

THE SCOPE, INCLUSION, AND EXPERIENCES OF INTERNATIONAL TEACHERS WITH A MIGRANT BACKGROUND IN SLOVENIAN SCHOOLS

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Abstract The paper introduces the scope, form, inclusion, experiences, self-perception, and difficulties of international teachers (with a migration background) in the Slovenian educational environment. The quantitative-qualitative study was carried out within the European ITTS project (entitled International Teachers for Tomorrow's School-System Change as an Opportunity for Intercultural School Development and Mutual Learning). Data were obtained using an online questionnaire for school principals and a semi-structured interview for international teachers. The results showed that not many international teachers (with a migration background) were integrated and employed at Slovenian schools. School principals welcomed and supported the integration of international teachers (with a migration background) into the Slovenian school system. The international teachers reported positive relations and collaboration with their colleagues as well as with the school administration. However, their professional educational qualifications were often not fully recognized by Slovenian schools. Not mastering the Slovenian language and the culture of the country hindered access to employment. The results obtained should assist Slovenian school policymakers and educators in reconsidering the possibilities for professional re-integration and continuing the professional development of these teachers in Slovenia.

Keywords:
international
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professional
integration,
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inclusion

1 Introduction

The professional re-integration of international teachers (with a migration background) who have recently arrived in a new school setting is a challenge for countries all over the globe. Putjata (2017, p. 14) has established that global transnational mobility opposed by a monolingual and monocultural mindset at school has led educational researchers across the world to call for a multilingual and multicultural turn. Niyubahwe, Mukamurera and Jutras (2013, p. 280) emphasize that the re-entry of international teachers (with a migration background) into the teaching profession of the host country is beneficial not only for recently immigrated teachers but also for the children of immigrant families. They are perceived as bridge-builders between students, teachers, parents, and the school community, and as experts on multilingualism and intercultural communication (Putjata, 2017). Erel (2010) also points out that positioning immigrant teachers not as refugees in need of help but rather as experts and equals to their colleagues could at the same time help to enhance economic integration and prevent the chronic underemployment of new migrants.

A review of research on international teachers (with a migration background) in other countries (e.g., Israel, Canada, Australia, USA) shows very few studies on their professional re-integration into the host country's school system. Researchers are faced with a restricted data corpus (Jhagroo, 2016; Niyubahwe et al., 2013; Putjata, 2017; Yoon Young, 2018); therefore, their findings offer only impressions of the situation rather than generalizations that could be beneficial for their socio-professional integration into the new school environment. However, Jhagroo (2016) notes that these findings cannot be generalised because one's experience of practices is individual and personal in nature, while also depending on the host country's school context. The findings of the studies (Myles et al., 2006; Schmidt, 2010; Schmidt et al., 2010) indicated that international teachers' existing competences were not taken into consideration in the hiring procedures in the new country, although they had university diplomas or extensive teaching experience acquired in their country of origin. Niyubahwe, Mukamurera and Jutras (2013) also remarked that international teachers who were competent in the required subject were not hired in a permanent position.

Slovenia also faces with the question of how to integrate the children of migrants and asylum seekers into the regular Slovenian school system. From the viewpoint of integration, learning Slovene as a second/foreign language is important for these children. This is set out in Article 82 of the Migration Act (2011) and the Basic School Act (1996), which guarantee immigrant children (who have a residence permit in the Republic of Slovenia) the right to compulsory primary education and Slovene language assistance. In recent years, the school milieu has indicated that “radical systemic changes in school organization will be needed so that the newly prepared guidelines can be properly implemented. With these changes, it will be necessary to (further) educate Slovene and international teachers so that they can adapt to the new teaching system” (Knez, 2009, p. 8).

Moreover, the question also arises of how to register and activate international teachers (with a migration background), among asylum seekers in particular, to teach immigrant children in Slovenia, their host country. In accordance with the Rules on the Education of Teachers and Other Experts in Education (2011), all Slovenian teachers, including international teachers, must master the Slovene Standard language, have certain teaching competences and qualifications, and pass a final professional exam. Potential candidates who acquired their teaching education competences in their country of origin may initiate the procedure of recognition of their professional qualifications. This service falls under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. The conditions of employment in the field of education are the same for all teachers except that international teachers need a residence and work permit.

In the Slovenian context, only one paper deals with the professional re-integration of international teachers into the school system. Marijanca Ajša Vižintin (2009) describes a project which, besides teaching Slovene as a second/foreign language, introduced teaching of the language of origin (Macedonian and Albanian) and the cultures of immigrant children in Slovenia. The teaching was presented from the perspective of three international teachers who immigrated to Slovenia, two from Albania and one from Macedonia, and their integration in the specific school setting.

This paper focuses on the form, inclusion, experience, and self-perception of international teachers (with a migration background) as part of a new community. Jhagroo (2016, p. 56) states that “offering the teachers a platform for their stories to

be heard, their feeling of value may be rekindled. In addition, engaging in reflective narrative through recollections of one's past experiences within a present context may be professionally beneficial in giving the teachers an opportunity to reflect how their own background and experiences may influence on their practice."

2 Methodology

2.1 Background to the Research Approach

To understand the immigration context in Slovenia and the process of collecting the international teachers' contact information (with a migration background), some statistical data are first presented. According to the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS, November 2021), 2,107,126 people live in Slovenia. Of this, only 8% are people of other nationalities, which (according to Eurostat, 2019) places Slovenia among the last quarter of EU countries in terms of the total number of immigrants per population.

The annual trend shows a growing number of immigrants in Slovenia (e.g., on 1 January 2020, there were 156,351 foreign citizens in Slovenia, and a year later, on 1 January 2021, there were 168,651 (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia, 2021). Most people immigrate to Slovenia from the former Yugoslavia. In 2019, 78.5% of all immigrants who came to Slovenia came from that area. The largest share of immigrants from the former Yugoslavia in 2019 consisted of people from Bosnia and Herzegovina (56.9%), Serbia (16.3%) and Kosovo (14.2%) (SORS, 2020). Immigrants come to Slovenia for economic reasons because of their desire for a better life.

With the purpose of examining the integration of international teachers (with a migration background) in the regular school system in Slovenia, we contacted all public pre-primary, primary and secondary school principals. With the help of official intervention by the Ministry of Education, a short questionnaire was sent to all official e-mails of the public schools (approximately 100 pre-schools, 400 primary schools, and approximately 100 secondary schools). One of our aims was to record the process schools need to undertake to employ international teachers (with a migration background) and to collect the personal (e)-contacts of those teachers who

would be able to complete the final version of the questionnaire. However, only 78 school principals completed the questionnaire.

Furthermore, more than 10 different non-governmental cultural organisations from former Yugoslavia, based in Slovenia, were also contacted. These cultural and arts organisations create conditions for the long-term sustainability of various cultural, educational, and artistic practices of people coming, for example, from the Republic of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, or Albania. Also, several individuals were addressed (e.g., colleagues at the Ministry of Education and other educational institutions, individual teachers) who could help us find international teachers (with a migration background) in Slovenia. However, we received no answers from these cultural organisations, while the individuals we contacted were unable to provide us with the contact details (e-mail, addresses) of any international teachers in Slovenia. These individuals reported that they knew people who had moved to Slovenia when they were young and who had completed their education here and now work as teachers, or they recommended that we contact international teachers who came to Slovenia from Western EU countries or the USA.

We then turned to other non-governmental organisations who offer support to immigrants (e.g., from Afghanistan, Pakistan). Their contacts reported that they did not possess information on the professions of immigrants residing here in Slovenia and did not know if any of them worked as teachers in their host country. They also pointed out that most immigrants living here are just passing through Slovenia with the goal of settling and finding employment in one of the western countries (e.g., Germany, France, Great Britain).

2.2 The Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of the quantitative-qualitative study was to examine the **scope, form, inclusion, and situation** of international teachers (with a migration background) in the regular school system in Slovenia. The study also examined the **perceptions and experiences** formed by these international teachers (with a migration background) as well as **the difficulties and obstacles** they encountered in their integration into the Slovenian educational environment.

Based on the results obtained, the purpose of the study was to consider the possibilities for re-integration and the continuing professional development of these teachers in the Slovenian school environment.

2.3 Research Questions

Our research was based on the following research questions:

RQ1: What were the forms of participation, cooperation, type of employment and qualifications of international teachers (with a migration background) over the last five years in Slovenian schools?

RQ2: What experiences do international teachers (with a migration background) have in everyday Slovenian school life and what additional support do they receive?

RQ3: How are international teachers professionally integrated and involved in school activities?

RQ4: What difficulties/obstacles do international teachers face in their integration into the Slovenian educational environment?

2.4 Research Methods and Data Processing

The first part of the quantitative study was based upon a descriptive and causal-non-experimental method of empirical pedagogical research, involving an online questionnaire for school principals.

The second part relied on a qualitative methodological approach, utilising semi-structured interviews. With the help of this interview, we offered the interviewees, international teachers (with a migration background), the opportunity to describe, in their own words and feelings, their own perceptions and experiences in their field of work (Vogrinc, 2008). Their comments provided a multitude of perspectives and experiences of integration and teaching in the Slovenian classroom, while at the same time offering more in-depth insights into international teachers' authentic classroom situations.

The respondents' answers were analysed at the descriptive level and with the help of inferential statistics. The semi-structured interviews were analysed using ranking categories.

2.5 Instruments

In agreement with the Ministry of Education, data were collected using an **online questionnaire** (1ka) for (pre)primary and secondary school principals in Slovenia. The study was conducted between February and April 2021.

The **semi-structured interviews** were conducted and analysed in September 2021. The aim of the semi-structured interview was to record the experiences and perceptions of professional integration and involvement in Slovenian schools from international teachers from different (marginal) geographical areas, especially from non-European countries (e. g., Syria, Afghanistan).

The results are illustrated in tables, using frequency distributions (f, f%).

Ranking categories were used to analyse the semi-structured interviews.

2.6 Research Sample

205 principals of Slovenian (pre)primary and secondary schools responded to the questionnaire. Only fully completed answers were included in the statistical analysis; the final research sample was 78 (n = 78).

From the Slovenian principals, (only) two contact e-mail addresses for international teachers employed in their schools were received: one was from Slovakia and the other was from Croatia. We wanted to interview them in person, but they did not respond to our e-mails, despite several e-mails being sent to them.

Since we were unable to collect the e-mail addresses of international teachers from the Slovenian school principals, we then contacted the Slovenian Government Office for the Support and Integration of Migrants. However, five e-contacts for international teachers with a migration background were received: three from Turkey, one from Iran and one from Syria, which were subsequently invited to participate in the semi-structured interview. Only two of them responded to our e-mail and were willing to take part in the interview, one from Turkey (under 30 years of age, a resident in Slovenia for 4 years) and one from Iran (40 – 49 years of age, a resident in Slovenia for 2 years). They were both teachers of English as a foreign

language. The interviewee from Iran commented: *“I was an official English teacher in my country. I asked the employment office in Ljubljana to help me find a job as an English teacher, but they couldn’t. I’ll be happy if you help me with that.”* From their answers in the interview, we concluded that they had had no experience with teaching in Slovenian schools, neither of them was employed, and they were therefore unable to describe their everyday school-life experience. As stated by the interviewees, the certificate of proficiency in Slovene was an obstacle for them if they wanted to be employed at a school.

Only one international teacher, from Madagascar, was willing to take part in the semi-structured interview. Her answers are summarised in section 3.2.

3 Results and Discussion

The results are presented in two parts. First, the quantitative analysis of the answers to the **online questionnaire** is given. Then, the results of the **semi-structured** interview with the international teacher (with a migration background) are illustrated.

3.1 Analysis of the Online Questionnaire

First, the authors were interested in school principals’ experiences with international teachers (with a migration background) in their schools and how many of them have participated in the Slovenian school environment. The questions addressed the last five school years. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency distribution of the participation of international teachers in schools over the last five years

Participation in schools	School year					
	2020-21		2019-20		2018-19	
	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%
Participated	6	60	2	20	1	10
Did not participate	55	81	0	0	1	1
	2017-18		2016-17		Total	
	f	f%	f	f%	f	f%
	Participated	0	0	1	10	10
Did not participate	0	0	12	18	68	100

As evident from Table 1, among the 78 schools that participated in the study there were 10 that employed international teachers between 2016 and 2021. One international teacher was employed in the 2016-17 and 2018-19 school years, two in 2019-20. There were 6 more international teachers employed in the 2020-2021 school year. The results over the last five years demonstrate that only some Slovenian schools employed international teachers (with a migration background).

The authors were also interested in the number of international teachers participating in schools. As indicated in Table 2, all school principals involved in the study answered that fewer than 3 teachers participated in schools in the last five years. In most cases, one international teacher per school was involved.

Table 2: Frequency distribution of international teachers participating in schools in the last five years

Number of international teachers	School year									
	2020-21		2019-20		2018-19		2017-18		2016-17	
	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %
Less than 3 teachers	6	60	2	20	1	10	0	0	1	10
More than 3 teachers	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Furthermore, the school principals were asked what forms of cooperation they had implemented in their schools with international teachers. The data is illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequency distribution of the form of cooperation according to the school year

Forms of cooperation	School year					
	2020-21		2019-20		2018-19	
	f	f %	f	f %	f	f %
Supporting students in their studies	0	0	0	0	0	0
Teaching as a regular obligation at school	4	67	1	17	0	0
Language support, help in communication at school	1	100	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	1	100

Forms of cooperation	School year			
	2017-18		2016-17	
	f	f%	f	f%
Supporting students in their studies	0	0	0	0
Teaching as a regular obligation at school	0	0	0	0
Language support, help in communication at school	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0

In the last five years, the form of cooperation of international teachers in schools has largely taken the form of **teaching** (all) students or offering language support in **communication** with others (e.g., peers, teachers, parents).

As evident from Table 4, the most common type of employment in the schools involved in the study was full-time employment (43%). One international teacher worked as a part-time teacher, one received a fee, and one participated at the school as a volunteer. However, 36% of respondents chose the option “other” to this question. Their open-ended answers revealed that they have been employed as international teachers from Western European countries, such as Great Britain, France, Germany, Italy or Spain, teaching these languages to students. Some principals also answered that they had immigrant students attending their schools but no immigrant teachers.

Table 4: Frequency distribution of the type of employment of international teachers in schools

Type of employment	f	f%
Full-time employment	6	43
Part-time employment	1	7
Fee	1	7
Volunteer	1	7
Other	5	36

The authors also wanted to know which qualifications international teachers needed in order to participate and teach in schools, or how the conditions for the cooperation with these teachers were set up. The results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Frequency distribution of the type of employment of international teachers in schools

Qualifications	f	f%
Additional teacher training in the host country.	2	13
Gained the suitable education in the country of origin and was sufficient to work in the Slovenian school.	5	33
None of the above.	5	33
Other:	3	20

As indicated in Table 5 the school principals stated that 5 (33%) of the international teachers (with a migration background) had acquired a suitable educational qualification in their country of origin to work in a Slovenian school. Two (13%) of them needed additional teacher training in Slovenia in order to teach, five (33%) and three (20%) principles chose the answers “none of the above” or “other”. In the open-ended option, two principles wrote: “*The teacher has learned Slovenian and passed a professional exam. The international teacher had obtained a relevant qualification in her country of origin, but it was not fully recognized. She then studied at the Faculty of Education, University of Primorska, and received a relevant qualification that led to her employment as a preschool teacher.*”

Next, the authors wanted to know which language was most frequently used for communicating with international teachers in (pre)primary and secondary schools. As evident from Table 6, Slovene (75%) was the most frequently used language. However, three principles chose the answer “other” and mentioned that other languages, such as Serbo-Croatian, were also used.

Table 6: Frequency distribution of language of communication in schools between international teachers and school staff

Language of communication	f	f%
English	0	0
Slovenian	9	75
Other	3	25

At the end of the questionnaire, the respondents were given the opportunity to write a comment or simply add their own views on the topic. One the headmasters’ comments is especially worth highlighting: “*I support employing international teachers with the immigrant experience because we desperately need them, both the students and the teaching staff. It would be much easier for all of us.*”

The comment indicates that school principals welcome and support the integration of international teachers (with a migration background) in the Slovenian school system because of the linguistic and cultural diversity of school students.

3.2 Analysis of the Semi-Structured Interview

The second part of the study includes a semi-structured interview with one international teacher (with a migration background). In line with the research questions, the authors were interested in the type of employment and the contract the interviewee had, the form of activity and involvement at a current school, acceptance and support among the staff, and her perception of everyday school life. Since Slovenian students and teachers do not have much experience with migrant teachers and their inclusion in our educational environment, the interviewee's personal experience and involvement in everyday school life is summarized below.

Interviewee

The interviewee came from Madagascar. She was a teacher of French at three secondary, public schools. She worked as a part-time teacher (50% and more). She had been working at her current schools for more than 5 years, renewing her contract every new school year. At the time of the study, she was employed as an independent teacher with appropriate knowledge of the content, didactics, and teaching methods in her subject. She enriched the content of French lessons, introducing cultures, customs, traditions, and language, and she complemented the work of a Slovenian teacher of French as a foreign language. She states: *“My work as a language teacher is perhaps different from that of my teacher colleagues because teaching a language really requires a contact with a native speaker who adds value to the learning, which a Slovenian teacher cannot do. I am not disqualifying the work of my Slovenian colleagues at all. On the contrary, our work, our methods, our approaches are complementary.”*

The interviewee taught the subject independently, sometimes accompanied by an experienced teacher and, if required, received help with teaching. She interacted with other teachers and also parents. She used Slovene when talking with parents and was regularly involved in school life. She attended staff meetings, school trips, and reflected on and promoted the diversity of the students in the classroom. Her

professional duties and activities were similar to those of local teachers in her country of residence.

She felt accepted and comfortable among the staff, could always ask a colleague for advice, and could contribute her own ideas among the teaching personnel. She was asked by colleagues for her opinion and feedback on the school's work, and she felt valued by the principal, staff and students. Her international background was appreciated and valued. She was proud that her students achieved excellent results on various examinations and at language competitions.

The interviewee received support in team teaching, materials and in-service training. However, she would have appreciated more support in learning Slovenian (the language of the host country). She could have used support in her everyday schoolwork, especially in the preparation of and reflection on teaching lessons, classroom management, extra-curricular tasks, and orientation at school. She also pointed out that the formal requirements/acceptance of degrees is a barrier for her to work as a teacher in Slovenia. She said: *“I do not receive the real ‘price’, value, salary for the work I do. It is my colleagues who get the points for the projects I propose, organize, and carry out. They get career advancement and not me. I would not like to take the place of the Slovenian teacher but would like to work with him/her to support the students, to bring the added value to the classroom.”*

As an international teacher, the experience and competences she brought to her professional life differed from those of her Slovenian colleagues. She noted that Slovenian classes were more homogenous than in her country of origin and, in her opinion, the question of identity is also different in both countries. She commented: *“My vision of life in Slovenia is different from that of my Slovenian colleagues because I chose to live here, and I ‘have’ to make effort to adapt myself to the habits that are not mine. For them, every situation is ‘normal’ and ‘logical’. So, in first-hand: what is normal and logical is not for everyone.”*

For me, the classes are rather homogenous contrary to those in my country. As a result, Slovenian students and teachers all think more or less the same and do not see other culture. For example: If we had students of different origins, different religions in the same class (at least half of them), we would treat the question of identity differently (a theme for the language class to deal with)”.

4 Discussion and Conclusions

The results obtained through the quantitative-qualitative research indicate that few international teachers (with a migration background) are integrated and employed in Slovenian schools. Despite efforts in contacting various institutions, Ministries, non-governmental organisations, individuals, and school principals, the authors could not collect the contact information (e-mail) of other migrant teachers in Slovenia who were willing to share their experiences about everyday Slovenian school life. Only one international teacher was willing to participate in the semi-structured interview. Moreover, the findings reveal that if international teachers (with a migrant background) are employed at Slovenian schools, they tend to come from Western European countries as foreign language teachers, or from the countries of former Yugoslavia. Medarić et al. (2021, p. 4), in their paper on integration of migrant children in Slovenian schools, claim that Slovenia remains largely a country of transition. According to their research data, Slovenia is not a desirable and/or final destination for migrants from a global migration perspective, as it is geographically small, politically less recognized and not economically attractive enough (*ibid.*).

More precisely, the school principals' answers in the quantitative study show that only 10 Slovenian schools have employed international teachers (with a migration background) over the last five years – these numbers demonstrate that fewer than three teachers (usually just one) have participated in one Slovenian school per school year. Other studies from Canada and the USA (Deters, 2006; Niyubahwe et al., 2013) also report that international teachers (with a migration background) find it very difficult to find a school that will give them the opportunity to prove themselves. Schmidt, Young, and Mandzuk (2010) noted that systematic discriminatory hiring practices are one of the main obstacles faced by immigrant teachers who want to resume their teaching careers in Canada.

Furthermore, according to the school principals' answers in this study, teaching as a full-time employee at school was the most frequently used form of cooperation among migrant teachers in Slovenia. The principals also stated that almost half of them (43%), working at schools, had been consistently employed. In addition, the study also revealed that the international teaching qualifications for cooperation in schools were often not fully recognized in the Slovenian education system, meaning that along with passing a Slovenian language exam, international teachers also

needed to complete additional teacher training courses in order to receive a relevant qualification.

Furthermore, the respondents from Iran and Turkey stated that none of them had been employed in a school and were therefore unable to describe their everyday school-life experiences. To get a job at Slovenian schools, all teachers must master the Slovene standard language, have certain teaching competences and qualifications, and pass a final professional exam. Both interviewees fulfil the requirement of having teaching competences in their home country. However, the certificate of proficiency in Slovene is often an obstacle to international teachers being employed at schools, as stated by the interviewees. The authors see a problem in this, as there is only a small number of international teachers (with a migration background), who work in Slovenian schools and who are able to offer support to immigrant students, therefore, the authors recommend loosening (language proficiency) legislation in order to ease their path to employment.

According to Slovenian legislation (Rules on the Teaching Certification Examination, 2006), permanent staff in education need to pass a final professional exam, which alongside content and teaching methods also evaluates the candidate's knowledge of Slovene. Teachers cannot be regularly employed in a Slovenian educational institution if they do not speak Slovene fluently. The assessment of Standard Slovene in the oral section of the final professional examination is based on the standards set out in the *Catalogue of Knowledge of the Slovene Language for the Professional Examination* (Križaj-Ortar et al., 2004). The catalogue states that "the basis for determining the candidate's knowledge of Slovene, acquired during the candidate's internship or training in schools, is mainly the mentor's and school principal's assessment of the candidate's oral and written assignments or activities" (Križaj-Ortar et al., 2004, p. 3). Currently, there is no legal document that determines the level of language proficiency of Slovene (e.g., B1, B2 or C1), according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages, (Council of Europe, 2020), needed to teach in schools. The only document the principals are required to follow is the above-mentioned catalogue of knowledge.

Other studies (Elbaz-Luwisch, 2004; Lefebvre et al., 2002; Myles et al., 2006; Niyubahwe et al., 2013) also indicate that failure to master the language and the culture of the country could hamper access to employment. For example, Lefebvre,

Legault, and De Sève (2002) report that the French language test could be an obstacle for gaining access to employment for many immigrant teachers in Canada.

From the open-ended questions one may conclude that Slovenian school principals welcome and support the integration of international teachers (with a migration background) into the Slovenian educational system. They are aware of the fact that these teachers may act as role models, help immigrant students to integrate into the school system, and contribute to multilingual and multicultural education (Niyubahwe et al., 2013).

The responses from one international teacher (with a migration background) revealed that she mostly taught content or offered language support in communication with parents, other teachers, or students. She reported no differences in teaching approaches or classroom management and stated that she enjoyed positive relations and collaboration with her colleagues, as well as with the school administration. She did not feel socially isolated at school. Some studies in Israel (Remennick, 2002) or in Australia (Peeler & Jane, 2005) do exist, however, highlight a lack of cooperation and support on the part of school counsellors, colleagues, and parents.

There are various key factors, which support the social and professional re-integration of international teachers (with a migration background) into a new school: recognition of their professional competences leading to a teaching permit and long-term employment, the quality of collaboration and cooperation between teaching colleagues and school administration, and acceptance from the (general and school) community as well as the students' parents (Niyubahwe et al., 2013; Schmidt et al., 2010). Bearing in mind the potential for a shortage of teachers in the long run in Slovenia, the authors herein see the opportunity for international teachers to fill in this deficit. Therefore, we recommend developing guidelines or recommendations for principals, teaching staff, and international teachers themselves for their professional transition into Slovenia and elsewhere, especially in terms of employment legislation, overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers, offering supplementary funding for continuing teacher training programs, workshops and re-certification, developing (bilingual) websites for teaching and social resources, supporting teacher practices, mentorship experiences and networking.

In conclusion, the quantitative-qualitative study (which, owing to a limited number of responses from school principals, presents only impressions, not generalizations) has brought to light certain practices and obstacles regarding the social and professional re-integration or transition of international teachers (with a migration background) into schools in Slovenia. Regarding this issue, the small number of international teachers integrated in schools and studies in Slovenia and globally, have been highlighted. However, the diverse teaching tasks and practices that international teachers are engaged in and their cooperation with other teaching staff enhance the quality of education and working conditions in schools.

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