consequence is a tendency to assume particular practices and changes are products of explicit policy mechanisms—which our data does not enable us to claim—rather than to focus on the mechanisms themselves, which may be possible, or to investigate the relationship between policy proposals and outcomes, which is completely outside our capacity.

The policy model—and our means of addressing it—also tends to limit the number of actors involved. On the one hand, the categorisation of three levels of expert is very useful here, but it does clearly silence some potentially significant voices, which also perhaps makes it more difficult to line up with the findings of WP 6, for instance. In particular, there is a—probably inevitable, and not undesirable—tendency to prioritise academic commentators and analyses. And on the other hand, it is important to recognise that the limitation to written documents, unavoidable though it is, also reduces the range of available sources, inputs and reactions to what is occurring in education, especially at lower levels, as a result of high-level governance.

The point of these caveats is not to lament what we did or were not able to do, or claim, so much as to draw attention to the restricted nature of the claims we can make on the basis of our data, and to provide a context for the means by which we have attempted to produce valid interpretations of our research in this area.

The following chapter 3 presents the findings related to the governance frictions chosen in the GOETE countries and attempts a cross-national comparison in terms of national differences in patterns of Citizenship and Identity. It also discusses the findings in reference to different national institutional pathways and opportunity structures as well as with relation to national differences in discursive pathways and opportunity structures.

### 3. Policy Frictions in the GOETE Countries: Cross-National Perspective

The present chapter presents and discusses the findings related to the governance frictions chosen for analysis. During the preparation for the collection of empirical information for this chapter we were confronted with two challenges: *First*, be able to ensure some degree of comparability in face of very diverse policy contexts in the participating countries and of quite distinct governance issues that might be raised as ‘governance frictions’; *second*, simultaneously allow for the greatest possible degree of freedom for national teams to discuss the governance frictions that seemed most relevant and pertinent in their countries. Against this background, we have to deal with some theoretical and methodological problems associated with analyzing, and attempting to compare, eight different national reports, even when, as we made clear in the last chapter, they were to be developed around a common framework and list of questions.

Each country was invited to choose two policy ‘frictions’ that best exemplified current issues in educational governance relating to the GOETE teams in their countries. In order to assure comparability, we agreed that if possible, all members would take up the same frictions and for most countries the choice fell on the issue of ‘migration’. While Poland, Finland, and France decided not to focus on migration for reasons of pertinence and relevance, the national teams did pay attention to issues of inequality and related policy answers to it in the educational sector, which proved sufficient as a focus to make it a shared friction and topic, which could generate valid comparisons. A second governance friction could be chosen freely according to the national policy context (see overview in section 2.1). These cover a wide range of topics, though many of them seem to be concerned with forms of remediation of the damage done by inadequate or inappropriate understandings or treatments of migrant children and young people or ‘disadvantaged groups’ in education. A significant issue here was the basis of the choice of ‘second’ frictions; what did that tell us about the nature of the transition regimes?

The added—indeed, central—attraction of migration as a friction was that it was an equally ‘distinct’, ‘non-mainstream’, issue in the educational governance of all the GOETE countries. Essentially, there were no routines or structures into which it could easily be accommodated. That was the case even in England, which had the longest history of post war migration, and perhaps most explicitly so in the case of Turkish migrant workers in Germany. The expectation was, therefore, that the necessity of adjusting, modifying, altering, an existing educational governance systems to address a new and quite different problem would reveal elements of that system that would otherwise remain tacit, and taken for granted.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> This choice proved to have been partly anticipated by the Scottish sociologist of transitions, David Raffe. In pointing out that most of the research carried out on transition systems has charted their similarities and differences, but has not devoted so much effort to more qualitative differences between them, he suggested that one way of exploring these issues in transition research might be to study “circumstances in which the competing logics of different transition systems confront each other, such as large-scale migration” (Raffe, 2008, p. 293), which provides further and apt support for the approach we chose to adopt

If the *first* friction (migration) essentially imposed a level of commonality, essentially asking how countries represented and responded to what was ostensibly a 'common' issue, in other words how they did the 'same' thing, the *second* friction enabled us to probe into what was revealed by the basis of specifying a particular issue, or theme, as a friction ('other frictions'). Much of the interest here lay in the breadth and detail of the national identifications of transition-related frictions. Which were the transition-related issues that concerned national and regional governments? And what might we learn from these about the nature and place of the educational trajectories in those countries? This also enabled a close focus on the GOETE meta-questions regarding the relationship between education and social integration.

The chapter is structured as follows: *first*, the different national accounts of how the issue of migration impacted on the two educational transitions at the heart of GOETE, and the light it shed on the trajectories as a whole, are presented and analysed in the first half of this chapter (section 3.1). This part closes with an attempt to cross-national comparison in terms of national differences in patterns of citizenship and identity (section 3.1.1); a discussion of the findings in reference to different national institutional pathways and opportunity structures (section 3.1.2) as well as with relation to national differences in discursive pathways and opportunity structures (section 3.1.3). *Second*, the chapter comprises accounts of the 'other' policy frictions chosen by national teams (section 3.2). The comparative discussion of the second set of national frictions represents an attempt to *transversal analyses*. In this case, the focus was on the methodological tools that had been developed to enable analyses at a level of abstraction that enabled some deeper analysis. The frictions were analysed in relation to the contexts shaping decisions and practices (section 3.2.1), the 'logics' and 'modes' of intervention employed—prevention, intervention and compensation— (section 3.2.2), as well as the institutional and discursive selectivities involved (section 3.2.3).

### **3.1 The Migration Friction**

The discussion of the first national friction, on migration, has three main aims. The *first* is to report directly on how issues related to the educational trajectories in general, and the two central transitions in the focus of the project in particular, of a significant minority of socially disadvantaged children and young people – children and youth from migrant backgrounds – are framed and impacted in all eight GOETE countries. *Second*, in section 3.1.1 we ask what can be learned from the ways that they are framed about the overall understandings of citizenship and identity, and how they are related to the significance of the national. Here, we also address the question of the value of the transition regimes typology used in GOETE. And *third*, in sections 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 we discuss the discursive and institutional opportunity structures that frame national educational policies and practices.

#### ***National Migration Frictions***

##### ***Finland***

The critical point in the life course of young people in Finland is the phase between comprehensive school and upper secondary level. Up until then, all pupils have been taught basically in a

uniform way with no differentiation according to ability. The drop-out rate in Finnish comprehensive school has been minimal since the 1960s, one reason for this being the extensive special education system within the comprehensive school. Immigrant youth has received special attention in the transition phase because of their increased risk of marginalization in comparison to the Finnish majority population. It has been shown that the risk of unemployment and inadequate education among immigrants in Finland is four or five times higher than among the non-immigrant population (Myrskylä 2011). Young people with immigrant background encounter more difficulties in accessing education than the “native” population. While 88.2 % of all applicants were admitted to vocational education, only 55.4 % of applicants with immigrant background were admitted (Kilpinen & Salonen, 2011). Or, more generally: drop-out rates are higher, marks are lower, the risk of marginalization and of remaining outside education and the labour market are higher for students with immigrant background. Immigrant youths from outside the EU particularly girls experience the greatest risk of marginalization.

Against this background, equal access to education is an important issue in Finnish education policy and a constant theme in Finnish Government programs. The recent Government Programme from 2011 states: “The objective of Finnish education and cultural policy is to guarantee all people - irrespective of their ethnic origin, background or wealth – equal opportunities and rights to culture, free quality education, and prerequisites for full citizenship.” (Finnish National Board of Education, quoted in Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 6).

Equal opportunities in education are also perceived as ways in which the knowledge society and the competitiveness of Finnish labour is improved and maintained. The Education guarantee, which is at the heart of the Finnish/Nordic welfare state, is motivated by “ensuring individual careers, the quality of life and working capacity and preventing exclusion.” It is stated that 93 % of those completing basic education apply for further education, with 90 % in upper secondary education, while 3 % continue in voluntary additional education in comprehensive school. This means that there are about 7 % who do not continue their education after compulsory schooling.

Exclusion is one main challenge to the tenet of equality; this includes individual as well as inter-generational exclusion, where marginalization or exclusion is passed on to the next generation. Members of visible minorities are identified as being at great risk of becoming subject to discrimination, harassment and violence due to their ethnic background. Furthermore it is argued that problems and the risk of being subject to discrimination is particularly high for young people belonging to immigrant and minority groups, the Roma, indigenous Sami people, sexual minorities and those with disabilities.

In the transition phase, regarding the problem of not finding a place in further education, there are two main solutions: implementing an education and training guarantee and additional basic education or orientating prevocational education. These solutions can be interpreted as a preventive action, which might give an indication of the direction in which education policy in Finland is moving to, i.e. a policy of preventing instead of patching up.

Solutions discussed with relation to immigrant children and youths are to increase the participation of immigrant girls in education and training, immigrant students will be supported in maintaining and developing both Finnish/Swedish as well as their own native language. One can con-

clude from this, that girls are in a particularly vulnerable position and therefore require special attention and that language problems are a major issue.

Another focus in this context is on how the majority population and the educational professionals should deal with immigrants: “Tolerance and a positive attitude to different cultures will be stressed in all education and training. Questions relating to minorities and human rights will be systematically integrated into teachers’ initial and further training.” (Finish National Board of Education, quoted in Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 36)

Because immigrant youth encounter several challenges in the transition phase, and the education guarantee was not realized satisfactorily for them, implementing a VaSkooli project especially for immigrant youth is seen as one solution, justified within the Nordic Welfare model, which implies equal opportunities for everyone and supporting the person in the weakest position. Providing special support for immigrant youth is also justified with decreasing the risk of social marginalization, which is a risk immigrants are in particular vulnerable to, as well as in terms of the calculation that a marginalized young person costs 1 million Euros to society before (s)he turns 60.

Overall, the governance of the transition phase seems to be moving towards an individualistic supporting system, which might mean supporting individuals according to their personal needs, supporting a group of people with a specific need, e.g. immigrants who encounters language difficulties or students who are talented in some specific subject. Among the many measures there is a strong emphasis on language competency in Finnish and Swedish.

### ***France***

France opted not to focus on the Migration specifically, but to frame the policy friction more broadly as ‘inequalities. The question of inequalities in French education is all the more difficult to accept in a system that is based on the belief in individual equality in school, and on the principle of meritocracy. This overall issue is so dominant that most of the time the different *types* of inequalities stay undefined.

The issue of inequalities between school trajectories has been recognised for a long time should have disappeared with the democratisation of schools. The democratisation waves (1960 and 1980), despite the common discourses, did not enable the educational system to achieve this goal, and while the number of students who pass the A-level is higher than in the past, working class students mainly tend to pass the A-level in vocational tracks, whereas academic tracks are still reserved for middle and upper class students. Although the level of graduation within the working class has increased, they are three times less likely to graduate than privileged the class. At the same time, discrimination is also seen as part of institutional misrecognition of diversity, be it with regards to gender, sexual orientation, disability, national origin or social class. (Jahnich et al., 2012, p. 19).

The problem with regards to social class (which is often closely linked with immigration) is seen as structural: it is related, on the one hand, to the implicit barriers that weigh on working class students when they choose one or another track and, on the other hand, to the devaluation of the

kind of degrees they are most likely to follow (the most valued ones are those of the “grandes écoles” which have faced a limited social opening).

The solutions are placed within the responsibility of the education system: they concern mainly the Ministry of Education and its agents. The role attributed to parents, other actors or informal education is very narrow.

The possible role of the educational community as a part of the discrimination process is not raised, and there is no acknowledgement that the actors have to be trained to deconstruct their own prejudices. Major issues are:

- The existence of structural inequalities (social and spatial) that exist independently from the school system;
- Inequalities due to the school system (incapacity to take the question of inequalities into account, reinforcement of inequalities, ghettoization, incapacity to support pupils);
- Attempts at solving these inequalities (in coping with the most serious problems, from the guidance services and from the local authorities).
- The French school system is particularly weak when one considers the necessity to recognise inequalities: there is currently no strong political will to deal with this question. Apparently, the political project of the French school system is rather blurred. In addition, as the French school system is the most (or one of the most) centralised in Europe; it appears that territorial inequalities are hardly recognised. All regional and local administrative bodies are supposed to be organised and function in the same way, regardless of their sizes, their socio-economical contexts, their employment markets. Several interviewees insisted on the impossibility of keeping this principle alive. As a consequence, despite several exploratory attempts, local authorities’ roles are still very thin and peripheral, even if they try to develop actions to overcome some of the school system limits. Moreover, the French school system was based on the necessity to produce an elite and its objectives are oriented toward the 10% of students who are excellent and who will be the country future decision makers. Consequently, other students have to adapt as well as they can to a very closed system; no positive tracks are developed for them; all other pupils will experience various types of failures.
- Far from being able to support its pupils, the French school system tends to reinforce inequalities. Many interviewees quoted the PISA results to demonstrate the difficulties. They assert that our school system is very pernicious for self-esteem: the system of marks is very depreciative as well as the exclusive importance given to curricula and to formal knowledge, or the inefficacy of the repeating practices. Due to these elements, pupils suffer in school and are deeply bored: they have no clue of what they are doing there. The system is several times qualified as ‘a machine that generates failure’. The interviewees also consider that pupils have almost no real rights in schools (even if several laws have promoted rights – in terms of participation for instance, the effectiveness of them are very relative).
- The system also tends to create or to reinforce the existence of ghettos. In France, some areas can be labelled as ghettos in the suburbs developed during the 60ies at Cities peripheries. This

phenomenon is well known in the sector of urban policies that emerged during the 80ies to struggle against the growing socio economic difficulties of these places. As far as schools are concerned, the ghetto phenomenon is both reinforced by the school zoning (that tends to anchor working class children in these areas) and paradoxically by the smoothening of the school zoning system (that enables middle class parents to enrol their children in schools outside their zone). These trends have an impact on both pupils' trajectories and class management. Indeed, for pupils, having studied in the schools of the ghetto can be somewhat debasing, with suspicions regarding their level and the likelihood that they will encounter difficulties in their guidance. For the management of classes, the ghettos or even the standardization of pupils' profiles is a problem: when a class concentrates pupils with difficulties the level tends to be worse than when pupils are mixed.

To sum up, what is revealed is the incapacity of the educational system to support children who encounter difficulties. The treatment of difficulties is developed through a very individualised process based on providing additional hours of teaching, such as more hours of maths or French for instance. This approach is problematic from several points of view: 1. it means that pupils with difficulties do not spend their days in the most efficient way; 2. there is no questioning of the methodology (a pupil who faces difficulties with one particular subject will have more content on this subject, usually with the same means even if he or she did understand in the first occasion...); this time is dedicated to a particular subject, there is no transversal consideration.

### *Germany*

Issues pertaining to immigration have been refocused so that they now appear predominantly as educational problems. This friction relates, first, to an element of social policy, namely, the issue of social cohesion and national integration through access to education but also strengthening social inclusion and avoiding exclusion through it; particularly, the focus on language skills in German is represented as the sine qua non to social integration and educational success. Focusing on children and youth of migrant background represents a policy for achieving equality of opportunity in education and in society at large. Second, it pertains, in a narrower view, to education policy inasmuch as it addresses the close relationship of educational attainment and ethnic and social origin. Third, it entails an element of labour market policy since youth of migrant background are among those pupils most affected by early school leaving and low chances of entering a training contract (Ausbildungsplatz). Also here, the focus is placed on lacking competencies and dispositions of the youth themselves and refers to a discussion of 'trainability' (Ausbildungsfähigkeit) that is closely linked to employability. This means that the skills and competencies of school leavers transferring to the employment system are regarded as problematic both in cognitive and social areas.

The discourse on migration/immigration reflects the struggle to politically deal with society's increased plurality and heterogeneity. As Germany does not count itself among the classical immigration countries, the term 'migrant', really international migrant, refers to a person who has permanently changed his or her centre of life to another country (definition of the federal office of migration and refugees, 2006).

The specific designation “migration background” indicates that the distinction between natives and non-natives is retained. Migration background tends to become a permanent feature re-establishing the ‘we–they’ boundary although citizenship legislation has become more inclusionary. This has led to the situation that every third person with migration background lives in Germany since birth.

Since the last years of the twentieth century, the social scientific term of neo assimilationism, became an important background to policy development. From there, it was but a short step to focus on language acquisition as the key to integration, early childhood education as an important step to decrease the risk of failing education careers etc. The key question with regards to all GOETE-themes: access, coping, life course, relevance and governance was found in the successful adaptation of personal dispositions to the new requirements of an increasingly complex and fast changing social environment.

In the early years of the century, migration came to be seen as presenting a particular challenge to the emerging knowledge society while at the same time being necessary for demographic reasons. Children with migrant background were generally not seen in a differentiated way but – in a metonymic way – children of Turkish origin came to be taken for the entire group. This *pars pro toto* strategy was accompanied by ascriptive processes and a rather vulgar application of reproduction theories: lack of interest in education, low educational background of the parents, lack of interest in learning the German language, lack of habits conducive to educational success such as reading aloud to small children, having books at home, investing in cultural activities such as visits to the museum, exhibits etc. The argument thus ran: children who have not been properly pre-socialized before attending school, most migrant children, will have difficulties in access and making smooth transitions; their coping skills will be underdeveloped as they are unfamiliar with the problematic and have little support from their parents, school will be irrelevant to them, because they have not learned to appreciate the relevance of schooling. Even where parents have high ambitions for the school career of their children, are these ambitions and expectations likely to be unrealistic etc. At the same time, especially in the wake of the discussion of the international large-scale student achievement tests, the failure of the German education system in dealing with social inequality, a central dimension in the discussion on migration, was emphasized. (Cf. Boell Foundation, quoted in Amos et al., 2012, p. 3)

This is a different argument than the one outlined previously: children and youths with migration background fail in the German education system, not because of their deficits but because of the system. This is not their failure, but a system’s failure in particular its inability to aid these children and youths in realizing their full potential. The answer is to provide children and youths with more and higher quality support measures and to pay more attention to the preventive function of early childhood education.

This very common argument in the present debate on the integration of children with immigrant background attributes to preschool education a whole range of competencies and responsibilities: language acquisition, diagnostic competencies, communication with parents are singled out as areas where the German system is most deficient. This is not to deny the necessity of addressing the deficits of schools in dealing with non-native German children. The ambiguous attitude to-

wards immigration is identified as being reflected in curricula and textbooks. Eurocentrism and blatant forms of “othering” are identified as elements contributing to the alienation of migrant children. Most importantly: the construction of “collectives” along ethnic or national lines is said to strongly contradict the modern focus on the subject and the formation of individual identities. Multicultural societies emphasizing plurality such as the Netherlands, Canada and Scandinavia are referred to as positive role models, viewing immigration as an asset and a special form of societal capital instead of as a burden – the still prevalent view in Germany. This perspective shifts the attention to an appreciation of the richness of different ways of thinking and ways of life. The contradiction between the focus on the individual and the emphasis on collectives is not taken note of. After all: intercultural competence is only possible if the existence of different cultures is emphasized.

The relation between migration and integration is so strong in the German migration discourse that it is easily forgotten that migration can be but one special case of integration but not of integration as such which is a general task of society with relation to the next generation. With regards to the tasks at hand, language is given a particular emphasis. Among the shortcomings of the education system *vis à vis* migrant children and youths, the lack of providing them with adequate language skills is especially highlighted as the condition of successful participation in school, work and society.

“Schools must play a leading role in creating an inclusive society, as they represent the main opportunity for young people of migrant and host communities to get to know and respect each other. Migration can be enriching for the educational experience of all: linguistic and cultural diversity may bring an invaluable resource to schools. It can help to deepen and strengthen pedagogies, skills, and knowledge itself. (Commission of the European communities, 2008, quoted in Amos et al., 2012, p. 29f.)

If the lack of educational success is not addressed the consequences are clearly stated: “widening social divisions which are passed down across generations, cultural segregation, exclusion of communities and inter-ethnic conflict. The potential for such consequences remains.” (ibid.)

## ***Italy***

The broad policy background in Italy includes four contextual features that affect the migration friction: 1) A ten-year long but incomplete and open-ended process of reform of school cycles, targeting especially the issue of *relevance*, which, however, left untouched a) an inconsistent (mainly hierarchical and bureaucratic) governance structure; b) an unreformed mid-cycle (the lower secondary cycle) as a weak point in the whole education path; c) a still unclear “division of labour” between vocational education and early vocational training. 2) A school autonomy which has never been fully really materialized due to budget constraints and controls. 3) decentralization, including the 2001 Constitutional Reform, that set up a still not settled division of tasks and responsibilities between State and Regions; leaving a still appalling North/South divide. And finally 4) a relevant de-standardization of individual life courses, challenging the traditional integrative and comprehensive school model put into practice in Italy since the 1970s. In this respect,

the issue of pupils with immigration background has a relevant “mirror effect” of Italian “State thought” (Sayad, 2004) and its weaknesses.

These four contextual features provide specific lenses through which to analyse and interpret the meaning of the two frictions in Italy. Scholars usually focus on the lack/inconsistency of an integration model in Italy. However, the school system has been among the first institutions to pay attention to multicultural issues, though in a general context of weak policy attention in this field.

Usually norms on intercultural integration and immigrant integration at school rank low in the hierarchy of sources, and hence there is no strong commitment. General principles of a comprehensive education, stated in national and international laws, prioritise the right to education.

The strongest legal protection of foreigners' school integration is included in the 1998 Immigration Law and in the following enacting decrees, where basic elements of the current ‘Italian way’ towards integration were included: the right/duty to education for all minors, intercultural education as foundation of educational practices, the use of intercultural mediators, the need for local policy networks.

The broad context of policy is the ‘Italian Way’, which shapes the broad approach to integration, based on right/duty to education for all minors, *intercultural* education as foundation of educational practices, the use of intercultural mediators, the need for local policy networks. In this form, it goes beyond formal recognition to include possible remedies. This approach continues to inform policy in this area, though immigration is a divisive issue politically.

A fourfold solution is advanced, which should be professional, national (the Italian way), implemented locally and dynamic, and based on the principles of universalism, comprehensiveness, person-centred education and ‘interculture’, which means that diversity should converge towards social cohesion, rather than emphasising differences, or multicultural models based on separate identities.

However, a ‘thick’ interpretation of culture and the “absolute relativism” (a *bogey* concept especially in Catholic thought) are turned down: dialogue means also change in cultures. So, the *interculture* ‘Italian way’ means that diversity should converge towards social cohesion. A culturalist view of origin countries and the absolutization of belonging should be avoided.

Selective education paths are refused; separate education is allowed just for short periods or specific subjects. The definition of “*Interculture* Italian way” and the reference to “rigid” models means that both the colour-blind assimilationist model and the UK multicultural model based on separate identities are rejected in favour of an in-between model. There also policy documents emphasising the characteristics of migrants as being responsible for their lack of attainment.

One issue raised in the debate around this circular letter, is the definition of Italian In the document this is half essentialist (there's an Italian culture, and there are other cultures, while the concept of dialogue in intercultural contexts – a mantra in previous documents – disappears) and half formalist (the use of “non-Italian”, a term considered quite neutral in the Italian “officialise” (i.e. the language used in Italian official documents), and of foreign pupils means that also second

generations are still a problem of external diversity, not a national issue, in a country whose citizenship law is grounded on *jus sanguinis*).

The basis of the experts' critique of the political understanding of the migration issue is that the Italian system, and the Italian way, are failing to respond not just to problems of immigration but to wider challenges of globalisation. It is seen as a matter of a system that was considered to be performing well not being able to come to terms with challenges brought about by forms of diversity quite unlike those the existing system aimed to serve, such as disabled students. In this frame Italy is perceived as a backward country, either missing a clear model of integration, or not implementing it consistently.

One specific issue that was deliberately raised with the experts was the proposal to limit the number of immigrant children in classes, with the imposition of a quota of 30%, and especially the publicity attaching to the case of a school in Rome where around 95% of students had an immigrant background.

On the one side were parents and teachers who thought that such integration experiments were very positive, while against them were those who took the case as an occasion to flag the negative effects of multiculturalism and immigration policy. In effect, the groups were embracing two different definitions of 'Italian', one civic, one ethnic, with the policy makers clearly following the second. More broadly, though, that reversed the Ministry's view on intercultural education and the inclusion of migrants. In the words of one of the experts, 'the political and cultural message (was that) foreigners are a problem in itself, notwithstanding their skills.'

Certainly, while the segregation of minority children in vocational education and training has been clear for some ten years, it has not been an issue in the agenda of either policy makers or of experts. Overall, the experts see the problem as lying with the school rather than with individuals.

In conclusion, a number of issues might be highlighted here:

- All discussions and framings of issues around migrant education continue to be informed by conceptions of the 'Italian way';
- There has been little if any change in the levels of governance of those issues;
- The usual response to most issues seems to be 'more of the same'; for instance, the response to fragmentation is support for further localization;
- At the same time, the importance of building local networks, and at the most giving a role to Regional authorities in this respect, underrates the path-dependency of unequal development and performances of local institutions;
- There is a strong perception at local level of lack of coordination and support from central institutions, leading to a distrust in the possibility of reforming the governance of the system: the risk is reproducing the usual model of weakly generalized good practices;
- The overall governance system seems based on overlapping lobbying/advocacy, together with passive subsidiarity replacing State idleness, but also grounded on State delegation;
- So, the combination of wide scope documents, governance gaps, the lack of implementation tools, goodwill (but not necessarily skilled) mobilization leads to an integration model that we

can call 'do-it-yourself', unintended, based on a local micro-regulation that some interviewees vividly calls 'molecular integration'.

### *The Netherlands*

The integration of non-Western migrants into Dutch society has been an important policy issue in recent decades (much less so since the inception of the current government), and education and training is considered to play a key role in this process. There are broadly two positions relating to education of migrants: the dominant official policy entails that there is no need to devise specific policy measures targeting migrant students. Instead the focus should be on supporting disadvantaged students, immigrant or native Dutch. The official policy, therefore, does not observe large differences in terms of educational challenges encountered by these equally disadvantaged groups. The discursive priority is on general quality improvements, perceiving no or little need for specialized policies for migrant children.

However, some other policy actors, such as civil society organisations, knowledge centres and academics, highlight that the challenges for migrant students differ in terms of their nature and scope, and improving education of migrant students do require specific policy measures. They believe that the present shift of the government from migrants to 'disadvantage' in general might run the risk of further deterioration of educational achievement among migrant students. This discourse emphasizes on-going structural issues including persistent lower academic achievement among migrant children, low language proficiency in Dutch (and even in their native language), underrepresentation in the two highest tracks of secondary education and higher education, school segregation having a negative impact on social cohesion, and more frequent advice for migrant children in the lowest tracks because of their deficiency in language skills rather than lower intellectual capacity. Hence, the supporters of this discourse suggest that tackling these issues requires specific measures, such as additional language support at schools, improving parent-school cooperation, inclusion of modules in teacher training tailored for prospective teachers who will teach at segregated schools improving the quality of teachers teaching at segregated schools, and increasing involvement of migrant parents in school decision-making process.

An important aspect of political debate and public discussions on education of migrants relates to school segregation. Segregation is not a new phenomenon in the Dutch education system, since primary and secondary schools have been segregated along denominational lines for many decades. What has changed over the years though is the nature of the segregation. Segregation has become increasingly pronounced along the lines of socioeconomic status and more recently by ethnic background. Due to strong presence of religious segregation, little attention has been paid to socioeconomic segregation. Only since the 1980s and 1990, has socioeconomic segregation become an issue in political debates as segregation, overlapping strongly with segregation by ethnic origin. The current debate on the topic is primarily concerned with two possible negative effects of segregation on 1) educational achievement, and 2) social integration of different groups into Dutch society.

More broadly, the most important shifts within education policy for migrant students in recent years come from specifically migrant-target-group-oriented policy towards general disadvantage

policy in socio-economic terms, which is considered to be more in line with the actual disadvantage suffered by students.

Policies related to the education of migrants (and to students from low socio-economic backgrounds in general) include those aimed at individuals, those aimed at school policy, those aimed at the education system, and those aimed at wider policy.

*Early school programmes* are offered to children who are considered to lag behind in language skills. The programmes are provided through collaboration between preschool playgroups and primary schools, and start at the age of 2.5 years.

In primary schools, pupils with language deficiencies are placed in a separate group and receive intensive language teaching for a full year, so that their language skills might match their capabilities and enable them to make the transition to a higher track of secondary education.

Effort is devoted to increasing the involvement of parents from migrant groups, who are generally more difficult to reach and less involved in the education of their children than are Dutch parents. This is partly because of a lack of knowledge and skills, but also because of a deficient command of the Dutch language.

One important characteristic of Dutch education is the widely used terminology of ‘black and white schools’. ‘Black’ is used for non-Western immigrants, including Suriname, Moroccan, Turkish and persons of Caribbean origin. In governmental statistics, a school is defined as ‘black’ when more than 70% of students have are of non-Western immigrant origin. Schools with less than 20% of non-Western immigrant students are categorized as ‘white’.

Educational achievement is not the only aspect of the discussion on segregation. The interlinkages between segregation and integration (e.g. social cohesion and citizenship) are just as important. The Council proposes that mutual contacts between the different population groups in the Dutch society are essential, particularly at young ages and within and via education. Learning about ‘others’ is difficult in the absence of the ‘other’. Since segregation is considered to be detrimental to social cohesion of the Dutch society, one might argue that the subject concerns everyone, whether migrant or not.

The current Minister, however, clearly states that “the quality of education is more important than the fact that a child is enrolled in a black or white school” (Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012). She acknowledges that a number of initiatives were taken at different levels to combat segregation in the past, but suggests that the outcomes of these projects were not perceived as conclusive or very successful. They are no longer a priority for her.

The social interaction of migrant students who study at segregated schools is much lower since they hardly have contact with native-Dutch peers, and observations and impressions of researchers and persons who are involved in educational practices confirm the adverse effects of segregation in these two areas. By doing so, the document aims to reopen a conceptual debate on school segregation in a policy environment that scientifically devalues the problematization of segregation. The main problems specified are:

- The level of segregation in and through the existence of ‘black and ‘white’ schools, which encourages also white flight, is likely to lead to even greater residential and hence educational segregation, and increasing gaps between ‘native’ and migrant children in experiences and opportunities
- Insufficient sources of advice and assistance for migrant students in schools
- The issues of segregation/integration are especially serious in the large cities
- The emphasis on performance and efficiency in schools, and especially the policy of financially supporting education for the ‘gifted’, has a cost in diminishing the opportunities for all children to learn together.
- There is a problem of inexperienced teachers in ‘black’ schools

Overall, migration problems concern the whole society and supersede school issues as they touch the (im-)possibilities of social integration, with the existence of ‘black’ and ‘white’ schools reflecting the general segregation in Dutch society. On the one hand, the problem is not confined to the Education Ministry, but on the other, it is not recognised there, at least by the current Minister, where ‘quality education’ is held to be the solution for all students, parental choice of schools is sacrosanct, and migrant status is not recognised as a particular form of disadvantage.

### *Poland*

In Poland, in a way similar to France, immigration is not an issue in its own right but is subsumed under the policy concern of dealing with special educational needs. Thus a broad definition of inclusion is thematized and linked to teacher education, which is deemed to be insufficient for dealing with the challenges posed by diversity. A central policy document: The National Plan of Actions for Children in 2004-2014 ‘Poland for Children’ puts forth a threefold strategy: 1<sup>st</sup>) with regards to the promotion of employment and labour market institutions is to make children with special educational needs capable to successfully participate in the labour market. 2<sup>nd</sup>) to support children with special educational needs in their local environments. 3<sup>rd</sup>) to take preventive measures to prevent dropouts. 4<sup>th</sup>) to provide equal educational opportunities.

Diagnosis and work with students with special educational needs should commence in the pre-school institutions at primary schools, specifically in the first year of formal schooling.

The list of issues to be addressed includes the following (Minister of National Education, Feb. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2011):

- 1) Disability
- 2) Social maladjustment
- 3) Risk of social maladjustment
- 4) Extraordinary talents
- 5) Specific difficulties in learning
- 6) Communication disorder

- 7) Chronic illness
- 8) Crisis or traumatic situations
- 9) Failures at school
- 10) Negligence referring to the students' living conditions and the family's background
- 11) Adaptive difficulties referring to cultural differences

The list of new phenomena includes – inter alia – Euro-orphans – referring to children left at home with relatives or neighbours keeping while both or one parent works abroad; or prolonged stays abroad of children who went there with their parents but have not continued education in their mother tongue and they are faced with difficulties after the return.

The issue of special educational needs is addressed very broadly in Poland. It includes dimensions of physical and psychological disabilities as well as special needs for the very talented and the socially less privileged. The level of common acceptance of the implemented changes stemmed from the more precise definition of social benefits because of the regulation changed and more in-depth explanation of responsibilities of each of the actors on the stage of educational policy who participate in the realization of the planned changes in legal regulations.

As a result one can find that despite of the fact that awareness of the importance of individual help in learning of special educational needs students has risen, the actions undertaken are not sufficient to meet the needs revealed.

Expected time of the specialist's assistance, necessity of community – what is especially crucial in case of students from rural areas.

It must be underlined that in the described area of friction the Ministry of National Education has prepared projects of solutions which should be deemed as justified and accurate. The representatives of the Ministry focused on the factual side of the project and they underestimated the importance of communication with those affected by the changes – parents and local governments and bodies managing schools.

### ***Slovenia***

The definition of immigrant in the Slovenian legislation is quite narrow and exclusionary; a person is considered an immigrant a year after her/his residence registration in Slovenia. This section adopts a more inclusive definition, closer to that used in the main policy document analysed. Immigrant children are defined as those who for different reasons (social, economic, cultural, language) are not fully integrated and/or included in the society. They are currently living in Slovenia though they may or may not have been born in Slovenia and may or may not have Slovenian citizenship or permanent residence, with at least one parent not having been born in Slovenia. This definition embraces a broad typology of immigrants and ethnically Non-Slovenians living in Slovenia. The definition includes those who do not speak Slovenian as their first language.

According to the Slovenian legislation children of Non-Slovenian citizens living in Slovenia, citizens of other EU countries, Slovenians without citizenship and refugees have the right to attend primary and high school under the same conditions as Slovenian children.

Only one consistent and extensive document (*The strategy of inclusion of immigrant children and*

*pupils in the education system in Slovenia*) deals with the inclusion and integration of immigrant children while taking into account mainly the role of the primary school, especially the aspect of language learning. Other documents are mostly of a purely legislative nature, with the problematic of immigrant children and schools very fragmented and very briefly addressed.

The main report seems to have been written to fit in with EU expectations, with a broader impact on Slovenian policy not the main goal. As one expert, who was involved in writing the report, put it *this strategy was not even meant for schools. When we were working with our team we never worked with the intention that this strategy will live in schools. [...] The European Union wanted this, for meeting their expectations, we wrote that document.*

The expert makes a distinction between EU and Slovenia, implying EU is perceived as a detached, even universal institution, that works top-down, while Slovenia, as one of its members, is perceived simply as the follower of EU standards and consumer of EU resources. The EU therefore becomes 'handy' when referring and advocating human rights and applying for funds.

The Strategy identifies three main reasons for the persistence of the problem of immigrant children finding problems following lectures and integrating: 'immigrant children's lack of knowledge of Slovenian language; the absence of strategies and instruments for the inclusion of immigrant children in the education system: and the failure to include immigrant children and their parents in the schooling system and in the »broader Slovenian environment'.

The Strategy lists the following reasons for the failure to address these issues, although it produces little evidence to back them up:

- A lack of legislation that would allow a more successful planning of inclusion of immigrant children in the Slovenian educational system. A lack of strategies and instruments for the inclusion of immigrant children in the educational process. A lack of expert knowledge, and of skills for quality cooperation with immigrant parents.
- A lack of knowledge of immigrant children, especially on the part of teachers, and in the provision of language teaching
- Inadequate recognition of the importance of preserving the language and culture of immigrant children and unequal evaluation of these compared with the Slovenian language and culture environment.
- Insufficient inclusion of immigrant children and their parents in the school and the Slovenian environment.

The Strategy promotes (possibly as a result of the EU influence) intercultural communication and dialogue and the promotion of equality and equal chances. It critiques the lack of implementation of these values at the level of both policy and practice. The critique of the level of practice, focuses especially on teacher's competence, though it seems not to be based on any scientific research or data, (while blaming teachers is very common in the expert interviews).

The Strategy distinguishes several categories of immigrant children on the basis of their legal status, and suggests that the process of learning of Slovenian as their second language, as well as the process of their inclusion in schools should be planned according to the categories of immi-

grants. One of the most problematic issues is the almost exclusive understanding of integration as based on the acquisition of language skills. Cultural and social integration, labour market etc. are listed as relevant, but not separately addressed.

Multiculturalism is still understood through concepts of integration and sometimes assimilation. Therefore, it reproduces the same hegemonic relations of social majority over social minorities.

The Strategy also constructs the crucial actors responsible for the integration of the immigrant (“The responsibility for a successful inclusion of immigrant children bears the whole teaching staff and never the individual expert”) (quoted in Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p. 26). This is especially evident when discussing teachers in primary schools by semantically positioning them as those without knowledge, those who need to be educated and coached.

The integration discourse clearly upholds *conformity* as the desirable outcome of successful integration of immigrant children in the school system. Accordingly, immigrant children who adhere to their linguistic, social and cultural patterns are considered segregated from the mainstream school system. The integration discourse is framed within the one-sided notion of help (help with extra learning lessons, special help from experts, teachers etc.) coming from the supposedly stronger, more relevant and institutionally protected teacher understood as the one holding the integration process.

In the absence of any explicit policy, every single school adopted its own methods to deal with immigrant children. There is no policy, this is not valued, not encouraged, so that the responsibility for immigrants is somewhat random as it is transferred from the systemic policy level to the individual level framed through the ethic of care and solidarity, so that successful integration is left to coincidence. Whether the immigrant child will have the proper support or not depends on the individual school and the individual teacher.

Experts voice that the adaptation of the notion of inclusion over the notion of integration has to be clearly set and scientifically reflected and not left to randomness. This should be applied on all levels of immigration policy. It has to introduce the concept of inclusion on other fields, such as cultural, social, economic etc. in order to address the issue holistically.

### ***United Kingdom***

In the United Kingdom the migration friction was seen as framed by two broad societal issues:<sup>15</sup> First, the long history of successive waves of migration to the UK, particularly throughout the twentieth century, and, second, the socio-cultural legacy of multiculturalism brought about as a consequence of these demographic changes and global British Imperialism.

A longstanding policy challenge has been what is termed the ‘underachievement’ of young people with migrant heritage, especially boys from Black Caribbean families, who are often labelled as ‘troublesome’. Links are often made between the youth cultures of Black boys and their disengagement with school. So although the actual migration might have occurred decades ago, the

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<sup>15</sup> This section is based on England and Scotland, since migration is not a significant issue in Northern Ireland.

affects remain a focus for policy intervention in education. In many respects then, the friction of migration/immigration in the UK is a historic one that is played out through the discursive framing of ethnicity and race equality (see Runnymede, 2010 for instance). This is an important issue because young people with migrant family backgrounds constitute a significant minority in UK schools: in England, 23.3% of primary school pupils and 20.6% of secondary school pupils are of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) heritage (Runnymede, 2011, p. 4). More recent waves of immigration have led to claims that migrant children are currently ‘swamping’ UK schools. Such concerns are primarily raised around issues of language competency and ‘Britishness’, with fears expressed that a large number of schools are (or will be) dominated by children for whom English is an additional language.

Therefore, the policy friction of migration/immigration within the UK falls into two subcategories: *firstly*, the impact of previous waves of immigration and the cultures of participation among young people of BME migrant heritage; *secondly*, the on-going and loosely defined project of ‘inclusive education’, which is part of a broader political project of community cohesion. Another key debate concerns the benefits of immigration to the UK, typically focusing on economic and/or social factors, while Human Rights and asylum issues also continue to have an influence.

Social cohesion through diversity is a strong discourse in the UK with regard to immigrants, ethnic and other minorities, varied religions and cultural groups. All mainstream political parties – even those that are centre-right and conservative – adhere to a common philosophy of liberalism and social democracy (even if this may be the result of different political ideologies). It should be noted then that the friction of migration/immigration and education is located within the wider historical, cultural and social processes of multiculturalism and equality. In many respects then, the migration/immigration friction is a particular aspect of the broader marginalization friction.

The Runnymede report presents research findings from a project that investigated community and social cohesion in relation to immigration. The constant framing of the potentially of opportunity from ‘tensions’ may be due to what could be termed the discourse of ‘equality of opportunity’ that has deep roots in British culture, despite the hierarchical character of British society. Where schools are positioned as capable of resolving conflicts and tensions in the wider locality, there is a sense of ‘localized meritocracy’; a recognition that due to existing and entrenched structural factors, equality equates to different things in different places, depending on how it is defined within the local community *and* governed by local authorities.

The processes of restructuring, specifically the Academies scheme (essentially, centrally state funded schools with a great deal of autonomy) and increased private-public partnerships are considered to be policies that will reinforce rather than challenge existing inequalities and therefore have a very mixed impact on social cohesion.

The document recognises that deep-seated social problems – such as urban regeneration (or lack thereof) – are critical in understanding underachievement among pupils from these backgrounds. However, it is also quick to stress that schools are also not doing enough to equip young people with the necessary skills. There is therefore a tension from the outset and at the heart of the strategy between social causation and explanation and individual responsibility gained/engendered

through educational engagement. Unsurprisingly then, a key solution offered is the development of personalised learning strategies (p. 11). Moreover, the guidance states that:

- Schools that are effective in raising the attainment of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish heritage pupils have the following features in common. They:
- identify where pupils from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish communities are under-achieving;
- strengthen the use of data to inform learning and teaching;
- target appropriate support;
- develop inclusive learning and teaching approaches;
- build effective whole-school structures and systems that focus on under-achieving groups as part of a whole-school improvement strategy;
- ensure school senior leaders take a lead in the monitoring and evaluation of impact on pupils' learning and attainment;
- embed coaching as a means of professional development to support partnership teaching and to bring about improvements in learning and teaching;
- plan regular opportunities to enlist pupils' view on learning and what the school can do to improve practice;
- strengthen the work with parents and the community to support the learning of their children

In sum, this list illustrates the main trends that schools are expected to adopt within their cultures in England. Schools are expected to play an active role in community cohesion, in enhancing race equality, and in combating Islamophobia and through encouraging religious cohesion. This, of course, is the underlying and only occasionally explicit discourse throughout the entire document - how can pupils with Muslim heritage be incorporated into a schooling system that, while multicultural in many aspects, remains predominantly 'Christian' (within the broadest cultural sense of the term). There are then, two major tensions here: *firstly* there is the unresolved relationship between societal, educational and personal influences/responsibilities in enhancing attainment and thus improving educational trajectories and life chances (this consequence is taken for granted). *Secondly*, there is the legacy of multiculturalism and its effect on the politics of integration. English language proficiency is an essential skill, but this must be achieved in an 'inclusive' fashion, which remains respectful of the heritage of newly arrived (and more established) ME young people.

In Scotland, there is a great concern with the allocation of resources and a questioning whether resources spent on immigrant girls, particularly Roma girls, might not be spent in vain, because these girls have a very distinct group-specific life perspective.

In conclusion, the main points discussed here include:

- The policy friction of migration/immigration within the UK falls into two subcategories: firstly, the impact of previous waves of immigration and the cultures of participation among

young people of migrant heritage; secondly, the on-going and loosely defined project of ‘inclusive education’, which is part of a broader political project of community cohesion.

- The consequences of previous waves of immigration emerge as frictions within on-going debates about policy and practice at the highest level of governance. Perhaps most notable are concerns about the underachievement and educational exclusion of BME boys.
- In the UK is that there are very few specific national education policies for dealing with current migration/immigration - those strategies that do exist are embedded within the broader *Every Child Matters* agenda/legacy, which can be viewed as a further aspect of the political project of community cohesion.

### ***3.1.1 The Significance of National ‘Regimes’: National differences in patterns of Citizenship and Identity***

In this section, we attempt to consider and compare different national patterns of the governance of educational trajectories and transitions of migrant children and young people.

In some ways, the most striking thing about how citizenship and identity are represented in the national reports is how infrequently they are explicitly mentioned. The prominence, extent and depth of the discussions in the national reports where citizenship and identity do feature, vary quite considerably across the reports. In some cases, they seem to be almost entirely taken for granted, to the point where it is not necessary to mention them. In others, and most notably the case of Slovenia, they more or less explicitly underlie large areas of the reports. This might be taken as a reflection of the different degrees to which they might be taken for granted, and have been, in both the documents and the expert interviews that make up the national reports, as the institutional and discursive contexts with which current policies and practices are formulated. It is almost as though there is a kind of internal relation between conceptions of appropriate ways of responding to the ‘problems’ generated by migrant children and young people, and questions of citizenship and identity; that is to say, in effect, any discussion of migrant integration, assimilation, etc, entails and implies conceptions of citizenship and identity. They may be discrete phenomena, but they are necessarily connected. However, this has rather unfortunate consequences for our work in this section, because it means that many of the rules, norms, assumptions, etc, that frame policies remain relatively implicit.

In *France*, issues of citizenship and identity in respect of migrant children and young people, are straightforward: “The educational institution, which rests on republican values, has the mission of contributing to the training of free, equal and fraternal citizens, responsible for a shared and common destiny. This is evident not just at the level of formal citizenship, which is strongly based on a principle of *ius soli* (citizenship depends on place of birth) but also in the ways in which the principles of formal equality are extended to include the struggle against harassment, of which certain pupils are victims, due to their gender, their sexual orientations, their origin, their disability, their physical appearance’, which has to constitute an absolute priority’. This is based on *legal* definitions. Discrimination is not allowing someone to access something which would be accepted for somebody else according to the 18 criteria defined by the law.

However, interviewees also considered that pupils have in reality almost no real rights in schools (even if several laws have promoted rights – in terms of participation for instance, the effectiveness of them are very relative).

The definition of immigrant in the *Slovenian* legislation is quite narrow and exclusionary; a person is considered an immigrant a year after her/his residence registration in Slovenia.

According to the Slovenian legislation, children of Non-Slovenian citizens living in Slovenia, citizens of other EU countries, Slovenians without citizenship and refugees have the right to attend primary and high school under the same conditions as Slovenian children. Other foreign citizens can attend primary school under the principle of reciprocity.

The Strategy distinguishes several categories of immigrant children on the basis of their legal status, and suggests that the process of learning of Slovenian as their second language, as well as the process of their inclusion in schools should be planned according to the categories of immigrants.

It is notable here that the issue of formal citizenship plays a much bigger role in the Slovenian report than in any of the others. It seems likely that this is because of Slovenia's relative 'youth' as an independent country. It has had to create the category of national citizenship from the ground up, as it were. This is also shaped by the pressing need for the new country to clarify its relationships with other former Yugoslav states, refugees from which in the period immediately following Slovenia's independence, presented a 'problem' that had to be solved through the legal construction of Slovenian citizenship.

Alongside this, and for similar reasons, Slovenian *identity* is projected as closely linked and integrated in the European (meaning Western European) cultural and ethnic identity and Slovenian nationality and belonging is always framed in relation to Europe. This creates a hegemonic relation between Europe/European and the Other(s), making Slovenian identity part of the European one and in clear contrast to the immigrant identities.

At the same time, the absence of *migration policy* is framed on the ideological level and attributed to Slovenian nationalism and the relationship of Slovenians vs. the Ex-Yugoslavian immigrants. Respondents characterized this relation as transcendent, and attributed to national euphoria, xenophobia, political problems and the remains of recent historical events.

By contrast with the Slovenian report, the Finnish report makes almost no reference, direct or indirect, and draws no inferences about issues of citizenship and identity of what are referred to as 'immigrants'. There is no definition of who count as immigrants, of their formal status, and very little differentiation within the wider category, save for references to Roma and Sami people, and to the fact that those from outside the EU seem to encounter more problems. In the special section of the national Plan for Education on Diversity and Equality it is argued that members of visible minorities are at great risk of becoming subject to discrimination, harassment and violence due to their ethnic background. Furthermore it is argued that problems and the risk of equality and discrimination among children and young people is particularly high in immigrant groups, the Roma, indigenous Sami people, sexual minorities and those with disabilities. This

may be a reflection of a radical interpretation of equality of opportunity, that sees it as essentially indifferent to the nature of differences, since it is able to overcome any of them.

In *Italy*, the strongest legal protection of foreigners' school integration is included in the 1998 Immigration Law and in the following enacting decrees, where basic elements of the current “Italian way” towards integration included: the right/duty to education for all minors, intercultural education as foundation of educational practices, the use of intercultural mediators, and the need for local policy networks.

The broad context of policy is the ‘Italian Way’, which shapes the broad approach to integration, based on right/duty to education for all minors, with *intercultural* education as the foundation of educational practices. In this form, it goes beyond formal recognition to include possible remedies. This approach continues to inform policy in this area, though immigration is a divisive issue politically.

The definition of foreign pupils, used by the Ministry and by the bureaucracy, is “pupils with an immigration background”, or “non-Italian pupils”, thus providing a multifaceted (and somewhat blurred) interpretation of the target population. One important consequence of the use of the terms “non-Italian”, a term considered quite neutral in the Italian “officialise” (i.e. the language used in Italian official documents), and ‘foreign pupils’, means that second generations are still a problem of external diversity, not a national issue, in a country whose citizenship law is grounded on *jus sanguinis*.

In terms of the wider problem, Italian intercultural policy has focused mainly on newcomers, especially those in a half-way situation (generation 1,5 – not fully educated in the immigration country) and attending lower secondary education.

In *Germany*, both national and Länder-level offices for statistics define migration background as referring to people who have migrated to Germany after 1949, all foreigners born in Germany and all Germans born in Germany with at least one parent born abroad. Thus, migration background tends to become a permanent feature re-establishing the we–they boundary although citizenship legislation has become more inclusionary. This has led to the situation that every third person with migration background lives in Germany since birth.

According to one significant Foundation report, ‘the aim has to be a culture of recognition and of living together on the basis of equal rights based on the rights and duties laid down in the constitution. Cultural differences have to be taken seriously and have to be endured, those immigrating into our society have to be able to meet with the receiving society on the same eye level.’

The end of this passage is especially interesting because of its semantic shift: the construction is not immigrating versus indigenous population but „people“ (those immigrating) and „society“. At the same time the interesting inconsistency of the metaphor should be noted. It is impossible that individuals and society meet on the “same eye level”. The implication is that those immigrating are not part of society, although they deserve to be treated as equals on a formal and legalistic level. The common ground for encounter is the constitution.

The relation between migration and integration is so strong in the German migration discourse that it is easily forgotten that migration can be just one special case of integration, but not of integration as such, which is a general task of society with relation to the next generation. With regards to the tasks at hand, language is given a particular emphasis. Among the shortcomings of the education system vis à vis migrant children and youths, the lack of providing them with adequate language skills is especially highlighted as the condition of successful participation in school, work and society.

The most significant feature of the **UK** report for this section is that the words, 'citizenship' and 'identity' scarcely appear. This may be because, in the context of a long history of immigration, recent migration is positioned as a *recreation* or re-instigation of longstanding social problems - and problems within the education sector - rather than something unique or newly emerging. Issues of citizenship and identity in this context, become absorbed into the wider existing context of the need to maintain social cohesion, where improving the level of educational achievement is seen to be central.

Even so, social relations between new arrivals and long-term residents in the context of education seem to be heavily influenced by local 'learning identities', which are rooted in the individual and collective trajectories and histories of new arrivals and long-term residents, as well as in the political economies of the areas they both live in. These factors have to be considered jointly in the formulation of new comprehensive approaches to education, prioritising the long-term sustainability of social relations over short-term and short-sighted academic results-oriented goals

Yet the guidance in other government documents recognises that deep-seated social problems – such as urban regeneration (or lack thereof) – are critical in understanding underachievement among pupils from these backgrounds. However, it is also quick to stress that schools are also not doing enough to equip young people with the necessary skills. There is therefore a tension from the outset and at the heart of the strategy between social causation and explanation and individual responsibility gained/engendered through educational engagement.

Unsurprisingly then, a key solution offered is the development of personalised learning strategies.... Schools are expected to play an active role in community cohesion, in enhancing race equality, and in combating Islamophobia and through encouraging religious cohesion, which might be seen as the underlying and only occasionally explicit discourse throughout the entire document - how can pupils with Muslim heritage be incorporated into a schooling system that, while multicultural in many aspects, remains predominantly 'Christian' (within the broadest cultural sense of the term).

From a governance point of view, it should also be noted that policy on raising achievement of ethnic minority children is effectively a text for senior educational managers, an example of how 'central' policy for raising attainment of ethnic minority groups is rather loosely articulated in England, and how the responsibility for developing and 'thickening' policy is de-centralised and regionalised.

There are then, two major tensions here: firstly there is the unresolved relationship between societal, educational and personal influences/responsibilities in enhancing attainment and thus im-

proving educational trajectories and life chances (this consequence is taken for granted). Secondly, there is the legacy of multiculturalism and its effect on the politics of integration. English language proficiency is an essential skill, but this must be achieved in an ‘inclusive’ fashion, which remains respectful of the heritage of newly arrived.

If schools are to be the ‘engines’ that drive social integration - as suggested by government documents analysed– current policies, which some think tanks see as likely to lead to further segregation, are likely to entrench pre-existing divisions and inequalities rather than alleviating them. Free Schools in particular are presented as potentially driving selective ethnic separation. Due to the widespread devolution of governance to local authorities, think tanks suggest that it is local authorities that will have to provide the rather loosely defined ‘shared spaces’ for increased and improved ethnic integration.

The comments from the UK national report so far have focused on the situation on England, but while the reform of the education system in Scotland has a similar discursive framing - freedom, autonomy, innovation, creativity, and so forth, at the school governance level, relevant differences in the logics of intervention are apparent.

Beyond the ‘common sense’ notion that head teachers and schools should be more autonomous, there are significant differences between the reform models under development in the two countries.

In England, the expansion of the Academies programme has significantly increased apparently paradoxical de/re-centralisation of school governance and accountability, as Academies have significant autonomy over budgetary and curriculum matters, but are also directly accountable to the Secretary of State for Education, rather than the local education authority (LEA), as is the case for ‘normal’ State schools. This gives central government unprecedented power over Academies, even while on a day-to-day basis they are supposedly ‘freer’ than standard State schools. Meanwhile the role and function of LEAs has been significantly disrupted, with strong leadership and ‘vision’ required to avert a slide into effective redundancy.

Whereas the current English reforms concern only secondary schools, - with no ‘trajectory philosophy’ built into the curriculum, in Scotland reform is centralised under the auspices of *Curriculum for Excellence*, which concerns all levels and aspects of schooling from the early years. Schools are encouraged to be innovative with the CfE, while taking it as a strong core for school-level development and creativity – and the CfE ensures consistency in standards, even while structures of delivery might vary to some degree. Under the CfE, local authorities in Scotland maintain a clear role in finance, support and regulation. The consequences of these differences for the development of both individual identity and a collective sense of citizenship seem quite clear.

### ***3.1.2 National Differences in Institutional Pathways and Opportunity Structures***

By institutional opportunity structures, we mean the deeply ingrained conceptions about how education systems ‘work’, how they get things done, the set of rules through which the system is

administered. Such institutional/organisational frameworks powerfully channel and frame what it is possible to achieve in and through education systems.

Thus, we see that in *France*, while the problems are recognised as structural, and related, on the one hand, to the implicit barriers that weigh on working class students when they choose one or another track and, on the other hand, to the devaluation of the kind of degrees they are most likely to follow, the solutions mainly target the educational system. Even when they concern partnership, they consider firstly the Ministry of Education or the State; local authorities or parents are given a very narrow place.

*The solutions are clearly shaped by the Ministry of Education and its field of reference.* Nevertheless, efforts are made to involve all potential actors: not only teachers and headmasters but all practitioners who intervene in schools as well as parents, pupils and NGOs. The implicit difficulty is to convince the educational community that the question of discrimination is a real problem and that it has to be taken into account in the framework of school.

So, as well as the existence of structural inequalities (social and spatial) that exist independently from the school system, there are also inequalities that are due to the school system (incapacity to take the question of inequalities into account, reinforcement of inequalities, ghettoization, and incapacity to support pupils).

The French school system is the most (or one of the most) centralised in Europe; it appears that territorial inequalities are hardly recognised. All regional and local administrative bodies are supposed to be organised and function the same way, regardless of their sizes, their socio-economical contexts, their employment markets. Local authorities' roles are still very thin and peripheral, even if they try to develop actions to overcome some of the school system limits.

Far from being able to support its pupils, the French school system tends to reinforce inequalities. Many interviewees quoted the PISA results to demonstrate the difficulties. They assert that our school system has pernicious effects on self-esteem, through a discriminatory system of marks and the exclusive importance given to curricula and to formal knowledge, or the inefficacy of the repeating practices. The system also tends to create or to reinforce the existence of ghettos. In France, some areas can be labelled as ghettos in the suburbs developed during the 60ies at Cities peripheries. This phenomenon is well known in the sector of urban policies that emerged during the 80ies to struggle against the growing socio-economic difficulties of these places. As far as schools are concerned, the ghetto phenomenon is both reinforced by the school zoning (that tends to anchor working class children in these areas) and paradoxically by the smoothening of the school zoning system (that enables middle class parents to enrol their children in schools outside their zone). These trends have an impact on both pupils' trajectories and class management, so that even the standardization of pupils' profiles is a problem for class management; classes that concentrate pupils with difficulties tend to be worse than when pupils are mixed.

The interviews point to the incapacity of the educational system to support children who encounter difficulties. The treatment of difficulties is developed through a very individualised process based on providing additional hours of teaching, such as more hours of maths or French for instance. This approach is problematic from several points of view: 1.) it means that pupils with

difficulties with do not spend their days in the most efficient way; 2.) there is no questioning of the methodology (a pupil who faces difficulties with one particular subject will have more content on this subject, usually with the same means even if he or she did understand in the first occasion...); this time is dedicated to a particular subject, there is no transversal consideration.

On the other hand, experiments developed at departmental level tend to take into account the importance of territorial inequalities. They are particularly important in Seine-Saint-Denis where the difficulties are deep. In this department, an internal plan has been implemented to focus on five training elements: the development of vocabulary, particular attention to narrative structures, more systematic use of writing, foreign language competence echoing French language competence, and borrowing books. Outside schools, several large partnerships have been developed with other public actors to struggle against early dropouts, such as the Conseil general (the elected body of the Department level), justice and police.

In **Finland**, the institutional pathways and opportunity structures are very heavily shaped by a commitment to equal opportunity for all, which is underpinned by, and realises, the Nordic education system, with a particular emphasis on equality of access to education. In the recent Government Programme from 2011 it is stated; “The objective of Finnish education and cultural policy is to guarantee all people - irrespective of their ethnic origin, background or wealth – equal opportunities and rights to culture, free quality education, and prerequisites for full citizenship”.

This is particularly realized via the ‘educational’ guarantee, which is motivated by ‘ensuring individual careers, the quality of life and working capacity and preventing exclusion’ (cf. the account on Finland in section 3.1 above). The problem of securing equal opportunities to basic education is defined as important in a “successful prevention of exclusion”, which is both a part of an individual perspective, preventing the individual from being excluded, and of a societal perspective, e.g., exclusion leads to expenditure for the society and an decreasing in labour force.

The most important channel though for promoting integration is education *based on compulsory education*. All educational institutions should have an equality plan, and through this prerequisites for intercultural dialogue are created.

In the transition phase, there are two main solutions to the problem of not finding a place in further education: implementing an education and training guarantee and additional basic education or orientating prevocational education. These solutions can be interpreted as a preventive action, which might give an indication towards the policy Finland is moving, i.e., a policy of preventing instead of patching up.

The problem immigrants encounter are seen as not only language difficulties and study skills, but also the fact that students with immigrant background often encounter several transition phases, because they often participate in preparatory instruction for immigrants or similar. The document identifies four main challenges around immigrant students in the transition phase: the diversity of educational trajectories for immigrants, the supply and demand in education do not meet, developing the learning, teaching and guidance, the insufficient number of places in vocational education.

Very significantly, the problems of immigrant students are legitimized with statistical references on how immigrant youth manage in comparison to students from the mainstream population, such as for instance, that drop-out rates are higher: marks are lower: the percentage of students with immigrant background who apply to upper secondary level is lower than among students from the mainstream population: their risk of marginalization and of remaining outside education and the labour market are higher. This does not offer much in the way of specific diagnoses of what produces these figures, or of how they might be addressed.

One specific solution proposed comes from implementing a project that has been more widely effective in a form especially for immigrant youth. This justified within the Nordic Welfare model, which implies equal opportunities for everyone and supporting the person in the weakest position.

If there is a continuing form of response to the issues, the overall policy in Finland seems to be that young people with immigrant background first need to learn the language, Finnish/Swedish, in order to enrol in the education system.

The aims of immigrant education have been an education including equality, functional bilingualism and multiculturalism. There is a recognition of a problem that immigrants encounter several transition phases in education, which might increase difficulties and drop outs. The thought seems to be that every transition phase means an increased risk of dropouts.

Overall, governing of the transition phase in Finland seems to be moving towards an individualistic supporting system, which might mean supporting individuals according to their personal needs, supporting a group of people with a specific need, e.g. immigrants who encounters language difficulties or students who are talented in some specific subject.

In *Germany* this friction refers to the question of how to deal best with the consequences of migration/immigration in terms of education transitions and trajectories. This is to say that issues pertaining to immigration have been refocused so that they now appear predominantly as educational problems. This friction sees children and youth of migrant background representing a policy for achieving equality of opportunity in education and in society at large. Second, it pertains, in a narrower view, to education policy inasmuch as it addresses the close relationship of educational attainment and ethnic and social origin. The general tenor, however, points to a rather compensatory strategy (improving language proficiency levels of individuals). Third, it entails an element of labour market policy since youth of migrant background are among those pupils most affected by early school leaving and low chances of entering a training contract (Ausbildungsplatz). Also here, the focus is placed on lacking competencies and dispositions of the youth themselves and refers to a discussion of 'trainability' (Ausbildungsfähigkeit) that is closely linked to employability. This means that the skills and competencies of school leavers transferring to the employment system are regarded as problematic both in cognitive and social areas.

The findings of the PISA study with relation to children and youth with migration background indicate an immense failure of German educational policy and schools. Children and youth with migration background experience deficient careers in schooling and achievement that are a con-

tinuous threat to all efforts at integration. The inability of German schools to mitigate or compensate social inequality becomes especially evident in this context.

This is not a failure of children and youths themselves, but a system failure, part of which is the inability to help these children and youths in realizing their full potential thus harmonizing a human capital approach (it is a societal waste to systemically disadvantage these children) with a subjective approach (realizing one's potential as a source of individual well-being and fulfilment).

Migrant children and youths have limited access to the full range of schooling; they are channelled to the lower tiers of the education system thus increasing the attainment gap of their German peers. However, the channelling itself is not problematized but clearly attributed to "the quality of support". Language acquisition, diagnostic competencies, and communication with parents are singled out as areas where the German system is most deficient. The logic thus is: children with migrant background do not get the support they need thus falling behind before they even enter school. The misrepresentation of migration is attributed to the long-term denial to view Germany as an immigration country. Eurocentrism and blatant forms of 'othering' are identified as elements contributing to the alienation of migrant children. Most importantly: the construction of "collectives" along ethnic or national lines is said to strongly contradict the modern focus on the subject and the formation of individual identities. Multicultural societies emphasizing plurality such as the Netherlands, Canada and Scandinavia are referred to as positive role models, viewing immigration as an asset and a special form of societal capital instead of as a burden – the still prevalent view in Germany.

Four institutional/contextual features affect the frictions in *Italy*: 1) a ten-year long but incomplete and open-ended process of reform of school cycles, targeting especially the issue of *relevance*, which, however, left untouched a) an inconsistent (mainly hierarchical and bureaucratic) governance structure; b) an unreformed mid-cycle (the lower secondary cycle) as a weak point in the whole education path; c) a still unclear "division of labour" between vocational education and early vocational training. 2) A school autonomy which has never been fully really materialized due to budget constraints and controls. 3) A decentralization, including the 2001 Constitutional Reform, that set up a still not settled division of tasks and responsibilities between State and Regions; leaving a still appalling North/South divide. 4) A relevant de-standardization of individual life courses, challenging the traditional integrative and comprehensive school model put into practice in Italy since the 1970s. In this respect, the issue of pupils with immigration background has a relevant "mirror effect" of Italian "State thought" (Sayad, 2004) and its weaknesses.

Usually norms on intercultural integration and immigrant integration at school rank low in the hierarchy of sources, and hence not a strong commitment. General principles of a comprehensive education, stated in national and international laws, prioritise the right to education.

Intercultural education is taken as a means of opening up schools to every kind of diversity as a basic educational paradigm. On-going changes (globalization, Europeanization, new mediascapes and knowledge, school reforms), including migration, affect all pupils, and answers must be given generally: immigrant pupils work as a mirror/magnifier ('marker' is the word used in the text) of wide-scope problems to be coped with.

One highly relevant document identifies three facets of the *problem*; the concentration ( and to some extent the ‘culture’) of immigrant pupils; a problem of institutional coping, with shortages of trained staff and lack of good practice (which is a ‘technical’ problem); and a problem of the availability and quality of information and data (again, a technical problem). The document presents a list of solutions, largely drawing on those set out as the ‘Italian Way’. However, it has no practical implication, since, as is often the case, the buck is passed to local authorities, even explicitly stating that there is no money to dedicate to these ends. Clearly this defines a passive form of subsidiarity, i.e. delegation of responsibility without allocation of resources.

So, overall,

- There has been little if any change in the levels of governance of those issues;
- The usual response to most issues seems to be ‘more of the same’; for instance, the response to fragmentation is support for further localization;
- At the same time, the importance of building local networks, and at the most giving a role to Regional authorities in this respect, underestimates the path-dependency of unequal development and performances of local institutions;
- There is a strong perception at local level of lack of coordination and support from central institutions, leading to a distrust in the possibility of reforming the governance of the system: the risk is reproducing the usual model of weakly generalized good practices;
- The overall governance system seems based on overlapping lobbying/advocacy, together with passive subsidiarity replacing State idleness, but also grounded on State delegation;
- So, the combination of wide scope documents, governance gaps, the lack of implementation tools, goodwill (but not necessarily skilled) mobilization leads to an integration model that we can call ‘do-it-yourself’, unintended, based on local micro-regulation.

In the *Netherlands*, the dominant official policy relating to education of migrants entails that there is no need to devise specific policy measures targeting migrant students. Instead the focus should be on supporting disadvantaged students, immigrant or native Dutch. The official policy, therefore, does not observe large differences in terms of educational challenges encountered by these equally disadvantaged groups.

The most important shifts within education policy for migrant students in recent years have shifted from specifically migrant target group oriented policy towards general disadvantage policy in socio-economic terms, which is considered to be more in line with the actual disadvantage suffered by students. The deeply engrained tradition of parental choice of school, and a segregated education system further exacerbates the difficulties faced by migrant children and families.

Policies related to the education of migrants (and to students from low socio-economic backgrounds in general) include those aimed at individuals, those aimed at school policy, those aimed at the education system, and those aimed at wider policy.

Effort is devoted to increasing the involvement of parents from migrant groups, who are generally more difficult to reach and less involved in the education of their children than are Dutch par-

ents. This is partly because of a lack of knowledge and skills, but also because of a deficient command of the Dutch language.

In *Slovenia*, a distinction is made between EU, perceived as a detached, even universal institution that works top-down, and Slovenia, as one of its members, which is seen simply as a follower of EU standards and consumer of EU resources. The EU therefore becomes '*handy*', for instance when referring to, and advocating for human rights and applying for funds.

The Strategy constructed to address the issues of migrant children and students identifies three main reasons for the persistence of the problem of immigrant children: their lack of knowledge of Slovenian language; the absence of strategies and instruments for their inclusion in the education system: and the failure to include immigrant children and their parents in the schooling system and in the 'broader Slovenian environment'.

The Strategy lists the following reasons for the failure to address these issues, although it produces little evidence to back them up:

A lack of *legislation* that would allow a more successful planning of inclusion of immigrant children in the Slovenian educational system: a lack of *strategies and instruments* for the inclusion of immigrant children in the educational process: and a lack of *expert knowledge*, and of *skills for quality cooperation* with immigrant parents.

The Strategy does not suggest enough clear policies to be applied to the school system in order to make a step from implementing integration to inclusion.

In the absence of any explicit policy, every single school adopted its own methods to deal with immigrant children. There is no policy, this is not valued, not encouraged., so that the responsibility for immigrants is somewhat random as it is transferred from the systemic policy level to the individual level framed through the ethic of care and solidarity, so that successful integration is left to coincidence. Whether the immigrant child will have the proper support or not depends on the individual school and the individual teacher.

In the *UK*, the processes of restructuring, specifically the Academies scheme (essentially, centrally state funded schools with a great deal of autonomy) and increased private-public partnerships are considered to be policies that will reinforce rather than challenge existing inequalities and therefore have a very mixed impact on social cohesion.

School intakes appear to be more ethnically segregated than their neighbourhoods. This may be an unintended outcome of existing policies, but not a desirable one in terms of promoting good relations or reducing inequalities.

Schools that are effective in raising the attainment of Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish heritage pupils have the following features in common. They:

- identify where pupils from Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Somali and Turkish communities are under-achieving;
- strengthen the use of data to inform learning and teaching;
- target appropriate support;

- develop inclusive learning and teaching approaches;
- build effective whole-school structures and systems that focus on under-achieving groups as part of a whole-school improvement strategy;
- ensure school senior leaders take a lead in the monitoring and evaluation of impact on pupils' learning and attainment;
- embed coaching as a means of professional development to support partnership teaching and to bring about improvements in learning and teaching;
- plan regular opportunities to enlist pupils' view on learning and what the school can do to improve practice;
- strengthen the work with parents and the community to support the learning of their children

The consequences of policies towards previous waves of immigration emerge as frictions within on-going debates about policy

### ***3.1.3 National Differences in Discursive Pathways and Opportunity Structures***

As noted above, discursive opportunity structures framing policy initiatives and possibilities are deeply embedded in national modes of representing the relationships between 'natives'—whether defined on the basis of *ius soli* or *ius sanguinis*—and 'immigrants'. Also as noted above, the nature and consequences for possibilities of action of the ways that immigrant populations are named, and we see a few of the different educational consequences of those different modes of naming and discursively framing migrant populations.

In **Finland**, as noted above, 'immigrants' (the almost exclusive term used), and the 'problems' they might be associated with, are scarcely glossed at all, save by reference to inability to speak Finnish. There is clear recognition that they are more likely to be unemployed, but implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, this is put down to ineffective implementation of the educational guarantee. There is scarcely any discussion in the documents or by the experts on factors associated with their lack of success (apart from lack of language), while, as the report points out, their 'failure' (which is never referred to in those terms) is registered almost exclusively in statistical terms. And while a lot of 'solutions' are provided, the *problem* is not very well defined. However, when looking at the solutions provided, one can get an idea of the main problems regarding immigrant education and training. Solutions provided in the text are to increase the participation of immigrant girls in education and training, immigrant students will be supported in maintaining and developing both Finnish/Swedish as well as their own native language. One can implicitly comprehend that girls are in particular in a vulnerable position and therefore require special attention and that language problems is something which needs to pay special attention to. However, while the overall emphasis of policy is shifting in the direction of individualization of solutions, there is little indication of how this might work with immigrants.

It is also important to note that the focus is also not only on how to support immigrants, but also how the mainstream population and actors in school should deal with immigrants: "Tolerance and a positive attitude to different cultures will be stressed in all education and training. Questions

relating to minorities and human rights will be systematically integrated into teachers' initial and further training."

In *France*, while migrants may be recognised as full citizens, and the tradition of republicanism inhibits any attempts at distinctions between groups, the possible role of the educational community as a part of the discrimination process is not raised, and there is no acknowledgement that the actors have to be trained to deconstruct their own prejudices.

The French school system is particularly weak when one considers the necessity to recognise inequalities: there is currently no strong political will to deal with this question. The French school system has been based on the necessity to produce an elite and its objectives are oriented toward the 10% of students who are excellent and who will be the country future decision makers.

Having studied in the schools of the ghetto can be somewhat debasing, with suspicions regarding their level and the likelihood that they will encounter difficulties in their guidance.

In *Germany* the discourse on migration/immigration reflects the struggle to politically deal with society's increased plurality and heterogeneity. As Germany does not count itself among the classical immigration countries, the term 'migrant', really international migrant, refers to a person who has permanently changed his or her centre of life to another country (definition of the federal office of migration and refugees. Influential German sociologists introduced assimilation into the German social scientific discourse. From here, it was but a short step to focus on language acquisition as the key to integration, early childhood education as an important step to decrease the risk of failing education careers etc. The key question with regards to all GOETE-themes: access, coping, life course, relevance and governance was found in the successful adaptation of personal dispositions to the new requirements of an increasingly complex and fast changing social environment.

In the early years of the century, migration came to be seen as presenting a particular challenge to the emerging knowledge society while at the same time being necessary for demographic reasons. Children with migrant background were generally not seen in a differentiated way but – in a metonymic way – children of Turkish origin came to be taken for the entire group. This pars pro toto strategy was accompanied by ascriptive processes and a rather vulgar application of reproduction theories: lack of interest in education, low educational background of the parents, lack of interest in learning the German language, lack of habits conducive to educational success such as reading aloud to small children, having books at home, investing in cultural activities such as visits to the museum, exhibits etc. The argument thus ran: children who have not been properly pre-socialized before attending school, most migrant children, will have difficulties in access and making smooth transitions; their coping skills will be underdeveloped as they are unfamiliar with the problematic and have little support from their parents, school will be irrelevant to them, because they have not learned to appreciate the relevance of schooling. Even where parents have high ambitions for the school career of their children, are these ambitions and expectations likely to be unrealistic etc.

*The Italian Way for Intercultural Schools and the Integration of Foreign pupils, (Ministry of Public Education, 2007)* is directed at concerns raised by principals and teachers about what are referred to, rather broadly, as “pupils with an immigration background”, or “non-Italian pupils”. It is presented as a “cultural” effort to define a national model of integration aimed at identifying principles and frame decisions and actions taken elsewhere.

Its basic representation of the problem centres on possible risks from over-concentration of immigrants, though it does acknowledge the importance of cultural diversity, with ‘intercultural education’ concerned not just with immigrants, but important for all in a globalising world.

A form of assimilation is promoted as the positive side of integration: “many pupils are kids of second-generation immigrants, and sometimes they speak Italian with the clear local inflection of one of our beautiful dialects”. This means that the first form of diversity mentioned and valued is intra-national.

A fourfold solution is advanced, which should be professional, national (the Italian way), implemented locally and dynamic, and based on the principles of universalism, comprehensiveness, person-centred education and ‘interculture’, which means that diversity should converge towards social cohesion, rather than emphasising differences, or multicultural models based on separate identities.

However, a ‘thick’ interpretation of culture and the ‘absolute relativism’ (a *bogey* concept especially in Catholic thought) are turned down: dialogue means also change in cultures. So, the *interculture* ‘Italian way’ means that diversity should converge towards social cohesion. A culturalist view of origin countries and the absolutization of belonging should be avoided.

Selective education paths are refused; separate education is allowed just for short periods or specific subjects. The definition of “*Interculture* Italian way” and the reference to ‘rigid’ models means that both the colour-blind assimilationist model and the UK multicultural model based on separate identities are rejected in favour of an in-between model.

The basis of the experts’ critique of the political understanding of the migration issue is that the Italian system and the Italian way, are failing to respond not just to problems of immigration but to wider challenges of globalisation. It is seen as a matter of a system that was considered to be performing well not being able to come to terms with challenges brought about by forms of diversity quite unlike those the existing system aimed to serve, such as disabled students. In this frame Italy is perceived as a backward country, either missing a clear model of integration, or not implementing it consistently. For some this gap is just a question of time (since Italy is relatively a newcomer as a destination country of international migration), while few think this issue is structural.

Nevertheless, education is somehow seen as an outpost, since a national—intercultural-- model exists (at least on paper).

In terms of the conceptualisation of the issues, most documents and interviewees proudly and safely state that Italy supports an ‘intercultural’ model. In their words and texts, ‘interculturalism’

means a half way between multiculturalism and assimilationism, since both these models are neglected and considered as “failed”.

Thus, ‘interculturalism’ would imply an acceptance of cultural diversity (differently from assimilationism) as an individual feature, and not as a group one (differently from multiculturalism): diversity is a dynamic experience, and there should be awareness on that. It is worth wondering how this discourse relates with actual practices, and why ‘interculturalism’ should sum up positive features of multicultural and assimilationist models, and not their negative sides. In this respect, the Italian discourse on interculturalism is poorly reflexive, not considering any risk that can come from the model itself.

In summary, all discussions and framings of issues around migrant education continue to be informed by conceptions of the ‘Italian way’.

In the *Netherlands*, the discursive priority is on general quality improvements, perceiving little or no need for specialized policies for migrant children. However, other policy actors highlight that the challenges for migrant students differ in terms of their nature and scope, and improving education of migrant students does require specific policy measures, with the present shift of the government from migrants to ‘disadvantage’ risking further deterioration of educational achievement among migrant students. Supporters of this discourse suggest that tackling these issues require specific measures, such as additional language support at schools, improving parent-school cooperation, inclusion of modules in teacher training tailored for prospective teachers in segregated schools, and increasing involvement of migrant parents in school decision-making process.

While school segregation is not a new phenomenon in the Dutch education system, what has changed is that it has become increasingly pronounced along the lines of socioeconomic status and more recently by ethnic background.

One important characteristic of Dutch education is the widely used terminology of ‘black and white schools’. ‘Black’ is used for non-Western immigrants, including Suriname, Moroccan, Turkish and persons of Caribbean origin. In governmental statistics, a school is defined as ‘black’ when more than 70% of students have are of non-Western immigrant origin. Schools with less than 20% of non-Western immigrant students are categorized as ‘white’.

Educational achievement is not the only aspect of the discussion on segregation. The interlinkages between segregation and integration (e.g. social cohesion and citizenship) are just as important. Since segregation is considered to be detrimental to social cohesion of the Dutch society, one might argue that the subject concerns everyone, whether migrant or not. The level of segregation in and through the existence of ‘black and ‘white’ schools, which encourages also white flight, is likely to lead to even greater residential and hence educational segregation, and increasing gaps between ‘native’ and migrant children in experiences and opportunities.

The current Minister, however, clearly states that “the quality of education is more important than the fact that a child is enrolled in a black or white school” (Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012). Initiatives taken at different levels to combat segregation are no longer perceived as conclusive or successful, and are no longer a priority for her. “It is good when people

from different cultures meet, but for me, as the Minister, fighting segregation is not a goal” (ibid.).

As a Christian Democratic, she refrains from taking any action which might constraint free school choice: “I find it rather important that the families are able to choose the schools themselves”. The issue is one of quality, not the student composition of schools; in various recent policy notes of the Minister, the issue of education of migrants is absent, and there is an emphasis on quality improvements with a strong belief that such improvements would also improve educational achievement of immigrants.

Overall, migration problems concern the whole society and supersede school issues as they touch the (im-) possibilities of social integration, with the existence of ‘black’ and ‘white’ schools reflecting the general segregation in Dutch society. On the one hand, the problem is not confined to the Education Ministry, but on the other, it is not recognised there, at least by the current Minister, where ‘quality education’ is held to be the solution for all students, parental choice of schools is sacrosanct, and migrant status is not recognised as a particular form of disadvantage.

In *Slovenia*, immigrant children are defined as those who for different reasons (social, economic, cultural, language...) are not fully integrated and/or included in the society. They are currently living in Slovenia though they may or may not have been born in Slovenia and may or may not have Slovenian citizenship or permanent residence, with at least one parent not having been born in Slovenia

This definition embraces a broad typology of immigrants and ethnically Non-Slovenians living in Slovenia. The definition includes those who do not speak Slovenian as their first language.

The issue of immigrant children and schools is very fragmented and very briefly addressed, with a lack of knowledge of immigrant children, especially on the part of teachers, and in the provision of language teaching, and inadequate recognition of the importance of preserving the language and culture of immigrant children and unequal evaluation of these compared with the Slovenian language and culture environment.

The Strategy promotes (possibly as a result of the EU influence) intercultural communication and dialogue and the promotion of equality and equal chances. It critiques the lack of implementation of these values at the level of both policy and practice. The critique of the level of practice, focuses especially on teacher's competence.

One of the most problematic issues is the almost exclusive understanding of integration as based on the acquisition of language skills. Cultural and social integration, labour market, etc. are listed as relevant, but not separately addressed.

Multiculturalism is still understood through concepts of integration and sometimes assimilation. Therefore, it reproduces the same hegemonic relations of social majority over social minorities.

The Strategy also constructs the crucial actors responsible for the integration of the immigrant (“The responsibility for a successful inclusion of immigrant children rests on the whole teaching staff and never the individual expert”). This is especially evident when discussing teachers in

primary schools by semantically positioning them as those without knowledge, those who need to be educated and coached.

Overall, the strategy document has an ‘ideological’ background in its relationship to formal EU ideas and values and therefore fits in the transitional process of democratization of Slovenia. The problems being addressed are related to the process of inclusion of immigrant children in the education system of Slovenia, with learning the Slovenian language as the crucial factor for a successful integration of the immigrant children while other factors are not as much taken into account.

The integration discourse clearly upholds *conformity* as the desirable outcome of successful integration of immigrant children in the school system. Accordingly, immigrant children who adhere to their linguistic, social and cultural patterns are considered segregated from mainstream school system. Despite the policy objective of defining integration as a two-way process that requires the accommodation on the part of both immigrant students and the Slovenian school system, the integration discourse suggests that it is immigrant children and not Slovenian institutions that are required to change. The integration discourse is therefore framed within the one-sided notion of help (help with extra learning lessons, special help from experts, teachers etc.) coming from the supposedly stronger, more relevant and institutionally protected teacher understood as the one holding the integration process. The Strategy does not suggest enough clear policies to be applied to the school system in order to make a step from implementing integration to inclusion. What the strategy does not introduce is a non-essentialist view on cultures, nations, ethnicity, citizenship and diversity etc. It also unproblematically adopts the EU-fashioned notion of multiculturalism that lately has been subject to relevant scientific critiques.

A longstanding policy challenge in the *UK* has been what is termed the ‘underachievement’ of young people with migrant heritage, especially boys from Black Caribbean families, who are often labelled as ‘troublesome’. Links are often made between the youth cultures of Black boys and their disengagement with school. So although the actual migration might have occurred decades ago, the affects remain a focus for policy intervention in education. In many respects then, the friction of migration/immigration in the UK is a historic one that is played out through the discursive framing of ethnicity and race equality.

More recent waves of immigration have led to claims that migrant children are currently ‘swamping’ UK schools. Such concerns are primarily raised around issues of language competency and ‘Britishness’, with fears expressed that a large number of schools are (or will be) dominated by children for whom English is an additional language.

Therefore, the policy friction of migration/immigration within the UK falls into two subcategories: firstly, the impact of previous waves of immigration and the cultures of participation among young people of BME migrant heritage; secondly, the on-going and loosely defined project of ‘inclusive education’, which is part of a broader political project of community cohesion.

Another key debate concerns the benefits of immigration to the UK, typically focusing on economic and/or social factors, while Human Rights and asylum issues also continue to have an influence.

Social cohesion through diversity is a strong discourse in the UK with regard to immigrants, ethnic and other minorities, varied religions and cultural groups, so that the friction of migration/immigration and education is located within the wider historical, cultural and social processes of multiculturalism and equality. In many respects then, the migration/immigration friction is a particular aspect of the broader marginalization friction.

The “tensions” created by newly arrived families are not framed as being entirely new, and immigration is not taken as a neutral issue - it *does* create forms of social instability. But such instabilities are never discussed without the potential for a positive opportunity to arise and are positioned as *recreations* of forms of pre-existing social instabilities and inequalities. The constant framing of the potentiality of opportunity from ‘tensions’ may be due to what could be termed the discourse of ‘equality of opportunity’ that has deep roots in British culture, despite the hierarchical character of British society. Where schools are positioned as capable of resolving conflicts and tensions in the wider locality, there is a sense of ‘localized meritocracy’; a recognition that due to existing and entrenched structural factors, equality equates to different things in different places, depending on how it is defined within the local community *and* governed by local authorities.

There are two major tensions here: firstly there is the unresolved relationship between societal, educational and personal influences/responsibilities in enhancing attainment and thus improving educational trajectories and life. Secondly, there is the legacy of multiculturalism and its effect on the politics of integration. English language proficiency is an essential skill, but this must be achieved in an ‘inclusive’ fashion, which remains respectful of the heritage of newly arrived (and more established) ME young people.

The consequences of previous waves of immigration emerge as frictions within on-going debates about policy and practice at the highest level of governance. Perhaps most notable are concerns about the underachievement and educational exclusion of BME boys.

### 3.1.4 Summary

We will employ two means of summarizing the great amount of detailed evidence we have examined around the migration friction. The first is to compile a summary table of the predominant logics of intervention deployed by the eight different national systems. Having gone through the three aspects of national approaches, we can see how their logics of intervention are informed by conceptions of the national and shaped by historical understandings of the desirable and the possible in education, each of which has consequences for the ways that they frame and administer transitions into and out of lower secondary education.

**Table 5: Logics of Intervention underlying the migration friction in national reports**

	<b>Problem</b>	<b>Solution</b>	<b>Mechanism</b>
<b>Finland</b>	Intrinsic to Knowledge Society: Prevention of Exclusion and Marginalisation (on	Compulsoriness and Equality: Specificity of Migrant	Education Guarantee: Specific solutions; Preventive strategy

	basis of statistical evidence): Problem for everyone	identity and treatment	
<b>France</b>	Framed bureaucratically/legally, and no political will behind it  Actual structural inequalities in school system;  Incapacity of system:  Educational administration both the problem and the solution	Very centralized	Almost none  Very few and underpowered local experiments
<b>Germany</b>	Dealing with consequences of migration—turned into an educational problem:  Social Inclusion:  Equal opportunity:  Youth skills—restricted ambition of migrants:  System failure: Indeterminate policy	Equality of opportunity:  Successful adaptation;  Integration of youths;  Influencing individual dispositions rather than system change (or structure of schooling)	Language skills as key to integration;  Intercultural competence;  Support for individuals;  Compensatory
<b>Italy</b>	Policy context of unresolved changes and reforms makes action problematic	Integration via the ‘Italian Way’—right to education for all minors; intercultural education	Intercultural education as the foundation;  Strategy of ‘more of the same’; delegation to local level with no funding, poorly coordinated
<b>Netherlands</b>	Quality, not equality--relates to all ‘disadvantaged, not just migrants; existing structural issues in school system; school segregation; NB also seen as a solution;  Not ‘migrant specific’		Language support; Intercultural education; parental involvement; more advice and support
<b>Slovenia</b>	Essentially structured by ‘ex-Yugoslavia’	Government adherence to EU prescriptions	Language absolutely central; Intercultural



Esping-Andersen’s welfare state typology, and Jutta Allmendinger’s use of measures of educational standardisation and stratification.

The version of the national migration specific classification we will consider is the study by Koopmans et al, *Contested Citizenship* (2005), whose explicit focus is the bases of citizenship for migrants in the four countries we have just mentioned. They do this on the basis of what they call *Cultural Difference and Group Rights*, which is based on the dimensions of *Cultural Monism—Cultural Pluralism*, and what they call the *Ethnic* and *Civil-Territorial* bases of individual access, the results of which are set out in Figure 3.1.

**Table 6. Cultural Difference and Group Rights (Koopmans et al., 2005, p.73)**

	<b>Cultural Monism</b>	<b>Cultural Pluralism</b>
<i>Ethnic</i> basis of individual access	<i>Assimilationism</i> Germany	<i>Segregationism</i> Netherlands
<i>Civil-territorial</i> basis of individual access	<i>Universalism</i> France	<i>Multiculturalism</i> UK

This clearly differentiates between the four countries on the basis of their ‘migrant-specific’ policies, and comes up with a conclusion that they are all distinct from each other; there is no single common ‘regime’.

By comparison, as we know, Esping-Andersen puts France and Germany together in the category of ‘Corporatist-conservative’ welfare regimes, and classifies Netherlands as a ‘Social-Democratic’, and the UK as a ‘Liberal ‘welfare regime’.

Allmendinger classifies all three of French, German and Dutch school systems as highly *stratified* and highly-*standardised*, and the UK systems as ‘low’ on both dimensions.

Moreover, if we move outside these classifications to look at how the four countries are classified by Hall and Soskice in terms of their ‘varieties of capitalism’, for instance, we see that Germany and Netherlands are identified as *Coordinated Market Economies*, the UK as a *Liberal Market Economy*, and France as ‘ambiguous’) (Hall & Soskice, 2004).

Not only are there no overlaps between the categorisations of France, Germany, Netherlands and the UK (the four GOETE countries that are included in all three classifications (Esping-Andersen, Allmendinger, and Koopmans et al.), but also the classifications appear to be quite independent of each other, suggesting strongly that there may be good reason to consider the possibility of a separate basis for migration policy that is not reducible to either the countries’ overall welfare state form, or the conformation of their education systems.

Thus, while the classifications in terms of welfare regimes, varieties of capitalism, and the standardisation and stratification of schooling, do show some overlap with each other, neither individually or collectively do they show much beyond a random relationship with Koopmans et al.’s classification of cultural difference and group rights.

The second example of direct inter-national comparisons of national responses to the presence of migrant children and young people is taken from the work of Sabine Mannitz in a collection entitled *Civil Enculturation* (Schiffauer et al., 2005). Like Koopmans et al., Mannitz considers the

cases of France, Germany, Netherlands and UK, (comparing in particular the experiences and responses of Turkish students in schools in the cities of Paris, Berlin, Rotterdam and London) specifically in terms of ‘what it is that nation-state school systems put across to their present-day pupils, specifically in terms of what the volume refers to as ‘civil culture’. This ‘combines three elements: competence in the workings of a country’s civil society; competence with regard to its nationally specific conventions of civic culture and norms of civility; and some familiarity, conformist or hopefully critical, with its dominant national self-identification, what Taylor (2004) calls its’ social imaginary’. Essentially, it taps into conceptions of citizenship and identity, and their relationships. The research shows that the forms these take, and the relations between them, are nationally specific congeries of institutional and discursive representations and meanings of the issues surrounding migrant education.

Mannitz found that ‘in conceptualising cultural differences, pupils mostly followed the hegemonic forms of assignment of the surrounding society and as a result showed how far they have assimilated structural elements of the respective discourses about the meanings of culture and the otherness of immigrants’. Thus, in the case of Berlin, the students ‘replicated the dominant perception of other cultures as collective ‘mentalities’ that were produced through family upbringing’, while ‘their parents’ backgrounds were mostly described in terms of inadequacies; being less affluent and stable, not functioning so well, not being so liberal, nor able to compromise or discuss things openly’. By contrast, the students in the Netherlands and the UK—both classified by Koopmans et al. as ‘culturally pluralist’— found it much easier to define positively what their own culture stood for. Only in culturally monist and assimilationist French case, ‘where pupils are expected to treat cultural peculiarities with programmatic indifference and strict relegation to the private sphere’, was there an insistence on their cultural differences as a crucial and indispensable aspect of their position in society’. (Mannitz, 2005, p. 295) Mannitz summarises her argument as follows:

“All four cases have in common the fact that pupils from migrant families dissociated formal citizenship and identity as a solution to the dilemma of partly competing, partly overlapping, identifications. In the settings of these nation states, where identification with the greater collectivity of the nation is supposed to link the political framework of the state with the people as its sovereign and protective community, these pupils’ creative conflations of identity are apt to challenge the very axiom of national citizenship as the crucial source of collective identity.” (ibid., p. 299f.)

### **3.2 ‘Other’ National Frictions**

This section of chapter 3 provides a narrative overview of the national frictions that will be discussed in the following thematic sections of chapter 4. They explain the rationale behind the selection of each topic as reported by the GOETE national partners. Something that became clear at a very early stage in the analysis of all the national reports was that in the majority of cases it was impossible to fully disentangle one friction from another. This, of course, is not surprising given the intersectionality of the social world and policy processes; it is also something that most partner teams noted in the introductions to their national reports. However, through the lens of the chosen frictions we are able to focus closely on the GOETE meta-questions regarding the rela-

tionship between education and social integration, and the governance of young people’s educational trajectories.

The selection of the second frictions is a matter of great interest. Can we discern a common pattern among them? Do all the countries have similar anxieties? Are the problems they see themselves facing external or internal to the education systems? Are they becoming more alike?

All countries, however, share some common background and contexts. All, for instance, are members of the EU, and thus recipients of the same process and focus of naming and framing ‘problems’, most prominently in the identification of the problem of *Early School Leaving* as of the highest importance. All have been affected, albeit in quite different ways, by recent upheavals in the global economy.

It might be expected that the frictions selected would also make reference to what is perceived in the research literature on education policy in Europe as a rapidly encroaching wave of governance of education through numbers, driven by conceptions of competitive comparison, performativity, efficiency, accountability, and even privatisation. However, there is little trace of any of these forms in the frictions, with the exception of PISA, which is mentioned quite frequently in some cases, but effectively ignored (or perhaps taken for granted) in others. Nevertheless, the existence of such possibilities need not be entirely palpable for them to have what we might call a ‘frictive’ effect on national education governance—even if that is confined to speculation about how far these new initiatives take into account the plight and outcomes of the socially disadvantaged.

More directly, wider changes in conceptions of the purposes, processes, structures and expectations of education do seem to underlie these frictions, indeed to contribute to them, as local manifestations and experiences of such shifts and what they may mean for the disadvantaged—whose constitution itself has changed qualitatively and quantitatively. Specifically, three of our countries—Germany, Poland and Slovenia-- have undergone very significant political change in the past two decades, whose consequences continue to affect the conditions of education governance.

At its most general, we may see these changes as representing significant challenges to the effectiveness of the ‘education offer’ as it concerns the socially disadvantaged in the countries we are concerned with, and if there is a common thread to be recognised across the cases, and the frictions, it is that. That does not mean, however, that the countries identify the same frictions, or see them as representing the same kind of problem (see tab. 7). Rather, they expose different tensions and issues in each country, challenging existing institutional and discursive selectivities.

**Table 7. Other National frictions for the GOETE countries**

<b>Country</b>	<b><i>Friction 1</i></b>	<b><i>Friction 2</i></b>
<b>Finland</b>	<b><i>Marginalization</i></b>	<b><i>Equal access</i></b>
<b>France</b>	<b><i>Inequalities</i></b>	<b><i>Difficulties with reform</i></b>
<b>Germany</b>	Migration/immigration	<b><i>All-day schooling</i></b>
<b>Italy</b>	Migration/immigration	<b><i>Vocational pathways</i></b>

<b>Netherlands</b>	Migration/immigration	<i>Early selection</i>
<b>Poland</b>	<i>Lowering of mandatory age (7 → 6)</i>	<i>Expanding definition of special needs</i>
<b>Slovenia</b>	Migration/immigration	<i>Gymnasiums vs. vocational schools</i>
<b>United Kingdom</b>	Migration/immigration	<i>Marginalization</i>

**Note:** Frictions in bold italics are outlined in the following sections

The way we will proceed in this section is to introduce capsule accounts of the eight country teams nominated ‘second friction’ (and in the case of Poland there are two of these, in the absence of a ‘concentrated’ account of migration as a friction). Following this we will examine how far it is possible to draw some kind of ‘transversal’ comparison of the cases, through a brief consideration of the contexts (section 3.2.1.), logics of intervention, mode of intervention (section 3.2.2.) and institutional and discursive selectivities (section 3.2.3.) that they have employed.

### *Finland – Marginalization and Equal Access*

#### *Marginalization*

In Finland, the prevention of social marginalization is positioned in policy terms as key for securing equal access to education for all children throughout their educational trajectories. Emphasis has been put on, for example, early intervention, support for ‘at risk’ families, support in day-care centres and in schools, and multidisciplinary safety nets in schools. In preventing social marginalization regarding the transition phase from lower secondary to upper secondary, some issues in particular have been on the agenda during the last decade; multi-professional cooperation between government agencies, outreach youth work, adequate guidance counselling and support, adequate support for integration, maintenance of special-needs schools and classes, promoting of integration and employment of immigrants through training.

In 2011, the Youth Act (72/2006) introduced significant amendments to multidisciplinary cooperation and outreach youth work with the aim of improving young people’s access to the public services and the support measures available, so that young people’s social empowerment is made more effective during their life course. The Act introduces the use of the term ‘multidisciplinary cooperation’ instead of the previously used ‘multidisciplinary cooperation between authorities:’ the general meaning is the same, but the changed name emphasizes the fact that the cooperation includes professionals in various public administrations and other sectors. The multidisciplinary cooperation will now be implemented at a local level as collaboration between authorities in various sectors. In addition, the law has impacted on outreach youth work; a youth division authority will now be appointed responsible for the implementation of outreach youth work. The general objectives of this work being the promotion of young people’s entry into education and labour market, i.e. improving the employment rate, reducing unemployment and securing balanced public finances. Regarding the transition phase from lower secondary school to upper secondary education, multi-professional cooperation between government agencies is in particular highlighted.

It is also proposed that the legislation is amended to include provisions on cases in which the authorities would be required to disclose a young person's identification data and contact information to outreach youth work authorities without the impediment caused by data security provisions or the consent of the young person in question in order to reach the young person and provide him/her with early support.

### *Equal access*

Equal access to education is seen in Finland as necessary in order to maintain a Nordic welfare model. As in the other Nordic countries, Finland has been trying out 'guarantees' since the late 1970s in order to secure opportunities in education and on labour market for young people in particular (Hummeluhr, 1997, quoted in Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012). After the Lisbon Strategy, Finland launched two important guarantees to increase access to education and labour market, the 'Education guarantee' in 2003 and the 'Youth guarantee' in 2005. The emphasis on the youth guarantee is to ensure each young person under the age of 25 a place in employment or training. In the transition phase from lower secondary to upper secondary education the Education guarantee plays an important role. Everyone who has completed comprehensive school is, according to the education guarantee, guaranteed a place in further education - in upper secondary education or additional comprehensive education. If a young person does not get admitted to an upper secondary school or additional comprehensive education of his/her choice, the education guarantees the person a place in another upper secondary school, additional comprehensive education or outreach youth work.

In 2008 an electronic application system came into effect in order to effectively deal with applications made under the Education guarantee system, which allows young people to apply for a place in any school in the country. The majority of young people, especially those with a good leaving certificate, probably benefit from this system; they have the possibility to apply for any school of their choice. However, for all young people this is not the case, when applicants with better degrees outside the municipality apply to study in upper secondary schools leaving applicants without good degrees without a place in further education. This seems to be the case in especially the big cities; many young people apply to upper secondary schools in big cities and there might be a lack of applicants in upper secondary schools in smaller municipalities.

A weak leaving certificate, learning difficulties, health problems or other reasons allows students to apply in the joint electronic application system with a flexible selection. The flexible selection may also be used if the student has a specific interest in a subject due to e.g. extracurricular activities. An education provider may take in up to 30 % of applicants using the flexible selection. The electronic joint application system has been criticized by some experts to make it more difficult for pupils in the flexible selection system to gain access to upper secondary schools, because in the electronic joint application system a pupil may apply to many schools anywhere in the country. Experts indicate that the weakest pupils, who are in most need of support, i.e. the flexible selection system, are at greater risk in getting excluded. Another problem is that pupils with weaker leaving certificates may have to accept a place in an upper secondary school/outreach youth work not of their choice, with an increased risk of dropping out. In vocational education

only 15 % of the pupils commencing their studies evaluated that they were studying in the right field. Over 50% said they are in the wrong field and a third of the pupils weren't sure (Numminen et al, 2002).

## ***France – Inequalities and Reform***

### ***Inequalities***

Inequalities between schools is probably the most important issue currently under analysis within the French educational system. The results of the last PISA study illustrate the 'polarisation' of the French school system, with a large reproduction of social inequalities in the field of education (OECD, 2009). It is, unsurprisingly, at the heart of many official reports to the Ministry of Education and of journals and newspapers dedicated to the educational community. Academic research has illustrated the multi-faceted character of the issue. The structural inequalities of educational trajectories influence the labour market transitions in terms of unemployment rate, but also of kind of employment –incomplete or with very short contracts (Merle, 2009). Territorial inequalities have large impacts in terms of schools performance and of social relegation (Oberti, 2007 & Van Zanten, 2011), meaning social inequalities are clearly related to educational inequalities (Dubet, 2010), while students who encounter difficulties experience largely early dropouts and face weak chances to enter the labour market (Lefresne).

The question of inequalities is all the more difficult to accept in France because the French system is based on the belief of individual equality toward school and on the principle of meritocracy. This illusion guided the various school reforms that crossed the field since 1960: the school generalisation; the unique lower secondary education; the objective of an 80% success rate for each age group up to the A-levels, and so forth. The assertion of its failure represents an important reconsideration of the French school principles. Yet as Dubet has asserted, the issue is actually so common that most of the time the various types of inequalities stay undefined. Dubet suggests that inequalities can be identified in three main forms: 1) the inequalities of distribution (the way school inequalities are or not reproducing social inequalities), in this case, the analysis focuses on the inputs and resources of schools; 2) the inequalities regarding the integration/exclusion of students, in particular vis à vis of the labour market (the outputs of school); 3) the inequalities in the educational competencies that are provided by school in terms of symbolic goods (self-esteem, honesty, for instance). Due to discrimination and other social issues, young people with a migrant background often encounter all these inequalities and must therefore deal with particularly difficult educational trajectories.

### ***Reform***

It is now well understood by both policy experts and practitioners that the French system as it currently stands produces inequalities and no longer matches the objectives of a democratised school system in a developed country. This common belief has pushed every new government since the end of the 1980s toward new reform through the education sector. Since 1989, every new ministry has launched a reform that has in some way changed the schedule of schools or the

curricula they deliver. However all these reforms are considered as failures in terms of their own logics and objectives. Some have had positive impacts but none have really reached all the aims targeted by the reform. The changes implemented thanks to the reforms have been peripheral or have even, it has been argued, increased the level of inequalities (Oberti, 2007).

Reforms in the education field are extremely tricky in France. The education system is one of the most corporatist systems in the country: nevertheless, the Unions' influence has weakened for two decades and it is increasingly uncommon that a consensual way of reforming the system can be found. As a result, the educational system has fragmented in a constellation of corporations, which prevents deep reform to be implemented. Moreover, the willingness of every ministry to implement its own reform has staved off any attempt to properly or thoroughly evaluate the previous reform. This has created a climate of exacerbated tension where there is distrust toward any reform whatever its content.

### ***Germany – All-day schooling***

All-day schooling in Germany (though not uncontested) looks rather like a 'low-threshold' reform because it leaves the basic structure of schooling intact. An indication of the largely non-ideological debate (non-ideological in the sense of not falling into the left/right opposition) post-PISA is the absence of arguments rejecting all-day schooling for associating it with socialist practices as had been done previously. Opposition does come from parts of the teaching community; from parts of the social policy and social pedagogy sector; from parents, especially middle class parents who see all-day schooling impinging on their educational rights; from sports clubs and other associations who depend on pupils having enough time for other than school-related activities. By and large, it is rather segments of than entire groups, and therefore opposition never was very strong. Upon closer analysis however, all-day schooling is much less modest than it seems. Besides affecting the relation between public and private education - compulsory education versus parental rights by de facto expanding compulsory education - it strongly affects the relation between hitherto separate policy realms: education policy and social policy, thus re-embedding youth policy.

An analysis of a joint policy document from education and youth ministers released shortly after the first PISA study illustrates the implications of the new constellation. At stake is the question of whether social policy that has been strongly client- or addressee-oriented maintains its independence and becomes an equal partner of schooling, or whether schooling so dominates the common policy space that social - especially youth policy - can no longer hold its own. This is one of the many consequences of the new paradigm of 'lifelong' and 'lifewide' learning: the educational realm appears increasingly unbounded; it dominates both time and space especially in the life phase of youth. Because of the new ubiquity of education, governance becomes an issue of orchestration – at least from the point of view of state policy actors. The motivation behind the implementation of all-day schooling in Germany combines several different aspects:

- A social policy concern is an important element of this policy friction. It speaks to the need to combine family and work career, especially for mothers, since parents are relieved from school-related activities. It is of particular relevance for the reshaping of gender roles in the

traditionally matri-central family education. All-day schooling is to provide adequate care for children so parents can work.

- A further point in question is the facilitation of peer contact, which, due to demographic developments (dropping birth rate, low number of children in families) is deemed necessary. Also, the half-day school is deemed too centred on individual learning; all-day schooling is to foster team work and contribute to solidarity in the peer-group.
- Also, education and school-related policy considerations play an important role. All-day schooling is considered to facilitate individual support for pupils, in particular for low achievers; more learning time is deemed crucial in improving the quality of education and raising achievement levels. It is, however, also related to a different organisation of the school hours and the curriculum (rather than more time). A 'new learning culture', more differentiated and flexible is the objective. All-day schooling is seen here as a tool of school development.
- Moreover, All-day schooling is seen as a means of equalizing performance disparities due to socio-economic differences in the families, since support is less dependent on parents' education level and financial means (private tutoring and the like). All-day schooling is to secure social integration and counter exclusion.
- Labour market-related arguments also figure prominently in this friction. Extensive implementation of all-day schooling fosters the labour market opening positions for teachers, school social workers and other education professionals.
- With regards to the aforementioned dissolution of educational boundaries; having more control over the spare time of pupils, is an important means to a stricter attribution between educational aims and individual learning processes as fewer hours are left outside of the influence of organised education
- Last but not least, for all of these reasons, all day schooling is a means of modernisation and can be used as a flexible instrument giving the Länder the chance to leave it to the individual communities and municipalities and to the local schools to determine the specifics. Hence, it may be used as an important means to local school development.

In relation to the GOETE-themes 'all-day schooling' relates to a strand of discourse that points to the necessity of improving performance levels, fostering the integration of children of migrant background, reducing the effect of social origin in school performance as well as providing individualized support. First, it relates to a policy of enlarging access to education for disadvantaged pupils, which also represents a potential support offer for these groups to cope with education requirements. Further, individual support is seen as providing an education that is relevant both to pupils and to society. Importantly, all-day schooling seems to be changing the traditional relationship between schools and youth and social work. Also, it hints at the absence of debate over a structural reform, especially in regards to the issue of permeability between the school types as well as the segregative effects of the multi-tiered German education systems.

### *Italy – Vocational pathways*

The Italian educational system has recently gone through a ten-year long but incomplete and open-ended process of school cycles reform. The fragmented planning and implementation of changes failed to resolve the following problem areas:

- 1) An existing inconsistent (mainly hierarchical and bureaucratic) governance structure;
- 2) An unreformed mid-cycle (the lower secondary cycle) as a weak point in the whole education path;
- 3) An unclear 'division of labour' between vocational education and early vocational training.

It is point three that provides the focus for the second Italian friction. In the last ten years, three policy documents framed the debate on the relationship between education and training, and on the transition to the labour market. The first, the "White paper on labour market in Italy: Suggestions for an active society and for quality jobs", was released in 2001 by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. It grounded the 2003 Reform Law on the Labour Market (a bit cynically known as "Legge Biagi"), and spread the idea of closing the relevance gap and the labour mismatch by boosting apprenticeship and workplace-based education. The second document, released in 2009 by the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policy, is a white paper on the future of the (Italian) social model, titled "The Good Life in an Active Society". Apprenticeship is mentioned again as a tool to boost and strategically accompany the transition school-to-work. The third document, released in 2010, is titled "Italy 2020: Action Plan for Youth Employability through the Integration between learning and work".

The building of the Regional Systems of Education and Training is rarely focused on in each of these scenario documents – they are much more attentive to the issues of apprenticeships and youth aged 16 and over. A great part of the debate on Regional Systems in Italy took place in the State-Regions Conference, a coordination board between the two established after the 2001 Constitutional Reform, when 'training' became a Regional jurisdiction and 'education' both Regional and State. The State-Regions conference, however, produced only agreements mainly focussing on technical features of implementation and not all the background documents at the very basis of the agreements are easily available. As a consequence, the norms regulating the issue are quite complex: a problem quite well known in Italian policy making. Reading the norms regulating the right-duty to education/training (e.g. the background for the Regional Systems of Education and Training and the Regional Systems themselves), one must consider: 1) 15 laws and decrees passed between 1999 and 2010; 2) 11 Ministry decrees between 2001 and 2011; 3) 10 agreements between State, Regions and Local Authorities issued between 2003 and 2011; 4) 3 guidelines documents - this extensive list does not include any Regional laws, regulations and guidelines. It should be no surprise therefore that not all these norms are consistent with one another.

A policy friction is evident here because equality of opportunity is strongly hindered for most disadvantaged pupils, those with immigrant background and/or low socio-economic status, and/or poor family support, and/or school failures or bad achievements in their past educational career. The dramatic number of NEETs is also an undisputable proxy of this issue. The accumulation of disadvantages has great effects on the life course trajectories of youth in general – which is a disadvantaged group *per se* – given the serious problems of transitions between education, training

and the labour market. The structural deficiencies are also connected to the coping strategies enacted by young people and their families: vocational education and training is strongly played down, and – in a rigid labour market – families do often prefer to retain youth waiting for the “best” chance, to avoid a downward labour insertion.

Furthermore, a decade of efforts to increase the relevance of vocational training and education have led to quite limited results: often, the offer is slavishly connected to current (potentially transitory) needs, with a weak vision of future professional needs in the labour market, or connected to different logics, like in the patronage system playing a big role in some Regions, in particular in the South of Italy. Thus, the governance of educational paths within vocational training provides an absolutely paradigmatic example of one of the many unsettled State-Regions unbalances, which consolidated after the 2001 Constitutional Reform. Autonomy without resources and ‘empowering’ tools for weak institutions – a sort of ‘passive subsidiarity’ delegating responsibilities without providing resources to fulfil them – produces too often ineffective blaming strategies.

### *The Netherlands – Early selection*

Early selection is one of the defining characteristics of the Dutch education system. Unlike the majority of OECD countries which track children into different types of schools at the age of 15 or 16, in the Netherlands tracking takes place after primary education at the age of 12. Based on CITO (a central exam test) results as well as advice of primary school teachers/principals (based on educational achievement, interests and motivation levels), children are eligible to apply to three different secondary schools: pre-university (VWO), general secondary (HAVO) and vocational (VMBO) education. Since such differentiation takes place when children are still at a young age, it is defined as ‘early selection’.

Even though the policy is well embedded within the education system, it has stirred heated discussions among policy makers, educators, media and general public in different periods in the past. These discussions have resurfaced recently after an OECD publication in 2007, which criticised Dutch education system because of its early selection. The report argued that early selection reinforces inequalities within the Dutch society and limits opportunities of young people to study at higher education institutions. The report particularly makes reference to students with low socio-economic backgrounds (including a large share of non-Western immigrant students), and claims that their study opportunities at higher, non-vocational tracks of secondary education as well as progression to higher education is restricted because of early selection.

The incumbent Minister of Education, Culture and Science seriously considered OECD criticisms and initiated some public discussions on the merits and drawbacks of early selection. The Minister also requested a comprehensive study on the topic by Education Council, an independent, advisory body that advises the government on the main outlines of policy and legislation relating to education. The Council published its report in 2010, ‘Vroeg of Laat?’ [‘Early or Late?’]. Within the report, although the Council recognised the concerns, it maintained that postponing the selection moment is not necessary and that the differentiation is required to maintain and improve the education quality. Hence the Council did not suggest any major system changes and only rec-

ommended some measures to expand the opportunities of students from lower socio-economic background to study at higher tracks of secondary education and to improve their educational achievement in general.

In recent years, a stream of national think tanks, pressure groups, academics, and ‘high profile’ commentators in the political arena and the media were involved in a wide national policy discussion. Their policy texts vary from maker, broker and commentator documents, and endeavour to influence the existing policy. The discussions in these policy texts can be characterized by sharp discursive differences and juxtapositions. What is evident is that there is a lack of consensus on the effects of early selection. The different argumentations in these texts can be roughly divided in two contradicting discourses: anti- and pro-early selection.

Anti-early selection discourses emphasize the inequalities that the Dutch education system creates and/or reinforces by early selection policy. They see the moment of selection as one of the most problematic issue, and therefore, put much discursive priority on systematic changes (to delay selection moment for a few more years) or modifications that would remedy the adverse effects of early selection for the disadvantaged students. Early selection is considered to have a negative effect on equity because it limits participation of students from lower tracks to study at higher tracks of secondary education and higher education institutions. The pro-early selection discourse prioritizes quality issues rather than equality issues. Such discursive statements are disseminated, most notably, by the Minister of Education, Culture and Science, by broker documents of the Education Council’s report (2010) and the Central Planning Bureau (2011). These texts support the preservation of the early selection policy as they argue that the studies indicating a negative effect on equality are inconclusive. Furthermore, particularly the Central Planning Bureau (2011) and the Minister of Education, Culture and Science (Van Bijsterveldt, 2011) suggest that quality is a more pressing issue for the Dutch education system at the moment and preserving differentiation and tracking soon after primary is therefore essential. The general pro-quality argument is that when talented students are mixed with much less talented students, their educational performance will decrease as they are not be stimulated by their peers and they would lack teacher attention because teaching in a heterogeneous class is more demanding. Since those who are currently in power advocate pro-early selection discourses, this discourse is more powerful than that on anti-early selection.

### ***Poland – Expanding mandatory education and Expansion of the definition of special educational needs***

#### ***Expanding mandatory education***

As of the school year 2008-09, Polish children have entered mandatory education aged six, following a lowering of the commencement age from seven. The basic arguments supporting the implementation of the change were:

- Earlier school education commencement enables better diagnosis and support for children requiring professional support (in Poland, relatively few children attend pre-school institu-

tions) and correspondingly (it is argued) a more effective equalling of educational opportunities

- Earlier commencement of the formal education process is tantamount to earlier entering of those students into the work market after the graduation - an important issue in the face of decreasing job opportunities as the society becomes older
- Earlier intellectual and emotional maturing of children. The age of education commencement in other EU countries was also brought up as a supporting argument (for instance, the UK, Belgium, France, the Netherlands) in debates
- Imposing an obligation of education of younger children increases the overall number of children at school at any given time, therefore helping to maintain the level of employment across the education system

A three-year transition period was implemented and during that period parents could decide whether their child started education at first grade or attended a pre-school institution (in a reception class). This was extended by two years in 2012, giving rise to protests from local officials, who were concerned about spiralling costs, uneven provision and finances, and a range of organisational issues including planning and expenditure. More, the changes introduced were not commonly accepted throughout Poland. Especially active in protesting against the changes were parents who claimed that schools were not ready for the admission of children at the age of six. Some academic societies and educational experts claimed that children of this age were too emotionally immature to participate in formal school-based learning and that the changes might ultimately result in an increased number of special educational needs statements.

These changes triggered a reform of the elementary school curriculum, followed by alterations to the lower and upper secondary curricula. Due to the swift implementation of these changes, accusations were made that the government had not allowed for due preparation. Furthermore, the changes made in the curricula triggered a discussion on the role of contemporary education; what it is supposed to be and what approaches toward the process of learning dominate in Polish schools.

### ***Expansion of the definition of special educational needs***

Recent changes to the statutory definition of special educational needs (SEN) in Poland have expanded the catalogue of SEN criteria to take into account family background and environment factors, as well as students who demonstrate extraordinary talents in certain areas. The implemented change resulted from the analysis of the existing diagnosis and support system, which was recognised as inadequate. The previous definition of SEN limited the group of students requiring support to a narrow cohort and did not allow for provision for students whose problems had not stemmed from their capacities and abilities, but from their living conditions. Moreover, the increasing occurrence of previously marginal phenomena such as ‘Euro-orphans’ (resulting from the long stay of parents abroad while the children are left unattended at home) and long stays abroad (children *with* parents) supplemented arguments for the expansion of the catalogue of SEN ‘problems’. The inclusion of ‘extraordinarily talented’ young people into the group of

SEN students was, in part, a consequence of the general opinion that Polish schools are for 'average students' and do not support extraordinary students in any way.

The changes in defining SEN students also, necessarily, expanded the range of forms of assistance and support that should be available at school and in the Polish system of education. Currently in Poland, the task of diagnosing SEN and arranging support is conducted by psycho-educational counselling centres that are located out of school, often remote from school what hinder students in need access to assistance. New or improved forms of support are supposed to be available as close as possible to a student, resulting in new duties for teaching staff at school. Moreover, the implemented change in SEN was (is?) supposed to be the first step of a wider reform of the psycho-educational counselling centres and the whole system of diagnosis and students' support. Therefore, the SEN issue is deemed to be an area of friction because the implemented changes will have a significant impact on schools' functioning, often in a way that schools are not adequately prepared for; the lack of appropriate specialists employed at school is undoubtedly the major problem. Unsurprisingly, the change in the functioning of psycho-educational counselling centres (their effective closure) does not convince all teachers and experts.

Furthermore, the introduction of the new school-based diagnostic approach, critics argue, will increase the influence/interference of the school in the family environment, while students with a difficult, problematic family situation are at risk of stigmatization. A further related issue: currently, students with lower social and economic background in Polish system of education are treated frequently as students with SENs, therefore there is a shortage of action addressed to them exclusively; also, they do not exist in public debate as a separate category. The marginalization of such students reflects their functioning at school and, as a consequence, educational and learning problems occur that are often accompanied with negative attitudes toward the school responsibility and lack of their own vision of (investment in) educational and professional career.

### ***Slovenia – Gymnasium vs. vocational schools***

The enrolment level of primary school graduates in secondary vocational and technical schools is dropping every year in Slovenia, while the number of those enrolled in general upper secondary schools (gymnasiums) is growing. The reasons for a drastic decrease of students deciding for vocational and technical schools could be found in:

- A strong parental influence on the child's educational trajectory. For different reasons parents tend to prefer their children to enrol in gymnasiums - a low status of cooperation between parents and schools.
- Amongst the main reasons is the low status of vocational and technical schools in society in general. This is related to low income of vocational jobs, low cultural and social capital of students enrolled in vocational schools, violence, vandalism, alcohol and drug abuse are frequent in these schools.
- Prolonged youth and postponed decisions, that mainly shows in postponing decisions on future studies (students decide after gymnasiums) and education for a particular profile

- A weak influence of the school experts on the child's educational trajectory (amongst the main reasons is the lack of time devoted to counselling and parental influence mentioned above).
- A low selection of programs in vocational and technical schools.

A decrease in the numbers of young people enrolling in secondary education in the last decade has, consequently, significantly influenced the number of students in vocational and technical schools. Apart from gymnasiums, all the other (vocational and technical) secondary schools have experienced a drastic decrease of young people enrolled in their programs. The problem is most serious for lower and secondary vocational-technical education because the transition to the third educational level is more difficult, but still possible. However, also other social factors that influence enrolment in vocational-technical schools are detected: a desire for a better education, a lack of jobs in certain fields, and other reasons that encourage young people to prolong their schooling period.

One of the main goals listed in the 'White Book on Education in Slovenia – Vocational Education and Training' (2011) is increasing the quality of knowledge. The process of quality improvement lies in the Strategy of smart, sustainable and inclusive growth of 'Europe 2020'. According to the Strategy the level of knowledge should raise due to the development of the economy while social partnership should increase the cooperation amongst schools, the economy and the governmental institutions. An important aspect of social partnership is practical training in vocational and technical schools that would suit the labour market and the economy and generate better connections between schools and employers. Lifelong learning that is in domain of Regional centres for lifelong learning are another mechanism to integrate the economy and the schools. If we sum up, the vocational and technical schools are aiming at a better integration with the labour market and economy in general. The program is being reformed in order to follow and suit the changes in the market and economy.

### ***United Kingdom – Marginalization***

The UK has four distinct education systems in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Each nation has devolved responsibilities for education policy, teacher training, schools inspectorate, and so forth. These differences are both historic and current. It is therefore impossible to consider the UK as being a single unit for analysis; educational research that takes the UK as its focus must be comparative, or at least explicitly address how the plurality of systems will be dealt with in analytical terms. For our investigation of educational trajectories and governance within GOETE we are covering three different city-regions, each in a different nation: England, Northern Ireland, and Scotland (Wales is not included in the project). As Ball (2008, p. 2) notes, while Northern Ireland and Scotland are not exempt from the pressures of globalization that shape education policy in England, "they mediate those pressures differently, they balance them differently against other priorities and face different social and economic problems".

There can be no entirely 'elegant' solution to dealing with the UK focus in reports such as this, where we aim to go beyond description and juxtaposition in our analysis of governance and poli-

cy. However, the emphasis on frictions in WP7 does provide us with a logical framing device and allows us to focus on the pressures and demands placed on policy actors throughout the UK and how they go about mediating these (their logics of intervention). For the UK, the migration/immigration friction is specifically ‘nested’ within the broader friction of marginalization (for reasons fully described in the UK national report). We also take the further step of placing England at the centre of our analysis, because it is overwhelmingly the largest nation in terms of population and thus provision of education. Scotland and Northern Ireland are not neglected but are employed in comparison, as described below.

Marginalization is deployed to describe the way that education is positioned as key for socializing young people’s sense of civic responsibility. In particular: how the ir/relevance of different kinds of education for particular groups of young people (for example, working class boys) are seen as causing or accentuating social problems; claims that new forms of governance are being used to radically change access to better or more suitable forms of education for groups of young people identified as problematic; the facilitation of support strategies (including public, private and ‘civic’) to help students cope with transitions, and therefore provide what are seen as positive life course trajectories. Following the civil disturbances in English cities during the summer of 2011 the links between educational disadvantage and social marginalization - and the supposed ability of education to alleviate youth disengagement with community - have become recurrent themes in the popular press and in education policy debates. In reality, of course, this is nothing entirely new; but contemporary economic pressures, global labour market processes, and the mechanisms proposed by policy makers (particularly the involvement of the private sector in the design, provision and delivery of compulsory schooling) give the current debates a different dimension.

Such strategies are embedded within a range of wide sweeping reforms currently being implemented across the nations of the UK. Two key examples are the Education Act 2011 in England (streaming from ‘The Importance of Teaching’ White Paper) and the Curriculum for Excellence programme in Scotland (not a single document, but a cluster of policies). The Northern Irish government has focused its efforts on dealing with marginalization by focusing on young people who are not in education, employment or training - NEETs, as will launch a new strategy in 2012.

The issue of social marginalization - and overcoming its problems - has become bound-up and embedded in complex ways with the processes of systemic restructuring. In England, for example, the expansion of the Academies programme and the introduction of Free Schools, proponents argue, will bring better education to those at risk of marginalization - this position is, of course, contested. In Scotland the phased introduction of the ‘3-18’ curriculum has seen a quite different approach; one that has young people’s individual learning trajectories at its core. In Northern Ireland the system will not be altered from the existing arrangement with non-selective secondary schools and selective grammar schools (where there is also commonly a division between Catholic and Protestant) - the newly introduced NEET strategies will be implemented *through* the current structure. The discourse that unites each of these cases is that of ‘standards not structures’: so, despite the debate and on-going reshaping of the systems being almost entirely focused on

structures - their stability or evolution - this is actually not positioned as the key issue by policy actors from across the political spectrum.

### ***3.2.1 'Transversal' Analyses of Friction 2 Accounts***

#### ***Contexts of Frictions***

This section on the second frictions is of considerable significance in itself, for it provides clear indications of what are considered some of the most significant issues at national level in terms of the governance of educational transitions. Why are these issues considered problems – or solutions, for there is no reason to assume that only objects designated as problems can constitute frictions – and what are they problems of/solutions to, and for whom? For instance, how are the frictions distributed across the issues of steering, administration or management that we distinguished above? On this basis we might say that the frictions suggested for Netherlands, Poland and Slovenia are largely linked to Steering (though this also has clear implications for Administration), those in Finland, France, Italy and Scotland revolve around Administration (with German friction crossing the distinctions between Education and other sectors, and between Steering and Administration), while the English trend seems to be to locate everything possible at the management level. This suggests that the frictions are related to forms of governance in general rather than being ‘transition-specific’. The frictions appear to have been generated from quite a wide range of contexts, though it is possible to distinguish broadly between those generated by ‘external’ (exogenous) and ‘internal’ (endogenous) contextual factors.

Among the exogenous factors, we have for Germany in particular, the experience with PISA, which seems to continue to throw a long shadow, though the more immediate context seems to be the importance of finding ways of ‘absorbing’ new clienteles, through the creation of an original new form of schooling. France, too, refers to PISA, but particularly in what PISA reveals about the extent of inequalities of the French education system, which is seen as a particular affront to the French notion of individual equality. There is some reference to the significance of the Lisbon agenda in the Finnish report, but the central issue is how to implement fully the education and youth ‘guarantees’ that have been offered to all young people. In particular, the deep seated problem of the better off managing to gain the greatest benefits from any educational innovation, including those not targeted at them, continues to thwart efforts at implementation. The key context for the Netherlands, too, is in part international, with an OECD report critical of its early selection policy, which is taken as an example of—and possibly a contributing factor to—wider inequalities in Dutch society.

Among the endogenous factors, the dominant element for the UK is the perceived need to interrupt the progressive marginalisation of young people for whom the education system has not provided effective entry to the labour market. For both Poland and Slovenia, in different ways, the key context is that of coming to terms with the political changes of the last twenty years. Finally, the framing context in Italy is that of the forms of stasis created by the national-regional division of the labour of vocational education—‘a sort of ‘passive subsidiarity’, delegating responsibilities without providing resources to fulfil them.

### 3.2.2 Logics and Modes of Intervention

In the “other” frictions we selected, we can identify, as noted above, three separate components to the logic of the kinds of policy intervention we are considering here:

- 1) the way the issue is *problematized*;
- 2) the imagined *solution* to “the problem”;
- 3) the *mechanisms* for addressing it.

These three phases do not appear in any necessary order or sequence. The problematisation might be implicit in the mechanisms developed in addressing it or the solution might prevent the problem. The three phases might even be attached to different territorial levels providing a complex multilevel governance picture.

The **Finnish** case is especially interesting in this context, since the problem to be addressed emphasises educational issues as problems in themselves, for instance, the consequences of social exclusion, and they are to be met by educational and youth guarantees to all, as human/civil rights in themselves, rather than as ‘causes’ of other problems, or a ‘difficulty’, or social problems in themselves. The solution then becomes making the guarantees work. This is to be achieved on the one hand by means of a new electronic selection mechanism—which unfortunately turns out to produce some socially biased outcomes—and by an emphasis on multi-agency working, based on the assumption that the education system is insufficient, and not necessarily wholly appropriate, to meet the challenge.

The situation in **France** is rather different. Here the problem is seen as one of three main forms of structural inequality: a) of distribution of the inputs and resources of schools; b) of the integration/exclusion of students, particularly in respect of entry to the labour market (the outputs of school); c) and in the educational competencies that are provided by school in terms of symbolic goods, such as self-esteem and honesty. There are other structural inequalities, including inter-regional inequalities, and these carry over into labour market. Given this problematisation, the solution lays clearly not in hands of education system alone, or the school, and previous mechanisms of intervention aimed at redressing the problem have failed. While there is much discussion about how they might be improved, the elitist and centralised structure of education system itself remains a major issue.

The first problem in **Poland** is in some ways also seen as a structural one and the solutions and mechanisms seem to be tailored with that in mind. The consequences for existing provision, especially given an ambitious time target to bring about an effective solution, through wide ranging planned reform, represent another aspect of the problem that has raised some opposition. The second problematisation is interestingly aimed at wider outcomes (changing education’s contribution *vis-à-vis* families) of, rather than more immediate outputs from, the education system. The proposed solution is the introduction of enhanced provision Special Educational Needs, to be brought about by shifting provision from specialist centres to schools.

The problem in the **Netherlands** derives from different political conceptions of what education is for – improving quality or reducing inequality, with the (key GOETE) issue of early selection a

flash point in the heated debates. On the one hand, the (independent) Education maintains that postponing selection is not necessary, and that differentiation is necessary to maintaining and improving education quality. The other side emphasize the inequalities that the Dutch education system creates and/or reinforces by early selection policy. They see the moment of selection as one of the most problematic issues, and therefore, put much discursive priority on systematic changes (to delay selection moment for a few more years) or modifications that would remedy the adverse effects of early selection for the disadvantaged students. Here we have polarised political positions on the central functions of schooling, and associated conceptions of the nature of the problem, with quite different ideas of what constitutes a solution, and of how to reach it via education policy. Thus, those wishing to retain early selection propose measures to expand the opportunities of students from lower socio-economic background to study at higher tracks of secondary education and to improve their educational achievement in general, while for the opponents the solution is to end early selection.

A different kind of duality of problematisation is evident in the **Italian** case, with both substantive and 'processual' (forms of governance) issues being identified. Substantive equality of opportunity is denied to most disadvantaged pupils, those with immigrant background and/or low socio-economic status, and/or poor family support, and/or school failures or bad achievements in their past educational career, and the effects of these disadvantages is cumulative. At the same time the value of vocational education and training is played down, with families often preferring to wait for the 'best' chance, to avoid entering the lower echelons of the labour market. Conceptions of effective solutions seem to be conceived in terms of existing (failed) efforts at reform, with the range of possible change mechanisms limited by existing institutions and governance relationships.

The problem is conceptualised in a rather similar way in **Slovenia** as the increasingly evident lack of relevance of vocational education, in an era when academic qualifications dominate. The solution is seen to lie in better integration with labour market, which would bring benefits both to wider society and to students. The proposed mechanism for bringing this about is a somewhat vaguely conceived increase in practical training and lifelong learning opportunities.

The **German** example may be seen as one where the solution, all day schooling, in a sense goes beyond the definition of a single problem. It rather conceives social disadvantage of pupils in a much broader way, aiming at reducing the effect of social origin in school performance as well as providing individualized support. The solution is seen as a far reaching reform in the direction of lifelong and life wide learning, involving other agencies than the education system, enabling the 'collective' addressing of a range of what might be called 'para-educational' rather than '(formal) schooling-related' issues. In terms of mechanisms, it seems to introduce a kind of portmanteau set of reforms under one heading, without attempt at major structural reform, which are additional to rather than alternative to, the formal education system, though necessarily with wider consequences.

The different countries of the **United Kingdom** conceive the problem in rather different ways. In England, for instance, the problem is seen as inhering in the relationship between educational disadvantage and social marginalisation, exemplified in particular specified groups, such as un-

derachieving white working class boys. One solution is seen to lie in generating multiple alternative solutions, that would be based around ‘standards not structures’, that is to say requiring local initiatives rather than systemic reform. In terms of mechanisms, different approaches are found in different areas (and countries), so that England has introduced an array of novel forms of secondary education, which not necessarily tailored for (or easily available to) at risk groups), Scotland has introduced an extensively revised secondary curriculum, and Northern Ireland is to focus on provision for NEETs.

In terms of the *mode of intervention* adopted (prevention, intervention or compensation), only in the **Finnish** case, and possibly the German case, where some form of prevention also seems to be implied, , where there is clearly some attempt at prevention. In the other countries all seem to rely on some form of intervention, though varying from the rather half-hearted, apparently gestural activities in **Italy**, to the very intensive system wide reform contemplated in **Poland**. **Germany’s** reform is an extensive and intensive move, with potentially far-reaching consequences, changing the traditional relationship between schools and youth and social work while leaving its structure intact. By contrast, a number of the other countries seem to resort to attempted structural reform, without success. There is little evidence, outside the German and Finnish cases, of any systematic attempt to do anything more than repair or update the system (though this involves a major project in Poland), rather than attempting more far reaching measures.

### **3.2.3 Institutional and Discursive Selectivities**

We see quite a range of institutional and discursive selectivities in the eight countries. At one end, we have the distinctive French and Italian cases, with institutional opportunity structures in the former remaining very largely limited to existing assumptions and governance patterns, and a still dominant discourse of inequalities and meritocracy. In **Italy**, the institutional opportunity structures remain strongly classified and framed, while we might see discursive opportunity structures extended rather than renewed, through the recognition of NEETs as a problem, for instance, and rather finer distinctions made within ‘the unemployed’. Poland and Slovenia are both still in a stage of (especially) discursive and institutional reformulation, with clear changes in both institutional and discursive opportunity structures. Institutionally, **Poland** is in the course of introducing a different conception of an educational career, while discursively changing conceptions of the role and contributions of education at individual and societal levels. We also see a clear discursive enlargement and redefinition of Special Educational Needs (SEN), accompanied by reforms of institutional arrangements. The changes in **Slovenia** do not appear to be so dramatic, though institutionally, there is some discontinuity with existing forms. The most significant change here is the more or less wholesale adoption of EU conceptualisations in some areas, together with the significant introduction of the concept of lifelong learning. The very strong discursive framed through the Nordic welfare system is very evident and important in **Finland**, laying down the basic parameters of the desirable, while institutionally, we observe something of a shift, or break, from the existing opportunity structures, with introduction of multi-agency working. In the **Netherlands**, the very different discursive representations of the issue of early selection appear to be associated with almost equally different conceptions of appropriate institutional arrangements for educational transitions. In **England** in particular, new institutional opportunity

structures proliferate, many on the basis of joint state/non-state provision, upsetting existing opportunity structures. We also find considerable discursive proliferation in forms of identification of both forms of schooling, and those at risk—and hence of appropriate treatment. Finally, the **German** case seems to demonstrate the most radical shifts of discursive and institutional opportunity structures. It appears to be opening up new institutional opportunity structures, alongside, rather than replacing, existing ones. And discursively, there is a clear attempt to introduce new opportunity structures—in the forms of lifelong learning, new ‘learning culture’, new goals and outcomes for extended understanding of education and its roles.

### 3.3 Conclusion

This chapter has represented the first attempt to elaborate, exemplify and test the tools of analysis that we have developed in order to facilitate an effective and productive comparison of the accounts of eight national regimes of educational transition governance. The fundamental idea on which those tools are based has been the necessity of moving the analysis to a higher level of abstraction than the kinds of empirical descriptions that are hugely informative, but less enlightening, in that they do not make clear the bases of their own characterisations, largely because they take so much for granted, as too ‘obvious’ to require articulation. This taken for grantedness itself can be quickly dispelled by the introduction of juxtaposition with other examples, models and forms of transition regimes, with ostensibly similar aims and possibly structures and processes. The differences exposed by such a process prompt and require further reflection, which can be very productive and very valuable. The limits of such juxtaposition, though, become evident when the fundamental incomparability of sets of practices aimed at delivering ostensibly similar objectives becomes apparent. That was essentially the problem that the structure of this section and the next one was constructed to address.

As noted in the introduction to the report, and in Chapter 2 on methodology, the method we adopted to tackle this problem was to shift the basis of the analysis to another level of abstraction. We have described a number of the forms this took, but in this chapter we have adopted the method of *tertium comparationis*, in this case in the forms of ‘frictions’ and logics of intervention, where the focus is not on the practices themselves, which as we have just noted, are not comparable, but on the reasons given for using these particular practices rather than others, which are comparable.

We can summarize what emerges from our analysis considering these five aspects:

- a) *The significance of the national*
- b) *The Mechanisms of Governance and National Histories*
- c) *National Conceptions of Citizenship and Identity*
- d) *Discursive Opportunity Structures*
- e) *Institutional Opportunity Structures*

.These do not exhaust, or explain, all the components involved in the governance of transitions and trajectories, but they are indispensable to understanding them.

- a) *The Significance of the ‘National’*

The first of these aspects, which has been pretty constantly repeated throughout this report, is the central significance of ‘the national’, in the sense of a unique, local and irreducible set of arrangements for educational transitions and trajectories. The national is, to different degrees, a defining element of the high level governance of educational transitions. It is what characterizes and distinguishes national systems. It appears to be based on almost primordial conceptions of the nation—the *‘Italian way’* is the most explicit and perhaps the most pervasive of these—while distinctions between the countries making up the UK seem similarly deeply rooted in such conceptions.

However, it is the forms taken by the national, and the differing nature and understanding of what is entailed by the governance of educational transitions and trajectories that is of particular interest here. In some ways, this emerges most clearly when we consider the national teams’ choices of a ‘second friction’—conceived of as an issue that in some ways crystallises a number of aspects of transition and trajectory governance, for it indicates something of the different roles and places and functions attributed, typically implicitly, to the governance of those transitions.

Thus, for **Finland**, the prevention of social marginalization is the overall objective to be achieved, or at least contributed to, through educational transitions. It is the goal around which they should be organised, and it is to be achieved in part through the education and youth guarantees. It includes early intervention and additional support for ‘at risk’ families, while the transition from lower to upper secondary has been the subject of considerable targeted effort over recent years.

The second friction selected by the French team is described as probably the most important issue currently under analysis within the French educational system. It concerns inequalities between schools, and related social inequalities, and it has been the focus of great official and academic reflection and activity, while structural and territorial inequalities of educational trajectories affect both unemployment rates and the kinds of job available.

The question of inequalities is seen as all the more difficult to accept in **France** because the French system is based on the belief of individual equality toward school and on the principle of meritocracy. This illusion has guided the various school reforms for the past 50 years, and its continuing failure is seen to require serious reconsideration of the principles of the French school.

In **Germany**, the relationship between education and social policy is taken as a key friction. The issue revolves around whether social policy should maintain its independence and become an equal partner of schooling, or whether schooling now effectively dominates the common policy space. In a sense, what makes this an important friction in GOETE terms is that it sheds light on some consequences of the new paradigm of ‘lifelong’ and ‘lifewide’ learning, which, the country report suggests, sees the educational realm appearing as increasingly unbounded, and dominating both time and space especially in the life phase of youth. And in this, it foreshadows in a sense one of the wider conclusions of the report, that of the increasing fragmentation and desynchronisation of educational transitions and trajectories.

The second friction selected by the Italian team is very directly related to the transition from lower secondary education. It concerns the unclear ‘division of labour’ existing in **Italy** between vo-

cational education and early vocational training, which has been the focus of unresolved debate for the last ten years, during which three policy documents have attempted to frame the relationship between education and training, and on the transition to the labour market.

In the **Netherlands**, the chosen issue was early selection to secondary school, a relatively rare focus on the first of the two GOETE transitions, which has been pursued for many years. The major issues seem to be about the consequences for social equality, and the tension between this and the very fundamental attachment in the Netherlands to freedom of school choice.

Given the relative absence of migration-related issues, the Polish team selected two 'other' frictions for **Poland**: the lowering of the age of starting school from seven to six, and the reform of SEN provision. While the first of these marks a fundamental shift in the pattern of educational transitions and trajectories, it is interesting to note that one significant case advanced in support of it was that it would enable young people to enter the labour market one year earlier. The other friction resulted from the analysis of the existing diagnosis and support system, which saw existing definitions of SEN as not allowing for provision for students whose problems stemmed from their capacities and abilities, but from their living conditions, which included 'Euro-orphans' (resulting from the long stay of parents abroad while the children are left unattended at home) and 'extraordinarily talented' young people.

In **Slovenia**, the friction was directly related to transition and trajectory issues, centred around the rapid reduction in the number of students opting for vocational and technical schools, because of the status differences between the types of school, and the phasing as well as the nature of the educational choices they would have to make.

In the **UK** (England), the key friction was the process of marginalization, interpreted as the possibility of different kinds of education for particular groups of young people (for example, working class boys) causing or accentuating social problems, especially after the civil disturbances in English cities during the summer of 2011. As a result of this, the links between educational disadvantage and social marginalization - and the supposed ability of education to alleviate youth disengagement with community - have become recurrent themes in the popular press and in education policy debates. This may not be new, but in the context of increasing economic pressures, global labour market processes, and the mechanisms proposed by policy makers (particularly the involvement of the private sector in the design, provision and delivery of compulsory schooling) it takes on different dimensions.

The range of the frictions elaborated in the national reports point to fairly fundamental reconceptualisations of the role of education in the life course, and in shaping the trajectories available to young people. The scope of the choices does demonstrate how deeply and variously the governance of educational transitions and trajectories is imbricated with different elements and aspects of wider society, and its multiple and complex relationships with education. Some of these frictions can be seen as strictly 'educational', in the sense of directly attempting to improve education's contribution to individual progress and success. Others may appear as somewhat tangential to this project, aiming instead for wider social goals via education. Others still are interested in what combinations of education and other forms of social support might bring about improved experiences of, and results from, educational transitions. Taken together, they demonstrate another

er somewhat underestimated element of the governance of the transitions and trajectories; the number of areas into which they reach, and on which they depend.

Looking from the obverse angle, as it were, the findings about the countries' responses to the common friction of migration are equally revealing, in this case more directly of the mechanisms of governance that they reveal.

### *b) The Mechanisms of Governance and National Histories*

By far the commonest element characterising the different frictions described in the national reports concerned the *gaps*, of various kinds, existing between the different levels of educational governance. Several reports pointed to the important and recurrent gaps between discourses that are developed by decision makers (at national or regional levels) and the reality of the practices and means that are, or are able to be, implemented in response. There is a double disjuncture here; between different levels of policy making—national-regional, for instance—, and between levels of policy making, policy administration and implementation management.

One notable factor separating the eight countries seems to be their different historical experiences of migration, with France, Netherlands and UK on the one side, and the other countries on the other side. The particular issues raised here concern who counts as a citizen, what rights does that carry, and how are those who are not citizens regarded. Thus in **France**, this history is reflected in the fact that people with a migrant background—typically from French ex-colonies, are officially considered as French and not separately considered in national data, which represents an extreme case of the continuity of discursive and institutional opportunity structures. The **Netherlands** also presents very clear evidence of the strength of both existing discursive and institutional opportunity structures, discursively through the prioritisation of quality over equality, and institutionally through the sacrosanct status of parental choice of school. These remain dominant, and contribute to the emergence of what are recognised as 'white' and 'black' schools. Like France and the Netherlands, the English response to migrant young people is strongly framed by the discourses and institutions that have developed over several decades of incoming migration. However, those discursive and institutional framings are currently under fairly radical reconceptualization, with moves towards both much greater variety of secondary education provision, and individualization of the responsibility for life course trajectories. **Scotland** and **Northern Ireland**, by contrast, are following much more 'conventional' routes of curricular reform.

What was referred to, in various forms, as 'individualisation' was a theme common to a number of countries, though it clearly meant different things in different places; in **Finland**, for instance, it meant supporting individuals according to their personal needs, supporting a group of people with a specific need, or students who are talented in some specific subject.

Overall, the work we drew on the experiences of similar students in different countries suggested that national differences did have a major impact on migrant student experience. It is, though, important in this context to acknowledge that the focus of the project as a whole is not on young people from a migrant background, but on the transitions and trajectories of the majority of young people in each country. The point of the focus on migrants was to reveal, obliquely, what

might otherwise have remained hidden dimensions and aspects of that experience, as well as any possible consequential effects for local young peoples' transitions and trajectories. One way in which this is registered is via a form of '*pars pro toto*' strategy, where the experience of one minority group—the socially disadvantaged, migrants, dropouts—is taken as representative of everyone in any of those categories.

**Germany** represents a particular case here, with its unique history of Turkish *Gastarbeiter*, where now, the high levels of failure of children and youths with a migration background in the German education system, is seen as a system failure. This includes the inability to bring such children and youth to the realisation of their full potential, and their associated collective – in terms of human capital – and individual benefits.

In **Italy**, the migrant focus constitutes just a further aspect of what are seen as chronic issues of governance across the board. This is made up of an incomplete and open-ended process of reform of school cycles, an unreformed lower secondary cycle, which represents a continuing weak point in the whole education path; and the still unclear “division of labour” between vocational education and early vocational training which we have referred to above. Here, the problems are seen as distinctly internal to the education system, and to the apparently insoluble issues around its internal divisions of labour and responsibility.

For **Slovenia**, migration is something of a novel problem, and one that seems to be absorbed into its wider political concerns around relationships with other parts of the former Yugoslavia. The problem is relatively new, and there is little capacity in the country to address it. One partial solution is very tight adherence to formal EU statements and policies in the area.

### *c) National Conceptions of Citizenship and Identity*

When we come to look at the transversal analyses, in some ways the most striking finding concerns how citizenship and identity are represented in the national reports, especially in how relatively rarely they are explicitly mentioned. The prominence, extent and depth of the discussions in the national reports where citizenship and identity do feature, vary quite considerably across the reports. In some cases, they seem to be almost entirely taken for granted, to the point where it is not necessary to mention them. In others, and most notably the case of **Slovenia**, they more or less explicitly underlie large areas of the reports. This might be taken as a reflection of the different degrees to which they might be taken for granted, and have been – in both the documents and the expert interviews that make up the national reports – as the institutional and discursive contexts with which current policies and practices are formulated.

However, there are some questions to be asked about this. First of all, does ‘the national’ explain the same amount of difference in every case? Our evidence does not allow us to say, but it seems *prima facie* likely that it does not. Second, while it may always be necessary, there seem to be no cases where it is sufficient, with the possible—and highly debatable—exception of **Slovenia**, in its current particular circumstances. A more important set of questions it raises, however, concerns what ‘national’ we are talking about. For instance, do these ‘nationals’ that are so relevant in the cases we have looked at, occupy the same ‘spaces’ as, for instance, the ‘national’ that Bob

Jessop identified in the post-World War II regimes? It seems unlikely, especially given the rise of the *New Public Management*, but here again, we cannot expect its impact to be the same everywhere—which of course only compounds the difficulty of coming to terms with the changing (theoretical) terrain of the national, because if that is the case it demonstrates quite clearly the variable and shifting nature of the space it occupies. This may be seen, for instance, if we compare the relationships between the state, the national and the public that might be inferred from our investigations. There are other shifts of this kind, but what we might take from this is that what the findings of the analysis here deliver is not a solution, but a new, and possibly more relevant set of questions about the nature of the national.

A second and quite similar issue, similarly rooted in the changing nature of contemporary societies, is the continuing overwhelming prominence of the labour market in all the accounts we have. Again, it is easy and almost ‘natural’ to assume that this is a constant, that it means the same, or at least has the same prominence, everywhere, but once again, it seems important to take this as a question to be problematized, a prompt for future work, rather than as a settled matter.

And, third, one tool that has emerged in this chapter as useful for advancing these understandings is that of discursive and institutional opportunity structures. This enables us to distinguish between apparently similar policies, and we now summarise the findings of the Chapter in these areas.

#### *d) Discursive Opportunity Structures*

As noted above, *discursive opportunity structures* framing policy initiatives and possibilities are deeply embedded in national modes of representing the relationships between ‘natives’—whether defined on the basis of *ius soli* or *ius sanguinis*—and ‘immigrants’. Also as noted above, the nature and consequences for possibilities of action of the ways that immigrant populations are named, and we see a few of the different educational consequences of those different modes of naming and discursively framing migrant populations.

In looking across the discursive opportunity structures offered by the different countries, we find striking difference is the way the ‘problem’ of ‘immigrant’ pupils is represented, with one group of countries effectively identifying the migrants themselves as the problem, and another pointing to the failure of the system to adequately address the issue, which is perceived to be one for the whole of society and not just the migrants.

In the first category we find in the **UK** a dominant discourse of immigrant ‘underachievement’, which should be addressed by specific measures, most recently of broadly ‘inclusive education’. In **Slovenia**, the problem seems to come down to migrants’ lack of ‘conformity’, especially in language. In **Italy**, there is a recognition of the need to integrate migrants (non-Italians), though to the ‘Italian Way’, but also to avoid excessive concentrations of migrants in particular schools because of their deleterious impact on the achievement of Italian students.

In the category of ‘system responsibility’, we find most prominently **Germany**, where dealing with a heterogeneous population is a cornerstone of a range of social policies. Rather less focussed are the policies of the **Netherlands**, which make the general improvement of education

for everyone (and which might therefore be referred to as ‘colour blind’, if we were not aware of the designation of white and black schools in that country), with ‘quality education for all’ the slogan, rather than ‘equality’ for the disadvantaged.

Placed somewhat between these two extremes, or at least recognising the significance of both, is the educational system in **Finland**, where the inability of migrants to speak Finnish is identified as a key issue, but accompanied by the recognition of the responsibility of the Finnish government to rectify this situation.

Standing somewhat outside these groupings is the **French** system, which has ‘colour-blindness’ at its heart; no distinctions are, or may be, made on the basis of ethnic origin, when all are equally citizens. What this means in practice, according to the French national report, is that the French education system is fundamentally concerned with the reproduction of an academic elite, with little recognition of or attention to the relationship between education and social equality generally.

In **Finland**, as noted above, ‘immigrants’ (the almost exclusive term used), and the ‘problems’ they might be associated with, are scarcely glossed at all, save by reference to inability to speak Finnish. There is clear recognition that they are more likely to be unemployed, but implicitly, and sometimes explicitly, this is put down to ineffective implementation of the educational guarantee. There is scarcely any discussion in the documents or by the experts on factors associated with their lack of success (apart from lack of language), while, as the report points out, their ‘failure’ (which is never referred to in those terms) is registered almost exclusively in statistical terms. And while the *problem* is not very well defined, one can get an idea of the main problems regarding immigrant education and training from the solutions provided. These include supporting immigrant students in maintaining and developing both Finnish/Swedish language. However, while the overall emphasis of policy is shifting in the direction of individualization of solutions, there is little indication of how this might work with immigrants.

It is also important to note that the focus is also not only on how Education can support immigrants, but also how the mainstream population and actors in school should deal with immigrants: “Tolerance and a positive attitude to different cultures will be stressed in all education and training. Questions relating to minorities and human rights will be systematically integrated into teachers’ initial and further training.”

In **France**, while migrants may be recognised as full citizens, many of whom are French speakers, and the tradition of republicanism inhibits any attempts at distinctions between groups, the possible role of the educational community as a part of the discrimination process is not raised, and there is no acknowledgement that the actors have to be trained to deconstruct their own prejudices.

In **France** the school system is particularly weak when one considers the necessity to recognise inequalities: there is currently no strong political will to deal with this question. The French school system has been based on the necessity to produce an elite and its objectives are oriented toward the 10% of students who are excellent and who will be the country future decision makers.

In **Germany** the discourse on migration reflects the difficulties faced in finding political means to deal with increased social plurality and heterogeneity. Assimilation came to be seen as part of the solution, leading to a focus on language acquisition as the key to integration, early childhood education as an important step to decrease the risk of failing education careers, etc. The key question with regards to all GOETE-themes: access, coping, life course, relevance and governance was found in the successful adaptation of personal dispositions to the new requirements of an increasingly complex and fast changing social environment.

In **Italy**, *the Italian Way for Intercultural Schools and the Integration of Foreign pupils*, (Ministry of Public Education, 2007) is directed at concerns raised by principals and teachers about what are referred to, rather broadly, as ‘pupils with an immigration background’, or ‘non-Italian pupils’. It is presented as a ‘cultural’ effort to define a national model of integration aimed at identifying principles and frame decisions and actions taken elsewhere.

Its basic representation of the problem centres on possible risks from over-concentration of immigrants, though it does acknowledge the importance of cultural diversity, with ‘intercultural education’ concerned not just with immigrants, but important for all in a globalising world.

In the **Netherlands**, migration problems are seen as concerns for the whole society and supersede school issues as they touch the (im)possibilities of social integration, with the existence of ‘black’ and ‘white’ schools reflecting the general segregation in Dutch society. On the one hand, the problem is not confined to the Education Ministry, but on the other, it is not recognised there, at least by the current Minister, where ‘quality education’ is held to be the solution for all students, parental choice of schools is sacrosanct, and migrant status is not recognised as a particular form of disadvantage the discursive priority is on general quality improvements, perceiving little or no need for specialized policies for migrant children. However, while other policy actors point out that migrant students face different challenges, and improving education of migrant students does therefore require specific policy measures, the recent government move not to distinguish migrants from other ‘disadvantaged’ students does carry risks of further deterioration in the educational achievement of migrant students.

In **Slovenia**, immigrant children are defined as those who – for different reasons (social, economic, cultural, language...) – are not fully integrated and/or included in the society. They are currently living in Slovenia though they may or may not have been born in Slovenia and may or may not have Slovenian citizenship or permanent residence, with at least one parent not having been born in Slovenia. This definition embraces a broad typology of immigrants and ethnically Non-Slovenians living in Slovenia. The definition includes those who do not speak Slovenian as their first language.

The key relevant strategy document has an ‘ideological’ background in its relationship to formal EU ideas and values and therefore fits in the transitional process of democratization of Slovenia. The problems being addressed are related to the process of inclusion of immigrant children in the education system of Slovenia, with learning the Slovenian language as the crucial factor for a successful integration. Other factors are not as much taken into account.

One key way of representing the issue of immigrant young people in the **UK (England)** has been to focus on what is termed the ‘underachievement’ of young people with migrant heritage, especially UK born boys from Black Caribbean families, who are often labelled as ‘troublesome’. Links are often made between the youth cultures of Black boys and their disengagement with school. So although they are not literally migrants, their perceived behaviour and school achievement remains a focus for policy intervention in education. In many respects then, the friction of migration/immigration in the UK is a historic one that is played out through the discursive framing of ethnicity and race equality.

More recent waves of immigration have led to claims that migrant children are currently ‘swamping’ UK schools. Such concerns are primarily raised around issues of language competency and ‘Britishness’, with fears expressed that a large number of schools are (or will be) dominated by children for whom English is an additional language. Therefore, the policy friction of migration/immigration within the UK falls into two subcategories: firstly, the impact of previous waves of immigration and the cultures of participation among young people of Black and Minority Ethnic migrant heritage; secondly, the on-going and loosely defined project of ‘inclusive education’, which is part of a broader political project of community cohesion.

#### *e) Institutional Opportunity Structures*

Comparing the different institutional opportunity structures offered by the countries that followed the migrant friction produced some very interesting responses.

Not surprisingly, when we consider the different ways in which the national and local educational institutional regimes recognise and respond to the increasing presence of young people from different countries arriving in their schools, we find continuities between the ways that the presence is discursively represented and the ways the institutional responses are organised. For instance, one major distinction that we made between those countries who discursively identified the migrants themselves as the issue to be addressed, and those who saw it as an issue of the workings of the system, and we do indeed find matching patterns reflected in the institutional arrangements. So, to a degree, the discursive framings that we have identified may be seen as implicit backdrops for the institutional responses we summarise below.

In this summary itself we will consider together both the relationship between the institutional opportunity structures and the generation or mitigation of social disadvantage/inequality, and provide the basis for a comparison of the *forms* taken by the recognition of the migrant problem.

In terms of the first of these, the **Finnish** case offers what turns out to be a relatively extreme example, where a major purpose of the education system as a whole is to ‘interrupt’ wider social inequalities. A wide range of forms was adopted that were broadly structural rather than individual, though they take in all three forms of prevention, intervention and compensation. Also to be noted here is the point made in the discursive summary, which these issues are considered to be the responsibility of the whole of Finnish society, and indeed we do encounter several examples of multi-agency cooperation in this case.

The **French** case is considerably different. Essentially, the report suggests that it is the structural characteristics of the system that cause the inequalities whose consequences are experienced by socially disadvantaged young people, with implicit barriers affecting working class students when they choose one or another track and, on the other hand, to the devaluation of the kind of degrees they are most likely to follow, the solutions mainly target the educational system. Even when they concern partnership, they consider firstly the Ministry of Education or the State; local authorities or parents are given a very narrow place. Associated with this relationship there is effectively no official form of recognition of inequalities, though the report details several examples of action at a local level. However, while local authorities were formally absent from the process of decision making concerning reforms, and while the central administration and its local representatives tried to control this spread, they were in some cases able to go beyond their legal fields of intervention, in developing coping facilities and extra-curricular activities.

**Germany** is the clearest example of the education system being seen as the basis of extending wider social opportunities. As noted above, there is an expectation that the remedies to social issues should be generated in the education system. There are several forms of recognition, that flow from this, but in the shorter term it seems that compensation is the preferred response, for instance in the forms of language acquisition as the key to integration, and early childhood education as a means of facilitating smooth transitions into school and within the different forms of schools as it lays the foundation for future learning and contributes to reducing the likelihood of later school failure.

In **Italy**, the issue of 'pupils with an immigration background', or 'non-Italian pupils' does not have a high general priority. As the national report puts it, "it is presented as a 'cultural' effort to define a national model of integration aimed at identifying principles and frame decisions and actions taken elsewhere". The clearest form of response occurs through possible risks from over-concentration of immigrants. However, there is clear recognition of the importance of cultural diversity, with 'intercultural education' a matter of concern for everyone, rather than an issue related to migrants in particular. The report also draws attention to the somewhat fragmented state of the coping mechanisms available in Italy, which shares the typical features of weak stateness and welfare protection characterizing the country.

As noted elsewhere in this report, the official **Netherlands** approach to migrants is essentially to accommodate them as effectively as possible to the existing institutional structures, including early selection and the priority of parental choice of schools. This means that the form taken by 'migrant' problems is seen as just one variant on the general problem of social disadvantage within education, though other policy actors suggest that the issue of migrant students does require specific policy measures.

In **Slovenia**, the issue of immigrant children and schools is a rather novel one, with little of relevance, or capacity, in the institutional framework, so that it is rather briefly addressed, largely following EU formal statements, in line with the transitional process of democratization of Slovenia. The form of recognition is very much to focus on the 'absences' of migrant children, especially in the area of language, as a means of bringing them into conformity with Slovene expectations.

The **UK-England's** institutional framing of the migrant question has been deeply rooted in its long history of receiving young people and their families. In a sense, it had become relatively indifferent to migration as a problem, with the exception of Black youths—the great majority of whom were not migrants, but British born—at least until the riots of summer 2011. These events, together with more recent waves of immigration, especially of children whose first language is not English leading to fears that a large number of schools are (or will be) dominated by children for whom English is an additional language, which represents a different construction of the issues. This has been accompanied by new levels of fragmentation of secondary education, which may see many issues devolved to school level.

### ***Concluding Remarks***

In the end, we have to ask what this chapter contributes to our understanding of the governance of national educational transitions. Six main ways in particular might be advanced.

- 1) First, the chapter enables us to understand more clearly key aspects and assumptions involved with the governance of educational transitions. It throws new light on the structures and processes of educational governance, and the nature and consequences of the divisions of labour between central, regional and local administrations and practices. In doing so, it specifies and situates the climates within which the five key themes of GOE-TE are required to develop.
- 2) Second, it helps us understand a little more clearly the nature and significance of the intangible and implicit nature and forms of *'the national'* in educational governance. Recognising more clearly the contribution of understandings of 'the national' to how educational problems are framed and governed, and the operation of institutional and discursive opportunity structures—where the national may have to meld with the transnational and the sub-national—can deepen and extend our understanding of their nature and influence.
- 3) Third, in doing this, it offers a possible new dimension to the comparative analysis of educational transitions, through the transversal analyses of how governance issues and methods are specified, for instance, which enable us to usefully augment the typological approaches to the comparison of education and transition.
- 4) Fourth, the focus on migration in particular offers a different but distinctly complementary perspective on how the educational transitions of 'non-migrant' disadvantaged young people are perceived and treated in educational transitions.
- 5) Fifth, using the idea of the 'context of context' enabled us to identify more effectively the nature and significance of the external constraints, challenges and opportunities common to all eight countries. Consequently, it considers how these external constraints were incorporated in ways that affected the place, patterns and practices of educational governance.

Finally, the forms of comparative analysis employed, which essentially rest on seeking to carry out comparison at different levels of abstraction, when direct comparison of activities is not possible, does provide us with a useful additional means of understanding educational transitions and trajectories.

## 4. High-Level Governance of GOETE Themes: Thematic Analysis

### 4.1 Introduction

High-level governance both reflects and constructs conceptions of and responses to issues of access to education and its relevance, coping with the challenges it presents to socially disadvantaged young people, and how adequately it enables their integration through the life course. It can produce public and social ‘bads’ as well as public and social ‘goods’. It is where societies’ expectations of education are translated into sets of experiences for all young people.

This report already contains a great deal of material on high-level governance, and the point of this final chapter is not so much to recapitulate that material as to show (a) how and in what ways high-level governance has framed educational trajectories in the GOETE countries, from the perspective of the five thematic perspectives adopted in GOETE: *Access to, Coping with and Support for, and Relevance of education, Life Course and Governance*; (b) what these measures have meant for socially disadvantaged young people in particular; and (c) how the differences in the patterns and modes of high level governance contribute to producing and reflecting the differences between GOETE member countries around these issues.

*Section 4.2* spells out and explains what is understood by *governance* in this context. It addresses the issues through the trinity of actors, territories and challenges, which enables greater substance to be given to the national accounts and to their comparability within the context of context introduced earlier, and how this might enable a conception of the governance of governance. In particular, it points to an increasing de-synchronisation and fragmentation of policies, disconnected from each other and from a broader relational framework which establishes linkages between them. The ambiguities of educational governance are also related to a dual agenda facing states—fostering neoliberalism but at the same time empowering non-state actors, whose potential contributions are seen to be dependent on their institutional framing. The chapter gives more flesh to the scalar dimension of educational governance, pointing both to the European Union as a source of potential influence, and to local authorities, whose roles and importance are made very clear in the national reports. However, there is a strong suggestion here of a tendency to ‘offload’ responsibilities—including financial responsibilities—for the implementation of reforms from central to local authorities, or from steering and administration to local management. The chapter also addresses the issue of what is often referred to as ‘horizontal’ relationships, between education and other social and economic sectors. As we see in both the coping and relevance sections of the chapter, too, this can involve shared coordination with both social services agencies, and labour markets respectively. Overall, the relationships between high level governance and lower levels involve the former creating the preconditions for the latter to work properly, defining the options to which the lower levels provide the practical solutions.

It is arguable that *access* provides the thematic perspective where issues of equality of opportunity and the reproduction of social disadvantage are most central. It includes issues of access of whom, to what, and *section 4.3* sees the issue as one of institutional responsiveness, effectiveness and universality. The chapter enumerates and discusses different forms of segregation that inhibit access for the socially disadvantaged. Territorial segregation—in the sense of opportunity to at-

tend particular schools—is frequently associated with concentrations of socially disadvantaged, or migrant populations, which also tend to be greater in schools than they are in the neighbourhood generally. It has at least three significant consequences—one comes about through the ‘school mix’ phenomenon, where the performance of individual children is powerfully affected by those they study with; the second, which features strongly in the Italy report, is associated with almost the inverse of this, in limiting the concentration of migrant children allowed to be accepted in any particular school; and the third is the reinforcement of existing segregated schooling systems, notably in the Netherlands. The other major form of segregation is track segregation, especially where this occurs after the first transition, into lower secondary school. Some of these forms of segregation may be inadvertent, or unintended outcomes of other factors, but the promotion of specific goals across a system can entail a political response that can affect possibilities of access; the clearest case in the national reports is that of the Netherlands, whose Minister of Education is explicit in saying that education policy should be concerned with enhancing quality rather than trying to reduce inequality. A different form of political ‘downgrading’ of the significance of access is found in the area of language learning, which, in several countries becomes a matter of individual responsibility rather than of public provision. Section 4.3 also draws attention to the apparent prevalence of what are referred to as ‘ostrich policies’, where a government is reluctant to acknowledge that a problem exists or chooses not to respond to it, which may be quite widely found in areas such as access to education for socially disadvantaged young people. One final comment on the access chapter; while the choice of migrant young people as the key friction around which data was collected may have highlighted issues of access, there is little reason to believe that it is only young people suffering from the social disadvantage of being migrants who experience the limits on their access to desirable forms of education.

The section on *coping* is very revealing (*section 4.4*). References to Coping in the national reports are in fact shown to be far fewer than references to ‘support’, which sounds a little like putting the cart before the horse, and certainly to indicate an approach to the issues involved that is very much, and possibly rooted in historical understandings of what constitutes those issues, ‘supply’, rather than ‘demand’, driven. We can also take this as an indication that coping has traditionally been as much a ‘preventative’ strategy as an ‘interventive’, or compensatory one. Most of the reports suggest, however, that coping is called in as an ad hoc response to new challenges and risks at lower levels; further, the scope of coping seems to be confined to ‘in school’ factors, rather than also including ‘critical-life events’. But, again most interestingly, this does not mean that coping is confined to ‘individual’ problems within schools. It is also related to the ability of education systems to address economic developments and technical change, for instance. Further, belying the exclusively ‘compensatory’ connotations of coping, the account shows that some countries engage in what might be called ‘pre-emptive’ coping, seeking to prevent social exclusion, through early childhood education, or language classes, for instance. Nevertheless, support activities at the level of the school, and references to ranges of multi-professional collaborations

are quite prominent, especially in Finland<sup>16</sup>, Germany and Netherlands. The other prominent feature of coping is its apparent relative marginality in several countries. This marginality is reflected in rhetorical support for support mechanisms at a national level, but no financial or other forms of back up made available at local levels in Italy, for example, another instance of the gaps between steering, administration and management that we have already remarked on. We do, however, see a distinct change in governance strategy over the status and deployment of strategies aimed at bringing about the outcomes sought through ‘coping’, in the ‘traditional’ sense, by quite other means, in the UK (England) report. Essentially, what it appears to be proposing is the passing of responsibility for ‘coping’ from the education system as traditionally conceived, to young people themselves, as lifelong learners ‘following a personal and flexible learning agenda’. This might be seen to represent a quite novel form of response to the individual consequences of structurally generated problems.

While issues of access and coping may be somewhat specific to socially disadvantaged young people, *section 4.5* discusses the issue of the *relevance of the education* they receive, and how it is governed, is of concern to all involved with education. It seems that the issue of relevance is everywhere taken for granted as central, though what it means and how it might be implemented is just as commonly contested, if somewhat implicitly—while the possibility of an ‘irrelevant’ education is never raised. Just as in the case of coping we can see quite different questions of relevance appearing at three levels, national, institutional and personal. At the national level, one key criterion of relevance appears to be linking the country to the global knowledge economy, but equally there is evidence of how education may be relevant at a quite different level, for instance as a means of governing populations, by classifying them in terms of educational merit and need. Education may be “societally functional but not socially relevant for many students”, while there is an unwillingness to consider how the French education system is implicated in creating inequalities. At the institutional level, there is quite a lot of evidence of ‘change *within* the system, but not *of* the system’, and of resistance to large scale reform. Actors at the level of administration and management of education systems have particular conceptions of, commitments to and interests in the maintenance of established patterns of practice, into which any ‘new’ conceptions would have to be integrated. It is interesting to speculate here how far the findings of the national reports on perceptions of relevance are shaped by the documents consulted and the location of the interviewees, which may all have contributed to a somewhat ‘educationist’ conception of the relevance of education. While there were a number of references to personalization of education in the national reports, the most systematic attempt to improve relevance for a particular group of students was the attempt in Poland to focus directly on meeting special educational needs.

An understanding of educational processes and educational trajectories – and of the transitions within such trajectories as well as decision-making processes involved therein – requires a theoretical approach that accounts for the interplay of institutional/structural and of individu-

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<sup>16</sup> One rather curious apparent contradiction emerging from the Finnish report is its reference to the problem of silos—prominently mentioned in the governance section—and the references to ‘multi-professional working’ in the coping section.

al/subjective aspects in their interaction. In GOETE and in *section 4.6* the *life course* perspective is used as a theoretical lens for analysing the material collected in the different national reports (Elder et al., 2003). In relation to GOETE's overall focus on disadvantaged pupils, and especially with view to pupils from migrant background discussed in the present report, two considerations might be of particular interest: *first*, children and youth from migrant background are usually and paradigmatically gauged against the backdrop of 'normal' life course of the mainstream population resp. national/cultural traditions. For this reason, the theoretical model of 'youth transition regimes' (Walther, 2006; Parreira do Amaral, 2011, pp. 41ff.) is of particular interest since it points to the link between these hegemonic understandings of 'normal life courses' and different concepts and constructions of disadvantage on the one hand, and of coping and support on the other. *Second*, educational trajectories of children and young people from migrant backgrounds are characterised by 'double transitions', i.e., both transitions from the country/society of origin to another as well as transitions within the education system and from there to training systems and labour markets. Here, the question arises as to whether these particular conditions of children and youth from migrant background are perceived and taken into account in the respective discourses and policy discussions.

## **4.2 The Governance of High-Level Governance: Challenges and Prospects**

### **4.2.1 Introduction**

This chapter should be about the governance of education policies' high-level *governance*, i.e. on the way in which different actors (not just public) at different territorial levels are involved in decision making processes on educational transitions. More precisely on the ways they exert sovereignty by defining the rules that structure the different actors' roles in managing and implementing those regulations. Such an ambitious title raises probably too many expectations, which we might not be able to meet. For these reasons, we will restrict our inquiry – considering the empirical material produced within this working package as a solely source – on what type of governance discourses influence high-level “activities” and “reforms” and how. More specifically, the chapter will select the key components of governance arrangements (i.e. actors, territories, challenges) and look how they deploy in the different countries according to the national reports.

In order to do so, we have to consider what are the constitutive elements of governance in general, and high-level-governance in particular. The different understandings of what governance is in different disciplines, and in the political discourses of the different countries, makes the picture surely quite complex (van Kersbergen & van Waarden, 2004).

We will make a drastic simplification and among the potential questions we will try to answer we have: “what kind of actors' arrangements are legitimized?”; “Are there national differences/similarities in how discourses are taken up, adopted or adapted?” etc. In our questions, it is not just a matter of how many actors are involved in the high level governance of transitions or the thresholds of what they can or cannot do, but also a matter of the *quality* of their interactions and the mutual understanding of aims, tools to achieve them and practices. Further questions,

therefore, should be: ‘What are the relations among actors?’, ‘How do they interact and produce the high-level-governance outputs?’, ‘Are there specific agreements in place?’

Unfortunately on the above issues our empirical basis is rather thin and does not provide enough evidence to conduct a systematic comparative analysis. We have to find alternative solutions and provide the reader with at least some evidence about the systematic interaction among different characteristics of governance which, through synergic effects, might produce a similar outcome.

Just to give an example, let us consider that for every country, whatever friction is analysed (being it the “transition from compulsory education to vocational training” or “specific measures to improve the performance of pupils with immigrant’s background”), emerges that for each solution envisaged new actors are required to join not just the implementation but also the design of the measures. Then, we have an emerging common pattern. This might be related to discourses fostering ‘big society’ or ‘subsidiarity’ which are not necessarily mentioned in the documents but which permeate the ideological stance in the background of the changes. This requires us to provide a plausible narrative supporting such a description and an interpretation which should identify the patterns of meta-governance or – as it has been pointed out earlier in this report – the *context of contexts*. Translated into the language of governance we should provide the *governance of governance*, i.e. we should identify the high level frames of reference defining the agenda, the priorities, the actors to be involved and with which roles and see how these frames have been translated into national discourses.

### ***Some intrinsic difficulties in carrying out this exercise***

Identifying high level frames of reference that are defining the agenda and then translate into national discourses is, actually, not possible in a coherent way for all policy areas addressed in the frictions. In this case the problem is more general and not related to our empirical basis. In fact, we are facing an increasing *de-synchronization* and *fragmentation* of policies, i.e. processes that increasingly bring single policies to be conceived, designed, funded, etc. disconnected from each other and from a broader relational frame which establishes linkages among them.

De-synchronization and fragmentation are of course policy- and country- specific. Labour market policies have substantially different dynamics than educational policies and some countries with a higher steering capacity are able to re-synchronize and coordinate policies better than others. The point is that the coherence of the trends we might identify lie more in the ‘eye of the beholder’ rather than in the complexity of reality.

This is also related to the fact that governance has an ambiguous role in these processes. On the one side, it is considered the cause of the problem as the increasing number of actors (see section 4.2.3) and the increasing number of territorial levels of government (see section 4.2.4) increase also (and actually contribute to consolidate) the complexity of the current situation and the difficulties in managing and steering it. On the other side it is considered the solution to increased fragmentation and de-synchronization, in particular when governance is conceived as a synonymous of coordination and steering (see section 4.2.5).

Obviously enough, not all countries take up these ambiguities equally. Negative aspects of these developments – in an extreme form – are given, as we will see, only in a very few cases (e.g. Italy). However, all countries display an increasing degree of fragmentation due to the spread of governance arrangements.

This poses the policy scenario under great pressure, because it builds the premises for high and increasing transaction costs for all decision making processes. But what is the *original sin* of these high-level-governance transaction costs?

The spread of new governance arrangements is intrinsically permeated by ambiguous processes taking place at different levels and involving different actors. Often new governance arrangements require a new mix between exchange/market, hierarchy/state and networks/families-third sector associations. Institutional settings do not promptly adapt to this new mixes. The same is true the other way around. An institutional reform might foresee the involvement of third sector associations, but they are not necessarily spread homogenously across cities and regions. It is often new wine in old bottles.

These ambiguous processes are related to two contrasting tendencies: the first fostering neoliberal policies and the second providing – often at the same time – frames for empowering ‘the people’ (meaning by that civil society, non-for-profit associations, individuals,...). This ambiguity is highly loaded ideologically and plays a major role both in framing the analytical approaches and the interpretations of the processes at stake.

Discourses reflect these ambivalences and consolidate the ambiguities. The consequence is that we end up analyzing very opaque discourses in which the facts are blurred. A solution – following Schumpeter’s famous quotation “the budget is the skeleton of the state stripped of all misleading ideologies” (1918, p. 100) – would be to look where the money goes to, but that is not the aim of this chapter.

#### ***4.2.2 The Ambiguities of Pros and Cons in Governance Arrangements***

The always growing literature<sup>17</sup> on governance (low, meso and/or high level) highlighted a set of positive and more critical aspects related to the spread of governance arrangements emerging out of the ongoing changes. Among the positive ones we can find:

- The new role of non-state (predominantly local) actors which are increasingly involved not only in policy delivery, but also in policy management and policy making (i.e. in “high level governance”), aiming at providing the ground for innovative ways of addressing social problems (Mouleart et al., 2007);
- An increased legitimation of the policies put forward, deriving from the involvement of NGOs and civil society at large, not only in building trust among the actors, but also because

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<sup>17</sup> See for instance Bode (2006), Bolleyer & Boerzel (2010), Brenner (2004), Considine (2002) Considine & Giguère (2008), DiGaetano & Strom (2003), Jessop (2002, 2004), Kazepov (2005, 2008, 2010), Le Galès (2002), Mayntz (2003), Øverbye *et al.* (2010), Pierre (2000), Pierre & Peters (2000), Sellers & Kwak (2010), Somerville & Haines (2008), Swyngedouw (2005), Sørensen & Torfing (2005, 2007), Stoker (1998).

of the increasing impact they can have on the decision making process itself (Hirst, 1993; 1997);

- More flexibility and freedom from the grassroots for local action and experimentation, allowing to take into consideration the contextual diversities in addressing social problems and tailoring solutions to be more effective (and efficient) (Garcia *et al.*, 2008). “Increase freedom and autonomy for all schools, removing unnecessary duties and burdens, and allowing all schools to choose for themselves how best to develop...” (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 31).

These – almost unanimously considered positive – aspects are paralleled by some potentially negative ones:

- The risk of institutionalizing specific power relations and inequalities, both among actors and among territories at different levels (Kazepov, 2010), not only consolidating diverging practices but “giving up” the ideal of common rights and duties among citizens of one country;
- The increasing need for coordination due to the increasing fragmentation of the decision making process among actors and territories (see § 5). A situation which triggers a plethora of potential conflicts through reciprocal vetoes, paving the way towards policy instability and complex – often low level – compromises;
- The difficulties in guaranteeing accountability in differentiated contexts. Fragmentation tends to weaken the democratic control over actors’ responsibilities (Crouch, 2003; Benz, 2007; Bovens, 2007);
- The spread of cost-shifting games and blame-avoiding strategies carried out by the national state. These are related to passing the buck and “decentralizing [the] penury” (Keating, 1998) of retrenchment to lower tiers of government and to the third sector and civil society. Responsibility – one of the high level governance prerogatives – is passed on, without an adequate resources transfer or mechanisms guaranteeing access to resources. This might be called passive subsidiarity, i.e., an allocation of responsibilities without an allocation of resources to face this responsibility (Kazepov, 2008).

There is broad consensus that these issues are more or less inherent to the spread of new governance arrangements and to the related territorial reorganization of sovereignty (Kazepov, 2010). This implies that in each country there is some mix of positive and negative aspects, even though these aspects are not equally distributed across countries.

The way in which *pros* and *cons* are distributed is an empirical question will be addressed more thoroughly in comparative thematic working paper on governance (Work Package 8), when we will take into due consideration all research packages’ outcomes – in particular those on the institutional settings (WP2) and governance in practice (WP6) and selected questions in the other WPs – in our analysis. What can surely be said here, however, is that the balance among different aspects strongly depends on the institutional capacity of the different countries. In particular, on their capacity to foster the positive aspects and/or to hinder the negative ones by providing a healthy institutional environment within which relations among actors and territories can develop. WP2 and WP6 provide some examples of how this capacity is unequally distributed. For in-

stance, the differences between “what is aimed for” and “what is done in practice” is in some countries incommensurable (e.g., Barberis & Kazepov, 2012).

#### **4.2.3 The Actors of High-Level Governance**

*“nobody has enough resources to handle all the problems”*  
(Interviewee, in Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 29)

The spread of governance arrangements not just in implementation, but increasingly also in the management of specific policies (e.g. educational ones), brought about the issue of participation and involvement of new and more actors. This is true in general as well as for educational policies more specifically and relates also to the policy making process and the policies’ design (Fung, 2003 & 2006). The latter – from the empirical material we gathered – did not stand out as particularly relevant. We would have expected more explicit references to this “need to involve people from the grassroots” in the policy-making process itself. From the analysis of the documents selected to address the frictions provided in the national reports, high-level governance seems less participatory and rather contested (e.g., Buchowicz & Bledowski, 2012; Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p. 7). Just experts might be included in this process. Corporatist countries might be an exception in this, as consultation and even veto points by the different actors play a relevant role in the direction reforms take (e.g., in France (see: Jahnich & et al., 2012, pp. 5, 26) or Germany (see: Amos et al., 2012, p. 5). In France, “the education system is one of the most corporatist systems [...]. After the Second World War, the education system has been organized by Unions. These Unions were directly bargaining the content of reforms with the government” (Jahnich & et al., 2012, p. 26)

More and different actors, however, are foreseen in “the solutions”, i.e. in the ways of conceiving policies in their *management* and in their *practices*. The involvement of teachers, trade unions, social workers, educators, professionals with immigrant background, churches and increasingly also of parents, etc. aims at promoting social partnerships (e.g., Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p. 49). Indeed, it aims also at sharing responsibilities with a larger plethora of actors adopting a well-established European jargon. As we mentioned in § 2, however, this entails both positive and negative elements. What makes a difference is not so much having or not having “other” actors involved (private, for and not-for-profit, associations of various kinds, etc.), it is rather the way in which their participation is institutionally framed. The tipping point between positive and negative is directly linked to this institutional frame and varies from country to country (see: Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011). More specifically, the tipping point might be related to: a) the kind of responsibilities these actors acquire and how they are distributed; b) the amount of resources that are transferred to them; c) the accountability system; d) the tasks they have to fulfil; e) the rights-and-duties attached to these aspects. Taken altogether, the specific mixes of these aspects define the form of subsidiarity adopted.

What we should bear in mind is in any case that relations among actors are in most cases asymmetric (Amos et al., 2012, p.19), according to the power-balances and resources they can have access to (Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p. 20). Another issue complicates the picture: professional

groups working according to the different logics of the systems they belong to. This makes cooperation not an easy task (Amos et al., 2012, p. 36). In any case not a task to be taken-for-granted.

In this scenario, also *parents* are increasingly involved in all sorts of activities almost in all countries, hinting to a *familistic turn* in educational policies (e.g., Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p. 19). From the point of view of discourses the focus on “*prevention*” and “*equal access for all*” is connected to a dominant “family and community discourse” in which “wellbeing is primarily created in the families and local communities” (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p.18; see also Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 22). This would entail family or community policies to become prominent, but not much is said about this in the analysed documents, while integrated policies and accompanying measures are often the key to success.

The vague statements about family/community involvement – to be found in all WP7 reports – require more precise data to be fully understood. As they are, they just reproduce the overall ambiguity of coexisting *pros* and *cons*. Is it also a form of subsidiarity? Or just a cost-shifting game? Referring to the relevance of the family or community might hint to both. Delegating responsibilities in a context of shortage of public resources, or sharing responsibilities through participatory practices in policy-making, policy-management and policy-implementation. “Terms such as ‘community’ and ‘partnership’ are used in numerous places, their meaning is not the same” (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 36) and – again – it is not easy to disentangle which of the two interpretations is prevailing in the different countries, because the devil is in the details and what we need to do, is to connect WP7 with WP2 and WP6 in an integrated view.

#### ***4.2.4 The Territorial Dimension of High-Level Governance***

High-level-governance is firmly rooted in national and regional sovereignty (the latter in federal countries). Nevertheless, the European Union and local authorities play an increasingly relevant – even though quite different – role, challenging consolidated territorial hierarchies.

On the one side, the European Union contributes to build a framework of reference for all countries, sharing views on the strategic role of education within the knowledge based economy and in society at large. A view that is presented as being “inevitable building blocks on the road to a common Europe” (Amos et al., 2012, p. 5) to which most of the countries comply (Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p. 31).

The point is that most of the countries differ in the means to achieve the goals they share. Indeed the repertoires of ideas put forward by the European Union need to be translated into national contexts. This translation exercise occurs in a relatively path dependent setting. No *tabula rasa* can be taken as a starting point, not even for countries which joined the European Union in recent years (e.g., Poland). Simply put, the automatic translation of mainstream European ideas (and jargon) in national different settings might produce diversified impacts and outputs.

On the other side, local authorities gain momentum in most national reports (e.g., Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012, p. 5). In particular, all underline the increasing relevance of municipalities in dealing with education not just in implementation, but also in the coordination activity of multi-professional teams. Their task is to foster collaboration among actors within

service-rich interventions (e.g., counselling) increasingly spreading in the educational landscape. National all-encompassing solutions to most problems are not conceivable anymore since they are complex and involve a variety of dilemmas and contradictions. Therefore, they

“can only be tackled at local level, by trying and learning from experiences. Education stakeholders should develop arrangements which would be helpful to solve (...) problems and they should work in consultation. (...) legal space should be created to facilitate such local level tailor-made solutions. Hence, the government and the parliament need to define the legal boundaries for action” (Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012, p. 44).

This does not necessarily mean that localities should be left isolated; on the contrary, they should try to network and to exchange experiences that work as most interviewees maintain.

Within high-level-governance, the scalar issue becomes relevant in different ways. First implicitly, when with no explicit reforms responsibilities are off-loaded to local authorities. One example are budget cuts which put local authorities/schools under pressure in fulfilling institutional duties (Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012, p. 7, 24; Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, p. 33-34). Another example is related to fast changing conditions, like migration, for which national policies might even be lacking. This brings about lower levels solutions in practice to be the only option. The policy of the school is crucial “but the school policy can be only if there is state policy. And there is no such policy” (Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p.42).

Second explicitly, when there is a scale-shift in high-level governance, and regulatory capacity is allocated to lower (or higher) tiers of government. The latter option seems rather the exception than the rule and what seems to emerge is (again) an ambiguous process of de/re-centralization. Some aspects are decentralized, others are retained at the national/federal level in increasingly opaque institutional settings of multilevel governance, where the boundaries of responsibility allocation are blurred.

There are some exceptions. The trend towards multilevel governance in France, for example, seems more theoretical than a practiced reality. France remains (one of) the most centralised educational systems in Europe, “where local authorities’ roles are still very thin and peripheral” (Jahnich & et al., 2012, p. 20-23) due to an uncompleted policy of devolution (Jahnich & et al., 2012, p. 30).

The denial of territorial differences – which exists because of socio-economic and/or cultural factors – paves the ground for some major problems, if not properly addressed. Treating different problems in the very same way might generate failure. The difficult task is to address existing differences in a way that similar conditions of disadvantage are addressed similarly. This is not necessarily given in countries where institutional differences characterize sub-nationally organized educational systems (e.g., vocational training in Italy, Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, pp. 34-55). Nor it is given in countries which only loosely define the tasks of central’ policy, like in England, where the responsibility for developing and ‘thickening’ policy is de-centralised and regionalised (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 22). These options are not necessarily the adequate answer to territorial differences, but just the result of these differences.

#### ***4.2.5 Governance and the Coordination Challenge***

Coordination activities and governance go hand in hand as governance entails steering a multitude of actors and making not only the interaction but also the output more efficient and – ideally – more effective. In the documents analyzed by the single country WP7 reports very little is to be found addressing this issue, in particular in relation to the discourses influencing high-level-governance. Nevertheless, the identification of the problem is clear.

In Finland the lack of horizontal coordination and collaboration based on a *silo-based* approach to policy development and implementation is clearly identified as one of the most significant problems in the Finnish public administration. This limits the ability to flexibly respond to government needs also in the field of education (Julkunen & Salovaara, 7). The challenge is therefore to coordinate different administrative bodies, not so much actors outside the State.

The uncompleted policy of devolution and the great amount of reforms in the educational realm (Jahnich et al., 2012, p. 34) left in France a potential for coordination problems still to emerge, in particular at the departmental level (Jahnich et al., 2012, pp. 30-31).

Germany is a good example of coordinated multilevel governance with a strong institutional division of tasks, in which the different bodies have different duties, but also interact at different levels in a complex web of relations (Amos et al., 2012, p. 5). Umbrella organisations, fora, etc. play a relevant role as well in these corporatist arrangements. Opinions and agendas might diverge, but in most cases there is an institutionalised form of cooperation foreseen. The increasing complexity asks also in this context for better coordination and cooperation in order to overcome inefficiencies of a fragmented offer. Similar problems seem to characterize the Dutch system, which is highly decentralized.

In Italy awareness of the importance of coordination goes hand in hand with little hope and weak steering capacities. The minister writes “I hope that indications and guidelines provided in this document can build up an orientation frame” (Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, 15). Isn’t this an un-governed fragmentation, aiming at “the best we can do”? A sort of path dependent attempt to ameliorate the situation, which seems difficult to govern. The lack of coordination from central institutions is strongly perceived at local level giving rise to a kind of “distrust” in the possibility of reforming and governing the system. Most of the actors prefer to be part of micro-level actions than setting the national agenda and even those actors having a national position or role are involved (and invest) in local experiments and projects (Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, p. 34).

In Poland top-down reforms (e.g. the one “lowering the age of mandatory education to 6 years”) would have required a greater coordination with the different stakeholders both in the design and implementation. Lacking coordination can be seen therefore as one of the causes of the difficulties in implementation (Buchowicz & Bledowski, 2012, pp. 24-26). The same applies in Slovenia where the changes that the ministry introduces “are especially top-down changes” (Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p. 7) in which most stakeholders are left aside.

Common difficulties in horizontal coordination and collaboration are related to various factors: a) leadership priorities and the need to put forward specific reforms: governance in government’s

terms; b) the working-together of separate government ministries/departments with overlapping responsibilities (for example a Minister of Education, a Minister of Social Affairs and a Labour Minister), c) lack of mobility across and outside sectors of the state administration; d) emphasis on workers' specialization; e) lack of positive incentives for coordination and collaboration; f) divergent agendas by the different stakeholders.

At the vertical coordination level, difficulties include: a) the possibility that government agencies – not aware of the work of others – may duplicate their efforts (both horizontally and vertically); b) the risk of cost-shifting games between agencies at different territorial levels; and c) the existence of “grey area clientele” falling between the cracks of different agency responsibilities in “no-men’s land” (Øverbye, 2010).

All these issues leave us with the need to understand why differently equipped institutional arrangements address similar issues in similar ways even though the magnitude of the problem(s) might be drastically different. This is an empirical question we did not address in WP7. We might speculate – on the basis of the interviews we gathered – that supra-national mainstream discourses are taken over in all countries, even though – because of the contextual differences – the outcome might be very different in the educational systems' performances. It is a rather banal statement, but with non-banal consequences.

#### **4.2.6 Conclusions**

Addressing the governance of high-level-governance was not an easy task, also because WP7 country reports highlight just a relatively small portion of the *problématique*. What seems to emerge, however, is that high-level-governance looks very much as government in action, aiming at creating the preconditions of lower level governance to work properly. Participatory practices – that characterise most innovative governance arrangements – did not get through to the high-level-governance arrangements, where they are characterized rather by governance in governments' terms.

The high-level co-defines the options and the lower and meso-levels provide the solutions in practice. This does not diminish the relevance of their contribution. Indeed, between the high issues of high-level-governance and policy goals and the low issues of actual delivery lies a gamut of meso-level governance arrangements dealing with how policy goals are implemented in political, administrative and financial structures, which – according to us and the current literature – should attract more attention (Øverbye, 2010). In particular, because they are part of the social construction of the actual governance arrangements.

The low-level (street-level) coordination is in most high-level-governance documents referred to as the solution to current problems. Educational services should ideally develop integrated pupil-centred approaches and networking practices to serve multi-problematic cases, both through individualised and standardised interventions. Involving services without street-level coordination can create extra problems for pupils with multiple problems (drop-outs, disabilities, ...), who have to find their way through increasingly fragmented landscapes of services and support.

How do governments at various state levels deal with coordination challenges in an increasingly complex institutional environment? Is the task of street-level coordination taken up by public actors (such as teachers or educators) at all, or is it up to the parents of the pupils themselves to explore the system of available options? Is the involvement of parents – so often mentioned in all WP7 reports – to be seen as passive subsidiarity or an example of participative practices? And how is meso-level cooperation between public and private actors organised, for instance when non-for-profit organizations become more involved in the production of social services and support? Almost all WP7 national reports identify – in particular after the crisis start in 2007 – more cost containment strategies than empowerment and participation, but answers to these questions will be part of WP8.

What emerges to be crucial – also in the governance of high-level-governance – is to use “guarantees as steering mechanisms” (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 15), i.e., foreseeing the involvement of new actors (whoever they are) in a frame of clear rights and duties, including rules of accountability. This is not easy to disentangle as it is the result of the complex interaction among institutional settings (WP2), practices (WP6) and discourses (WP7). An attempt will be done in WP8.

## **4.3 Access to Education**

### ***4.3.1 An Introduction***

In the eye of a governance perspective, educational access and accessibility are relevant, due to their association with social inequalities and reproduction of disadvantage into and by the educational system.<sup>18</sup> Thus, it involves the organization and structuring of educational provision, and the relationship among educational and other social institutions, in coping with disadvantaged conditions created/reproduced in educational setting, and “external” disadvantages conditions affecting educational trajectories.

Access is also related to participation, to conditions limiting participation chances, including selection policies and practices – in an interplay between structural factors and agency involving (directly or indirectly) almost every actor in the educational arenas: policy makers, school staff, parents, pupils.

In broader terms, access and accessibility are issues concerning welfare policies as a whole, rising questions of equality of opportunities, coverage and flexibility (especially to cover multi-problematic cases and cases not belonging to ‘standard’ mainstream welfare user categories). From this point of view, the issue of access is related to institutional responsiveness, effectiveness and universality.

To frame the policy features characterizing integration of immigrant pupils in our case countries, we will briefly report Mipex data.

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<sup>18</sup> First paragraphs are an elaboration on GOETE Glossary entry “Access” (see [http://www.goete.eu/components/com\\_joomlawiki/index.php/Access](http://www.goete.eu/components/com_joomlawiki/index.php/Access)).

Mipex is a benchmark exercise assessing and comparing integration policy targeting Third Country Nationals in 33 countries. In 2010, for the first time education policy was included. In particular score on education is based on 27 indicators, whose 7 for access:

- Access and support to access pre-primary education (same access of national plus targeted policies to increase access chances);
- Access to compulsory-age education (legal rights and obligations);
- Assessment of prior learning and language qualifications (standardization and use of trained staff);
- Support to access secondary education (targeted measures to increase access and successful participation);
- Access and support to access and participate in VET (same legal access right of nationals, measures to increase migrants' participation and employers' collaboration);
- Access and support to access and participate in higher education (same legal access rights of nationals plus targeted measures to increase participation and success);
- Access to advice and guidance (written information in languages of origin, provision of targeted orientation and/or of interpreters).

The other three areas are often access related, focussing on:

- measure to address specific needs of migrants and their families in schools (e.g. induction programmes, language support, monitoring...);
- measures to benefit from cultural diversity brought by migration (language of origin, social integration through school, support of parents and communities);
- inclusion of intercultural diversity in curricula, teacher training and daily life at school.

**Table 8. Mipex scores – Area Education. 2010.**

	DE	FI	FR	IT	NL	PL	SL	UK
Access	43	79	50	36	57	50	29	57
Targeting needs	30	90	13	60	50	23	17	63
New opportunities	50	44	19	25	13	25	19	19
Intercultural education for all	50	42	33	42	83	17	33	92
<b>Total score</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>58</b>

Source: own calculation on Mipex, 2010

As the table briefly show, we have a wide range of scores, though usually quite low (the threshold of an “optimal” policy would be 100), with the exception of Finland.

Drawing on WP7 national reports, in this chapter a selection of issues related to access and governance of access has been made.

In particular, we will analyse how (if) definitions of migrant background (and potential disadvantage tied with it) is problematized in framing access chances and hindrances.

We will also analyse how territorial and track segregation and channelling is problematized, discussed, and in some cases legitimized – considering accounts from comprehensive and selective transitions regimes. To do it, we will focus in particular on dilemmas and ambivalences in prioritising either quality or equality in education, and the direction of blaming that act as a therapy towards the evidence of continuing access discrimination.

In order to understand how these discourses frame practices, we will use as an example the neo-assimilationist trend that stresses more and more the importance of national language learning.

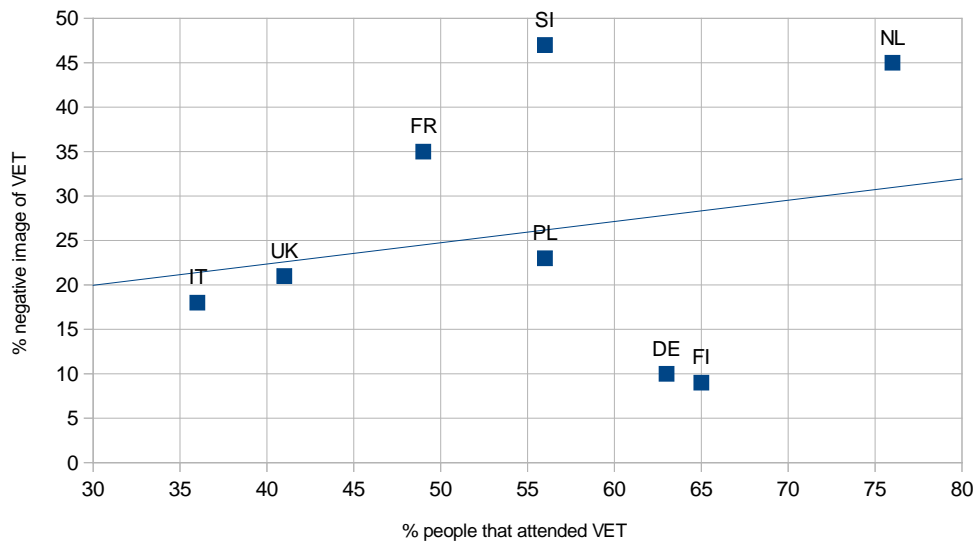
#### ***4.3.2 School segregation: toleration and reactions***

In our case studies not rarely horizontal (territorial) and vertical (track channelling) segregation are associated, at least at secondary education level: if track segregation is strong, it also means a concentration in specific schools (usually vocational ones). Though, analytically we will consider separately the two kinds of segregation: territorial and track segregation.

*Territorial segregation* is a concern in most countries with a relevant population with immigrant background. In many countries, access in segregated schools proves to be a strong disadvantage factor, due to lack of intercultural and interclass contact, inadequate endowment of human and economic resources to cope with intersecting disadvantages. Policy answers either focus on school desegregation or on neighbourhood desegregation, but no generally valid measure is found by policy-makers.

On the other hand, *track segregation* could be much more influenced by the characteristics of the educational system. Among the others: selectivity; share of pupils in vocational tracks; relevance of tracks; transformations of the system.

Among the transformations, reputation is probably a relevant issue. Using Eurobarometer (2011) data, we can see that in our sample there are some country where negative accents on vocational education (notwithstanding their large coverage) are very strong, like NL and SI. And we will see that the issue of reputation is often mentioned also in countries where in general the opinion is not so negative (since, even though general opinion is not so negative, there are anyway doubts on relevance, effectiveness and quality of VET throughout many countries). Thus, we can see here a particular intersection of disadvantage where reputation of school tracks and their falling relevance intermingle with immigrant background, reinforcing each other.



**Figure 2. Negative image of VET by people that attended VET, 2011.<sup>19</sup>**

### *Territorial segregation*

Territorial segregation was not thematized in every country. As an example of cases where it is becoming a concern, we will consider mainly Italy (relatively newcomer in immigration management, with a blurred integration strategy) and the Netherlands (a country with an unmaking integration strategy and a recent swing between multiculturalism and neoassimilationism).

Though, the issue is considered also in other countries. In **Germany** every fourth migrant goes to a school with a 50% share of migrant pupil population (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung, 2006), causing concerns due to segregation effect on educational achievements (there are indications that children of migrant background do worse in schools with a very high percentage of other migrant children).

In **France**, territorial inequalities and their impact on school performance has been targeted in academic research, somehow echoed in the public debate (Oberti, 2007, Van Zanten, 2004), in the general frame of a strong concern for ghettoization processes in peripheries of French cities.

In the **United Kingdom**, school segregation is usually higher than neighbourhood segregation, thus showing selective practices enacted by families.

To come back to our two case countries for this dimension, in **Italy** keeping school heterogeneity as large as possible (thus avoiding concentration) is a recent policy issue. The over-concentration of pupils with immigrant background in some schools and the risks of ghettoization inflamed the debate in Italian media and educational arenas in 2010, after the Ministry of Education delivered a circular letter on the number of non-Italian pupils per class. This strategy foresaw a program-

<sup>19</sup> Source: own calculation on Eurobarometer (2011).

ming of school intakes and a definition of a threshold for pupils with limited language skills (especially newcomers), set normally at 30% – a share that can be derogated upward if foreign pupils hold adequate language skills or downward if they have not.

This rule proved to be quite a U-turn in Italian intercultural policy, since in this document, for the first time, immigrant pupils are mainly seen as a problem, causing “unease” and “difficulties” and “negatively affecting school services and outcomes”.

Most Italian interviewees strongly criticized it: not in its goals (desegregation), but in its logic. Actually, it is considered inconsistent, symbolic (definition of target was so blurred and with so many exceptions that it became hardly executable) and discriminatory.

In general, interviewees are annoyed by the politicization of the issue, seen as an obstacle towards a proper coping of the matter: “poisoning the well” and “bombing schools” where commonly used definitions.

According to some interviewees, actually many schools implemented effective access models of short-term out-class or blended in-out-class education for immigrant pupils, thus the circular letter reduced their opportunity window. And it reduced further since it heated the debate, while school-based activities were shared without raising claims for discrimination and with success and collaboration with families.

The solution presented by the circular letter is the building of a network to guide school choices in order to avoid concentrations and to have a balanced distribution. To do this, “local pacts” should be signed, including all the public and private stakeholders, starting from networks among schools. Networking is aimed at overcoming the present postcode lottery, a risk to be contrasted with the generalization of good practices, increasing relations among schools and with local authorities: though, there's no problematization on how, why and under which conditions networking should work (we will come back on this in the Conclusions).

On the other hand, in the **Netherlands**, school segregation has been an issue for quite a long time, starting from denominational pillars: in that case, segregation was not associated with disadvantage, but from the 1980s onward, when attention shifted towards socio-economic segregation, and later towards its relation with ethno-national background. The issue has now relevant dimension, caused by a combination of residential segregation as well as free school choice policy. Several studies have demonstrated that (1) learning achievement levels in concentration schools is not high and even deteriorating in recent years; (2) even schools with large minority shares but high-performance are not selected by natives.

Nevertheless, recently this issue is undergoing an ostrich policy trend, due to changing balances in the political arena. This means that it is no longer a priority in the political agenda, with a consequence on policy outcomes. This is connected to a general retreat from multicultural policy and from the targeting of minority background as source of disadvantage: for example, a shift in criteria to access support measures, caused funds to be directed away from schools with large numbers of migrants to schools with native Dutch disadvantaged students (SCP, 2009).

So, general desegregation solutions are not taken into account, due to a strong imbrication with a standing principle in Dutch education system, i.e. free choice: institutional action is limited by family choices influencing the composition of student body. Desegregation would imply a change in school choice policy, and top policy makers think that the majority of parents would disapprove: this implies also that there are interest groups (including status-conscious parents) rather in favour of segregated schools (and city quarters). So, the buck is passed to urban policy (that is: starting to desegregate neighbourhoods, in a way that later can help desegregating schools) or to local-level administrations and voluntary arrangements between schools and parents.

### ***Track segregation***

In many of our case-study countries, school segregation of pupils with immigrant background into some tracks is a well-known and undisputed issue, both in comprehensive and selective educational systems. It usually implies that kids with an immigrant background:

- do on average perform worse than their colleagues;
- do enter tracks with a lower reputation and/or limiting the chance for further education and training (dead-end tracks leading to manual jobs; tracks losing their relevance and effectiveness in last years);
- even when performing as well as their colleagues, they are more likely to be placed into vocational tracks, showing hints of direct discrimination;
- do meet difficulties also within these tracks, with high drop-outs, low completion rates, difficulties in the transition to the labour market.

Main reasons reported by policy documents and interviewed stakeholders are considered an inadequate guidance, a fall in motivation that intertwines with access difficulties (due sometimes to poor language skills, or not usable social capital) and teachers' expectations in structuring cooling out processes. Furthermore, not rarely tracks where pupils with immigrant background are overrepresented suffer from other disadvantages, concerning endowments and/or teachers' skills.

Transition from primary to secondary cycles seem very challenging for disadvantaged youth because quite commonly social, cooperative, cohesive and integrative tasks of educations are not considered an issue to be extended to secondary education: we can see here a tension between the integrative and the selective functions of education.

Thus, segregation in secondary education adds up to a critical point in youth life course, in the transition between basic, comprehensive schools and selective tracks.

The strong change in educational methods (subject-centred, result-oriented) is not properly accompanied and supported, thus some actors claim for better bridges to re-orient educational choices in a more effective way.

Furthermore, entry exams or assessment can add further barriers, e.g. in NL and DE, and partly also in FI. Though, also in countries where access is not formally conditioned to strict skill requirements (e.g., Italy), the effect of slowing down and delaying careers due to assessment practices is similar.

All in all, this challenges the idea of free-choice, individualized, responsibility-based liberal systems, since in a way or another transition to secondary schools falls under implicit or explicit coercive and cooling out systems affecting especially disadvantaged and minority pupils – systems that prove to be ineffective in channelling properly pupils, and strongly based on class and cultural discrimination.

In the **Italian** case, channelling is a well-known phenomenon (as the latest configuration of a well-known problem in intergenerational upward mobility); though it has become a real concern quite recently.

The weak problematization we have seen till recent times can be due to low numbers involved till recent times, a poor attention on integration issues in upper secondary education (seen mainly as a place of selectivity), possibly a certain degree of expediency (immigrant students in vocational paths were sustaining a part of the school system less and less appealing for Italians, thus helping to preserve the organizational status quo).

All in all, our interviewees mention three main reasons for track segregation:

- the informal ranking and reputation of schools: a couple of interviewees even label vocational tracks as a “social dump”, being attended mainly by pupils with fragmented and unsuccessful careers, potentially misfits;
- the labour-orientation of immigrant families;
- institutional discrimination in class insertion and guidance.

In this respect, the downgrading of vocational tracks comes before immigrant pupils' enrollment: the latter, through discriminatory guidance and cooling out practices, follows and mirrors (and eventually reinforces) the growing social and economic irrelevance of vocational tracks.

Solutions identified, in the framework of a comprehensive system, see a refusal for selective education paths for immigrant pupils: separate education is allowed just for short periods or specific subjects. Though, the needed tools to mainstream pupils with immigrant background are quite limited.

In the **Netherlands**, early selection implies that students are selected into highly differentiated educational trajectories at an early age (around 12) based upon their perceived aptitude (national test and teacher's advice). It is quite an issue in the national public agenda, boosted also by an OECD report (2007) criticizing early selection.

Migrant children are more frequently found at the lower levels of secondary education, and are underrepresented in the highest two tracks which provide access to tertiary education institutions. Transition to secondary education is governed by teacher advice and results of a test taken in the final year of primary school. Though, migrant students generally receive a lower recommendation than native Dutch students: national data shows they are slightly more often given a recommendation below their test achievement levels, too (direct discrimination).

Students study in schools that are physically separated from each other, and segregation, in turn, risks undermining social cohesion and inter-group interactions: thus, a segregation, demotivation

and low-performance spiral starts by allocating students with similar background in homogeneous and less stimulating classes.

Though, recently (as we have seen also for territorial segregation), the issue started to rate low in the political agenda, in connection with an increase in neo-assimilationist positions.

Nevertheless, educators and experts do anyway rate this concern quite high, framing as a societal risk, since school segregation boosts social segregation at large.

These analyses led to the suggestion of policy interventions to compensate for the possible adverse effects of early tracking. Among the others: early remedial classes; an extra year of intensive classes after primary education; mixed bridging class with pupils from general and vocational tracks together; clarification over transfer rules from a track to another, and easier bridges between general and vocational tracks; overall, intensive career coaching already in lower vocational education to prevent wrong subject choices) (cfr. Onderwijsraad, 2010; CPB, 2011). And there are also some non-targeted, mainstream policies that are beneficial to pupils with immigrant background: promoting transfer to higher education through the vocational education route is an example of this, as is providing opportunities for the accumulation of qualifications in secondary education.

However, the current Minister, and the government in general, does not appear to be concerned with issues of educational equality that much: main officials and policy makers disagree with a general postponement of the selection, since it is maintained that the actual system benefits talented students.

In **Slovenia**, we see hints of processes quite similar to those already described above for a neighbouring comprehensive system (the Italian one): selection in upper secondary education is a hot issue in the public debate, indirectly involving also immigrant backgrounds (which do not climb the policy agenda for reasons we will see better later): general schools have a higher reputation, though decreasing due to their growing popularity; vocational schools do gather mainly disadvantaged pupils with lower social status, with a negative public opinion well described by Eurobarometer data mentioned above. In this class division, minority pupils and those with an immigrant background are more often placed in weakest tracks, also with new ways of reproducing disadvantage: even though general education is becoming more popular, there's a segmentation opening a gap between "elite" and more popular gymnasia. And policy-makers seem not rarely to support this trend, e.g. with proposals for ability grouping, that usually shows poor attention on learning and social effects on more disadvantaged students.

In the **German** case, the apprenticeship system is particularly under scrutiny, proving to be more and more inadequate for disadvantaged pupils – including those with immigrant background. Furthermore, there's also evidence of channelling in schools for pupils with special needs (with quite a discrimination in access chances to mainstream education), and a considerable gap in higher education and qualification tracks: institutional discrimination is a concept mentioned by some interviewees to describe the outcome of recommendations for secondary education tracks.

In this case, the policy answers are quite similar to another selective system, the Dutch one: it is such a basic feature of education model that it is rarely challenged. Possibly, the German dis-

course is a bit more open to the need of mitigating negative effects of selectivity than the recent Dutch official positions.

In the **French** case, we observe a class channelling (affecting also minority pupils), with an over-representation of working-class students in vocational tracks, and a lower success in tertiary education. Furthermore, working-class students more frequently graduate in degrees whose standing is worsening.

Transition from primary to secondary education needs a specific care, since it's also a shift toward a subject-centred education, with subject-specific teachers: without a proper guidance, some pupils can meet difficulties in coping with the new setting.

Similar discourse in **Finland**, where the transition to upper secondary education has been ranking high after the depression in the 1990s, together with a concern for high dropout rates in vocational education (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2008). In this general focus, a special attention is paid to youngsters with an immigrant background, having lower admission and success rates.

So, the main point underlined by policy makers is not so much the segregation of people with immigrant background in vocational tracks, but their exclusion (or, subordinately, inclusion in a school not of their choice, increasing drop-out risks) due to limited opportunities: territorial and track effects do intermingle because of application procedures, that can exclude most disadvantaged students applying for 'popular' schools. The implementation of an electronic joint application system has been meant to better match demand and offer with the role of guidance counselors, even though the risk of second-choice for most disadvantaged pupils is always there.

Finally, ethnic segregation is an issue also in UK. Selection and admission policy favours in an unintended way segregation, even in contexts where residential segregation is not so strong. This could be particularly true in recently instituted 'free schools' (charter schools): the allocation of funding to them, run by private-public joint ventures, which only guarantee a high achievement rate by selecting the relatively most advantaged children, can reproduce and exacerbate structural inequalities and social antagonism.

#### ***4.3.3 Quality or equality?***

The acceptance of segmentation in access chance is driven also by State foundations and political cultures, as echoed in the setting up and transformation of educational systems. The concern for quality or for equality in education, and the mission the system primarily give itself in this respect, is linked to access guarantees and to the acceptance of inequalities, as a way to answer a relevant societal question: which degree of inequality can be tolerated in a society?

Actually, even though quality and equality are not antonyms, often documents and interviews tend to contrast these as two horns of a dilemma, and a preference is accorded to one of the two.

Which is a policy priority, if aiming toward equality supporting the most disadvantaged pupils (including those with an immigrant background), or pointing towards quality, 'getting rid' of the disadvantaged to favour talented pupils is an issue discussed, implicitly or explicitly, in most national reports.

So, if we can trace back national path-dependency leaning toward one side or the other, anyway – as reported in the Dutch national report – there has been a general shift away from equity driven reforms to competitiveness based reforms (focus on education quality, efficiency, differentiation) in the world (Carnoy, 1999).

This trend leaves open many questions, not so thematized in the discourses by policy makers and brokers. For example, it is not so clear if and why a strong choice for quality and competition should be beneficial for the society as a whole. What to do with the “left behind” in a quality-oriented model is largely unsaid. The same discourse applies to possible detrimental effects on social cohesion.

In **Slovenia**, quality is more and more a policy concern in upper secondary schools, due to increasing enrolments in general education, once considered as a class distinction school. From this point of view, the praise to quality (e.g. to be achieved via ability grouping) hides a class cleavage, and an effort to keep a separation between elite and mid-to-low class schools, according to the idea that high-potential students are held back in heterogeneous classes.

In another country where immigration doesn't rank high in the policy agenda, **Poland**, we can see anyway patterns of evolution of the quality equality balance. The redefinition of the category of “special education need”, for example, redefines both quality and equality (by trying to enhance treatment of disadvantaged pupils, but also to focus more on special talents), while the lowering of compulsory education age was also justified with equality arguments in favour of rural areas and families at risk of social exclusion (with an earlier detection and support and a compensation of inequalities originated in students' background, to cope with family- and context-related problems).

In **Italy**, equality concerns have a great role in most documents and interviews we analysed: though, immigrants as a hindrance for quality are mentioned in the most recent Ministry document on immigration issues, the circular letter on 30% threshold per class.

Nevertheless, equality concerns are still prominent in discourses on access: almost every policy maker, broker and contestator we identified admitted that (at least on paper) Italy is one of the most advanced countries in Europe in granting the right to education also to undocumented pupils. Though, as also Mipex report noted, Italy usually grants access and equal opportunity to immigrants just in a formal way, with no active measure to make these statements real.

In the **Netherlands**, the issue has been debated as far as early selection is concerned: on the one hand, supporters of an early-tracking system do maintain that it contributes to a better quality, encouraging more gifted students. The general pro-quality argument is that when talented students are mixed with less talented ones, their educational performance will decrease, due to a not stimulating peer environment and lower teachers' attention (claimed by demanding issues in heterogeneous class). Hence, heterogeneous classes are considered to lead to quality related challenges.

On the other hand, policy contestators challenge this idea (and no clear evidence appears to confirm one position or the other), underlining risks for equality: a premature, forced channelling influences all the next life and educational steps, and it is likely to be based not on individual quali-

ties, but on directly or indirectly discriminatory factors: namely, language skills, cultural capital, family support. In this respect, there's a strong bias in a meritocratic argument based on an (at least partly) ineffective selection tools (the test at the end of primary cycle).

The **German** case shows quite a concern for equality, starting at least from the debate on PISA results. For example, Germany is ranked as unsuccessful in integrating second generation migrant children, and their educational gap is among the largest in PISA countries (cfr. Tab. 2).

As in the Dutch case, this also casts doubt about the working of the selective system, producing social inequality as an outcome. Not by chance, in our sample the only two countries with no improvement between second and first generation are exactly NL and DE, those with a selective system (see column G in the table below).

**Table 9. Reading performance by immigrant status<sup>20</sup>**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
	Without immigrant background	II generation	I generation	I and II generation together	Gap B on A	Gap C on A	Gap C on B
DE	511	457	450	-11,0	-10,6	-11,9	-1,5
FI	538	493	449	-13,0	-8,4	-16,5	-8,9
FR	505	450	426	-12,1	-10,9	-15,6	-5,3
IT	491	446	410	-14,7	-9,2	-16,5	-8,1
NL	515	469	471	-8,9	-8,9	-8,5	0,4
PL	500	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.	n.d.
SI	488	447	414	-9,6	-8,4	-15,2	-7,4
UK	499	492	458	-4,6	-1,4	-8,2	-6,9

In **France**, equality is a beacon for the national political culture, and educational policy too, as a base for a meritocratic system: the French school system in its foundation is probably the one strongly concerned in coupling equality and quality, based on the necessity to produce elite, thus targeting the “cream of the crop” of students – in theory regardless their background.

Thus, the evidence of inequalities is potentially challenging, but not always expressed in a centralist and diversity-blind policy system, that can underrate some kind of diversities (including territorial ones).

Recently, there are also some trends that could reinforce the elitist and quality leaning, pointing to a free choice system (and the relaxing of the postcode policy is an example), and some brokers and commentators (trade unions and NGOs) underline the problem that could emerge from this choice, i.e. more inequalities and more segregation.

<sup>20</sup> Source: own calculation on PISA 2009 dataset.

**Finland** is another case where equality plays an important role in the policy arena, but also a case where heterogeneity and disparity are becoming more and more accepted (OECD 2010b). Correspondingly, a new discourse on free choice was put side by side with the long-standing focus on equal opportunities. Even though the latter is still very important in Finnish educational policy, there's more attention on gifted students.

In the **British** case, equality and quality discourses intertwine in a peculiar way. On the one hand, we have a dominant, multicultural discourse of equality through diversity, of social cohesion based on the acknowledgment of minorities: Mipex ranks are very high in this respect, and also PISA gaps are among the lowest (possibly due to the *lingua franca* effect and post-Colonial linkages). On the other hand quality assessment is a strong concern in the system, that doesn't have a colour leaning, even though implicitly it can have a discrimination effects towards most disadvantaged groups, including some migrant backgrounds.

#### **4.3.4 Language Learning**

A certain, renewed kind of focus on national language learning can be seen as a hint of a neo-assimilationist turn into European immigrant policy: it can mean that integration effort is moved from a societal task to an individual one – with an underlying blaming risk for underachievers.

Complexification of migration flows require a different use of the national language: as a *lingua franca* (vehicular language) taught as a L2 (second language) for people with different background.

In this respect, the social dimension of language learning requires a specific attention: on the contrary, in our case studies we see either a strong focus on knowledge, with a poor attention on skills and individual competences, and/or a connection between language and neo-assimilationist trends, where the matching with citizenship education stinks of a post-colonial version of civilization studies.

No case country has a clear policy to promote multilingualism, and language is still a relevant hindrance in easing access to education: proficiency in national language is a clear disadvantage in most PISA countries, and ours are no exception (insomuch performance gap we used before was exactly referred to reading skills, see Tab. 2).

In Italy, investing on the early and specific teaching of Italian as second language, to reduce career gaps and unequal entry level, has been a policy goal quite constantly and with different accents. Though, the implementation has not been so consequent. Actually, responsibility is mainly left to individual schools, that should organize on their own (with labs and/or curricular changes, use of linguistic facilitators, specific publications), possibly in networks.

In recent years a national plan of training has been implemented, involving, among the other measures, hundreds teachers in training on Italian as Second Language; though the impact of these actions is limited by the rigid organization of the system: “teachers trained couldn't be use systematically their new skills [...] since drafting them to a such a specialized role means recruiting too many replacements in a period of retrenchment.” [VO 59-66].

Inadequate language proficiency is considered to be an important reason why pupils with an immigrant background fail to enter general secondary schools in the **Netherlands**: they lag behind natives at the beginning of primary education, and the gap is reduced only partially during primary education itself. This has a consequence on the following career, since the discourse on the selection test after primary education poorly takes into account the influence of language skills.

For a long time Dutch primary schools provided teaching in the language of the country of origin for the main migrant groups. The objectives of this teaching were maintaining contact with the country of origin and combating educational disadvantage. The funding of teaching in the students' own language was terminated from 2004. The emphasis on language in primary education is now just on learning Dutch.

Dutch as a requirement is more and more an issue, and the Netherlands are somehow a forerunner in this respect, with recent language and acculturation requirements for migrants.

The need to achieve stronger skills in national language is almost the only theme in the policy agenda for immigrant youth in the **Slovenian** case. The acquisition of language skills seems to be the most important feature of a successful integration: the inclusion of migrant children in the Slovenian educational system consists mainly in additional lectures of Slovenian language. Other components, such as economic and social integration seem to be far less important, especially on the policy level. Though, the right to learn Slovenian is legally required, but the amount and the form of learning Slovenian is not equally defined in all the laws.

**Germany** is our case country where accent on language learning in the national report is stronger. Language proficiency in German is a kind of Litmus test of integration, and the focus on it is represented as the *condicio sine qua non* for social integration and educational success – also with assimilationist practices aimed at increasing exposition to the national language: e.g., language classes for parents, and the prohibition to use mother tongue in schools (an attempted made by some schools with large numbers of students with an immigrant background). The fear of ghettoization processes is the discourse driving such a policy orientation, though with a risk of blaming minorities.

In **Finland**, the Development Plan of the Ministry of Education for the period 2003-2008 mentions both the need of improving proficiency in Finnish/Swedish and in pupils' native language. On the other hand, several interviewed experts stress language difficulties as a top ranking difficulty, and the overall policy in Finland seems to be that young people with immigrant background first need to learn Finnish/Swedish, in order to enroll in the education system: a poor language proficiency after basic education implies a difficulty in accessing secondary education, and the enrolment into a one-year preparatory track. Anyway, this solution doesn't seem very effective, and it also extends educational careers.

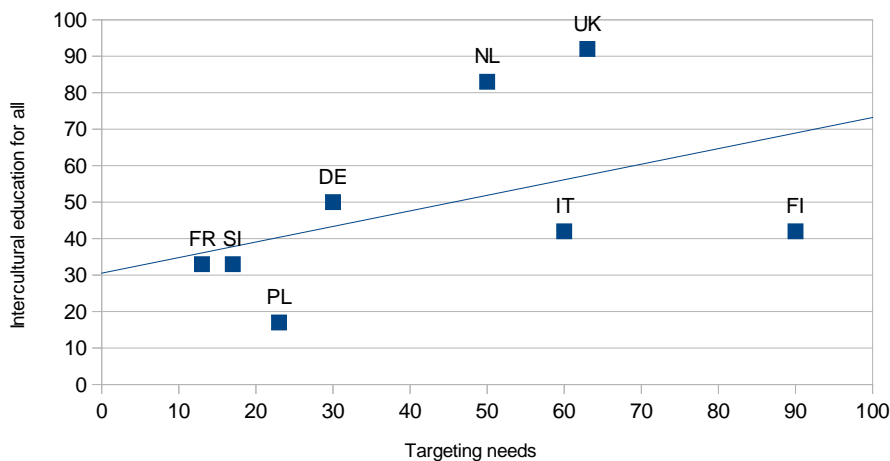
In the **UK**, concerns about language proficiency are raised about schools that are actually or potentially attended by children for whom English is an additional language. In England, new arrivals, refugees and children from asylum-seeking backgrounds can benefit from the ethnic minority achievement grant (EMAG), targeting pupils learning English as an additional language as well as minority ethnic pupils at risk of underachievement. Newcomers are also left aside in cal-

culations of school performance, thus not weighting in school assessments (thus limiting blaming and passing-the-buck strategies). Though, again in other cases, like Northern Ireland, language acquisition becomes a focal strategy (McDermott, 2008)

#### 4.3.5 Who is “different”? Definitions and Targeting

The destandardization of individual life course and the complexification of migration paths are challenging traditional labeling practices and consequent interventions: some scholars talk about “superdiversity” (Vertovec, 2007), that is a shift from large, organized communities from a definite number and type of origin areas (usually post-colonial), further reified by public and policy discourses, to a number of new, small, complex, plural and fragmented flows (origins and destinations), challenging traditional policies. This dimension can also have a ripple effect on access chances, since it intermingles with targeted, dedicated policies and with the visibility and viability of disadvantaged conditions.

In this respect, the treatment of pupils with immigration background has a relevant “mirror effect” of the national “State thought” (to use Abdelmalek Sayad’s words, cfr. Sayad, 2004) and its weaknesses.



**Figure 3. Mipex scores on Intercultural education and targeting, 2010.**<sup>21</sup>

Using again MIPEX data, cross-tabulating indicators on targeting and on intercultural education, we can distinguish three main groups:

- an assimilationist-residual model (FR, SI, PL), where labelling according to immigration background and dedicated policy is very limited. DE is also closer to this model, even though with a slightly higher multicultural leaning;
- a multicultural model (NL, UK) where both policy dimensions are praised;

<sup>21</sup> Source: own calculation on Mipex 2010.

- an intercultural model (FI, IT), that I define as a conservative variety of multiculturalism (see Barberis, 2011) where targeting is not so matched with effective intercultural policy.

In the **Italian** case, where *jus sanguinis* rule is prominent, there's an open debate on the naturalization law, among the strictest in Europe. This influences also the definition of pupils with immigrant backgrounds, since they are registered and counted as foreigners (“non-Italian” citizens).

Recent Ministry documents show a mix of essentialism (there's an Italian culture, and there are other cultures, while the concept of dialogue sounds a bit blurred) and formalism (the use of “non-Italian”, a term considered quite neutral in the Italian “*ufficialese*”).

Formally, there's no ethnic statistics (for example, if parents with an immigrant background are naturalized, the pupil is counted as Italian, with no further specification), but for the case of Roma. All in all, the idea of minority-generation as a consequence of migration processes is not considered. In the heated debates on school segregation and related blaming processes, we can see a clash of two definitions of “Italian”, a civic one (immigrant pupils are somehow Italian since they grew up in Italy, even though they haven't Italian citizenship), and an ethnic one (Italians are those members of the local culture by descent), without a clearly shared vision even among the policy-makers. Our interviewees explain this ambivalence defining Italy is a backward country as far as immigration policy is concerned – either missing a clear model of integration, or not implementing it consistently.

Though, in general we can see an ethnicization of foreign citizens, tied with the ambiguity of the national model of integration, swinging between assimilationism, multiculturalism and ostrich policy (with a weak debate on integration in schools and outside schools). Even though the educational arena is probably the most active and aware of labelling risks in its diversity policy, focusing on intercultural education as a general paradigm towards individualization and coping of every diversity, the worry for social cohesion can turn into a conservative version of multiculturalism, where practices can be quite far from theories, also due to the lack of proper resources and policy instruments. Ethnicization is not connected to an acknowledgment of diversity, and assimilation is not connected to equality policies, creating a highly contradictory paradigm that can turn into blaming. Accommodation to lifestyles and behaviours is required without promoting enough equality of chances, and causality of disadvantage is often ‘culturalized’.

In the **German** case, we have a debate oriented on similar dilemmas, even though the shift from a *jus sanguinis* to a model blended with *jus soli* principles is much more advanced than in Italy after the citizenship law passed in year 2000: it allowed the automatic naturalization of children born in Germany if their parents have lived in the country for at least eight years.

However, since the identification by ethnicity is still an important issue in German politics, the term migration background has become common usage (in schools: *Schüler/innen mit Migrationshintergrund*). Such a definition risks to turn that label into a quite permanent one, establishing an ethnocentric distinction. Though, in general there's an unresolved terminological fuzziness, tied with German peculiar history of migration policy and the wavering struggle to include heterogeneity in the national culture. Policy contesters emphasize the lack of a clear national model of integration, in comparison to the classic multiculturalist or assimilationist accounts: in this re-

spect the German case has been a paradigm of ostrich policy, and an exception among countries with a long tradition of immigration flows, since till the 1990s German institutions denied to consider Germany as an immigration country. Thus, for Germany too we can see an ethnicization without proper acknowledgement of minorities, and assimilation without equality tools, even though at lower extent if compared to Italy.

In the **Dutch** case analyses on general immigration policy talk about a “retreat from multiculturalism” (Entzinger, 2003). Recently, in education this means a policy shift from a colour-conscious to a colour-blind policy, following neo-assimilationist stances. Ethno-national background is less and less a criterion for support policy: for example, at primary level, measures for disadvantaged pupils are no longer based on immigrant background, but just on parents' education. This turn implies again a kind of ostrich policy, with the denial of salience of some kinds of disadvantages by policy makers. Nonetheless, institutional labelling in official documents and policy discourses is very strong: with the term *allochtoon*, formally the reference is to all who are not native Dutch, but someone (Western) is obviously more equal than the others (the actual reference is mainly on non-Western migrants, especially Turkish, Moroccan, Surinamese and Caribbean).

And the colour-blind turn didn't stop discourses on school segregation to be based on a race coding, with a quite spread institutional labelling (that, as an external observer, sounds quite disturbing and xenophobic): actually, in the educational environment, schools with a high share (more than 70%) of pupils with immigrant background are defined “*zwarte scholen*” (black schools) in opposition to “*witte scholen*” (where minorities are less than 30%), with an oversimplification of ethno-cultural backgrounds.

In **Slovenia**, even though the few official documents dealing with immigration-related educational policy pay homage to European goals and vast categorizations (including the use of “multiculturalism” and “interculturalism”), a real diversity policy is just on paper. In this case, the situation is more similar to the Italian one, where low numbers and/or recent growth of migration flows didn't allow the structuring of an explicit “State thought” about migration, and its acknowledgment. So, there's an implicit diversity management that can have quite discriminatory dimensions. Actually, the common reference is to people coming from Eastern and Balkan countries, especially other ex-Yugoslav countries, whatever their status is. This means also a complex relation with Slovenian nationalism and minority blaming, which finds poor or no place in official documents, but is relevant in practices.

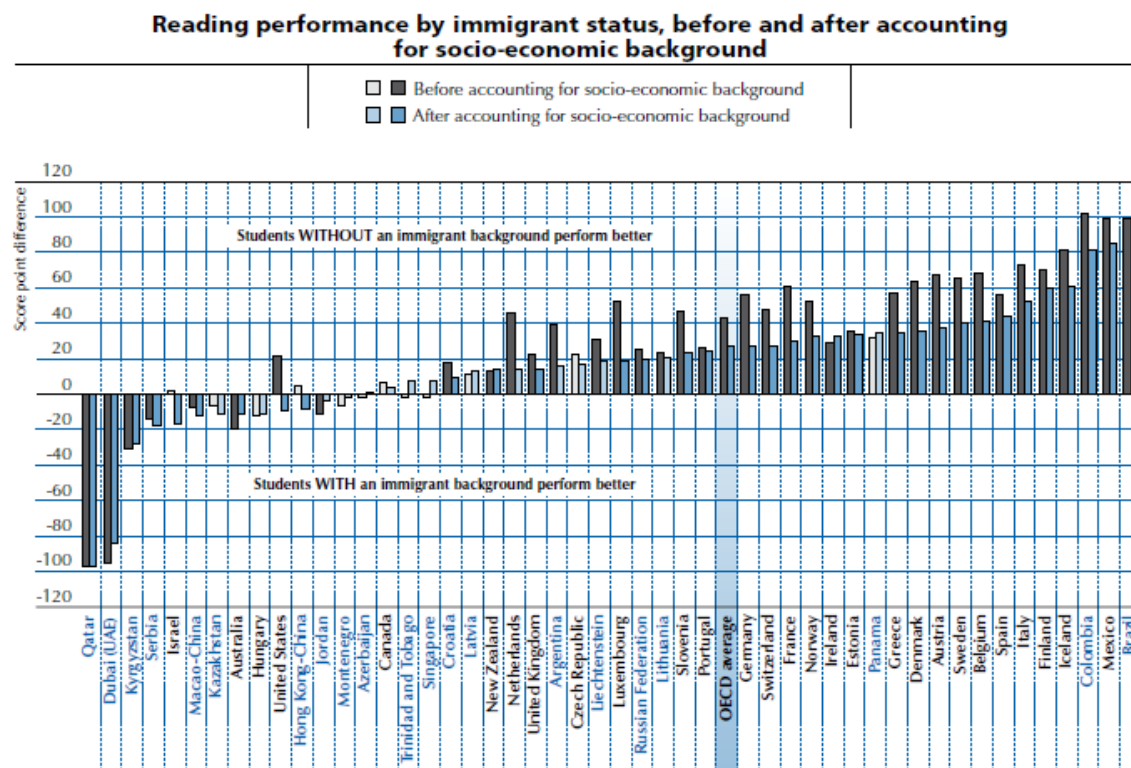
It is well-known that at State level, as an official policy, **France** adopts a strict colour-blind policy. This also means that the issue is not clearly circumscribed due to the fact that young people with a migrant background are not counted by national data. Though substantive inequality issues are in the public agenda.

In **Finland**, the focus on antidiscrimination policy and discrimination risks refers to members of visible minorities, immigrant groups, Roma and the local first nation, the Sami. Social exclusion is defined also in broader terms, with a special attention on youth as a risk category as a whole.

In the **UK**, the reference is more on “ethnic” than on immigrant background, thus with a consequent culturalization of problems, especially concerning some groups (e.g. Black Caribbean, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Turkish). On this basis “migrant” children are “recognised” and treated in different ways from the “native” population – in very variable forms (from the provision of special units to *colour-blindness*). Though, they are not so often an explicit target, but the coping of their difficulties is framed in wider community cohesion issues.

#### 4.3.6 Blame: Cultural and Structural Factors

An association between immigration background and socio-economic conditions, poverty and deprivation is frequent. Usually, quite grounded in data: as the PISA 2009 data below report, with a different extent in different countries.



**Figure 4. Reading performance by immigrant status, before and after accounting for socio-economic background (source: PISA 2010)**

Discourses on this issue can be risky in the appraisal of skills pupils with immigrant background can have. A “deprivation” discourse can even turn blaming, especially when disadvantage is perceived as ethno-cultural: somehow it implies that conditions of disadvantage cannot be eradicated but with an acculturation to host national culture.

On the other hand, the link to structural factors can also frame the utilitarian discourse on immigration, that is another way of reproducing a hegemonic discourse: implicitly, it means that minorities not so useful to majority should have less rights.

Calculations on PISA 2009 dataset reported above show that, true, there's a part of the gap of pupils with immigrant background that can be explained by socio-economic conditions: being inserted in lower socio-economic classes, immigrant families could suffer from limited social and educational capital, and limited chances of investment in education. Though, this doesn't cover all the gap, thus a share of it is directly connected to migrant condition (language proficiency, direct discrimination...).

Or, better – since this share is highly variable per country – to the treatment of diversity (notwithstanding its wealth) in school and society. Though, it is also worth saying that we cannot clearly input causality of this residual difference: xenophobia and direct discrimination? Cultural dimensions (e.g., in parenting styles among main migration groups in a given country)? Structural dimensions not considered socio-economic background by PISA (e.g., a country whose immigrant population sourced mainly by conflict areas and refugee condition could face specific gap due to difficulties in rebuilding normal, everyday life in the new context, notwithstanding a good socio-economic position)? Absent or ineffective policies?

In **Italy**, official educational documents usually try to balance risks and opportunities tied with immigration, stressing the role of school endowments and institutional coping (hence: of structural factors) in dealing with new challenges: the lack of guidance tools, never-ending and incomplete reform processes, retrenchment policies, inadequate relevance of education are often associated to the risk they imply for most disadvantaged groups – included those with an immigrant background. Actually, interviewees usually “blame” the school institutions more than the individuals.

Though, more than occasionally concerns can blame immigrant themselves, e.g. in the already mentioned circular letter on non-Italian pupils' thresholds or in a Parliament document where specific group problem, e.g. Chinese (“an issue apart concerns students with Chinese ethnicity, with a presence centred on specific places and behavioural models different for other foreign pupils”) and Roma pupils, are mentioned.

This feature has to be framed within the “Italian intercultural model”: it puts forward a quite complex acknowledgment practice, since it is intended as a model accepting cultural diversity (differently from assimilationism) as an individual feature, and not as a group one (differently from multiculturalism). Though, the reflexivity of implicit risks of culturalization of disadvantage coupled with risks of blindness toward structural factors of disadvantage is quite limited.

As a consequence, notwithstanding quite a consideration for institutional factors, policies are usually poorly consequent: few measures to remove general weaknesses of the school system are set, and there's a strong delegation to the local level.

In the **Dutch** case, integration of non-Western migrants has been an important policy issue in recent decades (much less so since the inception of the current government), and education and training is considered to play a key role in this process. Recognition of cultural diversity in schools have been instituted in 1985, and strengthened (as a statutory requirement) in 2006.

Documents and interviewees tend to associate immigrants' disadvantage with a lower socio-economic (class) background, and to underline associated structural and institutional factors, like the segregation enforcing effect of early tracking and free choice mechanisms.

In the **Slovenian** case, structural and cultural factors do mix too. On the one hand, some commentators do underline the inadequate support school staff is able to provide to disadvantaged groups (including those with an immigrant descent), as a consequence of inadequate instruments and tools. In this respect, policy makers, brokers and commentators underline that this issue ranks very low in the educational policy agenda (where it appeared mainly due to European requirements), thus the lack of institutional tools and competences in schools can be a strong risk factor.

Given a poor discourse on immigration, disadvantage is associated mainly to socio-economic conditions, but, on the other hand, the public agenda on immigrant education is dominated by language concern, in this respect playing down structural factors, and focussing on hegemonic cultural issues.

Similarly to Italy and Slovenia, in **Germany**, the discourse is somewhat ambivalent again, with different actors pointing on different causation of disadvantage – usually with a stronger culturalist nuance in policy makers' documents, and a structuralist note in contesters' and brokers' discourses.

On the one hand, ascriptive characteristics lay a negative discourse on willingness and habit for educational success (thus, passing the buck of low achievements to primary socialization – outside the intervention chances of educational institutions, with a strong blaming on families and parents). And the focus on language learning has again cultural dimensions: this means that just an uprooting of the culture of origin can solve the problems.

On the other hand, the debate following PISA results pointed out the relation between ethnic and socio-economic factors, hence mentioning structural dimensions of disadvantage. Adding to this, some interviewees point-out the lack of support and guidance for disadvantaged pupils, that becomes a serious issue in an early-selection system.

In **France**, inequality is strongly related to structural factors, also due to a persistent difficulty to explicitly refer to cultural diversity in the public space. Commentators, brokers and practitioners identify education itself as a source of inequality, mentioning issues like inputs and resources of the schools, labour market accessibility, social and educational skills provided in the school environment.

Hence, some interviewees mention a weakness in supporting disadvantaged pupils, with a lack in tools and methods to cope with difficulties. On the other hand some official discourses seem to focus on structural factors, too, but underplaying the role of educational institutions in reproducing it.

Structural factors are paid a great attention in **Finland**, even though the individualized focus is somehow shifting the focus toward specific risk factors, leaving untouched the general conditions that produce those risks.

In the **UK**, youth culture of minority children is often mentioned as a cause of underachievement, especially in media discourse. According to relevant commentators, despite a dominant multicultural discourse, disadvantage of minority children can be probably explained also by exclusionary practices at school level based on xenophobic stereotypes.

Thus, the same commentators argue that there is an institutional issue, where schools are not effective enough in endowing pupils with proper skills. Also, social class influence is mentioned, since it interplays with ethnic backgrounds, but still is the main predictor of educational disadvantage.

Discourse on individualization/personalization of practices do imply also a risk of individual blaming/responsibilization for pupils and teachers: individual characteristics are rated, while structural and institutional hindrances downplayed.

In general, discourses often frame migration as a challenge and an opportunity, though in quite a segmented way: the “challenge” side means mainly a concern for social cohesion; the “opportunity” side grounds mainly an utilitarian discourse, either stressing aging of nationals (with problems in the reproduction of labour force) or the globalization (with the need of multilingual and intercultural skills to access international markets). Whatever, the point is to keep “our” wealth, and to use immigrants for this purpose: we are not so far away from the classic discourse “wanted but not welcome”.

The educational version of this problem setting is quite evident in the track segregation process (see above), where pupils with an immigrant background are often overrepresented in tracks leading to a fast and downward labour market assimilation.

#### ***4.3.7 Conclusions***

The themes we listed above have multiple entry points to the issue of access, accessibility and governance of access and transitions (easing access to further levels of education, and to social integration at large).

As a first and general comment, it seems that in many cases access, success and tasks of education are measured in the frame of a productivist discourse: the output is measured by knowledge acquired, and the outcome by labour market insertion.

The importance of social skills and of living together as a lesson for a super-diverse world is rarely taken into account in the formal and informal assessment of the working of educational systems: functions of education, such as socialization and more general personal development of children, are often neglected. This can affect access, since a shortcut to selectivity can reward most fitting pupils to the detriment of disadvantaged ones whose accommodation is required in first place. In this respect, we see also an increase of neo-assimilationist trends: where multiculturalism is praised, we can define it more and more as a conservative multiculturalism (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1997). As a consequence, integration problems are less and less considered a societal task: the problem is not the integration of society, but the integration of migrants. This implies also a shift of responsibility for lacking integration from structures to cultures and individual bends and characteristics. Thus, integration becomes mainly an inclusion into national values,

sometimes with a strong accent on civic and democratic foundations – hence supposing that migrants and minorities can be a danger for democracy. As noted by Joppke (2007), we can temptations to pursue liberal goals with illiberal and somehow repressive means. So, especially in some government policy documents, not rarely democratic foundations are used as an ethnocentric and exclusionary argument.

The integration discourse turns into assimilationism, despite formal statements defining it as a two-way process that requires reciprocal accommodation: integration becomes one-sided, as a convergence towards the institutionally protected majority. This dimension is very clear in linguistic assimilationism practiced in some school contexts (e.g., SI, DE, IT, and partly NL).

***From State centrality to school autonomy: definitions and effects on access of minorities in an era of retrenchment.***

Definitions of insiders and outsiders are very important, and play a relevant role in framing access problems, related policy and blaming strategies affecting actual access outcomes. The definition of insiders and outsiders is traditionally a State task: its immigration policy, the labels it created according to its tradition of relation to diversity (from colonial history to the treatment of internal territorial, religious, class and ethnic difference before immigration flows) are mirrored in other policies, basing common political cultures and their related national models of integration (Heckmann & Schnapper, 2003). In this sense, features characterizing the inclusion into the educational system followed national guidelines – even though with more or less variability and discretion power, according to the role of intermediate bodies in different countries (from civil society to mid-level institutions, e.g., in Federal states).

In recent times, State ability to impose its own visions and definitions is challenged: international agreements set new rights and duties, and a converging problematization; the “ideal-typical” models of multiculturalism and assimilationism are intermingling (not by chance, there are hints also in the blurring of *ius soli* and *ius sanguinis* models, more and more accepting principles and rules coming from one other). On the other hand, immigration is becoming more and more complex (super-diverse, to mention again Vertovec). What is more, the boost of neoliberal ideologies based State retrenchment and the retreat of the State “visible hand” to correct territorial- and class-based market distortion.

All together, the unclear working of utilitarian discourses in recent times, the pluralization of cultural cleavages linked with the weakening of State and market assimilationist machines, the evidence of failures in both multicultural and assimilationist model countries – mainly due to the widening gap of social and reciprocal expectations between formal acknowledgment of equality and actual perspectives – increased

- the legitimization of anti-immigrant discourses;
- the blaming of individual and cultural causes of disadvantage, underplaying structural ones;
- State institutional aphasia (whose ostrich policy is just one of the onsets) facing pluralization.

Not rarely, these trends fed discourses on the need for decentralization and autonomy, either within the frame of a subsidiarity discourse (being the local level the closest to the problem, and supposedly the best to know and manage it), or within the frame of a neoliberal State retrenchment discourse (cutting State expenditure with responsabilization of every institution). Both, with the advantages of a blame avoiding game, whose responsibility for failures and institutional aphasia falls on the single school or local institution.

In the case of educational access for immigrant pupils, this means that the responsibility over social and educational integration shifted from State to family or local institutions, according to a misconcepted subsidiarity, that in era of retrenchment and devolution means both a) decentralizing penury (Mény & Wright, 1985), and b) passing the hot potato.<sup>22</sup> In general this means the need to redefine task, duties and skills at local level to answer State aphasia; skills that are not always available at local level. In that case, the hot potato comes back to State level – just when it is so hot to risk burning the whole kitchen: single cases become paradigmatic (even though they are not necessarily such), climbing the public agenda. This blurs access chances and opportunities, and fragment access rights into a concession more and more consistent with the shift from structural to cultural and individual focus (and blaming) we will work out below.

In general we can approximate that countries whose immigration process started in post-Fordist era do lack a clear model of integration and move ambivalently among different political cultures, while countries with a longer immigration history are challenging their model, perceived as no longer effective. Among the first ones, we can place Slovenia (where interviews showed an almost absent expert discourse on migration issues), Italy (with its ambivalent pendulum between assimilationism and multiculturalism) and somehow Germany (due to a discourse on immigrant integration that developed much later than the appearance of settled minorities with immigrant background). Among the second ones, we can consider at first the Netherlands (where multiculturalism is under discussion), France (where the local version of assimilation, *l'intégration républicaine*, proves to be ineffective in some contexts).

### ***Access and Individualization: Paradoxes***

One of the ways out from the “thick” and more and more unsatisfactory national models is the process of individualization of diversity management. Collective identities and group problems are refocused in the personal sphere, following a worsening mood for cultural recognition and protection of diversity and neo-assimilationist trends in Europe. To the point that in the individualization discourse two different trends intermingle: on the one hand, personalization as emancipation; on the other hand personalization as assimilation (i.e. making a clean break with the minority ethno-cultural backgrounds). So, individualization and tailored education could be a solution, and many actors in different countries do underline that this is the only strategy to overcome ineffective labelling; though, instruments and practices to govern life course fragmentation are

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<sup>22</sup> Obviously, this doesn't apply just to immigration-related disadvantage. In the Polish case, for example, the cost burden of (a) lowering mandatory education age and (b) expanding the definition of special education needs is mostly up to territorial bodies, while decisions are made at the national level.

poorly thematized, and enter fully in the field of institutional aphasia. How individualization can happen in the actual configuration of education is either unsaid or doubtful – notwithstanding evidences that here and there consistent practices are on the ground.

All in all, “the personalization process is full of ambivalences. In spite of the evolution towards personalization, pre-existing features of society are still positively evaluated, such as group membership, identification in communities and significant others.” (Baraldi & Maggioni, 1999) “Othering” processes (and even labels willingly oriented to target the disadvantaged) can clash with individualization. What is more, often migrants are “othered” and labelled according to ethno-national, linguistic, cultural, colour and/or religious lines: such a grouping, focussing on reified collectives, is blatantly contradictory with an individualization process. Though, this contradiction is rarely observed: sometimes, relevant actors do even consider that ethno-cultural labelling can be a step towards individualization (a way of accounting their difference).

We can see here a summing up of paradoxes of education and paradoxes of intercultural communication. If a consistent subject-perspective was taken, the categorization of “migration background” itself had to be dismantled, but – as reported in the German WP7 report – this cannot be done because systems monitoring and the definition of support measures depends on the identification of group specific needs. As a consequence, paradoxically personalization is both boosted as a solution and controlled in institutional environments (since too personal paths are considered deviant, and hence risky for social cohesion).

And a further paradox lies in the identification of a social, structural causation and then a focus on individual solutions, with different consequences according to main trends in personalization: is it a social or an economic activation? These paradoxes ground the main risk in case of failure or unexpected outcomes: blaming the disadvantaged, and a focus more on individual than on structural factors, with a shift from individual policy to individual policing, from empowerment to reprehension and depreciation. Actually, social emancipation through education is replaced with an individualised promise of meritocratic social mobility gained through commitment and high attainment. As reported in the UK national report, current migration policy is an instance of personalisation, where successful participation and integration into the labour market is demanded of the individual as something he or she is responsible for. Thus, the task of politics is providing means for an individual, successful coping, and avoiding systemic questions.

### ***Retrenchment and Access Chances***

As hinted above, in some ways individualization is also tied to public spending cuts, with a shifting focus from socio-economic structures and the removal of wide-scope institutional hindrances, to an individual attuning that leaves income distribution, inequality and poverty issues aside. In this respect, system changes (acting on disadvantage in a preventive way) are downplayed in favour of ex-post individual fine-tunings.

Again, the buck is passed to local, street-level actors, even explicitly stating that there's no money to dedicate. Clearly this defines a passive form of subsidiarity, i.e. delegation of responsibility without allocation of resources. As an effect, not rarely street-level actors (and mainly teachers)

are blamed (especially by interviewed policy experts) as not able to cope with challenges related to immigrant integration – even though teachers' training and re-training could be seen as an institutional, collective task and effort, not rarely (e.g. in DE, SI, IT, NL) individual teachers' dispositions are in the spotlight. Again, no attention for structural issues. In this respect, the outcome could be a further complexification of actual disadvantages.

### *The end of grand narratives and the institutional aphasia*

Often, CDA shows a lack in reflexive analysis on access problems. Though, where and when reflexivity is in place, there's no consequent step toward system reforms. In this respect, as the German WP7 report puts it, post-ideological state is in stark contrast to earlier times, where education policy was a highly contested arena, with different and clashing *Weltanschauungen* and anthropological visions clashed. Post-modernist discourse means also a less clear and linear paths toward system reforms, with resistances or even incapability to change existing structures. We can see examples of this issue in most case countries.

In **Germany**, the effort to reduce negative outcomes of the selective system is performed through incremental changes, whose all-day schooling is an example affecting also access chances for disadvantaged groups. And in this respect, an important note in the national report is the acknowledgment of unclear ideas by relevant stakeholders about which measures are successful and work well for migrant pupils and which ones are not.

In **Italy**, many actors complain in a way we can define with the classical motto from the book and movie “The Leopard”: “Everything must change so that everything can remain the same”. After ten years and more of reforms and reforms of reforms, contradiction after contradiction, the system changed in such a blurred way that no real effect on drop-out and NEET was visible, while teachers both in lower and upper secondary schools often do not really know how the whole system works.

The **Polish** reform of special education and compulsory school age is having similar consequences: we have pieces of reform without a systemic view (in the first case, no changes in access and no additional resources and skills were provided; in the second, no reframing of tasks and resources among territorial scales was accomplished), thus challenging expected outcomes of the reforms themselves.

In the **Netherlands**, challenges to early selection and its negative consequences do stop facing the fact that such a policy is so engrained in the Dutch education system that it is hard difficult to modify it. And some interviewees mentions as a reason for wrong targeting the distance between ruled and rulers: for example, there's a lack of information on the part of those who make policies about the realities at school and classroom level at vocational tracks, since none of the policy-makers is likely to have studied, worked or have children in that schools.

In **France**, a similar discourse pertains to policy implementers, e.g. teachers: their recruitment leads to a selection of upper or middle class teachers who have no clue of their pupils' social conditions and difficulties. Furthermore, governmental problems to lead reforms has been even considered as a friction by itself. Every reform in the educational arena launched in last decades

are considered as failures, not having really reached their actual aims. Even, the changes implemented thanks to these reforms have been peripheral or have supposedly increased the level of inequalities (Oberti, 2007).

## **4.4 Coping and Support**

### ***4.4.1 Coping and Support: an unbalanced relation***

Firstly: Focusing on the issue of coping and support the GOETE research project follows the question in which way the educational system has awareness on pupils to be prepared and – partly by professionals – to be accompanied in their efforts to handle the challenges of transition in successful and legal manner and is providing them with a variety of offerings of support. But the link between coping and support cannot be completely understood in the same manner as we speak about the link between problem and solution. Although the term coping generally is connected with a task to be managed – or obstacles to overcome –, it is always a special strategy (or form) of acting that has to be shaped by an individual pupil or a group. In contrast to the term coping, support is a term to identify agencies and persons in their social and cultural surroundings in order to participate in developing their capabilities of that coping process and to strengthen their efforts of overcoming difficulties in a successful manner. But what does “successful” mean?

Coping strategies can be developed inside the normative system of legality, but they also can be found as illegal or at least illegitimate forms of action. One example is aggressive or violent behaviour which can be understood as a strategy of coping without being educated in alternatives of behaviour which are socially accepted or without having a legal access to opportunities to reach an aim. Although they might be successful these coping strategies are not legalized and it is evident that they often lead to failure and create highly counterproductive effects for the life course. But they stay to be certain forms of coping with difficulties.

In other words: it is important to see that support does not mean to strengthen problematic and destructive strategies of coping but to accompany pupils in shaping strategies of action that are based on values and norms as well as on skills and capabilities. Relating to institutions this means establishing structures of qualified staff being able to cooperate with actors inside the educational system (pupils, teachers) but also outside (parents, social services, doctors, lawyers, police etc.).

Secondly: It is evident that no (welfare-) state is able to provide its members with support which covers every single demand that is generated in the different spheres of coping. This is also documented by the national reports which are reflected in the GOETE project. In fact the range of offerings of professional and non-professional supports is limited not only because of the difficulties to react adequately in time to every given demand but also because of the fiscal problems in providing personal, time, space and equipment. So the frictions are more or less strong between the articulation of demands and the political decision to cover them with support. There is a tendency of imbalance between coping and support: a permanent demand of describing challenges of coping on one hand and providing only a selection of adequate support on the other.

From a comparative point of view it is interesting if there is an awareness not only of the forms of coping but also of the lack or covering by support measures to be given by school professionals

or by school externals in cooperation with teachers, students and parents. In this context coping as an issue is mostly significant because of the costs that exist to create support services.

### ***Formal, non-formal, informal relations: inside and out-of-school context***

The relation between coping with the demands of transition and support of these efforts expected by students can be analysed on two levels: coping as a way to handle institutionalized challenges inside school systems and coping as a way to handle institutionalized challenges between school systems and labour market. These types of challenges can be characterized as the formal part of transition. But its formal character does not include that students can resort on strategies or resources of coping which are provided by school or market in a comparable formal sense. In this perspective the individual is reduced to be member of a formal setting with rights and duties in order to be a successful functioning part of functioning system. As such it seems to be the last unit to develop by its own more or less intelligent ways of regulating emotions, of combining resources of time, space, personal communication etc. This leads to the question whether the formal educational sector is coming up with any – formal – support for students.

Beside this quite different challenges in the informal or non-formal sector of life course have to be mentioned. Although not fixed in regular administrative schedule it is evident that different transitions in family and peer-group can occur, partly in addition, partly in an asynchronous manner. Special challenges for coping are coming up by so called critical-life events, i.e. separation of parents, sickness or death of a member of family, birth of siblings, unemployment of the breadwinner, moving to another region, violence in families, etc.

Generally in most of the National Reports of GOETE these out-of-school factors are not ignored, but there is no intensive reflection on their importance for coping with the transitions in school and from school to employment.

Seen from a formal point of view these events may have a serious influence in the process of coping with the challenges of transition inside the school system and beyond.

So the analytical differentiation between formal and informal or non-formal transitions only makes sense in order to attribute the characteristics of challenges: are they generated by the demands of schooling (qualification, selection, allocation) only, do they interfere with socio-economic status of familiar background?

Generally the national reports are using the term “support” much more than the term “coping”. This may be a result of an implication that is inherent in support: if several kinds of offerings of support to certain groups or individuals exist, the conclusion is that this fact can be seen as a structural reaction to their demands in coping. But if supports are adequate or if a lack of support is indicated, the question of quality, resources, professionalization and political will has to be treated on another level. Asking for what kinds of issues, and students, ‘coping’ mechanisms for disadvantaged students are put into place, the group of children with immigrant background (in the UK Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Caribbean, Somali and Turkish, in France and Italy members of African States, also Sinti and Roma – as in Slovenia-, in Germany immigrants from inside the European Community, Turkish, Russian) and those with a less economic, social and cultural

capital are predominantly mentioned. But the identification of those groups has to be seen in a broader range of contexts.

#### ***4.4.2 Three contexts of using the term coping and support***

Referring to the question, in which contexts the national reports pick out the issue of coping and support as central themes the differences are remarkable. There are 3 contexts to be identified:

- General societal contexts of demands and challenges of education which are generated by economic developments and technological change;
- Institutional contexts of institutional demands and challenges with perspectives on educational system due to the relation between the public and private sector;
- Individual context of capabilities and capacities of students in their local surroundings.

#### **Ad 1: Coping and support in societal contexts**

Coping and support – both terms are used in a general sense: to describe the challenges of societal and political change a country has ‘to cope with’ in a competitive knowledge society, in globalization facing economic demands and educational development of individuals as a question of shaping the future of the society. An important fact in analyzing societal contexts in comparative research has to be recognized not only in the specific path dependencies of coping and support structures given by traditions of policies on a national level. It also has to be considered that within the national borders a differentiation of districts of education policies is given according to the federal constitution of society. Significant examples are Germany with 16 Länder or the United Kingdom with four education systems (England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) which are coping with the challenge of marginalization and migration/immigration:

“Each nation has devolved responsibilities for education policy, teacher training, schools inspectorate, and so forth. These differences are both historic and current. It is therefore impossible to consider the UK as being a single unit for analysis; educational research that takes the UK as its focus must be comparative, or at least explicitly address how the plurality of systems will be dealt with in analytical terms.” (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 6f.)

These pluralities of education systems are characteristics for the compared nations and do not make it easy to come to a coherent picture although in many districts general challenges have to be handled. Demographic development and qualified workforce belong to these permanent tasks.

Experts throughout European Countries do agree that given the demographic development there is a demand of providing the nations with qualified workforce. The spectrum reaches between statements that find balancing education and employability is a permanent challenge of networking economic and educational policies and harsh critics concerning the lack of adequate efforts, as reported from Poland:

“The basic problem of the Polish education system is its low quality. One of the symptoms of that situation is tutoring, which became lately a general phenomenon in education process. Moreover, schools and universities are not responsible for employability of graduates

and therefore, do not sufficiently prepare them for entering and finding their way on the labour market, and do not develop their skills and competences that meets the needs of employers. The coherency of education with the labour market is low, which makes impossible to adjust education to expectations of a dynamic labour market”. (Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland 2007, quoted in: Buchowicz & Bledowski, 2012, p. 68)

Another challenge is seen in qualifying and integrating the groups having a low educated background without sustainable training qualification. Beside this the modern challenge of strengthening the abilities of participation in social and cultural spheres, the ability to lead a self-determined life facing the unreasonable challenges of mobility, complexity and acceleration of information and knowledge. It is also mentioned that (post-)modern members of society have to cope with devaluation of knowledge, tradition and attitudes in a process of life-long learning, which is a demand with the ambivalence between chance and risk.

According to that educational concepts and political programs are mentioned as frames of references that are (or are not) ‘supported’ by public opinion, political parties, scientists, associations. In this context different strategies of handling these challenges seem to be significant. Whereas some countries seem to have a broad dialogue about this between politics, associations and public (Finland, Germany) others are facing difficulties. One example of this type of macro-level-use of the term ‘support’ is given by Italy concerning a political strategy which is called “localism”:

“On the one hand, support for localism seems to work as a ‘sweep-it-under-the-carpet’ strategy: accommodation via micro-regulation avoids a negative politicization of the issue, heated national debates and hatred. Though, this strategy reruns traditional weaknesses in the implementation of Italian social policy: poor protection of clear right, postcode lottery of measures (localization is not fine-tuning but segmentation with poor match with local needs in a context where a national discourse and priority is missing). So the unsaid turning point is the real ability of the State to be enabling towards territorial levels and to guarantee a minimum set of nationwide standards. Not by chances, if experts, policy makers and third sector actors do underline positive local practice, activists do also underline negative ones involving weakest groups (e.g. the Roma), tied with unclear national rules or quite clear national rules (in some case very advanced in comparative terms) applied inconsistently: for example in granting the right to education for undocumented migrant minors also in upper secondary schools, and especially in vocational training (where a lot of documents a person in irregular condition doesn't have are required).” (Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, p. 26f.)

One main subject in that general sense is coping as an inevitable expectation to face the challenges of inequality. Inequality is seen as a general signature of the society not only in terms of structural social and spatial mechanisms of reproducing inequality but also inequality of access to education in order to broaden the competencies of coping and to use offerings of support. This issue is expressed e.g. in Germany as a necessity to realize social justice by supporting the economic status of low educated families and in France in order to change the educational system as a mechanism of reproducing inequalities:

“The issue of coping is central when one considers inequalities: the WP6 interviews with students and parents underlined the contrasted capacities of young people and their families to understand the school system norms and the various strategies to develop a relevant edu-

cational trajectory. In this perspective, there is undoubtedly a reproduction of inequalities: low qualified parents are the least able to support their children in this perspective.(...) Regarding COPING, the interviewees were very critical about the coping facilities that are offered at school. The leaders of the NGOs interviewed express their concern about the trend to delegate the treatment of school difficulties to other partner.” (Jahnich et al., 2012, p. 39f.)

Remarkable is that the question of inequality, marginalization and immigration is related to specific theoretical patterns especially to the discourse on stability of society in general and of community cohesion on a regional level. And it is not only the economic and social status of the families and their children but in a significant manner the question of language skills which plays a key-role:

“... the tacit but potent tension between the recognition of the social bases of the problems faced by non-English speaking migrants and the individual responsibility they are expected to demonstrate in school is to be resolved through personalised learning strategies. We also notice the tendency to turn to the areas where coping strategies are prominent as the first areas to be subject to reductions of funding or provision, and possibly among the last to have the emergence of new or multiplied forms of educational deprivation recognised. In Northern Ireland, though there had been a small distinctive Chinese community, and a small Indian and other communities, migration only became an issue in schools because of the arrival of Eastern and Central Europeans with the Poles as the largest community. This produced a dramatic rise in the number of students for whom English was not their first language, which created novel problems of coping for the education system. The response focused very largely on language acquisition, largely by means of an immersion strategy.” (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 27)

Similar to this the challenge of immigrant pupils is not seen as an addition of thousands of individual stories of transition cause by very many different circumstances (civil war, disasters, poverty). The “areas of concern” are spread all over the country since decades and they are expressed in changing intensity touching the concept of multicultural education as a coping strategy for the whole nation. Italy for example is seen as an arena of controversies:

“Main worries in coping with the somehow unexpected growth of vocational education and training are: the fragmented legal framework regulating the system, the unclear relationship between vocational education and training, the interregional unbalance and fragmentation, with qualifications too locally-bounded, the lack of adequate resources, at risk of further shrinking due to the crisis, the ineffective and inefficient guidance tools, the unclear framing of regional qualifications in national and European certifications, the risk for employees in the vocational training due to recent shrinking: due to subsidiarity agreements with schools, training centres are in a difficult position, the risk for employability of pupils from vocational training.” (Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, p. 44f.)

In contrast and addition to that Finland politics is facing challenges of improving access to the existing educational trajectories by taking several spheres into focus: prevention of social exclusion and support of families at-risk:

“In Finland, prevention of social exclusion is not only important in order to secure equal access to education for all children, but is also practiced during the whole educational trajectory in order to prevent social exclusion. Emphasis has been put on e.g. early intervention, support to at-risk families, support in day care centers and in schools and multidisciplinary safety nets in schools. In preventing social marginalization regarding the transition phase from lower secondary to upper secondary, some issues in particular have been on the agenda during the last ten years; multi-professional cooperation between government agencies, outreach youth work, adequate guidance counseling and support, adequate support for integration, maintenance of special-needs schools and classes, promoting of integration and employment of immigrants through training.” (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 16)

The question if education is petrifying social inequality or is a chance to achieve more equality strongly is emphasized in Poland. Coping with hurdles to get access to high quality education for families with low economic status means to reach structural generated limits of educational justice:

“Children from poor families have very limited opportunities to get the schools with high quality of teaching and therefore their chances to attend good educational institutions at higher level of education are decreased as well. The second kind of segregation is caused by the policy of schools themselves. They tend to segregate pupils according to the criterion of their parents financial resources.” (Buchowicz & Bledowski, 2012, p. 67)

It is evident that all these aspects of national importance have their influence on strategies and measures on the meso-level of educational and out-of-school institutions which are dealing with support of individual students. Here the issues of regional and local capabilities and governance are important but also the question of demographic segregation and question of socio-economic situation of the pupils’ families. A problem in some societies is the low status of empirical research and the lack of knowledge in the effects of educational policy, e.g., in Poland:

“There is a lack of complex researches allowing identification of key factors influencing youth decision on educational trajectory or strategy and there are no descriptions on coping with existing barriers in access to education.” (Buchowicz & Bledowski, 2012, p. 57)

## **Ad 2: Coping and support in institutional context**

Connected with those political and professional debates on the macro-level the picture of the institutional level is interesting when it comes to questions of decision in which direction the national and local system should be “supported”, stabilized or reformed. A large variety of measures and competencies of support is described. Some tendency is remarkable if it comes to specify the professional concepts which are underlying support offerings: individualization instead of standardization. Again this can be illustrated by the case of Finland:

“High-level experts seem to agree that young people need individual solutions to cope with the transition phase and that transition phases should be made as flexible as possible. There seems also to be a consensus regarding the follow-up of completers of compulsory education. Policy makers aim to prohibit the option of young people disappearing from the statistics after basic education. Young people in the transition phase seem to be supported in

many different ways. There are different projects for supporting a successful transition to upper secondary education.” (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 48)

The Netherlands (and Germany as well) are providing support in early childhood education for children with migrant background:

“There is already a policy on preschool education to support children to remedy their language deficiencies. The Minister pledges 50 million Euros more to support children who are most difficult to reach [...]. To combat educational disadvantage, schools are increasingly cooperating with agencies outside school (welfare, social work, health and youth care, police, cultural and/or sports associations). The purpose of such cooperation is to offer pupils and students help with problems at school or in their home setting, as well as to promote their development by offering additional activities (culture, sport) with which they normally have little contact. In secondary education the support of students with problems is being provided by ‘Care and Advice Teams’ in which schools work together with agencies in other fields (youth care, police, etc.).” (Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012, p. 36)

The situation in Slovenia seems to be characterized by discrepancies between demands and offerings of support. Although big efforts of providing children with backgrounds of poverty and experiences of exclusion there still is a huge demand of support:

“On the one hand we can observe very high expectations of the Slovene parents according to the school achievement of their children, since they are willing to pay a lot of instructions only with the goal that the child will have excellent grades. And on the other hand current research show that the already 40 years existing school internal supportive mechanisms (counseling staff in each kinder-garden and school) cannot give enough attention to the pupils who are in need for it – pupils with immigrant descent, with special needs, and pupils from socio-economic poor environment (among them also Roma children,...). The gap between the children in the general education is growing bigger in recent years. Not only in the domain of their gained knowledge but also in the domain of their further educational path.” (Ule & Vezovnik, 2012, p. 4)

In Finland emphasis is given to inter-professional cooperation. It is remarkable that services in the area of work with families at risk and outreach youth work became a central target of support measures:

“The most effective form of preventing social exclusion is to support the everyday life of families with children and offering help at as early stage as possible. Likewise, social exclusion can be prevented by a safe and inspiring childhood and youth.” [...] “Emphasis is now put on access to services, especially when moving from one service to another and promoting a smooth exchange of information concerning the provision of youth services by planning joint procedures between various authorities. Multiprofessional networks are provided as solutions aimed to work on a general local level focusing on the feasibility of services required by young people. Outreach youth work is seen as important not only in reaching the young people in need of support, but also in helping them to gain access to the types of services and support that promote their growth and independence as well as their entry into education and the world of work. These have been put forward in the policy pro-

gram for children and youth and in the amendment of the Youth Act.” (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 7)

Experts (e.g., in Germany) place emphasis on the necessity of cooperation between school teachers and out-of-school services as social work, psychological and psychiatric counselling and on self-organized support (by parents), but also on the demands of creating a sustainable school-culture with a clear ethical and normative climate of welcoming every child, of non- acceptance of bullying, mobbing or racist mentality, of constructive ways to solve and regulate conflicts by mediators (even peer-to-peer). Institutions “live” by transparency of their processes, by a high level of parent’s participation and an atmosphere of solidarity and support although this seem to be kind of paradox to the principles of competition and selection which schools have to follow. To come to this atmosphere of school culture teachers have to broaden their knowledge-base into social competencies and into the background of family lives. This issue is seen as important because differences between schools are also differences in teacher’s competencies. These areas are not only seen in a positive perspective:

“...also the institutional coping is under scrutiny: number and qualification of school staff are perceived as another risk (since there's no structured refreshment plan, but just short-term project or local good practices), and also the territorial coverage of good practices, is patchy too. It is mentioned that integration is a standard task schools should achieve” [...]. “[T]here's quite a large support for a mid-way model between a school- and a non-school vocational training: a too school-oriented approach proves to be ineffective to catch most disadvantaged pupils, while a dual system is very expensive, requires a strong organization some regions are not able to put in place and risks to be anyway segregating for the most disadvantaged.”(Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, p. 47)

In order to support teachers some suggestions are made to strengthen offerings of teaching parents in the very early stages of their parenthood. But the measures of educating the parents cannot be called a dominant strategy of high-level governance.

### **Ad 3: Coping and Support in an individual context**

One aspect in which coping strategies of pupils are mentioned is the description of those coming from families attributed as having a lack of resources to overcome structural barriers and difficulties which are connected with individual situations. Describing these situations is leading to influences which can be identified as discrimination (France) of disadvantaged children:

“Students who encounter difficulties experience largely early dropouts and face weak chances to enter the labour market (Lefresne). Students have to face discriminations in their educational course that weigh on their chances to achieve their graduation. Students with a migrant background deal with particularly difficult trajectories.” (Jahnich et al., 2012, p. 14)

It is remarkable that although the demand of supporting the individual by individualized measures which should be combined with groupwork (attached youth work in Finland) is explicitly mentioned the description of coping is mostly limited to some indicators which are interpret-

ed as interactions between selected backgrounds and the pictures that are painted in the public about them. In Germany the strategies of labelling children with special demands of support is problematized:

“This *pars pro toto* strategy was accompanied by ascriptive processes and a rather vulgar application of reproduction theories: lack of interest in education, low educational background of the parents, lack of interest in learning the German language, lack of habits conducive to educational success such as reading aloud to small children, having books at home, investing in cultural activities such as visits to the museum, exhibits etc. The argument thus ran: children who have not been properly pre-socialized before attending school, most migrant children, will have difficulties in access and making smooth transitions; their coping skills will be underdeveloped as they are unfamiliar with the problematic and have little support from their parents, school will be irrelevant to them, because they have not learned to appreciate the relevance of schooling. Even where parents have high ambitions for the school career of their children, are these ambitions and expectations likely to be unrealistic etc.” (Amos et al., 2012, p. 16)

This contextualization of ascribing and labelling groups with deficiencies is an every-day-life challenge for those who are targets. But it has to be differentiated from the necessity to express those needs which cannot be seen only as an effect role-making and role-taking by those who are labeled. It has to be recognized that there are structural reasons to be considered (United Kingdom): effects of marginalization by the labour market and by a meritocratic knowledge society which produces mechanisms of selection and exclusion by ranking school leavers alongside competencies and skills.

“Such marginalization, it is argued, is a consequence of the competitive industries of the 21st century, which will ‘require higher order academic, personal and vocational skills’ (p. 3) among the young workforce. This section of EM concludes that a successful continuation of education through sixth form and university is now becoming the norm, rather than the alternative. Therefore, young people looking to enter today’s knowledge driven economy must be prepared to invest in their own education, with the support of schools, following a personalised and flexible learning agenda. So through EM (and similar initiatives and policies) the twentieth century ‘great promise’ of social emancipation through education is replaced with an individualised promise of meritocratic social mobility gained through effort and high attainment.” (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 34)

It is also remarkable that the different competencies to cope with the multifactorial challenges of being a pupil partly are seen as a question of individual fate and personal profile, but predominantly it seems to be common sense that structural conditions are responsible for pupil’s abilities. Some experts find drastic words (‘hurdle race’) to describe the challenges that pupils face when being in school:

“Concerning coping strategies of students there are statements pointing out that it is important to understand young people’s desire to get rid of the permanent control in terms of examination and ranking and the warning to youth welfare aid not to reproduce the logic of selection with those who had made the embarrassing and sometimes traumatic experience of failure. ‘Our school-system is, metaphorically speaking, conceptualized as a hurdle race.

To get into the school is difficult for a part of children. That means that the first experience of failure - which is experiences of success for others at the same time - can happen already at school entrance or the intended entrance, when parents are suggested to send the child to kindergarten again or to special schools for disadvantaged’.” (Amos et al., 2012, p. 51f.)

All things considered at the end the finding is that the description of coping strategies of pupils and their families does not give a picture with many details. Emphasis lies much more on the description of challenges which have to be coped on a macro-level of politics by developing measures of support from the early childhood (language support) to special teacher training and structures of cooperation with out of school services till training and participating parents and families.

The relation between coping and relevance is close. The summery of the UK National Report gives a significant picture on the interdependency of responsibilities, levels of administration and priorities in educational policy.

“Coping is ... identified as the key handmaiden of relevance, the means that can help ensure its delivery, a form of supplementary intervention. Indeed, what emerges from considering how it is to be operationalised is a set of most interesting similarities of practically all the GOETE countries. As we noted in the case of the Migrant friction, Coping is typically (a) devolved to and administered at ‘lower’ levels; (b) based on ‘best practices’; (c) with the ultimate responsibility of individual schools to deliver, in school, working with individuals; (d) on problems that are identified as such—for instance as cases of ‘social disadvantage’—elsewhere; and (e) very much at the bottom of the pecking order when it comes to financial assistance, particularly in the case of England, where the local authority basis of much coping work is being undermined by the current reforms to school governance. By contrast, the latest ‘anti-NEET’ initiative in Northern Ireland (NIE 2012) contains the word ‘prevention’ in its title, and the general category of what we are referring to as ‘coping’ has been moved close to centre stage for 14-16 year olds, through a proposed programme of Community Family Support, which essentially proposes to target family, social and economic, health and housing as crucial ‘barriers to engagement’, drawing support from a range of government departments in addition to Education. This represents a rare example in this study of a preventative rather than interventive or compensatory strategy.” (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 43)

## **4.5 Relevance**

### ***4.5.1 Introduction***

This chapter addresses GOETE`’s concern with relevance by linking definitions and hypotheses of the State of the Art report and confronting them with new perspectives emerging from the further progression of the project. In all thematic chapters of the comparative report of WP7 concerned with high-level governance (HLG), there is a big concern with disadvantaged children, so also in the present chapter concerned with relevance. Relevance of education may be related to many levels and areas of concern: it may be applied to systems as well as to individuals. As a term of many facets, it is dependent on actor’s or stakeholder’s positions, but also on systematic relations on a societal level between education and economic performance or between education and polit-

ical participation. Therefore, the question whether education is relevant, might be answered very differently by the large array of actors of whom the education arena is comprised. The relational dimension of relevance is confirmed by the national reports of WP7 which illustrate the negotiation and definition processes indicative of the controversies regarding ‘relevance’. Behind the general question addressing the relevance of education, there is the more specific one: what kind of education is relevant for whom. This question will be more systematically addressed in the next part of the GOETE project.

The comprehensive discussion of relevance in Section D of the State of the Art Report (Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011, pp. 124-187) indicated one central problem that is mirrored in the national reports to be discussed below. The problem has been aptly articulated in the central question of the GOETE project: “This is why the GOETE project connects the question of whether education still contributes to social integration and whether education is still socially integrated to the question how different actors involved compromise on what education is held as relevant”. (Ibid., p. 140) The problematic stated in this quotation deserves further elaboration:

- a) One of education’s primary functions is to integrate the next generation into society, to ensure that the next generation is able to fully participate in society and is included in its subsystems: the labour market, housing, health, etc. As the overall societal context changes and evolves, how are education systems adapted in order to be “socially or, to coin a new term “societally”, integrated” to the new circumstances? With regards to the HLG (high level governance)-actors’ perspective: how radically is this question posed – is there any public pondering in any country to make drastic changes and fundamentally redesign education instead of resorting to reforms of existing structures?
- b) Conversely, what does the education system “do” in order to fulfil its task? How does the present system answer to these challenges and how are these answers perceived by various actors? Which dimensions of education are considered to be relevant by which actors? What shapes their different views and assessments?

Before looking at how relevance is discussed by high level governance actors in the various national reports of WP7, a first step consists in providing a frame and context for the further discussions. This context quite logically is that of the knowledge society. The knowledge society is the overall frame not only of the GOETE-project but for all social and educational debates and political measures currently undertaken in the different European countries: they are all designed with reference to the actual and perceived claims made on education by what is referred to as knowledge based economy or knowledge society. The focus on economic aspects is more prevalent in the Anglo-Saxon countries, while the continental and Northern European societies focus on the consequences for society as a whole. In a sense, the narrower focus is more precise, because it defines the kind of knowledge and its economic function; i.e., its potential to be commodified and traded in whereas the term knowledge in a societal context is much wider and includes anthropological dimensions as well as, e.g. scientific ones. However specified and framed, the term knowledge society informs debates on a national as well as inter-, and supra-national levels. With regards to the latter, it needs to be emphasized that the activities, policies and regulations by International Organisations, most importantly the EU and the OECD, play a major role in promoting the concept of the knowledge society and orient national policies.

In a second step, on that same general level, two prominent current positions will be singled out probing the implications of societal change for education. These two positions, written from an I&C-technology, the other from an educational point of view, discuss possible future scenarios of education irrespective of the constrictions of political negotiations “real” education is entangled in. As seismographs of possible scenarios these positions are interesting and prompt the question of whether any of these or other far-reaching possible developments play a role in HLG debates on the relevance of education. Having thus established the frames or the parameters of discussion, a close look at how relevance is discussed in the National Reports of the work package concerned with high-level governance (WP 7) will be presented and in the final discussion the various strands will be pulled together.

#### ***4.5.2 Relevance of education in the context of the knowledge society***

The transformations of advanced societies have been the concern of analysts for more than half a century, leading to various suggestions for reconceptualization depending on the features highlighted: information society, network society, knowledge society; in Germany also education society (Bildungsgesellschaft, which did not catch on, however). Despite the difference in emphasis and in disciplinary orientation, there is a common concern in coming to terms with the tectonic shifts of society caused by technological, geographic and social changes. A concern with the knowledge society is deeply interwoven with the GOETE-project. An international perspective like this can show the variations and different interpretations, also the different foci of the social scientific discussion. In the Anglo-Saxon countries there is a strong emphasis on the economic aspects which is why the term knowledge based economy or short, knowledge economy is much more common; whereas in Germany, for example, there is a much stronger concern with the political and societal implications. The common focus is of course a concern with knowledge, often conceived of as technical knowledge. Broadly speaking, the positions of the debate fall into two camps, more pessimistic ones: Anthony Giddens (1985), Ulrich Beck (1986/1992), André Gorz (2001) fearing that democratic processes are endangered, because political power resorting to scientific knowledge will not leave any space for the formation of political opinion (cf. Gorz) and more differentiated perhaps even optimistic views. Nico Stehr (2001) emphasizes the decline of traditional powers, State, Church, Military and claims that modern, post-industrial society is more fragile because of the increased significance of knowledge (Ibid., p. 8). This increased significance of knowledge is claimed to lead to a loss of power in the sense of one particular group being able to dominate or rule over another. Stehr, drawing on Francis Bacon’s famous dictum: *scientia est potentia* stresses the universal anthropological aspect of knowledge: its potential for action, its potential to change reality (ibid.). Another crucial insight relates to the following: knowledge can unfold its potential for action most fully in situations of decision and choice. In situations, in other words, where there is no stereotypical and routinized acting, but contingency and space to manoeuvre. Stehr sees the major relevance of scientific and technical knowledge in its sheer inexhaustible ability to permanently create new possibilities of action, and not in its authoritative, objective or uncontroversial status (ibid., p. 9). Stehr’s view places a different emphasis on scientific knowledge than the features highlighted by John W. Meyer and other world polity theorists. (cf. Drori et al., 2003) Viewed from a world polity perspective, there is a global ten-

gency of scientization. Scientization means that scientific knowledge, in the absence of the equivalent to the nation-state on a global scale, is one of the major governance forces with two main dimensions: rationalization and empowerment of actors. Scientization is seen in its broad cultural implications as a driving force of organization and the key to progress and development. The natural and social worlds are regulated by laws, which can be accessed and deciphered by human reason, recognising these laws, is the king's highway to progress and development. Despite their different emphases, both Stehr and the world polity proponents, agree on the proliferation of the capacity to act by an increased number of people, based on knowledge.

They thus agree on identifying knowledge, in particular scientific knowledge, as the defining trait of late modern society where knowledge is basis and guideline for all human action and where fewer and fewer people are concerned with producing or moving material objects and more and more people are 'knowledge workers', or experts whose job it is to transfer contended and often uncertain scientific knowledge into a stable and reliable basis for action. It is not possible to pursue this thought further here, but it shall be mentioned in order to be taken up elsewhere. I refer to the dialectics between determination and indetermination, or freedom and a specific form of coercion or enforcement that is worth looking into in greater detail. I am referring here to Karl Mannheim's distinction between action as reproduction and true social action which always entails liberty and freedom of decision. Here, the relation between expert and professional comes into play, which is especially relevant in educational contexts (cf. Radtke, 2009). Both groups deal with knowledge, but they do so in different ways. Rationalization, standardization and commercialization are associated with expert knowledge; relating knowledge to power of judgement and ethics is associated with professionals.

The current state of society might thus be characterized with the increased importance of knowledge, especially scientific knowledge in all realms of life. The concept of scientization as part of this discussion highlights that knowledge is the basis for standardization and rationalization; it is the driving force behind the proliferation of organizations in modern society and turns individuals into empowered actors. None of this would be possible without the expansion of mass education. This is why two visions of how education is or should be reembedded to "fit" society, to be relevant, shall be considered next.

### ***Two radical visions of the future of education***

In his diagnosis on what is wrong with current education, the educationist Sir Ken Robinson has employed the term "gene pool" with relation to modern education systems (Robinson, 2012). By this he means their cultural origins in the nineteenth century with Enlightenment and Industrialization the two key shaping forces. Many traits pertaining to industrial production can be found in schooling: the division of time and subjects, epitomized in the ideal of the factory so aptly described in David Tyack's educational history of the US. It is easy to recognize that many features of the current system were synchronized with the needs of the industrial age. The intellectual climate of the founding of the education system is mirrored by concepts of giftedness and talents, the assumption that rather homogenous learning groups with regards to age and aptitude are the best setting for effective and efficient educational processes. Although education systems were

founded based on the conviction that all human beings are endowed with reason and should be enabled to lead their lives independently and make autonomous judgments, it also reflects the social divisions by distinguishing the ones considered to be endowed with a stronger capacity for abstract reasoning from those considered to be practically inclined. This model was highly compatible with the requirements of the Industrial Age; it was societally relevant. Since the last third of the twentieth century, this is increasingly questioned. A large number of scholars of different disciplinary backgrounds and in different national contexts looked at education with a very critical eye: Pierre Bourdieu and Paul Willis to name but two of them, all recognized that education was societally functional but for many students was not socially relevant. Bourdieu (1986) recognized that the school was modelled as a reflection of the symbolic social order and the capital distinctions of the middle and upper social classes. Especially with regards to the kind and dispersion of cultural capital he clearly perceived how this would lead to disaffect many children with lower social background. From a different but somewhat complementary perspective – not sociology but cultural studies-inspired ethnography – Paul Willis (1977) gave a detailed account of how youngsters from a working class background would clearly deny the relevance of education while at the same time ‘learning to labour’: a working class job, the hard labour in the factory was dialectically linked to a disdain for education. The relevance of one was not held to be compatible with the other. Education thus was still societally relevant when it was not on an individual level. It served to preserve the social order, it kept away discontent and frustration because although education was discursively related to upward social mobility maintaining the status quo, reproducing the social divisions of society was perceived as individual choice – as an exertion of individual freedom. Jerome Bruner saw how elaborate educational measures seemed to serve above all to keep a portion of children in the lowest rungs of the social ladder.

Scholarship in previous decades was well aware of the mechanisms and institutional settings responsible for causing disaffection in many youngsters; however this did not imply questioning the relevance of education on a systems level. Education was societally relevant because it was functional. Since the last years of the twentieth century this is increasingly questioned. With the disappearance of the standard life course pertaining to industrial society: family, school, training, job for life as condition to have one’s own family, the sorting function of education is dysfunctional. The old division between people who are exclusively good with their hands and those who are exclusively good with their heads does not make any sense any more when flexibility and adaptability are the defining features.

Ken Robinson does not so much present a full-fledged alternative system as rather ask questions relating to learning and collaborating environments, to rethinking the logic behind age division as a key organizing principle and questioning the dualism between head and hand. He invites us to ask what our societal values are and how education should be redesigned to fit, to be societally and individually relevant. And conversely, given that education as presently organized has not been able to provide a good qualification for all children, as confirmed by the PISA study, the relevance of education for the individual is not a given either. One of his key criticisms of the traditional system is: how can it be that all the inventiveness and creativity of many children is lost rather than stimulated and further developed as they progress through school, and this while we are repeating the mantra of how much modern society depends on the new ideas and the inno-

vative potential of the new generation. What Robinson presents, in other words, is a thought-provoking critique indicating a certain direction and implicitly stating that a few reforms of the current system just will not be enough.

David Gelernter (2012), pioneer of the new media, has a very precise vision of how education will be organized in 50 years. The computer specialist expectedly focuses on this medium and predicts that in fifty years' time, schools as we know them today will no longer exist. Where Robinson sees collaboration as one pillar around which our current individualized education system should be redesigned, Gelernter squarely focuses on the single learner. He even revamps the master-apprentice relationship and demands that anyone with dedication and expertise in a particular subject or area should be allowed to teach, thus doing away with the entire debate on the professionalization of education.

The two very different positions meet in their perception of change and the recognition that carrying on as we did before will no longer be sufficient. Late modern society raises different questions for education and poses different challenges than can be answered and addressed with the old concept of schooling. Adequate responses to the current ideals of flexibility, lifelong learning, self-organization, etc. require different and in the view of observers and trend predictors like Gelernter and Robinson cannot be deduced from tradition because none of these orientations played a significant role in the age of industry. As will be shown in the following considerations, 'real' educational policy on all levels of shaping and decision-making is much more pragmatic. The focus is always on the education system as it is and as it relates to a particular national context. This simple but nevertheless important observation is indicative of the specificity of educational policy. The next sections will provide ample illustration of how relevance of education as a high level governance (HLG) issue is squarely placed in a nationally bounded context that does not take the organization and tenets of education as contingent, but as given.

#### ***4.5.3 Relevance of Education as related to the National Frictions***

The policy frictions chosen function in some way as "lenses" through which high-level governance processes could be observed, therefore the issue of relevance of education cannot be separated from them. In the following section, based on the national reports, the way relevance is dealt with in the different GOETE-country contexts, is investigated.

#### ***The Case of Finland***

Sometimes explicitly as in the Finnish case, often more implicitly, the societal context is that of the knowledge society, with the respective emphasis on lifelong learning, self-organization, and human capital development. The Finnish report states: "An emphasis on developing the knowledge society is recognized in the Government programme from 1999 by Prime Minister Paavo Lipponen. In the Government Programme it is stated that a knowledge society is built in Finland, Finland and the future of the Finns are strongly dependent on know-how, the ability to use knowledge and the ability to create new innovations." (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 45) Economic competitiveness and national development are also mentioned in this context. The discourse on the knowledge society is not only reflected in the documents but is also taken up in the

expert interviews. “We have woods and lakes and then there people. And the people and the education forms quite a big keystone.” (Interviewee E10, quoted *ibid.*, p. 45).

However, this reference to transnational, global’ developments, should not obscure the fact that the challenges for education are primarily viewed through a national lens. For example, the Finnish success in the PISA study is interpreted as a confirmation and support of the comprehensive school (Interviewee E3, quoted *ibid.*, p.46). At the same time, the real challenges are identified at the next stage of education. This is highlighted by the frictions chosen: “Preventing social exclusion of youth – from prevention to early intervention” and “Improving access to the upper secondary level in the transition phase in Finland with a special focus on immigrant youth”. The relevance of education and the challenge for high-level governance is to strike a balance between individualism and collective orientation; safeguarding the Finnish welfare state and preventing youth from becoming disillusioned and failing at schools. problems are identified as being located on the next stage. Relevance of education as a high-level governance issue is not deduced from the direct link to the knowledge society, but rather from the ‘indigenous’ Finnish perspective: the individual – to counter exclusion and from the societal level – to maintain the welfare state.

Against this background, it is now possible to reconsider statements from the GOETE State of the Art report with regards to the transitions regimes in the GOETE countries:

“The fruitfulness of the transition regime model for the GOETE objective lies in the fact that it extends beyond the boundaries of education systems (also if this implies reducing the complexity of differences between education systems [...] including structures of labour market, welfare and youth services as well as dominant meanings of the individual and thereby to distinguish dominant models of educational governance. [...] According to this scheme (*ibid.*, table 40) – which is a hypothesis to be tested rather than a result of research – access to education is open and inclusive in the universalistic regime. Coping is an integral part of education, and personal development is the main criterion of relevance of education; the individual is first of all a citizen whose autonomy is secured by welfare rights, also with regard to educational choice.” (Parreira do Amaral, 2011, p. 186)

While the universalistic, social rights based focus is still clearly discernible, an economic orientation, a high-level governance concern with the creation of a productive workforce, cannot be denied. Thus the human capital discourse is also prevalent in Finland, which also implies that personal development is not the sole point of reference. This is also mirrored by concerns with career patterns, including access to the higher tiers of education, which is problematized as being less universalistic than claimed, as well as counselling to prevent social exclusion. The universal orientation on “personal development” is also challenged by an awareness of individual differences. How to adequately address the special needs of the highly gifted or talented is as much an issue as are efforts to counter social exclusion through coordinated team-work. “While the emphasis is still on equal opportunities for everyone, the latest trend seems to be on also providing individual solutions, flexibility and multiprofessional cooperation. Governance of the transition phase seems to be moving towards individualistic supporting systems.” (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2012, p. 49) high-level governance geared at making education relevant thus has to take individ-

ual needs and demands into consideration. Education relevant for all, on both the individual and the societal level, now is considered as part of a network of professional organizations.

### *The Case of Germany*

The concern of high-level governance with relevance of education in Germany also mirrors this trend to view education as embedded in a larger context of professional organizations, but also of voluntary work, thus linking the discussion to the Finnish Case. The frictions chosen for Germany were migration/immigration and all-day schooling. As in all cases chosen for high-level governance, the frictions strongly interlink: All-day schooling is intended to be the all-inclusive answer: it is also to prevent social exclusion, integrate children with an immigrant background and make education in general more relevant for all kinds of students: the gifted as well as those with educational difficulties. All-day schooling became the most important focus of educational policy in reply to the PISA-debacle. The more than sobering results of the first PISA study were taken as a direct indication of educational relevance. The logic ran like this: if our 15 year olds perform well in the PISA studies, we can look to the future without fear, because we know that the next generation is well prepared to weather the storms that may come. Because of the extraordinary meaning attributed to PISA as the key to modernizing the education system, it became the major trigger for an on-going period of intense educational reform. However, here too, change is *within* than *of* the system. Of course, Finland as the PISA champion was envied and closely studied, but the comprehensive system was not imitated. Although PISA was the trigger event to a period of intense educational reform: change is incremental rather than radical. The friction all-day schooling is a perfect illustration: it leaves the structure of the system intact while promising to solve problems of disadvantage and social exclusion. It answers to the criticism of early selection while retaining the practice to decide on the form of secondary schooling after only four grades of elementary schooling.

The interviews mirror the concern with relevance on an individual and societal level; with regards to the latter, in Germany as in the other countries, economic competitiveness is a large issue. Many interviewees stressed the increased complexity and the necessity for various expert groups to work together. Concerning school to work transition, there is a tendency in the documents analysed as well as in the interviews, to get other actors involved more strongly with a strong emphasis on the employment sector. Schooling is seen a crucially important institution which is illustrated by interviewee E6: “I am still attributing particular importance to schools as institutions and I am strongly interested that they are not falling apart, neither horizontally between private and public school, nor vertically [...]” (Amos et al., 2012, p. 51). This is a very strong and idealized statement of the relevance of school which is attributed the key function in the lives of young people: “So without an appropriate and complete schooling and vocational training (they can) only gain control over their lives by chance [...]“ (ibid.).

It is consistent with this statement if all day schooling is presented as the magic bullet: it allows greater chances of participation in the workforce for mothers, it promises to make meaningful and relevant educational offers and thus to stimulate educational attainment for all. This perspective does not allow considering the possibility that schooling might be the problem for a significant

segment of the school age population and that more of it might not be an effective solution in these cases. The German discussion is clearly focused on increasing educational attainment.

### *The Case of Italy*

In Italy too, there is much concern with the relevance of education in several waves of reform. The Italian report stresses “A ten-year long but incomplete and open-ended process of reform of school cycles, targeting especially the issue of *relevance*. The fragmented, planning and implementation of changes led to reforms in curricula and teachers’ recruiting procedures, though leaving untouched [...]” (Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, p. 6); here the authors of the report list issues such as governance structure; the necessity to reform the lower secondary cycle and the relation between vocational education and early vocational training plus several others unaddressed reform areas. The second friction underlines this as it is specifically concerned with vocational paths, the background of which are measures taken to “close the relevance gap and the labour mismatch by boosting apprenticeship and workplace-based education”. (ibid., p. 36). The bottom line is that despite the advances made in aligning education and work, there is still an unexpressed “problem of relevance. The training of qualified workers clashes with the needs of the labour market” (ibid., 55). The issue here is not only reforming the educational system but also the labour market. This finding is significant because it underlines that contrary to the perception pattern associated with the knowledge society discourse, i.e., it is the education system that needs to be modernized, it is stated here that the education system can be as modern and advanced as can be, if it is not aligned to the labour market, if the labour market does not absorb highly skilled workers operating on a high cognitive level, the relevance of education for economic purposes amounts to nothing.

Concerning the hypothesis advanced at the end of the State of the Art Report:

“In the under-institutionalised regime [...] relevance of education follows the division between academic and vocational yet more directed centrally than by labour market actors, which has created a significant time lag as regards modernisation. Privatisation relies on individuals backed up by the family while education is still primarily governed through the central state” (Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011, p. 187),

we find evidence to confirm this view. Encouraging a stronger link between labour market and education is a yet still unfulfilled desideratum. Without this link, however, education misses an important dimension of relevance.

The following question would be interesting to further investigate: As briefly shown at the beginning of this section on relevance, world culture theorists suggest that scientization is a main trait of the knowledge society and the knowledge based economy. Scientization in turn depends on mass education and promotes the spread of organizations. Countries with a very differentiated education and aid system are good illustrations of this statement: Counselling, therapy and forms of organized education outside of schooling have increased in number particularly over the past half century and particularly with the educational expansion of the nineteen sixties and seventies. However, it seems as if this is primarily the case in a societal context where the (welfare) state

provides the infrastructure for person-centred educational provisions or where there is a market for them, as is the case in the liberal welfare regimes.

Put in more general terms: if mass education, scientization and the proliferation of organization stood in a causal relationship, then many highly educated and skilled young people would and could be employed in this context. The economic and educational mismatch highlighted in the Italian case raises questions about this proclaimed universal link.

### *The Case of France*

In France and the Netherlands, there is a traditional (France) or current (Netherlands) movement towards training of social elites and quality of education, leading to de-emphasizing equality respectively inequality. In France, the need for far reaching reforms is confronted with the inherent corporatist nature of the system. The frictions focused on were inequalities and difficulties of educational reform. “After the Second World War, the education system has been organized by Unions. These Unions were directly bargaining for the content of reforms with the government.” (Jahnich et al., 2012, p. 26) Despite a weakening influence of the Unions, the Critical Discourse Analysis and the interviews indicate that there is strong discussion in France on the relevance of education – on what education is about: “Is it about selecting people or giving them the basis to think freely or allowing them to get a job? When should the selection take place?” (Ibid., p. 33) These tensions again mirror the different perspectives on relevance: From a societal and economic perspective, providing young people with education so that they can find jobs and lead an independent life is important. Again from a societal perspective it is important that critically minded young people participate in the political process, make informed decisions and contribute to “improve” society and its institutions. From an individual perspective: education as an end in itself might be the most relevant aspect.

The supra-national level is present in a law on the common base of knowledge and competences, thus reinforcing standardization in an already highly centralized system. However, the law was passed without the consent of the unions which shows that there was a strong political will to push through with reforms aligned with the transnational level but the question of effectivity depends also on the acceptance and realization of the law by the key actors of educational practice. In all national reports the question of social exclusion, of access to relevant education – in the sense of placing the individual in an advantageous position when competing with others – are discussed. An example of how structural barriers, how social inequality, is discussed in France, is provided by Document 1 of the French National Report on WP7 (see: Jahnich et al., 2012). Compared with the Finnish and German cases, when disadvantage and disaffection are considered, there is more emphasis laid on the responsibility of the state to prevent disaffection and early school leaving (Document 2 of the French National Report on WP7) than on building networks and partnerships. The report emphasizes the general unwillingness to consider how the French education system is implicated in creating inequalities. The centralized nature of the French system is strongly confirmed by the way relevance is treated as a high-level governance issue. Because of the great significance of elite educational institutions, and the principle of meritocracy as its underlying logic, the relevance of the current system of education is not questioned and irritat-

ing issues such as facing inequality avoided. The National Report observes: “As a matter of fact, policy makers all succeed in the French educational system and reach top positions thanks to the “meritocratic principles” that have ruled the education system (ibid., p. 36). The system, in other words, has worked for those in key positions of decision making and high-level governance. This is true of the French as it is of the other systems considered.

### *The case of the Netherlands*

The Dutch National Report on WP7 (Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012) confirms in the summary of the policy context the importance of the transnational level, especially the large programs of knowledge economy and globalization.

“In the past two decades, a series of system-wide reforms were introduced in the Dutch education system. Reforms were introduced in major policy areas from the content of the curriculum to the organization of the education system, from employment conditions to personal management and funding.” (ibid., p. 5)

Decentralization is a big issue including actors such as employers, local authorities and school boards (ibid.). These reforms are not without criticism that are very relevant for the issue of relevance. One issue concerns sustainability; since many of the reforms were implemented rather hastily, the question about the long-term effects arises. Among other issues, the effects on choice are a great concern (Educational Council, 2009, quoted in Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012, p. 6). Despite these vivid and manifold reform activities, again: it is a reform within and not of the system.

The Dutch National Report strongly emphasizes education as a contested field with many actors and manifold interests that have to be negotiated and accommodated. The two frictions are clear illustrations of this. The first one, concerned with early selection, stresses that despite the differences in the organization of education, the difference between vocational and academic inclination strongly correlates with social origin as one important indicator of disadvantage. The main focus of the Dutch educational policy is ‘excellence’ of education thus emphasizing again the link to the transnational discourse.

The Dutch National Report ends with: “The discussion on both policy issues suggests that the Dutch education system is resistant to large-scale educational reforms on early selection and school segregation” (ibid., p. 62) which is identified as being consistent with the international trend from equity to excellence.

The thesis advanced in the State of the Art Report proposed that: In the employment-centred model access is selective, support for coping externalised to welfare agencies and limited to compensatory education. Relevance of education follows the division between academic and vocational occupations. Here, scope of privatisation is limited by corporatist structures. The individual is conceptualised as rather passive – in terms of being employed or being taught – and embedded in corporatist structures. However, this is slowly being replaced by the idea of individuals as entrepreneurs of their own labour and human capital.”

The findings of the three representative countries for this model: France, Germany, the Netherlands by and large confirm this view. Early selection which is an issue in all three countries although with different emphases, might be problematized by high-level governance actors, but is not the object of current reform activities: “While most of our interview experts were more in favour of delaying early selection that keep to the present practices. But when asked what they thought about the chances for such a change, they all voiced great scepticism.” (see: Kosar Altinyelken & du Bois-Reymond, 2012, p. 33) Within system reforms try to address the changed role of the learner as active and self-determined, but are not a major issue of relevance as an issue of high-level governance. The Dutch case also presents the issue of migration/immigration as one were relevance is primarily viewed with regards to educational attainment. “This discourse looks at the issue from the perspective of educational performance, and discards a range of other issues that relate to segregation, such as inter-group interaction, integration and social cohesion.” (Ibid., p. 60). The unwillingness to deal with segregation is also mirrored by the French and German reports, but not by the Italian one, where the relation between native and non-native Italian pupils becomes a main target of regulation. In contrast to France and also the Netherlands, where there is strong tendency to abolish the category of Children with immigrant background, this category is not only retained but even further differentiated into terms such as “immigrant background” and “immigrant experience”.

### *The case of Poland*

Poland and Slovenia are the two countries in the GOETE-project that do not fit into the classical classification of welfare regimes. The two frictions chosen in the Polish case were the lowering of the mandatory school age to six years and the expansion of the definition of special education needs. The lowering of the school age indicates relevance in the sense of alignment to international practices and standards. The previous school entry age of seven years being rather exceptional in an international context. Relevance in this sense indicates resorting to measures that comply with international benchmarks and policies. Lowering the school age is also a relevant measure to maintain the system, it provides a means to compensate somewhat for demographic shifts in an aging society; it is expected to be relevant for the individual learner since pre-school attention is not very widespread in Poland and hence it is the school which is for most children the public institutions where special needs might be diagnosed and addressed. Entering school early also has economic consequences because it means that a large segment of the school leavers will enter the labour market earlier.

The second friction is concerned with a redefinition of the meaning of special education needs. This category now is more encompassing, relating also to special groups of gifted children as well as wide range of students facing intellectual, psychological and social challenges (Buchowicz & Bledowski, 2012, p. 6). The school relevant and legally binding consequences of this law imply an increased spectrum of offers to be provided by the schools in order to support students with special education needs. The latter strongly resonates with the international discourse on inclusion. Relevance in this context means that all children have the right to receive the support they need for successful educational participation.

Both frictions are not uncontended. The debates range from material considerations to psychological ones, arguments stating the advantages of later school commencement are advanced as are those in favour of an earlier start. Most interview partners were in favour of lowering the school entry age, as the following interview sequence illustrates:

“There is an important issue – the system has a serious drawback – lack of popularization of preschool education. Secondly, in my opinion, a nineteen years old student confined in a classroom does not sound good! [...] It does not work! Apart from the aspect of the labour market per se [...] but is in human nature that the faster one graduates, the earlier one enters the labour market and the faster one considers to have children [...] Nowadays, the young people put aside the moment of starting own family and having children and so on.” (Buchowicz & Bledowski, 2012, p. 24)

Here the main argument concerning relevance of education is: education is preparation, the “real” life comes after graduating. Work, raise a family, be an autonomous adult, making own decisions. This is further emphasized in the next section of the interview where legal issues of students of age are considered. “Other directed” schooling is incompatible with being able to make own choices and decisions at age 18. Relevance of education is linked to the curriculum and to testing which is done on an annual basis. As this implies that it starts after the first grade and is relevant for grade progression, it is also questioned (ibid., p. 27).

The intentions behind the redefinition of special education needs are certainly very laudable as the following interview sequence illustrates:

“I can say that good education should be tailored to meet specific needs, appropriately to talents, predispositions, interests, dysfunctions and so on. I would say that the best option of education that one can imagine is education beyond all frames, curricula requirements pertaining to all educational stage for the whole population. I would like to say that every student has individual curriculum composed.” (Buchowicz & Bledowski, 2012, p. 47)

Here, the relevance of education is strongly and exclusively judged from the perspective of the individual. It means taking the concept of inclusion to its logical conclusion and thus ends with a vision of education based on a different philosophy than the current system.

### ***The Case of the United Kingdom***

The concern in all GOETE-countries with disadvantaged or at risk children is also confirmed by the British case where immigration and marginalization are common themes in the heterogeneous British system consisting really of four different school systems (Mellor & Dale, 2012, P. 7). The hypothesis proposed with regards to liberal models is largely confirmed. Often under discussed in the liberal model are the strong social class structures influencing the system. The frictions selected accordingly were migration/immigration and marginalization. Against this background, one finds just such a strong correlation between vocational and academic training and social class background of the students as in the corporatist countries. Marginalization of which migration and immigration in many ways are central dimensions, is in turn closely related to issues of social cohesion and integration. One issue of concern in all countries debating immigration is the ques-

tion of whether or not it promotes social integration or is whether it is viewed as a divisive force. British society despite its hierarchies strongly believes in equal opportunity.

So it is the opportunity part which offsets and balances other strands of the debate focusing on risks and upheavals. High-level governance concerns with relevance in this regard emphasize issues such as the importance of local learning cultures, mixing long term residents with new arrivals and what the quality of their interaction depends on (ibid., p. 18). An integral part of relevance is sustainability. Relevance, in other words, is viewed here in cultural terms, not in the sense of ethnic or national culture, but in the sense of local practices, values and orientations. A different but related aspect is mentioned in another document. Here the integrating role of schools for the entire community is stressed. It is schools that have a responsibility as role models for modes of living together and therefore should be well integrated in their communities and assume an active role in a network of institutions and organizations. The friction's relation to relevance is summed up as the impact of a variety of factors "where the legacy of multiculturalism and its effect on the politics of integration underlies the tension between the simultaneous societal, educational and personal influences/responsibilities. Here it may not be possible to equate what counts as relevant education processes and experiences, with enhancing individual attainment." (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p. 29). The focus on English proficiency as one highly relevant education factor is emphasized and mirrors the debate in the other countries.

The other friction marginalization thematizes the back side of relevance. If education is experienced as irrelevant, if students drop out, if it does not provide the necessary qualification for social participation and as preparation for the labour force, it has no relevance. As illustrated by the documents discussed in the UK National Report; the backdrop of the discussion is the knowledge economy which is why the previous way out for disaffected children: early entry into the labour market is not an option anymore. Work available for the un- or under-qualified is either precarious or very scarce. Paul Willis' investigations bear this out: there is not early twenty-first century equivalent to Learning to Labour.

The remedies discussed mirror a common pattern: "improving *standards* over attempts at changing *structures*." (ibid., p. 38., emphasis in the original) This is a common theme in all national reports: education is relevant if it can be measured and translated into standards.

This is emphasised in the summary which stresses the differences between the British education systems and emphasizes with regards to relevance: In England, we see what almost amounts to a stretching of the concept to fit changing social conditions the relevance of education seems to undergo a shift from its traditional relationship with the 'content' of education as the dominant element, to the nature of the experience itself, and especially the outcomes achieved." (Ibid., p. 44)

### ***The Case of Slovenia***

In Slovenia, the system reform focuses on the transition from primary to secondary education – gymnasiums vs. vocational schools. The background of this friction is a decline in vocational and technical education and a rise in the more general forms of education, the gymnasium. The issue

is addressed among other places in the White book of 2011, which directly draws the connection to Europe 2020 with the key issues of knowledge development, the role of educational partnerships in a very broad sense, lifelong learning and institutional cooperation.

In addition to having fewer students, the lower educational schools are also said to have a changed social composition of students. It is said that more students with problems such as special needs and behavioural problems are now in the schools contributing to explaining why they are not popular. Although the increasing demand of students to attend the gymnasium on a first glance agrees with the transnational level emphasizing an increase of the role of knowledge at all educational levels, this trend is not universally lauded in Slovenia. A major concern is the fact that the gymnasium was initially conceived for the academically inclined where a small elite headed for the universities. The democratization of the gymnasium is not seen as the breaking down of barriers for those talented but excluded, but rather as the troublesome lowering of standards in order to accommodate students the gymnasium was not really designed for. Quality of education is a major topic in many of the interviews. The decline of standards is a big concern as is relevance. "In Slovenia I see education has lost its respect or knowledge. I agree with you that it is also some kind of waiting room where kids are safely tucked away, where young people are tucked away. Education is not really education." (Expert interview, 1-5, Slovenian report quoted p. 60) Here, the increase in educational participation, the 'massification' of the gymnasium is seen with great distrust, arguing that it lost its purpose.

Finally, a quick look at the hypothesis advanced in the State of the Art report with regards to relevance in the post-socialist countries:

"In the post-socialist countries the general but not exclusive trend is broadening access to education while the support for coping with education is differing from extensive to marginal and from integrated to external. Relevance of education is primarily defined in globalised labour markets terms inasmuch as education is seen both as a factor for attracting foreign investment and as a resource for individual migration." (Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011, p. 187)

The future of the Slovenian Gymnasium is a good case in point illustrating broadening of access while at the same time fearing that the institution will lose its elite status. With the lowering of the status of this form of education by making it less exclusive, it is also feared to be less relevant both in its social allocation function and in an ideational sense of providing high quality and somewhat 'exclusive' knowledge.

#### ***4.5.4 Discussion***

Relevance of education as one of the big five relations studied in the GOETE-project is one of the keys that link the international to the national level. This thesis might come as a surprise since the National Reports clearly indicate the dominance of the specificity of the national lenses. The following discussion elaborates the central statement.

The section started with two rather abstract considerations: one relating to the knowledge society or knowledge based economy, the other, to visions or scenarios of how education will be or

should be organized in the future. The key statement of these scenarios or projections was: schooling in the modern sense is a historical product, it was founded and developed in specific circumstances which are no longer the main forces shaping present society. It is therefore not implausible to ask the question of how our organization should change to meet new challenges.

The first finding with regards to the country reports studied therefore is that in no country is the relevance of education for society fundamentally questioned.

In all countries, on a high-level governance level, is education taken as a given as it is. A presence whose legitimacy and adequacy to serve societal ends is not to be questioned. Everywhere we find reform of the current systems not radical reforms experimenting with entirely novel modes of organization. There are probably many reasons for this but I would like to mention three of them on a rising scale of significance. One has been highlighted in the French Report: the key actors of high-level governance in education are highly successful graduates of the top tiers of their respective education system. This may sound a little simplistic but is on the level of personal dispositions influencing perception and point of view not entirely implausible. The second one highlights that high-level governance perceptions on governance are the result of negotiations; the actors are well aware that their views have to be synchronised with and are bounded by many other voices and restrictions. The decision to lower the mandatory school age in Poland has huge repercussions for the whole system, not the least of which is rather material and concerns school buildings and their equipment. Designing rather far out looking visions of education is therefore not part of the function and assignments of these experts, political or academic. The last argument seems to me to be the most important one: education systems are fragile creatures of particular historical and cultural constellations; we can reason with great conviction that education is important and relevant, but we soon run into difficulties defending this system as opposed to other forms. This of course is due to the principal contingency of modernity. In the absence of any permanent transcendent foundation, scientization fulfils the founding function in late modern societies. This is why standards rather than structure as the British Report so aptly put it, orient education reform. Relevance, is to be safeguarded and increased by a more thorough process of rationalization of education. As one famous historian of education put it: we are Tinkering towards Utopia.

This contrasting of current within-systems reforms with radical visions should not eclipse the observation that education is of course still extremely societally relevant: It has never before been more so. This is due to the one inescapable fact: the importance of education has increased over the past decades. The concern with social exclusion is a strong indicator of this development: youth dropping out of school have a very difficult time to meet the common expectations for an autonomous adult existence. Their risk of marginalization is significantly higher than that of their peers in Willis' Learning to Labour. The main ticket to the future are educational credentials and certificates provided by the state. Our societies are built on the trust that the education system and its professional personnel are doing their utmost to educate every child according to her/his abilities and inclinations. For the reason of the complex interplay of meritocracy, professional status, and legitimacy provided by the state, there is no alternative: education on this level is relevant for society.

On a less formal level: Education in the form of schooling is still considered as a means to adapt the individual to rapidly changing societal demands and hence indicates societal advancement. After all (national) education systems compete for this kind of relevance in the age of knowledge economies and knowledge societies. If this is the case it follows almost inevitably that governance actors are aligned at the decisive intersection between the inter- or trans-national level and the national level; because the trans-national level is important to link the definition of relevance to the global concepts of “knowledge based” (economies, societies) and the national level is necessary in order to implement changes and transform systems.

In Germany, the political significance attributed to the PISA studies is a good case in point. PISA redefined the relevance of education as competency and problem-solving oriented; outcome-based education as the most effective and relevant form of human capital development. All major policy measures can be directly related to the trigger function of PISA: the question of better integration children and youths with immigrant background; the introduction of all-day schooling as the standard form of organizing the school day; the increasing demands on early childhood education as the most important locus of prevention. It should be emphasized however, that PISA itself did not create these effects; rather they have to be attributed to how PISA was taken up and translated into national and federal policy. The decisive factor is something that could be called “relevance-alignment”. This is achieved through cogency, through persuasive relevance an important means of which is knowledge, especially evidence-based knowledge such as claimed by PISA. The re-alignment of individual and societal relevance of education in the context of the “knowledge-paradigm” makes it a key issue of high-level governance. However, even here, reform remains within the system.

As the country reports also showed, especially in Scandinavia and Central Europe, relevance of education on the level of the individual can no longer be taken for granted. As disaffection rates rise so does the need for special support systems built around education, including professional as well as lay persons to become involved. Thus, while schooling is still the educational core, it is not the sole organization anymore. Especially with relatively new trends such as individualization and inclusion the demand for multiprofessional teams to work together on site will increase. Ever more time and effort is needed to make education a relevant experience for an increasing number of young people, so it seems.

One specific area of tension, expressed in different tones of urgency is that between the academically and the vocationally inclined irrespective of the welfare state regime the country is embedded in. In Italy, the mismatch between education and the labour market is identified as key challenge for relevance. In Slovenia, the massification of the Gymnasium is viewed with suspicion; in France and the Netherlands, social exclusion and disadvantage is not placed prominently high on the reform agenda; in Finland, the transition phase is identified as the crucial point of decision and selection and problems are identified with it that point well beyond the success of the comprehensive system in the PISA studies. What this means as common denominator for relevance as a HLG issue is that the question of how to prepare all students to develop habits of lifelong learning and self-organization is still an unanswered question as well as how to align education with an increasingly globalized economy. The only exception to this, seems to be Poland. Here the

lowering of the mandatory school age is viewed optimistically as a chance for young people to enter the labour market early.

It follows from this that an interesting question for further studies would be a consideration of the national education systems in relation to their economies.

#### **4.6 Life Course**

An understanding of educational processes and educational trajectories – and of the transitions within such trajectories as well as decision-making processes involved therein – requires a theoretical approach that accounts for the interplay of institutional/structural and of individual/subjective aspects in their interaction. In GOETE and in Work Package 7 the *Life Course* perspective is used as a theoretical lens for analysing the material collected in the different national reports (Elder et al., 2003). The concept is colloquially understood as the sum and documentation of the stages through which individuals pass along their lives, especially institutionalized stages such as school, training, military/civil service, work, etc. Sociological life course research analogously defines life course “as a social institution [...] in the sense of a rule system that orders a central realm or a central dimension of life.” (Kohli 1985, p. 1, own translation) The concept of life course may be contrasted with that of biography; while life course points to an institutionalised construction of (culturally defined) patterns of ‘female’ or ‘male’ (normal) lives, biography can be regarded as the ‘narrated life’, i.e., a subjective meaning-making with regard to one’s individual life course. The institutionalisation of the life course is connected to the development of welfare and education systems in the context of modern nation states. In the context of late modernity, in which life course transitions increase, notions of life course normality become more and more fictitious. Thus, life course research increasingly has to consider both stability and change in lives as they unfold across time and generations and in historical, social, and cultural contexts. It has to reflect upon gendered demands and challenges to understanding the forces and experiences that shape human development. The life course perspective considers educational trajectories throughout the whole life span recognizing that developmental growth refers not only to childhood and youth but continues through adulthood into old age. It therefore suggests a multi-disciplinary approach and an ecological model placing families and individuals in the context of historical, demographic, and social change. This perspective includes an analysis of how different education systems rely on the cultural foundations of different assumptions regarding the ‘normality’ of individual life courses while at

the same time producing and reproducing such normalities. This is reflected by the number of transitions children and young people have to overcome within their educational trajectories as well as by the selectivity of these transitions, i.e., the question to what extent they contribute to differentiating subsequent trajectories. In GOETE, the overall research question related to *life course* was developed in the State of the Art Report in Work Package 2:

“The guiding research question in this respect is whether there are significant relationships between the structures of education systems, the consciousness and practices of actors regarding the implications of transitions in young people’s educational trajectories as well as the experiences and educational orientations of the young people themselves.

A further question is whether systems with less inbuilt transitions provide students with better opportunities for individualized educational trajectories than those in which multiple transitions represent constant institutional challenges and crossroads structuring the individual learning biography.” (Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011, pp. 191f.)

This overall question has been operationalized in the present sub-project (Work Package 7) and broken down into a number of research questions; the remainder of the chapter is organized to address the following questions:

- What are the policy issues raised in the national reports that refer directly or indirectly to life course?
- What emerge as the main associations between formal education and life course? Employment? Sense of Citizenship? Sense of belonging to a national or local community? Others?
- What sense of the importance of life course transitions appears in the documents and interviews?
- Are there examples of ‘non-formal’ educational strands of life course development in documents or interviews, whether provided ‘officially’ or by communities? Is there a relation to LLL policies/discourses?
- Is there evidence of formal education being seen as a means of ‘interrupting what might be seen as ‘inappropriate, unwelcome, or even dangerous life-courses?’
- Are ‘missed opportunities’ recognized, and are possibilities in place through which they may be ‘rescued’, or compensated for? What opportunities are there for inappropriate or ineffective choices be reversed? That is, how ‘flexible’ are life course concepts?
- How significant is Life-Course as an issue for High-Level Governance?

In what follows the relevant issues related to life course will be addressed presenting data from each country participating in GOETE, briefly describing which issues were raised that refer directly or indirectly to life course related policies. The chapter is organised per country and against the backdrop of the overall questions presented above.

#### *4.6.1 Life course related issues raised in GOETE countries*

##### *Finland*

In the Finnish context, the two frictions chosen raise central questions related to life course, especially in a context of economic depression after the early 1990s. It does this, though, in a more general way, referring primarily to how children and youth can be better supported in their transition phases. First, the friction “*Preventing social exclusion of youth – from prevention to early intervention in the transition phases*” points to the fact that while the level of welfare among the population has improved in general, at the same time the cleavage between the well-to-do and the most deprived part of population is growing. The widening social and economic gap between population groups means that equity and equality among the population is becoming more and more a crucial issue in welfare policy and most centrally for child and youth policy. The central framings of educational governance of youth transitions, particularly within the discourse on marginalization, are thematized since supporting access to education for young people at risk of being marginalized, improvement of multidisciplinary cooperation, and outreach youth work have been lifted up as relevant policy fields.

Emphasis has been put for instance on early intervention, support for at-risk families, support in day-care centres and in schools and multidisciplinary safety nets in schools. In preventing social marginalization regarding the transition phase from lower secondary to upper secondary, some issues in particular have been on the agenda during the last ten years: multi-professional cooperation between government agencies, outreach youth work, adequate guidance counselling and support, adequate support for integration, maintenance of special-needs schools and classes, promoting of integration and employment of immigrants through training. Members of visible minorities are seen at great risk of becoming subject to discrimination, harassment and violence due to their ethnic background. The risk of inequality and discrimination among children and young people is particularly high in immigrant groups, the Roma, indigenous Sami people, sexual minorities and those with disabilities. The emphasis on prevention of social exclusion is not a new issue in the country, however, changes have taken place over the past forty years in the governance of Finnish childhood and youth. Following the recession of 1990s the political interest in children and young people has increased, but in a qualitatively different way: thematizing *concern, risk and early intervention* rather than a rights based perspective, more prone to tolerance and less willing to intervene. The following interview quote exemplifies this well:

“It is undisputable (Se on vastaansanomaton). It is such a powerful discourse that you cannot resist it. But as well these discourses have their flip sides. If you seriously think about how this government has launched the idea of preventing social exclusion, that the aim is to prevent exclusion and promote early intervention, then in fact we are not talking about welfare policies but prevention of illfare.” (Finland, E3, commentator)

The second friction, “*Improving access to the upper secondary level in the transition phase in Finland with a special focus on immigrant youth*”, focuses on the transition phase from lower secondary education to upper secondary education that has gained a more important role after the depression in the 1990s due to a concern of high unemployment rates and especially unemploy-

ment rates among young people. Also the higher dropout rates from vocational education in comparison to general upper secondary education have become a focus of attention during the last decades. (Julkunen & Salovaara, 2008) In the early 2000's, Finnish policy makers became aware of a large number of young people outside education and labour market, a group of young people much bigger than expected. A discussion regarding young people neither in education nor in training/labour market ensued and both education and welfare experts became aware of young people not receiving services or not even entering the services. There was an acknowledgement of a need of developing cross-sector co-operation to ensure the provision of a diverse range of services. Preventive work was promoted highly in relation to remedial work.

While the emphasis in Finnish education policy has for a long time been – and still is – on providing equal opportunities for all and supporting all equally, the latest trend seems to be on also providing individual solutions, flexibility and multi-professional cooperation. Governance of the transition phase seems to be moving towards an individualistic supporting system, as the quote below illustrates:

“So these kind of steering tools, with which the whole system is governed, has shown, that they work well, and there has been a lot of good work done in different places, that there's a need and there has been done more individual education models, so some, because students are different, and the learning styles are different, so from this educating a group, there has been a transition to this individualized, we have for example in trying out learning at workplaces now models that two years in vocational education, after that one is moving on to apprenticeship training for one year so these solutions are very individual, and these (individual solutions) are more and more needed.” (Finland, E9, broker/maker)

The shift to more individualised models shows that formal education is being infused with ideas and concepts from non-formal learning settings, which might have a positive impact on how 'flexibly' life course concepts are understood; however it is still formal education which is seen as the appropriate form. These individual solutions might mean supporting individuals according to their personal needs, supporting a group of people with a specific need, e.g., immigrants who face language difficulties or students who are talented in some specific subject. Young people with immigrant background encounter more difficulties in accessing education than the mainstream population. While 88.2 % of all applicants was admitted to vocational education, only 55.4 % of applicants with immigrant background were admitted (Kilpinen & Salonen, 2011).

While the Finnish case shows that life course issues are high on the governance agenda of policy circles, there are some issues that can turn out problematic such as individualised support that while effective in tackling specific needs might also channel the view of stakeholders to individual dispositions and aspects, diverting attention from structural and institutional problems.

## ***France***

One of the frictions chosen in France relates to *school inequalities* and as such to different chances in the individual life courses. Actually, this friction is probably the most important one in the current analysis of the French educational system. It has been pointed out by the results of the last PISA study which shows the 'polarisation' of the French system with a large reproduction of so-

cial inequalities in the field of education (OCDE, 2009). The *structural* inequalities of educational trajectories influence the labour market transitions (in terms of unemployment rate but also of kind of employment –incomplete or with very short contracts). *Territorial* inequalities have large impacts in terms of schools performance and of social relegation. *Social* inequalities are clearly related to educational inequalities. Students who encounter difficulties experience largely early dropouts and face weak chances to enter the labour market. Students have to face discriminations in their educational course that weigh on their chances to achieve their graduation. Students with a migrant background deal with particularly difficult trajectories. Working class students mainly tend to pass the A-level in vocational tracks, whereas academic tracks are still reserved for middle and upper class students. There is a higher level of graduation within the working classes; however, they are three times less likely to graduate than privileged class. In addition, the working class tend to graduate in subjects where the degrees devaluation is the most important. Education inequalities – in distribution, outcome, and levels of competence – have a direct impact on life course. In sum, the experience of inequalities interferes largely with children and youth's life courses: it is very difficult for a student facing inequalities (in one or all dimensions mentioned above) in a very linear system (and the French system is excessively linear) to experience a life-long learning trajectory. There is indubitably a scaring effect in the experience of inequalities.

Some specificities of the governance of the French school system make it particularly weak in acknowledging the necessity to recognise inequalities: It seems that there is currently no strong political will to deal with this question. In addition, as the French school system is the most (or one of the most) centralised in Europe, it appears that territorial inequalities are hardly recognised. All regional and local administrative bodies are supposed to be organised and function the same way, regardless of their sizes, their socio-economical contexts, their employment markets. Despite several half-hearted attempts to reform, local authorities' roles are still very thin and peripheral, even if they try to develop actions to overcome some of the school system limits. Moreover, the French school system tradition of producing a small elite, worsen the situation of those in disadvantaged positions. The system also tends to create or to reinforce the existence of ghettos. In France, some areas can be labelled as ghettos in the suburbs implemented during the 1960s at cities' peripheries. As what relates to schools, the phenomenon of ghetto is both reinforced by the school zoning (that tends to anchored working class children in these areas) and paradoxically by the smoothening of the school zoning system (that permits to middle class parents to inscribe their children in other schools than the school of their sector). These trends were poignantly discussed by French experts who underlined the impact of these ghettos on pupils' trajectories and on the management of classes. Indeed, for pupils, having studied in the schools of the ghetto is poorly thought of: there is a suspicion regarding their level and they will encounter difficulties in their guidance. For the management of classes, the ghettos or even the standardization of pupils' profiles is a problem: when a class concentrates pupils with difficulties, the level tends to be lower than when pupils are mixed.

The second policy friction, on the '*difficulties to structurally reform the French educational system*', on the examples of the issue of reforming teacher status and adapting it to local contexts and necessities; the discussion whether the reform of the school zoning system and introduction of free school choice as well as the debate over blurred sharing of competencies for primary

schools at central and local level, point to how governance issues influence the educational trajectories and life course of children and youth in the country. In the French case, formal education predominates as the main focus of attention; its main orienting element remain the transition to further levels of education (collèges) and training as well as employment. The sense of relevance of life course remains implicit, though it seems that conceptions of ‘normal’ French life courses exert considerable influence on policy.

In conclusion, the French education system struggles hardly to support disadvantaged children and youth. Actually, the treatment of difficulties is developed in a very individualised process by proposing additional hours of teaching and the like. What becomes visible is the difficulty of the French system to acknowledge and tackle inequalities, especially when it comes to addressing particular groups such as children and youth from migrant background. Here, the national/cultural tradition of not thematising these categories have substantial impact on young people’s life course. Life course issues in France are not directly addressed and appear here as part and parcel of access issues. A further observation may be derived from the discussion of inequalities in France, namely that the themes of life course, access and coping are extremely interlinked. Life course policy issues, this can be highlighted here, are primarily viewed as governance issues.

### ***Italy***

*First*, the thematic focus on *pupils from immigrant background* is related to life course inasmuch as pupils with an immigrant background are among the weakest groups as far as educational outcome is concerned. Also, the over-representation of pupils with immigrant background in some schools and the risks of ghettoization relate to notions of normality relevant to pupils life course. In a life course perspective, pupils with immigrant background are strongly affected by the access problems they face and by the discouraging effect their coping strategies are confronted with. This is particularly true, also because education did not reach a sufficient level of individualization to address different and complex trajectories: the evidence is that still – after decades of immigration flows – class insertion of immigrant pupils is problematic. *Second*, in Italy the never-ending *reform of the upper secondary school system* has often focused on the relevance of education for enhancing future labour market participation, even though often in a quite inconsistent way. One of the most important missing issues in the reforms is how 14-16 years old dropped-out pupils can be helped in addressing the transition between lower and upper secondary education. Two issues are raised in particular, first, due to desynchronized and incomplete reforms, compulsory education does not finish when the lower secondary cycle finishes, but in the middle of upper secondary schooling; second, after the end of lower secondary school (when pupils are 13/14), vocational tracks are not so clear, with an ambiguity between training and education tracks and many different regional models balancing the two sides. In some regions, pupils were somehow compelled to education – even those who would best be inserted (according to their will and/or skills) in vocational paths; in others, the access in training would hinder further education. What is more, the regional vocational education and training systems are in the making, with few available places offered to trainees and few resources. The quantity and quality of vocational education and training is still an open issue and, notwithstanding a quite thorough monitoring, good solutions are far to be achieved. Even good experiences are now challenged by never-

ending reforms and inconsequential policy adjustments, where grand discourses are not followed by day-by-day implementation efforts. In the end, the rich debate and the dilemma on the balance between school and non-school tracks, between education and training didn't find a half way, but a halved way: no balance, but just a defensive and retrenching subsidiarity.

The dramatic number of NEETs is an undisputable proxy of this issue. The accumulation of disadvantages has great effects on *life course* of youth in general – which is a disadvantaged group *per se* – given the serious problems of transitions between education, training and the labour market. Too often there is a strong blaming of NEET or unemployed youth with no questioning whatsoever of structural conditions limiting life chances. How these issues will strongly and negatively affect social cohesion (with the risk of an intergenerational downward mobility) and future labour market developments in Italy seem not so an issue on the table in the public debate, with the exception of some experts studying the youth condition and trying to contribute also to the public debate with popularizations of scientific finding (Boeri & Galasso, 2007; Ambrosi & Rosina, 2009).

The two frictions of integration of youth from migrant background and of reform of upper secondary school system in Italy provide some interesting insights for the life course theme. Also here the interlink of life course and governance become visible, for although Italy has made some progress towards an intercultural education policy to address the issue of integrating pupils from immigrant background, it remains an open issue due to difficult implementation and policy fragmentation. All too often the problem is individualized – as is the case of NEET and unemployed youth – which blurs the picture and the fact that life course – educational trajectories – are the result of both structural/institutional and individual/subjective elements and mechanisms. With view to pupils from migrant background, it seems that life course issues in education are crossed by societal issues of integration and national identity, causing a conflictive political climate unfavourable to policy that effectively addresses the issue. Here it becomes visible how ‘high-level’ politics impact education policy.

### **Germany**

Issues related to life course are present in both frictions chosen in Germany, *immigration/migration* and *all-day schooling*. Pupils from immigrant background (“Schüler\_innen mit Migrationshintergrund”) are considered as one specific “at-risk” group in danger of social integration. The debate around PISA and other large scale student assessment studies established in the public discourse what practitioners had known all along and what was also highlighted by previous studies – there is close correlation between educational success or rather, educational failure and migrant background. Further, due to the selective educational system in the country, children of migrant background are more often tracked to school types with lower status (Hauptschule). Another issue relates to an alleged ‘lack of trainability’ of the pupils in their transitions into vocational training.

Also, the policy friction on *all-day schooling* refers to how disadvantaged pupils – here, there is a high overlap among the student population facing disadvantages since many pupils from migrant background are more often found among those in lower social-economic situations. All-day

schooling is one policy suggested as a solution to the problem of those groups in educational disadvantage – both from migrant background and native born pupils.

Another aspect of ‘all day schooling’ in Germany is that it implicitly changes the youth phase or – after it has been accepted as a separate phase of life – it is increasingly seen again primarily as a training moratorium and preparation for the future adult status. Or, put in terms of activating the welfare state: mainly as prevention to potential future failures. This increases the pressure and relevance of earlier ‘transitions’ – as already can be noticed in the transition between kindergarten, elementary and primary school levels. Unfortunately, support for these critical events in educational trajectories is seldom, as illustrated by the following from an expert, and this policy does not change it:

„In my view the central problem is that - except to the transition from pre-school to school offerings, which has really improved - all the other transitions are de facto not accompanied, but that is individual risk and when children are lucky they get parent’s support and accompany them and when they are not lucky they have the misfortune. The transition from elementary school to secondary school is not accompanied; inside the school it is destiny if one is promoted to the next grade for whatever reason, the transition from one school-system in the other, climb and descend are not accompanied. In general these processes are critical life-events for students and although we know what is connected to this we do not look precisely on them.” (Germany, E2, commentator)

It is interesting to note that in Germany the policy frictions of migration/immigration and all-day schooling combine policy issues related to social integration and labour market policies and focuses on how to deal best with the consequences of migration/immigration in terms of education transitions and trajectories. This is to say that issues pertaining to immigration have been re-focused so that they now appear predominantly as educational problems. As a consequence, the group needs to be supported in order to cope and manage their educational trajectories, i.e., the transitions within the educational system and into training and employment.

In this way, life course issues become individualised, especially when it comes to children from migrant background. Both frictions show that high-level policy shies away from addressing structural issues – such as the organisation of the highly hierarchical and selective education system – and addresses less controversial issues. Life course aspects falls off the table, or, to be more accurate, are viewed as problems some groups of pupils have and not as the structural issues they are. All-day-schooling does have a positive effect of bringing formal and non-formal education modes closer together; in practice, due to budget constraints, it often becomes not more than supervision without much pedagogical potential. The normative power of the institutionalised life course remains as inflexible as before and pressure on pupils increase as responsibility for success and failure is individualised.

### ***The Netherlands***

In the Netherlands both policy frictions chosen for analysis are closely linked to issues of life course: ‘*early selection*’ and the ‘*education of migrants*’. *Early selection* refers to the selection of pupils in the Netherlands into highly differentiated educational trajectories at an early age

(around 12) based upon their perceived aptitude (national test and teacher's advice). Life course issues become visible in two central elements: 1) The correlation of early selection and socio-economic and gender inequalities. While this is a major access issue it is also an issue for life course since selection at the early years of educational trajectories pre-conditions and determines possible further life paths both within and outside the education system; early selection is thus central to transitions into lower secondary schools and pre-determines to a great extent students' educational career, exerting a great influence on life course issues. 2) The different types of secondary schools, due to differences in, among others, the curriculum, teachers' expectations, teacher quality and student composition.

*“Education of immigrants”* is a highly relevant policy for the Dutch policy context since education and integration of immigrants is a recurrent theme within political discussions since the 1980s (less so since the coming into power of the current right-wing government). The position of immigrant children within education system continues to be a great concern for educators because of their relatively low educational performance, poor participation in higher tracks of secondary education and in higher education institutions, and relatively high repetition and dropout rates. Furthermore, high levels of educational segregation closely relate to this topic, and generate a lot of heated discussions within the country. The focus on school segregation shows the complexity of this problem and allow for the discussion of a range of problems relating to education of immigrants.

It is important to also mention that although these two policy areas are closely interlinked. This is because early tracking has more adverse effects on the education of students coming from lower socio-economic background. The majority of immigrant students come from such backgrounds, therefore, early tracking closely relates to discussions on the opportunities of immigrant students to study at higher tracks of secondary education and in higher education. Furthermore, early selection policy leads to increased differentiation in social composition of schools, hence contributes to intensification of school segregation.

Life course issues are highly significant for high-level governance and, indeed, the political climate in the Netherlands has had negative effects on the discourse over children from migrant background as well as on the debate over reforming the system to avoid early selection. The negative effects of early selection, it is argued, could be relieved by targeted intervention, which shows a focus on the individual. This position disregards that educational trajectories are the product of both individual and structural aspects. Life course concepts remain static and stable.

### ***Poland***

In the Polish case both frictions relate directly to life course. Both frictions *‘Lowering of the age of mandatory education to 6 years’* and *‘Expansion of the definition of special educational needs’* affect the organization of educational trajectories of pupils and influence the understanding of what a ‘normal’ career looks like. The first links pre-school education to school entrance and therefore emphasizes the importance of formal school education for educational trajectories. The aim of the reform is to increase access to pre-school education and secure the provision of equal opportunities in education of all children. Further, different arguments were raised for the lower-

ing of the age of mandatory education; it has been portrayed as beneficial to all those involved, i.e. to students, their parents, teachers, local governmental bodies and the economy, the labour market and the retirement system, but in practice the policy is highly controversial, as the following quote shows:

“Well, parents of students, or six years old children especially and in general, they make a very huge group and they even managed to become institutionalized in this educational surroundings. Some of parents are against the sole idea of lowering the age because they consider the school as not adequate for the needs of six years old child; the other consider schools as not duly prepared to accept six years old children. In case of the first group I cannot say anything because it is essential issues and that is their attitude or they simply have such concept of education. Personally, I think that the case depends on the form of a particular school. It cannot be a school, where six years old children sit at desks and are forced to maintain this position for 45 minutes because it is physiologically impossible and very difficult for those children and that may affect their emotional side as well. All educators say that, but when the changes were implemented, the government assured that this would not take place but it turned out to be different in practice.” (Poland, E9, commentator)

The main supporting argument for the proposed changes is indication on earlier development of children and their readiness to start education, what enables earlier participation in education at school, pointing to how changes in the organization of school careers are closely linked to issues of access to, coping with and the relevance of education, as a policy maker put it:

“The earlier we start, the better start those children have since this primary education, I mean such complete toddlers, and the more their education is homogenous the more chances we have to find, well... I don't know, let's say, some dysfunctions, difficulties, or if one fell behind so there is a chance to catch up because we have to said that not all parents read books to their children, and not every home have appropriate conditions to stimulate a child in right directions.” (Poland, E1, policy maker)

Formal education has been emphasized as the central mode in (relevant) educational trajectories. Lowering the age of mandatory education was accompanied by changes in the elementary school curricula which are planned on the central level and all teachers and schools are obliged to adhere to the contents. In a subsequent stage, curricula of lower secondary school and upper secondary schools have been changed, i.e., all levels of schools of general education. Deliberations also covered issues about the role of teacher in the primary grades, i.e., should such teachers be more a teacher of elementary education or should they rather be a guardian similar to those in pre-schools. The issues involved in this friction is a central matter for governance as the controversies raised relate both to the effects of the change for the children as well as to the financial and social benefits and costs.

The second friction, the *‘Expansion of the definition of special educational needs’*, directly addressed the support for special educational needs students and has been treated as an important task for preschools institutions, schools and educational schooling institutions. For this reason, the national plan of actions aimed at a “development of system of teachers’ professional training” to better cope with the need of special educational needs students. Two main action areas are in-

cluded: 1) development of training curricula for future teachers enrolled in subject studies with inclusion of the issue of special educational needs students; and 2) development of training curricula for students enrolled in studies of special education, which would enable them to teach specific subjects in public schools. The friction relates to training and continuing education for teachers; to the active involvement of parents in the support for students and their cooperation with the students and the school; and to equipping educational institutions with appliances enabling assistance to students with special educational needs. It also made necessary a redefinition of special educational needs students, pointing to a range of different groups of students requiring special methods, forms and organization of work and not only to handicapped and socially mal-adjusted children. As one policy maker states

“(…) I reckon that good education is not taken off-the-peg, I can say that good education should be tailored to meet specific needs, appropriately to talents, predispositions, interest, difficulties dysfunctions and so on. I would say that the best option of education that one can imagine is education beyond all frames, curricula requirements pertaining to all educational stage for the whole population, I would like to say that every student has individual curriculum composed. Such curriculum that is adjusted to one’s own predispositions both talents, interests and potential difficulties that could be overcome in the process of education.” (Poland, E1, policy maker)

The proposed new definition of ‘children and youth with special developmental and educational needs’ refers to

- children found having a vast spectrum of symptoms impeding or disabling motor, sensor, learning, communicative, social and emotional functioning, which affects the quality of life, and playing social roles now and in the future; or
- those who are found exposed to disabilities, all malfunctions, and all discrepancies that might have a negative impact on the further development;
- The inclusion of extraordinary talents and special interests of students into the category of special educational needs was regarded as especially important. Inclusion of such needs decreases the risk of wasting of human capital as a consequence of insufficient development of individual talents and skills of students.

Both frictions revealed that the problems are perceived as important by many circles involved in education and their solution will improve the process of teaching and increase students’ opportunities in education, which is seen to reflect the improvement of graduates’ chances on the labour market. The problems focused in the areas of this friction indicate precisely the role of educational process in determining one’s professional path and contribute to the standards of teaching as well as students’ opportunities in education. Both frictions emphasise individual aspects of the life course. Lowering the age of mandatory school entrance without providing for the necessary resources and preparing the system might exacerbate problems instead of solving them. The frictions point out to governance issues insofar as they show the difficulty of centralized policy-making – reforms being set to-down – and being blocked or undermined at lower levels.

### *Slovenia*

In Slovenia, pupils from migrant background are also thematized as a disadvantaged group that needs to be ‘integrated’; however, inclusion and integration remain rather vaguely defined, apart from additional language classes in Slovenian, no concrete measure or option is identified. Although, there are several immigrant children included every year in the Slovenian educational system, schools, local experts and individual teachers are forced to solve the issue on the individual level, as no public debate on the issue is in place, as illustrated by two interviewees:

“This is my personal opinion, when it comes to migrants, I think, that we did not encounter this so much yet, we have some singular problems, we encountered this in that period during the war in the Balkans and we had more of that refugees...”(Slovenia, E1)

“I don’t have it (an opinion), I don’t deal with this issue, I think, this for Slovenia is at the moment a relatively new question that is not such a burning issue, according to numbers.” (Slovenia, E2)

Whether an immigrant child will be properly treated when entering the Slovenian school system is therefore left to chance, and this appears as one of the main problems. The fact that immigration is slowly increasing, the inclusion of children of immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and persons with a short-term protection in the Slovenian school system is crucial. One of the main findings has shown that immigrant children frequently find difficulties in following lectures and in including into the wider social environment and that the status of immigrant should be understood in more broad terms. The experts detect three main reasons for the persistency of the problem: immigrant children lack the knowledge of Slovenian language, there are no strategies and instruments for the inclusion of immigrant children in the system of education, and immigrant children and their parents are not included enough in the schooling system and in the broader Slovenian environment. In the main, the problem is again individualized and becomes a problem of children from migrant background:

“Here are obviously immigrant children, their (teacher's) crucial problem with them is, not only that classic one with other cultural backgrounds, but it transfers on the level of language. Their... they are somehow sentenced to, somehow, on the marginal path in education, because they have the crucial lack and this lack is the lack of language. Mastering the language. And systemically the school and the state did not take care of it, of this lack that is obvious, to surpass it somehow, to diminish it, that would bring, nonetheless, if we see it from the perspective of utility, from what the state benefits from, this people would somehow have better knowledge and would contribute, if this lack would be surpassed.” (Slovenia, E9)

The *transition from primary to secondary education* – gymnasiums vs. vocational schools – is also raised as an issue related to life course. The enrolment level of primary school graduates in secondary vocational and technical schools is dropping every year, while the number of those enrolled in general upper secondary schools (gymnasiums) is growing. The reasons for a drastic decrease of students deciding for vocational and technical schools could be found in:

- A strong parental influence on the child’s educational trajectory. For different reasons parents tend to prefer their children to enrol in gymnasiums; a low status of cooperation between parents and schools;

- Amongst the main reasons is the low status of vocational and technical schools in society in general. This is related to low income of vocational jobs, low cultural and social capital of students enrolled in vocational schools, violence, vandalism, alcohol and drug abuse are frequent in these schools;
- Prolonged youth and postponed decisions, that mainly shows in postponing decisions on future studies (students decide after gymnasiums) and education for a particular profile;
- A weak influence of the school experts on the child's educational trajectory (amongst the main reasons is the lack of time devoted to counseling and parental influence mentioned above);
- A low selection of programs in vocational and technical schools.

Many were the problems named that impact life course and educational trajectories of pupils: the problem of mass education, the problem of lowering the standards of knowledge, the problem of prolonged youth and negative demographic trends, the problem of high enrolment in gymnasiums, the problem of low enrolment in vocational/technical schools. No matter what were the suggested solutions to various problems, the common denominator was always rooted in what we called the neoliberal order of discourse. Experts were sometimes legitimating the exclusivity and eliteness of gymnasiums, internal differentiation and ability grouping based on the Rawls' idea of different principle. The concept of knowledge was replaced with the notion of competences. The prevalent idea on where education should evolve was expressed with the most common neoliberal signifiers such as flexibility, progress, adaptation and commodification.

In Slovenia life course issues become engendered in problems of a public debate on migration and integration. Policy solutions are lacking or may be viewed as one-sided since they focus of the individuals that have to be changed to conform to the 'normal' national life course. All in all, life course issues do not seem to be on the agenda nor on the radar of high-level governance.

### ***United Kingdom***

In the UK, both frictions chosen – '*Migration/immigration*' and '*Marginalization*' – include issues of life course. *First*, concerning the first friction there is the question of how best to deal with the consequences of migration/immigration in terms of education transitions and trajectories, which relates to the themes of community cohesion through access to education, social inclusion or exclusion through ir/relevance of content and processes of education, and *life course in terms of entrance* into the employment market, in school strategies for support that enables coping like targeted mentoring. All these issues affect the possible and feasible *life courses* that migrant young people might experience. The obstacles appear to accumulate for many young people, despite the celebration of diversity and multiculturalism, which seems as likely to confine those young people to parallel tracks as it is to extend their opportunities to succeed through education. The issue of supporting migrant groups has also been balanced against resources being withdrawn from other (national) groups, as one policy maker put it:

“We have a number of different populations in the city, we have a large Asian community - not large in English terms I hasten to add, probably we have 9 to 10% of our population is

British born Asian now. And all together we have about 15% of our population with English as an additional language, and that has increased in the last five years. Obviously the eastern European dimension is the biggest, and in the eastern European group we have a large Roma population that brings huge self-protection, social housing issues, and they are mainly focusing in one part of the city. But it's the churn factor I call it, they come in for a year and then disappear. So you get children's English up to a certain level and then they're gone again." "[...] one of the issues is the other groups that are majorly deprived too, I mean our Scottish residents, are equally deprived and you're diverting resources away from them to a unique population with unique problems that needs a unique solution, away from Scottish families who equally need support and it is that balancing act." (United Kingdom, E12, policy maker)

The questions of access to what?, the level of support for coping, the 'actual' relevance of what is advanced, available and accessible as relevant, and the multiple ways that these are produced by shifting patterns of educational governance, all shape and load the odds with which the life course has to be negotiated.

*Second*, the theme of *marginalization* addresses the way that education is positioned as key for socializing young people's sense of civic responsibility. It calls attention to how the ir/relevance of different kinds of education for particular groups of young people (for example, working class boys) are seen as causing or accentuating social problems; claims that new forms of governance are being used to radically change access to better or more suitable forms of education for groups of young people identified as problematic; the facilitation of support strategies (including public, private and 'civic') to help students cope with transitions, and therefore provide what are seen as positive life course trajectories. Again, all of these changes culminate in their possible consequences for the contribution of education to individual *life courses*. However, they do so in rather different ways, with rather different conceptions of both life course and the nature of individual trajectories through education. In England, it becomes essentially a matter of being able to recognise, access and seize particular forms of educational advantage, as a logic of intervention stressing the central importance of individually-based meritocratic social mobility is promoted above all others. The Scottish conception seems to have a greater emphasis on the shared bases through which individual life courses are constructed. And in Northern Ireland this is further reinforced by the need to overcome the continuing damaging legacies of the recent past, notably though the attempt to prevent young people falling into a NEET life course. There seems little reason to expect that cross-generational class, gender, ethnic and 'able-ness' inequalities of access to the kind of education that might make a positive contribution to their life course will be diminished, though the apparent re-aligning of what counts as relevance, and the availability of coping support that seem likely to result from governance changes, especially in England, do make it likely that the relationship between 'schooling' and the life course may be at a moment of change.

#### ***4.6.2 Discussion: the Governance of Life Course in GOETE countries***

The issues raised that relate to life course and to educational trajectories may be discussed along three different headings. *First*, they appear in the GOETE countries as issues linked to the general discussion of prevention of social exclusion and marginalization as well as social integration;

*second*, they relate to developments and initiatives to reform educational arrangements (institutions, school paths, professional training and development); *third*, life course issues are raised that refer to interaction and cooperation (and competition) among the different actors involved in policy making but also those affected by it, that is the governance of life course.

### ***Ad 1) Prevention of social exclusion and marginalization as well as social integration***

Life course issues surface as normative arguments about what kinds of educational trajectories are favourable to social integration. Very often discussions about life course issues in the GOETE countries revolved around general discussions about combating social exclusion and marginalization and adequately integrating the different social groups (in particular migrants). This becomes visible in all countries, although in some more explicitly as in others. For instance, the French and Slovenian cases show that an open discussion on children from migrant background is not an obvious one – even though the realities within schools point to the opposite. Here, discussions on inequalities and language proficiency build the basis. In Poland, migration is apparently not an issue at all; there pupils from rural areas are particularly addressed as disadvantaged and in need of support to succeed in their educational trajectories and work life. Only in Finland was the discussion permeated by a concern with rights-based welfare and not only with ‘prevention of ill-fare’, as one expert put it. These differences hint at the divergent traditions of welfare and education policy in the countries.

### ***Ad 2) Developments and initiatives to reform educational arrangements***

Education systems are under reform all over the world; this is not different in GOETE countries. Especially the findings from performance testing are being used to create reform pressure, but also labour market imperatives are used as argument for improving educational outcomes. Increasing access to upper levels of education, facilitating transitions between educational levels and tracks, activating NEET students and improving labour market entry chances are among the objectives of the on-going reforms across the GOETE countries. Early selection and selective systems, low levels of performance and difficulty to find vocational training places are, however, not problems at the individual level, but rather structural problems that are most probably not to be solved by incremental reform. Most current reform developments and initiatives avoid structural reform, as the case of Germany and France, but also the Netherlands show. It is important to highlight the controversial debates, or the attempts to avoid them, in discussions pertaining to reforming the systems in the countries studied; these have a direct – but seldom recognised – impact on life course in general and educational trajectories in particular. Policy-making and high-level governance need to recognise the intricate interrelations among the different dimensions of policy making. For instance, what effects do different constellations (policy-makers, parents, labour market representatives, etc.) have on the content dimension of policy frictions?

### ***Ad 3) Governance of life course – interaction and cooperation (and competition) of actors***

The difficulty of reforming education is highlighted by the French report, but is most visible in other countries, e.g. Italy, Germany and the Netherlands. The very nature of education policy

may be described as open to controversy as the meaning is highly dependent of ideological, political and cultural views. Also, the different actors – who in turn are located at the different governance levels – have different views on what kind of reforms they advocate, for whom, with what effects. The Polish discussion on the lowering of age for compulsory education is a case in point; there different actors advanced divergent interests; also, policy decided on the national level with high financial implications was burdened on the local level. This issue seem, accentuated in more and less, to revolve around high-level governance questions, posing important challenges to how successful and effective policies become on the ground.

In conclusion, the issues related to life course raised in the GOETE countries are linked to child and youth welfare, especially their integration into education and employment, to the duties of youth work as well as to youth not in education or training. What becomes visible is a higher concern for children and young people's life course in the framework of combating social exclusion – which however has the effect of increasing the pressure for 'normalcy'. Life course transitions are seen as key to preventing social exclusion, thus, being in need of particular support. Education is regarded as important on the societal level in order to maintain social cohesion and welfare (which of course differ according to the model; e.g. Finland and Italy). Here, the link between education and the welfare state is to be regarded as important on the individual level in order to prevent marginalization and make possible that individuals cope not only with their educational trajectories but also life as a whole. While allusions to Lifelong Learning discourses are made, only formal education is highlighted, leaving the importance of non-formal education implicit. Also, there is a high policy concern for transitions from primary/lower secondary to upper secondary school levels (both general and vocational) and from school to employment. Life course may thus be seen here as a crucial issue of high-level governance; for instance, in Finland the policy of multi-professional cooperation may be regarded primarily a governance issue, i.e., of coordination among different actors. Both the critical discourse analysis and the expert interviews point to global and European discourses being adopted and adapted to the national contexts, both the discourse on early intervention and multi-professional practices are strong hegemonic discourses; they are, as some experts refer, "undisputable and uncontested". For instance, the discourse on social exclusion of young people has been very strong in GOETE countries. It is a discourse that has prevailed since the 1990's and from the beginning has been very strong within the employment policies. This discourse has however broadened and covers now also other policies, from welfare policies, family policies to education policies. This makes it interesting and important to look more closely into the strategies that are proposed to combat social exclusion among young people and more specifically at the transition phases as these are critical in combining and consolidating different policies. Further, life course issues involve not only individual features; they have to be regarded as a complex assemblage that has to be viewed against the structures and institutions that frame them.

#### **4.7 Discussion: the Governance of Educational Trajectories in GOETE countries**

As noted earlier in this report, and following the clear emphasis on the importance of governance in the State of the Art report, the issue of governance is absolutely central in, and pervades, the GOETE project. However, while all the earlier Work Packages have recognized the issues they

were focusing on, and the reasons that they were defined and carried out in particular ways, they also recognized, more or less explicitly, that what they observed did not ‘just happen’ but had to be brought about through series of structures, processes and practices that could be represented as, and were the results of forms of, *governance*. As a result, in a very real and useful sense, the GOETE project has been organized and presented in a bottom-up way. So, in one way, Work Package 7 represents a culmination of the questions raised in that Report, through its focus on the ways that the other forms of governance carried on at other ‘lower’ levels of education systems are themselves framed by high-level governance for instance, to consider how it has worked out in practice, or more specifically, to discuss how the hypotheses contained in Table 41 of the State of the Art report might need to be modified on the basis of work directly focused on HLG through the country reports. However, in addition to this possibility, WP7, and especially chapter 4, has presented an opportunity to go beyond that kind of classifying endeavor, to try to open up something of the nature of the relationships between high-level governance and other levels of educational governance, and their consequences for practice and individual experience.

The Introduction to this chapter stated that high-level governance both reflects and constructs conceptions of access, coping and relevance, and their implications for the life course. It set the challenge of both reflecting on the prominence of, and the forms taken by, the many issues implied by the key GOETE topics, such as those of (in)equality and its forms and consequences, means of forestalling, or compensating for differences of experience or treatment that are visited upon, rather than generated by, individuals, and the ways that their life chances and life courses are affected by the nature of the education they receive and its relevance to their—and their family and national—futures. It has asked what forms these issues take in the different countries and how are they addressed.

The analyses in the thematic chapters also sought to reveal where possible some of their consequences, and one notable and important feature of the reports on which those analyses are addressed and constructed, and of the comparative accounts of them contained in the various sub-chapters, is that these questions were not on the whole generated in a kind of ‘problem solving’ way, or as a means of identifying forms of possibly generalisable ‘best practice’. The relative common-ness of the issues seen as significant, and the equally context-boundedness of the construals and constructions of these problems and the solutions to them, get to the heart of the wider issues of educational governance in the current era. They demonstrate how on the one hand, national education systems are confronted with what is an apparently relatively homogeneous set of problems deriving from their place in the global knowledge economy, but on the other hand, they have to find the means and responses to, and resources for, addressing these problems, not only in respect of the local forms that these ‘general’ problems take, but also in respect of the existing forms of national educational governance, and the ways that that labour is divided, among actors and levels, where the ability to change and respond is much more limited than the variability of the problems confronting them.

The forms of analysis adopted in GOETE, as demonstrated in this chapter, thus enable both a more precise recognition and identification of problems generated by the changing contexts of context within which the high-level governance of educational transitions operates, and also a

more grounded analytic basis on which to appreciate more effectively the forms of the national responses in the key areas of interest to GOETE which were presented in the last chapter. These emerge, in different ways, across each of the key areas addressed in the different sections of this chapter.

The nature and extent of the gaps between high-level governance and other levels of educational governance are clearly revealed in Section 4.2. The relationship between the levels is described as one where ‘the high-level co-defines the options and the lower- and meso-levels provide the solutions in practice’. This does not diminish the relevance of their contribution. Indeed, between the high issues of high-level-governance and policy goals and the low issues of actual delivery lie a range of meso-level governance arrangements dealing with how policy goals are implemented in political, administrative and financial structures’, although we also find ‘an increasing desynchronisation and fragmentation of policies, disconnected from each other and from a broader relational framework which establishes linkages between them’. This is a critical inference to be drawn from the comparison of the eight national reports. It seems that in each case the relationship of the national and the sub-national is one of tension, with a common theme the nature and consequences of the difference between policy formulation at a central or national level, and the processes and actors involved in seeking to ensure that it becomes translated (or not, as the case may be) into local practices.

The nature of this gap is clearly elaborated in Sections 4.2 and 4.3, in particular, which point to significant structural gaps between high-level governance and the regional and local and street level bureaucrats who are involved in implementing national policy, in some ways summarised as ‘delegation of responsibility without allocation of resources’. This is where the gap in GOETE’s coverage is clearest. While we have vivid and complex accounts of some elements of ‘street level’ involvement in shaping educational practices, we have somewhat less evidence—though the French case is an exception here-- on the forms taken by, and the effects of sub-national and local educational administration. However, identifying that gap, and being in a position to frame research that would enable it to be filled is in itself a highly significant contribution. Thus, a considerable contribution of chapter 4 has been to show how—and how tightly—high-level governance has delineated the central GOETE issues in the different countries, and what kind of effective—rather than necessarily planned—agenda it has shaped, steered and enabled (which may of course take the form of ignoring or withdrawing from the field, blame avoidance, or denying the responsibility—passing the hot potato, as the Italian report had it—for day to day governance of educational transitions).

However, the existence of this gap leads us to ask a number of questions about the factors and issues that frame and bring about changes in the nature and functions of high-level governance itself. Who is it now accountable to, and for what? What are the stakes for high-level governance? One way of addressing these questions is to recall the discussions in the Introduction to this report on the ‘context of context’. While the national level of educational governance constitutes a major part of the contexts within which local and organisational levels operate, its own limits and possibilities are broadly shaped by the wider—largely international—contexts of which it is part.

In a sense, the comments made in the previous paragraphs could be seen to suggest a set of nested ‘contexts of contexts’. That is a useful analogy, but one that should not be taken too far, and certainly not too ‘mechanically’; contexts of possibility are not wholly framed by other contexts of which they are part, and nor does a particular context of context imply any specific form of response. The idea of changing discursive and institutional opportunity structures, introduced in Chapter 3, perhaps represents the nature and limits of the idea of context most effectively, in suggesting that changes are implied, even if they cannot be specified, and certainly that they will not all take the same form. This is especially the case with high-level governance, for the context of context that it responds to can be seen to be common to all the GOETE countries. What are the contexts that crucially frame high-level governance in the countries we are looking at? Clearly, though common, they vary considerably, but it is possible to identify some basic elements that seem to be shared by all of them.

One clear and very significant example of this is the ‘neoliberal State retrenchment discourse’ mentioned in section 4.7.3, which ‘exerts strong downward pressure on educational expenditure’. It is valuable to have attention drawn to this, because it does point to different conceptions of what is at issue and at stake in high-level governance, from those that have typically been raised in the national reports, which are, quite rightly, heavily focused on the best ways of improving educational transitions (and not just from the higher levels), and especially with considerations of equality and social cohesion, which are noticeably absent from these discourses. That is not, however, how other segments of national populations see the high-level governance of education, and the views of those whose dominant preoccupation is reducing the cost of education, for instance, also have to be taken into account by those involved in that high-level governance. However, while this is of particular importance and interest, given the relative paucity of discussions of finance-related matters in the national reports making up this Work Package, the possibility that that is a result of methodological biases in the choice of experts and documents for analysis should not be discarded.

Another example is clearly a conception of being part of a competitive global knowledge economy, which shapes conceptions of relevance, suggesting which kinds of knowledge are considered of most worth. This also means that a key set of relationships for those operating in high-level governance is with actors who are involved at the transnational level, operating in some ways as what might be called ‘policy conduits’, or perhaps better, ‘agenda conduits’, since it should not be assumed that this means that policies are put into practice unchanged. Indeed, it could be argued that the *modus operandi* of international organisations in education is not so much to provide solutions as to point out what the problem is.

One particular example of this is the way that issues around the nature and place of Lifelong Learning, which has been heavily promoted by the EU, become visible at several points in the reports. However, the national reports show how difficult it is to discern whether and how far the understandings of lifelong learning are similar to, or even compatible with, each other.

More broadly, and more importantly, the consequences and implications of membership of a ‘global knowledge economy’ are essentially spelled out for national governments through the work of international organisations. This is most evidently reflected in the very clear influence—

especially in Germany, but by no means confined to it—of the OECD’s PISA programme, where the fact of ranking, the rank obtained, and changes in rank, act as very powerful mechanisms shaping education policies at national state level. One of the ways that PISA works at national level is as a means of holding national education policy, and those responsible for it, to account. It is one of the means through which this happens, alongside other forms of high stakes testing, including testing and ranking—in England most prominently, but also elsewhere. This has the effect of very clearly affecting the priorities of education systems and those responsible for their high-level governance. It also, and quite crucially, has led in many cases to the enrolling of socially disadvantaged students in the same high stakes academic projects by which the ‘standard’ of all national education systems is assessed and ranked. We see one consequence of this in the English decision to exclude recent immigrants from the international tests. And this in turn has implications not just for what counts as relevant education, but for the stakes involved in, and the process of, key educational transitions.

This is associated with the prominence across all our countries, though to differing degrees, of the New Public Management, a central tenet of which is the need to make education systems more accountable to both those who benefit from, and who fund, them. This is taken to require national public services to be organised more directly on the basis of private sector practice, including contracting out of services, and in particular a shift of the locus of accountability for educational governance from input to output—results driven—accountability. This also has the effect of standardising—in both senses of the term (i.e., making similar across all countries, and setting common standards within them—note here the English mantra of ‘standards not structures’). These strategies and practices are further key elements of the context of context within which national education systems, including national systems of educational transitions, operate, and by means of which conceptions of access coping relevance and life course are shaped.

But at the same time, the variations in practice that have been exemplified in the various sections of this chapter also demonstrate that these contexts of contexts do not operate as strait-jackets. While the nature of the outer limits are effectively set by the wider global and macro-regional contexts within which all GOETE member states operate, they clearly allow for the wide ranges of variation of practice demonstrated in the reports discussed in the chapter.

The issue of increasingly high stakes being attached to education and individual performance is not confined to the level of international educational league tables, significant though these are. The issue pervades a great deal of the discussion in all national reports of high-level governance. This is not always explicit, but is none the less always implicitly present, or taken for granted as a, if not the most, significant issue, or outcome for individuals and for economies, to be taken into account in formulating educational transitions. This may be most evident in the sections on Access and Relevance, but it clearly underlies discussions of coping, and especially Life Course, too.

The common emphasis on, political centrality of, and consequent pressures exerted by, the increasing stakes and importance of educational achievement in the form of test scores, especially in respect of the two key transitions within the educational career, highlights the signal absence from these wider contexts of any matching pressure towards reforms that might ease and facili-

tate educational transitions of socially disadvantaged young people. In fact, the contrary is the case. The transitions into and out of lower secondary schools are quite central to the distribution of opportunities to succeed in education. In terms of the first transition, this may be due in part to the ‘school mix’ effect, the effect of ‘who studies with whom?’ and how this is determined. However, irrespective of the validity of the school mix effect, it seems that especially middle class parents act as if it is valid, and transition to secondary schools becomes highly politicised. One consequence of this is the—unintended but quite predictable—creation of unpopular schools, that no parents want to send their children to, as they are perceived to be of low standard, and where attendance may set further limits on the possibilities for successful educational careers for the already socially disadvantaged. The consequences of these divisions are most starkly illustrated in the Dutch case of the separation into ‘white’ and ‘black’ schools, but variants of this are seen in almost all national reports.

In terms of the transition out of lower secondary education, the stakes are at least equally high (and they will have been considerably swayed by the consequences of the first transition). The employment nexus has clearly become dominant in life course transitions, and it is a crucial issue, possibly the most crucial, around educational transitions. It takes the high-level governance in two different directions—a horizontal link with the labour market and the world of employment, and the education world, with its different ways of classifying and governing the relationships between academic and vocational education. Reducing or increasing the divisions between the two sectors, or groups of providers, appears to be a crucial issue in all eight countries, though it takes very different forms depending on the prior history of relationships between academic and vocational education. The proper role and shape of vocational education seem to be significant issues for high-level governance in several countries, from iVET in schools to dual systems. We will conclude this brief discussion by highlighting some of the key findings of chapter 4.

Section 4.2 offers a very original, complex and valuable dissection of key elements of high-level governance of education. Two particular points stand out. First, it demonstrates that and how high-level governance co-defines the options, and the lower- and meso-levels provide the solutions in practice, and points to the range of political, administrative and financial structures through which the different levels may combine (though as the Italian case in particular illustrates, there is no guarantee that such arrangements will either be established, or successful). This is a crucial point in the context of GOETE, since as has been pointed out above, there has been frustratingly little opportunity to examine those critical links between levels in any degree of detail.

Another crucial contribution of section 4.2 is to point out the different forms of governance with which HLG is concerned and the complications they can cause. The outstanding example of this is the different dynamics of labour market and education policies, while governments are expected to both promote neoliberal policies and protect their populations from the consequences of them. Another key task of high-level governance is the definition of insiders and outsiders: though its immigration policy it creates categories on the basis of its traditional understandings of diversity, and these are reflected in other policies, based on common political cultures and their related national models of integration (Heckmann & Schnapper, 2003). In this sense, patterns of

inclusion into the educational system follow national guidelines, though with more or less variability and power of discretion, depending on the role of intermediate bodies in different countries. However, the report also points out that the state's ability to impose its own visions and definitions is under challenge, as international agreements construct new rights and duties.

Two further fundamental points here are that access is the key—policy—mechanism through which individual decisions and performance based on social disadvantage deriving from class, gender, ethnicity, region and neighbourhood, mutate into differential *opportunities for learning* and consequent life perspectives, and that it seems to be construed and constructed in almost all countries—Finland as ever the exception-- as an individual and not a structural matter.

The relationship between coping and support has been commented on in an earlier chapter, but one notable finding of the coping section in chapter 4 is that it does not formally mean that students can rely on strategies or resources provided by school or market in a comparable formal sense. In this perspective the individual is reduced to being a member of a formal setting with rights and duties. One implication of this is that in order to be a successful functioning part of functioning system 'success and failure in education depend on how the effects of children's and young people's social disadvantage on their learning in school is mitigated by the support they and their parents can mobilise informally or formally – through individualised teaching, private lessons, special needs education, counselling and youth services – and informally through family and peer networks. And this in turn is related to the social embeddedness of education and its interrelation with other areas of social life worlds'.

As such it seems to be the last unit to develop by its own more or less intelligent ways of regulating emotions, of combining resources of time, space, personal communication etc. This leads to the question whether the formal educational sector is coming up with any – formal - support for students.

In all countries, on a high-level governance level, the relevance of education is taken for granted, though largely in terms of its 'traditional' functions and forms. Everywhere we find reform of the current systems not radical reforms experimenting with entirely novel modes of organization. The most important reason for this may be that education systems are fragile creatures of particular historical and cultural constellations; we can reason with great conviction that education is important and relevant, but we soon run into difficulties defending this system as opposed to other forms. This does not mean that it is not still extremely societally relevant: It has never before been more so. This is due to the inescapable fact that the importance of education has increased over the past decades. The concern with social exclusion is a strong indicator of this development: youth dropping out of school have a very difficult time to meet the common expectations for an autonomous adult existence. Their risk of marginalization is significantly higher than that of their peers in Willis' Learning to Labour. The main ticket to the future are educational credentials and certificates provided by the state.

However, while schooling is still the educational core, it is not the sole organization anymore. Especially with relatively new trends such as individualization and inclusion the demand for multiprofessional teams to work together on site will increase. Ever more time and effort is needed to make education a relevant experience for an increasing number of young people, so it seems.

The two most striking features of the section on Life Course are the phrase that in the context of late modernity, *'notions of life course normality become fictitious'*, and more generally the linking of life course and the avoidance of social exclusion, which has been as overshadowed in these reports as it is in the real world of high-level governance. What becomes visible is a higher concern for children and young people's life course in the framework of combating social exclusion – which however has the effect of increasing the pressure for 'normalcy'. Life course transitions are seen as key to preventing social exclusion, thus, being in need of particular support. Education is regarded as important on the societal level in order to maintain social cohesion and welfare (which of course differ according to the model; e.g., Finland and Italy). Here, the link between education and the welfare state is to be regarded as important on the individual level in order to prevent marginalization and make possible that individuals cope not only with their educational trajectories but also life as a whole.

#### **4.8 Emerging Issues**

GOETE's focus on how educational transitions are governed in eight countries of Europe has become even more potentially significant and opportune as a result of the massive changes that have been experienced in the global, national and local political economies since the project started. This produces both major headaches of focus, re-conceptualisation, data collection and analysis, and reporting, but also unusually demanding and worthwhile theoretical and practical challenges. Many of the questions we are asking now, and the issues that emerge from them, could not really have been anticipated at the onset of the project.

One other feature of the project is that GOETE faces both back and forward, a tension and a challenge that underlies a number of the issues considered in this Chapter. On the one hand, we are looking back on the accounts of the practices and policies we have observed, and to an extent considering how far they may be seen as representative of significant shifts in the 'education offer' of countries like those we are studying, and what their consequences seem likely to be.

On the other hand, the issues raised here do look towards changes in contexts, practices, objectives and so on. Effectively, there are neither any certainties, or even continuities, that we can depend on, nor, as yet, any clear guidelines to what we may expect in the area of educational transitions. However, at the same time, we do know that the future will neither be wholly different from the present, nor completely unaffected by it. The seeds of the future do lie in the present, and it is part of our task in this final section to try to determine what those seeds might look like, and which of them are likely to contribute to future growth. Might we expect further significant shifts in the 'education offer' of countries like those we are studying?

One central element of the GOETE project that has proved itself a most robust basis for analysis is the five thematic areas designated at the start of the project—access, coping, governance, relevance and life course. The report as a whole has been organized around those themes, and this final section will draw on them as we seek to distinguish both the consequences and open questions left by the body of the report, and what might be the most significant new issues that emerge from those reports. And in undertaking this final section, we are quite consciously taking the idea of emergent properties seriously—very briefly and simply that the coming together of

two properties can create a new and quite different property, not reducible to either of them; the best example is the combination of hydrogen and oxygen to produce water, but we have already seen in the course of the GOETE project as a whole the value of combing the five areas of focus.

We will find several ‘big’ issues running across the five areas discussed below, but here we want to highlight the one broad area that has probably been of most concern in the GOETE project, the issue of inequality, the forms it takes, and how it is generated by, and might be addressed by, the forms taken by educational transitions.

Finally it is important to register the basis of the information on which this chapter, like all the others, is based. It draws especially on the testimony—in documentary and interview form—of people with expertise in, or strong views on, educational transitions. They are all, to a greater or lesser extent, ‘insiders’, and this should be taken into account in considering the kinds of issues that their testimony has generated.

### *ACCESS*

- The analysis of the “migration” and other frictions across the national reports seem to show converging pressures over national models of incorporation and national educational systems. This does not mean that a strong convergence effect is to be expected, but it does suggest that similarities are stronger than portrayed in the literature on national models.
- National models developed in an era of Keynesian, interventionist welfare state, when national discourses and definitions of insider and outsiders had a stronger grasp on policies and institutions, and on the public agenda.
- The more blurred role of the State today means difficulty in imposing clear definitions of inclusion and exclusion, and in having traditional models implemented, and also because, in the meanwhile, immigration trends have changed significantly, with new post-Fordist flows characterised by a “superdiversity” in profiles, places of origin and destination, which is quite different from traditional post-colonial migrations.
- We can see an increasing legitimization (at least with a different scope and grasp on different national contexts) of neo-assimilationist trends (e.g. in the way instruction language learning is conceived), and a shift from societal to individual blaming and responsabilization for integration. This may cause a paradoxical individual blaming for cultural (collective) backgrounds, joined with traditional ‘othering’ mechanisms – with a consequent distinction of deserving and undeserving “diversities” and individuals.
- Issues around access are in danger of becoming more and more reduced to following productivist/utilitarian discourses of education, and consequently playing down the role in social cohesion. The use of various means of formal and informal selection at both transition points heightens these possibilities. This is not confined to those education systems that are formally segregated at transition points, but also affects, if not so directly, those in non-segregated systems who find themselves competing, in circumstances that do not favour the socially disadvantaged, for places in more favoured schools. Access in these conditions is to particular forms of educational experience that are differently formed by different ‘school mixes’.

- We may also find in non-segregated systems that effective responsibility for distributing access opportunities is passed down to local levels, where local autonomy and the responsabilization of individual schools/teachers can be used as blame shifting strategies by central states. In the case of educational access for immigrant pupils, this means that the responsibility over social and educational integration moves from central government to family or local institutions.
- Discourses on individualization carry some promise, especially for migrant young people. However, they tend to be ambiguous, involving variously discourses of individualisation as emancipation, and as assimilation (abandoning ‘native’ culture). They are also misleading, in so far as they leave the key structural conditions that combine to bring about individual disadvantage untouched. This also has the effect of constructing the consequences of educational experiences as risks for individuals, and shifting responsibility, and especially blame, on to individual young people.
- A further area where high-level governance shapes opportunities and access in crucial ways was seen in the case of migrant young people. Central states typically have the right to define insiders and outsiders, and to define appropriate ways of dealing with them. This has created major problems of translating formal into substantive forms of equality, for both multicultural and assimilationist approaches.
- The issue of resources, especially in times of recession, becomes especially relevant to questions of access, with the tendency/temptation to abandon large scale general programmes and turn to individualised provision of responses. We see some of the forms this takes, and some of the responses to it and consequences of it, in the area of coping.
- One quite noticeable aspect of the national reports, and of the commentaries on and rising from them, is the relative absence of discussions of gender, certainly by comparison with discussions of class and ethnicity. This may indeed be partly due to the particular focus on the trajectories of migrant young people in Chapter 3.
- Issues of access to education for socially disadvantaged young people seem to be especially vulnerable to the apparent prevalence of what are referred to as ‘ostrich policies’, where a government is reluctant to acknowledge that a problem exists, or chooses not to respond to it; as we note elsewhere in this section, the critical decisions taken at the most crucial stage of the life course in education may often tend to be rendered as ‘technical’ rather than political matters. The significance of these decisions is reinforced when we learn that concentrations of socially disadvantaged, or migrant populations, tend to be greater in schools than they are in the neighbourhood generally.
- Associated with this is the consequent issue of segregation, which also is discussed elsewhere in this chapter. The report points to three forms it may take: what is referred to as ‘territorial’ segregation, which shapes the opportunities of especially disadvantaged young people to attend particular schools; ‘concentration’, as in the Italian case, where the proportion of immigrant children in any one school was to be limited; and track segregation, segregation—on whatever basis, but frequently de facto conceptions of ‘ability’—within schools. Each of these stages has particular impacts on the access opportunities of socially disadvantaged young people—and each of them is clearly potentially open to policy action.

## *COPING*

- It is significant that the coping sections of national reports, as well as the section of Chapter 5 devoted to Coping, are much more likely to use the term ‘support’ than ‘coping’. We have suggested above that this is indicative of a general tendency for mechanisms of coping to originate effectively from the ‘policy supply’ side than from the ‘policy demand’ side. This may be an especially strong form of institutional path dependency, and certainly in some countries for ‘support’ for variously defined categories of educational need to take the form of deeply institutionalised and defined provision. The provision of services for children defined as having Special Education Needs is emblematic of this, and it is highly significant that as the national report demonstrates, Poland is even now making very significant moves to institute such provision—though at the same time, that also shows the still highly contested nature of the definition of SEN. What it also reinforces is the fact that in such a supply-driven system, getting help depends on whether an individual child or young person falls into one of the existing categories. Where forms of assistance with ‘coping’ are provided for groups who are defined demographically—very largely ethnically or linguistically—rather than on the basis of a particular ‘condition’, certainly as far as the UK provision is concerned, it can be associated with forms of individualization, as “‘young people looking to enter the labour market must be prepared to invest in their own education with the support of schools and following a personalized and flexible learning agenda.” (Mellor & Dale, 2012, p.38)
- It may be significant that the commonest form of support available to migrant students takes the form of assistance with mastering the language of the ‘host’ country. This may be seen as a pre-emptive rather than compensatory (the usual connotation of coping) strategy. We have little data on either the organization or the outcomes of such programmes—which in some cases are made the responsibility of the individuals themselves, but they seem to carry the potential for both enabling greater individual progress and contribution, albeit associated with somewhat assimilationist strategies. Indeed, in the case of England, coping is identified as the handmaiden of relevance, the means that can help ensure its delivery.
- This is a clear illustration of what seems to be identified as the main failing in the conceptualization of coping as a means of educational assistance. This is its identification with individual failings, which, like the wider structural factors that ‘constructed’ the particular areas of ‘failure’, tend to be seen as precisely that, individual and not socially generated, shortcomings.
- As noted elsewhere in this Chapter, it is important to look for ‘absences’ as well as intriguing presences in the national reports. In the case of coping, what is striking in this respect is the almost total absence of any reference to the EU’s Key Competences for Lifelong Learning (European Communities, 2007). The point of the key competences, which are particularly aimed at educational underachievers, is that they are the competences which ‘all individuals need for personal fulfilment and development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employment’<sup>23</sup>. Similarly, there is little if any trace in the national reports of any reference to, or

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<sup>23</sup> The Reference Framework sets out eight key competences: 1) Communication in the mother tongue; 2) Com-

recognition of, the needs created by the changing forms and demands of employability, as discussed in the section on Relevance

- One of the ‘historical’ aspects of coping, where different national traditions are clearly evident, is to be found in the nature and level of multi-professional provision, though the forms that this took varied greatly. This, too, seems to emerge as an area of national historical contingency, that is under pressure, if not threat, from the wider changes in educational governance that this report has been describing
- Finally, it is clear that issues around the responsibility for and the delivery of coping mechanisms and programmes tend to be the area where the greatest and most significant gaps between national and local provision are to be found. This takes the form, most clearly expressed in the Italian report as the passing on of the hot potato, of national prescription followed up by no support for implementation. This may also be the area where the ‘post-Fordist’ framing of the expectations of educational governance produces least continuity with earlier regimes, of which coping may also be seen to be especially representative.

## **GOVERNANCE**

- (How) has the status and place of educational transition changed with changes in global and local political economies? This is a very big question, if only because it requires us to recognize and respond to the fact that neither national nor local states control the conditions that generate social disadvantage, though they are responsible for dealing with its consequences
- There is evidence in this report of change *within* levels of educational governance, but less of changing relations *between* them, or of the system as a whole, despite changes to the basis on which those relations were based—in particular, perhaps, central funding of local programmes. Indeed, the relationships across and between levels of governance seem to be a key area where the strains created by recent changes to the contexts in which they operate become most evident, important and frustrating. Thus we see in the reports references to government ‘aphasia’, to ‘hot potatoes’ being passed down the line, and to ‘ostrich policies’, where problem are just ignored. These examples all come from the Italian report, but other reports, though not expressing themselves as graphically, seem to suggest that their relevance is not confined to that country. More ‘constructively’ these shifts have in some places led to suggestions of remedies in the form of decentralization and autonomy, either within the frame of a subsidiarity discourse, or within the frame of a neoliberal State retrenchment discourse (cutting State expenditure with responsabilization of every institution).
- One very big issue, which was not really relevant at the conception of the GOETE project, and whose consequences could not really be directly addressed by/or possibly affect national responses, is the massive retrenchment and rethinking of public spending possibilities and priorities. The retrenchment hits educational transitions in two ways, at least. On the one hand, it means a brute reduction in the amounts of money available to fund education as a

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munication in foreign languages; 3) Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology; 4) Digital competence; 5) Learning to learn; 6) Social and civic competences; 7) Sense of initiative and entrepreneurship; 8) Cultural awareness and expression.

whole. On the other, it has similarly radical, but unknown, consequences for the whole range of contexts of context within which education systems operate, prioritise their resources, formulate their outcomes as well as their budgets, and so on. There may be especially relevant consequences at the level of the education system, especially at the end of the present educational career, possibly through the creation of new life stages/identities for those for whom paid employment is not available.

- Not unconnected with this is the general issue of ever higher stakes in education as a whole and in transitions in particular. As employment becomes ever more elusive and exclusive as a target destination, will the routes to that destination become even more shaped by, and dependent on, formal educational achievement?
- Associated with these questions, do we also need to reconsider the idea of ‘public’ education, certainly beyond compulsory stages? This may involve revisiting the idea of ‘public’, and ‘the public’, more rigorously. What do we understand when we talk of the public realm, the public interest, public services and ‘the public’ as a collective identity? The meanings and representations of these concepts have individually and jointly, to varying degrees in different countries, been deliberately eroded, largely by state action, for instance by attempts to privatise and marketise public services. There are also ongoing attempts to de-politicise the public realm. These shifts are associated with, and to a degree inspired by the New Public Management, and both privatization and de-politicisation, especially the former, carry considerable threats to the existing forms of high-level governance of education. There are at least three main ways in which this might impact on educational transitions. One particular threat that may be entailed by these moves could involve the consequences of the proliferation of ‘tailored’, and ‘client-specific’ programmes—e.g. narrowly targeted vocational programmes, or payment by results to private providers. Secondly, the de-politicisation moves seek to bring about a downplaying of politics, though the main area where we find this is in association with the reception and treatment of migrants, where the relevant discursive and institutional opportunity structures are shaken up as well as exposed. And third, there are several examples of moves to represent what are essentially political issues—and especially opportunities for access to ‘better’ schools-- as effectively ‘technical issues. This is especially likely in the case of the designation of school zones, with their serious consequences for territorial segregation/school mix on the basis of relative social advantage.
- In some ways, the most important question we need to ask about the governance of educational transitions is ‘can what we are witnessing be seen as a ‘hollowing out’ of the state in the area of educational transitions? This question has more plausibility if we consider it in the light of ‘qualitative’ as well as ‘quantitative’ shifts in the work of national states in this area, that is to say, if we do not approach the issue on the basis of a straight calculation of the quantum of powers ceded to other levels, or taken over from other levels. This is because on the one hand, issues such as the hollowing out of the state already to a degree assume a traditional social-democratic state, and on the other it is quite difficult to calculate the ‘weight’ of shifts in *forms* of governing—‘at a distance’, for instance, or ‘by numbers’. In particular, it points to “an increasing de-synchronisation and fragmentation of policies, disconnected from each other and from a broader relational framework which establishes linkages between them.

Putting the question in this way is intended to direct attention to other than formal aspects of high-level governance. It is interesting to note that in the analysis of the migrant friction, for instance, teams found themselves addressing responses that very strongly reasserted the central importance, authority and responsibility of the state in determining the statuses of the populations inhabiting its territories, while this did not at all appear to be the case when it came to coping, for instance. And if we take this question further, it generates very interesting further issues about the governance of the life course, in all its complexity. Can life courses be governed by a combination of fragmented authorities, for instance?

## ***RELEVANCE***

- The relevance of education may appear to be the area where the need to rethink the differences between how the Fordist and the Knowledge Society relate to education is most obvious. A common perception is to think of the Knowledge Society as a new evolutionary stage of society coming “after” or “following” Fordist society, whose value was by the measured by knowledge acquired, outcome by entry into the labour market. Despite the recent and much heralded emphasis on knowledge both as a commodity and the precondition for successful individual participation, there is an equal demand for skills and an emphasis on the traditional virtues preparing the next generation for the working life. However, it is not just the composition of the labour market that is changing, but the composition of the potential labour force, too, an issue which might have received more attention in the reports. Labour in advanced societies of the twenty-first century is increasingly facing competition not only from within Europe, where wages are far from equal, but also from countries outside Europe. These tensions and contradictions between an emphasis on high skill and education with the promise of high earnings and the realities of increasing demands under conditions of low earnings and precarious jobs are also acted out in the education systems and deserve further attention. Possibly, global and local developments are much more directly interlinked than expected.
- In this regard, the situation of disadvantaged groups needs to be studied with a focus more on the labour market than on education. In other words, it would be interesting and necessary to expand the time frame: We have been looking at the periods of transition into the labour market, but it would be of interest to follow up what has been researched in the local case studies in a longitudinal study. Of special interest is the question whether those in precarious conditions, the at-risk-students, eventually are absorbed by the local labour markets, and if not, what kind of strategies they choose and what measures are offered to them to deal with it.
- It is also important to try to conceptualise the nature of the labour market and its demands in the present conjuncture. As one Scottish labour market expert told us, ‘the jobs these kids ask me about, the jobs their dads and uncles did, no longer exist; the major employer around here is Asda (supermarket)’. One way of trying to move beyond the ‘skills/productivist’ discourse of educational relevance is to examine the concept of employability, or ‘trainability’ (Ausbildungsfähigkeit) as it appears in the German report. Employability does not here appear as an index of the percentage of graduates of a programme obtaining jobs, but as a means of

”transcending explanations of employment and unemployment that focus solely on either supply-side or demand-side factors. ..It is argued that the ‘narrow’ usage of ‘employability’... as shorthand for ‘the individual’s employability skills and attributes’...can lead to a ‘hollowing out’ of the concept of employability. (Rather)..analysing employability (should be) built around individual factors, personal circumstances and external factors, which acknowledges the importance of both supply- and demand-side factors.” (McQuaide & Collins, 2005, p. 197)

- The addition of ‘personal circumstances’ and ‘external factors’ here could effectively meet several of the criticisms that have been made of the current discourse of transition to employment in this report. Such a conceptualization might also make it possible to approach issues of formal/informal, and academic/vocational, distinctions in ways that reflect their changing meanings and implications.

### ***LIFE COURSE***

- The life course theme enables us to see how the various other thematic threads might come together and mutually inform and relate to each other. It also requires us to look outside the narrow confines of education governance and provision, to consider its relationships with the wider world, at a number of levels, for instance by bearing in mind the significance of ‘critical life events’, which provides a direct link to issues of coping.
- Life course issues are central to educational trajectories and as such for analysis and policy formulation. However, this is not always appropriately recognised in the documents and interviews. Especially the highly dynamic and interactive processes associated with them do not seem to receive enough attention. One important aspect would be to make this relationship visible both in research and in policy discussions. Further, even though there are variations across GOETE countries, in general life course arrangements are highly normative and structured, influencing how alternative or ‘deviant’ trajectories are viewed and tackled. One important issue here would be to thematise more closely the relationship between formal and non-formal/informal educational settings.
- We see in several reports the emergence of new life course categories, which reflects very effectively the kinds of changes that are taking place in educational transitions. Probably the commonest and most striking of these identities is that of NEETs—Not in Employment, Education or Training. This was originally coined in the UK, but has been taken up in other reports, too. The nature of the proliferation of these new categories sheds interesting light on the changing identities emerging to capture the life course status of young people. A very revealing example of this comes from the UK report, where apparently similarly placed young people in the three countries of the UK, England, Northern Ireland and Scotland, are referred to in quite different ways. In England, it becomes essentially a matter of being able to recognise, access and seize particular forms of educational advantage, where a logic of intervention stressing the central importance of individually-based meritocratic social mobility is promoted above all others. The Scottish conception seems to have a greater emphasis on the shared bases through which individual life courses are constructed, with the intention of ensuring that all school leavers go to ‘Positive Destinations’, which does not mean employment, but

rather, effectively, 'anything but NEET'. And in Northern Ireland this is further reinforced by the need to overcome the continuing damaging legacies of the recent past, notably though the attempt to prevent young people falling into a NEET life course. These might all be seen as the use of formal education as a means of 'interrupting' what might be seen as 'inappropriate, unwelcome, or even dangerous life-courses', in circumstances where all those adjectives, including the last, and very much present in the areas of some schools.

- If we consider how the main associations between formal education and life course are mediated, we find again that the traditional employment nexus is under great pressure. One interesting issue here is what kinds of response and alternatives might succeed or supplant employment as the key link. Forms of voluntary service, or even formal national (not necessarily military) service have been mooted in some places
- In addition to these 'demand side' questions, we need also to consider the education supply side issues that are so influential on the life courses, in particular the prevailing audit/high stakes testing/competitive climate of secondary schooling, that is appearing in many of our countries. Is there any evidence of new kinds of identities being made available for young people to don at these crucial points in their lives? To adopt the title of Philip Wexler's (1992) classic book on this topic, are there new ways of 'Becoming Somebody' that may emerge from the rapidly changing patterns of transition that we are witnessing?
- What are the consequences for the place of education in the contemporary life course of arguments that the meanings and forms citizenship are being altered as a result of, on the one hand the erosion of the basis of the modern social contract on which it rests, and on the other the erosion of its national basis with the growth of the global movement of people, for instance?

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

The two central chapters of this report have provided accounts of high-level governance of educational trajectories and transition in the GOETE countries in two major dimensions. Chapter 3 focused on national differences in the conceptualisation and realisation of high-level governance and its forms and obligations, while chapter 4 analysed the eight national reports from the perspective of their representation and translation of the five key themes of GOETE, Access, Coping, Governance, Relevance and Life Course. In both cases, we found evidence of considerable differences between the countries in the ways that they conceived of high-level governance. However, one pattern of similarity that has been evident across almost all reports has the existence of ‘discontinuities’ between different levels of education governance been significant structural gaps between national authorities and the regional, local and ‘street level’ bureaucrats who are immediately responsible for putting national policy into practice. These discontinuities are often to do with lack of resource available to more local levels to implement national programmes, often quite wittingly, leading to suggestions that they amount to ‘delegation of responsibility without allocation of resources’, or as the Italian national report put it, ‘passive subsidiarity’ (cf. Barberis & Kazepov, 2012). Most significantly, we find similar comments and responses from the other side, as it were, in the WP6 report on local governance of education, where again, “practically all countries converge in their critiques, [...] comment(ing) negatively on the relation between different power levels and the different expertise of actors which can make cooperation cumbersome.” (du Bois-Reymond et al., 2012, p. 226) Similarly, “Governments (in all countries) are inclined to delegate “transition responsibility” to individual schools or school boards...(and) government agents would not be willing to face the consequences of decentralization (by) providing the necessary means and [...] defend(ing) political actions.” (ibid., pp. 226f.)

This poses interesting but quite revealing problems for our understanding of educational transitions and trajectories in the GOETE countries. What it seems to indicate is that we have on the one hand, the existence of broadly common constraints—financial and governmental-- on national governments, and broadly similar responses to them in various forms of delegation of responsibility but not of resources, but on the other hand, very different forms taken by these generically similar processes, a quite crucial issue in considering the nature and scope of high level governance. Indeed, it points to the fact that high-level governance could be seen as a key part of the context of context within which regional and local education governors operate, as it ‘co-defines their options’.

A central thrust of the GOETE project has been not just to examine and investigate how disadvantaged young people’s trajectories into and out of lower secondary school are governed, but to compare those experiences across eight countries. Such comparison can have two main purposes, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive: *first*, to construct better ways of understanding the trajectories and the transitions they encompass, their structures and processes and their effects, and, *second*, to determine the possibility of coming up with more equitable and more effective ways of governing those trajectories. These are not the only ways in which comparative work can assist our understanding, of course. One of the greatest benefits of the comparative approach is derived from simply recognising that ‘there are other ways of doing these things’. These may be

considered worse, or better, than ‘our’ way of arranging these matters, or even irrelevant to them, but most fundamentally, irrespective of our evaluation of them, they do make us aware that ‘ours’ is not the only way to do these things, which is a powerful piece of knowledge, especially if we consider the alternative of lack of awareness of what we are doing.

In terms of these two main purposes, GOETE, in common with almost all similar projects, has had as its ideal the development of a theoretical understanding of different regimes of governance of educational trajectories that would at the same time enable us to identify ‘best practices’, or less ambitiously, to be able to point to sets of governance tools and mechanisms that were clearly superior to those in use in other countries. This is evident in the three central research objectives set out in the State of the Art Review during our preparatory phase (Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011, pp. 12f.). The research objectives of the GOETE project imply a comparative perspective for three reasons:

- to identify general factors of the relation between education, life course and social integration as well as converging trends of educational governance in distinction from contextual specificities;
- to identify constellations and factors of governance that are favourable to broader access to education, to support mechanisms that help students effectively in coping with educational demands and to communication procedures that allow for a reconciliation between different systemic and subjective criteria of educational relevance;
- to allow for processes of mutual learning in the modernisation of educational governance.

The *first* of these objectives comes closest to a statement of the ideal, where comparative academic analysis provides us with a basis for mapping different models or types of educational governance in terms of—national, cultural and social—factors (e.g., governance tools and mechanisms) specific to a particular setting (country, region, municipality, etc.) but also in terms of general developments (e.g., convergent trends) across the different settings we investigated. It meant the search for specific and for general elements, aspects and arrangements; in essence the objective is more descriptive-analytic and classificatory and aims at a better understanding of general trends in the governance of educational trajectories, in a period of rapid and radical change in the various ‘contexts’ as well as of the ‘context of contexts’ of the governance of educational trajectories in terms of access, coping and relevance. Here, the two main chapters provided us with important means of being able to map, in ways that enabled creative comparison, key elements of the differences revealed in the national reports. Chapter 3 provided us with innovative means of comparing the high-level governance across the different national situations of this report, while in Chapter 4 the value of having specified key thematic areas of GOETE was especially useful, for it enabled us to give a form of coherence across national reports and national circumstances.

There were major problems in achieving the *second* objective, identifying ‘new’ constellations of practice and effective mechanisms of support, for instance, largely because it became clear from the national reports that it was extremely difficult to find evidence that would enable us to do either of these things. However, that led to the need to determine why this was the case, and how it might be constructively resolved. The major part of this resolution depended on establishing

*why* constellations did not seem to emerge from cross-national comparisons in the ways that had enabled them to be so prominent in the State of the Art report. Effectively, this sent us in three directions:

- trying to find reasons for what is referred to in the Governance section of Chapter 4 as the widespread fragmentation and de-synchronisation within countries of policies around educational transitions; this entailed looking at the contexts of context within which transitions and trajectories are now formed;
- an enhanced focus on the details rather than the ‘naming’ of governance activities; what is now to be understood by ‘governance’ of educational transitions?;
- coming up with ways of constructively analysing what the national reports enabled us to say about the state of educational transitions and trajectories.

### *Contexts of Context*

The context of context that nations and regions, and even schools, have to respond to can be seen to be common to all the GOETE countries. What are the contexts that crucially frame high-level governance in the countries we are looking at? Clearly, though common, they vary considerably, but it is possible to identify some basic elements that seem to be shared by all the GOETE members. As Brenner et al. (2010) point out, one—for them the most important—context of context is clearly a conception of being part of a competitive global knowledge economy. This was already discursively present at the time the State of the Art report (Parreira do Amaral et al., 2011) was written, but its prominence and importance have intensified rapidly, especially with the development of the idea that knowledge is itself a factor of production. The medium through which the discourse is most energetically disseminated is the work of international organisations, such as OECD, the World Bank and the EU, to the point where it now suffuses discussions of economic growth in every country, as every country is exhorted to up its contribution to the knowledge economy, in great part through its education system. This is quite explicit in six of the eight GOETE national reports, (the exceptions are France and Poland, where the choice of frictions in Chapter 3 did not cover this level of policy). From its identification as crucial by the Finnish Prime Minister, to the Italian policy document that damns the Italian system as “an exercise of micro-local navel contemplation, totally inconsistent with the frame of the European knowledge society, the flexibility of education and training and the labour mobility it requires; and insufficiently aware of on-going European practices and priorities” (Barberis & Kazepov, 2012, p. 43), the discourse of the knowledge economy was crucial in shaping higher level governance in the GOETE countries.

The most intrusive—and the most effective—way in which these discourses have penetrated deeply into national education systems is the OECD’s PISA programme. The crucial aspect of PISA from the point of view of the issues that GOETE is involved with is that it sets effectively a common benchmark for educational achievement. One of the crucial features of PISA is that it operates through a ranking system, and thereby sets a common standard for all member countries—among which are numbered all GOETE countries. In a sense, it might thus be said to lay down a common definition for the relevance of education, for instance. It also raises and extends the profile of high stakes educational testing regimes, which are taken up by several GOETE

countries. This has the effect of very clearly affecting the priorities of education systems and those responsible for their high-level governance. It also, and quite crucially, has led in many cases to the enrolling of socially disadvantaged students in the same high stakes academic projects by which the ‘standard’ of all national education systems is assessed and ranked. References to the importance of PISA in shaping education systems is very prominent in GOETE national reports, and not just in Germany, where that influence has been very heavily commented on. So, in France, it is seen as a test of the equality of the system, in the Netherlands it is a means of comparing the system against others, while one Finnish experts credits it with ‘saving the comprehensive school in Finland’.

This is associated with the influence across all our countries, though to differing degrees, of the New Public Management (NPM), a central tenet of which is the need to make education systems more accountable to both those who benefit from, and who fund, them. Providing a key mechanism for enabling this across countries is another achievement of the PISA programme. The fundamental basis of NPM is to require national public services to be organised more directly on the basis of private sector practice, including contracting out of services, and in particular a shift of the locus of accountability for educational governance from input to output—results driven—accountability. These strategies and practices are further key elements of the context of context within which national education systems, including national systems of educational transitions, operate, and by means of which conceptions of access coping relevance and life course are shaped. NPM came to prominence before the beginnings of GOETE, but its influence has intensified and spread, to the point where it now begins to appear like a default mechanism, something to be opted out of rather than into; some forms taken by these shifts are clear in Section 4.2.

One clear and very significant example of this is what the Italian report refers to as the “neoliberal State retrenchment discourse” which “exerts strong downward pressure on educational expenditure” (Barberis & Kazepov, 2012). This points us to different conceptions of what is at issue and at stake in high-level governance, from those that have typically been raised in the national reports, which are, quite rightly, heavily focused on the best ways of improving educational transitions (and not just from the higher levels), and especially with considerations of equality and social cohesion, which are noticeably absent from these discourses. That is not, however, how other segments of national populations see the high-level governance of education, and the views of those whose dominant preoccupation is reducing the cost of education, for instance, also have to be taken into account by those involved in that high-level governance. However, while this is of particular importance and interest, given the relative paucity of discussions of finance-related matters in the national reports making up this Work Package, the possibility that that is a result of methodological biases in the choice of experts and documents for analysis should not be discarded.

The point of this digression into discussions of some of the forms and elements of the context of context in which educational governance is transacted is to indicate that it has changed very dramatically from that which held even 10 years ago. The parameters and significance of each one severally and collectively of the five GOETE areas of interest, access, coping, relevance, governance and life course have been radically altered, *to the point where the assumptions and framings of the questions and typologies set out in the State of the Art Report are no longer as valid as guides to analysis as they originally were.* This does not mean that they are without value; the

very fact that they have continued to drive and sustain the intellectual effort of this project, and indeed to enable it to arrive at the point it is at, is testament enough to that.

However, it is also important to note that contexts of context are not monolithic; they impact differently in different places and circumstances. Thus, although changes in the context of context have meant that while the goals and purposes of education associated with the global knowledge economy have changed qualitatively, the means and structures available to, and taken up by, education systems in response to them are still, to a notable degree, informed by the existing ‘grammar of schooling’ (and we see something of this in the report on teacher training in WP3). An excellent example of how this works and its consequences is provided in the German national report for this Work Package, when it points out that the structures of schooling and societal rewards for schooling are moving out of synch with each other. Education systems and schools are still largely structured and organised around the set of assumptions about the relationship between education and the economy that essentially developed in the era of Fordism. These were centred around assumptions of lifelong careers, preparation for (especially male) skilled trades, an economy based on production, etc. These contrast quite starkly with the current reality of services economy, knowledge-based economies, flexible working, the expectation of multiple career changes, and so on. This anachronism, or de-synchronisation as it is called in Chapter 4.2, is a vivid symbol and symptom of the different paces of change in relevant contexts. More broadly, we witness changing assumptions about the wider public role of education, especially in its relationship to the social contract, where the place of education is significantly changed by the changed context of the context within which it operates. It is no longer involved in contributing directly to the well-being of societies, in a public good kind of way. Rather it is involved via contributing to a level of economic success that enables trickle down of the opportunities it enables to whole populations, as the responsibility for life courses shifts away from the collective to the individual, a trend noted in several of the national reports.

### ***Fragmentation and De-synchronisation***

A central argument of this report, and especially of chapter 4, has been that we are experiencing a ‘fragmentation’ and ‘de-synchronisation’ of processes and practices at different levels of governance of young people’s educational transitions. Indeed, it could be argued, on the basis of this Report, that it may be that there are two separate processes taking place, albeit deriving from a common source—territorial/scalar fragmentation, and temporal de-synchronisation.

More than this, we might also argue that not only has there been considerable fragmentation in and between different levels of the governance of educational transitions, but that this has also had ‘fragmenting’ and ‘de-synchronising’ consequences for the strategies and opportunities relevant to the life courses of young people themselves. Just as the context of contexts for high level governance, and its relationships with other levels of governance, has been profoundly changed, so this has had consequences for the possible life courses available to young people. Indeed, we might see these changes as themselves altering the patterns of discursive and institutional opportunity structures available to those young people—although it is less clear how well the changing discourses, especially around employment opportunities, are recognized by the young people themselves. This is perhaps most starkly evident in the account provided by the Glasgow em-

ployment expert of young men whose conceptions of employment were limited to the kinds of jobs that had been held by earlier generations of their families, but which now no longer existed.

Furthermore, one very significant means of recognizing and understanding the messages that seem to be contained in the earlier Work Packages is that the institutional opportunity structures—essentially the schools the young people inhabit—through which individual life courses have to be negotiated, have themselves also been changing, as schools have to prepare themselves to respond effectively to the changed nature of their relationship with what is available for their students after they have left school. Many of the issues and pressures can be seen clearly in, and inferred from, the coping and relevance sections of chapter 4.

At the same time, from the other side as it were, the emergence of many more young people for whom the existing routes following the end of lower secondary education have changed radically, constitutes another element of the context of high-level governance of education trajectories and transitions itself. For it is not only from ‘above’ that the effects of the changing contexts of context are experienced, but also, and more immediately, from ‘below’, in the form of the indirect problems and pressures that flow ‘upwards’ from their effects on the young people themselves, who now constitute a body that is in many ways distinct—certainly in terms of its life course stages—from the earlier cohorts whose experiences and expectations had provided the basis for existing institutional provision, and the pressures school face as a result of this.

The perceived fragmentation thus has multiple causes and effects, generated from below as well as from above, and these converge in the local and street level problems and practices, and their relationships with high-level governance. So, we may perhaps be witnessing a kind of ‘double fragmentation/de-synchronisation’ of the governance of educational trajectories and transitions, as it becomes clear that the effects of the changed ‘top down’ contexts of context of high-level governance, also very clearly and directly affect the opportunity structures of young people at the end of lower secondary education. What we might see as the ‘master discourse’ constituting the wider contexts of context, neoliberal capitalism, directly affects employment opportunities for young people, and a little less directly affects the structures and processes of high-level governance of educational governance, the main means of addressing the forms and consequences of those changed opportunities. And at the same time, those wider contexts impact on the opportunity structures for young people in ways that generate different kinds of pressures for schools ‘from below’. As a consequence, both individual life courses, and educational provision, become both separately and mutually fragmented and de-synchronised, as schools encounter radically new problems, at the same time as their ability to address them effectively is considerably reduced by the effect of the same wider context of context on the capacity of their own high-level governance to contribute to solving those problems.

The broad response to, and indeed the dominant framing of, these issues, certainly at the European level, has been the heavy promotion of lifelong learning. While it receives little attention in the national reports, despite the wider recognition of fragmentation and de-synchronisation, the statement in the German report is emphatic and quite wide-reaching; it refers to

“the many consequences of the new paradigm of lifelong and lifewide learning: the educational realm appears increasingly un- bounded, it dominates both time and space especially

in the life phase of youth. Because of the new ubiquity of education, *governance becomes an issue of orchestration – at least from the point of view of state policy actors.*' (Amos et al., 2012, p. 31, emphasis added)

### ***What is now to be understood by 'governance' of educational trajectories?***

As we noted above, one of the difficulties in recognising and mapping changes in the field of governance of educational trajectories is that those changes tend not to be signalled by changes in language or terminology; rather there seems to be considerable continuity in the ways the terms are used, irrespective of changes in what they refer to. The kind of problem this represents, and why it is important, has been very nicely expressed by the anthropologist, Gavin Smith, who writes that "a whole series of key concepts for the understanding of society derive their power from appearing to be just what they always were and derive their instrumentality from taking on quite different forms." (Smith 2006, p. 628) Some of the terms used in the State of the Art report (SoA) remain in currency, but their meanings have changed, in more or less subtle ways. 'Modernisation' is a good example of this. In the State of the Art text, it clearly connotes an improved state of affairs, a welcome updating. Just five years later, modernisation is much more likely to be taken as meaning conforming to the forms and tenets of modernity, which is now much more negatively interpreted.

However, we have had to recognise that 'governance' itself falls into this category. Its scope and meaning are no longer precisely what they were even as recently as when the GOETE project was written. The popularity of the term has spread, to enclose areas that were not originally seen to be in its compass. This may be the case in the areas of interest to GOETE, which was perhaps among the first projects that explicitly named and focused on 'governance' as the most appropriate way of understanding where transitions and trajectories were going, how they were getting there, and with what consequences, especially for the life course. Essentially, however, we might see a dual use of the term at work, whose differences are reflected in the very use of the term, High-level, for this Work Package. The problem is fundamentally, that rather different things are going on, conducted by rather different sets of people, for rather different reasons. At its simplest, high-level governance is concerned with, indeed almost defined by, a focus on outcomes and ends, which may include some that are quite remote from immediate individual trajectories, while lower level governance, as reported in WP6, is necessarily concerned with outputs and means. The thrust of this is caught from 'below', in the WP6 report, '

"They would or could not be willing to disregard the ...voting cycle with implied changes in government ideologies and school reforms which overrule existing cooperation networks and draw back introduced school experiences, or overrule schools with new reforms which school people did not ask for. Power relations are such that the local context is always subordinated in favor of more distant decision makers who precisely because they are distant take the wrong decisions." (du Bois-Reymond et al., 2012, p. 227)

And indeed, as indicated in the opening paragraph of this chapter, one of the clearest messages from the national reports is concerned with the tensions that seem to result everywhere in this area.

### *Devising new ways to understand the issues*

One very important consequence of the changing contexts of context, and of the increasing complexity of the concept of governance in this context, is that they made it necessary to devise new means of comparative analysis. These have been described in some detail in the body of the report, but, essentially, GOETE has come up with two different responses to these problems. One has been to continue with the ‘non-empirical’ and ‘non-national’ variables of access, coping, relevance, governance and life course, and these continue to yield a handsome return, as is evident from chapter 4. The other strategy is that deployed in chapter 3, which is to compare not empirical data on practices or frequencies, etc., but to shift the level of abstraction at which comparisons are made. Thus, we have seen in chapter 3 the development of the ideas of ‘friction’, ‘logic of intervention’ an approach to comparison that adopts the strategy of *tertium comparationis*, and discursive and institutional opportunity structure. To put it over-simply, we do not compare the actions and practices, but the reasons given for them. This enables some level of case and variable combination. We take a complex and relatively abstract variable—friction, logic of intervention—and examine in and across different cases. This enables us to incorporate and build in to our analyses matters related to the changing contexts of context; they become part of the analysis rather than merely parameters of it. Issues of changing context become topic rather than resource in our analyses. They also enable us to carry out transversal analyses of different aspects of national regimes, without falling into the problem of methodological nationalism.

### **5.1 Concluding Remarks**

The report has addressed the changing nature of the high-level governance of educational trajectories in eight European countries. It has focused particularly on relations between governance and the contexts in which it operates, which have changed radically, and on the consequences of these changes for the processes and outcomes of educational transitions.

The overall picture provided by this report is one of systems of high-level governance of educational trajectories that are in flux. The fundamental reasons for this are broadly common to all GOETE countries, but the ways that individual countries have sought to deal with them vary considerably, to a notable degree in line with their national and historical differences. The common ‘context of context’ they experience sets limits to, but does not determine, the strategies and outcomes sought by the individual countries.

One broadly common feature of the countries’ representations of, and responses to, their changing contexts, has been that it has involved forms of what section 4.2 refers to as spatial fragmentation and temporal de-synchronisation in the majority of the eight cases. The former has involved changing relations between high-level governance and other levels of the governance of transitions and trajectories, while the latter reflects elements of disruption to what had been considered the ‘normal’ life course and the institutions through which it was structured and processed.

What this also indicates and reflects is that the wider ‘external’ changes have led to changing, though not necessarily explicit, changes in the forms and place of high-level governance itself.

As noted at several points in the report, while the relationship between high-level governance and other levels of governance remains one where the former sets the agenda for the latter, in many cases, this is not accompanied by the resources necessary to implement that agenda. Associated with this, there have been changes both in the nature of the activities involved in high-level governance of educational transitions and trajectories, and in the bodies responsible for carrying them out. This is especially apparent in the changing status and place of the labour market as a key institution of transition, and the various alternative discourses, such as NEETs, that have emerged alongside it. This broadening of the basis of high-level governance is also reflected in the changing profiles of, and contributions from, both ‘non-educational’ public sector organisations, and broadly third sector organisations. A further indication of these kinds of changes is the prominence of policy-related documents highlighted in the national reports, which are produced by think tanks and foundations.

Finally, it is perhaps worthwhile to indicate a surprising—and relevant—absence in the national reports, and in the documents and expert interviews on which they are based. This is the paucity of references to the European level, and in particular to the Lifelong Learning programme, (and especially, as noted above, the document on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning) which might be seen as a direct attempt to tackle many of the problems that have been identified in the reports. In a sense, this absence might be seen to represent the obverse of the prominence of the ‘national’ in the country accounts.

### ***Limitations***

One clear limitation is the ‘educationist bias’/‘education-centredness’ of the report. Granted that the purpose of the whole project is to shed light on education transitions and trajectories, it has been made clear throughout the project that this cannot be effectively understood on the basis of a focus on current education systems alone. Now, more than ever, they are deeply imbricated with many others institutions and sectors, practices and experiences, that shape and orient them in direct and indirect ways. This is certainly fully understood in GOETE, and it is evident in a number of places, most especially perhaps in Work Package 6, with its concentrated ‘locality’ focus. In this report, too, we have endeavoured to emphasise the importance of the contexts of context within which these trajectories and transitions take place. However, the core of the evidence on which the chapter draws is drawn from more or less narrowly and exclusively ‘education’ sources. The experts we interviewed in this work package were almost all more or less directly involved in education. In particular, we heard little from employers, or the world of business and commerce, which appears as a rather flat and homogeneous background to the structures and processes we have been discussing.

### ***What might we have done more on?***

A central issue arising from the chapter that there has not been adequate space to discuss is the relationship between the rapid and radical changes in the economic and political spheres, which have been experienced, in different forms, by all the GOETE countries, and the apparent relative ‘conservatism’ of education systems in their responses to the changing climates they faced (to say

this is in no way necessarily to regret it). It becomes most evident perhaps in the accounts, from many countries, of gaps between national policy and local practice, which in almost every case, as we have seen, struggles to keep pace with attempts at system wide reform, which in many cases seems to be led by the ‘global knowledge economy’ discourse (which, paradoxically, may in some ways be a kind of by-product of PISA, with its emphasis on accountability through assessment). This is a major source of what is in some ways the most significant gap in the project, that between the intentions and objectives of ‘high level’ policy, and the processes through which it relates to practice in school. In one sense this can be seen as emerging from a tension between the discursive and institutional opportunity structures of ‘policy’. It is framed discursively by particular *outcomes* oriented, but institutionally by essentially *output* oriented practices of schools.

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