comparative papers

edumigrom

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Comparative Report on Education

ABOUT EDUMIGROM
Ethnic Differences in Education and Diverging Prospects for Urban Youth in an Enlarged Europe is a collaborative research project that aims to study how ethnic differences in education contribute to the diverging prospects of minority ethnic youth and their peers in urban settings. Through applying a cross-national comparative perspective, the project explores the overt and covert mechanisms in socio-economic, political, cultural, and gender relations that make ethnicity a substantive component of inequalities in social status and power. The project involves nine countries from old and new member states of the European Union: the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. EDUMIGROM began in March 2008 and will run through February 2011. The project is coordinated by the Center for Policy Studies at Central European University.

ABOUT THE PAPER
The first research phase of EDUMIGROM focused on background studies on education and ethnic relations in the domestic contexts of the project's target countries. During this phase, research teams gathered and processed macro-level data and information with three adjacent goals in mind: to supply the 16 comprehensive country studies on education and ethnic relations; to inform cross-country comparisons on minority ethnic youth in education; to provide ample information for the multi-level selection of samples for surveys, community and school case studies.
The second research phase of EDUMIGROM, by applying a cross-country comparative perspective, focused on exploring similarities and differences among the project's target countries in three broad topical areas: inter-ethnic relations, the educational situation of minority ethnic youth, and educational policies attaining inclusion. The three closely related comparative studies rely on the outcome of the 16 background reports that discuss these issues in the domestic contexts. Taking into account the decisive influence of the diverse historical legacies of inter-ethnic relations and the potentials and limitations that the prevailing welfare state arrangements put on shaping these relations, these comparative studies introduce meaningful variations in the situation and opportunities of minority ethnic youth within and beyond education. By putting the notion of citizenship into their focus, the reports address general issues of 'minoritisation' that affect indigenous Roma in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and second-generational migrants in Western Europe in a similar way, and bring up the differential clusters of responses that the project's target countries give to the surfacing challenges. On the basis of these analyses, the studies also draw out important implications with relevance to policies in the areas of minority rights, distributional justice, educational arrangements, and the broader perspectives of ascertaining equal opportunities for all. The publication of the three comparative studies is intended to provide valuable comparative knowledge and stimulate inter-regional and international discussions on issues related to the socio-political and economic situation, education, and integration of minority ethnic youth in Europe.

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Table of Contents

Introduction

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The purpose of this Education Report is to provide an international comparative analysis of the themes and issues examined in the eight Background Reports on Education produced by EDUMIGROM research teams in October 2008. This report is the outcome of a year-long work of the EDUMIGROM collective. As part of our research project design, each country team compiled a report on the educational system of their country. Included in these country reports was a focus on the situation and opportunities of the minority ethnic youth groups represented in each country setting. The present report relies on the information and analyses presented in these Background Reports on Education.[1] On the one hand, the key aim of this report is to analyze the structure of inequalities in education arising from inter-ethnic, socioeconomic and gender differences. On the other hand, it is also aimed at understanding the significance of ethnicity in producing, and reproducing, social inequalities in education. While in a global knowledge society, education is perceived to be a key element of social and employment integration, the aim of this report is also to analyze the relationship between the social mobility strategies employed by, and positioning in education of, second-generation immigrants in the western half of the European continent, and Roma in Central and Eastern Europe, respectively. This cross-comparative analysis will provide an in-depth description of the considerable similarities and differences that exist between the country specific educational systems at the levels of institutional structure and school environment. In particular, it will draw together a synthesis of the existing educational situation, and a description of the future possibilities of second-generation immigrants and Roma.

In short, the main aims of the report are to:

- provide a comparative overview of the workings of the individual educational systems, the structure of private and public school distribution and the structure of tracking across the nine country contexts;
- compare patterns of differentiation in education according to intersecting inequalities (i.e. ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender);
- compare the mechanisms of school segregation, and the connection between school segregation, inter-ethnic communities and the practice of parental school choice;
- compare the processes of 'othering', 'racialisation', and 'minoritisation' among second-generation immigrants and Roma. Describe how these processes of identity formation are related to school attendance, school performance, and school success or failure, respectively;
- compare the institutional framework of, and issues related to, special educational

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[1] The countries involved in EDUMIGROM research project are the following: the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom. The background reports are covered by seven country reports and a condensed comparative report on the two Nordic countries, Denmark, and Sweden. The reports are: Armagnague et al.: Country Report on Education: France; Drál et al.: Country Report on Education: Slovakia; Fry et al.: Country Report on Education: United Kingdom; Harbula et al.: Country Report on Education: Romania; Katzorová et al.: Country Report on Education: the Czech Republic; Miera: Country Report on Education: Germany; Moldenhawer and Kallehave: Country Report on Education: Denmark and Sweden; Molnár and Dupcsik: Country Report on Education: Hungary.

programmes (e.g. multicultural curriculum, special classes for minority ethnic children, mother tongue-, bilingual- and/or second language learning programmes), and how these programmes are related to school success or failure among different groups of students; and

- provide a knowledge base for the development of a cross-national understanding and explanation of the structure of inequalities in education arising from ethnicity.

Chapter 1 provides a comparative overview of the workings of the individual educational systems, the structure of private and public school distribution, and the structure and effects of tracking across the nine country contexts. It also addresses the construction of statistical indicators pertaining to students in education, and to the state-regulations of education. Despite the vast differences evident amongst the countries involved, this chapter points to the fact that the basic structure of compulsory education within the individual countries is analogous to, and in keeping with, the vocabulary of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), in that its elements are referred to as elementary (first phase); lower secondary (second phase) and upper secondary (third phase) schools.

Chapter 2 provides a comparative analysis of processes of differentiation, evident in education, pertaining to inter-ethnic relations, and how ethnicity plays a role in education. It will also look at official statistics regarding issues like school attendance, and particularly statistics disaggregated by ethnicity. Furthermore, it compares the processes of 'othering', 'racialisation', and 'minoritisation' among second-generation immigrants and Roma. Following this, Chapter 2 addresses and compares the institutional framework of and issues related to multicultural/intercultural educational programmes, as well as how these programmes are related to school success or failure. The final part of the chapter addresses how several problems and phenomena depicted as 'ethnic' are often far more complex. In short, this is because social conditions, residential legislation, legacies of racism and discrimination, as well as, institutional or organisational structures and necessities, tend to contradict equal opportunities.

The complexity of 'ethnicity' is addressed in Chapter 3 by comparing other dimensions of differentiation present within the respective educational systems. This chapter thus provides a comparative analysis of the pattern of differentiation in education according to intersecting inequalities (i.e. ethnicity, socioeconomic background, and gender). It also compares the mechanism(s) of school segregation and the connections among school segregation, inter-ethnic communities and patterns of parental school choice.

Chapter 4 synthesises existing knowledge on schooling and education patterns amongst minority ethnic youth and the intersecting inequalities present in education. It also identifies the leading theories and research traditions employed within the national contexts related to educational inequalities and ethnicity. Several questions comprise the focus of this chapter: What are the determining factors of differences in education between minority ethnic and majority students? To what extent are schools responsible for inequalities in education? What are the major patterns of segregation affecting the education of minority ethnic students? Is there a systematic disadvantage connected to the educational performance of minority ethnic students? The chapter concludes by looking at several under-investigated issues, concerning: the role of teachers, minority inter-ethnic relations, and the experiences of non-minority students in segregated school settings; studies of policy impact and the impact of continuities and changes in public discourse; and transnational studies of schooling strategies among minority ethnic groups.

Chapter 5 synthesises the implications of the comparative analysis of differentiation in education depicted in Chapters 1-4, drawing out the wider theoretical, methodological and research implications. It also provides a knowledge base for the development of a cross-national explanation of the structure of inequalities in education arising from the significance of ethnicity in education. While Chapter 4 describes *what* the differences and similarities of the applied theoretical approaches are comprised of, Chapter 5 asks *how* the previous analysis of differences and similarities between the involved countries can be applied in the search for general explanations 'across single country studies'.

1. Comparative overviews of the educational systems

Vera Messing

This chapter provides a comparative overview of the working of the individual educational systems and the structure of subsequent levels of schooling across the nine country contexts. It addresses some of the most pertinent matters with regard to the social consequences of structural characteristics of national educational systems, such as the role and effects of tracking, early selection and other forms of differentiation inherent to the individual educational systems. The last part of the chapter presents issues related to organisation, ownership and financing including funding mechanisms, distribution of private-public units, as well as substantive issues such as centralisation/decentralisation, human resource policies in educational institutions, and quality control in education. The chapter also addresses the construction of statistical indicators of students in education, and provides basic comparative statistical data based on various OECD databases.

1.1. The construction of educational systems

Obviously, there are considerable differences across the construction of school systems of the nine countries participating in EDUMIGROM research project. Still, what makes comparative research reasonable despite these vast differences is that the basic structure of compulsory education is analogous: following (compulsory or non-compulsory) pre-school, three stages of primary/secondary schools compose compulsory education. Education for the cohort of 5- to 7-year-olds to 16- to 18-years-olds is divided into three periods, each consisting of three to five years. In some countries, only the first four to five years are 'elementary', and the next eight to nine years are 'secondary' (lower and upper); in other countries, the first eight years are 'primary' and the next four to five years are 'secondary'. All systems are based on a three-stage principle. We will refer to them – in keeping with OECD vocabulary – as elementary (first phase), lower secondary (second phase), and upper secondary (third phase) schools, even though the denominations vary across countries (OECD 1997).

Pre-school

There are considerable differences in the organisation and understanding of the function of pre-schools among the nine countries. Some systems understand pre-school education as an integral part of the education system, which serves as a terrain for early childhood socialisation. In this stage, children's social and cognitive skills are developed in preparation for a smooth start to their school careers. In other countries, pre-primary education is understood as a child-care institution that serves working parents. Consequently, in some countries (Denmark, Hungary, UK, Romania), a certain number of years – in most cases, the last year – in pre-school is compulsory, while in other countries, pre-school is voluntary.

Pre-school is often regarded as an institution that reduces the effects of social inequalities through its welfare and pedagogical functions. In Hungary, for example, special attention and care is provided for socially disadvantaged children. According to a recent law, while pre-school is normally obligatory only for children who have reached the age of five, in case of socially deprived children, the regulation is stricter: underprivileged children older than three

years have to be accepted and cared for by nursery schools. However, this requirement has yet to be put into practice, because of insufficient nursery capacities in deprived rural areas where the most under-privileged children live.

In most of the countries (Sweden, Germany [in most *Länder*], France, the Czech Republic, and Slovakia), pre-primary education is not compulsory, though in some countries, it is widely practiced. Even so, children of socially disadvantaged families are typically not cared for by nursery schools for various reasons: children of poorer families are excluded because preschool is costly, or because there is an insufficient network of nursery schools. Often, small settlements, where economic deprivation is relatively extensive, lack access to nursery schools. Roma children, as well as children of migrant background, are usually highly affected by exclusion from pre-school facilities, despite the fact that they need and would profit most from nursery schools and early childhood socialisation.

First and second phases: elementary and lower secondary education

The nine countries participating in EDUMIGROM differ with respect to whether the first two phases of schooling (the first eight or nine years) are institutionally united or separated. The first four to five years are institutionally separated in Germany, the UK, Romania and France. In some of the new Member States (Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Hungary), various types of schools exist in parallel. Although primary schools offer education for eight years (primary and lower secondary), which is followed by four years of upper secondary schooling, some – mostly elite – secondary schools offer an eight- or six-year-long program which means that children opting for such schools leave their primary school after grades four or six in these countries.

The first two phases of compulsory schooling provide general basic education in all of the countries. The only exception is Germany, where children attend elementary school until grade four. After, they are streamed into different school types of lower secondary education: *Hauptschule*, providing basic general education with a focus on practical (vocational) subjects; *Realschule*, providing a more extensive general education that prepares children for upper secondary vocational or tertiary education; and *Gymnasium*, covering both lower and upper secondary level (grades 5-13) and providing in-depth general education aimed at gaining entrance to higher education.

In some countries, typically those where lower secondary schools last for five years, lower secondary schools mark an end to compulsory education (Czech Republic, Romania, Denmark and Sweden), and in others, compulsory education reaches into upper secondary schools. Nordic countries run a comprehensive school system, where the first two levels of education are unified and last relatively long, until the age of 16. Still, the last year of lower secondary education is a determining stage of students' continued schooling. It is the moment when students (and parents) must decide into which profession or track – vocational, general – children will proceed. With exception of Germany and Sweden – it is the period when tracking of children into different streams takes place.

Third phase: upper secondary education

The third phase – the upper secondary level – of schooling is usually institutionally separated from the previous stages of education, although some school types in a few countries offer comprehensive education with joining these two stages (Gymnasium in Germany, eight-year-

long Gymnasiums in Hungary and the Czech Republic). With the exception of Sweden, which runs an integrated system for all upper secondary school students, the upper secondary phase is highly diversified, with clearly departing tracks. Within each country, there is considerable differentiation of students into various school types at this stage.

Most of the countries run a two-pillar system of upper-secondary schools, including schools for general academic development and schools that provide dominantly vocational training. In some of the countries, a third type of upper secondary education program also exists, schools which besides general education also provide vocational, occupational education (Denmark, Hungary, Germany, Czech Republic). Programs providing extensive general education offer qualification that serves as a pass for students to continue towards higher education, while vocational training schools prepare their students for direct entry to the labour market without further training into specific occupations. Upper general secondary schools last usually for three to four years (2+2 years in the UK, three in Sweden, Denmark, France, Romania, and four in Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia).

Table 1: **Distribution of upper secondary school students across vocational and general training streams**[2]

	Upper secondary general %	Upper secondary vocational %
Czech Republic	21%	79%
Denmark	46%	54%
France	44%	56%
Germany	39%	61%
Hungary	73%	27%
Slovakia	26%	74%
Sweden	42%	58%
Romania	73%*	27%*
United Kingdom	60%	40%

Source: OECD database. 2005. http://stats.oecd.org/wbos/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=RENRL
*Note: OECD statistics does not include data on Romania; data come from the country report

The system of vocational training ranges widely across the nine countries. Some countries have a reasonable system of vocational training that is closely connected to industry, reflecting genuine demands of the labour market. In others, vocational training schools lack an informed connection to the labour market, and consequently provide their students with few chances of being competitive after graduation. In such countries, many of the vocational training schools[3] have very little prestige and typically serve as schools for students who are unmotivated to study but who need to comply with regulations on compulsory schooling that reaches beyond lower secondary school.

In most of the countries (Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia), 60% or more of upper secondary students are enrolled in pre-vocational or vocational training program, while it is only Hungary and Romania, where over 60% of students study in general programs of upper

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[2] Great differences are partly due to problems categorising programmes that provide general and vocational training. In some countries (i.e. Hungary's *szakközépiskola*) schools are categorised under general programmes; in others (Germany's *Realschule*), they are classified as vocational programmes by OECD statistics.
[3] Such as vocational training schools in Hungary, *Hauptschule* in Germany, and Secondary Vocational Programmes in the Czech Republic.

secondary education.[4] In France, Denmark and Sweden, students are more or less equally distributed between general academic and vocational tracks (OECD 2007a).

Graduation rates – the ratio of students who successfully complete the final year of upper secondary school – at the upper secondary level vary a lot by school types. Students of upper-secondary schools providing general academic education graduate at significantly higher rate (60-70%) than their peers in vocational schools (20-50%) (OECD 2007a).

1.2. Educational differentiation: selection, tracking within the school system

Broadly speaking, organisational differentiation in education can take place at three levels: system level, school level (differentiation between schools and between classes within schools), and the class level (differentiation within the class). This section deals only with mechanisms of selection inherent to the individual educational systems.

The most obvious mechanism of institutional selection is the distribution of children across private and public schools. The category of private schools can be divided into schools that receive more than half of their funding from private sources (independent private schools), and schools in which public funding sources exceed 50% (government-dependent private schools). Even though there will be a tendency in each of the two categories of private schools to host children of the most affluent parents, it is not always the case. In Hungary for example, many foundation schools are registered as 'private schools', and they provide education for deprived children. In other countries, like Denmark, government dependent private schools, which are equipped well with human resources, have lower class sizes, and better technical infrastructure, usually provide higher quality education. With the only exception of the United Kingdom, the presence of plainly private schools at the primary and lower secondary level is minor.

In many countries differentiation of children takes place already in primary and lower secondary schools. Therefore an important characteristic of the school system in terms of selectivity is whether parents have the right to choose the school and schools have the possibility to select from applicants on the primary level, at the age of six to seven years. This issue strongly relates to the system of school districts or school catchment areas, which will be further discussed in Chapter 3.[5] Other mechanisms of selectivity include early separation of children according to performance, which closely relates to parents' social background at this early age. The Slovak system induces separation through its 'zero-class system': children from socially disadvantaged families who did not achieve school maturity by the age of compulsory education may be oriented into zero grade. Children in zero grade of elementary school typically come from families with multiple disadvantages (social, language, cultural) and learn basic skills at a slower pace. After completing zero grade, pupils do not necessarily join other first graders, but may be and are often kept together in the same class during their later studies. This ensures the salient separation of disadvantaged, 'problematic' students within the school. Very similar mechanisms might work in other countries, but are attached to specialisation in various subjects (i.e. in math for children of middle class families and physical training for children of socially disadvantaged families), or the grouping of children according to language teaching.

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[4] These salient differences are partly due to somewhat artificial categories composed by OECD, which do not always comply fully with terminology and categorisation of the individual countries.
[5] We will use the terms 'school district' and 'school catchment area' interchangeably in this report.

Institutional selection in some countries is practised by means of directing children to remedial schools originally designed for educating developmentally challenged children with special needs. In all of the new Member States, the ethnic composition in these schools is characterized by a robust and disproportionate presence of Roma children (ERRC 2004). In light of vast and strong international criticism,[6] most of the countries started to reorganise institutions of remedial schools and mechanisms of directing children into special education.

As far as the system-level differentiation of secondary school students is concerned, a very useful and widely used indicator is the age of first tracking. As discussed in the previous section, there are essential differences with respect to when tracking children into different paths takes place. In some countries, tracking happens as early as the age of 10 (Germany), while in others (Nordic countries), children are kept together until the end of comprehensive compulsory education.

German educational system not only selects and tracks children at a very early age into general academic and vocational streams, but it is also rigid: mobility between school types is minor: only three percent of students in grades seven, eight, and nine changed school types and the direction of such mobility was usually downward.

Table 2: **Age of first institutional selection**

Hungary	10; 12; 14/15 depending on secondary school type
Slovakia	11;15 depending in secondary school type
Czech Republic	11;13; 15 depending on secondary school type
Romania	14/15
Germany	10
France	14/15
UK	16
DK	16

The age at which children are streamed is a crucial characteristic of the school system not only in terms of chances of opportunity, but also in terms of equity and performance. According to results of the comparative analysis of Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) data,[7] in countries where selection starts at an early age, children's average academic performance is lower. Also, the effect of parents' socioeconomic status on children's performance is more robust. This indicates a potential negative relationship between the age of tracking and overall quality, effectiveness and equity within the educational system (OECD 2005). It is well demonstrated by various OECD studies that there is a significant positive correlation between the age of tracking and quality within the educational system: the lower age of tracking within a school-system (Germany, Hungary,

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[6] The most well known of these was the case of Ostrava (Czech Republic), which was taken to the European Court of Human Rights. The Czech government was sued by the European Roma Rights Centre for discriminating Roma children by segregating them in the special school for mentally retarded children. The documentation revealed that more than half of Roma children in the Czech Republic were schooled in remedial schools in 2000 and a Roma child was 27 times more likely to be placed in such a school than similarly situated non-Roma child. Their application, which was approved by the Court in 2007, contended that their assignment to special schools constitutes 'degrading treatment' in violation of Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights. See Ostrava Case: D.H. and others v. The Czech Republic, at http://www.errc.org/cikk.php?cikk=2945 (accessed March 18, 2009).

[7] PISA is conducted by OECD and implemented in a growing number of countries (43 in 2000 and 57 in 2006). It is an internationally standardised assessment of students' performance that was jointly developed by participating countries and administered to 15-year-olds in schools.

and the Czech Republic) relates to low average performance of students and overall quality of education. On the contrary, a higher age of tracking within the school system (Nordic countries) corresponds to a higher general performance of students. There are, of course, exceptions from this rule: one is France, where the impact of family background on performance is relatively high (though much lower than in Germany or Hungary) and student performance remains at the OECD average. The reason for this might be that although students are kept together for relatively long (until 14-15 years of age), the school system is characterised by complex and often implicit forms of internal differentiation and hierarchies. These manifest as intra-school or even within class differentiation, which more socially advantaged parents are best equipped to negotiate to their children's benefit. In effect, the French school system, even with a later tracking system, cannot be regarded as one that increases equity.

1.3. Organisation, ownership, financing

Ownership and financing

There are great variations with regard to organising and financing primary and secondary schools in the nine countries. Generally speaking, on average, 80-90% of funding of primary and secondary education comes from public sources. Still, ownership and maintenance of schools is not a direct function of financing: in most of the countries, private or non-public schools are financed - partly or entirely - from public funds. Therefore, OECD classifies private schools into two further categories with regard to their financing: private schools which receive more than half of their funding from private sources (fees, donations) are named as 'independent private schools' while those in which's funding public sources exceed is 50% are named 'government-dependent private schools'. This arbitrary cut of public/private funding, however, has lead to somewhat contradictory outcomes of national statistics and the comparative statistics of OECD: according to the latter, some countries seem not to have private schools, while others seem to have a considerable private segment within education only because the proportion of state funding hovers around 50%. The distinction of private/public school is not only important because of differences of principles of funding, but also because this division bears important consequences with regard to limitations and strategies of recruiting student. Thus, the proportion of public-private schools might impinge on equal access to quality education and consequently on the differentiation within the schools system.

In EDUMIGROM member countries, the vast majority of the schools are public schools financed and managed by the state or municipalities. With the exception of the UK, the only country in which independent private schools form a considerable stake within compulsory education (approximately 10%),[8] private schools are government-dependent schools. Denmark and France[9] have the largest rate of publicly financed private schools (15-20%), while in the Czech Republic, Sweden and Germany,[10] public schools comprise over 90% of schools. In Romania and Slovakia, the ratio of such schools is negligible. 'Independent schools' in the UK – in OECD terms, 'independent private schools' – are secondary schools that are funded by private sources, predominantly fees generally paid by the parents of their pupils. Independent schools are free to select their pupils, and the few parents who cannot

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[8] The ratio of independent schools within secondary education in the UK is nearly double: 19%.

[9] In 2004-2005, 20% of all upper and lower secondary school pupils were enrolled in a private school. Of these, 97.4% were in a school under contract with the state.

[10] Seven percent of students in Germany, approximately 8% in Hungary, and 2% of primary and 25% of secondary school students in the Czech Republic attend private schools.

afford the annual fees are offered means-tested bursaries. Independent schools have a better teacher-to-pupil ratio than mainstream schools and academic achievement is significantly higher.

The extent of public subsidies available to private schools differs by country: in Germany, in most *Länder* private schools receive state funding of about 60 to 70% if the school has proved to be successful after about two or three years. In the Czech Republic, 40% of private schools' funding come from public sources. In France, the state covers salaries and functioning of those private schools that have entered into contract with it. In Denmark, private schools are funded by a combination of fees (parents' contribution) and government grants, corresponding to approximately 80% of the total expenditure of the schools.

Nordic countries in general have a school system with a considerable component of independent schools (government-dependent private school, in OECD terms) open to everyone. While Denmark – in comparison with Sweden – has a long tradition with independent schools, the number of independent schools has considerably increased in Sweden in the past years: the number of students has quadrupled since the 1990s.[11] Now, independent schools provide education for nine percent of students in Sweden and almost one-fourth of compulsory schools in Denmark. In Sweden, it is the municipality in which the student resides that pays the tuition of children studying in independent schools. Education provided by independent schools in Sweden and Denmark might have the same basic objectives as municipal schools, but a profile that distinguishes it from municipal schools (such as a particular pedagogical framework, as with Waldorf, Montessori, minority schools).

A considerable proportion of non-public schools are run by churches.[12] Confessional schools constitute an increasing segment of the school system in Germany and in the new Member States. This is especially the case in Romania and Hungary, where confessional schools that reclaimed their pre-World War II properties receive the same or even higher funds (per student quota funding) as do public schools. Faith schools in the UK are schools that are partly funded by the state and draw the remainder of their finances from either religious organizations or fees paid by parents of pupils, though some faith schools are now wholly maintained by the state.

Students from different socioeconomic backgrounds are distributed unevenly across school types: generally speaking, students of higher socioeconomic backgrounds are overrepresented in private schools, while public schools host middle class and socially disadvantaged students (OECD 2005: 75). There is no significant difference in the distribution of students across various school types by their family background in Denmark and in Sweden. Private schools host mainly students from elite in the UK and in the Czech Republic.

Centralisation-decentralisation

The level of centralisation of the school system varies widely across countries. It differs not only with regard to the level where decisions are made, but also in terms of the school types about which we speak. There are highly centralised systems, in which decisions made on national or regional levels, and the autonomy of individual schools is rather restricted (France, Romania and Germany[13]). In mixed systems, various decisions are assigned to

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[11] The number has grown from 238 (20,247 pupils) in 1995 to 635 (86,205 pupils) in 2007.

[12] About 80% of all private schools are run by the Protestant or Catholic churches in Germany. In Hungary and the Czech Republic, 6% and 1% (respectively) are confessional schools.

[13] In Germany, centralisation is at the level of the *Länder*. On national level, the system seems to be

different levels of the state: ministry, region, municipality, and school board. Finally, in highly decentralised systems, decisions are made by the municipality and the school, and the state identifies only the main framework of education (Hungary, Nordic countries). One of the most important terrains of de/centralisation is human resource management.

Teachers' appointment, human resource management in education

Teacher's appointment is a result of a centralised selection procedure in some countries (Germany, France), but in most of the countries (UK, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia), it is the right and responsibility of the school principal. The most important argument for the centralised selection procedure is that it prevents quality segregation of teachers, a mechanism which results in the most prestigious schools selecting the most qualified teachers and leaving lower quality or geographically isolated schools with under- or unqualified teachers. The argument for the autonomous human resource management of schools is rather obvious: it is a flexible system, in which demand and supply might meet and schools may find the best fitting teachers to fill vacant positions.

In some countries, the decentralised system of teachers' selection results in huge differences of quality of education among public schools. In Hungary, for example, where a decentralised system goes together with a complete lack of independent institutions for quality control, many under- or unqualified teachers teach in village schools in economically depressed regions, where a critical mass of socially disadvantaged students would need highly qualified teachers. Slovakia faces similar problems: during the transition period, pedagogical professions lost much of their previous symbolic prestige and the relatively decent remuneration for teaching steadily decreased. Due to the chronic lack of financial resources, most highly qualified teachers sought employment outside the state school system. In the least developed regions of Slovakia, the proportion of unqualified staff often reaches 50%. Contrarily, in other countries (UK, Nordic countries), where specific schools and their governing bodies are responsible for recruiting and retaining their staff, decentralisation does not lead to greatly diverging quality. In the UK, a support mechanism functions: if asked for, local authorities provide support with any staffing difficulties (e.g. staff shortage).

Two countries have a totally centralised system of teachers' appointment: Germany and France. In both countries (in most German *Länder*), the actual appointment procedure and contract is the responsibility of regional governments, where regional authorities (*Länder* educational offices in Germany and regional academies in France) evaluate teachers and compile lists according to which teachers are allocated to schools. This procedure is attacked in Germany for taking only the applicant's formal qualifications into account and ignoring other expectations of schools and applicants. In an alternative selection procedure that is used increasingly, especially in North Rhine-Westphalia, schools themselves select applicants. The benefits and disadvantages of the centralised system is also debated in France, where within the bureaucratic system of teacher appointment, those teachers who have accumulated the most points (through seniority, higher certification and favourable inspection results) are most likely to obtain their preferred choice of neighbourhoods, while newly certified teachers are often obliged to begin their careers among the most unfavourable conditions. The result of this mechanism – quality selection of teachers into the most favourable schools – is just the opposite of its imagined advantage. With regard to the different regimes of teachers' selection in the nine countries, it seems that neither centralised nor decentralised selection procedures alone guarantee equal distribution of quality and expertise across the country's schools.

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decentralised, but if we consider the level of individual *Länder*s, the system is centralised indeed.

Quality control

Quality control of schools and teachers varies tremendously across the nine countries. With one exception (Hungary), all countries have a system of quality control. The reason for the lack of such institution in Hungary goes back to the early 1990s when, during the massive project to decentralise the former 'state socialist' educational system, the network of school inspectorates that had previously controlled teachers' work was abolished. Consequently, there is now no external institution that inspects what is going on in schools and provides schools and teachers professional help related to the various aspects of school life. In some countries, quality control in education is the responsibility of a separate institution - school inspectorates (UK, the Czech Republic, Slovakia); in others, it is delegated to centralised multifunctional institutions or to a subdivision of the ministry of education (France, Romania, Germany). Inspectorates schedule regular inspections at individual schools and/or carry out inspection on the basis of complaints. They elaborate their evaluations of each school regularly. Great differences can be detected with regard to consequences of problems discovered by inspections. In some countries, consequences are minor. In Germany, for example, schools in certain *Länder* are not obliged to publish evaluation assessments. Consequently, their impact remains restricted. In the Czech Republic, similar to Slovakia, for findings of quality control to have any results involves a long procedure: first, a school's principal is approached and required to solve the problem. If this is futile, the founder of the school is contacted and asked for intervention, and next the Ministry is asked to intervene. The final step is suing at court. In France, teachers are evaluated during school inspection and are awarded points as a result of their performance during school inspection. These evaluations primarily affect teachers' careers and their possibility to find better positions. The most effective system seems to be the British, which incorporates automatisms in case of quality problems in schools. Quality control in British schools is the responsibility of a separate, non-ministerial government department called the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted), which inspects all schools every three years. Ofsted assigns a category to a school after inspection: poorly performing schools are described as 'special measures' or 'notice to improve'. These categories contribute to a school's reputation. Schools labelled 'special measures' receive support from local authorities, additional funding, and reappraisal from Ofsted until the school is no longer deemed to be failing. Additionally, senior managers and teaching staff can be dismissed and the school governors may be replaced by an executive committee. Schools which are failing but, according to inspectors, possess the capacity to improve are given a 'notice to improve'.

1.4. Concluding remarks

This first chapter discussed different issues regarding the structural characteristics of national educational systems such as the role and effects of tracking, early selection and other forms of differentiation, organisation, financing and quality control. Despite vast differences between the involved countries, the conclusion is that the basic structures of compulsory education are analogous. In concord with OECD vocabulary, these structures are referred to as elementary (first phase), lower secondary (second phase), and upper secondary (third phase) schools. Dealing specifically with mechanisms of selection inherent to the individual educational systems, this chapter finds that the issue of institutional selectivity strongly relates to the variety of school types available to parents, the system of school districts and countries' respective 'traditions' (i.e. grouping of children between classes, directing 'problematic' children to special remedial schools). Further important mechanisms of selectivity include early selection of children according to performance. As far as the system-

level differentiation of school students is concerned, a very useful and widely used indicator is the age of first tracking. It is concluded that there are essential differences with respect to when the tracking of children into different paths takes place and that the age at which children are streamed is a crucial characteristic of the school system not only in terms of chances of opportunity, but also in terms of equity and performance.

It is hard to conclude how the presented issues of organisation, ownership and financing, distribution of private-public units as well as substantive issues such as the centralisation/decentralisation in education affect the educational opportunities of different groups of students. The character of funding and the division of public and private schools can affect socially depressed groups of students negatively, such as in situations where they intersect with social exclusion and marginalisation of communities in economically depressed areas. It seems obvious, though, that the lack of genuine quality control within the educational system leads to diverging quality and varying opportunities for students with different socioeconomic background. While the focus in this chapter has been to compare the structure of inequality inherent to the educational systems in general, the focus in next chapter will be an analysis of the differentiation in education according to ethnicity, in particular.

2. Comparing the differentiation within educational systems according to ethnicity and the 'selected minority ethnic groups'

Frauke Miera

This chapter aims at comparing the nine countries under study with respect to the question of if and how 'ethnicity' plays a role in schooling and education. Across Europe, policy-makers, research, and school environments have repeatedly pointed to the growing importance of ethnicity in forging young people's career paths and life chances in general. In spite of considerable investments in education by European welfare states, and political and legal efforts to promote equal opportunities in education, ethnic differentiation in schooling still result in significant inequalities in opportunities for meaningful participation and recognition in economic, social and political life. Differentiation in education contributes to socially determining minority positions on the basis of ethnicity. Hence, the ways in which educational institutions address ethnic differences is crucial in developing social inclusion based on equal citizenship rights and recognition. Despite great variations in economic development, integration regimes, and welfare state arrangements, recent developments seem to lead to similar consequences for certain groups of *second-generation immigrants* in the western half of the continent and *Roma* in Central and Eastern Europe. Regardless of whether they are citizens of old or new Member States of the European Union, people affiliated to these groups tend to experience new and intensive forms of involuntary separation from the majority or social exclusion. In this chapter, the aim is to provide a comparative analysis of how second-generation immigrants and Roma are affected by the overt and covert mechanisms in socioeconomic, cultural, and gender relations that make ethnicity a substantive component of inequalities in education. As minority ethnic groups are liable to experience social exclusion, the aim is also to analyse variations of 'minoritisation' on ethnic grounds and how these variations affect their education and therefore their life chances.

We begin by briefly describing the selected minority ethnic groups with particular reference to school attendance figures for selected groups. Next, we analyse how various education systems contribute to processes of 'othering', racialisation, or minorisation. The comparison of different cases refers to two levels. First, we ask which normative concepts the different national educational systems follow. On the basis of school regulations, programmes and educational policies we try to identify the range of intended goals in the different national educational systems from the poles of acknowledging cultural diversity and imposing 'majority culture' onto ethnic minorities – and how they aim to reach these goals. Second, on the basis of the available data and evaluations provided in background reports, we discuss the practical impact of educational policies. Do they contribute to equal opportunities, to the recognition of cultural diversity, or rather to the exclusion or separation of certain minority ethnic groups? Emphasis is given to recent changes in programmes and legal provisions and their respective impact.

Normative concepts and questions of policy implementation now stand at the centre of the theoretical and political multicultural debate in terms of their actual or empirical impact – that is, how to balance the recognition of cultural diversity and group rights on the one hand, and the provision of equal opportunities and individual rights on the other (Kymlicka 1997, Modood 2007, Phillips 2007). This chapter will illustrate how national integration models of multiculturalism versus assimilation (Brubaker 1992, Castles 1995) are not as clear-cut as the concepts may suggest (or as they might have been around two decades ago), but are in themselves more complex and change over time (Koopmans et al. 2005). Different factors

and discourses crosscut and modify national integration principles: in particular discussions about social cohesion and national citizenship; international competition for highly skilled personnel and tendencies to 'liberalise' or 'marketise' the educational system; and processes of democratisation and anti-discrimination strategies in the course Europeanisation.[14] Despite decisive national characteristics and developments, some parallel processes are particularly apparent when comparing old and new EU Member States. There are, however, also significant similarities cross-cutting the East-West dichotomy.

2.1. Criteria for the selection of minority ethnic groups

A central aim of the EDUMIGROM project is to analyse the specific situation of second-generation immigrants and Roma and their descendants in education with regard to the impact of educational structure and policies. The guiding criteria for the selection of minority ethnic groups studied were, in most countries, threefold: first, low school attendance rates, high drop-out rates and a relatively poor level of academic achievement in comparison to peers from the ethnic majority; second, tendencially being targets of discrimination and racism; and third, a public perception of these groups as being 'problematic' and 'difficult to integrate'. The idea behind these criteria is to analyse prevalent inter-ethnic conflicts and tensions. These cases may illuminate national discourses and educational structures. As a matter of fact, the selection of these vulnerable minority ethnic groups does not mean that there were no minority ethnic groups who were performing well in school, seldom subject to discrimination, and barely focused on in public discourse. In addition, the experiences of individuals among the selected groups also differ decisively.

Looking at the nine countries under study, one difference in the selection of minority ethnic groups particularly stands out: in the Central and Eastern European (CEE) states – the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia – the focus on Roma youth, who are members of ethnic or national minorities or groups who have already been living in the country or on the territory for centuries.[15] In contrast, the old EU Member States under study – Denmark, Sweden, France, Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK) – have to come to terms with a significant population of immigrants and their descendants. Countries of origin and the status of the immigrants in the receiving countries vary, which primarily reflects the specific immigration and integration policies as well as the colonial past of (some of) these countries. The main groups are youth who have immigrated themselves or were born in the country as children or grandchildren of immigrants (second or third generation youth). These are, in particular: in France, students of North African or Turkish background; in Denmark those of Pakistani and Somali origin; in Germany students of Turkish or Lebanese background; and in the UK students from Bangladeshi or Black Caribbean origin, as well as Gypsies, Roma and travellers.[16] Regarding Western European countries, it is striking that the majority of the selected minority ethnic groups are either Muslim or are increasingly perceived as being Muslim within public debate.

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[14] We do not refer to the 'harmonisation' of immigration policies or policies to reduce immigration from Third World countries.

[15] With respect to the Czech Republic Vietnamese immigrants have also been chosen as a group for comparison, as an example of the recently increasing numbers of immigrants who mainly come from Spain, Italy and Vietnam.

[16] Although there is also a significant population of Roma or other traditional ethnic minorities in other old EU-countries, these rarely appear within debates on education or social inclusion. This may be due to their lower numbers but also to the lack of awareness concerning their existence and social situation.

Keeping in mind the problematic significance of school statistics and the variations of definition within the category 'ethnicity',[17] as well as the disparities in available data, we now take a closer look at school attendance and drop-out rates among the selected minority ethnic groups. In Romania, Slovakia and Hungary, school attendance reports only register differences between the national majority population and the Roma population. In the Czech Republic, differences in school attendance are only reported with reference to two categories of minority ethnic groups with different migrant and settlement histories in the country. In France, UK, Denmark and Germany, reports differentiate between students from the national majority, majority ethnic students as well as inter-ethnic differences when looking at school attendance and performance.

In Romania, 69% of the majority population and only 17% of the Roma population in the age of 16-19 are enrolled in school. Drop-out rates in 1998 among Roma accounted for 1.9% (age 7-10) and 8.6% (age 11-14), while in the same year, 15-16% of the youth in the age of 7-14 had never enrolled in school. An estimated 34% of the Roma population have not graduated from any school in 2002.

In Slovakia, the relative part of Roma population in education has increased to 13.6% in 2002 (Vano 2002). The educational level of Roma was significantly lower than that of the ethnic Slovak population. In 2001, only 1.2% of Roma had completed upper secondary education, compared to 26.6% among ethnic Slovaks. The MPC Presov survey (2007) revealed an uneven distribution of excused and unexcused absences among pupils from 'socially disadvantaged environments' (SDE), among which the proportion of Roma is quite high. The percentage of pupils from SDE of the total number of absences is 23.5%, whereas unexcused absences account for 70%. The proportion of early drop-outs or pupils repeating a grade is much higher among children from SDE.

In Hungary, Roma children made up about 15% of the school-aged population in 1997. Approximately 10% did not continue their education on secondary level; 36% dropped out of vocational training school at grade nine, and 35% in grade 10. Very few Roma attended secondary vocational or general school. In 1993, the percentage of those who completed the secondary education with a final exam was only three percent in the corresponding Roma age-group. In comparison, in 1990 the rate of those who completed secondary education with a final exam in the whole 25-29 year-old population was 41%.

In the Czech Republic, it was estimated that in 2006 7.3% of Roma youth are enrolled in secondary education, while only 1.2% successfully complete secondary school. While the average drop-out rate at secondary school ranges between 10-20%, this rate accounts for about 85% among Roma students. As far as the basic level of education is concerned, besides Slovak pupils, there are two large immigrant groups who attend Czech basic schools: Vietnamese, and Ukrainians. This reflects the fact that these nationalities represent traditional immigrant groups, who, in the case of Vietnamese immigrants, started migrating as guest workers in the 1970s, many of whom stayed. A new wave of Vietnamese immigration started after 1990. While the proportion of Ukrainians with higher levels of education is growing, the proportion of the Vietnamese in this category is decreasing.

In the UK in 2007, 17.7% of the student population came from a minority ethnic group. Absence rates were highest for Travellers of Irish Heritage (26% overall absence);

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[17] In some countries data is collected according to citizenship, in other countries it is mother tongue; and in others it is still the self-declaration of ethnicity. Moreover, some figures refer to school statistics, others to national census or empirical research data.

Gypsy/Roma (23%); Mixed (White and Black Caribbean) (almost 10%) and Irish (just over nine percent). The overall absence rate for all pupils was around eight percent. Drop-out rates of pupils over 16 has been notoriously high in the UK. There is a clear disparity between social groups, with pupils from lower socioeconomic backgrounds more likely to leave school earlier. Gypsy/Roma and Traveller groups experience the most severe educational exclusion of any minority ethnic group in the UK with levels of attainment being roughly a quarter of the national average. Additionally, patterns of attainment at this level are declining, which is markedly different from other minority ethnic groups where there is evidence of some improvement. The consequences of missing out on an education include an inability to find employment and exclusion from society at large (Bhopal 2004). This is particularly a problem for Gypsy/Roma and Traveller girls (Children's Society 2007). The Black Caribbean population of the UK has for many decades had significantly lower levels of educational attainment than the national average, and despite some indication of improving levels of attainment, this educational inequality persists. Black Caribbean boys are particularly struggling to perform well in schools, and the abnormally high level of school exclusions for this group also persists. The Bangladeshi population in the UK is experiencing improving levels of educational attainment much closer to the national average than the other two groups of selected ethnic minorities. There is an internal polarisation among Bangladeshi pupils in terms of educational performance.

In France, pupils with a foreign passport made up seven percent of all pupils enrolled in the primary level in 1998-99, while accounting for approximately 22% of students from schools in deprived neighbourhoods and five percent of students in non-deprived primary schools. The percentage of second-generation immigrants at age 15 among the total population of 15-year-old pupils is 12%. The overall educational attainment of minority ethnic students appears much less favourable that the average. In a study based on data from a cohort of 55,000 young people who left school in 1998, it shows that while only 17% of males and 11% of females born of non-immigrant French parents leave school without having obtained a secondary school diploma, this is the case for much higher percentages of second-generation immigrants. Among Maghrebin youth, this is the case for 44.6% of males and 13.5% of females. Almost 55% of males and 56% of females born of Turkish parents leave school without a diploma, while 51.2% of males and 23.1% of females born of parents from Sub-Saharan Africa have left school before having obtained a diploma (Silberman, Alba and Fournier 2007).

In Germany, students with foreign citizenship are twice as likely to leave school without graduating than their peers with a German passport. Three times as many 'German' males and females receive their Abitur graduation than 'foreigners. In the selected German city of Berlin, in 2007/08 nearly 20,000 students holding Turkish passports attended general-education schools (Ohliger 2008). From these students, 49% attended primary education, 8.5% Hauptschule, 4% special needs schools, 10.5% a Realschule, 14% Gesamtschule, and only 13.5% attended Gymnasium.[18] Students with a Turkish background not only are the largest minority ethnic group, but also appear to be disproportionately affected by the exclusionary school system and they belong to the category of students whose performances are significantly low. The comparison groups of (grand) children of Portuguese guest-workers constitute a minority ethnic group who also show quite weak school performances, but are

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[18] *Hauptschule* (grades 5-9/10) is a type of school at lower secondary level providing a basic general education; *Realschule* (grades 5-10) is also a type of school at lower secondary level providing pupils with a more extensive general education and the opportunity to go on to upper secondary level courses that lead to vocational or higher education entrance qualifications. *Gymnasium* (grades 5-13) covers both lower and upper secondary level and provides an in-depth general education aimed at gaining general higher education entrance.

barely mentioned and recognised by the public as a target group in way that are Turks.

In Denmark the percentage of bilingual students of all students accounted for 10.1% in 2000, the largest group being from Turkey. The selected minority ethnic groups with a Pakistani and Somali background accounted for 3.9% and 3.3% of all immigrants and descendents in 2008 (Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration 2008). In 2005, six percent of all males, but 16% of 'minority ethnic boys', did *not* continue in secondary schooling. Pakistani youths are generally performing well in schooling and education, in comparison to both the minority groups of Turks and Somali. The Turkish minority ethnic community is internally heterogeneous, with large groups of well performing and failing students. In Sweden, about 15% of all students in compulsory school come from foreign background. In 2004, about 90% of the majority Swedish students qualified for admission to an upper secondary programme, compared to about 76% of minority ethnic students.

Due to country specific statistics, the reports on France, Germany and the Nordic countries do not provide detailed data on attendances and drop-out rates according to ethnicity or citizenship.

2.2. Comparing how 'ethnicity' plays a role in schooling and education

Generally, education is a social right across the nine countries. In Germany and, until recently, the Czech Republic, children of refugees, or those without legal documents, have been exempted from this right or are hardly able to use it. Despite the different normative conceptions of how to deal with cultural diversity in schools, the perception of central minority ethnic needs differs as a result of the distance or closeness of these groups to the dominant cultural, linguistic and religious habits and practices; be it the right to first-language instruction, the provision of cultural specific meals, the right to wear religious insignias, the possibility to practice one's religion, or the support in the acquisition of the majority language.

Minority ethnic protection and inclusion

Romania, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary basically share several similarities, but also follow some diverging educational strategies. Normative concepts of how to deal with Roma minorities are not easily identifiable. On the one hand, there is a tradition of ethnic/national minority rights protection. Some countries have acknowledged Roma as a national minority (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania), while in Hungary, Roma were defined as 'ethnic minority'. On the other hand, there are striking inadequacies in the application of minority rights for Roma Students. Second, it seems that the reference to minority rights is often used to legitimise exclusion and discrimination. Furthermore, there has been very low awareness about exclusion through discriminatory practices.

In the last few years, some changes of educational strategies towards Roma are observable. One important change in educational strategy is the right to receive instruction in mother tongue, understood to be the pivotal point in ethnic or national minority protection. Nevertheless, apart from the case of Romania, this right does not refer to the group of Roma because of reasons pointing to legacies of discrimination and subordination. For example, citizens with a minority ethnic-national background in the Czech Republic are entitled to an education in their first language when they account of 10% of the local population and a

Council of National Minorities has been established on a municipal level.[19] With respect to Roma, this is largely irrelevant even in those areas in which their population accounts of more than 10% of the local population. One reason for this lies in the reluctance among Roma population to identify and register themselves as Roma for fear of being subject to discrimination. The lack of skilled Roma speaking staff and the inability to mobilise support for Roma schools also impede the establishing of Roma schools. In Hungary, although Roma have the right to language instruction in their mother tongue by law, it is not practiced, because many do not speak Roma, but partly due to the lack of required resources. The vast majority of Roma (88%), in Hungary speak Hungarian as their mother tongue, and 70% (all the Romungro) do not speak Roma at all. Therefore, this right, which has been primarily designed for other ethnic minorities (e.g. Romanians, Germans, Slovaks, Ruthens, Ukrainians, Slovenians), is an 'empty' right in the case of Roma. In Slovakia in 1991, Roma have been recognised as an ethnic minority by the government giving them the right to minority language schooling. Despite this acknowledgment, in the various subsequent amendments of the school law, the list of minorities eligible for instruction in their first language has not been extended (on changes since 2008, see below). In Romania, the right to education in their mother tongue also applies to Roma. Here, the dominant Hungarian minority with its strong political representation and the legacy of mother tongue teaching in the socialist past serves as a role model. Until recently, segregated classes were perceived as a positive form of minority protection. However, apparently the attitudes towards the Romani language have deteriorated in comparison to the attitude towards Hungarian, as has the quality of schooling for Romani. Moreover, Romani turned out to be not a very valuable skill in the job market. Only recently have policymakers begun to acknowledge the segregating and discriminating effect of this form of 'minority protection' and started to implement more inclusive forms of schooling (see below). In the past, the normative goal of minority ethnic protection in these countries has been either ignored, as in the case of Roma, or hurdles preventing Roma from making use of their rights have not considered by policy makers. In addition, the widespread subordination/devaluation of Roma culture affected the provision or the quality of mother tongue education.

Denmark, France, Germany, Sweden and UK, all represent different and contrary models of integration, assimilation, multiculturalism and the nation: France representing the republican model, UK standing for the multiculturalism and anti-racism concept, and Germany as the typical example of the exclusionary (or non-acting) and ethno-national concept (e.g. Castles 1995, Brubaker 1992). The 'Nordic' case does not really fit into this scheme. In Denmark, and even more so in Sweden, where there are significant populations of long-term, settled ethnic minorities, the protection of ethnic minority rights has been crucial. In the meantime, the Danish integration concept now correlates more with the German one in many respects. Despite these different national legacies, educational practices as well as social phenomena in educational institutions share more and more similarities. This refers to changes in the concept of citizenship, social cohesion, the significance of language teaching, social and ethnic segregation, and institutional discrimination, and to tendencies towards the liberalisation of the educational system.

According to the republican model, the French education system officially does not differentiate according to ethnicity or ethnic origin. There are no explicit regulations or laws; general educational legislation applies to all students irrespective of their ethnic or national origin and even of their legal or illegal status. There are only very few provisions for linguistic, cultural and religious practice of minority ethnic youth, for instance, based on bilateral agreements courses in Arabic a few hours per week. Special meals according to

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[19] Generally, this entitlement is fairly seldom realised because the barrier of 10% is quite high.

religious habits are provided in schools; but wearing religious insignias is restricted according to the principle of secularism. Differentiation of immigrants and non-immigrants is officially only legitimate temporarily and for the purpose of preparing the new immigrants for regular schooling (see below). In France, a heated debate on the recognition and teaching the history of colonization, the slave trade and the role of France in the Holocaust has begun, but has apparently not yet been transposed into state curricula.

In contrast to the French case, the guiding normative principle in the UK is the recognition of cultural diversity and equal opportunity. Legislation and monitoring mechanisms to combat racism and implement equal opportunities has been elaborated on since the Race Relations Act (RRA) came into effect in 1976. In 1997, New Labour pledged a commitment to social justice and education as a means of creating a just society. The RRA amendment (2000) required local authorities to proactively eliminate discrimination and promote equal opportunities. Schools are obliged to agree on a written policy statement for promoting race equality, and to monitoring the admission and progress of students with reference to ethnic groups. The Independent Office for Standards in Education monitors the progress of schools and local education authorities. There are several specific funding and promotion programmes, and strategies generated as a consequence of the RRAA, targeting either socially disadvantaged groups or ethnic minorities – or both, as these groups often overlap. Further, New Labour focuses on encouraging the role of Faith schools in education.

Until recently, German policies towards immigrants and cultural diversity was characterised by the reality-contradicting notion that Germany was not an immigration country and migrants would eventually return to their home countries. On the other hand, some social workers and pedagogues confronted with increasing numbers of migrants and their children developed a certain attitude towards this clientele that was characterised by good-will and at the same time patronising and stereotyping. There are some explicitly segregating practices, such as the categorising of immigrants or children of immigrants according to their citizenship or their non-German mother tongue and concentrating these students in extra classes or in remedial classes, a legal administrative practice in some federal states until the late 1990s. Transfer to regular schooling from these classes was difficult.

The approach found in core curricula and textbooks is dominated by a division between native Germans and immigrants and their descendants. In October 1996, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the *Länder* agreed on a resolution, regarded as the most elaborate agreement on intercultural education of its kind in Germany. Most of the *Länder* have now designed general integration concepts and started to revise their educational programmes and curricula, but this new approach is far from being widely implemented. The issue of accommodating culture-specific needs is quite contentious and often intertwined with the ideologically hardened debate about the compatibility of 'Western values' and 'Islam'. Although several federal Ministries acknowledge the importance of supporting the first languages of immigrant children and despite immigrant parents' organisations demanding respect and support of their native languages in schools, only some pilot schemes and projects have been developed, mainly in primary schools. Instead, German language acquisition is increasingly perceived as a remedy of current educational difficulties.

The Danish school system does principally not aim to keep minority ethnic groups apart or acknowledge their differences, but rather tends towards an assimilative approach. The issue of language skills is at the centre of the educational debate. Up until early 2000s Danish municipalities were obliged to offer mother-tongue teaching to minority ethnic children. This obligation was abolished in 2002 indicating a strong assimilative turn including the

implementation of monolingualism and a reference to the 'essence of common Danish characteristics'. Only some municipalities (e.g. Copenhagen) have stood by the principle of mother tongue teaching as an option. Although mother tongue teaching is still provided in certain languages, it is primarily offered as an extra curricular activity and therefore not included as an element of subject teaching and learning in school. The acquisition of Danish language among minority ethnic students is still the target of their mother tongue lessons, which is possibly the reason why bilingualism is seen as a barrier to be overcome rather than a competence to be developed. In contrast the Swedish curriculum stresses the right of multilingual children to develop their languages; students are entitled to first language instruction in compulsory schools for the purpose of building up self-esteem and dual identities. A central aim is to create homogenous and integrated schools in which pupils with different ethnic and social background may meet and create mutual tolerance.

Institutional discrimination or measures towards inclusion

The administrative practices of the schools, the selection to certain school types or the settlement segregation of minority ethnic students, as well as schools remaining ignorant about their low school attendance, all point to the role of institutional discrimination. On the other hand, there are also some measures being established to prevent social disadvantages, which often disproportionately affect ethnic minorities. Institutional discrimination is often uncovered by the structures of inter-ethnic relations and by the patterns of 'minoritisation' and 'othering' on ethnic grounds. The structures of inter-ethnic relations constructed by institutional discrimination will be the comparative theme of the discussion below.

Segregation in certain classes and schools among the selected minority ethnic groups is a matter of fact in all nine countries of study. Roma are often disproportionately allocated to special schools for students with mental disabilities irrespective their actual mental condition. In Slovakia, this takes place in the mechanisms of the excessive placement of Roma children into special schools, often by directly violating legal provisions (for instance, incomplete documentation of the selection process, lack of special examinations and absence of an expert commission). In Hungary, the Czech Republic and Romania, the vast exclusion of Roma students from majority education and their segregation in special schools or certain classes within regular schools is common place. Furthermore, ethnic segregation between schools is described as a consequence of settlement segregation (see chapter three) and the increasing competition among schools for 'non-problematic' children, conceptualised in a way that correlates with being Roma. Subsidies are allocated to schools according to the number of pupils, and schools try to avoid close downs. The less Roma students are enrolled in a school the more attractive it is. One key factor is the delineation of school districts. Non-Roma elite and middle class parents exert their influence on school administration and local decision-makers to keep certain schools 'Roma-free'. By choosing such schools or schools outside of the districts with a high percentage of Roma they are part of the 'white flight' and further segregation. At the same time, some of the background reports describe that parents of Roma pupils are often not aware of the possibility of opting for a school outside the district, or that they are content with schools with a high proportion of other Roma students as they expect better marks for their children, standards being lower and curricula reduced, or they expect less discrimination from the peers in these schools.

In some towns (e.g. in Hungary), we observe a sort of 'division of labour' between individual schools mostly attended by Roma while the remainder are dedicated to non-Roma. In other cases, schools allow the enrolment of Roma students thereby preventing the closing down of their school due to lack of students. Roma students are allocated to separate classes or to

remedial classes, which are typically of lower quality, poorly equipped, badly maintained; teachers are not specially educated and have lower expectations of the pupils' achievements. In turn, extra money some schools can receive for the improvement of schooling facilities for Roma pupils does not always have the intended effect of being spent on the Roma. In Hungary, for example, about one-third of Roma children are taught within extremely segregated conditions, and facing low quality in terms of services and equipment. Another quite recent form of exclusion observed in Hungary (and UK, see below) is the exemption of 'troublesome students' from school attendance, converting them to 'home schooling pupils'. The majority of affected students are Roma, 14-16 years of age, and often pregnant girls. Parents or the school may request the exemption; it is then the responsibility of the applicant to prepare the child for exams. In practice, directors and teachers often convince or even put pressure on parents to request the exemption.

In some countries (Denmark, France, Germany, UK), the issue of acquisition of the language of the host country and the adaptation to its 'common value' becomes increasingly important as a means of inclusion and social cohesion in educational policies. In some countries (Sweden), the issue of acquisition of the language of the host country is also important, but followed by the concept of multicultural-based 'common value'. Several measures tackle social disadvantages, which often disproportionately affect ethnic minorities. Nevertheless, irrespective of normative principles in all countries discriminatory practices and routines inherent to the educational institutions are at work.

In France, there are special 'welcoming and integration classes' for newcomers in primary and lower secondary level schooling; non-francophone pupils receive intensive study of French language for about one or two years. Officials stress the necessity of rapid immersion into regular classes. However, despite the official announcement of equity, integration into regular education turns out to be difficult/rare for those who arrive in France after the beginning of lower-secondary schooling. They experience high drop-out rates and are concentrated into the least prestigious vocational streams or into 'special needs' classes. The risk of being tracked into 'special classes' is significantly high for those who have arrived in France in the course of their primary schooling. A special provision indirectly referring to migrant youth is a support programme for schools in deprived neighbourhoods. Schools within the ZEP (*Zones d'education prioitaire*) receive funding to reduce class sizes, finance more teachers, and fund bonus payments. As the percentage of pupils with a non-French citizenship is quite high in these neighbourhoods these provisions indirectly affect them disproportionately. Qualitative studies reveal rather implicit practices of ethnic distinction and discrimination. For instance, there is the prevalent association made between North African students, poor school performance and behaving in an undisciplined way; violence and racial tension is perceived as being linked to ethnicity.

In UK, the aims of anti-discrimination and social justice conflict with organisational structures and practices in schools of social relations are contributing to ethnic division and significant ethnic segregation. Ethnic minority students are disproportionately placed in lower sets with a negative reputation; stratification according to ethnicity seems to be mutually accepted. Teachers are often unprepared to teach a culturally diverse group or they reify stereotypes; generally, there is a lack of minority ethnic teachers. We observe a 'White bias' in terms of the curriculum. The low performance of certain ethnic groups turns out to be part of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Similar to other countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania and Slovakia), the programmes and projects highlight, that race is still a signifier of relational identity policies. Cultural issues stemming from racial identities may impinge on school practices, such as the provision of a prayer room. Critics contend that the binding of a school's organisation to cultural diversity contradicts the open nature of multiculturalism.

More recently, some measures have been launched to tackle some of these barriers, such as a general programmes for improving education, with a component dedicated to minority ethnic schooling, the improvement of teacher training, and teacher recruitment or the encouragement of first languages other than English as well as English language training.

Further developments in public discourse and integration and the education policies promoted by New Labour challenge the ideas of equal opportunity and the recognition of cultural difference. First, the notion of citizenship has been reframed. Citizenship education, which has been compulsory in schools since 2002, promotes universal values without any understanding of difference or including issues like ethnic equality; racism is no longer perceived as an institutional phenomenon, but reduced to individual ignorance and prejudice. Secondly, the marketisation of the school system and the parental free choice of school challenge the principle of social justice.

In Germany, the results of the PISA-surveys have intensified the perception that German language skills and good school performances were the main criteria for successful integration of immigrants and their descendants (OECD 2006). Integration measures have therefore been focused on language acquisition, while bi- or multilingual teaching and multicultural or intercultural education is subordinated and often entirely dependent on the commitment of individual schools or teachers. As mentioned above, a powerful exclusionary force in discriminatory differentiation is the multi-track school system, which indirectly and negatively particularly affects immigrant students and children from a socially disadvantaged background. Institutional – or covert – discrimination results from routines, habits and established practices in internal school organisation. Educators and administrations often inadvertently act in a discriminatory way, simply by following the organisational logic of the system. Streaming students appears to have particularly negative effect on children from minority ethnic groups (UNHRC 2007). The system of classifying students in the last year of primary education includes an individual assessment of the student by teachers who have not been properly trained for that task (ibid). Often teachers reify ethnic stereotypes or latently feel less responsible for their immigrant students. The student's future career depends on these recommendations although parents are not obliged to follow the recommendation. The national report suggests that primary schools do discriminate against immigrant students in terms of their assessment and secondary school recommendation (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung 2006). Apparently, authorities attach disproportionate weight to the linguistic competence of students, since one of the key elements in the classification assessment is their proficiency in German language.

In Denmark, as mentioned above, emphasis is mainly put on the acquisition of the Danish language. Students of a non-Danish mother tongue – so called bilingual students – learn 'Danish as a second language' in pre-schools and in compulsory schools. Since 1993 'Danish as a second language' has been acknowledged as a subject; nevertheless, research has highlighted several problems with the subject relating to lack of resources and unqualified teachers. Further single initiatives and projects are aimed at an even distribution of minority ethnic students among the schools and the support of their performances. In Copenhagen, bilingual pupils are distributed among public schools in order to counteract segregation, to promote students and to generate encounters between students of different ethnic background. The effects of this model have not been evaluated, but it one criticism has been that minority ethnic youth are differentiated and distributed and not the 'non-ethnic' children. Other initiatives refer to the employment of bilingual staff members, the allocation of extra resources to schools with many minority ethnic children, free transport and after school activities and supplementary training of Danish majority staff members. But in Denmark too, hidden mechanisms of the school institution contribute to the discrimination of minority

ethnic youth. The official notion of culture as 'obsolete' or 'old-fashioned' results neglects culturally specific sentiments. By taking norms and values that are closer to the Danish majority experience as standard the school system creates unequal conditions and discriminates minorities. The example of Muslim boys in the Danish schools system and how they are assessed according to a perception of 'standard Danish behaviour' illustrates the effects of these hidden mechanisms. Similar developments can be observed in Swedish schools – Swedish norms are not made explicit, but being regarded as 'natural'. Similar to other countries (France, Germany, Hungary, Romania), Nordic countries also experience lower academic expectations of minority ethnic pupils among teachers leading to the educational self-fulfilling prophecy of lower performances or failure. In Sweden, although the idea is to have similar academic performance criteria in all schools, differences between schools and socioeconomic, ethnic and performance level segregation are increasing. This development is also influenced by the increased competition between schools and a corresponding increased marketisation of the educational system beyond national boundaries.

2.3. Concluding remarks

These cases illuminate the reality that irrespective of the explicit aims of educational policies in practice, the fine line between the recognition of cultural diversity and exclusion is often difficult to draw. As a result – instead of identifying single policies – an advantageous approach to avoid exclusion as well as non-recognition of difference would be fostered by continuously reflecting the processes of normalisation and 'othering' – and by implementing resources and methods to develop this reflection among teachers, parents and students. What has also become clear that several issues often depicted as being 'ethnic' are often far more complex – social conditions, residence legislation, legacies of racism and discrimination as well as institutional or organisational structures counteract equal opportunities measures among minority ethnic students and majority students.

Ultimately, holding schools solely accountably for disparities among students and ensuing social conflicts in terms of schooling appears to be insufficient. Issues in, for example, urban policy, administration and general implementation of anti-discrimination policies and intercultural opening are also of an extreme importance.

On the whole, in nine country contexts, the expectation for educational institutions to compensate for deeper, structural problems and social exclusion in society is quite high. Schools are regarded as accountable and blameworthy for a lack of social cohesion. As described in this chapter, some measures have been developed to support schools in realising these tasks, but a comprehensive strategy of implementation is still lacking. As well, the situation among schools suggests that schools are more and more exposed to competition, which will be analysed in next chapter.

3. Comparing other dimensions of differentiation within the educational systems

Bolette Moldenhawer and Jenny Kallstenius

This chapter compares the patterns of differentiation in education arising from the intersecting inequalities of socioeconomic and gender relations. It also situates the role of ethnicity among these parameters across the nine country contexts. Given the disadvantaged position of minority ethnic students within the educational systems, it compares the way in which the interplay, and influence, of multiple social categories results in differences in school performance and school careers evident among minority ethnic students. Another crucial mechanism of differentiation is linked to the regional and local distribution of schools, which relates not only to the educational system as such, but also to systems of school segregation. Finally, the chapter compares the mechanisms of school segregation, the relations between school careers and/or school segregation, and patterns of parental choice of school.

3.1. Intersecting inequalities in education

This section contains a twofold focus on the intersecting inequalities in education. Firstly, it addresses the unifying features and major differences in the tracks within the respective educational systems according to social categories such as socioeconomic background, gender, ethnicity and locality. Secondly, it addresses the rules, and schemes, for assessing school achievement and how they work. Furthermore, it describes the structure of inequalities present in education, and analyse how this structure affects the role of education as a social mobility strategy employed by different groups of ethnic minority students.

Differences in school careers

The educational system is an institution which has increased in significance, both politically and economically speaking, in all nine countries. In a global knowledge society, where investment in human capital is an important element of economic growth, the development of educational systems is extremely important for states within the context of a competitive state-system. A common pattern throughout the nine countries is that investment in education is based on a mixture of ideas and habituated teaching and learning strategies. In this case, it is primarily based on the idea of democratisation of the educational system so that the educational level of all pupils and students may be raised considerably. The whole issue of raising the educational level of all pupils and students is also based on a meritocratic idea of 'equal opportunities' in education. Even though the educational systems of the nine countries have each their own national history, structure and local practices, they are all influenced by the pressure to increase the educational level of all pupils and students. This means that they also have to treat the problem, of how to overcome existing, well-documented inequalities in education, seriously. Bearing in mind the considerable differences between, and similarities among, the democratisation processes undergone by the educational systems in question, the aim of our analysis is to compare the structure of inequalities in education. That is, what are the major manifestations of multiple differentiation within education and on entering the labour market, respectively?

To date, four broad dimensions have been the overriding foci of research conducted within the nine countries, into the school careers of students from different backgrounds. These issues are as follows: socioeconomic background – in this context assessed on the basis of parental educational and occupational standing, ethnicity, gender and residential locality. A common pattern in all countries is that socioeconomic background is significant, not only for the educational choice made by students, but also for their academic achievements at primary-, secondary- and further-education levels. Yet another common pattern is linked to this issue, namely, that the higher the educational level of their parents, the better pupils and students manage in school and in their subsequent educational career (PISA studies in all countries confirm this pattern). Obviously, there are also considerable differences between the systems of inequality present in the respective national educational systems. In some systems, primarily those of Slovakia, Romania, the Czech Republic and Hungary, the inequalities of the educational system are characterized by significant regional differentiation amongst schools and social differentiation between students with varying levels of education.

While the strong impact of socioeconomic background on school performance in Slovakia implies its inherently unequal nature, the inequality of the educational system is also characterized by a higher inter-school variance than intra-school variance. Furthermore, while the educational system in the eastern part of the country is characterised by a proportionately higher percentage of Roma children, their segregation in separate classes or schools is rather common. This, coupled with lower expectations of, and towards, these pupils and students, the inferior qualification of their teachers and their own generally lower school performance, seems to indicate that the detected inequality is also a systemic one. As described in Chapter 2 above, this can be understood as an element of institutional discrimination.

Research into regional differentiation in terms of all-over development indicates, in Romania, that particularly women with a university degree tend to do better in terms of employment within the capital region, composed of the capital city and its surroundings. In addition to ethnicity, gender is a system that continues to create inequalities within Romanian society, in terms of access to education for example. Several studies point to the fact, that the possession of identical educational levels amongst women and men is not the only factor that guarantees them equal opportunities in terms of access to sought-after positions on the labour market. In short, in addition to being influenced by gendered stereotypes and discrimination, their opportunities are still being determined by the traditional patterns of the division of labour. Data on educational level observed at the crossroads of ethnicity and gender indicates that Roma girls are relatively overrepresented amongst pupils and students who fail to complete compulsory education (39 percent) in comparison to Roma boys (29 percent). While this is clearly the case, the overall percentage of Roma who are fail to complete compulsory education is much higher (34 percent) than the percentage of non-Roma in the same situation (five percent). In short, the Roma are overrepresented amongst citizens living in poverty and unemployed, not to mention among citizens working in low-paid occupational sectors. Their socioeconomic background and employment positions comprise the structural factors responsible for the maintenance of, not to mention increase in the social inequalities between Roma and non-Roma (see UNDP 2003).

In Hungary, the mechanisms of spontaneous segregation worked very efficiently in the seemingly homogeneous and egalitarian system. Research also shows that class hierarchy in Hungarian schools correlates with the hierarchy of parental socioeconomic background. Here, family background continues to play a significant role in relation to individual differences in the school performance of pupils and consequently in relation to their school careers. The latest PISA survey points to the fact that parental education and profession have a greater impact on the educational achievements of pupils and students in Hungary compared to those

in other OECD countries. Public education reflects certain dimensions of regional and local inequalities as well. In poor urban areas, schools are unable to provide additional educational services to those outlined in the core curriculum, such as extra curricular education and extra language courses. That this is the case may, in turn, explain why regional inequalities are visible in surveys of school performance. In short, there is a vast gap between the socioeconomic position of students attending vocational education and those attending other types of secondary education, with the result that their subsequent integration into the labour market, not to mention into mainstream society is obstructed (Molnár and Dupcsik 2008).

Studies of the Programme for International Student Assessment have stressed that the Czech Republic belongs among countries where academic results are strongly dependent on the socioeconomic and cultural status of a student's family (OECD 2005). Similarly, differences in students' achievements are also ascribed to differences between schools. That this is the case is mainly due to the fact that they are attended by students from similar cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. The PISA studies also claim, that although there has been a decrease in the direct family influence on a child's aspirations in keeping with a general rise in educational level, family and socioeconomic background continue to influence the academic performance of pupils and students indirectly. Regional differentiation between schools corresponds with the social differentiation of schools, such that a relatively low socioeconomic recruitment profile corresponds with limited curricula and less qualified teachers. In general, this leads to the inferior grades and unequal schooling of Roma children, and hence to their relatively frequent failure to advance to a higher grade. In some of the other countries, such as Sweden and Denmark, which are dominated by a welfare state policy of equal opportunities and structured by the key notion of education as a fundamental social right (Marshall 1965), the structure of inequalities is primarily transformed into a transition gap between junior secondary and upper secondary education, as well as, between upper secondary education's vocational and general education tracks (see also Chapter 1). Unlike the egalitarian based educational system in Denmark and Sweden, the French educational system has a long tradition of being structured by a well-established division of elite and non-elite educational institutions (Bourdieu 1998). In recent years, the French system has been under pressure to democratise itself. Despite these fundamental differences, there are considerable similarities between France, Denmark and Sweden – for example, in how upper secondary school systems, as well as their universities, have experienced a massive influx of students from working class backgrounds whose parents and grandparents terminated their studies at the end of primary school or during lower secondary school.

Through the creation of the college unique and the variety of technological and vocational Baccalaureates available in France, this quantitative democratisation has been responsible for the relatively high levels of schooling amongst students from lower socioeconomic strata of French society, in comparison to those of their peers in other European countries. This democratisation has not, however, eliminated social inequalities in school performance and career paths. In other words, the mechanisms of social selection have become more internal to the school system, and the hierarchies that differentiate the prestigious and selective tracks from those that are seen as pathways to unemployment have become increasingly complex. The variety of extra academic options (e.g. fine arts, language learning, special needs assistance, international sections) which has multiplied within lower and upper secondary schools has created a diversified educational market and range of options, streams and types. While this market is both highly regulated through a centralised public-school system and the constraints of predetermined catchments areas, it is also the object of parental strategies and of inter-school competition. As mentioned above, the fundamental social inequalities still remain, despite the general increase in the educational level of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. While the educational level of working-class students has risen

considerably (close to 50% of them obtain the Baccalaureate degree at present), these students still do not follow the same career paths as their middle and upper-middle class counterparts. Instead, they still experience higher drop-out rates and a greater tendency to leave school without any documented qualifications in comparison to their peers from more privileged backgrounds.

Research conducted into the school careers of students from different backgrounds in Denmark has predominantly been focused on four broad issues: namely, socioeconomic background, social heritage (in this context assessed on the basis of parental educational, and occupational, standing), ethnicity and gender. Social heritage is clearly significant, not only for the educational choice made by students, but also, for their academic achievements throughout primary and secondary school education. The prevailing pattern is, that the higher the educational level of parents, the better students manage, both in school and in their subsequent educational careers. It is also clear that on average, the parents of minority ethnic students within primary and lower secondary school education tend to have a lower education, and occupy lower positions within the workforce, than do the parents of ethnic Danish students. Furthermore, minority ethnic students tend to choose shorter educational careers than do their Danish counterparts. In addition, there is an apparent connection between the expectations of pupils in relation to their educational careers and social heritage. In terms of gender, it is concluded that female minority ethnic students have greater chances of improving their performance within the educational system than do their male counterparts. Being a woman, for example, increases one's chances of commencing an upper secondary education, while at the same time reducing one's risk of dropping out of vocational training programmes (Integrationsministeriet 2004). An evaluation of the pupils' educational achievements in terms of socioeconomic and ethnic background seem best described in the PISA survey (Ragnvid 2005), including Ethnic PISA (Egelund and Tranæs 2007). Here, it is concluded that regardless of whether students are categorised on the basis of the language spoken in their homes or their ethnic background, minority ethnic students perform poorly in lower secondary school compared to Danish students. The greatest gap between the achievements of minority ethnic students and majority students is seen within the natural sciences while the smallest gap between them is in terms of their reflective abilities when reading.[20] It is also concluded, that differences in the school performance of minority ethnic students and majority students, respectively, remain present when data is controlled for social background and the educational level of the students' parents. The French case also shows that despite initial difficulties in primary school, probably due to second language acquisition, and despite higher rates of class retention, the main cause of minority ethnic students' relative success seems to lie in the fact that minority ethnic parents have much higher aspirations for their children than do their French-born counterparts. Compared to families with similar socioeconomic characteristics and whose children performed similarly upon entering the final year of primary school, minority ethnic parents have a greater tendency to wish that their children will continue their studies until the age of 20 or more, regardless of gender. High aspirations are frequent among North African and African parents, relatively frequent among Southeast Asians, less frequent among Turks and least frequent among Portuguese parents. Yet even the latter have higher aspirations for their children than do French born parents from a similar socioeconomic background. While this is also a well-known pattern in the Danish case, high aspirations are also to be found among parents with a Turkish background in Denmark. The pattern underlying the wishes of minority ethnic parents for their children is more or less identical in the Danish and French contexts. In both cases, they have a greater tendency to wish that their children will enter more prestigious academic (e.g. medicine and

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[20] Reading is divided up into 3 sub sections in PISA ethnic: information, interpretation and reflection (Egelund and Tranæs 2007, p.53).

law) and technological streams compared to their non immigrant counterparts.

In Sweden, research results indicate patterns identical to those above. Here, the social, economic and cultural conditions of families are crucial for the way in which children and youngsters experience school and for what they acquire from their schooling. The research indicates, without exception, that both academic success and upper secondary school education varies in direct relation to parental educational level and occupation, not to mention in relation to the length of residency in the case of migrants. While length of residency has a positive effect on academic achievement, the status ascribed to education, by the migrant community and its local networks, is an important motivational factor in relation to the educational hopes expressed by youngsters. Finally, the research indicates that ethnic discrimination has a negative effect on their educational prospects.

Alongside these identical patterns, there are also considerable differences between the Swedish and Danish systems. One such difference is that upper secondary education in Sweden is an integrated and compulsory system that has allowed for internal differentiation, similar to that present within the French system, where the mechanisms of social selection have become more internal and the mechanisms of differentiation increasingly complex. In Denmark, on the other hand, upper secondary education is divided between a vocational and a general education track, resulting in a more obvious and less complex pattern of differentiation. While it is obvious that students in Denmark must choose between a qualifying vocational or a general, preparatory education, students in Sweden have no option but to choose a three year general, preparatory educational programme. Even though formally speaking, all programmes qualify for higher education, there are certain programmes with a natural science profile, which are more frequently qualifying for higher education at university level than are other programmes with a social, health, or trade profile.

Bearing the corresponding relations between regional and school differentiation patterns mentioned above in mind, it is clear that an almost identical pattern exists in Germany. Here, there is a clear correlation between special needs schools for minority ethnic students and the social status of these schools in the majority of German *Länder*. It is not the amount of special treatment in itself that defines the social status of schools, but rather the social reputation that is connected to a school when the number of minority ethnic students represents more than two thirds of the entire student body. Furthermore, there is a clear tendency that also the Hauptschule are described as being 'problematic', in the sense that these schools are characterised by a high concentration of 'immigrant students and students from low socioeconomic backgrounds. According to the PISA studies (OECD 2007b), Germany has, in comparison to other industrialised countries, the most pronounced correlation between a student's social and immigrant background and their educational achievement. This remains the case, despite the fact that the correlation fell slightly between 2000 and 2006 (ibid). An analysis of different criteria clearly demonstrates the massive influence of the educational level of parents. Without going into details, the reasons for this seem quite obvious. Not only can well-educated parents with a good income support their children, intellectually and financially, they can also afford to provide them with extra tuition if necessary. Not only, can they teach their children competencies such as self discipline and optimal learning practices, they can also teach them a certain bourgeois or 'educated' habitus that matches their teachers' expectations. When it comes to the transition between school and vocational training, the category of migrant background is significantly relevant. While it took 50% of migrant students up to a period of 17 months after they finished school to find an apprenticeship position, non-migrant students found a position after a mere three months. That these differences remain stable, even when educational and economic backgrounds are taken into account, points to the discriminatory selection practices of employers in their role

as trainers. Thus, we can conclude, that migrant students are disproportionately affected by discrimination, since the categories of their migrant background and socioeconomic position often coincide.

Differences in school achievement

As already mentioned in chapter one, there are obvious differences in the construction of the school system across the nine countries under study. There are differences related to whether or not a particular school system is a multi-track system, such as that in Germany where tracking happens as early as at the age of 10, and where mobility between school types is minimal, or an integrated education system such as that of the Nordic countries, characterised by the absence of tracking throughout compulsory schooling. Following on from this, it is evident that the kinds of differences that appear at the educational system level are transformed into corresponding differences in the way in which testing and evaluation systems are developed. Thus, as a result of the dominant idea of equality in education, Denmark and Sweden do not have a tradition of extensive testing of students. This is still the case, although governance in Denmark has been replaced by a more goal- and result-oriented system, in which central government outlines the overall goals for syllabi, subject learning, evaluation and quality control. In short, student performance in schools is assessed in a variety of different ways throughout the nine countries. In the United Kingdom, student performance is assessed in terms of the academic progress made between four Key Stages: class banding in terms of ability, achievement on the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) exams and A-levels, as well as by attendance and exclusion rates. Research conducted into the achievement of different groups of students has focused predominantly on three broad issues: gender, socioeconomic position and ethnicity. It is a well documented fact, that girls outperform boys in schools. It has been suggested that the reasons for this difference in educational achievement include: an 'anti-achievement culture' among some boys; male peers disrupting schoolwork; the low expectations of boys; teaching practices that prioritise the learning styles of girls; not to mention a loss of motivation among boys engendered by the decline of traditional masculine jobs, and finally the way in which pupils are grouped during class. Research conducted into the effects of social class reveals, quite predictably, that social class is the primary determinant of variations in educational achievement, followed by ethnicity and gender, in that order. Similarly, research on the performance of minority ethnic groups has revealed a complex picture in terms of educational achievement. Pupils and students from the Caribbean, and from Pakistani and Bangladeshi minority populations, achieve lower average levels of attainment than do their peers with a white majority background. Contrary to this, pupils and students from an Indian, African Asian, Chinese or African background, are more likely to achieve higher academic qualifications. These trends can be found at both lower and higher educational levels. Yet again, research indicates that some ethnic groups, such as Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, are extremely polarized internally, comprising both highly qualified and unqualified students. Finally, the research at hand points to the fact that all ethnic groups, with the possible exception of Black Caribbeans, have increased their share of admission to higher education since 1990.

In terms of the correlation between gender ratios, minority ethnic background and school achievements in Germany, identical gender differences are to be found amongst minority ethnic students and majority students. However, it is also clear that both male and female migrant students perform poorly in comparison to their non-migrant peers. Generally speaking, while boys are more likely to repeat a class than are girls, both boys and girls with a migrant background tend to repeat a class more frequently than do their non-migrant peers.

The proportion of male students who drop out of school prior to graduation is significantly higher than that of female students. However, both male and female students with foreign citizenship are twice as likely to leave school prior to graduation as are their German peers. If we take a closer look at the modification of differences within the migrant background category, we find, that a significantly greater proportion of students from the EU-countries, East Asia, USA and the American continent achieve the prerequisite grades for entrance to University than is the case for their German peers. The opposite is true in the case of students from Turkey, Italy, and the states of former Yugoslavia, as only half of them achieve Arbitur compared to German students. The relevance of student nationality decreases substantially when the educational level, income and occupational position of their parents is taken into account. In this case, there would no longer be a significantly higher proportion of EU, American and East Asian students in comparison to German students eligible for university level education. Also, there would be a decline in the disadvantages of students from e.g. Italy, Turkey, Morocco and Eastern and Middle-Eastern-Europe. In fact, students from Vietnam and other South Asian countries, Greece, Spain and Portugal would perform even better than their German peers from the same socioeconomic position. However, in countries like Denmark, Sweden and France, the differentiation of achievement among students from different socioeconomic backgrounds, gender and ethnicity reveals, a similar entrance pattern to university level education. In short, students with a middle or upper middle class background, and women and majority students in particular, are represented significantly more frequently in the student body gaining entrance to these university education levels.

Thus, it is clear that there are considerable differences indeed across the nine countries in question, such as in terms of how the interplay of multiple social categories, namely, ethnicity, socioeconomic position, gender and locality affect differences in the school performance of pupils and students. Although the social backgrounds of their parents are significant – not only for their choice of education, but also for their academic achievements in primary and secondary education – in countries like France, Germany, Denmark and Sweden, we find a diversified picture in which some minority ethnic students succeed and some fail to perform optimally. In countries like Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Romania, the interplay of multiple social categories seems to have an extreme impact on the career prospects of Roma students. In Slovakia, for example, a 2002 survey demonstrates the presence of significant differences in the school performance of children from SDE who represent one of the three main categories of students with special educational needs. The proportion of early drop-outs, or students repeating grades, is much higher among students from SDE. In general, the higher the grade, the lower the proportion of children with special educational needs. This picture is the same among Roma students. While they represent more than 18 percent of the total number of students in grade one, when we take a look at the final grade their proportion of the student body is down to five percent. In addition, Roma students also comprise the vast majority of students who complete the compulsory 10 years of school attendance during, or right at the end of, elementary school – a fact that indicates their repeated enrolment in at least one grade during their school career. In Hungary, the rate of Roma children completing primary school has increased significantly in the past decade, but at the same time the education level of the non-Roma has also increased, which means that the difference between the Roma and non-Roma population has not changed. Moreover, there has been a growth of segregation within the primary school sector, deepening the existing inequalities of the education system. Roma accompanied by socially disadvantaged non-Roma are those with the worst study conditions, both in terms of school equipment and the poor professional competencies of their teachers. They meet lower expectations, and their education is clearly worth less than that of majority pupils and students. Due to this fact, coupled with their weak school performance, their further education is rather problematic. They often end up attending vocational training schools that, if at all completed, prepare them

for professions not valued by the labour market. In 1997, 62% of Roma children were admitted to vocational (apprenticeship) training schools, nine percent to vocational secondary and almost four percent to general secondary school. Two years later, these rates were 57%, 15% and 4%, respectively. At the same time, it is estimated that about 10% of Roma children fail to continue their education to the secondary level, and that a significant percentage of those enrolled in vocational training programmes drop out early on (36% in grade nine, and 35% in grade 10). There are various reasons for this, including: poverty within the family, difficulties related to commuting or staying at boarding school, low motivational levels, early marriage or childbirth, and the inability of schools to handle new problems related to the increasing number of disadvantaged children attending them. In short, the increasing presence of Roma children within secondary education cannot be considered a real success story. While a growing number of non-Roma children attend school with the result that they subsequently move on to relatively well-paid and secure professions, Roma children, in spite of being better educated than their parents, still have little chance of escaping from their inherited deprivation. In Romania, there are discrepancies in the educational level of the population along ethnic lines. Following this, the 2002 census indicates that of the Roma population as a whole, 34% have not graduated from any kind of school at all, and that a further 34% of these individuals come from rural areas. According to official sources, it is estimated that approximately 75% of Roma children in the Czech Republic have been educated in special schools. Furthermore, it has been estimated that approximately 7.3% of Roma youth are enrolled in secondary education, while only 1.2% of the Roma youth in a particular cohort is found to complete secondary school successfully.

3.2. School segregation

A comparison of the participating countries reveals the existence of several mechanisms of segregation within the educational systems. Each primary, lower-secondary and upper-secondary school in France has been attributed a specific geographical recruitment area, which means that the home address of each pupil determines which school he or she must attend. Germany has a similar school district system. In France, the system is an administrative tool which not only makes it possible for the authorities to predict the size and distribution of the school population, but is also a way of ensuring a relative social mix amongst the student population. The German system is first and foremost an attempt to provide equal educational chances to all pupils regardless of their social background. In both cases, evidence indicates that upper and middle class families have found ways to circumvent existing restrictions and districting systems. In both France and Germany, it is possible to circumvent the school district system if the family registers at a secondary address outside their current district of residence. Another way to avoid the local schools in France is to choose an educational option, for instance a particular language, which is not offered by the local school. Finally, a family can choose the private school sector which is not subjected to the constraints of school districting. In Germany evidence shows that upper and middle class families have developed a similar strategy, in that they often choose Christian schools for their children. Just as in France, these schools are not subjected to the constraints of school districting, without being religious. The system of school districts has been criticised in both countries as it is plausible to assume that it reinforces the existing social and ethnic segregation which is due to the considerable differences in residential opportunities of, and housing segregation amongst, the local community.

Consequently, the school district system can have a segregating effect, in the sense that pupils from different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds enrol in different schools as a result of

housing segregation, so that it is mainly upper and middle class parents who have the means to develop strategies to circumvent the restrictions. But the system can also be internally segregated, in the sense that schools located in socio-economically and ethnically segregated districts can result in homogenised school environments.

Free school choice is a formal parental right in the Czech Republic, Denmark, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Sweden and the UK. A geographical division in school districts exists in most of the nine countries, whereby any given school is obliged by law to give preference to pupils permanently resident within its particular school district - at primary and lower secondary education levels, at least. In many cases, such as in the Czech Republic for example, a large number of parents choose to enrol their children in the local school connected to their residential district, regardless of this possibility. In discussing the formal freedom of choice in education, it is extremely important to cast light on the difference between formal equal rights and actual equal rights (SOU 2004). Even if all parents have the formal right to choose whatever school they like for their children, both inside and outside their residential district, research evidence confirms the fact that factors such as educational level, migration status, and knowledge of the majority language not only influence the tendency to use, but also the tendency to be informed of, this right.

The present situation in Slovakia is a good example of this, in that Roma parents rarely choose a school outside of the socially disadvantaged and marginalized district in which they live, even when they have the formal right to. In fact, most of them are not even aware that they possess this right. As discussed in the case of France and Germany, evidence shows that here again, it is middle and upper class parents who tend to develop strategies for circumventing the school district system. Evidence from Hungary and Sweden (Bunar and Kallstenius 2006, 2007; Kallstenius 2007) shows that to a large extent it is the same groups that actively employ free school choice to leave local schools in what are socially, and often immigrant dense, disadvantaged areas. The policy of free choice in Sweden has resulted in an increased socioeconomic and ethnic segregation of schools, at both primary and secondary educational levels (SOU 2000, p.39; Solverket 2003; Söderström and Uusitaio 2005). When this is related to the distribution of pupils with a minority ethnic background, and second generation youth, the conclusion is that socially disadvantaged schools situated in the suburban areas become increasingly segregated as the best qualified pupils with a minority ethnic background, often with a comparably higher socioeconomic family background, apply to middle class, 'Swede-dominated', schools in more well-off inner city areas (Kallstenius 2007).

A similar tendency has been observed in Hungary where the number of segregated schools, with a majority of Roma pupils, has increased within the last two decades. This is partly due to increased residential segregation, and partly due to the fact that parents in a comparably more advantaged position (e.g. from a majority and middle class background) increasingly tend to choose not to enrol their children in schools attended by a large proportion of Roma pupils. This development, where majority pupils enrol in other schools when the proportion of minority ethnic pupils increases, has also been observed in France. This so-called white fight (or middle-class fight) tends to contribute to the concentration of socially disadvantaged minority ethnic youth in the least reputable school establishments. Another aspect of the issue of free choice is linked to the practices of the receiving schools. Prior to 2007, there were no regulations in Hungary regarding the enrolment of children resident outside a given school district. This meant that in actual practice, the schools could freely select which pupils they wanted to enrol. The same is the case for Slovakia, the Czech Republic and Romania. Evidence from Sweden also shows that pupils with a minority ethnic background resident in socially disadvantaged areas, experience discriminating practices and attitudes from teachers,

ethnic Swede pupils and their parents, after being enrolled in 'Swede-dominated' middle class schools situated in more well-off areas (Kallstenius 2007).

Another aspect of school segregation is the existence of different school types which characterise the educational systems in several of the participating countries. Evidence shows that pupils with different socioeconomic and ethnic backgrounds, and gender, enrol in different types of schools. There is a divide in the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Hungary, Slovakia and the UK between public schools financed through taxes and government grants (and therefore free of charge), and private (sometimes called independent) schools partly funded by government grants and partly by fees, or donations, paid by the parents. In Romania and Sweden education is free of charge. Tuition fees may prevent pupils from lower socioeconomic backgrounds from enrolling, and evidence from Germany indicates that low attendance figures of migrant students in private schools, suggesting that it is quite possible that high tuition fees present serious obstacles many migrant families. As discussed earlier, evidence from France and Germany for instance, shows that middle and upper class families resort to private schools, despite them being liable to fees, in order to circumvent the attendance of disadvantaged minority ethnic students.

Also, in countries like Denmark and Sweden a variety of independent schools exist which attract different groups of pupils. In Denmark, for instance, the independent schools can be roughly divided into the following categories: small schools in rural areas, religious or congregational schools (Catholic or Danish mission schools), so called progressive free schools; schools with a particular pedagogical objective (e.g. Waldorf), German minority schools and immigrant schools (Muslim schools). In terms of differentiation and segregation based on gender, evidence from all participating countries reveals a clear pattern whereby girls and boys are seen to enrol in different educational tracks. To a large extent girls can be found in the more study oriented education programmes at the secondary educational level, and boys in the more vocationally oriented programmes. The observed gender patterns interplay with ethnical differentiation, and the resulting comparison points to the fact that minority ethnic males are to be found on vocational oriented educational programmes to a larger extent than male peers from a majority background. While in some cases, these different educational tracks can co-exist within the same school building, as in Sweden for instance, in other cases they are divided into different schools or different types of schools, as is the case in Denmark, Germany and Hungary. Furthermore, evidence from Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) reveals the existence of a system where especially Roma pupils are enrolled in different kinds of special schools for children with light mental handicaps, in some cases without being properly diagnosed, and often due to assumed problems related to their socially disadvantaged environment and insufficient knowledge of the majority language.

Apart from pointing at the administrative practices (e.g. school districts), implementation of policies (e.g. freedom of choice) and organizational structures (e.g. different types of schools) the comparison points towards another dimension of segregation, i.e. discriminating and segregating practices within schools and classrooms. Moldenhawer and Kallehave (2008) discuss the occurrence of ethnicity based differentiation at both primary and lower secondary educational levels in Denmark and Sweden, where pupils are sorted and differentiated between according to their teachers' understanding of children. Similar evidence is reported from not only the other countries in the western half of the European continent, but also from Central and Eastern Europe. The schooling systems create unequal conditions for pupils when school practice is based upon values and norms closer to the experience base of majority children than to that of minority ethnic students or pupils with an immigrant, or second generation immigrant, background. These practices can be carried out directly or

indirectly, not to mention intentionally or un-intentionally. For instance, evidence from Slovakia shows that schools in some cases develop apparently objective criteria based on performance for participating in curricular or extracurricular activities. Yet, the standard is put so that it is plausible to assume that most Roma pupils cannot fulfil them. In other cases, such as in Denmark and Sweden, evidence points at the occurrence of a discrepancy between the intentions and practice of teachers. Although teachers express a strong desire to include minority ethnic pupils, this does not come into effect in practice, as the grade criteria acknowledged within the schooling system result in a differentiation of pupils (Gilliam 2008; Runfors 2003).

3.3. The interplay of segregation, inter ethnic relations and parental choice

These different mechanisms of school segregation interplay in a complex pattern, whereby housing and school segregation, inter ethnic relations and parental choice of school are connected. To illustrate this interaction the situation in the UK and in Slovakia will be analysed in more detail. These two cases illustrate the complex interplay of factors that are greatly important for minority ethnic youth and second generation immigrants on the western half of the European continent, and the Roma youth of Central and Eastern Europe. Evidence shows that social and ethnic school segregation has increased between 1994 and 2004 in the UK (e.g. Allen and Vignolles 2007; Goldstein and Noden 2003). One explanation is that the increased emphasis on parental choice policies can result in pupils from different ethnic backgrounds being separated from each other (Tomlison 2008). However, parental choice is not the only reason that can explain the increase of segregation since evidence also points towards the fact that many parents support moves towards greater social cohesion (Weekes-Bernard 2007). Thus, the uneven spread of children from different social backgrounds (Jenkins et al 2006), the increasing divisions of income and wealth and levels of poverty, housing policies, patterns of immigration, and experiences of discrimination and racism may be other factors underlying the increased segregation witnessed in British schools (Weekes-Bernard 2007).

Another important factor behind increased school segregation is the marketisation of the educational system. In many Western European countries, Denmark, Sweden and the UK for example, the education systems have become increasingly marketised, implying an increased emphasis on parental choice and a situation in which parents compete with one another for school placements, not to mention an increased competition between diversified types of schools with a view to attracting pupils. The introduction of market policies in education seems to exacerbate the hierarchy among schools and the most desirable schools, often located in well-off districts, are the least likely to be attended by pupils from lower social, and minority ethnic, backgrounds. Evidence suggests that the increased parental choice and school diversity has led to a 'white flight' among schools with large numbers of minority ethnic pupils (Tomlinson 2005).

To facilitate parental choice, league tables have been made available to enable comparison of different schools. This system has introduced a so called 'naming and shaming' policy for schools who in many cases have a large proportion of minority ethnic pupils (Parekh 2000), which consequently decreases the enrolment of pupils with higher socioeconomic and ethnic majority backgrounds. Fry et al (2008) conclude that school segregation does not simply follow income or housing segregation, but rather from a complex interplay of factors in differing local contexts including geographical location, social class, the history of particular schools, the impact of marketisation and the emphasis on parental choice (Burgess and Wilson 2004). Organisational structures within the educational system and practices in

schools create patterns of social relations which can be viewed as contributing to ethnic differentiation and segregation. One element is the educational tracking that tends to lead to minority ethnic students being placed in socially disadvantaged schools with a reputation for behavioural problems. Another element is it can be argued that there is a majority bias within the curriculum (e.g. Singh 1987). Finally, teachers are often unprepared to deal with multi-cultural school environments and the occurrence of antagonisms they encounter among different minority ethnic groups (e.g. Pearce 2005). Evidence shows that teachers tend to stereotype on the basis of pupils' ethnic group where some groups are seen to possess high abilities and others low (Mac an Ghaill 1993). This suggests an educational self-fulfilling prophesy which impacts on both expectations and performance.

School segregation in Slovakia is often a direct consequence of housing segregation and the delineation of school districts which in many cases cuts off Roma settlements from the rest of the municipality. Several Slovakian reports point at the discrimination and segregation practices related to Roma pupils in Slovakia (Tomatová 2004; ERRC 2004; Amnesty International 2007; OSI 2008). Evidence shows that segregation in many cases is a consequence of demographic changes within local communities. A higher fertility rate amongst the Roma population in combination with a stagnant or sometimes decreasing rate of majority population fertility rates can change the proportion of Roma children located in mixed, non-segregated, housing districts. This development has proved to trigger two modes of segregation within the educational system. Firstly, in some cases the Roma pupils enrolled into a school can be clustered in special classes, apparently objectively justified by different school performance and language and behavioural deficits. Secondly, as a consequence of the development within the district the local schools can become 'Romanised'. Evidence shows that if the proportion of Roma pupils in a given school reaches a critical level, non-Roma parents tend to enrol or transfer their children to a school outside their district. Another overt manifestation of segregation in Slovakia is the disproportionate placement of Roma children in special schools for children with a light mental handicap. Even though it is prohibited, evidence shows that these practices occur without mental disability having been properly diagnosed. Consequently, Roma children who for different reasons are unable to keep up with the workload, and in many cases due to the hostile social environment, are being segregated from the regular system of education (Tomatová 2004). Other, more covert mechanisms of differentiation and segregation have been proven to take place in schools which appear to be comparably more integrated. School administrators and teachers can employ segregation practices within the school, for instance in class enrolment and participation at curricular and extracurricular activities for instance by developing objective criteria, mostly based on performance, where it is plausible to expect that most or even all Roma children will not fulfil them, and therefore are excluded. Two examples, Slovakia and the UK, illustrate the interplay of occurring overt and covert mechanisms and manifestations of school segregation within the participating countries. In the case of the UK, evidence shows that the increased emphasis on parental choice and the diversity of different types of schools can result in increased social and ethnic segregation. In the case of Slovakia, evidence shows how the use of parental choice and strategies to circumvent local schools with a large proportion of Roma pupils, can increase the segregation of Roma pupils, both in segregated Roma settlements and in apparently more integrated areas. Both cases contain examples of both direct and indirect differentiation, discrimination and segregating practices within the educational systems. In short, the pupils who are affected by the negative side of this development are to a large extent, socially disadvantaged minority ethnic and Roma children and youth.

4. State of the art in research on minority ethnic youth in education

Claire Schiff

This chapter aims to present a summary of the most significant research findings concerning minority ethnic education and differentiation in education. By synthesising existing knowledge on patterns of schooling and education of minority ethnic children and youth and intersecting inequalities in education, the chapter provides a knowledge base of the most important empirical findings. It also identifies leading theories and research traditions of studying inequalities in education according to ethnicity across the national context. In the final part of this chapter, several under-investigated issues are identified that concern: the role of teachers, inter-ethnic relations and the experiences of non-minority students in segregated school settings, studies of policy impact and of continuities and changes in public discourse, and transnational studies of schooling strategies among minority ethnic students.

4.1. Major questions raised in the reports on the schooling of minority ethnic pupils

What are the determining factors of differences in education between minority and majority students?

Describing the actual differences between the educational careers of majority and minority ethnic pupils is a relatively straightforward exercise when reliable data is available. However, determining the major causes of such differences is much more complex and hazardous. The background reports present four major causes which can be considered to influence academic outcomes, and which have been central or marginal within the literature, depending on the national contexts and academic traditions. Schematically one can distinguish between approaches which emphasise the role of culture (essentially limited to minority ethnic culture), that of social class, of local context (with the issue of residential segregation being central here) or of prejudice and discrimination. While these various factors are certainly closely linked in reality, the material presented varies according to the extent to which these intersections are examined.

Perhaps because of the strong influence of Marxist theory, social scientists in countries such as Hungary and France have traditionally tended to view lower academic achievement of minority ethnic pupils as a result of structural social inequalities, while research in countries such as Germany and Denmark have placed more emphasis on the role of the culture of immigrants, alternatively viewed as an obstacle to integration or as an intrinsically valuable source of identification to which the majority population should be sensitised. In the Romanian context, where segregation and discrimination against the Roma is particularly widespread, the question of the effects of social class and minority ethnic culture on educational outcome appears relatively secondary for this very reason. In the UK, which has a large and diversified body of literature on ethnicity and education, the various factors influencing minority ethnic educational outcome have been treated in a more integrated manner.

Several of the nine country reports stress the need to go beyond the sterile debates which see culture and social structure as major yet mutually exclusive causes for inequality, insisting on the innovative and more nuanced approaches which more fully examine individual agency and experience as well as specific local and institutional contexts.

To what extent are schools responsible for inequalities in education?

Several of the country reports raise the question of the extent to which schools have a decisive affect on the educational attendance and performance of minority ethnic pupils given the larger national contexts and the fact that discrimination, especially in the workplace, works to undermine the value of education. Recognising the fact that schools are a locust of interaction between the above mentioned factors (e.g. cultural, social, residential), the question here is whether the collective efforts of the educational community can overcome on their own problems such as segregation, early school drop-out and academic underachievement.

In the Romanian case, many factors which are relatively independent of the educational quality of the schools, such as early marriage of Roma women, lack of tangible benefits of schooling, very poor living conditions, the need to earn money and fear of being bullied by majority children, combine to make families sceptical about the advantages of prolonging their children's schooling. In answer to the question, the UK report presents evidence from studies on schools, which have managed to increase the success of minority ethnic students through special efforts to collaborate with representatives of the communities and through the promotion of racial equality. In France, where the tendency is to protect and isolate schools from the influences of families, communities and neighbourhoods (not only in disadvantaged settings), initiatives have been taken to open certain very prestigious and highly selective classes in the most disadvantaged and segregated schools, preparing students to enter into the *grandes écoles*, which traditionally produce the nation's elite. The impact of such initiatives on the rest of the student body has yet to be examined.

What are the major patterns of segregation affecting the education of minority ethnic students?

Segregation is a major theme in most of the country studies. Several different forms of segregation are mentioned, the first one being residential segregation. Although there seems to be a consensus in the literature from the various countries pointing to the negative consequences of the residential segregation of ethnic minorities on their concentration in lower quality schools, the extent of the concentration depends somewhat on the manner in which pupils are allocated to secondary schools (districting, free choice, distinct minority ethnic/majority schools). It can be noted here that recent PISA findings show no negative correlation between the degree of concentration of pupils of immigrant origin and the extent of the gap between minority ethnic and majority educational performances (OECD 2006).

An interesting and complex question is raised around the issue of within school ethnic segregation between more or less prestigious classes, sections and streams. Better access of minority ethnic pupils to mainstream education may go hand in hand with more insidious forms of internal segregation and differentiation. Both the French and the Nordic background reports point to evidence which shows that the democratisation of secondary schools and the access of all students to prolonged education have been accompanied by increased segregation within schools and between different schools. In a similar fashion, Central and

Eastern European country reports show that there is an important debate over the positive or negative effect of policies which are aimed at integrating the school system with regards to the attendance of Roma pupils. While they are at a higher risk of being rejected and bullied by non-Roma in integrated schools, they do seem to benefit from better quality education.

Is there a systematic disadvantage in educational performance of minority ethnic students?

The particular difficulties faced by pupils belonging to minority ethnic groups are the central concerns of most of the studies presented in the account of the literature. Several accounts indicate however that this 'disadvantage' is neither absolute nor is it constant over time. Some country reports give details on the particular hierarchy of educational performance among the variety of ethnic minorities within the given country, occasionally stressing that there are certain groups who perform at or above the national average (Vietnamese in Denmark, South Asians in UK) and that there is even more internal differentiation among ethnic minorities than within the majority population (France).

Beyond the previously mentioned fact that both Roma and second generation immigrant pupils have tended to follow the general trend towards more prolonged schooling over the past few decades, several country reports stress that the educational performance of minority ethnic pupils improves over the course of their careers (France, Denmark). Generation or age at arrival is also shown to have some counter intuitive effects, with instances of second generation immigrant pupils performing worse than those of the same origin who immigrated at a young age (Pakistani in Denmark and Algerians in France for instance).

4.2. Under-investigated issues

The wide array of countries participating in the consortium and their differences with regards to the extent of the available literature on issues of ethnicity and education makes it difficult to formulate observations about under-investigated issues which hold true for all cases. There are, however, several analytical and empirical issues which are pointed to as needing further study by a number of country teams. We have taken the liberty to add to those issues mentioned in the reports our own observations about under-investigated issues as derived from what is not mentioned in the reports.

The role of teachers

It appears that relatively few studies have been carried out with the aim of analysing the impact that teachers may have on the educational performance and identities of minority ethnic pupils. Several of the reports by new EU Member States point to the need for further research on the attitudes, prejudices and representations among teachers of their Roma students. The question of whether the training received by teachers is adapted to the particular needs and demands of minority ethnic students is also raised by several country reports. Another connected issue, which is not addressed in the country reports, is that of the impact of teachers of immigrant or minority ethnic origin. What are the conditions which make the presence of minority ethnic teachers a positive factor of success and identification for students and what are those which tend to make of the presence of such teachers an additional factor of relegation? Moreover, the issue of interethnic relations among teachers has, to our knowledge, rarely been addressed.

Inter-ethnic relations and the experiences of non- minority students in segregated school settings

From the country reports it appears that the vast majority of studies on the schooling of ethnic minorities consider the schooling of minority ethnic youth from the point of view of their experience as a minority ethnic group which is in a subordinate position in relation to a dominant majority group (whites, non-immigrants, non-Roma, etc.). The very relative nature of ethnic segregation and the frequent co-existence of a variety of ethnic groups in disadvantaged neighbourhoods and schools raise the issue of the nature of relations between the various ethnic groups, particularly when they constitute the majority of a school's population. Only the Romanian country report mentions the tensions which arise from the co-presence of Roma communities and Hungarians, who each have their own differing claims and expectation regarding integration and recognition. With the possible exception of the UK, little has been said about the particular experience of pupils who, while belonging to the countries majority group, end up being a numerical minority ethnic within certain schools of disadvantaged urban areas. Another seldom studied topic is that of differences of the perception of inter-ethnic relations by various groups of minority ethnic students, and how this is related to their school and education carrier.

Studies of policy impact and of continuities and changes in public discourse

Several background reports point to the scarcity of research on the impact of policy. This is pointed out on a very practical level by several of the Central and Eastern European country reports when mentioning the difficulties faced by school personnel when implementing the integration of Roma pupils in the presence of a hostile local population. The German country report poses the question in broader terms by asking what may be the major historical legacies of immigration and educational policies (or the lack thereof) over the past fifty years when observing the present day situation of immigrant pupils. The logical assumption is that the inequalities observed today within schools can also be explained by the types of constraints which previous generations have had to face. The problem of the social reproduction of inequalities in a context where the meaning of those inequalities have changed is particularly evident in France where the issue of 'discrimination' has become as important as that of 'integration' in discourses on immigrants and ethnic minorities. This reveals important changes both in the academic approaches to the 'problem of minority ethnic education' and in the perception that individuals have of their condition. Some specialists in France address the question of racial and ethnic discrimination as a subjective framework through which minority ethnic pupils make sense of their school trajectories more than as a cause of inequalities (Oberti 2007).

Transnational studies of schooling strategies among minority ethnic students

It appears that relatively few studies of transnational migration and education have been carried out. The transnational perspective is also crucial to understanding how minority ethnic groups conceive their immigrant society and the 'national' schooling system, and how they manage within these. This perspective is also crucial to understanding how the education strategies are structured by a widening and varied set of socioeconomic and cultural conditions across local and national boundaries, and how employing education as a social mobility strategy has to do with the opportunities minority ethnic groups have to convert economic capital into schooling and education, and future symbolic capital.

5. Establishing a comparative framework for the study of minority ethnic groups in Education

Bolette Moldenhawer

The aim of this chapter is to synthesise the implications of the comparative analysis of differentiation in education. Furthermore, it draws out the wider theoretical, methodological and research implications, thereby providing a knowledge base for the development of a cross-national explanation of the structure of inequalities in education informed by ethnicity.

The purpose of Chapters 1-3 has been to provide an in-depth description of the considerable differences, and similarities, that exist between the country specific educational systems. Typically, they are visible at the levels of institutional structure, economic ownership, financing, and school environment. The purpose of chapter 4 has been to synthesise knowledge production, by identifying the leading theories and research traditions employed in studying the significance of ethnicity in producing, and reproducing, the educational inequalities witnessed across the nine national contexts.

Contrary to the above, the central purpose of this chapter is to describe, and analyse, the implications of the foregoing comparative analyses and the results hereby obtained. The key question is: How the foregoing analyses of the similarities and differences between the nine countries can be harnessed in an attempt to find common explanations across the single country studies? In other words, how are we to understand the significant differences, not to mention similarities, between the various dimensions of the education systems in, and across, the countries in question. In the first section of this chapter, we unfold the contextual and cross national comparative research traditions with a view to discussing the comparative approach employed in the foregoing analyses (Jensen 2000; Moldenhawer 2005). This in turn provides an opportunity, in the second section, to discuss – methodologically and theoretically – the extent to which the categories of ethnicity, social background, gender and locality, are equally important factors in explaining differences in school performance, and educational opportunities, observed throughout the countries in question. Following on from this, the central questions are: how are these categories constructed in the individual countries, and how are they, as categories, structurally connected with other meaningful categories in the overall system of relations? The underlying reason for this is that the use of a comparative perspective tends to indicate that while a particular social phenomenon is thought to have a common meaning across different countries, in actual fact, it may possess very different meanings, and effects, at different points in history and in different historical contexts. The third, and last, section contains a summary of our evaluation regarding the knowledge that must be developed with a view to developing a cross-national explanation of the structure of inequalities in education arising from, and informed by, ethnicity.

5.1. Contextual and cross-national comparative analyses

Scientifically speaking, comparison is basically about noting and proving which systematic methods are involved in the production of knowledge. The comparative method's point of departure in terms of the research at hand, is the study of the way in which 'the schooling of minority ethnic groups' is produced, and reproduced, in relation to the structure of the educational system and the 'intersecting dimensions of differentiation'. In this light, the comparative approach is to be understood as a continuous comparison between the complex

social conditions that contribute to the production of unequal educational opportunities amongst minority ethnic groups, across the differences and similarities that exist between the national educational systems of Europe. However, the national education systems themselves are complex entities, historically affected and influenced by the surrounding society's political, economic and cultural aspects. The comparative approach is about determining (in this case, educational) systems in all their complexity, while at the same time being able to carry out a theoretically substantiated demarcation of the elements inherent to the system., which in turn, comprise the object of a given field of study. According to Winther-Jensen (2004), the raison d'être of comparative pedagogy is to be found, precisely, in the fact, that it "contributes to illustrate the variations and nuances in this interplay" (ibid. 26), i.e. the reciprocal relations between the national educational systems and their surrounding culture and society. In comparing a phenomenon across national boundaries, we are presented with an increased opportunity to understand the normal workings of that phenomenon. According to this understanding of comparative pedagogy, one compares phenomena that are already summed up pedagogical concepts, and therefore situated on a higher level of abstraction. The benefit of this approach is, that the pedagogical concepts achieve greater conceptual weight, when one compares disparate entities, occurrences and effects of that, which is encompassed by a given concept.

According to Broadfoot (1999), comparative studies can be classified into five categories according to their degree of theoretical generalisation. The first group is comprised of 'single-site studies', including studies which provide detailed empirical documentation of educational phenomena in a particular, typically national, setting. The second group entails 'comparative contextualised case-studies', or studies which provide single-site studies contextualised in terms of the broader international debates on, not to mention theoretical frameworks and empirical accounts of, the same issue. Group three pertains to 'comparative empirical studies', such as studies which are explicitly comparative in design, based on a coherent rationale for their selection in order to cast light on their 'constants and contexts'. Group four refers to 'theoretically informed comparative studies' – studies in which the contexts being compared are themselves theorised aspects of wider social science debates on the relationship between system and action, power and control, culture and the creation of meaning. The last group consists of 'theoretically informing comparative studies', or studies which use comparative research to inform theory (ibid. 24).

The contextual and cross-national approaches are theoretically inspired by social science. This entails the fact that institutions, individuals and social categories cannot act as point of departure for comparative analyses. On the contrary, institutions, individuals and social categories must be considered within the framework of more predominant, and fundamental, concepts and basic assumptions regarding state, society and their variations; e.g. a shift away from an individual- or institutional-focus, to a focus on society within comparative analyses (Durkheim 2000; Bourdieu 1998). In relation to the following analysis, this means that the national and local conditions regarding the situation of ethnic minorities within the education system may be understood in terms of concepts of both the social roles played by the education system, i.e. integration, selection, qualification and socialisation, and the social differentiation inherent to society. Thus, the comparative method of analysis may be established on the basis of a theoretically informed approach, comprising components that refer to each other in a system of relations between social differentiation within society and the educational system's institutional, governing and economic dimensions.

5.2. A theoretically informed comparative analysis of differentiation in education

The comparative analysis described in the above chapters, has primarily consisted of the contribution of 'comparative contextualised case-studies', in which the aim has been to provide detailed empirical documentation of the complex patterns of differentiation within education throughout the nine country contexts. Furthermore, this analysis has also been contextualised in terms of the single-country settings themselves – both nationally and locally – as well as in terms of broader, cross-national, empirical accounts of the issue. The main question in the following is, whether or not the categories incorporated in the analysis of the opportunity criteria available to ethnic minorities within the educational system – i.e. via their socioeconomic background, gender, ethnicity, community, integration or segregation – mean the same throughout the nine country contexts, as explanations of both the schooling of ethnic minorities and of education as a medium of social mobility. The question is answered, by means of a discussion of the manner in which these categories are bound to one another in a system of relations in the countries under study. This approach is theoretically and methodologically grounded by the notion that the explanatory strength of cross-national comparative studies grows proportionally in line with the fact that causal relations between categories are made the object of a structural analysis of how they keep referring to other categories within a given system of relations.

We have analysed the following three components inherent to the educational system: institutional, governing and socioeconomic dimensions. We have also analysed what they mean as explanations of the differences in educational opportunities evident among minority ethnic and majority pupils. We have proven how the educational system, with differing emphasis, is divided according to a three-stage principle (preschool, elementary and lower secondary education, and upper secondary education). We have also proven the fact that the age at which children are streamed is a crucial characteristic of any given school system, not only in terms of opportunity, but also in terms of equity and performance. In other words, parental socioeconomic background has a stronger effect on the performance of children in systems where selection starts at an early age. The situation in France and Sweden indicates that inequality in education is structured by a system, whereby schools are distributed in a hierarchy according to a more hidden scale, determined by differentiation according to social class background. In the French school system, family socioeconomic background has a strong impact on performance. This explains both the relatively high instances of poor performance, and entry into vocational tracks, witnessed among children of immigrants, and French parents of lower socioeconomic status, alike. This is also the situation in the Swedish, Danish and German school systems, where socioeconomic background also accounts for differences in school performance and differences among students attending either vocational education or higher education. In Central and Eastern countries, it has been proven that there is a significant correlation between the level of school attendance, performance and education strategies found among Roma pupils, and the poverty level of their families. In these countries, it has also been proven that the educational systems are under national and international pressure to promote equal opportunities through programmes that support quality education in general, and including desegration in the case of Roma pupils and students in particular. In the UK, it has been proven, that, while ethnicity and gender remain major factors within the achievement gap, social class appears to be the biggest factor determining success, a conclusion endorsed by Gilborn and Mirza (2000). They show how social class is the largest determinant of variations in educational achievement, followed by ethnicity and then by gender.

In our analysis of the education system's institutional dimension, we have also focused on the problematic of freedom of school choice. The question to be answered here is whether or not this principle in itself can explain the differences we have seen in terms of school achievement and educational opportunities amongst ethnic minority, and majority, pupils and students. The answer to this is, that the principle must be analysed in terms of the structures underlying 'residential' and 'school' segregation, respectively. How can we explain the vast differences observed, in terms of the functions and practices related to the system of school districts? On the one hand, we have seen how school districts exist in all the countries, with the exception of the UK. On the other hand, we have also seen how, despite the presence of this common system throughout the countries under study, a variety of elimination processes come into play through more or less hidden mechanisms. In the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Germany for example, it is possible to remove 'undesired' children. That this is the case in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, has led to Roma children ending up in special schools through hidden mechanisms.

In addition, we have studied the causal relationship between inequalities in education and the respective proportions of independent and non-independent, public and private, schools within the individual countries. Public schools constitute over 90% of all schools in Germany, for example. The UK, on the other hand, is the only country in which independent private schools hold a considerable stake within compulsory education. While, independent private schools in the UK mainly host students from the elite sectors of society, they are actually free to select their pupils. When we compare the mechanisms of inequalities in education, evident in Germany and the UK, the conclusion is that they point in opposite directions. While the dominant mechanisms of inequalities in Germany are a correlation between early tracking, school districts and the low percentage of independent private schools, the mechanisms of inequalities in the UK they are comprised of non-school districts, late tracking, free school choice and a high percentage of independent free schools. The lesson to be derived from this is that each mechanism in itself cannot explain the inequalities witnessed in education. Instead, explanations are to be found in the relations between the mechanisms and how they refer to each other within a relational system. As we have seen above, mechanisms aimed at removing students and school segregation have emerged for a variety of reasons in the countries under study. For example, while mechanisms aimed at removing minority ethnic children in order to diminish school segregation serve the purpose of providing a way of ensuring a relative social mix within the student population of Denmark, in Germany, they first and foremost, represent an attempt to provide equal educational opportunities for all students, regardless of their social background.

Finally, when taking a closer look at the governing dimension of the educational system, our primary focus has been the preconditions necessary for implementing multicultural and/or intercultural educational programmes in a decentralised system, such as that of Hungary, Denmark or Sweden, as opposed to those in a central system, such as that of France, Romania or Germany. Our conclusion is, that whatever the circumstances, it is difficult to implement multicultural educational programmes in such a way that, they can intervene with a view to bringing about change in the dominant school, and teaching, culture. This is true, in relation to core school conditions, such as teaching methods, curricula, teaching language, not to mention teachers' attitudes towards, and views on, ethnic minority pupils, etc. This problem/dilemma is not only to be found in centralised or decentralised educational systems. On the contrary, the answer seems to be, that in cases where a decentralized system coincides with a lack of reasonable quality control, many under- or non-qualified teachers teach in the village schools of economically depressed regions, as is the case in Hungary and Slovakia, for example.

5.3. The significance of ethnicity in education

The aspect to be discussed in this section concerns the significance of ethnicity as a mechanism of differentiation in education. In the present report, ethnicity has been explored as a dynamic phenomenon, interwoven with class, gender and race. Thus, ethnicity cannot be defined as a clearly delimited and internally uniform category derived from an original source. The social construction of ethnicity has been observed to be related to global processes, cultural hierarchies, discrimination, political marginalisation and social exclusion. This is also the reason why certain questions (how, and under which social circumstances, does ethnicity make a difference for the schooling of minority ethnic groups?), has been pursued in this report. Meanwhile, we cannot, not even on the basis of the foregoing descriptions, join a common explanation of 'the significance of ethnicity in education'. On the other hand, there is no doubt, that the processes of othering, racialisation and minoritisation operate within the school- and education systems in all of the countries examined, in a manner, that creates unequal educational opportunities among the selected minority ethnic groups in particular. A series of regional, cultural and linguistic initiatives that have been taken within the educational systems, aimed at increasing the inclusion of selected minority ethnic groups, are described earlier in the present report. In the meantime, the conclusion from a 'single country study' comparative perspective points towards the fact, that the mechanisms underlying ethnic discrimination to an increasing degree are directly related to 'increased residential segregation' and thereby to connected 'school segregation'. Last, but not least, we have argued for the way in which this tendency towards school segregation grows in importance, when free school choice is introduced, and subsequently how this results in an increased competition between schools and educational tracks, with a view to attracting the best fitting pupils. Ultimately, a fact that exacerbates the negative educational opportunities accessible to minority ethnic youth.

Conclusion

Bolette Moldenhawer

What power of proclamation are we left with, when the implications are summed up, and a synthesis has taken place? What can we explain on this basis, and how do we do so? The common thread throughout the previous chapters is that unequal access to school- and educational conditions, not to mention the importance of education as an upward or downward mobility factor, is best explained on the basis of the underlying categories of socioeconomic background and ethnicity. However, the categories of socioeconomic background and ethnicity are not conclusively described in the contextualised single-site country studies. In some countries, particularly the parental educational factor is emphasised in describing socioeconomic background. In other countries it is more the economic factor and business or professional position in the labour market that is emphasised in describing the category. Finally, in the Nordic context, the variable is primarily described in terms of equal emphasis on the economic and cultural dimensions. Following on from this, the dominating pattern is that the remaining categories, such as gender and ethnicity, are incorporated into the analysis of school performances and educational opportunities, acquiring their power of explanation from their relational connection with the underlying socioeconomic variable. In saying this, we do not underestimate the significance of ethnicity as long as we understand ethnicity as the nature and complexity of relations between the movement of people (migration), the crossing of boundaries between groups of people where cultural mixtures find expression in both personal and collective identity work, in language, music, and so forth (ethnicity) and the formation and negative treatment of racial groups (racism). Variations are, of course, also to be found across the countries studied. The predominant pattern in the old EU countries (i.e. Denmark, France, Germany, Sweden, and the UK),on the one hand, is that ethnicity, as a category, is less decisive an explanatory factor in terms of school performance and educational opportunities, since there is a growing tendency that, particularly ethnic minority ethnic women are achieving success. They are doing a lot better than men from their own minority ethnic groups, and in some contexts even better than majority pupils from lower middleclass backgrounds. On the other hand, the typical pattern in the new EU countries is, that there is a tendency, particularly amongst Roma populations, that women still achieve the lowest educational levels. In this perspective, the emergence of 'new ethnicities' (Hall 1992) is the fruit of cultural diffusion and social exclusion. On the one hand, we cannot study people and cultures today through a magnifying glass – as if they were a fossilised 'ethnographic present' – without making the prism of contemporary cultural complexity visible. Nor, on the other hand, can we understand the dynamic of cultural diversity without relating it to the fragmenting, marginalising and separating forces of social inequality. These forces operate behind the processes of 'othering', 'racism', 'minoritisation' and 'ethnicisation' and identity-based sectarianisms of the present period (Ålund 2002). The cross-national comparative analysis of schooling and education among the selected minority ethnic groups of second-generation immigrants - for example Turks in France and Germany, Pakistanis and Somalis in Denmark, Bangladeshis and Black Caribbeans in the UK, and North Africans in France – not to mention the Roma, has also proven that it is difficult to define them as homogenous groups. Even though each member of all selected minority ethnic groups shares some sense of community, their shared cultural meanings, identity and history will also be structured differently by inadequate or partial, national political, and policy, responses together with significant levels of majority hostility. Yet, it is difficult to draw any obvious conclusion regarding intra-ethnic and interethnic schooling, and education strategies among selected minority ethnic groups, on the basis of the level of analysis possible within

the background reports. The analysis of these intra-ethnic and interethnic strategies constitutes a key focus for the fieldwork on local communities to be carried out later on in this EDUMIGROM project.

In the meantime, suffice to say, it is difficult to forward a common explanation of these differences on the basis of our present knowledge base. A common explanation of the numerous complex conditions meticulously described in this report, would first and foremost require a contextualised exploration of the way in which the denomination of diverse socioeconomic, gender and ethnicity categories is incorporated in a relational social structure (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992). Without such a preceding analysis, it is difficult to forward a general conclusion across the countries under study, on the bias of the explanatory power of the analysed and intersecting social categories. In the present report, the social categories are primarily conceived as descriptive categories. They are precisely *not* constructed in connection with the conceptual weight that is prerequisite for a theoretically informed comparative examination's attempt to compare various instances, occurrences and effects of that, which can be encompassed by the same concept.

A common explanation of the unequal access to the education system would subsequently require a more systematic examination of, the way in which initiatives aimed at reforming the education system are connected with both the social and economic forces, and the production conditions, in the countries in question. The in-depth descriptions of the education systems' respective working modes, outlined in the preceding chapters, point unanimously towards the fact that, the education system is perceived as an unequivocally central political and economic factor that must be invested in, in order to raise the general educational level of society. As 'human capital' is increasingly perceived to be a product, that is rendered valuable by the education system through streaming amongst diverse educational directions and competencies, there has been an increase, at national level, in the attention given to developing the quality of the education system, amongst other things, with a view to minimising the social inequality factor. Meanwhile, the political ambition of increasing the overall educational level of a given population, characteristic of all the countries in the present study, is also determined by the fact that, the fight to invest in education takes place to an ever increasing degree between states on an international, global market (Moutsios 2007; Peters et al 2008). The international PISA consortium on references to national PISA examinations are an excellent example of, the way in which investment in education and educational performances are increasingly being evaluated according to a common, international standardisation logic, that has clearly emerged from an unambiguous national standardisation logic.

On the one hand, it is difficult to evaluate the common value of investing in education, on the basis of the preceding descriptive analysis of contextualised national initiatives. On the other hand, the conclusion on the descriptive level, is, that a certain type of centralising of the education system is of benefit, when governments consider investing in education for all, in those countries, that are already affected by an excessive regional social differentiation of the population. This is particularly true in the case of the new EU countries. In the old EU countries, on the other hand, it is more difficult to inconclusively determine the benefits and/or disadvantages of centralising, as opposed to de-centralising, the education system in terms of increasing the general educational level of the population. For example, while the French and German education systems, are respectively characterised as being centrally, and de-centrally governed, they still possess common traits in terms of the social reproduction logic employed in connection with investing in education. In a 'theoretically informed comparative analysis', an examination into these conditions would be more likely to investigate the way in which global competition, within and between states, aimed at

producing the 'best qualified candidates', effects the strategic development of the national education systems. Not to mention, how the strategic fight between states effects the development of both national and local initiatives in schools affected by having to include social and minority ethnic groups already marginalised within, and by, society.

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