



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement N°822664.



REFLEXIVE METHODOLOGY

Newly arrived migrant children, long-term migrant children, local children – SLOVENIA

Workpackage 5, 6 & 7 Newly arrived migrant children, long-term migrant children, local children

Deliverable D 5.5., 6.5., 7.5.

September 2021

Dissemination level: Public

Project title: MIGRANT CHILDREN AND COMMUNITIES IN A TRANSFORMING EUROPE

Acronym: MiCreate

Project No.: 822664

Funding programme: H2020 Inclusive, Innovative and Reflective Societies

Call identifier: H2020 – SC6 – MIGRATION – 2018

Type of action: Research and Innovation Action

Duration: 1 January 2019 to 31 June 2022

Deliverable: D5.5, D6.5., D7.5.

Workpackage: WP5-7 Newly arrived migrant children, long-term migrant children, local children

Lead beneficiary for this delivery: ZRS

Date of delivery: September 2021

Author: Mateja Sedmak

Published by Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče Koper

Koper, Slovenia

www.zrs-kp.si

First published 2021

©Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče Koper 2021

This publication is copyright, but may be reproduced by any method without fee or prior permission for teaching purposes, but not for resale.

Research partners:

Znanstveno-raziskovalno središče Koper, Slovenia (ZRS)

Manchester Metropolitan University, United Kingdom (MMU)

Centre national de la recherche scientifique, France (CNRS)

Mirovni inštitut, Slovenia (MI)

Univerza v Ljubljani, Slovenia (UL)

Syddansk Universitet, Denmark (SDU)

Universitat de Barcelona, Spain (UB)

Hellenic Open University, Greece (HOU)

Stowarzyszenie Interkulturalni PI, Poland (IPL)

Universität Wien, Austria (UW)

HFC Hope for Children CRC Policy Centre, Cyprus (HFC)

CESIE, Italy (CESIE)

Udruga centar za mirovne študije, Croatia (CPS)

DYPALL NETWORK: Associação para o Desenvolvimento da Participação Cidadã, Portugal (DYPALL)

Fakulteta za dizajn, Slovenia (FD)

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	3
3.	REFLEXIVE METHODOLOGY	6
3.1	Survey	6
3.1.1	Access and usefulness of methods	6
3.1.2	Responses to methods.....	7
3.1.3	Assessment of child-centred approach.....	8
3.1.4	Personal reflection	9
3.2	Participant observation	10
3.2.1	Access and usefulness of methods	10
3.2.2	Responses to methods.....	11
3.2.3	Assessment of child-centred approach.....	12
3.2.4	Personal reflections	13
3.3	Focus groups	14
3.3.1	Access and usefulness of methods	14
3.3.2	Responses to methods.....	16
3.3.3	Assessment of child-centred approach.....	17
3.3.4	Personal reflection	18
3.4	Interviews	19
3.4.1	Access and usefulness of methods	19
3.4.2	Responses to methods.....	20
3.4.3	Assessment of child-centred approach.....	21
3.4.4	Personal reflection	22
3.5	Different factors	23
3.6	Newly arrived, long-term, local children	25
3.6.1	Newly arrived migrant children	25
3.6.2	Long-term migrant children	26
3.6.3	Local children	27
4.	CONCLUSION	27

1. INTRODUCTION

This report contains reflections on the fieldwork conducted on the selected sample of Slovenian primary and secondary schools within the MiCREATE project (WP5-7). The overall objective of this fieldwork was to gain data related to the process of integration of newly arrived migrant children (in Slovenia for less than three years) and migrant children with long-term residency (more than three years) in Slovenia as well as data related to the potential role that local (also second- and third-generation migrant) children may have for the integration of migrant children. During the research process, we carried out child-centred ethnographies using a mixed methodological approach.

The report contains critical reflections on the methods used, their usefulness in terms of collecting data, children's responses to various methods, and researchers' thoughts and observations. Special attention is given to reflection on to what extent application of the **child-centred methodological and research approach** was possible and if and how it is possible to minimize adult-centred perspectives on migrant children's integration during the research process.

The report stems from the proposition that the choice of methods and analysis and interpretation of data are not neutral techniques, because they carry the epistemological, ontological and theoretical assumptions of researchers who developed them (Alvesson and Sköldbberg, 2000). Furthermore, selection of methods, data analysis and interpretation is impacted by other personal, interpersonal, emotional, institutional and pragmatic influences. Feminist researchers were among the first to point out that characteristics such as gender, race, class and sexuality affect the nature and structure of research relationships (Cotterill, 1992; Edwards, 1990; Finch, 1984; Ribbens, 1989; Song and Parker, 1995). Related to this, critical reflection on how we transform individual subjective accounts into social science 'theory' and how this is affected by our positioning as researchers is crucial (Mauthner & Doucet, 2003). In the reflection process of fieldwork with vulnerable groups, the influence of *power differences* must be considered.

In the report, we try to address how our individual position (being female, middle-aged or young, local or with a migrant background, etc.) influences the research process, data-collecting process and translating data into theory. We are recognizing the importance of the

social location of the researcher as well as the ways in which researchers' emotional responses to respondents can shape our interpretations of their accounts. We believe that situating ourselves socially and emotionally in relation to respondents is an important element of reflexivity.

Additionally, special attention is given to reflexivity related to *ethics and ethical mindfulness* – awareness of the relational and emotional nature of research. Here, we follow Warin's (2011: 812) perception of ethical mindfulness and reflexivity as intertwined concepts in improving ethics and practices in research with children. As pointed out by the author, researchers working with children and young adults should be exceptionally sensitive to ethical anxieties due to the potential for exploitative relationships. We share the author's belief that reflexivity is a tool for achieving ethical mindfulness and the latter is much needed especially in research with children and other vulnerable groups (Etherington, 2007). With regard to reflexivity related to ethics, special attention is given to the nature and process of receiving consent in relation to individuals' participation in the study.

What also needs to be mentioned in the introduction is that the field research was seriously challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic and consequent measures such as distance schooling, limitation of social contacts, etc. Several school closures changed the dynamic of schoolwork and affected our research process (restrictions in accessing children, postponement of research phases and partial abandonment of the art-based approach, time pressure to complete the observation phase, interviews and focus groups, conducting interviews and focus groups in two schools using online tools, etc.).

What follows is: *first*, the presentation of the fieldwork, the research plan and methodological approach, sample and sampling, methodology used and data collection process; *second*, reflection on the four methods applied – namely, survey, participant observation, focus groups and interviews; and *finally*, concluding remarks with contextualization and critical discussion of the fieldwork, methodology and ethical issues. Here, special attention has been given to differences between the three main observed groups of children – namely, newly arrived migrant children, long-term migrant children and local children.

2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The data collection process, quantitative and qualitative fieldwork in Slovenian schools took place in the period from **November 2019 to March 2021** and significantly exceeded the initial plan. The fieldwork was significantly prolonged due to the lockdown of schools (and social life) and other COVID-19 restrictions.

The research was conducted in **three primary and four secondary schools** located in western, eastern and central parts of Slovenia in areas with a higher range of cultural diversity. There were two age groups of children involved in the study: 10–14 y/o (primary school) and 15–19 y/o (secondary school). In this report, we use the terms ‘child’ and ‘children’ when referring to the learners/informants/participants involved in the study, although we are aware that especially in the case of the older group (15–19 y/o) this may look inappropriate and awkward, and that other ‘labelling’ would be more appropriate when referring to adolescents. This terminological decision stems from the fact that in our fieldwork the integration processes were studied in a child-centred (CC) perspective. The latter takes its point of departure from the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Therefore, the decision to use ‘child’ and ‘children’ is primarily analytical rather than substantive.

Children are of both genders and for analytical purposes are divided into three categories: local (including also ‘second-’ and ‘third’-generation migrants) and those with direct migratory experience (newly arrived and long-term migrant children). All schools involved in research are public and located in urban areas. The rate of migrant children enrolled in the schools observed varied and migrant children are prevalingly coming from the area of former Yugoslavia. The prevailing languages of migrant children are: Albanian, Serbian, Croatian, Bosnian and Macedonian. However, in observed schools we also noticed the presence of, for example, Russian, Ukrainian, Chinese, English and Persian language.

These schools were selected on the basis of the overall criteria from the project guidelines to select the schools with ‘a higher level of overall cultural and ethnic diversity’. All but one school were already included in previous fieldwork within WP4 that focused on members of the educational community. Consequently, we already had the link with school representatives and contact persons who helped us with the organization and realization of

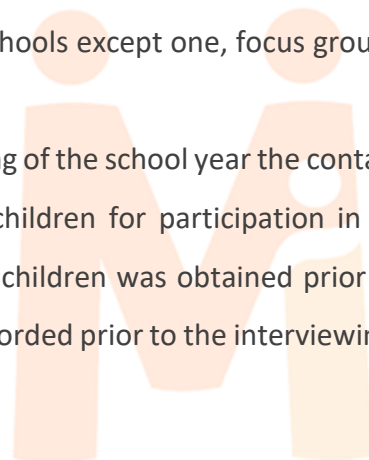
the research with children. Due to the fieldwork completed with teachers and educational staff, we already had a good overview of the general atmosphere in schools, a certain level of knowledge about integration programmes and practices, and insight into values, opinions and attitudes toward ethnic diversity, integration approaches and migration/migrant children in general held by teachers.

Each school appointed a person who helped us with the organization of the fieldwork and selection of children, and who worked as a gatekeeper with other teachers and/or children involved in our study. The gatekeepers were mostly school counsellors, persons appointed to work with migrant children or teachers of additional classes of Slovenian language for foreign students. The presence and the role of gatekeepers were crucial, especially due to the challenges related to COVID-19 restrictions.

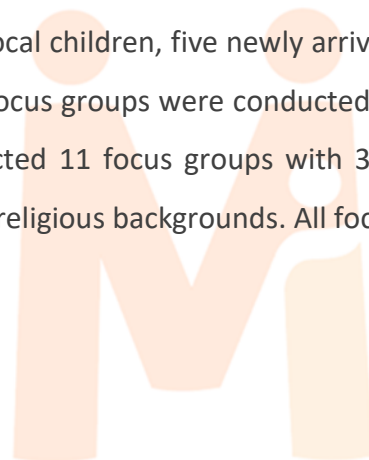
There were many difficulties in establishing a connection with classes, children and teachers; moreover, our research process was interrupted several times during the COVID-19 outbreak (from February 2020 to May 2020 and from October 2020 to March 2021).

In collecting data, the following methods were used: **survey, participant observation, art-based approach (only online in one school), focus groups and individual interviews** in the form of the collection of autobiographical life stories. All activities took place in or in the vicinity of schools: in classrooms, separate conference rooms at schools, hallways, school cafeterias, schoolyards, etc. First, the participant observation phase was applied in all schools. This phase was soon followed by school closure and fieldwork was interrupted for almost half a year. After, it was followed by the survey and interviews with children in all schools. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions and closures of schools, only in one school was the art-based approach applied as 'a preparation for the interview'. In all schools except one, focus groups (one or two) were conducted.

In schools involved in the field research, at the beginning of the school year the contact persons collected signed consent forms from parents and children for participation in all research phases. However, additional consent signed by the children was obtained prior to the survey. Finally, the children gave oral consent that was recorded prior to the interviewing.



Computer-assisted web interview (CAWI) was implemented mostly in computer classrooms with the presence of a researcher. In some cases, children use smartphones with the help and guidance of teachers and/or the researcher, and in two cases children completed the survey online without the presence of a researcher/teacher due to school closure. The participant observation phase was implemented in five schools for 15 days, in one school for ten days and in one school for five days. Participant observation was implemented by one researcher per school in the classrooms, schoolyards, hallways, school cafeterias, gyms, nearby areas of the school, on the roads in the vicinity of the school, in the grocery shop where children are buying meals, etc. A combination of passive and later more active observation was adopted. First, the researchers were just observing the overall dynamic of classes and social relations among the children, as well as between learners and teachers/educational staff. After that, some friendly, informal involvement and communication on the part of the researchers started. Researchers adopted as little an adult/formal/authority approach as possible. Interviews were collected mostly face-to-face, individually with one child in a separate room (e.g. a conference room), library, school cafeteria or in the schoolyard. At two schools, some interviews were implemented online using ZOOM, Facebook Messenger or Microsoft Teams. In a few cases, interviews were conducted with two students at the same time (at the students' request). Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim. Prior to recording, the researcher obtained additional recorded oral consent from interviewed children. Interviews lasted between 16 and 66 minutes. Interviewees were chosen on the following criteria: prior involvement in the observation phase, voluntary participation and age/gender/migratory status. Our aim was to interview five local children, five newly arrived and five long-term migrant children per school. Finally, two focus groups were conducted in five schools and one in two schools. Altogether, we conducted 11 focus groups with 3–6 participants who differ in their ethical, cultural, linguistic and religious backgrounds. All focus groups were recorded and transcribed verbatim.



The number of children involved in the survey is 712. The observation took place in seven schools. During our research, we organized 11 focus groups (two with six children; one with five children, five with four children and three with three children) while 106 children participated in interviews (43 locals, 33 newly arrived and 30 long-term migrants).

For more information about methodology and data collection process see: *National report on quantitative research, qualitative research and reflexive methodology: methodological section – Slovenia* (Micreate, Internal document, July 2021).

3. REFLEXIVE METHODOLOGY

3.1 Survey

3.1.1 Access and usefulness of methods

According to our experience, the survey method was the easiest applicable as it could be performed face-to-face in the computer classrooms, in regular classrooms by using smartphones or online with the presence of the researcher or teacher alone. In one secondary school, it was applied without the presence of any supervisor. The survey also enabled us to involve a high number of children and collect a sufficient amount of data; however, the child-centred approach was somewhat limited.

Survey questions were standardized, and the answers (due to the ease of analysis) were already defined (closed-ended type), thus leaving little space for children to freely express all possible opinions, observations and attitudes or to autonomously address the observed topics. Closed-ended questions direct and limit children's responses.

Further, it is hard to assess to what extent children, especially the youngest ones, truly understood the questions and, on the other hand, to what extent their answers were honest. To reach the highest degree of understandability, clarity and simplicity to fulfil the survey and to apply a more child-centred approach (CCA), we should take more time and increase collaboration with the children. Additionally, and more importantly, children should be more involved in the preparation of the questionnaire from the very beginning, although it was tested in primary and secondary schools prior to implementation.

The preliminary participatory observation phase positively affected children's willingness to participate in a survey. Children became familiar with researchers and the objectives of the study. However, it is hard to assess if, as a result of the already established relationship with the researcher, children tended to respond more in line with the researcher's expectations. The physical presence of a researcher (and especially teachers) functioned as the adult authority that influenced their readiness to participate. Also, the researchers' explanations related to the survey and motivation to participate might have a 'negative effect' from a CC perspective – children were persuaded to participate in the survey, and it is difficult to say to what extent participation was completely voluntary. The line between informing and persuading is often very thin since researchers are always struggling between the 'need to get the data' and 'neutral invitation to participate in a project'.

Overall, this method was useful as it enabled the collection of a significant amount of data closely related to the research topic and interest, namely the integration process of migrant children in the school environment.

3.1.2 Responses to methods

Generally, the atmosphere between researchers and children during the survey was relaxed and participative. Often, children were pleased that part of the class was dismissed due to surveying. However, considering that the survey was implemented in a 'formal' school environment, children perceived it to a large extent as a part of school obligations. Children who were not involved in the participatory observation phase were less motivated to participate. The feeling was that children from some vocational schools have not taken the survey very seriously – some finished unusually fast, and some refused to participate. One researcher had a feeling that some children had difficulties understanding the questions; however, no additional questions were raised on the children's part. In contrast, in primary schools and other secondary schools, children raised questions related to the survey when they needed additional explanation/clarification. In one primary school, children lacked concentration and the initial plan of the researcher to go through questions reading them aloud so that the children could then answer was not possible. This problem was partly diminished with the organization of smaller groups of children. Finally, there remains a doubt

about the honesty of the children's answers as some of them, in both primary and secondary schools, consulted classmates before answering or they compared answers.

3.1.3 Assessment of child-centred approach

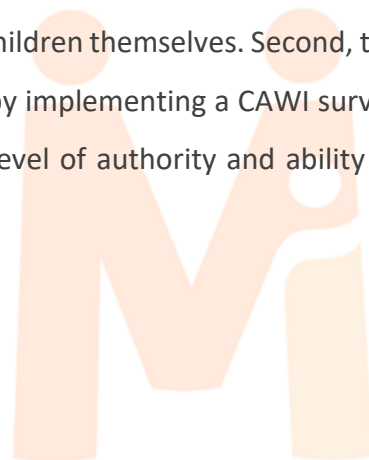
The possibility to adopt a child-centred approach with the survey is generally limited. The questions in our survey were standardized with already defined answers. We have tried to avoid this limitation by using questions from questionnaires that were already tested by children and in accordance with the CCA (e.g. the GUIDE project on the wellbeing of children). An additional limitation in this respect is that the survey's questions were mostly of the 'closed-ended type' (to allow ease of analysis), meaning that there was no space for free expression of thoughts, additional/diverse/alternative opinions, etc. We tried to reach more CCA by pilot-testing the questionnaire with children in different countries and national contexts. Further, we considered and implemented their suggestions/observations in the survey. The CCA was also respected as children's participation was voluntary, and they had the opportunity to leave the survey whenever they wanted. Moreover, children were encouraged to ask questions and seek further explanation, and before the start, they signed informed consent. The survey was translated into four languages, and this was well accepted by the children. However, it is not clear to what extent all the mentioned measures merely present a necessary and obligatory methodological/ethical protocol that should be used in all types of surveying and to what extent all these methodological/ethical precautions really encourage a child-centred approach. Moreover, children often perceive researchers as 'another teacher' and the surveying process as 'another school obligation'; therefore, it is hard to say to what extent participation was truly voluntary. This addresses the ethical questions of whether and to what extent children are 'expected' to participate (the expectation by teacher and researcher; informal pressure from a part of the class – as 'all classmates participate' in a survey) and to what extent this is truly their own decision. Evidence that there was also a certain degree of self-determination and voluntary participation, and not only external 'coercion', is recognized in the fact that some children did not participate in the survey and some of them terminated the survey part way through.

3.1.4 Personal reflection

Researchers observed a significant challenge and limitation to implementing the survey during the COVID-19 restrictions and distance learning. Among the consequences of this unprecedented situation were overburdened teachers/contact persons. The latter considerably influenced the whole organization of surveying. Also, children lacked interest in additional online activities (also known as video conference fatigue), and it was generally harder to keep them motivated, engaged and excited to participate.

Several children did not take the survey 'seriously enough' or in accordance with researchers' expectations, were having fun, surfing on the web instead of taking a survey, some were also openly dishonest (e.g. "I will not write that I'm from Japan because everyone will know that's me") or gave socially desirable answers. Some children felt troubled by some questions, and this could be noticed from complaining or whispering. However, they did not want to reflect or discuss it with the supervisor/researcher. Several children accepted the survey as part of school obligations, without reflecting on its content and aims. On the other hand, in some secondary schools, children were willing to participate, but did not really express much interest or ask additional questions. Often, they were just happy to not have lessons and/or they took the survey as a part of school obligations. However, it is hard to assess how seriously the survey was taken and to what extent it reflects their actual opinions. We expect that triangulation of methods and using various analyses will give us a final answer.

In the primary school, a considerable challenge was the participation of children and keeping the children calm during the survey. In relation to the participation of younger children, it should be revealed that here the reason lies primarily with teachers, consultants, etc., thus adult's willingness and organization, and not on the children themselves. Second, the lack of concentration was troubling. This was partly resolved by implementing a CAWI survey in smaller groups. In general, the role of teachers and their level of authority and ability to engage children seems to be of enormous importance.



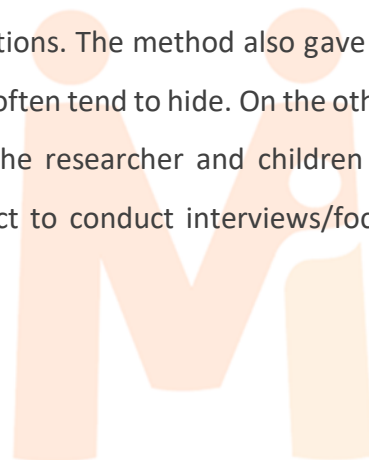
3.2 Participant observation

3.2.1 Access and usefulness of methods

The observation phase was applied at the very beginning of the field research with the aim to get familiar with the school, teachers and, most importantly, the children. The observed classes were selected with a help of a contact person appointed by the headteacher (i.e. teachers of Slovene language for foreigners, school counsellors or teachers responsible for migrant children). After getting approval from the headteacher to conduct the research and collecting consent forms, the researchers had full autonomy to conduct the research (access to classes/teachers/children, individual arrangements with teachers and children, etc.). Observed classes were selected in accordance with the MiCREATE criteria – to observe classes with an appropriate structure of children (at least five local, five newly arrived and five long-term migrant children).

Researchers adopted a “shallow cover”, meaning that they explicitly explained the aim of the project (researching migrant children’s integration process) and their role but did not expand upon the project objectives in great detail.

The method proved to be particularly useful and valuable. On the one hand, it gave us the opportunity to see ‘the reality of everyday life’ as it is – the everyday dynamics of children, interpersonal relations among them, and relations between children and teachers. With this method, we gained valuable information about interethnic issues in classes, as well as how ethnicity and cultural diversity are lived in the class, how they are addressed and tackled by teachers and children. Participant observations gave us an opportunity to collect information without ‘filters’ (opinions and interpretations on the part of the educational staff or children, etc.), which are present during interviewing and oral explanations. The method also gave us insights into the dynamics of everyday relations that teachers often tend to hide. On the other hand, the method proved to be very useful as it enabled the researcher and children to become acquainted with each other and to establish contact to conduct interviews/focus groups in a better way.



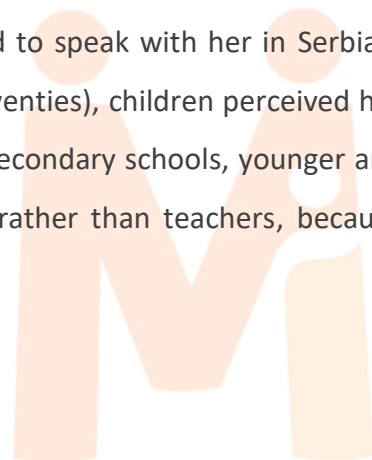
After the initial exclusively observational phase, researchers tried to create a link with children in more informal situations (e.g. during breaks). In the classrooms, the interaction was more reserved and formal since researchers were sometimes introduced by the class teacher as ‘another teacher’. In one case, a teacher invited the researcher to participate in class activities (e.g. group work, playing board games, having a discussion) and school events (a roundtable organized by students).

Initially, the migrant background of children was obscured. It gradually transpired (during breaks, in classes where practical skills are developed) when some of them communicated in their language of origin.

3.2.2 Responses to methods

In the beginning, the overall class dynamics were affected by the presence of the researcher/observer. Children were more alert, some of them tried to seek attention with more extroverted, and sometimes inappropriate, behaviour, while others were more diligent. Generally, children were curious about this new person in the class. Especially in primary schools, the children wanted to keep company with the researchers. To have someone who listens to their opinion meant a lot to them. Some children just took ‘all the attention’, so it was challenging to build relationships with everybody to the same extent. In one primary school children were so keen to socialize with the researcher that it was difficult to adopt the passive observation phase. Instead, moderate participant observation by adopting a friend role was used. In secondary schools, the relations with researchers were sometimes more formal, although friendly.

In one primary school, where the researcher was a migrant herself, migrant children were more relaxed and comfortable around her and wanted to speak with her in Serbian. Similarly, when the researcher was a younger person (late twenties), children perceived her as ‘more equal’ and not as ‘another authority’. Similarly, in secondary schools, younger and middle-aged researchers were perceived more as ‘friends’ rather than teachers, because researchers managed to form more informal ties.

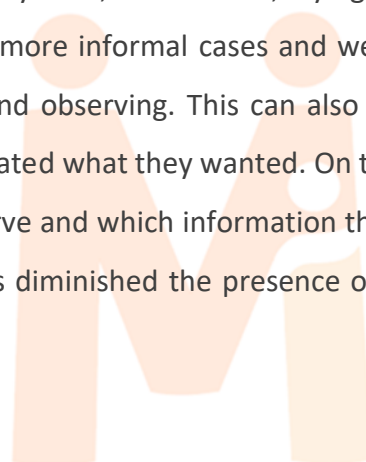


The same was noticed with the teachers. Only rare exceptions were relaxed from the very beginning. Most of them felt observed and tried to be 'more professional' and 'more competent'. Several of them implemented methods, attitudes or approaches that seemed not to be part of the usual routine (as they were trying to impress/please the researcher). Some teachers felt that their work was being evaluated. Sometimes, teachers used the presence of the researcher as a means of threatening learners: 'now others can finally see how you behave' or 'yes, just show to the researcher who you really are, 'what a beautiful impression you make'. Several researchers built friendly, respectful and warm contacts with gatekeepers (teachers of the Slovenian language for foreigners, school counsellor, etc.).

3.2.3 Assessment of child-centred approach

Some researchers avoided communicating and socializing with teachers as much as possible to adopt 'the least teacher-like role' as possible. Nevertheless, teachers often approached researchers and thus researchers were automatically associated with them. The approach was child-centred in the sense that researchers tried not to interfere with the class dynamics and merely observed it. Additionally, researchers let children take the initiative in communication. Still, the researcher would address some children during breaks or gym class. Children would often use formal talk (vikanje) with the researcher, indicating unequal power relations that unsurprisingly influence children's expression.

Children's influence on what the researcher observed during the observation phase was present in their actions and attitudes. Sometimes, they were 'acting for the researcher' consciously or unconsciously, sometimes they were excessively loud, extroverted, trying to have all the attention. They chose the topic of discussion in more informal cases and were aware that the researcher was somewhere close listening and observing. This can also be perceived as a CCA as children exposed/expressed/communicated what they wanted. On the other hand, researchers had in mind what they want to observe and which information they want to gain, and this influenced the observations as well as diminished the presence of a CCA.

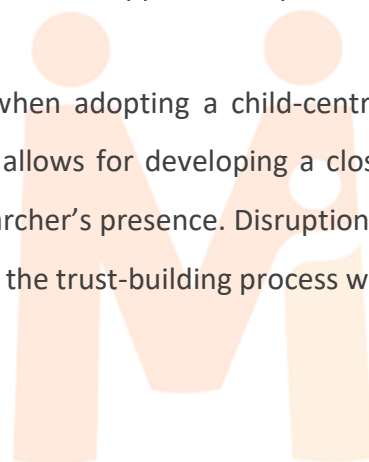


Researchers tried to apply a CCA by being present in more informal situations where children can express themselves more authentically (e.g. in the schoolyard, in hallways, school cafeteria, in front of the school, etc.), avoiding value judgements, imposing authority, by adopting a less teacher-like role, not intervening even in situation of fights, etc. Also, researchers tried to be as natural as possible, letting children guide all interactions/communication with the researcher. Some avoided approaching the children directly and waited for interaction to progress from gradual encounters as spontaneously as possible (if they exchanged eye contact, the researcher smiled in return, and this would sometimes prompt their comments or questions to the researcher). Finally, researchers observed hardly any child-centred methods or approaches enacted by the teachers.

3.2.4 Personal reflections

We believe that participant observation is an essential method if we want to catch and understand social dynamics related to class interpersonal relations. It gives an important insight into how ‘things are in the natural environment’ and not how they are expressed. Participatory observation gives us the possibility to see things without or with fewer filters, since in direct interactions/interviews children (and people in general) tend to present themselves in a better light, answer in accordance with social expectations, etc. This method reveals the context and broader perspective. Sometimes, it was indeed rather obvious that observed subjects act differently from how they would if researchers were more familiar or absent. However, with time, this negative effect diminished. What was also problematic was that the researchers were sometimes introduced or behaved as a supplementary teacher and/or research authority.

Being present in schools on a daily basis is crucial when adopting a child-centred approach, so that children get used to the researcher. This allows for developing a closer connection and the children being less distracted by the researcher’s presence. Disruption of observations due to the school lockdown negatively impacted the trust-building process with children and opportunities for creating friendly relationships.



Additionally, the COVID-19 pandemic affected the research process in that other research stages were interrupted. Consequently, the interviewing and focus group phase did not immediately follow the observation phase. This course of events had a significantly negative influence on our research activities. However, researchers remained patient and flexible; they nurtured good relations with school staff as well as behaved responsibly to protect children's and teachers' health as well as their own.

Researchers' previous experiences and intersectional positions (being middle-aged women, second-generation migrant or migrant, etc.) influenced engagement and interactions with children. Researchers with migrant experiences were able to refer to their experiences with migration and used their ethnic background to establish more confident contact with children. Also, older researchers immediately invoked a more 'children–adult' position than younger ones (what could be observed in the use of 'vikanje').

3.3 Focus groups

3.3.1 Access and usefulness of methods

In primary schools, children were mostly selected by the researchers and teachers or other gatekeepers (e.g. school counsellors) while in the secondary school children were either invited to participate and volunteers took part in the focus groups (several participated in individual interviews as well) or were selected by teachers and gatekeepers. Children participated out of curiosity, external motivation (e.g. because they were absent from the lessons) and because of the small compensation they received at the end of the focus group as a sign of gratitude for participating (Bluetooth speaker or flash drive). Only at some schools were children selected with regard to their age, gender, nationality and migratory status. Mostly, the selection was subordinate to voluntary willingness to take part in the focus group. In general, the previous participant observation phase was especially valuable because it gave the researcher the opportunity to become familiar with the children. Participants in focus groups were selected by the teachers according to the methodological (ethnicity, gender, etc.) criteria, or by the researcher, or they volunteered.

Children were informed about the aims and protocol of focus groups in advance (recording, transcribing, anonymity, confidentiality, topics, etc.). The researcher started the conversation with some initial questions and then allowed the discussion to evolve. If necessary, the researcher paraphrased questions or shifted focus to other relevant topics. In cases where one of the participants was more talkative or passive, the researcher tried to give the opportunity to speak up to everyone.

In two schools, focus groups were organized in an online environment due to COVID-19 restrictions, and this presented additional challenges from a technical point of view: children used primarily the Messenger application, researchers were familiar with Zoom, and finally Microsoft Teams application was used. The dynamic of focus groups was affected by online performance and later evaluation revealed that face-to-face focus groups were much better. The organization of the online focus groups was facilitated by the fact that children already knew the researcher from the participatory observation phase.

In terms of usefulness, focus groups proved to be a valuable strategy as they enabled participants to compare experiences, views and attitudes, confront (dis)agreements, and remember different aspects, situations and events. Moreover, focus groups helped in evoking memories that might be forgotten during individual interviews. Participants were relaxed; they did not hesitate to express their opinion, they confronted different points of view and shared valuable information from the perspective of the project's aims. However, the disadvantage lies in the fact that more 'introverted' participants who struggle to speak up, have difficulties expressing themselves and are inclined to give short answers were often outvoted by more extrovert participants in focus groups. In secondary schools, children in the focus groups were mostly close friends, classmates or teammates, so the atmosphere was additionally relaxed and confidential. However, the usefulness of the method was particularly challenged in one primary school. In this setting, the researcher tried to adopt a more friendly and less adult approach. Unfortunately, too relaxed an atmosphere developed that almost prevented collecting the data. Children were loud, they listened to music, walked around, made jokes, had fun and similar.

Finally, it is hard to assess if the information collected with this method differs relevantly, informatively and/or qualitatively from the information collected with individual interviews.

3.3.2 Responses to methods

Overall experiences with the focus groups and responses to the methods are very diverse and vary among primary and secondary schools and between schools involved in the project.

We observed that readiness to participate in a focus group was motivated by being excused from regular classes and by the compensation received (sometimes, children were informed about the compensation from others already participating in focus groups or interviews and sometimes by the researchers themselves). As already mentioned, in primary schools, when children were selected by teachers, participation was perceived as a 'school obligation'. In secondary school, one focus group was organized by a dominant boy who was willing to participate and encouraged others to participate.

We noticed the positive effect of the previous participatory observation phase. As researchers had already built rapport and trust with the children, the organization of the focus groups was easier.

At the beginning, children in vocational schools were a bit shy and did not know what to expect. After a while, they relaxed to some extent; however, they were still considerably reserved and responded mostly when they were explicitly asked. Moreover, their answers were very short, and discussion did not develop. Children experienced problems expressing themselves and developing thoughts and narration. Other focus groups in secondary schools were livelier, filled with information and arguments. The researchers facilitated the discussion by asking questions. In focus groups, where close friends participated, the discussion was more vivid; however, an important constraint in such cases may be the lack of diversity of opinions and experiences.

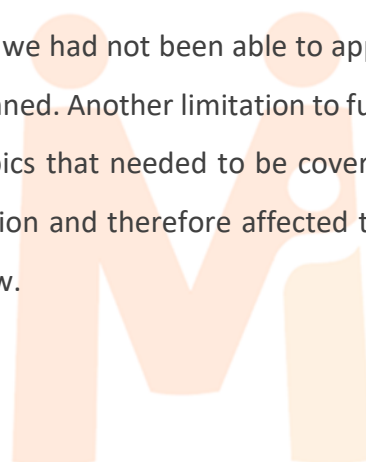
At one primary school, where the researcher took a more informal and non-adult approach, children were very relaxed. Unfortunately, they did not take the focus group 'seriously', but rather perceived it as a free-time activity where they could be naughtier and more playful. In this case, the researcher had a problem collecting informative and valuable information. Children were unfocused and chaotic. Some of them wanted to participate more

‘seriously’, but the influence of the ones who lacked concertation was immense. The researcher’s observation was that they would be more interested in participating in the conversation if they didn’t know each other. This experience exposes the tension between methodological demands to collect data and CCA.

In another primary school, we could observe that a more informal atmosphere (eating biscuits and drinking juice) did not negatively affect the performance of the focus group because the rules about how to behave and what to expect were established more clearly and at the beginning of the conversation. However, in this case, the question arises whether a ‘more controlled and directed’ approach is weakening CCA.

3.3.3 Assessment of child-centred approach

We tried to reach CCA with very open, non-structured and not specifically oriented starting-point questions to give the children as much space as possible to express themselves freely. Children were given the opportunity to start the conversation wherever they felt like, to highlight their own perspective, to give explanations with their own words. Children navigated the course of the discussion, which topics were discussed more thoroughly, and they provided their own ideas. Their agency was stimulated so they all actively participated and confronted their views, even when these were in conflict with each other. Beyond this, their agency was not additionally stimulated. Still, the researcher was in charge of time and supervised the tone of the discussion as well as the variety of topics. However, knowing the focus of the MiCREATE project, this might already have an influence on the topic children started the conversation with. From this perspective, it is possible to reach CCA with a focus group. However, a considerable constraint to fully achieving child-centredness was the fact that the research work was interrupted several times due to COVID-19 and that we had not been able to apply an art-based approach before the focus group as originally planned. Another limitation to fully applying CCA is the fact that researchers had in mind the topics that needed to be covered within the research. This, of course, influenced the conversation and therefore affected the conversation from the adult-centred and research point of view.



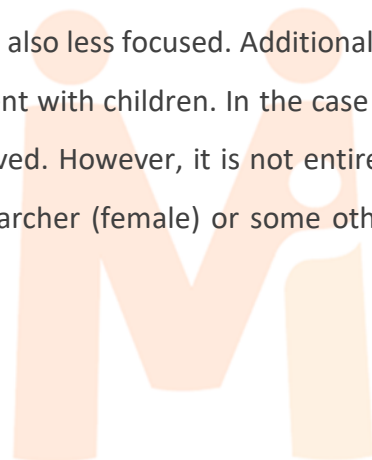
3.3.4 Personal reflection

Several focus groups were organized a week before the school closure due to the pandemic outbreak and this influenced the process of collecting data negatively. On the one hand, these focus groups were organized under great time pressure, while, on the other hand, the children were alarmed, concerned, sometimes anxious and, generally speaking, in a bad mood. The researcher had to make an additional effort to go beyond an explicitly COVID-19 perspective on several aspects of children's lives. It seems that more informative responses could be reached with the repetition of the focus groups.

In some cases, researchers expected that children would be more focused and participative. At one primary school, where the researcher tried to approach children as informally as possible, she encountered significant difficulties with keeping them calm and focused. It appears that for a less adult-centric and more CCA approach, more time is needed for the researcher to become a part of a group and an 'accepted member' to receive needed information.

Focus groups organized in an online setting turned out to be especially stressful and challenging. Challenges arose from the access to participants and from numerous technical difficulties. However, in the end, the researcher managed to create a relaxed atmosphere.

Another observation by the researchers is associated with the researcher's age. For example, being a middle-aged researcher automatically translated into more authority and a 'teacher/mentor position' and consequently caused different dynamics. On the other hand, a young researcher was perceived as a more friendly figure, informal ties were more easily developed, and consequently children were more informal but also less focused. Additionally, the migrant status of the researcher influenced the engagement with children. In the case of exclusively male focus groups, some reservations were observed. However, it is not entirely clear whether this was influenced by the gender of the researcher (female) or some other determinants.



3.4 Interviews

3.4.1 Access and usefulness of methods

Participants were selected according to their age, migrant status and ethnicity, as well as their internal motivation to participate. At primary schools, the initial selection was sometimes made by the school counsellor and/or teacher. In secondary schools, the selection was made mainly by the researcher or school counsellor; however, the snowball technique was also applied. For example, children reported positive experiences to classmates and other children volunteered to participate as well. Children were mainly selected from the classes that were involved in a participant observation phase, but not exclusively. This phase was of extreme importance for establishing a link between the children and researchers and made the implementation of interviews easier.

An important incentive for participation was that the interviews were conducted during school lessons and teachers allowed children to miss the class. The interviews took place in the school library, in the school cafeteria, in a coffee place outside school and similar. Sometimes, researchers gave children the autonomy to choose the place. While the school library and conference room were quieter places, the coffee place was more informal and sometimes thus more suitable.

Interviews with children in the form of a collection of autobiographical life stories were the best method used in terms of obtaining information. Children could openly discuss various topics and sometimes they turned into different people in one-to-one conversations. Researchers learned more about them compared with simply observing them in the classroom or during focus groups. The method proved to be very useful as it gave children the most space and time to express their thoughts. This method, because it is individualized, gives each child enough space for very personal expressions. In addition, interviews allow obtaining an insight into the subjective experience of migration and integration, as well as general wellbeing. Further, interviews helped to achieve a more thorough understanding of previously observed classroom dynamics and peer relations.

Interviewing as a method had certain limitations when speaking with newly arrived migrant children due to their language constraints. Additionally, in the case of very introverted

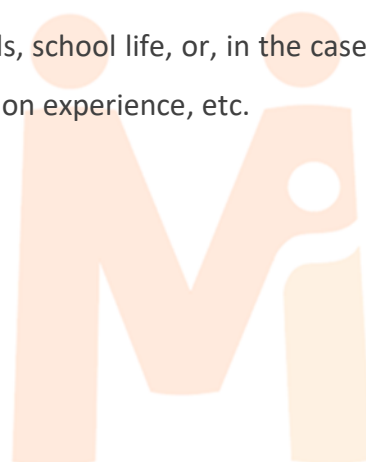
children, the method was similarly insufficient. Additionally, when interviews were conducted online, this was a serious obstacle; nevertheless, children still (in most cases) spoke openly and shared rich and interesting information about their life, hopes, thoughts, plans and subjective wellbeing.

3.4.2 Responses to methods

The interviews took place primarily in schools (e.g. classrooms or conference rooms) where the atmosphere was more formal, but quiet and private. Several interviews were conducted outside (e.g. in the schoolyard, coffee places) where the atmosphere was more relaxed. Only a few interviews were conducted in an online environment when no other possibilities existed.

Interviews started with discussion of 'lighter topics' such as free-time activities, chores, family life, etc. and progressed to topics associated with migration and integration, children's attitudes, experiences and values. Some interviews started with open and broad questions, such as *'How did you become the person you are now?'* or *'Tell me please the story of your life'*. Researchers tried not to interfere with the narrative. However, very soon it became obvious that most children prefer clear-cut questions, thus researchers were constantly compromising between promoting open narration and asking specific questions. Most children required guidance and therefore additional questions were mandatory. For example, children often asked researchers to provide more concrete questions and 'lead the interviewing process'. After a while, some children relaxed and expand their narration, but for the majority constant incentive was necessary.

Primary school children were more relaxed, open and talkative. They were discussing a wider range of topics. In contrast, several secondary school children were more narrowly oriented in relation to specific topics – leisure activities, friends, school life, or, in the case of migrant children also language, migration experience, integration experience, etc.



In the beginning, some children felt a bit reserved. After initial small talk, most of them relaxed and became very communicative. The only exception was those who had difficulties expressing themselves in the Slovenian language or very introverted children. There were also some emotionally intense moments (crying) and difficult issues discussed (illness in family, divorce of parents, drug issues in family, health issues due to the stress caused by migration, etc.).

Researchers were under the impression that children in general lack opportunities to speak about their problems and concerns with adults (at home and in school as well). Researchers collected one explicit complaint of a secondary school child in relation to the complete absence and lack of adult support in school.

Children who were involved in the participant observation phase were generally more talkative and their interviews were filled with rich information; however, this cannot be applied to all children. Presumably because we knew more of their background, researchers could ask more in-depth questions – for example, questions concerning specific events that happened in the past or in relation to specific classmates. Knowing children from the participant observation phase also gave an advantage to researchers to respond in an empathic manner (more trusting atmosphere) and understand their stories, which contributed to a more relaxed environment and spontaneous flow of the interview.

3.4.3 Assessment of child-centred approach

The method is considered very child-centred when used properly and with enough time available. Children were allowed the opportunity to express their thoughts, observations, feelings and attitudes. Further, they could reveal topics that are important for them, regardless of the overall aim of our project.

CCA was applied as researchers tried to follow the children's perspective as much as possible. Sometimes this was very difficult since children expected direct questions by researchers and refused to take the initiative to lead the interview. Failure to adopt CCA that would facilitate children's agency was particularly evident in relation to less talkative or more introverted children or those less 'close/involved' with the researcher from previous research stages. Further, children who experience language barriers also struggled in such settings.

These children were inclined to give very short answers and thus it was difficult to build the narration and follow their perspective. On the other hand, researchers encouraged respondents to choose the place and time for the interview whenever this was possible.

Researchers tried to act as naturally as possible, letting children guide the interview as much as possible. Even when researchers were asked to ask more direct questions, they tried to form questions based on children's previous narration and took their cue from what they had been told before. Other than following the project's guidelines in terms of topics of interest, researchers kept their interventions to a minimum. In the beginning, researchers avoided addressing the topic of integration directly and allowed children to progress to it spontaneously. However, during interviews researchers still had in mind the overall objective of the research and tried to get needed information when possible. If certain topics seemed too difficult or uncomfortable for children to talk about, researchers respected their boundaries.

Finally, it would be useful or almost mandatory to conduct interviews two or three times with the same children in order to apply CCA better.

3.4.4 Personal reflection

For some children, interviews were somehow therapeutic. From what they told us, they do not have many opportunities to talk to adults who are attentive and consider children's opinions as relevant. Many of them discussed personal and family problems, hardships that trouble them (e.g. illness, absent parent, drug abuse in the family, neglecting behaviour, physical abuse, etc.). Some children took the opportunity to promote and praise themselves. Admittedly, researchers were emotionally involved to a significant extent. It is very hard for a researcher to maintain emotional and psychological distance when hearing about children's troubles, feelings and challenging experiences.

Researchers had an impression that their intersectional position influenced the engagement with children. Often, researchers referred to subjective experiences when posing a question. Sometimes, when listening to difficult stories, researchers did not record the conversation but took some time and just talked/listened to the children. In addition, some children reported high-risk events that put researchers in a position of deciding whether to report the event to the authorities or not. Ultimately, researchers did not report any stories.

Researchers agree that the participant observation phase was especially valuable for being able to adopt CCA during the interview. On the other hand, we identify as problematic the break between the observation phase and interviewing phase.

3.5 Different factors

The participatory observation method seems to be the approach that offered the most equal opportunity of 'participation and expression' to all children regardless of their age, gender, ethnic background, etc. The collected interviews exposed slight differences related to **gender** at the level of **secondary school**: females were generally more talkative, more open and more informative. Girls were usually more expressive and able to reflect more thoroughly on their personal lives, feelings, challenges, future aspirations, etc. Also, **long-term migrant children and local children** have an advantage in oral expression since they do not encounter language barriers to the same extent as their newly arrived peers. Still, significant differences related to personal traits were present.

For **newly arrived migrant children**, interviewing was challenging as they sometimes experienced severe trouble expressing themselves in the Slovene language and find the right words. Consequently, the fluency of their narration was affected. Although they were sometimes given the opportunity to speak in their mother tongue, they rarely decided to do so. Such interviews were poor in terms of information richness, but they enable other insights: for example, why newly arrived migrant children do not want to speak in their mother tongue with the researcher. In one secondary school, a focus group exclusively with newly arrived females was organized and that turned out to be very positive. These girls were talkative and informative. Finally, researchers have had the feeling that the application of art-based methods may give newly arrived migrant children more possibility for expression.

The **socio-economic status** of children was revealed in some cases. Most children from one vocational school have low socio-economic status and difficult family backgrounds (low level of education, precarious jobs, low wages, low cultural capital, etc.). In such cases, the aspirations of children for the future are very similar to those of their parents; they aim to be manual workers at construction sites, workers in the family bakery, hairdressers, etc. Socio-economic status influences the integration process of children when fathers are the only family

members who are employed, work in low-paid jobs (construction sites, bakery), are absent the whole day and have a low level of language fluency. The same can be said when mothers are mostly at home, are not employed and do not socialize with the outside world; hence, their language proficiency is low. On the other hand, families with higher socio-economic status, higher parental education and higher professions seem to facilitate the integration of children: well-off parents enable children to attend extracurricular and leisure activities where children have more opportunities to communicate with local children. In addition, some can pay for private lessons in the Slovenian language, etc.

The integration process is slowed down in the case of more closed ethnic communities/families; we observed the influence of **ethnic background** and **ethnic boundaries**. When fathers work the entire day on construction sites or in a bakery, they rarely integrate linguistically. At the same time, mothers are mostly stay-at-home mothers; they are not employed and therefore they tend to socialize exclusively ingroup. Consequently, they miss opportunities to learn Slovene. Similarly, children who belong to ethnic groups with strong group boundaries tend to socialize mostly with parents, relatives and other ingroup members and this influences the integration process. In Slovenia, this phenomenon was observed in relation to children with an Albanian ethnic background. In addition, at one secondary school, Albanian girls, with one exception, did not want to participate in interviews.

In relation to the **age** of children, it was easier to establish more friendly relations with younger children (10–13 y/o). For this age group, it would be more appropriate to apply an art-based approach which, unfortunately, because of the COVID-19 situation was almost completely impossible. It seems that especially for **younger newly arrived migrant children** an art-based approach would be the most appropriate one. Autobiographical interviews proved less useful for this age group of children as they are not able to autonomously summarize their life stories, are less structured and focused, and lack the necessary concentration. In addition, they require more guidance from the interviewer. Hence, the guidance and impact of the researcher are significant and less child-centred in comparison with an interview structured and led by children.

Finally, we have not obtained any data in relation to **sexual orientation and sexual identity**.

3.6 Newly arrived, long-term, local children

3.6.1 Newly arrived migrant children

During the field research, newly arrived migrant children were, due to language barriers, mostly quiet and reserved. Having difficulties expressing their thoughts resulted in less informative interviews that were hard to conduct. However, a significant difference in the children's behaviour was noticed when they attended additional Slovene language courses for foreign learners (with only newly arrived migrant children involved) and regular classes where all children were included. In the language courses, newly arrived migrant children were noticeably more relaxed, talkative and curious, while in regular classes they were more quiet, careful, observing, reserved and shy. This was especially true at the beginning of the school year, while during the school year, some changes could be noticed. After six months, some of them adapted to the extent that they were unrecognizable, turning from quiet, shy, reserved children to loud, talkative, outgoing and omnipresent.

The most significant challenge when approaching newly arrived migrant children is their language barrier. However, there exists a considerable difference regarding their origin. If their mother tongue is Bosnian, Serbian or Croatian, which are more similar to Slovenian, the language constraints were not as significant as with newly arrived children whose mother tongue is, for instance, Albanian. These children faced more pronounced problems in learning Slovene and integrating into a new society.

Some researchers noticed specific gratitude from some newly arrived migrant children in terms of recognizing the opportunity to speak up. The MiCREATE project gives children the feeling of being appreciated, heard and accepted. Interviews with these children were more emotional and 'heavy' to conduct because of their vivid memories of loss and change. This group requires special emotional support.

Whenever possible, researchers were willing to adapt to the newly arrived migrant children and spoken in Bosnian/Serbian/Croatian or English. Consequently, a translator's presence was never needed. Sometimes, having a translator would allow the researcher to obtain more data; however, it is possible that the presence of another adult would negatively affect the atmosphere.

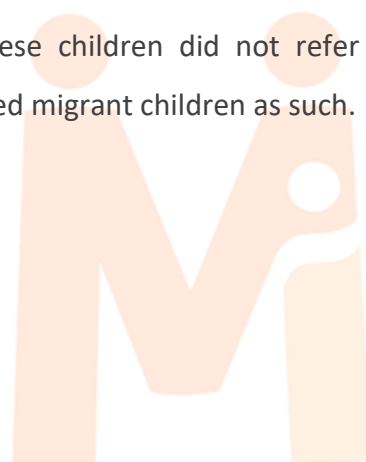
In the case of newly arrived migrant children repetition of interviews also seems appropriate in order to give more time and space for autonomous expression.

3.6.2 Long-term migrant children

This group was usually fluent in the Slovenian language (although the accent often revealed their non-Slovene origin), ambitious, well adjusted and mostly proud of their cultural heritage. They easily switched between cultures and languages, evaluating the pros and cons of migration, and suggesting what is already well developed in the process of integration and what could be improved in the future. In most cases, children appreciated the opportunity to speak about their country of origin, struggles, fond memories and new possibilities and opportunities. Most of them were happy to live in Slovenia. They have no desire to return to their country of origin. Many of them were committed to succeed in order to express respect for their parents' decisions and courage in migrating. These children were relaxed, happy and open-minded. In secondary school, children did not face major expressions of discrimination. They identified primary schools as being places of more intolerant behaviour where several of them experienced bullying and intolerant attitudes. In their words, such events are not present in secondary schools where 'they speak more about football and girls than about ethnicity'.

All methods were easily applicable to the long-term migrant children. In particular, interviews were very informative, consisting of fluent narration about the migration experience, integration and general life in the country of origin and in the host country. The interviewees were spontaneous; they needed less guidance and required fewer specific questions. Children were approachable, interested in participating and willing to share their views, ideas and experiences.

Finally, it was interesting to observe that often these children did not refer to themselves as migrant children but perceived only newly arrived migrant children as such.



3.6.3 Local children

Local children were mostly approachable and interested in participating. Apart from one secondary school, where two local children explicitly declined to participate in the study, local children had no constraints in this regard. The researcher assumed that the reason for declining to participate was the topic of the research.

During the observation phase, local children were a bit louder, more confident and more active in classes. They felt comfortable in the presence of the researcher, probably because of familiarity with the general social situation and dynamics in school. In mixed focus groups, they dominated the discussion. During the discussion, this group of children sometimes behaved according to prevailing stereotypes and prejudices, gave socially desirable answers, and assessed how successful their migrant classmates are (in terms of grades, sociability, popularity, etc.). Several local children struggled to put themselves in migrant children's shoes while others were considerably empathic. They offered interesting ideas and solutions and were aware of common barriers that migrant children encounter.

In general, local children are used to the cultural diversity in their local environment and acknowledge cultural diversity in their schools. Sometimes, local children are the minority in their class or belong to 'second' and 'third' generations of migrants.

4. CONCLUSION

In this report, we tried to critically reflect on (a) the **methodology used** during our fieldwork with children, but more importantly to evaluate (b) the success of the attempt to apply a **child-centred approach** in the research and (c) **ethical issues** with a special emphasis on children's free consent to participate in the research.

The decision to apply a mixed-methods approach when researching the process of the integration of migrant children in the school environment and to apply a participatory observation phase and collection of auto/biographical stories as a form of interview was strongly influenced by researchers' experiences and knowledge stemming from previous work with (migrant, unaccompanied, etc.) children. As experienced researchers in the field, we had the knowledge that only with mixed methods we can come close to what can be called 'social

reality'. Our epistemological, ontological and theoretical background and assumptions thus influenced to a significant extent not only the research and methodological protocol but also the decision to apply a child-centred approach.

Although, in accordance with a child-centred perspective, we tried to listen to the voice of children and catch their reality, we are well aware, as Reinharz (1992) reveals, that there is an obvious tendency among researchers to simplify complex processes of representing children's voices as though these voices speak on their own, rather than through the researcher who makes choices about how to collect and interpret these voices (and which transcript extracts to present as evidence).

The problem in this respect is that our subjectivity (who we are) is always interfering with the lives of others, with the lives of those we observe, analyze and interpret. As 'representation ... is always self-representation ... the other's presence is directly connected to the writer's self-presence in the text (Denzin, 1994: 503). Our characters, subjectivity, age, gender, having our own children or not, being locals or migrant or someone with a migrant background, etc. influenced the whole process of researching.

Also, our preferences for a qualitative, fluid and more open-ended methodological approach must be reflected in accordance with the criticism directed against the tendency to romanticize children's voices and 'subjectivities'. We, as researchers, are bargaining between objectivity, collection of data, evidence and construction of the theory on the one hand, and, on the other, respect towards observed subjects, their voices and interpretations.

Reflexivity is needed to avoid the traps of simplified reasoning and presenting social reality as we see it as the only true and objective. Finally, the question remains: how can we, as researchers, consider and incorporate our reflexive observation into actual analysis of data?

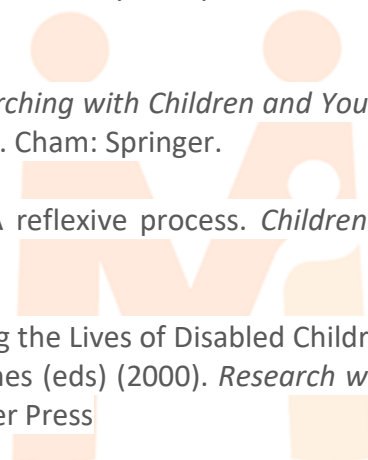
Another issue that should be openly discussed is to what extent we were truly ethically mindful throughout the research process. As researchers, we were compromising between the need to collect needed data and, at the same time, respecting children's will and their free choice to participate fully. To what extent was the children's participation truly and consciously voluntary? Children were often participating in the research because they perceived us as authority figures, 'teachers' or as a part of school protocols. The process to

obtain informed consent is especially tricky. In Slovenian schools, parents sign a form that gives general consent for children to be 'part of different anonymous surveys and photographing sessions, etc. for research or school purposes'. This general consent form covered the 'survey part' of our research; however, we decided to additionally include at the beginning of the online survey the information and signed consent to participate in surveying for children. Similarly, after receiving signed consent forms from some parents and children, we still again asked for consent and recorded it prior to the formal recording of interviews and focus groups. However, we cannot dismiss the feeling that this consent was sometimes 'just a formality' and that children were not fully aware of the true nature of research and also possible consequences in participating in the research (as, for instance, in the event of unexpected and/or illegal and, for children, dangerous activities, we are obliged to intervene and/or act in accordance with the law and the best interest of the child).

It appeared that especially vulnerable in this respect were newly arrived migrant children, less fluent in the Slovenian language and less competent in general social protocols related to participation in research.

REFERENCES

- Alvesson, M. & Skoldberg, K. (2000). *Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research*. London, Thousand Oaks, CA, and New Delhi: Sage.
- Connolly, P. (2017). Race, Gender and Critical Reflexivity in Research with Young Children. In P. Christensen & A. James (eds), *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices* (pp. 104–120). London and New York: Routledge.
- Cotterill, (1992). Interviewing women: Issues of friendship, vulnerability, and power. *Women Studies International Forum*. 15(5–6), 593–606
- Coyne, I. & Carter, B. (eds) (2018). *Being Participatory: Researching with Children and Young People. Co-constructing Knowledge Using Creative Techniques*. Cham: Springer.
- Davis, J. (1998). Understanding the meanings of children: A reflexive process. *Children & Society*, 12(5), 336–348.
- Davis, J., Watson, N. & Cunningham-Burley, S. (2000). Learning the Lives of Disabled Children Developing a Reflexive Approach. In: P. Christensen & A. James (eds) (2000). *Research with Children: Perspectives and Practices*. London, New York: Falmer Press



Denzin, N.K. (1994) The Art and Politics of Interpretation. In N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (eds) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

Edwards, R. (1990) Connecting method and epistemology: A white woman interviewing black women. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 13, 477–490.

Etherington, K. (2007). Ethical research in reflexive relationships. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 13, 598–616.

Finch, J. (1984) 'It's Great to Have Someone to Talk to': The Ethics and Politics of Interviewing Women. In C. Bell & H. Roberts (eds) *Social Researching: Politics, Problems, Practice*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Horgan, D. (2017). Child participatory research methods: Attempts to go 'deeper'. *Childhood*, 24(2), 245–259.

Khawaja, I. & Mørck, L.L. (2009). Researcher positioning: Muslim 'otherness' and beyond. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 6(1–2), 28.

Mauthner, N.S. & Doucet, A. (2003). Reflexive accounts and accounts of reflexivity in qualitative data analysis. *Sociology*, 37(3), 413–431.

Reinharz, S. (1992) *Feminist Methods in Social Research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ribbens, J. (1989) Interviewing – an unnatural situation? *Women's Studies International Forum* 12(6), 579–592.

Song, M. & I. Parker (1995) Commonality, difference, and the dynamics of disclosure in in-depth interviewing, *Sociology*, 29, 241–256.

Spyrou, S. (2011). The limits of children's voices: From authenticity to critical, reflexive representation. *Childhood*, 18(2), 151–165.

Warin, J. (2011). Ethical mindfulness and reflexivity: Managing a research relationship with children and young people in a 14-year qualitative longitudinal research (QLR) study. *Qualitative Inquiry*, 17(9), 805–814.

White, A. & Bushin, N. (2011). More than methods: learning from research with children seeking asylum in Ireland. *Population, Space and Place*, 17(4).

