



Assessment with and for Migration Background Students-Cases from Europe*

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this research as part of an Erasmus+ funded project titled Aiding Culturally Responsive Assessment in Schools (www.acras.eu) is to provide an exploratory analysis of survey responses related to culturally responsive assessment policies, professional development and practices that were administered to school principals in four European countries (Austria, Ireland, Norway and Turkey).

Research Methods: The research method used in this study was a quantitative comparative analysis. A purposeful sampling strategy was adopted based on geographical spread of the participants in Austria, Ireland and Turkey. The survey was also administered to all principals in four out of eighteen Norwegian counties. Descriptive analysis and nonparametric analysis were used.

Findings: There is evidence to suggest that the foundations for culturally responsive assessment practices are beginning to take shape albeit varying degrees of difference in each country. However, the survey results also indicate the need for training and professional development, and this study also implies that not enough emphasis is being placed on culturally responsive assessment despite the rhetoric that espouses interculturalism.

Implications for Research and Practice: The research points the need for upskilling in culturally responsive leadership as well as the development of an overarching culturally responsive assessment framework and toolkit that can be used by policy makers and schools to allay the various interpretations of what it means to satisfy the assessment needs of teachers and students with migrant backgrounds.

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Introduction

Countries throughout Europe have witnessed significant changes in patterns of migration. According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the number of international migrants in the world reached 258 million in 2017; with a 49% increase in migration since 2000 (2017a). Of this total migrant stock, 14 percent are under 20 years of age (2017b). However, given that these figures relate to first-generation migrants (a person born in a country other than the country of residence), the net global migrant population is considerably higher if other migrant categories such as second-generation migrants (native-born with at least one foreign-born parent) and native-born persons with migration backgrounds are considered (Eurostat, 2017). Whereas global patterns of migration have changed where for example, many countries in Europe such as Ireland have become migrant receiving countries, what has remained constant over the last eighty years are the rates of and motives for migration such as increased safety and better living conditions (Borjas, 1995; Castles, Haas & Miller, 2013; Cavalli Sforza & Pievani, 2012; Czaika & Haas, 2014; Geddes & Scholten, 2016). The major differences between migration in this era and the past is that 'human beings are engaged in much faster, more distant, and more frequent migrations than ever before' (Chung & Griffiths, 2018, p.64). Certainly, these fluctuating patterns of migration have resulted in heightened awareness among various national and transnational policy makers such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on how best to sustain and meet the needs of culturally diverse populations; particularly when vital elements for social cohesion such as education are concerned. As stated by OECD (2016a), 'Integration policies, and extra support targeted towards immigrant families and children, can make a significant difference in how immigrant students fare in their host communities' (p.16). Thus far; however, with numerous descriptions of cultural neglect such as the inattention given to linguistic interdependence (Cummins, 1979), the lack of culturally responsive leadership in schools (Brown, McNamara, O'Hara, Hood, Burns & Kurum, 2017), and the supremacy of standardized testing (Brown, McNamara & O'Hara, 2016; Padilla, 2001; Young, McNamara, Brown & O'Hara, 2018,); educational outcomes for migrant children have not always been as uniformly positive compared to that of their native counterparts (Brown, 2007; Griner & Stewart, 2013). The OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) starkly illustrates this point.

Acknowledging that there are varying conceptions of quality and indicators for educational achievement such as access to education, participation, progression, and youth unemployment (Brown et al. 2016; Caspersen, Smeby & Olaf Aamodt, 2017; Scheerens, Luyten & van Ravens, 2011); analysis of PISA test scores (OECD, 2000 – 2017) demonstrates that, in most OECD countries, there have been constant achievement gaps between migrant and non-migrant children in the areas of Reading, Mathematics and Science. Bilgili, Volante & Klinger (2018), in reference to PISA 2015 (OECD, 2016a), also state that the majority of first and second-generation migrant students performed worse than those students without a migrant background. On the

other hand, with reasons for optimism, there is a growing body of research that provides strategies for schools to become, what interchangeably referred to as, 'culturally relevant' (Ford & Kea, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995) and 'culturally responsive' (Gay, 2010); Villegas & Lucas, 2002) learning environments. As stated by Bledsoe and Donaldson (2015): 'the call for cultural responsiveness has reached a deafening crescendo' (p. 7).

Ford and Kea (2009) define culturally responsive classrooms as 'student centered and, by design and default, culture centered. A student-centered classroom does not exist if culture is ignored or disregarded in any way' (p.6). The authors identify five components of culturally responsive classrooms that need to be considered for equitable participation with and for students with a migration background: 'Curriculum' (Banks, 2006; 2008); 'Philosophy' (Ford & Kea, 2009); 'Instruction' (Gay, 2010); 'the Learning Environment' (Rothstein-Fisch & Trumbull, 2008); and 'Assessment' (Hood, 1998). This paper focuses on one core component of cultural responsiveness, often referred to in the literature as culturally responsive assessment (Slee, 2010; Smith-Maddox, 1998).

Researchers argue that adapting and being sensitive to people from different cultures is a critical 21st century skill that every student needs to survive and succeed in the world (Earley & Mosakowski 2004; Harris 2006; Tan, 2004). In education, Brown (2013) among others suggests that it is necessary for schools and external agencies to consider reciprocal methods of assessment and evaluation that take cognizance of cultural variations that exist. Be that as it may, most practicing teachers and those external agencies responsible for curriculum development come from a culture of the majority and have been trained in the majority culture (Gay, 2010); often making implicit assumptions about how to conduct assessment regardless of the cultural variations that exist in schools (Rothstein-Fisch & Trumbull, 2008). Culturally responsive teachers, on the other hand, are aware of cultural and social diversities and embed culturally sensitive approaches in their practices (Ford & Moore, 2013). In other words, being culturally responsive means being respectful of, taking cognizance of, the social and cognitive cultural variations that exist. Culturally responsive assessment can, therefore, be described as assessment that utilizes strategies to acknowledge and respect learners' cultural backgrounds and approaches to learning as they strive for academic success. A review of the literature suggests that there are certain interconnected social, cognitive and affective dimensions that affect the quality and merit of assessment strategies that have the potential to be culturally fair.

1. *Researching the self*. For teachers involved in cultural responsiveness, the process is 'deliberate and self-exploring and requires new thinking and practices' (Hood, Hopson & Frierson, 2015, p.xv). Researching the self requires: knowing one's biases; adapting; assisting and leading (Hofstede, 2009).

2. *Multicultural validity*. Multicultural validity is defined as 'the accuracy and trustworthiness of understandings and actions across simple, intersecting dimensions

of cultural difference' (LaFrance, Kirkhart & Nichols, 2015, p. 57). Multicultural validity addresses five elements of qualitative and quantitative assessment:

- a) Theory (rationales support the inferences and actions based on assessment)
- b) Methodology (design and measurement)
- c) Relationships (among all forms of life including interactions among people)
- d) Experience (congruence with the lived experience of participants)
- e) Consequences (justice of outcomes)

3. *Construct validity*. For students who may be in the process of learning the language of the test instrument, construct validity may be a serious validity concern if the 'linguistic complexity unnecessarily interferes' with the ability to demonstrate their knowledge in the situation where language factors are 'unrelated to the measured construct' such as mathematics (DeBacker, Van Avermaet & Slembrouck, 2016).

4. *Language*. First language is the source of the student's identity, and depth of concepts in a second language occurs via the conceptual knowledge in the first language. Furthermore, 'Conceptual knowledge developed in one language helps to make input in the other language comprehensible' (Cummins, 2000). Also, the development of proficiency in communication skills takes about eighteen months to two years, and the acquisition of academic proficiency requires five to seven years (Hancock, 2017).

5. *Thinking styles*. There are two styles of thinking suggested by Bennett (2009, p.134) that teachers need to be aware of when considering how to embed culturally responsive assessment into practice; Style A (Analytically logical, Abstract, Objective, Dialectic and Doubting) and Style B (Holistic, Metaphorical, Subjective, Integrative, Believing).

These core dimensions for culturally responsive assessment have influenced the increased use of specific methods of assessment that are deemed to have the potential of being culturally fair. In the United States for example, culturally responsive methods of assessment such as peer and creativity assessment are increasingly being used with indigenous youth (Demmert, 2001; Nelson-Barber & Trumball, 2007) and other ethnic minority students (Aceves & Orosco, 2014; Qualls, 1998). However, in Europe, a review of the literature suggests that culturally responsive assessment practices are less prevalent and consequently less discussed. In fact, with rare exceptions (e.g., Mitakidou, Karagianni & Tressou, 2015) very few studies in Europe have examined assessment strategies that teachers use to integrate cultural responsiveness into their student assessments and to compare the relative merit of these strategies. Nor have they looked at the challenges to assessing students with a migration background. To fill the lacuna of research in this area, this paper as part of an Erasmus+ funded project titled Aiding Culturally Responsive Assessment in Schools (ACRAS.eu) provides an exploratory analysis of research that was conducted over a two-year period in four European countries in order to ascertain: (1) the

supports available to schools to enhance their assessment of migrant students; (2) the perceived competence of staff to assess migrant students; and (3) the challenges and methods of assessment used by teachers to assess culturally diverse students. The countries chosen for this study have complementary patterns of migration. The population of Ireland, a country with a strong tradition of emigration, is now made up of approximately 420,000 non-Irish people (Central Statistics office, 2017), a significant rise in non-nationals, given that in 2002, there were approximately 224,000 non-nationals resident in this country (Darmody & Smyth, 2018). Dissonant, albeit similar rates of increased migration have occurred in Turkey. In 2000, Turkey hosted approximately 3,000 refugees and in 2016, this number increased to 3.1 million (UN DESA, 2017b). Similar figures related to the percentage of migrants resident in Austria (15.2 %) and Norway (10.6%) exist (Eurostat, 2017).

The first part of this paper provides a review of the literature on assessment methods that have the potential to be culturally fair together with a review of assessment policies and practices in four countries. Leading on from a description of the research method that was used in the study, a comparative analysis of assessment practices derived from a survey that was administered to secondary school principals in four countries is described. The paper concludes with a discussion of research findings derived from the preceding phases of the study, and suggests how these findings have wider implications for the future development of assessment policies and practices in Europe and elsewhere.

Methods of Assessment that Have the Potential to be Culturally Fair

It has been well documented that limiting the availability of certain methods of assessment such as standardized testing can have unintended consequences on student achievement (Caldas & Bankston, 1997; Stobart, 2008). This is of course not to say that there are no benefits to using standardized tests, but rather, to acknowledge antecedent variables that can affect the overall interpretation of assessment results. Certainly, there are benefits to standardized testing. In some OECD Countries for example, standardized tests are used as tools to ensure that schools and teachers provide a high-quality education to students (Morris, 2011). They can also be used to monitor national progress (Shewbridge, Jang, Matthews & Santiago, 2011) as well as providing a right of entry into tertiary education. Nonetheless, there are also concerns related to the validity of using test results for the assessment of students with a migration background (O'Connor, 1989; Padilla, 2001). Concerns relate to, for example, the linguistic complexity of the test instrument that can negatively affect the overall assessment of students who are in the process of learning the test language (De Backer, Van Avermaet & Slembrouck, 2016). According to Menken (2010), 'testing research is conclusive that a content-area test administered to an ELL [English Language Learner] in English is unlikely to render a true portrait of what the student knows and is able to do because language impacts the results' (p.123). Other factors in parallel with the limitations of standardized tests for all students (e.g. the educational level of attainment of parents) can also affect assessment results. Yet, in addition to the acknowledged limitations of standardized tests; for students with a migration

background, one of the most significant desiderata for attainment in standardized tests relates to that of the family proximity to the language of the classroom (Randen, 2015; Stevenson & Willot, 2007). Indeed, Kim and Zabelina (2015) suggest that because standardized tests are acculturated to the knowledge, values and socially dominant language of instruction, if the same assessments are used, this can result in unfairness towards students with a migration background.

In addressing the issue of fairness, a mounting body of research suggests that fairness in assessment means providing a range of assessment strategies to allow for the assessment of students with a migration background (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Espinosa, 2005). These strategies include the use of multiple methods of assessment to provide additional opportunities for students to demonstrate their learning (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008; Qualls, 1998) as well as using locally validated formative assessments (Tichá & Abery, 2016). Culturally responsive methods of assessment include:

1. *Creativity assessment*. Creativity assessment is defined as 'producing something that is novel and useful' (Kim & Zabelina, 2015, p. 136). Hempel and Sue-Chan (2010) and Kim and Zabelina (2015) recommend that including creativity assessment can address cultural bias. Kim and Zabelina also state 'creativity assessment shows few differences across gender or ethnicity' (p. 136).

2. *Performance-based assessment*. The six characteristic features of performance-based assessment proposed by (Baker, O'Neil & Linn, 1993) are as follows: (a) uses open-ended tasks, (b) focuses on higher order or complex skills, (c) employs context-sensitive strategies, (d) often uses complex problems requiring several types of performance and significant student time, (e) consists of either individual or group performance, (f) may involve a significant degree of student choice (p. 1211)

There are, however, issues to consider with performance-based assessment such as: (a) validity, reliability issues, (b) difficulties in construction, (c) use of resources and time, and (d) the design and purpose of the assessment.

3. *Peer-assessment*. Peer assessment has the potential for assessment that is more learner-centric, flexible, and culturally responsive as these approaches help ethnic groups, including immigrants, to take ownership of their educational progress and assessment, and in a wider sense, involvement and inclusion in society. Products to be assessed can include writing, oral presentations, portfolios, test performance, or other skilled behaviors (Topping, 2009, p.20). However, Reynolds and Trehan (2000) among others caution that the movement towards a more learner-centric mode of assessment brings about its own challenges such as the shift in power relations between students and teachers. Simply to exchange one situation of power relations (tutor-student) with another (student-student) does not of itself guarantee equality. It raises a new set of complex power relations which need to be understood (Reynolds & Trehan, 2000, p.274)

4. *Self-assessment*. Self-Assessment is used as 'a formative, awareness building tool which is grounded in 'learning to learn' and student reflective practice' (Taras, 2001, p.606). As with peer assessment, there are many benefits of facilitating self-assessment

practices such as increased confidence (Topping, 2009) and a better understanding of standards required (Hanrahan & Isaacs, 2001). However, challenges towards the implementation of self-assessment need to be considered. These challenges include lack of confidence by students to be objective in their assessments (Cheng & Warren, 1997) as well other challenges such as a lack of training required for the assessment task (Wood & Kurzel, 2008).

Nonetheless, etc perspectives on strategies of assessment that have the potential to be culturally fair can act as a powerful catalyst for classroom practice. It must also be noted that akin to all aspects of education; while schools and teachers have a responsibility for the implementation of culturally responsive assessment, they are also, as with any aspect of education, dependent on the vagaries of policies and supports that allow for the flourishing of such practices. To concur with Schapiro (2009), there is a need to ask if education policies and concomitant classroom practices do in fact 'improve the students' access to quality education, stimulate equitable participation in schooling, and lead to learning outcomes at a par with native peers' (p.33). It is this issue of assessment policies and practices in the case study countries that forms the next part of the paper.

Assessment Policies and Practice in four European Countries

In this section, summary descriptions of assessment policies and practices together with strategies to support the assessment of migrant students in each of the countries under investigation are described.

Assessment policies and practice in Austrian secondary schools: Entry to secondary education in Austria is based on the assessment of students at primary school level. The grades obtained at the end of primary school and at lower secondary school (8th year) are used to assign students to lower secondary school types and also to different types of upper secondary education or vocational training, respectively. Based on these assessments, students enter either a four-year Neue Mittelschule (NMS; i.e. lower 'practical' secondary school) or an eight-year Gymnasium (AHS; a traditional 'academic' secondary school). To complete the nine years of compulsory education, NMS-graduates can also attend a one-year Polytechnische Schule which prepares students for vocational training starting at grade 10. Whilst assessment in Austrian secondary schools is mainly teacher-led where the performance of students is continuously assessed throughout the school year using various instruments (e.g. tests, oral participation, homework, schoolwork, etc.). At the end of upper secondary level, students are assessed via a Leaving Certificate examination referred to as "Matura" which licenses for entry to tertiary education based on their performance in these examinations. Until recently, "Matura" examinations were set by individual schools. However, for increased transparency within the Austrian education system, from 2015 (2016 in upper vocational schools) a new scheme is in place which includes centrally set written examinations, regionally moderated oral examinations, and a 'research paper' written by individual students.

Extensive strategies and supports to enhance assessment with and for migrant students exist in the Austrian education system. At a policy level, intercultural learning is an 'educational principle' in Austrian schools. However, according to Fillitz (2002), many teachers do not consider it important or do not know how to put it into practice. The Ministry of Education have also set up The Federal Center for Interculturality, Migration and Multilinguality (BIMM, located at the University of Education Graz). This center provides relevant material and publications, organizes conferences and sustains networks among relevant actors of all Austrian teacher education institutions. The Austrian Center for Language Competences also develops materials and offers courses for teachers in the field of languages as well as strategies for whole-school development in the context of linguistic diversity. In the last number of years, the Federal Ministry has also begun the process of providing professional development workshops and courses for the purpose of having at least one competent teacher with responsibility for the further development of language-sensitive subject-teaching.

At a school level, students with first languages other than German are exempted from assessment for twelve months, and if necessary up to 24 months maximum. A language course or a language starting group is also available to students who have just started to learn German. For those students who are resident in the country for between 12 - 24 months, further courses in German as a second language are available for up to 5-6 hours per week. However, these supports in all cases are dependent on the organizational feasibility of the school management. Teaching in migrant student's first language is also offered as an optional subject with classes limited to a maximum of five students.

Assessment policies and practice in Irish Secondary schools. The first phase of secondary education in Ireland consists of three years of what is referred to as the junior cycle. This is followed by an optional transition year and two years of senior cycle. At both junior and senior cycle level, students are awarded national certificates which are equivalent to levels 2 and 3 of the European Qualifications Framework. Certificates are awarded based on national examinations that are set and administered by the State Examinations Commission. Assessment at junior and senior cycle level is undergoing reform. Derived from the OECD's definition and selection of key competencies, i.e. 'Use tools interactively (e.g. language, technology), Interact in heterogeneous groups, Act autonomously' (Rychen & Salganik 2003, p.5); the new junior cycle curriculum places a significant emphasis on key skills for the world of work (National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), 2009). Within this assortment of competencies, the new junior cycle emphasizes the centrality of assessment for learning (Poole, Brown, McNamara, O'Hara, O'Brien & Burns, 2018), and from 2022 it will include two classroom-based assessments in all subjects which will be reported on separately from the results of the state examinations. Proposals for reform of the Leaving Certificate have also been suggested where a greater emphasis is also being placed on key skills and assessment for learning (Burns, Devitt, McNamara, O'Hara & Brown, 2018; NCCA, 2005). However, given the initial resistance to junior cycle reform in Ireland (Brown, McNamara & O'Hara, 2016), that is teachers devising and grading student

assessments, reform efforts at this level have been delayed for the purpose of system level acceptance of new junior cycle assessment arrangements. Finally, as a unique situation to Ireland, almost all students in Ireland sit what is referred to as a Mock Junior and Leaving Certificate examination in rehearsal and preparation for the actual certificate examinations that occur at the end of each cycle. After each cycle is complete, almost all secondary schools in Ireland evaluate, as a measure of quality, the collective attainment for each state examination subject in comparison to the national average subject score for all secondary schools (Brown, McNamara, O'Hara & O'Brien, 2017).

At a policy level, the aspiration to respect diversity has been enshrined in Irish educational legislation since 1998 (Government of Ireland, 1998). The NCCA has also published guidelines for schools on intercultural education. These guidelines acknowledge the ways that cultural or language factors can give rise to errors in assessment and contained within, and recommendations are made on how to minimise potential errors for assessment (NCCA, 2006). In 2010, the Department of Education and Skills also published a strategy for intercultural education (DES, 2010). Both of these publications were prompted by the sudden migrant flow in Ireland that commenced in the late 1990s. At a school level, the main targeted support mechanism for students with a migration background is the provision of extra support for students who are learning English as an additional language (EAL). More recently, allocation of EAL supports have been subsumed with learning supports (for students with special educational needs) (DES, 2012).

Assessment policies and practice in Norwegian schools. In Norway, compulsory education comprises primary (grades 1 - 7) and lower secondary education (grades 8 - 10). Compulsory education is inclusive, without streaming or tracking. Teaching should be adapted to the individual student (Lovdata, 2016). In total, 97% of the students attend public schools (NDET, 2017), mostly the neighborhood schools. Education from the primary to the post-secondary level are mainly funded (94%) at the local level (OECD, 2016b). Although schools are locally funded, and Norway has a decentralized education system, there is still a national curriculum and an education act regulating school practices. As such, national guidelines for assessment are included in the Education Act (Lovdata, 2016).

At a policy level, the Norwegian education system is based on assessment for learning that has now become a national policy. In addition, assessment of learning in the form of grading is part of the mandatory assessment practices at the secondary level. Grades range from 1-6, with 6 as the highest degree. The same grading system is used throughout secondary education (Lovdata, 2016). Students are mainly graded by their subject teacher with two exceptions; 1) national tests which are computer based with automated scoring and 2) exams which are scored and graded by independent external scorers. Students apply for further schooling (upper secondary level and tertiary level education) mainly based on teachers' grading, although the outcome of national exams are included on school leaving certificates and averaged with teacher grades. Lower secondary students take one written and one oral exam.

At a school level, assessment for learning is the main strategy to support assessment with migrant students. Specially adapted Norwegian instruction for students with a migration background in core areas of the curriculum such as literacy and numeracy are also provided. Students with special needs also receive special education or adapted education within the local school.

Assessment policies and practice in Turkish secondary schools. Whilst assessment in Turkey is teacher-led, national examinations exist in primary (middle) education, at grade 8. This examination determines admission into the type of secondary school and are administered by the Ministry of National Education (MoNE). According to the results obtained in these examinations, students are placed in science high schools, social science high schools, project schools, and vocational or technical Anatolian high schools. Schools other than the ones that take the students who have completed MoNE examinations, take students without examination (MoNE, 2018). At secondary level, the MoNE also assesses students via two national examinations. Furthermore, if students wish to enter a university, there is another national examination referred to as the university entrance examination that is administered by the Assessment, Selection and Placement Centre, a unit of the ministry of Education (OSYM). At a policy level, given the sudden influx of refugees into Turkey, almost all resources to support migrant students are allocated to those students with refugee status. Training and course activities are available to all refugee children living in asylum centers and attending public schools. In these schools, there are approximately 12,759 teachers, of which 1024 are citizens of the Republic of Turkey, and 11,735 are Syrians (AFAD, 2016).

Method

Research Design

The research method used in this study was a quantitative comparative analysis of assessment strategies and challenges to assess students with a migration background in the countries under investigation.

Research Sample

A purposeful sampling strategy was used in this study based on geographical spread of the participants in Austria (n = 100), Ireland (n = 120) and Turkey (n = 120). The survey was also administered to all principals in four out of eighteen Norwegian counties with a total of 29 responses. In this regard, given the low response rate in the Norwegian sample, caution is advised when interpretations are made in relation to analyses of Norwegian data.

Research Instruments and Procedures

All questionnaire responses received a score for bi-polar response alternatives. This score did not apply to questions that provided nominal data asking for yes/no responses. The questionnaire was also translated into the official language of each country. The validity of the translations was also checked by subject field experts in each country.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis was used to examine the mean and standard deviation of the responses given in each country. Non-parametric analysis of variance was used to see if there was any significant difference between countries. Kruskal Wallis analysis was used since the number of groups was not equal and there were under 30 participants in the groups. For all Kruskal-Wallis ANOVA tests, α was set at 0.05. When the variance between the groups was significant, Mann Whitney U test was performed for paired comparisons. Bonferroni correction was made to mitigate Type-1 errors in Mann Whitney U tests (Tabachnik & Fidel, 2007). Bonferroni correction was determined with p (significance level) / k (number of groups), and since the number of variables was four, the significance level was found to be .0125. The reliability of the questionnaire was checked using Cronbach's alpha coefficient on all scaled items that had an ordinal measurement scale. All item subscales had a Cronbach's alpha coefficient greater than 0.7 and, in this regard, would be considered statistically reliable.

Results

This part of the paper provides an analysis of questionnaire responses and is divided into four sections: (1) School and student profile characteristics; (2) Supports to enhance teacher's assessment of migrant students; (3) Strategies used by schools to assess students with a migration background; and (4) challenges for the assessment of students with a migration background.

School and Student Profile Characteristics

School and student profile characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1*Student Profile Characteristics*

Variables	Answer Choices	Austria		Ireland		Turkey		Norway		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Student Population/ School size	30-500	99	99.0	4	35.8	57	47.5	25	86.2	224	60.7
	501-1000			7	63.3	42	35.0	4	13.8	122	33.1
	1001 - 1500			1	.8	15	12.5			16	4.3
	1501 - 2500					6	5.0			6	1.6
	Missing Value	1	1.0							1	.3
% of student population with migration backgrounds and whose language in most cases is different from that of the language of the classroom	None	10	10.0	2	1.7	11	9.2	3	10.3	26	7.0
	1% to 20%	65	65.0	1	92.5	10	85.8	21	72.4	300	81.3
migration backgrounds and whose language in most cases is different from that of the language of the classroom	21% to 40%	11	11.0	4	3.3	3	2.5	4	13.8	22	6.0
	41% to 60%	5	5.0	1	.8	1	.8	1	3.4	8	2.2
migration backgrounds and whose language in most cases is different from that of the language of the classroom	61% to 80%	6	6.0	1	.8					7	1.9
	More than 80%	3	3.0	1	.8	2	1.7			6	1.6

Regarding student profile characteristics, more than 81% of schools had a migrant population of between 1% and 20% (Table 1). Table 2 shows the responses of participating schools to whether any policy was followed regarding the evaluation of the academic achievement of migrant students.

Table 2*Policy on Assessment for Migrant Student*

Variables	Answer Choices	Austria		Ireland		Turkey		Norway		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Policy on assessment for migrant student	Yes	15	15.0	7	5.8	27	22.5	10	34.5	59	16.0
	No	76	76.0	113	94.2	93	77.5	19	65.5	301	81.6

In Table 2, somewhat surprisingly, given the percentage of schools who had students with a migrant background, more than 80% of schools in all countries did not have a policy on assessment of students with a migration background.

Supports to Enhance Teacher's Assessment of Migrant Students

The responses given by participants related to professional development opportunities that are available for staff at their school to help them reflect on their own cultural backgrounds, experiences, and expectations of students with migrant backgrounds are provided in Table 3.

Table 3

Professional Development Opportunities – Integration of culturally relevant materials into assessment practices

Item	Answer Choices	Austria		Ireland		Turkey		Norway		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Are professional development opportunities available for staff in your school to enhance their skill in integrating culturally relevant materials into assessment practices?	Yes	47	47.0	22	18.3	36	30.0	17	58.6	122	33.1
	No	37	37.0	98	81.7	84	70.0	12	41.4	231	62.6
	Missing Value	16	16.0							16	4.3

As can be seen from Table 3, when Principals were asked if professional development opportunities were available for staff to enhance their skills towards the integration of culturally relevant materials into assessment practices, almost 59% of respondents in Norway and 47% of respondents in Austria expressed that professional development opportunities were available. However, these values were considerably lower for Turkey (30%) and Ireland (18%).

The responses given by participants related to professional development opportunities available to staff that help them reflect on their own cultural backgrounds, experiences, and expectations of students are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Professional Development Opportunities - Experiences, and Expectations of Students with a Migration Background

Item	Answer Choices	Austria		Ireland		Turkey		Norway		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Are professional development opportunities available for staff at your school to help them reflect on their own cultural backgrounds, experiences, and expectations of students with migrant backgrounds?	Yes	40	40.0	16	13.3	76	63.3	9	31	141	38.2
	No	38	38.0	104	86.7	44	36.7	19	65.6	205	55.6
	Missing Value	22	22.0					1	3.4	23	6.2

culturally diverse students and their parents or guardians) as being the least adequate training provided. In the case of Ireland and Turkey, principals perceived item d (assess students with migrant backgrounds) as being the least adequate training provided. Kruskal Wallis analysis results are presented related to the extent to which teachers have adequate training to diagnose, support, communicate and assess students with migration backgrounds in Table 6.

Table 6

Kruskall Wallis Analysis Results – The Extent to Which Teachers Have Adequate Training to Diagnose, Support, Communicate and Assess Students with Migration Backgrounds

Item	Country	n	Mean Rank	s	χ^2	P	Difference U
(a) diagnosing the diverse needs of students	1. Austria	86	163.45	3	49.752	,000	1-3
	2. Ireland	120	137.95				2-3
	3. Turkey	120	223.34				2-4
	4. Norway	29	199.26				
(b) support individual student's learning and assessment needs	1. Austria	86	173.56	3	24.152	,000	2-3
	2. Ireland	120	148.07				2-4
	3. Turkey	120	200.23				
	4. Norway	29	223.02				
(c) communicate with culturally diverse students and their parents or guardians	1. Austria	86	183.17	3	97.85	,000	1-3
	2. Ireland	120	112.19				1-2
	3. Turkey	120	236.54				2-3
	4. Norway	29	192.76				2-4
(d) assess students with migrant backgrounds	1. Austria	86	202.14	3	100.11	,000	1-2
	2. Ireland	120	105.88				2-3
	3. Turkey	120	223.58				2-4
	4. Norway	28	211.29				

In Table 6, analysis of variance using the Kruskal Wallis test revealed a significant difference for all items a [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 49.752$; $p < .05$], b [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 24.152$; $p < .05$], c [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 97.85$; $p < .05$] and d [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 100.11$; $p < .05$]. Further analysis using the Mann Whitney U test to find between groups variance also revealed a significant difference between groups for all items. For item a, principals in Austria are of the view that they have less opportunities to diagnosing the diverse needs of students compared to Turkey and principals in Ireland are of the view that have less opportunities to diagnosing the diverse needs of students compared to Turkey and Norway. For item b, principals from Ireland thought that there was less training provided to diagnose, support, communicate and assess students with migration backgrounds when compared to Turkey and Norway. For item c, principals from Ireland thought that there was less training provided to diagnose, support, communicate and assess students with migration backgrounds when compared to Austria, Turkey, and Norway. Also, principals from Austria thought that there was less training provided to diagnose, support, communicate and assess students with migration backgrounds when compared to Turkey. For item d, principals thought that there was less training in Ireland compared to Austria, Turkey, and Norway.

Strategies Used by Schools to Assess Students with a Migration Background

Principals' views on the extent to which assessment practices are used in schools is provided in Table 7.

Table 7

Assessment Practices That are Used in Schools

Item	Austria			Ireland			Turkey			Norway						
	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s				
(a) This school assesses students' intellectual and academic strengths and weaknesses, and development needs	83	2.93	.89	4	120	3.62	.63	1	120	2.82	1.03	2	29	3.72	.53	1
(b) Teachers in this school use a range of assessment strategies that provide students with migrant backgrounds with opportunities to demonstrate their mastery and skills	82	3.12	.78	2	120	3.22	.69	2	120	2.78	1.00	3	29	3.45	.63	2
(c) Teachers in this school utilise culturally appropriate assessment tools for assessing migrant students	83	2.41	.92	7	120	2.35	.68	7	120	2.58	1.05	7	29	2.21	.77	7
(d) Teachers in this school use a wide range of assessment tools (for example, portfolio, oral presentations, mapping tests, project work) for assessment of students with migrant backgrounds	83	3.34	.72	1	120	3.02	.71	3	120	2.61	1.02	6	29	3.38	.56	3

Table 7 Continue

Item	Austria			Ireland			Turkey			Norway						
	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s				
(e)Staff in this school frequently collaborate to implement the best practices for assessment of students with migrant backgrounds	83	2.88	.90	5	120	2.65	.67	5	120	2.64	1.04	5	27	2.92	.78	4
(f)Teachers utilize information from several sources, including families, in assessing students' achievements	84	2.62	.90	6	120	2.65	.69	5	120	2.85	.97	1	29	2.52	.99	6
(g)Assessment data for students with migrant backgrounds is consistently used to inform teaching/learning	84	2.94	.87	3	120	2.76	.64	4	120	2.75	.99	4	28	2.64	.95	5
	3.37			3.38			3.17			3.47						

As can be seen from Table 7, in the case of Austria, item d (Teachers in this school use a wide range of assessment tools (for example, portfolio, oral presentations, mapping tests, project work for assessment of students from migrant backgrounds) was applied the most. In the case of Ireland and Norway, item a (This school assesses students' intellectual and academic strengths and weaknesses, and development needs) was applied the most. For Turkey, item f (teachers utilize information from several sources, including families, in assessing students' achievements) was applied the most. However, while principals in all four countries to a large extent were of the view that their schools assessed students' intellectual and academic strengths and weaknesses, and development needs; and teachers used a range of assessment strategies that provided students with migrant backgrounds with opportunities to demonstrate their mastery and skills; differences were found in the extent to which these practices occurred.

On the other hand, and worryingly in terms of the migration population of students in all countries, the least used assessment item for all countries was item c (Teachers in this school utilise culturally appropriate assessment tools for assessing migrant students). In this regard, when comparing results derived from all items, one could infer that, whilst assessment strategies occurred in schools, they were applied to the general population of the school with limited differentiation in terms of culturally responsive assessment practices.

Kruskall Wallis analysis results were presented related to levels of implementation of assessment practices in schools for migrant students in Table 8.

Table 8

Kruskall Wallis Analysis Results Related to Assessment Practices Used in Schools

		n	Mean Rank	s	χ^2	P	Difference U
(a) This school assesses students' intellectual and academic strengths and weaknesses, and development needs	1. Austria	83	143.96	3	67,36	,000	1-2
	2. Ireland	120	222.27				1-4
	3. Turkey	120	139.44				3-2
	4. Norway	29	233.57				3-4
(b) Teachers in this school use a range of assessment strategies that provide students with migrant backgrounds with opportunities to demonstrate their mastery and skills	1. Austria	82	179.80	3	18,027	,000	3-2
	2. Ireland	120	190.02				3-4
	3. Turkey	120	149.17				
	4. Norway	29	218.26				
(c) Teachers in this school utilise culturally appropriate assessment tools for assessing migrant students	1. Austria	83	175.80	3	6,617	,085	
	2. Ireland	120	166.25				
	3. Turkey	120	192.97				
	4. Norway	29	152.78				
(d) Teachers in this school use a wide range of assessment tools (for example, portfolio, oral presentations, mapping tests, project work) for assessment of students with migrant backgrounds	1. Austria	83	214.98	3	36,816	,000	1-2
	2. Ireland	120	176.72				1-3
	3. Turkey	120	139.75				2-3
	4. Norway	29	217.53				4-3
(e) Staff in this school frequently collaborate to implement best practices for assessment of students with migrant backgrounds	1. Austria	83	193.95	3	6,298	,098	
	2. Ireland	120	163.79				
	3. Turkey	120	170.35				
	4. Norway	27	193.74				
(f) Teachers utilize information from several sources, including families, in assessing students' achievements	1. Austria	84	170.21	3	6,299	,098	
	2. Ireland	120	167.96				
	3. Turkey	120	194.62				
	4. Norway	29	161.14				
(g) Assessment data for students with migrant backgrounds is consistently used to inform teaching/learning	1. Austria	84	193.24	3	4,069	,254	
	2. Ireland	120	169.84				
	3. Turkey	120	175.38				
	4. Norway	28	159.59				

Analysis of variance using the Kruskal Wallis test further revealed that there was a significant difference between the principals' views for items a [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 67.36$; $p < .05$], b [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 18.027$; $p < .05$] and d [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 36.817$; $p < .05$]. Further analysis of variance using the Mann Whitney U test to find between groups variance revealed significant differences for item a, with this item reflecting principals' views less in Austria and Turkey compared to Ireland and Norway. For item b, principals had fewer opinions in Turkey compared to Ireland and Norway. Finally, in terms of culturally appropriate assessment methods, there was a significant difference for item d with this item reflecting fewer opinions of principals in Turkey compared to principals in the other countries and in Ireland, compared to Austria. Principals' views on teachers' use of assessment techniques that have the potential to be culturally fair are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Principals' Views on Teachers' Use of Assessment Techniques That Have the Potential to Be Culturally Fair

Item	Austria			Ireland			Turkey			Norway						
	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s				
(a)Self-Assessment	84	3.13	.72	4	120	3.35	.56	3	120	2.80	1.00	4	28	3.35	.67	3
(b)Peer assessment	84	2.32	.85	3	120	3.28	.56	5	120	2.76	1.00	5	29	3.06	.75	5
(c) Portfolios	83	3.12	.90	5	120	2.91	.75	7	120	2.57	1.03	8	29	2.48	.87	10
(d)Students write assessment items	83	2.44	.81	8	120	2.95	.67	6	120	2.40	1.06	9	29	2.51	.57	9
(e)Students writing assessment criteria	83	1.09	8.7	10	120	2.68	.66	9	120	2.21	1.07	10	29	2.82	.71	7
(f)Oral assessment	83	2.48	8.8	7	120	3.58	.60	1	120	3.04	1.02	1	29	3.58	.50	2
(g)Oral presentations	81	3.55	.59	1	120	3.34	.64	4	120	2.84	1.05	2	29	3.62	.49	1
(h) Project work	83	3.38	.71	2	120	3.51	.59	2	120	2.82	1.03	3	29	3.10	.55	4
(i)Artistic/Dramatical performances	83	2.54	.97	6	120	2.45	.79	10	120	2.69	1.01	6.5	29	3.00	.53	6
(j)Designing and developing Individualised Learning Plans	83	2.32	.95	9	120	2.84	.72	8	120	2.69	1.03	6.5	29	2.62	.94	8
	2.64			3.09			2.68			3.01						

When principals views on teachers' use of assessment techniques that have the potential to be culturally fair are examined (Table 9); in the case of Austria and Norway, the most used assessment technique was item g (oral presentations). In the case of Ireland and Turkey, the most frequently used assessment technique was item f (oral assessment). On the other hand, the least used assessment item in Austria and Turkey was item e (students writing assessment items). In the case of Ireland, the least used assessment item was item i (artistic/dramatical performances). Finally, in the case of Norway, the least used assessment item was item c (Portfolios).

Kruskall Wallis analysis results related to principals' views on teachers' use of assessment techniques that have the potential to be culturally fair are presented Table 10.

Table 10

Kruskall Wallis Analysis – Principals' Views on Teachers' Use of Assessment Techniques That Have the Potential to Be Culturally Fair

Item	n	Mean Rank	s	χ^2	P	Difference U	
(a) Self Assessment	1. Austria	84	174.57	3	21.64	.000	2-3
	2. Ireland	120	200.68				
	3. Turkey	120	147.55				
	4. Norway	28	202.73				
(b) Peer assessment	1. Austria	84	119.18	3	59.18	.000	1-2 1-3 1-4 2-3
	2. Ireland	120	220.75				
	3. Turkey	120	168.92				
	4. Norway	29	196.86				
(c) Portfolios	1. Austria	83	211.03	3	21.38	.000	1-3 1-4
	2. Ireland	120	183.16				
	3. Turkey	120	154.67				
	4. Norway	29	140.43				
(d) Students write assessment items	1. Austria	83	156.66	3	25.64	.000	1-2 2-3 2-4
	2. Ireland	120	212.25				
	3. Turkey	120	158.05				
	4. Norway	29	161.71				
(e) Students writing assessment criteria	1. Austria	83	139.34	3	34.66	.000	1-2 1-4 2-3 3-4
	2. Ireland	120	207.13				
	3. Turkey	120	160.07				
	4. Norway	29	224.09				
(f) Oral assessment	1. Austria	83	178.98	3	19.94	.000	2-3
	2. Ireland	120	198.79				
	3. Turkey	120	148.08				
	4. Norway	29	194.78				
(g) Oral presentations	1. Austria	81	208.86	3	34.36	.000	1-3 2-3 3-4
	2. Ireland	120	179.62				
	3. Turkey	120	139.20				
	4. Norway	29	215.48				
(h) Project work	1. Austria	83	193.70	3	35.94	.000	1-3 2-3 2-4
	2. Ireland	120	207.21				
	3. Turkey	120	140.31				
	4. Norway	29	149.97				
(i) Artistic/Dramatical performances	1. Austria	83	170.66	3	12.52	.006	2-4
	2. Ireland	120	158.00				
	3. Turkey	120	188.47				
	4. Norway	29	220.26				
(j) Designing and developing Individualised Learning Plans	1. Austria	83	144.92	3	13.15	.004	1-2 1-3
	2. Ireland	120	193.49				
	3. Turkey	120	182.63				
	4. Norway	29	171.21				

In Table 10, analysis of variance using the Kruskal Wallis test revealed a significant difference for all items a [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 21.64$; $p < .05$], b [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 59.18$; $p < .05$], c [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 21.38$; $p < .05$], d [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 25.64$; $p < .05$], e [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 34.66$; $p < .05$], f [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 19.94$; $p < .05$], g [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 34.36$; $p < .05$], h [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 35.94$; $p < .05$], i [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 12.52$; $p < .05$] and j [$\chi^2_{(3)} = 13.15$; $p < .05$]. Further analysis using the Mann Whitney U test to find between groups variance also revealed significant differences between groups for all items. For item a (Self-Assessment), there

was a significant difference for this item reflecting teachers' views more in Ireland compared to Turkey (U=5059.500, p<0.0125). There was also a significant difference for item b (Peer Assessment) which was used less in Austria compared to all countries (Ireland (U=2038.500, p<0.0125), Turkey (U=3739.500, p<0.0125), and Norway (U=663.00, p<0.0125)).

Regarding item c, this item was used more frequently in Austria than in Turkey (U=3486.00, p<0.0125) and Norway (U=721.00, p<0.0125). For item d, this item was used more frequently in Ireland compared to all other countries (Austria (U=3320.500, p<0.0125), Turkey (U=5143.00, p<0.0125), and Norway (U=1166.500, p<0.0125)). In the case of item e, this item was used less frequently in Austria compared to Ireland (U=2928.00, p<0.0125) and Norway (U=617.500, p<0.0125). For item f, this item was used less frequently in Turkey compared to Ireland (U=5166.500, p<0.0125). There was also a significant difference for item g with this item being used less frequently in Turkey compared to all other countries (Austria (U=2999.500, p<0.0125), Ireland (U=5433.00, p<0.0125), and Norway (U=1011.00, p<0.0125)). In the case of item h, this item was used less frequently in Turkey compared to Austria (U=3490.00, p<0.0125) and Ireland (U=4516.00, p<0.0125), and less frequently in Norway than in Ireland (U=1109.00, p<0.0125). There was also a significant difference for item i, with this item being used more frequently in Norway than in Ireland (U=1041.00, p<0.0125). Finally, item j was used less frequently in Austria than in Ireland (U=3550.00, p<0.0125) and Turkey (U=3971.00, p<0.0125).

Challenges for the Assessment of Students with a Migration Background

The answers given by the principals in terms of how fairly and sensitively the students with culturally and linguistically different backgrounds were assessed in the classroom were given in Table 11.

Table 11

Fairness and Sensitivity of Classroom Assessment

Item	Austria			Ireland			Turkey			Norway		
	n	\bar{x}	S	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s	n	\bar{x}	s
To what extent is classroom assessment in your school conducted with fairness and sensitivity towards students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?	82	3.93	.83	120	3.26	.87	120	3.06	1.17	28	3.17	1.02

Finally, table 12 shows that, the majority of principals from Turkey (90%), Norway (83%), Ireland (74%), and Austria (57%) raised concerns about the extent to which high stakes tests were culturally inclusive of students with migrant backgrounds.

Table 12*Central Examinations*

Item	Answer Choices	Austria		Ireland		Turkey		Norway		Total	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Is it the observation of your school that high stakes tests have been designed to be inclusive of students with migrant backgrounds and have been standardized on populations of students similar to your students?	Yes	25	25,0	31	25,8	12	10,0	4	13,8	72	19,5
	No	57	57,0	89	74,2	108	90,0	24	82,8	278	75,3
	Missing Value	18	18,0					1	3,4	19	5,1

Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendations

With significant changes in migration patterns throughout Europe and elsewhere, coupled with the central importance of providing equitable education opportunities to cater for the workforce needs of knowledge-based economies; governments have, in response, attempted to put in place mechanisms and supports to cater for the varying educational needs of students such as those students with a migration backgrounds. Embedded through acts of legislation and various curriculum specifications, there has also been a significant trend towards the promotion of diversity in schools together with a range of complementary assessment for learning strategies, that not only judges but also supports students' learning. A review of the literature suggests that these assessments for learning strategies also have the potential to be culturally fair.

However, against a background of different systems of assessment and accreditation, overall findings from this research suggests that there is a lack of policy at a school level for the assessment of students with migration backgrounds (Table 2). Certainly, it would be reasonable to suggest that many schools do not see the need for a specific school policy on the assessment of students with migrant backgrounds given that, parity of equity to achieve desired learning outcomes as well as respect for diversity is already enshrined in government mandated policy and practice.

It is also evident that, while an appreciation for cultural diversity exists in theory, this study also found that supports for cultural diversity were not necessarily translated into school practice. Except for Norway, the majority of principals in the other three countries thought that professional development opportunities were not readily available for staff to enhance their skill in integrating culturally relevant materials into assessment practices (Table 3). Furthermore, there also appeared to be a belief among a significant number of principals in all countries that the training provided to teachers was not adequate to allow teachers in their schools to diagnose, support, communicate and assess students with migrant backgrounds (Tables 5 and 6). As such, there is a need to evaluate the scope of culturally responsive professional development opportunities available to schools. There is also a need to ascertain the extent to which curriculum specifications at initial teacher education level do in fact place any emphasis on strategies to assess students with migrant backgrounds.

Additionally, whilst principals thought that a range of culturally responsive assessment strategies were used by teachers, there did not appear to be a clearly defined distinction between assessment strategies and tools that were used for students with migration backgrounds and the general population of students in each of the countries. This was apparent when one examined the limited extent to which teachers utilised culturally appropriate assessment tools for assessing migrant students (Tables 6 and 7) and the significant extent to which teachers used assessment techniques that had the potential to be culturally fair such as self and oral assessment (Tables 9 and 10). It is no surprise therefore that, with the limited culturally responsive training provided to schools, coupled with the application of various assessment techniques to the entire student population, the majority of principals thought that due to the frequent use of assessment for learning techniques, their schools conducted classroom assessment with fairness and sensitivity towards culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Table 11). Finally, with cause for concern, the majority of principals were also of the view that high stakes tests had not been designed to be inclusive of students with migrant backgrounds and had not been standardized on populations of students similar to their students.

In conclusion, from a review of policy documents and curriculum specifications in each country, there is evidence to suggest that the foundations for culturally responsive assessment practices are beginning to take shape albeit varying degrees of difference in each country. The survey results also indicate the need for training and professional development and implies that not enough emphasis is being placed on culturally responsive assessment despite the rhetoric that espouses interculturalism. There are undoubtedly many reasons for this that requires further investigation such as the belief that because various assessment for learning techniques are becoming a common feature of classroom practice, assessment needs of culturally diverse students are being met. The research also points to the need for upskilling in culturally responsive leadership, and as a starting point, the development of an overarching culturally responsive assessment framework and toolkit that can be used by policy

makers and schools in order to allay the various interpretations of what it means to satisfy the assessment needs of teachers and students with migration backgrounds.

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