

Multicultural Diversity Practices in European Schools and Attunement between School Administrators and Teachers: A Comparative European Perspective

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Teaching ethnically and culturally diverse classrooms entails challenges for European school systems, especially in light of the significant incidence of students of immigrant origin. Educators who are unprepared to teach diverse classrooms hinder educational attainment and success and do not contribute to the integration of migrant-origin students into and through education, ultimately putting at risk the broader cohesion of their societies. For policy-makers and school leaders it is important to have reliable information concerning educators' perceptions, judgments and practices pertaining to multicultural diversity, especially as the number of migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers across the world continues to grow.

This study arises from a secondary analysis of data collected in the 2018 edition of the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) promoted by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). More specifically, and firstly, it focuses on data collected from **school administrators** concerning the implementation, within their (lower secondary) schools, of a set of **multicultural diversity practices**: support for activities or organisations that encourage students' expression of diverse ethnic and cultural identities; organization of multicultural events; teaching students how to deal with ethnic and cultural discrimination; adopting teaching and learning practices that integrate global issues throughout the curriculum. Secondly, the study focuses on **teachers**' perceptions regarding the adoption of the same multicultural diversity practices.

Thirdly, and most significantly, since the TALIS database allows the information provided by principals and teachers to be merged in order to compare the two groups' accounts on a school-by-school basis, the study explores the **attunement** among school administrators and teachers, that is, whether educators working in the same school provide **convergent or conflicting accounts of diversity practices**. Ascertaining the degree of attunement is particularly important, for divergence on this point is potentially detrimental to successful integration.

The study adopts a comparative perspective, in that it examines the above-mentioned topics in a diverse array of European countries: Austria, Belgium, England, France, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden. The overall, unweighted samples comprise over 2,000 school leaders (and therefore as many schools, with at least 125 in each country) and over 34,000 teachers (with at least 1,800 per country). About 90% of schools in these none TALIS participating countries teach students with migrant backgrounds, and in approximately 30% of them immigrant-origin youths comprise over 10% of the student body (with significant inter-country variations). About two-thirds of school administrators claim their schools suffer a shortage, at least to some extent, of teachers with competence in teaching students in multicultural settings. The adoption of diversity practices is widespread, but varies appreciably from country to country and even between specific initiatives.

Efforts will be devoted to identifying factors associated with high/low levels of both diversity practice and attunement, against a backdrop comprising the incidence of students of migratory or refugee background and the presence of multiple cultural and ethnic origins in sampled schools, school leaders' evaluation of the shortage of teachers equipped to teach in multicultural contexts and their perception of teachers' multicultural sensitivity, teachers' self-reported ability to cope with multicultural educational contexts and their need for professional development on this topic.