Migration and Child Well-Being

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110.1 Introduction

According to a quite general definition, migration is a "movement of a person (a *migrant*) between two places for a certain period of time" (Boyle et al. 1998, p. 34). Migrants emigrate from the starting location and immigrate to the target location. Since the 1920s, migrants have been subject of much research, at the beginning mainly in the USA (Park 1922, 1928; Park and Thompson 1939; Thomas and Znaniecki 1918) and later also in other countries (Kritz 1981; Massey et al. 1998; Castles and Miller 2003; Penninx et al. 2008). However, researchers have rarely focused on children; rather, their studies included whole migrant groups without distinguishing between adults and children, or they totally excluded children while studying phenomena like work migration or interethnic marriages. It was not until the 1990s that children became a central part of migration research. US scholars have been pioneers on this field, namely, Portes and Rumbaut (Portes 1995, 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001, 2005, 2006; Rumbaut 1994, 1995, 1999) and Hernandez (1999; Hernandez and Charney 1998).

This chapter's aim is to provide a portrait of children confronted with migration. Therefore, the numbers of these children and their share in the child populations of different countries are presented, carrying on with empirical findings on some child well-being indicators, including health, education, language fluency, and poverty indicators, as well as some findings about the role of the family in the migration context and about children migrating on their own.

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110.2 Coverage and Definition

This chapter discusses international migrants, a term that encompasses persons who cross international borders and migrate from one state to another. A further consideration of national migrants, that is, persons migrating within national borders, would make it difficult to keep a conceptual coherence, and it could not be treated within the given frame. Moreover, this chapter focuses mainly on immigrants in the Western industrial nations of Europe, North America, and Australia, because research literature about immigrants in Asia, Africa, and South America is relatively scarce.

According to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, every person younger than 18 years is considered as a child. Our units of analysis will be the immigrant children. For our purpose, this term will encompass children who have migrated themselves as well as children being born in the receiving country with at least one immigrant parent. Children who have been born in the receiving country are classified as second-generation immigrant children, while children who have migrated themselves belong to the first generation (Hernandez et al. 2009, p. 3; Rumbaut 1994, p. 758).

Moreover, there are some common categories in which immigrant children can be classified in regard to the reasons and motives of their migration. One category includes the asylum-seekers, who enter the country either with their families or unaccompanied. Most of the unaccompanied immigrant children fall under this category, though the reasons of their migration and why they are unaccompanied may be very different. Who is granted asylum is determined by the United Nations *Geneva Convention* relating to the status of refugees; however, varying national policies also play a role. Another category refers to the *family members* who migrate in order to reunite with their relatives already residing in the receiving country. The relatives may have entered the receiving country as asylum-seekers, labor migrants, or high-skilled and business migrants (Castles 2000, pp. 270–271).

110.3 Shares, Social Profiles, and Global Origins of Immigrant Children

Table 110.1 provides an overview about the shares of immigrant children among the 15-year-old pupils in 14 selected countries. The data stems from the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) conducted in 2009 (Stanat et al. 2010). The considered countries can be classified in two categories (Freeman 1995), where the first one includes the four traditional immigration countries (USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand), those "prototypical countries of immigration" (ibid., p. 887) where immigration was essential for the founding and development of the countries. The second category refers to the West European countries, where immigration has not begun until the post–World War II period and where the migration flows were shaped by postcolonial immigration (particularly in the UK,

Table 110.1 Percentage of the immigrant children among the 15-year-old students in 14 selected OECD countries

		Immigrant children							
Nation	Native children %	Total %	+/−	One foreign-born parent %	+/−	Second generation %	+/−	First generation %	+/−
Classic immigration countries									
Australia	57.5	42.5	1.0	19.5	0.4	11.9	1.3	11.1	−0.8
Canada	64.6	35.4	4.2	11.1	0.4	13.5	2.9	10.8	1.0
USA	73.1	26.9	7.5	7.6	1.8	12.9	5.4	6.4	0.3
New Zealand	59.3	40.7	3.6	16.0	−1.5	7.9	1.7	16.8	3.4
New immigration countries									
Belgium	72.9	27.2	3.6	12.7	1.0	7.7	−0.9	6.8	3.5
France	74.4	25.7	0.8	12.7	−0.3	9.9	0.2	3.1	0.9
The Netherlands	80.2	19.8	1.8	7.8	1.6	8.8	1.5	3.2	−1.3
UK	80.7	19.3	1.4	8.9	0.2	5.6	−1.1	4.8	2.2
Germany	74.4	25.6	4.0	8.1	1.7	11.7	6.7	5.8	−4.3
Swiss	58.1	41.9	5.5	18.4	2.5	15.1	5.9	8.4	−2.9
Austria	77.7	22.3	5.5	7.1	1.2	10.5	6.4	4.8	−2.1
Denmark	83.6	16.4	3.0	7.8	0.6	5.8	3.5	2.7	−1.1
Norway	84.8	15.2	4.3	8.4	2.1	3.6	2.1	3.2	0.1
Sweden	77.4	22.6	1.3	11.0	0.2	7.9	3.3	3.7	−2.1

Source: Stanat et al. (2010, p. 207). +/−: Change in percentage points compared to PISA 2000

France, and the Netherlands), labor immigration (e.g., in Germany, Austria, and Sweden), and from the 1980s also by humanitarian immigration (Bauer et al. 2001; Freeman 1995).

The table also contains an overview about the shares of the first- and the second-generation immigrant children as well as the children with one immigrant parent and one native-born parent. Furthermore, the rows labeled with +/− indicate the change in percentage points that has occurred since the PISA 2000.

The largest shares of immigrant children are found in two of the traditional immigration countries (Australia, New Zealand) and in the Swiss. Another country where the share of immigrant children is larger than 30% is Canada. In the USA, Belgium, France, Germany, Austria, and Sweden, the shares range from 22 % to 27 %; thus, in these countries, one of four pupils is an immigrant child. Shares of about 20 % are found in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, followed by Denmark and Norway with shares of approximately 15 %.

In all considered countries except New Zealand, the share of the second-generation immigrant children is larger than the share of the first-generation immigrant children. Since the year 2000, the share of the first generation has either decreased or remained

unchanged in most of the countries. In contrast, the share of the second generation became larger in almost every country, with the largest increases having taken place in the German-speaking countries (5.9–6.7 percentage points) and in the USA (4.4 percentage points).

110.3.1 Socioeconomic Status

The PISA data from 2003 also provide information about the social background of the immigrant children in 13 of the 14 receiving countries considered above (with the exception of the UK) (OECD 2006, p. 61). Regarding the education and the socioeconomic status of the immigrant children's parents, the outcomes were lower in comparison to the natives' parents in almost all 13 countries. It was only in Canada as well as for the first generation in Australia and New Zealand that the education of the immigrant children's parents was not significantly lower than the education of the natives' parents. The first-generations' parents in Australia and Canada even show a significantly higher education level than the natives' parents. This relatively high parental education in Canada and Australia, particularly among the first-generations' parents, is due to a policy of selective immigration in both countries, which requires a high education level as prerequisite for new immigrants (Katz and Redmond 2010, pp. 443, 446).

The lowest parental education is found among the immigrant children in Germany, with an average of less than 9 years of schooling and where also the gaps to the natives' parents, with approximately 5 years, are the largest. Here, too, immigration policy provides at least a partial explanation, because for a long time, immigration to Germany was mainly constituted by the recruitment of low-skilled immigrant workers and the subsequent family reunification (Oltmer 2009).

110.3.2 Origin Countries

Based on census data and national surveys, Hernandez et al. (2009, pp. 15–18) calculated the immigrant children's numerically most important countries of origin in some receiving countries (see Table 110.2). The children of Turkish origin are spread widely, as they represent the largest group in the Netherlands (124,970) and in Germany (397,000) and the sixth largest in France (119,495) and Swiss (31,261). The Moroccans are found particularly in France (336,570) and in the Netherlands (123,335), where they represent, respectively, the largest and the second largest group. Immigrant children who descend from the former colonies of the respective receiving country are found particularly in France (mainly from the former colonies Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and other African countries), in the Netherlands (from Suriname, Antilles, and Aruba), and the United Kingdom (from Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh). In Germany, besides the children of Turkish origins, those originated in Poland (153,000), the Middle East (149,000), and Italy (131,000) are well represented.

Table 110.2 Top ten countries of origin of immigrant children in seven countries

	France		Germany[d]		United Kingdom		The Netherlands	
	Origin	Number	Origin	Number	Origin	Number	Origin	Number
1	Morocco	336,570	Turkey	397,000	Pakistan	253,534	Turkey	124,970
2	Algeria	326,525	Poland	153,000	India	183,483	Morocco	123,335
3	Other Africa[a]	271,503	Middle East	149,000	Ireland	139,567	Suriname	89,560
4	Portugal	271,188	Italy	131,000	Germany	137,600	Antilles and Aruba	40,780
5	Other EU15[b]	123,877	Russia	104,000	Bangladesh	115,227	Germany	39,320
6	Turkey	119,495	South, Southeast Asia	104,000	United States	73,592	Indonesia	30,970
7	Tunisia	106,713	Greece	54,000	Kenya	68,074	Former Yugoslavia[e]	20,520
8	Spain	96,277	Serbia and Montenegro	50,000	Nigeria	54,796	Belgium	20,200
9	Italy	92,770	Croatia	45,000	Jamaica	48,353	United Kingdom	19,075
10	Other Europe[c]	73,337	Romania	40,000	South Africa	47,954	Iraq	15,240

	Switzerland		United States		Australia	
	Origin	Number	Origin	Number	Origin	Number
1	Federal Republic of Yugoslavia[f]	79,417	Mexico	5,216,718	EU15, EEA, and Switzerland[h]	457,240
2	Italy	71,799	Germany	655,305	New Zealand	153,831
3	Germany	44,757	Puerto Rico (US)	640,239	Southeast, South Central Asia[i]	150,779
4	Portugal	43,209	Philippines	562,787	Other Europe[c]	106,263
5	France	32,890	Vietnam	395,031	East Asia	98,137

(*continued*)

Table 110.2 (continued)

	Switzerland		United States		Australia	
	Origin	Number	Origin	Number	Origin	Number
6	Turkey	31,261	El Salvador	391,677	Vietnam	62,909
7	Bosnia and Herzegovina	21,323	Canada	367,042	Africa	60,379
8	Spain	20,773	United Kingdom	344,072	Philippines	47,311
9	TFYR Macedonia[g]	19,990	Dominican Republic	334,349	Other Oceania[j]	45,769
10	Austria	13,440	India	331,153	Italy	45,070

Source: Hernandez et al. (2009, pp. 16–17); Statistisches Bundesamt (2010, p. 60) (for Germany)
[a]Excludes African countries already listed
[b]Excludes African countries already listed
[c]Excludes European countries already listed
[d]Figures for Germany are calculated from the 1 % population sample provided by Microcensus 2009 and include children 0–15 years
[e]Includes present-day Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovenia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99)
[f]Includes present-day Montenegro, Serbia, and Kosovo (under UN Security Council Resolution 1244/99)
[g]The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
[h]Excludes Italy. EEA = European Economic Area, which here refers to Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway
[i]Excludes the Philippines and Vietnam
[j]Excludes countries in Oceania already listed

In the USA, due to the geographical proximity to Mexico, children of Mexican origins represent by far the largest group of immigrant children (5,216,718), followed by children originated in Germany (655,305) who at the same time are the only group from an affluent country among the six largest national origin groups. The third largest group is from Puerto Rico (640,239), followed by Philippines (562,787), Vietnam (395,031), and El Salvador (391,677). In Australia, immigrant children of European origin represent the largest group (457,240), followed by those from New Zealand (153,831), and from Southeast and South Central Asia (150,779).

110.4 Health Status

Given the fact that immigrants in most receiving countries have a lower socioeconomic status than the native population, and due to some risk factors being often associated with the migration experience (Grinberg and Grinberg 1984; Oberg 1998), there is a common perception of immigrants as "intrinsically pathological" (Portes and Rumbaut 2006, p. 175) persons. Yet there is no empirical evidence for such a general conclusion. There is some great variety between the different immigrant groups and indicators within and across countries, and at least in some cases, immigrants and their children even outperform native-born families.

110.4.1 Physical Health

In the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III) conducted in the USA in 1996 (see Mendoza and Dixon 1999; Hernandez and Charney 1998, pp. 63–68) and which was based on parental reports, the occurrence of asthma was reported less likely by the parents of first-generation Mexican children than by those of the US-born whites (3.1 % vs. 12.8 % among the 12–16 years old). Furthermore, the Mexican parents reported less likely that their children had any accidents, injury, or poisoning in the past 12 months (3.6 % vs. 18.5 % among the 12–16 years old). However, the reports increased in the second and later generations and approached to those of the US-born whites. This phenomenon of worsening health indicators across subsequent immigrant generations has also been found regarding the infant mortality and the rates of infants born with low birth weight (Hernandez and Charney 1998, pp. 60–61). Not only in the USA, but also in other receiving countries, researchers have found evidence for this phenomenon that they refer to as the epidemiological paradox (ibid; Berry et al. 2006, p. 125). It is often explained as a result of the abandonment of protective factors of the heritage culture while adapting to the new culture of the receiving country. Such protective factors could be healthier diet, social norms, stricter behavior control, and stronger family ties. As a concrete example of how cultural norms can affect positively the health status of immigrant children, one can see the drug and alcohol prohibition in Islamic cultures, which, as observed in the Netherlands, results in the

lowest levels in terms of drug use and alcohol consumption among the children of Turkish and Moroccan immigrant groups (Statistics Netherlands 2007).

However, there are a number of other indicators evolving in the opposite direction. For instance, it was much more likely reported by parents of first-generation Mexican Americans than by the US-born white parents that their children have fair to poor teeth condition (39 % vs. 7 % among children younger than 5 years), and the reports decreased in the second (26 %) and later (21 %) generations (Hernandez and Charney 1998, pp. 66–67). Immigrant children in the USA also show higher risks of harboring or acquiring infectious diseases like tuberculosis, hepatitis B, and parasitic infections. In 1995, immigrants made 35 % of total US tuberculosis cases (ibid., p. 71).

In the Netherlands, mortality rates among 5–24-year-olds of non-Western immigrant origins are 50 % higher, and the perinatal mortality rate is between a quarter and a third higher than among the native population, though there has been a substantial decline between 2002 and 2006 (Garssen and van der Meulen 2007). The highest perinatal mortality rate was found among the immigrant group from the Antilles and Aruba where it is related to the higher prevalence of sexually transmitted infections and the higher share of teenage pregnancies among this group (ibid.).

In some countries, there is a higher risk of obesity among specific immigrant groups. In the Netherlands, almost one-fourth of the Turkish and Moroccan children suffer from overweight, compared to 10 % among the Dutch children and 14 % among the children from Suriname, Antilles, and Aruba (Frenken 2004). In France, children of North African origin (Roville-Sausse 1999) and those of Turkish origin in Germany (Kurth and Schaffrath Rosario 2007) show higher risks of being obese. In a nationally representative US study conducted in 1995 (Harris 1999), high risk of overweight has been found in the Hispanic groups, especially among the children of Puerto Rican and Mexican origins, with fractions of respectively 39.3 % and 33 % in the second generation, compared to 23.4 % among the native-born non-Hispanic white children. In contrast, the Asian groups showed lower risks of obesity, particularly the Chinese, where only 10 % of the second-generation children in the USA were obese. Moreover, the risk of obesity increased consistently across the generations. A pattern that was already described above in conjunction with other indicators.

110.4.2 Mental Health

As for physical health, the mixed empirical results regarding the mental health do not allow generalizations about whether immigrant children do worse or better than native children. In a comparison of immigrant youth with national youth in 13 countries, Sam et al. (2006) found slightly fewer psychological problems and fewer behavior problems among the immigrant youth and no differences in the areas of life satisfaction and self-esteem. However, in a US study with 24,599 eighth graders, Kao (1999) found that children in Asian and Hispanic groups, compared to the American children, had overall lower feelings of self-efficacy and stronger feelings of being unpopular or alienated at school. No differences were

found in terms of self-esteem. After controlling for parental SES, home language use, school grades, and school experience, the differences in self-efficacy disappeared completely, and those regarding feelings of alienation were reduced almost one-half, but this was the case only for the Hispanics, while the differences persisted for the Asian groups. In contrast, Harris (1999) found in another US study no differences between the Asian, Hispanic, and American groups in terms of positive well-being and psychological distress, and when controlling for socioeconomic influences such as family and neighborhood poverty, the immigrant children showed even better outcomes than the Americans.

Virta et al. (2004) also did not find Turkish youth in Sweden and in Norway having more psychological problems than national youth. However, the Turkish youth in Norway reported significantly lower self-esteem and more mental health problems than the Turks in Sweden, and this could partly be explained by the higher frequency of perceived discrimination in Norway. Discrimination has been found to be one of the strongest predictors of negative mental health outcomes in a number of studies (Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti 2000a; Montgomery and Foldspang 2007; Phinney and Chavira 1995; Rogler et al. 1991; Rumbaut 1994; Ying 1996), and experiences of discrimination appear to increase with the length of residence in the receiving country (Rumbaut 1994, p. 782, 1999, p. 522; Gaudet et al. 2005, p. 163). Moreover, a strong ethnic identity, by fostering coping resources such as self-esteem and self-mastery and by buffering stressors like discrimination, showed to be positively related with the psychological health of immigrant children (French and Chavez 2010; Holleran and Waller 2003; Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti 2000b; Nesdale et al. 1997; Phinney et al. 2001; Virta et al. 2004). Furthermore, the quality of the parent-child relationship has been found to be one of the strongest predictors for psychological well-being among immigrant children (see Sect. 110.5).

110.4.3 Health-Care Utilization

There is some evidence of lower rates and different patterns of health-care utilization among immigrants. For example, in Germany, in a study with 17,641 children conducted between 2003 and 2006, only 56 % of the immigrant children reported participating in early diagnostic tests on a regular basis, while this was reported by 85 % of the German children. Furthermore, 14 % of the immigrant children have never taken part at an early diagnostic test compared to 2 % among the German children (Kamtsiuris et al. 2007). Thus, the health-care utilization of the immigrant children in Germany can be described as curative, rather than prophylactic. In a study conducted in 2003 in the German state Baden-Württemberg, Turkish parents largely agreed that one should only go to the dentist when having toothache (BBMFI 2005, p. 145 f.). Similar discrepancies between immigrant and native families have been found in France, and even after controlling for socioeconomic factors, the lower engagement of immigrants in preventive medical measures persisted (Lehingue et al. 1992; Wanner et al. 1995). Some of the most stressed explanations for such discrepancies refer to existing barriers to the health-care

system due to the immigrants' insufficient language proficiency, or their lack of knowledge about the structure and utilization of the health care system, or their lack of awareness of health risks and the importance of preventive care. Therefore, instructing the parents about the importance of a regular health care and its proper utilization would improve the health situation of immigrant children. This could be done by a counselor that is assigned to a newcomer immigrant family. Instruction should also include information about the social norms, values, and culture of the receiving country and how to behave properly in everyday situations. As Atkinson et al. (1993, pp. 264–265) remark, immigrants have often idealized views about what immigration means, they are not prepared to deal with experiences like discrimination or xenophobia. It is therefore necessary to forewarn them and help them fostering coping resources for preventing (or reducing) the negative impact of such experiences.

110.5 Migration and Family

110.5.1 The Ambivalent Role of the Family in the Acculturation Context

During the acculturation, that is, the adaptation to the new culture, the family of immigrant children can take an ambivalent role. On the one hand, it can have a supportive und protective function; for example, in a study about immigrant children in Israel, Mirsky et al. (2002, p. 94) state that parental support "appears to ease their [the immigrant children's] psychological distress [and. . .] was identified as a possible long-term distress-mitigating factor in migrations [. . .]." In a study with 3,000 immigrant children living in the USA, Harker (2001), too, was able to confirm the protective role of the family. The author found out that parental supervision and an open communication with the parents were negatively associated with delinquent behavior and positively with social competences and other positive behavior patterns. In another study, Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000a) point out that already the *perception* of support shows a significantly positive effect on the well-being of the immigrant children.

However, the migration situation can also be an important source of parent-child conflicts that are considered strong predictors of low psychological well-being (Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti 2000b, p. 447; Rumbaut 1994). These conflicts often emerge due to a differing rhythm of acculturation between parents and children (Aronowitz 1984; Gil and Vega 1996; Rosenthal 1996; Stopes-Roe and Cochrane 1989). While parents often try to maintain their heritage culture, which is in the case of non-Western immigrants mostly a collectivist one, the children acculturate more rapidly into the more individualistic culture of the receiving country. This results in intergenerational discrepancies about lifestyle issues such as sexual activities and dating behavior and about the right degree of parental authority and children's independence, and while parents complain about the new attitudes of their children, the latter feel embarrassed by the traditional and old-fashioned behavior of their parents (Portes and Rumbaut 2001; Rumbaut 1994; Rumbaut and Portes 2001).

110.5.2 Cross-national and National Findings

In a cross-national study with 2,374 immigrant and 968 native parent-adolescent dyads, conducted in ten different Western industrialized countries, Sam et al. (2006) state that both immigrant parents and adolescents value family obligations higher than their national counterparts. Yet, when examining the parent-child *discrepancies* on this issue, differences were bigger in the immigrant dyads, and these discrepancies were negatively associated with the children's psychological and social adaptation. When the immigrant adolescents were strongly oriented to the culture of the receiving country in terms of identity, attitudes, and behavior, the intergenerational discrepancies in terms of family obligations were greater in comparison to the adolescents who were orientated to their heritage culture, and the discrepancies became larger with longer residence in the new society. However, even among traditionally oriented adolescents, the discrepancies were larger if the parents strongly supported the retention of their heritage culture.

In a survey with 5,127 students with Asian, Latin American, and Caribbean origins, conducted in Florida and California (USA), Rumbaut (1994) found that parent-child conflicts increase when the child feels embarrassed by its parents and when it does not get support with homework. The strongest parent-child conflicts were found among the Haitians, the Filipinos, and the Indochinese (including Vietnamese, Cambodians, Laotians, Hmongs), and except for the Hmongs, the effect remained significant after controlling for several variables such as parental socioeconomic, discrimination, educational attainment, gender, and age. Also, it was most likely reported by members of these groups that they feel embarrassed by their parents, with the Hmongs being in first place. The Jamaicans and Mexicans were by far the least likely to report feelings of embarrassment for their parents; reports were also rare among children from other Latin American origin countries. The strongest familism values were reported by the Mexicans and the four Indochinese groups. Summing up the results of this study, it can be said that the considered Indochinese groups show high familism values, while, at the same time, they feel relatively often embarrassed by their parents and report more likely parent-child conflicts. The Latin Americans, especially the Mexicans, also show a strong sense of familism, but, in contrast to the Indochinese groups, the reports of parent-child conflicts and feelings of embarrassment for their parents were relatively rare.

In a survey conducted in Austria with 1,000 second-generation immigrant children (Gapp 2007), mainly of Turkish and ex-Yugoslavian origins, intergenerational discrepancies were much more likely reported by immigrant children than by natives. For instance, 45 % of the immigrant children reported having different life plans than their parents, compared to 36 % in the native group. Moreover, 32 % of the immigrants did not feel being understood by their parents, while this was reported by 26 % of the natives. The more traditional the upbringing was characterized by the children, the more likely tensions have been reported. Among the Turks, 58 % reported to have a very traditional or rather traditional upbringing, twice as many as in the other groups. Similar patterns were reported in regard of the perceived parental control on mate and friend selection, with the

Turkish girls on the top of the ladder, and gender differences also existent in the other groups, even among the Austrians.

Also, in a study conducted in the Netherlands including 541 adolescents from four different national origins (Dutch, Moroccan, Turkish, Surinamese) (Wissink 2006), the Turkish adolescents reported less support from their parents, having fewer disclosures with them, and perceived their relationship more negatively than did the other three groups. On the top of the ladder were the Moroccan adolescents who not only had better parental relationships than the other groups (even when compared to the Dutch) but also had the highest outcomes in regard of self-esteem and showed the lowest occurrence of delinquent and aggressive behavior. However, in a study conducted in France with 395 adolescents from five immigrant groups (Algerians, Antilleans, Moroccans, Portuguese, and Vietnamese), the Moroccan adolescents had the lowest outcomes regarding the perceived cultural harmony with their fathers and mothers (Sabatier 2008). The Vietnamese adolescents had similarly low outcomes, while the highest outcomes were found among the Antilleans, followed by the Algerians.

In a study in Finland with 588 first- and second-generation immigrant adolescents from four different groups (Turks, Vietnamese, Russians, Somalis), once again the Vietnamese reported the lowest perceived maternal and paternal support and understanding (Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti 2000b). By far the highest parental support was reported by the Somali adolescents, and, in contrast to the above mentioned studies from the Netherlands and Austria, the Turks also reported high parental support and understanding. Again, parental support was positively associated with self-esteem and negatively with acculturative stress (depression, anxieties, and psychosomatic). Furthermore, adherence to traditional family-related values (parental authority, limitations of children's rights) decreased acculturative stress and behavioral problems, and acceptance of parental authority increased life satisfaction. This could be explained by the higher conformity to the views of the parents which lessens parent-child conflicts and increases the parental capability to support their children. However, the adolescents who had been in Finland longer accepted the limitations of children's rights and parental authority less than those who arrived more recently, and that can be explained due to a more advanced acculturation of the former.

Here, too, counseling programs can be an effective measure by providing parents a better understanding about why cross-cultural conflicts within the family evolve and how to deal with them. One of the few implemented examples, the SITICAF (Strengthening of Intergenerational/Intercultural Ties in Immigrant Chinese American Families) (Ying 1999), has proven its positive impact on intergenerational relationship and sense of coherence. The program consisted of eight 2-h-per-week parenting classes offered in the parent's preferred language. One class offered a simulation of cross-cultural encounter to help parents better empathize the daily life of their children, as parents themselves often stay in their own immigrant groups. In a second class, cultural differences in general and in view of the parent-child relationship in particular were emphasized and discussed. In another class, the parents were instructed different parenting techniques grounded in Western culture and in which

situations it is more appropriate to use these techniques rather than their traditional ones. Finally, the parents were taught different methods to cope effectively with the stresses of parenting. Such intervention programs must not be an exception, but rather an offer to every immigrant parent, especially to the newcomers, and even an obligatory participation should be considered. Also further evaluations and research are needed in order to improve the effectiveness of such programs. Interventions for strengthening the intergenerational ties in immigrant families must also include the child, for example, by fostering its ethnic identity and helping it to appreciate the norms and values of its own culture. Costantino et al. (1984) have shown that one promising approach is to read and discuss folk tales, as a repository of cultural values, in a group situation with the children, parents, and therapists.

Although the presented findings indicate that, due to a differing rhythm of acculturation, immigrant children are likely to face some intergenerational differences regarding specific issues, it does not mean that the quality of the parent-child relationship and the family cohesion in immigrant families is generally lower than in native families. When examining the strength and quality of immigrant family ties, the literature often overemphasizes the specific dimensions where immigrants are more likely to experience intergenerational discrepancies, while overlooking other relevant dimensions of the parent-child relationship where immigrant families often report a high degree of agreement. As some findings listed above already showed, values of familism and obligations toward the parents are relatively strong among immigrant children, despite bigger differences in other issues. Kwak and Berry (2001) have made a comparison of Asian immigrant families and native families in Canada, and while they found greater intergenerational differences in parental authority and children's independence among the Asian families, the differences in children's obligations and intergenerational solidarity were greater in native families. The Asians showed stronger family ties and a higher degree of cooperation between family members than the natives. Another study about Asian immigrants in the USA found that the immigrant children often disagree with their parents when it comes to individualistic lifestyle issues such as seeking fun and excitement or material possessions, while agreement is high in regard of educational attainments, hard work, and familial solidarity (Caplan et al. 1989, 1992). Immigrant families do not necessarily experience a lower family cohesion and quality of parent-child relationship, as it is often suggested in the literature by overemphasizing disagreements on some certain issues.

110.5.3 Acculturation Patterns

Despite the differing rhythm of acculturation between immigrant parents and children, intergenerational conflicts are not an inevitable outcome of the acculturation process. Rather it is possible that immigrant children have positive attitudes toward the new culture and at the same time wish to maintain their original culture. Berry et al. (2006), who studied over 5,000 immigrant youths in 13 settling countries, found evidence that the largest number of youth, approaching two-fifths

of them, fell into such an acculturation pattern, which the authors call the *integration* pattern. The second largest pattern is *separation* (the wish to maintain one's original culture while avoiding social relations and acculturation to the culture of the receiving country), the third largest is *assimilation* (when individuals seek interactions with the new society and do not wish to maintain their heritage culture), and the pattern with the smallest share is marginalization (neither feeling attached to the original culture nor having interest in relations with the receiving society). The patterns had distinct correlates in several dimensions, among others the quality of parent-child relationship, educational outcomes, and psychological well-being. The highest outcomes were correlated with the *integration* pattern and the lowest with the *marginalization* pattern. The remaining two patterns (*separation* and *assimilation*) showed intermediate levels. A number of other studies also found evidence for the described patterns and their correlates (Berry and Sam 1997; Curran 2003; Phinney et al. 2001; Ryder et al. 2000). However, questions regarding the exact causal order remain. Hence, though it is possible that being attached to both cultures promotes the cognitive development and other positive attributes, it may be also possible that the causal effect runs in the opposite direction. In this version, the *integration* pattern is just a *consequence* of greater cognitive and social ability, rather than its source.

110.6 Language Fluency and Early Education

For immigrants, it is essential to master the language of the receiving country, hereinafter also called national language or second language, as it serves as a basic tool to function properly in the new society (Ying 1996). For instance, lacking sufficient knowledge of the national language makes it hardly possible to get involved in social interactions with members of the receiving country, or to participate in school and class activities, or to consume media, or to complete everyday tasks without having to rely on someone else. In a study with 95 Chinese Americans, language difficulty was the most often cited migration-related problem (by about two-thirds of the immigrants), and it was found to be a significant predictor of low immigration satisfaction (ibid.). After analyzing Hispanic and Asian students in the USA, Kao (1999) notes that children in families where English is not the mainly spoken language show a lower self-efficacy. Noels et al. (1996) found out that self-perceived competence in the language of the receiving country increases the sense of personal control and self-esteem and decreases the perceived stress. Similar results have been found by Pak et al. (1985), Dion et al. (1990), and Liebkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000a).

110.6.1 National Findings

In the USA, six of ten (58 %) immigrant children have at least one parent who is limited English proficient (LEP) (Capps et al. 2004, p. 18). Moreover, one-fourth is

living in so-called linguistically isolated households, where all persons older than 13 years are LEP (Hernandez et al. 2008, p. 7). However, 60 % have at least one parent who speaks English at home, and among the immigrant children themselves, the vast majority (74 %) speaks English exclusively or very well, while all others (26 %) are LEP (ibid., pp. 6–7). It is the linguistic integration of the latter that represents the real challenge.

Regarding France, in 1992, it has been found that only 20 % of the immigrant parents use exclusively their heritage language for communicating with their children; however, there were group differences, and, for instance, the Turks showed the highest values (56 %). In contrast, more than half (54 %) of the immigrant parents from the sub-Saharan Africa spoke exclusively French with their children (Simon 1996). In France, as seen in the USA too, the younger immigrant generations speak much better the national language than the older generations (Kirszbaum et al. 2009, p. 22). According to the data of the Family History Survey, conducted in France in 1999, in almost 80 % of the families where both parents are immigrants, a language other than French is spoken at home. The highest shares were found for the Asian groups (including, among others, Cambodia: 97 %; Turkey: 93 %), followed by the Americans and the Oceanians (83 %), and the Africans (78 %). The lowest shares were found among the Europeans (75 %), particularly the South Europeans (Italy: 57 %; Spain: 65 %) (ibid.).

In Australia, the national language English is spoken at home by two-third of the immigrant children. This relatively high proportion is due to the fact that the majority of the immigrant families originated in English-speaking countries (Ireland, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom) (Katz and Redmond 2009, p. 23). As in France, particularly the Asians do not speak the national language at home (66 %), with China and Vietnam having the largest shares (respectively, 92 % and 95 %). The Europeans take an intermediate position (18 %), with the Greeks (65 %) in the first place, followed by the Germans (25 %) (ibid.). However, over nine-tenths of the 12-year-olds who speak a language other than English at home have good English skills, which, once again, confirms the pattern that younger immigrant generations acquire the national language faster and better than their parents do (ibid., p. 24).

In Germany, the immigrant children of Turkish origin show by far the lowest outcomes regarding the national language skills. For instance, their reading skills in the International Student Assessment (PISA) of 2009 were 109 score points below the children of German origin, and this corresponds to a learning deficit of more than two school years. The situation is quite different for the immigrant children from the former USSR, as they do not differ from the German children in terms of reading skills. Moreover, after controlling for some socioeconomic and cultural variables, they even outperform the German children (Stanat et al. 2010).

110.6.2 Cross-national Findings (PISA 2009)

PISA 2009 also provides the most comprehensive cross-national comparison of language fluency of immigrant children (Stanat et al. 2010, p. 212). Among 21

selected OECD countries (including 17 European countries as well as Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the USA), Canada, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Ireland, and Portugal are the only countries where the immigrant children's reading performance is not significantly worse than the natives'. Australia is the only country where the immigrant children outperform the native children. The highest discrepancies between immigrant children and natives are found in Belgium, Germany, Austria, Luxembourg, and Italy. A comparison of the reading skills between the first and second generations shows that the highest intergenerational leaps in favor of the second generation are found in Sweden, Finland, Greece, Austria, and Italy.

110.6.3 Early Education

The age at immigration plays a key role for the second language acquisition. However, the positive impact of a young age at immigration can only take effect when a child has enough opportunities to get into contact with the language of the receiving country. For instance, this can be achieved by attending preschool facilities. A study conducted in Germany including 1,200 children of Turkish and Russian origin confirmed that kindergarten attendance has a positive influence on the second language acquisition; in fact, the competence increased linearly with the years spent in the kindergarten (Becker 2006). This positive impact can be explained due to the frequency and intensity of contact with the second language. However, it seems, at least regarding the children from low- and middle-income countries (LMIC), that the preschool attendance results in taking them out of a family context that shows to be less appropriate for developing general linguistic competences, even in the first language, as well as other important cognitive abilities. For example, some studies from the Netherlands showed that immigrant children from LMIC have basic linguistic deficits at the time of primary school enrolment (de Haan 1994; Pels 1991). Furthermore, some studies from the USA and from Germany were able to prove that preschool attendance not only has a positive effect on second language acquisition but also influences positively basic linguistic, cognitive, and social abilities as well as emotional and physical well-being (Becker and Biedinger 2006; Gormley et al. 2005; Kunze and Gisbert 2005).

In many countries, immigrant children have lower preschool enrolment rates than native children. For example, in the USA, the enrolment rates among the 3-year-old immigrant children in the year 2000 were 32 % compared to 39 % among the native children; among the 4-year-olds, the discrepancies were even higher with 55 % compared to 63 % (Hernandez et al. 2008, p. 11). In Germany too, differences in preschool attendance rates exist; in 2004, 71.7 % of the foreign-born children were enrolled in a kindergarten, while the share was 80.7 % among the children born in Germany with a foreign nationality and 83.7 % among those with German nationality (Konsortium Bildungsberichterstattung 2006, p. 38). Differences were also found in the Netherlands although they are continuously shrinking. By now, about half of the Moroccans and three-fourth of the Turkish immigrant children are visiting a preschool (Gijsberts 2003; Gijsberts and Herweijer 2007).

Sometimes cultural factors are stressed as an explanation for the lower preschool attendance rates among immigrant children. Yet recent studies from the USA show that the differences can be explained to a large extent, if not completely, by socioeconomic factors (Hernandez et al. 2011). Gijsberts (2003), too, suggests that it is mainly the financial costs that prevent the immigrant parents from sending their children to preschool facilities and why they often resort to their family and immigrant networks as an alternative for child care. Furthermore, culturalistic explanations, often articulated in the USA when referring to the Hispanics, do not appear feasible when looking at the case of Mexico, where preschools are free and where the enrolment rates are higher than those of the native children in the USA (Hernandez et al. 2008, p. 15). Given this key role of socioeconomic factors for the preschool attendance patterns, it seems more feasible that policy measures such as the reimbursement of the preschool fees for immigrant families could succeed.

110.6.4 Language Support Programs

According to a survey including 14 OECD countries (OECD 2006, pp. 117–153), only in Denmark, Norway, and some German states, children with limited proficiency in the national language are required to attend preprimary education before entering primary education. Only in Canada and in the Netherlands, the language support provided as part of the preprimary education is based on an explicit curriculum (in Canada 5–8 h and in the Netherlands 1.5 h weekly). In the Canton Zurich, the teachers are given a handbook that provides a basis for language support.

Different language support models exist in the primary and lower secondary education. In most of the surveyed countries, more than 50 % of the students with limited proficiency in the national language participate in so-called immersion with systematic language support. Within this model, students take part in regular school lessons and obtain additional support courses in the national language. Another language support model is the immersion with a preparatory phase, in which the students have to visit a preparatory program before they enter the mainstream class. Generally, the preparatory program takes 6–12 months and serves, besides the language support, to give an understanding of the culture and the school system of the receiving country.

In the primary education, significant shares of children with language difficulties who are enrolled in one of such support programs can only be found in Finland, Sweden, and the Australian state Victoria (respectively, 20–34 %, 35–49 %, 50–64 %). In the secondary education, the shares are larger, which can probably be explained by the higher need of support among the newly immigrated children. The highest enrolment rates are found in Australia (>80 % in the state New South Wales), the Netherlands (>80 %), Canada (50–64 %), Sweden (35–49 %), and Finland (20–34 %).

Overall, there are large variations between the different countries regarding the amount and the quality of the language support provided for immigrant children.

In countries such as Australia, Canada, and Sweden, the support appears more systematic, as it is based on standards and includes progress benchmarks; moreover, it takes place continuously in the primary and secondary education, and the lessons are conducted by teachers, who have appropriate qualifications and training. In comparison, the language support in countries such as Germany, Belgium, or Luxembourg is less systematic; for example, in Germany, 50–80 % of the students with language difficulties take part in a language support program in primary school, while the share is only 5–19 % in the secondary education. In most cases, the programs in these countries do not have an explicit curriculum, neither a certification program for teachers. The higher quality of the language support programs in countries like Australia, Canada, or Sweden may, at least partially, explain why the immigrant children in these countries have better outcomes than those in countries such as Germany or Belgium. However, this question needs further research.

110.6.5 Native Language Fluency

According to the much debated "interdependence hypothesis" (Cummins 1979), proficiency in the mother tongue will ease the acquisition of the majority language. There is some evidence in favor of this hypothesis; moreover, bilingual instruction does appear to have a positive influence not only for acquiring the majority language but also for the educational success of immigrant children (for the most comprehensive reviews, see Lindholm-Leary and Borsato 2006; Francis et al. 2006). Studies from other research fields have also shown that bilingual speakers have generally higher cognitive competences (Bialystok et al. 2006) and a higher brain matter density (Mechelli et al. 2004) compared to monolingual speakers. Yet more research is needed to exactly verify how bilingualism enfolds its positive influence on the cognitive abilities and if it is not just a correlate of other factors, rather than being itself a causing factor. Besides the suggested influence on cognitive abilities, fluency in a second language can improve one's competitiveness in the increasingly internationalized economies with a growing need of professionals who master more than one language (Portes and Rumbaut 2001, pp. 117–118). Proficiency in the mother tongue makes intergenerational communication possible, when the parents do not speak the majority language. Thus, it helps avoiding an intergenerational gap and parent-child conflicts, and it fosters the parental supportive role; therefore, it has been found as positively associated with the quality of the parent-child relationship and accordingly with the psychological well-being of immigrant children (Portes and Rumbaut 2001, pp. 133–146; Rumbaut 1994, p. 779; Tannenbaum and Berkovich 2005). Despite the apparent benefits of native language fluency, very few countries offer immigrant language instruction (ILI) on a nationwide basis and with a clear guided curriculum. A very comprehensive overview of the different ILI school programs in European countries can be found in Vermeulen (1997, pp. 57–100); less explicit but more recent data about the subject are provided by the OECD (2006, pp. 145–163).

The case of Sweden can be seen as an outstanding example for ILI on a legal and consistent basis. In Sweden, native language tuition is not just an offer, but a *right* for immigrant children. Primary schools are legally required to carry ILI when a minimum of five pupils per language per municipality is met; the cooperation of the school administration is required if the number falls below. Generally, ILI takes 2 h a week, and enrolment is allowed for maximum seven out of the nine compulsory school years. An important aspect of the Swedish ILI model is an every year collection of information about each pupil. Teachers and headmasters collect data about the native language usage at home, the need for ILI, and the proficiency in native language and Swedish. This information is gathered in the so-called home language statistics that serve as the most important data basis for the organization of the ILI and the funding of the local governments through the central government.

Most other countries are far from having this level of centralization and guidance regarding their ILI programs. In the Netherlands, the primary schools *may* include ILI in their curriculum if the pupils' parents desire it and if a minimum of eight pupils per language group per school is met, but in the end, it still depends from the interplay between school management, teachers, pupils, and parents. In Great Britain, priority is given to English as the primary education language, as it is considered as the key to enable immigrant children to participate in the national curriculum successfully. In primary education, ILI may be taught for auxiliary purposes, but not as an autonomous subject. In secondary education, the most important immigrant languages can be offered as part of the national curriculum, but as priority must be given to the national languages of the European Union, non-Western languages spoken by many immigrants in Great Britain are thus excluded. Moreover, the narrow framework of the national curriculum offers hardly time for including additional courses. In France, ILI is offered in primary education if the consulate of an immigrant group's origin country wishes it and if the French Ministry of Education approves it. The consulate is responsible for the funding and the curriculum development. In Germany, two ILI models are predominant; in some states, there is a consulate model similar to the one in France; in the other states, the organization of ILI is in the hands of the educational department of the state. However, there are substantial differences between the states: sometimes ILI is only offered in certain school types, sometimes only specific languages are offered, and sometimes participation is allowed only for pupils who have not attended German schools since their sixth year.

Despite the fact that ILI is compulsory, the enrolment rates are relatively high, though there are variations between the different immigrant groups. Among the students with Turkish origin eligible to participate in ILI, 54 % were enrolled in Sweden in 1998, 65 % in the German State North Rhine-Westphalia in 1995/1996, and 77 % in the Netherlands in 1993. The shares for Moroccan/Arabic students were, respectively, 63 %, 43 %, and 68 %, and the participation rates among students with former Yugoslavian origin were, respectively, 47 %, 30 %, and 25 % (Vermeulen 1997; Westin 2003, p. 997).

110.7 Educational Attainments

There is clear evidence that school education is strongly related with the later economic well-being and occupational status of person (Psacharopoulos and Patrinos 2002). Furthermore, Berry (1997) sees in school education a resource that eases the adaptation of immigrants to the receiving society as it is associated with other important skills such as problem analyzing and problem solving. In most cases, school is also the first and most intensive interaction opportunity for immigrants with the receiving society, that is why school takes the role of an acculturation agent. Schiffauer et al. (2004) were able to show, in a study including four European countries, how immigrant children learn the culture and history of the receiving country through school books and how other mechanisms within the school system help to shape their cultural and political identities. According to PISA 2003, immigrant children mostly express higher interest in school and higher educational aspirations than their native peers (OECD 2006, p. 114). Students from both immigrant generations, particularly from the first generation, report much more often than native students that they expect to complete a university program and that they are motivated and expect to succeed. However, their high aspirations and expectations for themselves diverge from their actual situation, as will be shown below.

110.7.1 National Findings

In France, as in most Western receiving countries, immigrant children show lower educational outcomes than native children. Vallet and Caille (1996) found, by studying a student panel conducted 1989, that almost half of the students of foreign origins have repeated at least 1 year in primary school, compared to only one-fourth among the French students. In secondary education, immigrant children are twice as likely as their French peers to leave school without a graduation, and they receive less likely a baccalauréat (Brinbaum and Kieffer 2009). Lainé and Okba (2005) found particularly high school dropout rates among immigrant children of North African origins; the shares were 43 % among the boys and 27 % among the girls, 2.7 times the share found among French children. Simon (2007) found even higher dropout rates among the children of Turkish origin (46 %). Similar patterns were also found in the tertiary education in France: In 1999, among the foreign-born 18–24-year-olds, those of Turkish origin had the lowest participation rates (37.6 % among Turkish men and 9.8 % among Turkish women vs. 56.6 %, respectively, 65.8 % in the French population); the shares of the Algerians in the tertiary education were also below average (43.8 % and 50.3 %). In contrast, particularly high participation rates were found among the men from South Asia (72.2%); only the women from the EU-15 countries had even higher participation rates (79.1%) in tertiary education (Kirszbaum et al. 2009, p. 26).

In Germany, too, the immigrant children show lower educational outcomes across all levels of the educational system. Regarding the 15-year-old with at

least one foreign-born parent, the participation rate in the highest school type (Gymnasium) was 22% in 2006, 15 percentage points lower than the German children (37%). Moreover, the former participated twice as likely in the lowest German school type (Hauptschule) (16% vs. 36%) (Autorengruppe Bildungsberichterstattung 2010, p. 65). However, there are large variations between the origin groups; for instance, the children of Turkish origin have the lowest outcomes, and those of Italian and ex-Yugoslavian origin have also lower outcomes than the German children. The best outcomes are found among the second-generation children of Polish and Russian origin (Alba et al. 1994; Kristen 2002, 2008; Segeritz et al. 2010). In 2003, among the 15-year-old students, the second-generation Russians and Poles participated more likely in gymnasium than German students (49 % vs. 39 % vs. 35 %); in contrast, among the Turkish second generation, the share was only 9 % (Segeritz et al. 2010, p. 128). At the same time, 49 % of the latter were found in the Hauptschule, compared to 16 % of the Germans, 20 % of the Poles, and 10 % of the Russians (ibid.).

Overall, regarding the European countries, it can be said that the Turkish immigrant children have significantly lower educational attainment than the respective majority groups in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Swiss, and France. In Belgium and the Netherlands, it is the Moroccans who have the lowest outcomes; the Maghrebians in France; the Pakistanis in Denmark, Norway, and Great Britain; and the Caribbean in Great Britain. The immigrant children from East Asia have higher-than-average educational outcomes in Great Britain and France and the children of Indian origin in Great Britain and Norway. The immigrant children of European origin take an intermediate position (Heath et al. 2008).

Furthermore, there is evidence that the immigrant girls outperform the boys in most European countries and in several educational areas. They have better test scores in secondary education and higher or equal participation rates in tertiary education, and they are much more likely to be found in higher education than their male peers, even though in most of the origin countries, there are great educational inequalities disfavoring the girls. However, as an exception, the Turkish girls in Austria, the Netherlands, and France do not outperform their male peers (ibid.).

In the USA, census data from 2000 (Rumbaut 2005, p. 1048) show that immigrant students of Asian origins are relatively high educated and that they often outperform the native children. The highest educational levels are found among the Chinese, where 58 % of the foreign born and 73 % of the US born have a 4-year college degree, compared to 31 % in the native population. The Korean and the Indian have similarly high outcomes, while the Hmong, Lao, and Cambodian are the least educated among the Asian groups. The children of Mexican origin are the least educated, as only 4 % of the foreign born and 13 % of the US born own a college degree. Other Hispanic groups such as the Cubans, Columbians, and Peruvian have higher outcomes, as the US born even outperform the native population. An upward mobility from the first to the second generation can be noticed in all Hispanic and all Asian groups, with the smallest increase in the Puerto Rican group.

Several US scholars have tried to explain the high educational success of Asian immigrant children. Based on a longitudinal study with students of Hispanic and Asian origins, Rumbaut (1999) found that the number of daily hours spent for doing homework was the strongest positive predictor, while watching television daily was significantly associated with lower educational outcomes. The children with the highest grades, notably those of Asian origins, also put the most efforts into schoolwork. Moreover, the Hmongs were the only students who decreased their school efforts over the years of observation, resulting in the main drop in educational performance among all considered groups. Another US study also confirms that frequent studying is a main explaining factor for the good performance of East Asian immigrant children and that they thus overcome their limited exposure to English (Fuligni 1997). Moreover, Asian immigrant parents set higher educational expectations for their children than other parents, they are less satisfied with Bs and Cs, they have higher standard for the minimum account of education that their children should achieve, and they expect their children to complete more schooling years than other parents (Okagaki and Frensch 1998). Also, Asian immigrant parents place a relatively high emphasis on hard work as a key part of their children's intelligence, whereas the native parents' conception of intelligence relies more strongly on innate cognitive abilities such as creativity and verbal expression, and Hispanic immigrant parents particularly focus on social skills as an important component of intelligence (Okagaki and Sternberg 1993).

110.7.2 Cross-national Findings (PISA 2003)

An examination of the PISA data from 2003 (OECD 2006), including 14 countries (10 European countries, the USA, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia), shows that the immigrant children, when compared to the natives, have lower outcomes regarding the student performance in mathematics, science, and problem-solving in almost every country. The only exceptions are the immigrant children in Canada, Australia, as well as the first generation in New Zealand. The biggest discrepancies are found in Belgium and Germany. In Sweden and Swiss, too, large discrepancies are prevalent, though they are much smaller for the second than for the first generation. In contrast, in Germany, the discrepancies are larger in the second generation, particularly in terms of science performance.

110.7.3 Determinants of Immigrant Children's Educational Performance

As for the native children, the parental education and occupational background also play a key role in explaining the educational achievements of immigrant children (Hernandez et al. 2010, p. 422). Parents, who themselves went successfully through the educational system, are in a better position to help their children with homework or prepare for tests (Erikson and Jonsson 1996, p. 26). Moreover, educated parents

have a higher knowledge of the structure of the educational system; thus, they are more capable to plan strategically the school career of their child, for example, due to the knowledge about the relevant school subjects, or about the most appropriate school for their child, or how to best communicate with the school staff (ibid., p. 22). Furthermore, parents with a high occupational status are more aware of the importance of education for succeeding in the job market; they therefore may be more determined when it comes to supporting and motivating their children. Professionally successful parents also serve as role models for the children; thus, it appears more feasible for the children to succeed in school and in job market as if nobody in the family has run through a successful school career (ibid., p. 23). Finally, parents with a higher socioeconomic status have more financial resources available that they can invest in the education of their child, whether it is for school materials and fees or for paying extracurricular lessons or preschool facilities.

A look at the PISA data from 2003 confirms that the educational outcomes of the immigrant children are strongly associated with the educational background and socioeconomic status of the parents (OECD 2006, pp. 57–63). For instance, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand were the only countries where the parents of the immigrant children did not have a lower socioeconomic status in comparison to the natives' parents; exactly the same pattern was shown above regarding the educational performance of the children. Moreover, in Germany, where the immigrant children showed the lowest educational outcomes, the parental education and the socioeconomic status were the lowest too, and the gaps to the natives' parents were the largest.

However, mostly, the educational inequalities cannot be explained completely by differences in parental background. As multivariate analyses have shown, the influence of the parental social and educational background varies in its strength between the different immigrant groups and receiving countries. In Germany, the lower educational performance of the immigrant children of Iberian, Greek, and (ex-)Yugoslavian origin can be explained for the most part, if not fully, by parental characteristics, while this is not the case for the children of Turkish and Italian background, where the effects are much weaker (R. Alba et al. 1994; Kalter and Granato 2007). Similar patterns were found in France (Brinbaum and Cebolla-Boado 2007; Vallet and Caille 1999) and in Belgium (Phalet et al. 2007). Also for the Pakistanis and the Moroccans in several European countries, the educational inequalities can only partially be accounted for by the parental background (Brinbaum and Cebolla-Boado 2007; Van De Werfhorst and Van Tubergen 2007).

Some authors argue that discrimination and unequal treatment within the school system may be one reason (Hermans 2004). Rangvid (2007) points out that 20 % of the lower educational performance of the immigrant children in Denmark can be explained by different aspects of the teacher-student relationship. For example, teachers often have lower expectations toward immigrant children, and the immigrant children report less likely that the teachers encourage them to achieve their full potential and that they do not value the child's academic achievements.

Other authors refer to unfair grading habits of the teachers, but this is difficult to verify. After studying the grading of Turkish and German children in primary school, Kristen (2006) states that the remaining disparities in the German grade, even after controlling for several background variables, may be an indication for discrimination through the grading habits of the teachers; however, other reasons could also be stressed. Diehl et al. (2009) found that, in Germany, male students of Turkish origin less likely find an apprenticeship position than their German peers, despite having the same qualifications and actually searching more intensively. According to the authors, this is due to stereotypes and prejudices toward this immigrant group, and it cannot be ruled out that such prejudices also exist among the school teachers. There is also evidence for racism on the part of the schoolmates. Verkuyten and Thijs (2001) have shown that immigrant children in Dutch schools, particularly those of Turkish and Moroccan origin, are more likely to be victims of racist name-calling and social exclusion than their Dutch peers.

Other explanations focus on institutional arrangements. One suitable way to investigate the influence of such factors is cross-national studies, in which immigrant groups of the same origin and with similar social background living in different receiving countries are compared with each other. For example, Crul and Vermeulen (2003) have compared the second-generation Turks in different European countries. The best educational outcomes were found among the Turkish students in France, followed by those in Belgium and the Netherlands, while the Turks in Germany and Austria had the worst educational performance. According to the authors, these cross-national differences are due to significant disparities regarding the conditions in the different national school systems. For instance, students in France enter school at the age of two and a half, in Germany and Austria at the age of six, so the children, who are in a decisive development phase, become much later familiar with the school system and the language of the receiving country. Furthermore, because school education in Germany and Austria mostly takes place on a half-day basis, the children have less face-to-face contact with the teachers as in countries where all-day-schools are more common. Moreover, in both countries, school selection takes place at a relatively young age of 10 years; thus, the immigrant children have less time to compensate their poor starting position. France selects at the age of 15 years, Belgium at 14 years, and the Netherlands at 12–14 years. Finally, the authors indicate that there are significant cross-national disparities as to the support that children are given inside and outside the school. In France, the students receive the most support, followed by Belgium and the Netherlands, while the least support is provided in Germany. Overall, it can be said that the Turkish children in Germany and Austria are in a relatively disadvantageous position.

110.8 Poverty in Immigrant Families

There are few other predictors that have such a negative effect on children's well-being as poverty (Duncan and Brooks-Gunn 1999). Commonly used

indicators for poverty are the parental or the household income. Further indicators are housing conditions such as overcrowding or home ownership and family size and structure; information about the recreational, cultural, and social activities of the child can also be used as indicators for poverty. A study conducted in the German State of Hesse found out that immigrant children receive on average less pocket money than other children, 15.56 € versus 23.72 € monthly. Moreover, it is more common among the immigrant children that they have to purchase things as school supplies or clothes with their own pocket money, while in native families, this is usually done by their parents. Hence, the immigrant children have less money available that they can spend for toys, magazines, and leisure activities (Hessenstiftung 2007).

In a cross-national study including 14 affluent receiving countries, Smeeding et al. (2009, p. 5) state that in all countries except Australia, immigrant children are confronted with a higher risk of poverty compared to the native children. One of the main reasons for this circumstance is the poorer labor market positioning of the parents. For example, in the Netherlands, the unemployment rate is significantly higher among the immigrants of non-Western origin compared to the natives, and even among the working immigrant population, many have only a part-time job or are employed in the low-wage sector (Vrooman and Hoff 2004).

Single-parent households can be seen as another risk factor for child poverty, as the remaining parent has to shoulder the burden of breadwinner and childcare alone. However, this factor does not play a key role for the immigrant population because the majority of the immigrant children live in a two-parent household, with the exception of few groups, that is, the Africans and the Caribbean in the Netherlands and in the UK (Hernandez et al. 2009, p. 26).

Another more important reason for immigrant children poverty is the number of children living in a household, given that in most receiving countries, immigrant families have more children than the native families (ibid., p. 27). In France, 59 % of the immigrant children from developing countries live in a household with two or more siblings, compared to a share of 32 % in the native children population. The shares in Germany are, respectively, 47 % and 19 % (ibid.). The higher the number of children, the fewer resources can be invested per child. As a consequence, and in combination with a lower average household income in immigrant families, immigrant children find themselves more likely to live in an overcrowded housing, that is, in a household with more than one person per room (ibid., pp. 57–60). Living in an overcrowded housing makes it harder for a child to find a silent place to do homework, and it can affect negatively the behavioral adjustment and the psychological health of the child (Evans et al. 2001).

Overall, it can be said that there is a combination of larger families and lower household incomes that result in overcrowded housing as, for example, Crawley (2010, p. 564) has shown for the immigrant population in the UK. Mencarini (2010, p. 540), too, notes that immigrant children in Italy live in homes that are on average smaller, and with more people living in it. According to a study conducted in the German state of North Rhine-Westphalia, immigrant children live much more likely in blocks of flats than German children

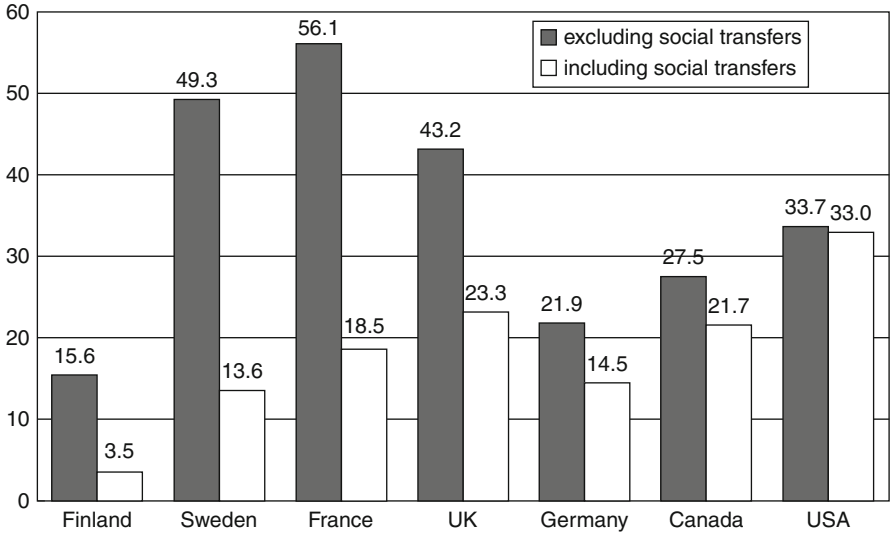

Fig. 110.1 Percentage of immigrant households below the poverty threshold in seven countries (Source: Smeeding et al. 2009:17)

(25 % vs. 3 %) and less likely in detached homes (41 % vs. 73 %); moreover, it is less likely that they have their own room and do not have to share it with their siblings or other family members (62 % vs. 82 %) (LBS-Initiative Junge Familie 2006, pp. 35–38).

110.8.1 Comparing National Antipoverty Programs

Given the fact that immigrant children experience in almost every receiving country higher risks of poverty, national antipoverty programs, as a way to help them out of poverty, play an important role, and it is quite interesting to analyze to what extent these programs do succeed. A suitable way to examine the effects of such antipoverty programs is a cross-national comparison, because, when immigrant groups with similar social background and migration biographies are affected differently by poverty in different countries, this could be an indication to a varying effectiveness of the different national antipoverty programs.

Such a cross-national comparison has been done by Smeeding et al. (2009) using the data of the Luxembourg Income Study (LIS). As in most cross-national studies, the poverty threshold was set at 50 % of the national median household income (ibid., p. 3). Figure 110.1 contains the shares of immigrant households below the poverty threshold in seven selected countries. The left bar represents the share *before*, while the right bar stands for the shares *after* taking into account the social transfers.

The resulting picture is quietly consistent with the well-known welfare typology of Esping-Andersen: The strongest effects of reducing the immigrants' poverty by social transfers were found in the generous Scandinavian welfare states where the social transfers are relatively high. For instance, in Sweden, the share of households below the poverty threshold decreases by 72 % after considering the social transfers and by 78 % in Finland. The other European countries take an intermediate level, with a decrease of 34 % in Germany, 46 % in Great Britain, and 67 % in France. The USA is at the bottom of the ladder, as its low social transfers barely contribute to reducing the poverty rate in immigrant households (2.6 %).

Besides the social transfers, the size of the low-wage job sector in a country plays a key role. For example, the USA, where the poverty rates are highest, the share of low-wage immigrant workers is also the largest, while in countries with a small low-wage sector, the poverty rates are correspondingly small (Smeeding 2006).

110.9 Unaccompanied Minors

The subjects of this last section are children, who migrate to a receiving country unaccompanied. These children, also called unaccompanied immigrant children or unaccompanied minors, migrate without the physical and emotional protection of their family and hence are particularly vulnerable. Unfortunately, research about this group of immigrant children is almost nonexistent. Official reports are one of the few information sources (European Migration Network 2010); furthermore, some qualitative studies have been conducted (Sourander 1998; Women's Refugee Commission 2009); however, these studies do not look beyond the first months of stay in the receiving country. Other studies do not focus on sociological or psychological aspects; rather, their main issues are the policies and the legal treatment toward the unaccompanied minors (Byrne 2008; Haddal 2009; Levinson 2011), and these studies too only consider the first period of residence in the receiving country. Therefore, it is barely possible to tell how unaccompanied minors perform in terms of the different indicators treated in the last sections. This section will give an overview about the numbers, origin countries, and migration motives of the unaccompanied minors; also some policy aspects will be discussed.

In the European Union and in the USA, the term "unaccompanied minors" means all persons under the age of 18 who immigrate to the receiving country without their parents or any legal guardian to take care of them, or who have been left unaccompanied after they have entered the receiving country (Council Directive 2001/55/EC; Homeland Security Act 2002). Table 110.3 provides an overview of the numbers of unaccompanied minors in the USA detained in ORR (Office of Refugee Resettlement) facilities in the period from 2003 to 2009. Generally, unaccompanied minors in the USA are transferred to ORR facilities after having applied for admission or filed an asylum claim. Table 110.4 contains the numbers of the asylum applications submitted by unaccompanied minors in seven European Union member states. However, one should consider that these

Table 110.3 Numbers of unaccompanied minors in the USA detained by the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR)

2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
4,792	6,471	8,015	8,160	8,227	N/A	6,074

Source: Congressional Research Service (for 2003–2007) (as cited in Haddal 2009, p. 19); Office of Refugee Resettlement 2010 (for 2009 numbers)

Table 110.4 Asylum applications submitted by unaccompanied minors in the years 2004–2008

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
United Kingdom	2,990	2,965	3,450	3,645	4,285
Sweden	388	398	820	1,264	1,510
Austria	914	790	414	516	697
France	1,221	735	571	459	410
Germany	636	331	186	180	763
The Netherlands	594	515	410	433	726
Belgium	675	654	491	555	470

Source: European Migration Network 2010:124

numbers only paint one part of the picture, whether because not every unaccompanied minor file an asylum claim, for example, children migrating to reunite with their family members, or because many children lack asylum claims or because they are repatriated immediately.

Grand Britain is the European country that has the highest rates of yearly immigrated unaccompanied minors; it has reached a peak in 2008 with a number of 4,285. In the last years, especially Sweden has experienced a significant increase of influx. Most of the unaccompanied minors are boys aged between 14 and 17 years. For example, 76 % of the unaccompanied minors who immigrated to the USA in 2007 were boys, and the shares of the 14–17 years old were greater than 80% (Haddal 2009, p. 20). A similar picture is found for the European countries (European Migration Network 2010, p. 128).

There are several reasons why children migrate unaccompanied or are left unaccompanied after entering the country. For example, Great Britain has seen a significant influx of children fleeing Somalia and the Sudan, where they were forced to serve as child soldiers (Maloney 2002, p. 104). Other children fled from gangs, or were victims of child trafficking, forced prostitution, and other abusive environments. Also economic reasons and the hope for a better life play an important role, and sometimes, the parents themselves send their children away because they want them to have a better life. The parents may also be hoping that an unaccompanied child will more likely be granted asylum, and the rest of the family would be allowed to follow due to a family reunification (European Migration Network 2010, pp. 28–41; FRA 2010; Levinson 2011).

The main sending countries of unaccompanied child immigrants to the USA are Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador; their shares were, respectively, 29 %, 29 %,

and 27 % in 2007, and they had similar shares in the years before. Among all other sending countries, only Mexico used to have shares higher than 2 % (Haddal 2009, p. 20). The main sending countries to Europe were in 2008 Afghanistan (3,399 children), Irak (1,299 children), and Somalia (1,299 children) (European Migration Network 2010, p. 126).

110.9.1 Vulnerable Victims or Unauthorized Immigrants

After comparing the US American and European policy regarding the treatment of unaccompanied minors, Levinson (2011) notes that there are fundamental differences between the two cases. While in Europe, the laws are developed and applied following the principle of the best interest of the child, the US immigration law makes no distinction between adult and child immigrants. In short, within the European legislation, unaccompanied minors are considered as vulnerable victims, while the American immigration law views the children as unauthorized immigrants. This is also evident as the European countries, in contrast to the USA, have ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that gives an important – although less concrete – frame regarding the appropriate treatment of the unaccompanied minors.

For a long time, unaccompanied minors in the USA were put in the custody of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS), the authority which is simultaneously charged with the enforcement of the immigration laws. As a result of this role conflict, the children were detained under inhuman and inappropriate conditions until a decision about their case was made. One-third of the children were held in the same facilities as juvenile delinquents, many of the children were treated like prisoners, they were put in handcuffs and shackles, and they were forced to wear prison uniforms and were locked in prison cells (Women's Refugee Commission 2002). Significant improvements have not taken place until 2003 when the responsibility for the care and custody of unaccompanied minors was transferred to the Division of Unaccompanied Children's Services (DUCS), a subdivision of the *Office of Refugee Resettlement* (ORR). Further improvements have been reached through the *Trafficking Victims and Protection Act* (TVPRA) enacted in 2008 (Levinson 2011).

However, NGOs refer to some still existing problems as, for example, the Border Patrol Stations, where the children, before being transferred to the DUCS, are detained up to 10 days in overcrowded and exceedingly cold cells together with adults (Women's Refugee Commission 2009). Furthermore, the growing institutionalization of the DUCS makes a personal and individual child care very difficult. Also the heightened level of security measures including video surveillance results in a loss of privacy of the children. Moreover, the DUCS lack adequate equipment for dealing with and preventing traumatic symptoms, although, according to some estimates, 30–50 % of the unaccompanied minors are in need of mental health services (ibid., p. 16). Not every child is assigned a guardian, though the latter has often been proven to be a confidant and important counselor for the child (ibid., pp. 23–24).

In the EU member states, unaccompanied minors are treated following the principle of the child's best interests. However, the policy is far from being consistent across all areas and all member states (FRA 2010; Levinson 2011). For example, in Germany, only few children are granted asylum; the shares were 718 % in the years 2004–2007, while for the same period, the shares of affirmations in Grand Britain were 77–85 % (European Migration Network 2010, pp. 124–125). In France, between 2007 and 2008, one-third of the unaccompanied minors were not even allowed to enter the country and had to return to their home country (ibid., p. 139). Also the conditions of accommodation vary between the different countries, for example, as to the extent of overcrowding, the size, and the type (hotel and hostels, detention centers, private and contracted facilities, etc.) (European Migration Network 2010, pp. 62–70; FRA 2010, pp. 32–41). In the UK, unaccompanied minors are being held for months in detention centers with inappropriate conditions (Amnesty International 1999).

110.10 Research Challenges

Researchers studying immigrant children face a lack of suitable data in many areas, as immigrant children generally make up a small portion of the population and their numbers within most samples are accordingly too small for calculating statistically reliable estimates. Moreover, most data collections do not provide immigrant-specific information as the data were not collected for the purpose of studying immigrant populations. It would therefore bring some significant changes if governments would fund more data collections that are specifically designed to study immigrant children, including information like the migration biography of a person, the living circumstances in the home country, the second and first language fluency, the ethnic composition of one's social networks, experienced discrimination and ostracism, self-identification, and much more immigrant-specific information seldom provided by general datasets. It is necessary to realize longitudinal studies where the same immigrant children are surveyed at multiple points of time, for only these kind of surveys make it possible to observe the acculturation process as a whole and studying causal factors directly while they enfold, rather than relying on less accurate and incomplete memories of the surveyed persons regarding events that could have taken place several years ago.

As data is often collected in immigrant households or families, unaccompanied children are systematically excluded resulting in an almost absence of quantitative data and studies about this group of immigrant children. This problem can be resolved either by conducting studies specifically designed to gather data about unaccompanied immigrant children or by ensuring that other studies also encompass this immigrant children subpopulation. Empirical findings can often be better interpreted by comparing different groups with each other. For example, when measuring intergenerational gaps in immigrant families, also the native families should be considered; else it stays unclear if the prevalence of parent-child conflicts is not owing to general factors affecting the natives as well, rather than to the

acculturation process. Therefore, studies should be designed in such a way that allows comparing groups of different origins with each other as well as with the native population. Moreover, a survey should include first- and second-generation immigrants as comparing the two groups being differently exposed to the new culture can highlight the effects of the acculturation process. It is also suitable to survey individuals from the sending countries that have never migrated, as one gets an understanding about the starting position of the acculturation process. Cross-national studies comparing immigrant groups in different national contexts are almost nonexistent, although such studies are eligible to uncover structural influences stemming from specific national arrangements and policies that would have been neglected within a strictly national research perspective. These studies can be realized in a collaborative effort of the different countries and/or under the coordination of a supranational organization as, for example, UNICEF has already done (see Hernandez et al. 2009).

Due to their large samples, Census data can provide socioeconomic information even about smaller immigrant groups. Yet this is only possible if the data also contain enough information about the migration biography of a person, because surveying only one's nationality, as done in many countries, leads to an exclusion of all naturalized immigrants and their children. Availability as scientific use files and an ease of access are further prerequisites for migration researchers can benefit from Census data. Regarding the annual reports published by national government institutions (among others about the health, family, and education situation of a population), immigrant children can be considered either by being listed in an own category or included in separate reports.

A number of research questions regarding immigrant children will not be solved until more appropriate data is available. These are questions about the exact mechanisms that lead to a sustained disadvantageous educational situation of immigrant children in most receiving countries. Also questions concerning the role of the family in the migration situation and why immigrant families often show a high cohesion despite parent-child conflicts emerging from different intergenerational acculturation patterns. It is also unclear why immigrant children do not necessarily experience a higher frequency of mental disorders and do not have a lower physical well-being though being exposed to the stressful event of migration and the acculturation process and though being often raised up in relatively poor socioeconomic and housing conditions. More research is needed to verify the positive effect of bilingualism and if it is not just a correlate of other causative factors. This also applies to the well-known acculturation strategies formulated by Berry (see Sect. 110.5.3), as there is still no coherent explanation why some strategies are associated with better outcomes than others.

110.11 Summary

This chapter provides information about key indicators reflecting the well-being of immigrant children in several Western countries. The little information available

about the health of immigrant children shows mixed results. Unlike some authors argue, there is no empirical evidence that immigrants generally have lower health outcomes than natives. Although in some studied cases, immigrant children actually experience more likely overweight, infectious diseases, or poor teeth conditions than the native children, in other cases, they are less likely to have chronicle diseases such as asthma, they have lower infant mortality rates, and they are less likely involved in dangerous or unhealthy behavior patterns than the natives. Some studies give indications that immigrant children experience lower mental health; however, after controlling for social background variables, the discrepancies to the natives almost totally disappear. Perceived discrimination is a strong predictor of low mental health, whereas a stable ethnic identity shows a positive impact as it serves as a buffer against stressful events. There is some evidence for lower health care utilization among immigrant families, caused by their more curative than prophylactic health care attitudes as well as their lack of knowledge about the health care system. Therefore, instructing new immigrants about the right utilization of the health care system would improve the health situation of immigrant children. This could be done by a counselor who could also provide information about the social norms and culture of the host society and on how to behave properly in everyday situations.

Generally, immigrant children adapt more quickly than their parents to the norms and values of the host culture. This differing acculturation rhythm can result in intergenerational conflicts that are one of the strongest predictors of low psychological well-being. Especially among immigrants from non-Western countries, intergenerational conflicts are often reported. Here, too, counseling programs can be an effective measure since they help parents to understand and deal with the challenges of the migration situation that affect their relationship with their children. The SITICAF program (Ying 1999) is one of the few examples that have been implemented so far, and it has proven the positive impact of such counseling programs on the quality of intergenerational relationship in immigrant families.

As language and culture are closely related, fostering the child's affiliation to its heritage culture also means improving its mother tongue skills. This is also important because many immigrant parents do not speak the language of the receiving country, so that limited mother tongue fluency on the part of the child results in communication difficulties between parents and children and in exacerbating the intergenerational gaps. Moreover, speaking more than one language can improve one's competitiveness in an increasingly internationalized labor market. However, mother tongue instruction rarely takes place in a nationwide and consistent manner with an explicit curriculum. The case of Sweden can serve as a possible model to be followed by other nations, as regular schools are obliged to offer immigrant children mother tongue instruction taught by teachers with appropriate qualifications and based on clear defined standards and a nationwide, explicit curriculum.

Another promising way of how to improve the social inclusion and well-being of immigrant children is to facilitate their participation at preschool education, as learning a new language and culture occurs much more effectively at a younger age,

and because preschool facilities and kindergarten offer good opportunities for immigrant children to get involved in social interactions with members of the receiving society. Moreover, preschool education shows to have a positive influence on the immigrant children's later school performance. This point is of high relevance given the key role of school education for succeeding in the job market, and as immigrant children have lower educational outcomes in almost every receiving country, preschool education as a promising solution should be considered closely. Providing immigrant parents with information about preschool education and creating an awareness of its importance for the future of their children may result in higher preschool attendance among immigrant children; furthermore, financial support for the parents may also play a key role, as particularly the preschool and kindergarten fees represent a barrier for many immigrant parents, rather than some cultural attitudes.

One main reason for the low school performance of immigrant children in many receiving countries is the low education on the part of their parents. Low-educated parents lack the knowledge, experience, and the financial resources to support the school career of their children adequately. Offering the immigrant children extra lessons, whether within the regular school framework or in terms of private tuition, could help to adjust their disadvantageous conditions at home. Most receiving countries do already have some kind of program, ranging from language support to remedial teaching and instruction in cultural values and norms of the receiving society. Yet, what is totally lacking are evaluation programs in order to examine the effectiveness of the different measures and to find out where and how improvements need to be implemented. There are indications that institutional arrangements are also accountable for low school achievements of immigrant children, for example, when secondary school selection takes place at an early stage of the school career so that immigrant children have not enough time to clear their disadvantageous starting position or when a late school entry results in an absence of social interactions with the majority society in a younger age when acquiring a new culture and language occurs more effectively.

Due to the low education and low-wage part-time jobs of many immigrant parents, in combination with larger families, immigrant children in almost every considered country experience higher risks of poverty and overcrowded housing conditions than native children. This is a critical situation as poverty is one of the strongest predictors for low child well-being. At the same time, international comparable data points out that national antipoverty measures can be an effective way to improve the financial situation of immigrant families. For instance, the poverty risks in immigrant families are reduced significantly in countries where social transfers are considerable, for example, in Sweden, Finland, and France, whereas in countries like the USA, where social transfers are comparatively small, no remarkable changes regarding the poverty risks of immigrant families have been found, a clear example of how intervention makes a difference.

Very little research has been done about unaccompanied minors. With regard to legal issues, significant differences between countries exist. The US immigration

law considers the unaccompanied minors as unauthorized immigrants, and they are treated accordingly. Although some changes have taken place during the last years, the US policies still lack child-specific standards and a treatment following the principle of the children's best interests. For example, newly arrived children are detained up to 10 days in the Border Patrol Stations in overcrowded and cold cells together with adults. Therefore, the children would benefit from the creation of an extra area within the Border Patrol Stations with appropriate conditions for child accommodation. Moreover, assigning a legal counselor to a child would help it to cope with the new situation as a counselor will serve as representative in legal issues and become a helping hand and a person of trust in a number of other issues. Because many unaccompanied minors suffer from migration-related traumatic symptoms, carrying out a health assessment soon after their arrival and providing them with appropriate treatment could contribute to cure or even prevent their disease. Unaccompanied minors in the US detention centers are often deprived of their right of privacy due to a nonstop observation by surveillance cameras and security personnel. They therefore would benefit if every child is guaranteed a place where it can be alone for relaxation and emotional release.

Regarding the treatment of the unaccompanied minors in the member states of the European Union, the principle of the children's best interests is enforced, although there is a lack of unification and a consistent policy across the different EU countries, for example, in terms of the types and quality of the accommodation facilities. Moreover, though all EU member states, unlike the USA, have ratified the United Nations Conventions of the Child, not every country is applying its assumptions properly when it comes to the unaccompanied minors. For instance, unaccompanied minors in the UK are often detained for several months and treated like prisoners.

Finally, there is a great lack of suitable data for studying the well-being of immigrant children. In general datasets/reports/studies/research, immigrant children usually represent a fraction that is too small to generate reliable statistics. Furthermore, most datasets do not contain immigrant-specific information as they were not originally collected for this purpose. There is also a lack of longitudinal studies that could shed light on the acculturation process. Moreover, cross-cultural studies of immigrant families are almost nonexistent although they would help to understand the influence of national policies and other specific national arrangements on the inclusion and well-being of immigrant children. Without appropriate data, many research questions that were mentioned throughout this chapter will remain unsolved.

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