THE BELGIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Compared to other EU Member States, the Belgian education system is rather favorable to the inclusion of foreign pupils (MIPEX, 2020).
- Public education is compulsory from 6 to 18 years of age.
- All migrant pupils can access public education, and their parents receive periodic information in multiple languages (e.g., French, Dutch, English) from public services and civil society organizations about the educational system.
- There are two programs to overcome the linguistic barriers of newly arrived migrant pupils before attending regular schooling: the 'bridging classes' (in the French territory: DASPA) and 'reception classes' (in the Flemish territory: OKAN).

What are the main… challenges… identified by immigrants and teachers?

Linguistic barriers

- Learning Dutch or French remains an important barrier affecting migrant pupils' integration into the educational system and their school performance.
- This barrier also affects migrant parents, as they need to have periodic communication with educators about the performance of their children.

Socio-economic vulnerability & digital skills

- The precariousness of migrant pupils' living conditions often goes hand-in-hand with lower educational performance. Pupils from migrant households that are socio-economically vulnerable also face a digital barrier that affect their performance at school.

Limited organizational resources and infrastructure

- Lack of trained and well-equipped personnel in Belgian schools affects the educational inclusion of migrant pupils.
- Schools count with a limited infrastructure for hosting a larger number of migrant pupils who wish to learn Dutch or French before attending regular school in Belgium.

Want to know more about migrants' access to education and other services in Belgium? See our AccessIN project reports here.

AccessIN
Social Inclusion and Access to Basic Services of Third-Country Nationals

Do you know what some professionals are already doing –in Belgium and in other European countries– to… improve… migrant pupils' access to education?

- School websites with information in several foreign languages
- Migrant pupils as mediators: to report any discriminatory episode that may occur in class.
- When migrant parents lack digital skills, some teachers opt for using class blogs or instant messaging to communicate with them.
- Donations of school materials and technological devices (Wi-Fi cards, laptops, tablets, etc.) to vulnerable pupils.

Dear **teachers**… do you know the variety of available resources to improve your competencies for working in culturally diverse classrooms? **Here** you have some tips.

Dear **migrant parents**, **this guide** may help you to know more details about the Belgian educational system