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From Welcoming Newly Arrived Migrant Students to Creating an Inclusive and Hospitable Environment: The Proposal from the Universe School

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Abstract: In Catalan schools, the rising influx of newly immigrated students poses significant challenges concerning their inclusion. These students show lower academic performance and self-esteem, are more likely to engage in risky behaviors, and lack support as they cope with the mourning process of migrating. Implementing intercultural education, working on socio-emotional skills, and helping to build a support network can be protective factors in improving the students' development. This project was implemented in a Barcelona public school and aimed to identify the needs of newcomer students and enhance their inclusion. A questionnaire administered to 30 teachers revealed low knowledge about migratory mourning and intercultural education. Consequently, training sessions addressed to the school's teaching staff were developed to provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with these topics. Interviews were conducted with the newly arrived children, specifically with 12 of them. They revealed a need for emotional support, the presence of migratory mourning, and a lack of a support network and socio-emotional skills. Students have appreciated the active listening and the opportunity to share their migration process. Teachers feel more empowered to support students in the migration mourning process after the training sessions. Feedback after the training sessions highlighted the clarity, ease of understanding, and usefulness of the material shared positively. The project lays the groundwork for more inclusive and intercultural initiatives in the school. Integrating the provided training into the teacher training curriculum could have a significant impact, better equipping educators to support recently arrived migrant students.

Keywords: social justice; inclusion; education; migrant grief; curriculum



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1. Introduction

Nowadays, we find ourselves in a society that is becoming more multicultural and multilingual. Education is regarded as a fundamental right, as set forth by the United Nations in 1948 [1]. In this context, the hospitality and welcoming attitudes of educators are crucial for the creation of an environment conducive to the full development of the children [2–4].

Over the past two decades, the number of immigrants in Catalonia has increased by 14% [5], and this demographic shift has been reflected in the composition of the student population in local schools. In 2022, the proportion of foreign pupils in public schools was 18.4% of the student population [6]. The majority of immigrants entering Spain originate from Latin America. Their decision to relocate can be attributed to a number of interrelated factors, including the prevalence of insecurity and instability in their countries of origin and the receipt of assistance from their host countries. Additionally, linguistic similarities between the countries of origin and destination facilitate their integration into Spanish society. Furthermore, the experiences of those who are close to migrants and who have already migrated serve to attract a greater flow of migrants to the country. [7,8]

Consequently, educational institutions with a more diverse cultural, religious, and linguistic composition have emerged, underscoring the necessity to consider how they welcome new students from disparate backgrounds [9].

1.1. Objectives

- (1) The main objective of this work is to improve the reception process of new students arriving at the Escola Unvers. In order to achieve it, the specific objectives are as follows:
- (2) Identify the needs of new students and teachers during the reception process;
- (3) Identify the challenges of teachers when welcoming newcomers;
- (4) Identify the difficulties of newcomers to include in school;
- (5) Increase teachers' knowledge of migratory grief and how to accompany it;
- (6) Increase the knowledge of teachers about intercultural education;
- (7) Create an inclusive school reception plan (SRP) that considers the migration grief process;
- (8) Develop an easy-to-use tool with resources on how to accompany newcomer students.

1.2. International Context of the Welcoming Process in Schools

Internationally, Canada was a pioneer country in the field of welcoming new pupils [10–12]. In 1969, it introduced experimental “reception classes” where newly arrived pupils spent between 12 and 24 months before joining the mainstream system [13]. The staff received training on interculturality and improving school–family communication, which facilitated the implementation of this initiative [14–16]. Belgium, Germany, Sweden, Finland, and the Netherlands have comparable models of reception classrooms [17,18]. The curriculum emphasizes language and cultural competencies, with less attention devoted to emotional and psychological aspects [19]. The aforementioned educational models have demonstrated the efficacy of psychoeducation in assisting newcomers, and they are characterized by the collaborative work of teams and the adaptation of educational programs to the specific needs of each student [20].

1.3. Catalan Context

The reception system was accorded significant attention in Catalonia in the latter half of the 20th century. In 1993, initiatives to engage with newly arrived students commenced, facilitated by the Interdepartmental Immigration Plan, which included the Language Workshops and School Adaptation Workshops. These were met with criticism for their potential to isolate and segregate this group [21]. In the 2004–2005 academic year, the Plan for Language, Interculturality, and Social Cohesion (LIC) was implemented in Catalonia [22]. This plan focused on three main areas: creating reception classrooms in schools with a high number of immigrant children (where students attend for a maximum of 24 months, in small groups of up to 12 pupils, complementing attendance in the regular classroom), reception plans for schools or municipalities, and coordination of linguistic and educational plans. The plan aimed to consolidate Catalan as the foundation of a multilingual, intercultural, and socially cohesive educational project [23,24]. Despite challenges posed by Catalonia's bilingual linguistic model, the Catalan school linguistic model has been effective in reducing educational inequalities in learning the official languages compared to the rest of Spain. However, the resources allocated to reception classrooms have decreased, and reception plans need better practical implementation [25]. It is then recommended that each school should develop a School Reception Plan (PAC) to improve the welcoming and integration of newly arrived students [26]. The education system in Catalonia is designed with the goal of inclusive education. This is in accordance with the principles set forth in Law 12/2009 and the UN in 2015 [27]. The system values equity, ensuring that all individuals have equal opportunities and that no unnecessary obstacles are placed in their path [28].

1.4. Newly Arrived Students

1.4.1. Difficulties and Risk Factors

Newly arrived children are also socially vulnerable students, with school dropout and repetition rates on the rise [29,30]. Additionally, they show difficulties in establishing healthy emotional and relational bonds, as well as constructing multiple identities to incorporate the new social context. Furthermore, there is a mismatch between academic expectations and the student's actual level of preparedness upon arrival in the new country [31], while they experience a lack of a sense of belonging in the school environment. Migrant children often have experienced trauma and are vulnerable to symbolic violence and bullying, occupying the least visible parts of the playground, receiving more rejection in class, and having lower self-esteem and self-efficacy [32,33]. It is important to address the psychological, emotional, and personal aspects of this group, such as experiences of trauma, bereavement, or psychosocial problems, to improve their well-being and inclusion in school and ensure their personal and academic development [34–36]. Newcomer students frequently exhibit a lack of confidence, which needs to be reinforced, as they initially perceive themselves as different, disconnected, and unequal [37,38]. Finally, the presence, chronicity, multiplicity, and intensity of risk factors can give rise to a phenomenon known as “migratory mourning or grief”.

The theory of multiple and multidimensional transitions [39,40] stresses the importance of considering physical, social, cultural, and psychological transitions that occur simultaneously and can significantly influence students' mental health. This theory also posits that transitions experienced by one individual can trigger changes in others around them. In the case of newly arrived migrant students, it is essential to analyze how their transitions may affect school dynamics and the adjustment of other students. For example, in Social Interactions, migrant students may introduce new perspectives and cultures, which can enrich social interactions and foster a more inclusive and diverse environment. However, challenges can also arise if there are linguistic or cultural barriers that hinder integration. Regarding academic adjustments, the arrival of students with different levels of academic preparation may require adjustments in teaching methods and curriculum to meet the needs of all students. This can be positive, as it can lead to more personalized teaching, but it can also be a challenge for teachers. In terms of mental health and well-being, transitions can affect the mental health of both migrant students and their peers. Migrant students may experience stress and anxiety due to adapting to a new environment, which can influence the overall school environment. It is important that schools provide adequate emotional and psychological support.

According to [41], migrant students' transitions can also affect their families and communities, which in turn can influence their school performance and adjustment. Schools can play a crucial role in facilitating the integration of families into the school community. These transitions, while challenging, also offer opportunities for growth and development for both migrant students and the wider school community.

1.4.2. Migratory Mourning

The preceding discussion has identified a number of key factors affecting the lives of these children. However, one particularly important element remains largely overlooked in most contexts: the phenomenon of migratory mourning or grief. Migratory mourning is a phenomenon that can arise when migrants experience a combination of risk factors related to their migration experience [42]. This grief has specific characteristics compared to other grief [43,44], such as the following:

- Partial: the migrant's country of origin does not completely disappear from their experience;
- Recurrent: it manifests with each stimulus related to the migrant's society of origin;
- Multiple: it encompasses grief over separation from family/friends, mother tongue, culture, land, social status, ethnic group, and risks to physical integrity.

The intensity of migratory grief can vary depending on the migrant's individual vulnerability and the level of stressors in the host environment [45]. Suppose the migration

experience is not processed positively. In that case, the grief can become “complicated”, making adaptation and inclusion in the new reality difficult and leading to feelings of discomfort, loneliness, and stress. In severe cases, the grief can develop into “extreme” migratory grief, also known as “Ulysses syndrome” [46]. This is characterized by elevated stress levels, a persistent crisis state, and symptoms like depression, anxiety, somatization, and cognitive impairments [37,47,48]. However, Ulysses syndrome is not classified as a mental disorder [49]. The studies indicate that providing protective factors like intercultural education, individualized student monitoring, and developing socio-emotional competencies can help prevent or reduce the negative consequences of migratory mourning [42].

1.4.3. Protective Factors

Based on the case studies and professionals’ perspectives, there are some key strategies that can be implemented to support newly arrived students and address the risk factors associated with “migratory mourning” [50–52].

As can be seen in Table 1, the strategies to be implemented are fundamentally based on the implementation of an intercultural perspective, offering good support to newly arrived children and promoting networking (with good documents, communication, and collaboration).

Table 1. Protective factors for newly arrived students associated with migratory mourning.

Protective Factor	Definition
Implement intercultural education	Promote inclusive spaces and coexistence based on equality, diversity, and the construction of multiple identities.
Provide individualized student monitoring	Establish positive connections and evaluate the progress of each student in a personalized manner [53].
Develop student’s socio-emotional skills	Reinforce self-esteem, resilience, and assertiveness in students.
Enhance early detection	Analyze how relationships are established, create reference figures for students, and detect children’s discomfort. This requires good teacher training adapted to the particular needs of the students.
Foster a healthy support network for the students in school	Provide an environment that reduces stress, expands support networks, and promotes interaction with individuals from diverse backgrounds.
Offer targeted counseling and emotional support	Provide access to mental health professionals who can help students process the grief associated with migration
Promote collaborative learning environments	Create opportunities for newly arrived students to engage with their peers and build a sense of belonging.
Develop comprehensive School Reception Plans	Establish clear protocols and resources to facilitate the welcoming and integration of newly arrived students.
Provide teacher training on intercultural competence	Equip educators with the knowledge and skills to effectively support and integrate newly arrived students [54,55].

By implementing these strategies, schools can better address the risk factors and support the overall well-being and academic success of newly arrived students.

Resilience can also act as a buffer during difficult transitions. According to Barrero Plazas, Riaño Ospina, and Rincón Rojas [56], resilience enables individuals to overcome adversity and adapt positively to new circumstances, which is crucial for immigrant students who face multiple challenges when integrating into a new school environment.

In turn, self-esteem also plays a crucial role as a buffer during negative transitions, especially for this type of student. According to Perales Garza [57], healthy self-esteem allows individuals to face adversity with greater resilience, facilitating their adaptation to new environments and challenges. This is particularly relevant in the school context, where high self-esteem can improve academic performance and interpersonal relationships.

1.5. The Importance of Teacher's Training

This project focuses on this last topic. The number of migrants is increasing rapidly, creating new challenges for teachers. As Rodríguez (2015) states, the reception of migrants in schools has created a major challenge for teacher training programs. Teachers must receive initial training to address the issues surrounding the growing migrant population in schools. Therefore, they must be adequately equipped to meet these challenges [58]. Teacher training in this area is essential to be able to provide adequate support to migrant children. Teachers need to be sensitized and able to understand the different stages of migratory mourning, as well as how it can manifest itself in the school environment. In addition, teachers must have a positive perception of immigration and recognize the value of cultural diversity in the classroom. They need to be open to learning about the different cultures represented in their classrooms and promote an inclusive and respectful environment. Furthermore, it is essential to introduce an intercultural perspective [59,60].

In terms of migrant children's conceptions of learning, teachers need to take into account cultural and linguistic differences [61–63] that may influence the teaching–learning process. It is essential to adapt pedagogical strategies to the specific needs of these pupils, providing individualized support and encouraging active participation in the classroom.

Finally, the lack of resources in schools can pose an additional challenge for teachers working with migrant children. Continuous training and support programs for teachers, as well as teaching resources and materials adapted to the cultural diversity of the pupils, are essential. Without them, it has been found that there is a general perception among teachers that they lack the necessary self-efficacy and capacity to accommodate pupils with such behavioral difficulties [63]. This deficiency in teacher training also results in disparate opportunities for migrant students when compared to their native counterparts.

It is also important to establish a good relationship with the families of migrant children, involving them in the educational process and maintaining constant communication to learn about their concerns and needs. Collaboration between school and family is key to ensuring the academic and emotional success of migrant students.

After all, initial teacher training to address migratory mourning is essential to ensure equitable and high-quality education for all children, regardless of their origin. Teachers need to be prepared to face the challenges of immigration in the school environment and to provide comprehensive support to migrant students and their families.

Some aspects that would be needed in teacher training on this issue include the following:

- (1) Knowledge about the migratory mourning process and the different stages;
- (2) Awareness of the difficulties and challenges faced by migrant students;
- (3) Skills to identify the symptoms of migratory mourning for students;
- (4) Strategies to provide emotional support and necessary support to migrant students;
- (5) Appropriate management of crises and emergencies related to migratory mourning;
- (6) Collaboration with other professionals and external resources to provide comprehensive accompaniment to migrant students;
- (7) Reflection on one's attitudes and prejudices to avoid possible discrimination or stigmatization towards bereaved migrant students.

In conclusion, the training of teachers in migratory mourning must be comprehensive, empathetic, and aimed at creating an environment of support and emotional containment for migrant students who are going through this process. There are some teacher training initiatives [64], and this project aims to complement them by adding the first-hand experiences of migrant pupils.

2. Materials and Methods

This section presents the school with which we worked (Section 2.1), a description of the participants (Sections 2.2 and 2.3), the procedure followed (Sections 2.4 and 2.5), and a presentation of the tools developed (Sections 2.6 and 2.7).

2.1. Escola Univers

In this project, we worked with the Escola Univers de Barcelona, using it as a case study and providing an assessment to improve the process of welcoming newly arrived students. This is a public primary school in Barcelona with 458 students and 33 teachers in the year 2023–2024. Escola Univers has seen a significant increase in the proportion of foreign students, from 12.87% in 2018–2019 to 24.3% in 2023–2024, creating a need for a comprehensive School Reception Plan and an increase in the teacher's knowledge in the fields of intercultural education and migratory mourning [65]. The school's student body is drawn from families whose socio-economic status can be considered in the medium to high range. This contrasts with the socio-economic status of newly arrived families, which is relatively low. The school uses project-based learning (PBL) methodology, which can be an inclusive approach for diverse students but requires integrating an intercultural pedagogy. The arrival of new students to the school has become a cause for concern, with several risk factors identified that could impact the mental health of these children. This year, the center has set itself the objective of creating a School Reception Plan, given the speed with which this issue has arisen.

2.2. Reception Classroom

Since January 2023, the Escola Univers has been assigned a reception classroom due to the high number of newcomer students. Students attended this class in groups of between five and ten children, combining attendance with the regular classroom and prioritizing the hours when the reference group is engaged in Spanish, Catalan, or science.

This year, two half-day teachers have been assigned to the reception classroom. These teachers have received a brief training session on the subject of newly arrived students, but they recognize the necessity to expand and deepen their knowledge in this field. In this class, their main objective is to facilitate the acquisition of Catalan language skills. However, they have noticed that these children lack the emotional education foundation that is provided to other children at the school. Consequently, they have identified a need to enhance their training in this field.

2.3. Participants

In this project, we have collaborated with the teachers and the newly arrived children of the Escola Univers.

- (a) Teaching team: The teaching team comprised 33 members. Half of them have been employed at the school for at least four years. The team comprises three members of the directive team: two teachers from the reception classroom, one support teacher, nine specialist teachers, and 18 tutors. A total of 30 of the 33 teachers answered the questionnaire;
- (b) Newly arrived students: In the reception classroom, there are 25 children in total. Nevertheless, only students in grades three to six were included in the study to facilitate communication, which reduced the number of participants to 16 students. Of the aforementioned students, 11 have been interviewed. They come mainly from South America and Pakistan, and all of them entered the Escola Univers between January 2023 and September 2023. The remaining five have not been included in the study due to a lack of parental consent or non-attendance on the days of the interviews. Additionally, a sixth-grade student who migrated to Spain from Colombia in February 2021 (at the third-grade level) has also been interviewed to provide insights on the experiences of migration-related and the reception process in the school. The data from the children interviewed is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Data from the newly arrived students interviewed.

Pseudonym of the Child	Grade	Number of Hours/Week in the Reception Classroom
An	3rd	7.5
G	3rd	7.5
F	6th	4.5
A	4th	3
B	3rd	7.5
K	5th	6
E	5th	6
N	6th	4.5
S	3rd	6
R	6th	6
U	6th	4.5
Ar	6th	0

2.4. Procedure

The project commenced in September 2023 and was concluded in May 2024. Visits to the school were frequent, with the majority occurring between December 2023 and February 2024.

First, a comprehensive literature review was conducted on the topic of reception systems and the development of reception plans in Catalonia and other pioneering countries in this field across several recognized databases, such as PsycInfo, PubMed, Google Scholar, Core, Department of Education, and others. The sources were evaluated based on the criteria of relevance, updating, reliability, precision, and coverage. Additionally, the documentation of the Universe School was analyzed to understand its methodology, values, and educational project. This bibliographic research was complemented by a visit to Escola Univers to discover the facilities and to establish contact with the management team and a part of the teaching team.

In order to gain insight into perceptions of the reception process at the school, two distinct methodologies were employed to collect the views of those directly involved in this process:

- (a) Teaching team: A questionnaire was sent to all the teachers from the school to evaluate their needs, challenges, and current resources required to effectively welcome new students to the center and their level of knowledge about intercultural education and migratory mourning (see Section 2.5 Materials);
- (b) Newly arrived students: Twelve semi-structured interviews were conducted over two days of visits to the school. One of the teachers of the host class was present in all of them to facilitate an atmosphere of trust and comfort for the children. The duration of the interviews was about 35 min each. The topics covered were the challenges, difficulties, and beneficial resources during the reception process, interpersonal relationships in the school, migratory grief, emotional states, and coping strategies for dealing with discomfort. The interviews were audio-recorded with the children's consent for subsequent transcription. The transcribed text formed the basis for data analysis with NVivo 14 software (see Section 2.5).

All participants were volunteers (they had been informed of the freedom of participation and the right not to participate or to withdraw from the project at any time). They were also informed of the confidentiality of the data collected, which will only be used for educational purposes. To use the techniques mentioned above, the school involved in the study provided us with the necessary informed consent for all participants (from the

legal guardians in the case of minors). This consent was obtained in a straightforward and transparent manner, ensuring that all participants understood the study objectives and procedures. In addition, one of the study authors collaborated at the school and had a direct relationship with the professionals and families involved. This relationship facilitated communication and obtaining consent, ensuring that the rights and dignity of all participants were respected. At the same time, we avoided infantilizing the students interviewed, recognizing their autonomy and personhood. Likewise, this work starts from an inclusive and non-discriminatory basis, contemplating the gender perspective, following the Guide for the non-sexist use of the language of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Furthermore, it avoids any cultural, linguistic, gender, or sexual orientation stigmatization or prejudice. The study focused on creating an inclusive and hospitable environment without involving interventions that could put the health or well-being of participants at risk. We, therefore, considered the risks to be minimal and manageable within the educational context. Finally, we ensured that we complied with all local regulations and guidelines related to research in educational settings. According to these regulations, it was not necessary to obtain additional Ethics Committee approval for this type of study.

2.5. Data Analysis

A qualitative analysis of the interviews was conducted using NVivo software. We used symbolic interactionism as our main theoretical framework, which allowed us to explore how children and teachers interpret and elaborate their migratory mourning experiences through their everyday interactions. Moreover, we employed thematic analysis to identify and analyze significant patterns in qualitative data. This method allowed us to link the results to the raw data in a systematic and transparent way.

Initially, the 12 interviews were transcribed. Subsequently, as shown in Table 3, categories (general codes) were created based on the study's objectives (challenges, needs, resources, and proposals to improve the reception process and migratory grief). The category "interpersonal relationships" was added due to the high prevalence of references related to this topic in the interviews. Each interview extract was assigned to a category. Subsequently, the categories were divided into subcategories (descendant codes). The descendant codes were developed both deductively (as the category "migratory mourning", based on the subcategories identified in previous research and studies) and inductively (as the categories "challenges, needs, resources and proposals", based on the first-person experiences of the interviewed students). The figures presented below were generated through the extraction of data from the NVivo software into an Excel spreadsheet (number of references per (sub)category, extracted from each interview). This process enabled us to obtain information in a numerical format, facilitating the creation of a more visual graph. In order to minimize the potential for bias, we adopted a reflective approach throughout the research process. This involved a continual process of revising our own interpretations and considering the ways in which our experiences and perspectives might influence the analysis.

Table 3. The categories (codes) and subcategories (descendant codes) were obtained after the qualitative analysis of the interviews with newly arrived children. The NVivo software has enabled us to categorize all the information into appropriate categories and subcategories, thus facilitating the analysis of the content. For example, the information pertaining to migratory mourning has been included in the category entitled 'Migratory Mourning' and then re-categorized in a more specific manner within each of the subcategories presented in the table.

Categories and Subcategories Obtained after the Data Analysis		
General Code	Descendant Code	Description of the Code
Bibliographic data	Age Origin Country Time spent in Catalonia	Includes information on age, country of origin, and time spent in Catalonia

Table 3. Cont.

Categories and Subcategories Obtained after the Data Analysis		
General Code	Descendant Code	Description of the Code
Migratory mourning	Country of preference	Preference of the country of origin, of the host one or both
	Managing grief	Mechanisms to manage sadness (share with family, friends at school, or individually)
	Building multiple identities	Signs of ambivalence in the identity and presence of multiple factors of the country of origin and reception
	Impact on school performance	How has migratory grief affected school performance
	Frequency of contact with the origin country	How frequent is the contact with the origin country
	Differences between schools	Different points between the school from the home country and the <i>Escola Univers</i>
	Language mourning	Sadness/nostalgia when thinking about the language of the home country
	Land mourning	Sadness/nostalgia when thinking about the landscape of the home country
	Culture mourning	Sadness/nostalgia when thinking about the culture of the home country
	Family mourning	Sadness/nostalgia when thinking about the family of the home country
	Friendships mourning	Sadness/nostalgia when thinking about the friendships of the home country
	Emotional blockage	Emotional blocks while remembering the migratory process
Emotions during the interviews	Happiness, sadness, fatigue, shame	Which emotions do they feel during the interview to evaluate biases or conditionals?
Emotions during the last year	Fear, rage, fatigue, worries, happiness, shame, anxiety, sadness	Which emotions did they feel during the last year (during the migratory process)
Needs while entering the new school	Finding trusting spaces Finding people who speak the same language Learning Catalan Making friends	Which needs did the child have upon arriving at the <i>Escola Univers</i> ?
Challenges while entering the new school	Victim of harassment Following the lessons Learning Catalan Learning English Adaptation to changes Creating trusting bonds Feeling of belonging	Which challenges did the child have to face upon arriving at the <i>Escola Univers</i> ?
Beneficial resources during the reception process	Discovery of the school and surroundings Speaking the mother tongue Making new friends Being treated with respect Link with the teaching staff	What aspects helped the child to feel more welcome upon arrival at <i>Escola Univers</i> ?
Suggestions for improvement	Activities to work on shame Having a companion/guide Making the schedule more flexible at the beginning Receiving interest and respect Helping to socialize Sharing in the classroom things from the country of origin	From the imagination or experience of the child, what proposals would you make to improve the reception system at <i>Escola Univers</i> ?

Table 3. *Cont.*

Categories and Subcategories Obtained after the Data Analysis		
General Code	Descendant Code	Description of the Code
Interpersonal relationships	Feeling of loneliness Establishing 1 or 2 bonds of trust Establishing + 2 bonds of trust Is a victim of harassment	How the child establishes relationships with his or her classmates at the Escola Univers.
Reception classroom	Positive/negative assessment	Positive/negative assessment of the personal experience in the reception classroom
General assessment of the school	Positive/negative assessment	Positive/negative assessment and feeling of belonging at the Escola Univers

On the other hand, the responses to the questionnaire were also subjected to a qualitative analysis to extract the most pertinent information and synthesize it using the method of categorization of the information. This process enabled the grouping of the 30 responses into a smaller number of categories.

2.6. Design of the School's Reception Plan

One of the school's annual objectives was to develop an inclusive and intercultural School Reception Plan (SRP). Accordingly, this project has been dedicated to advising the school's teaching staff to enable them to develop an SRP appropriate to their particular context. One aspect of this assessment was the design of a template to facilitate the creation of the final SRP. The template was developed based on examples of SRPs from other educational institutions and guidance from ELIC Terrassa staff.

The presentation of the template to the management team facilitated the organization of the work on the final document. All members of the teaching team drafted the definitive SRP, as it is a document that requires the collective decision of the institution regarding the implementation of strategies and resources, as well as the attitude and appearance that will be adopted in the reception process. Subsequently, two follow-up meetings were held with the management team to address any outstanding issues and provide guidance on the actions outlined in the SRP.

After this academic year, the final SRP will be available on the Universe School website.

2.7. Creation of Two Training Tools for Teachers

To finish advising teachers and offering good training on newcomers, research of studies and training programs related to migratory mourning and intercultural education has been carried out to develop two training guides for the teaching team of the Escola Univers: one on intercultural education and another on migratory mourning.

The general structure of both training programs comprised an initial theoretical introduction, followed by the presentation of resources and concrete practical actions to apply in the school setting. The content of both training programs is outlined below.

The training about intercultural education is divided into four sections:

- (1) Interculturality: Includes its definition, related concepts, and information about discrimination;
- (2) Intercultural education: Includes its definition and its principles;
- (3) How can we implement it?: It compiles actions and strategies on how to implement intercultural education in the classroom (school), with the families, and how to address linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity;
- (4) Intercultural education as a protective factor for newly arrived students;

The training about migratory mourning is divided into five sections:

- (1) Migratory mourning: definition, related concepts, the multiplicity of the mourning (seven areas), and how children can express it;

- (2) Multiple identity: the process of identitarian reconstruction in a migratory context;
- (3) Consequences of the migratory mourning: intensity, duration, risk, and protective factors, and other consequences (academic, somatization, emotional, relational, and cognitive ones);
- (4) What can we do?: It compiles actions and strategies on how to make a good identification, accompaniment, and intervention at individual and group levels in the school to better assist children's migratory mourning;
- (5) Additional resources: including extra documentation, tools, or books.

The two training courses are presented in three formats:

- A written document that collects all the information of the training more extensively (about 12 pages each);
- A written document with more visual and summarized interactive content (about 18 pages each);
- A presentation with short capsules in video format with reduced information. The intercultural capsule includes a presentation of 13 slides, and the migratory grief one includes 18 slides.

The two training courses in their three formats were collected in Google Sites, which aimed to serve as a comfortable and easy-to-use tool for the teaching team.

The Sites also contained a visual presentation with the results obtained in the analysis phase of this project (questionnaire and interviews) and a link to the Center's Welcome Plan, which will be completed jointly throughout the 2023–2024 academic year. Finally, a section has been created with resources (documents, stories, presentations...) to improve the reception process in the center, which could be extended over the next courses.

2.8. Instruments

Two different instruments have been used in this project: a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews.

The questionnaire provided general information and broader opinions. It was useful for obtaining quantitative data and comparing responses, facilitating a larger sample size. It also allowed for an assessment of teachers' prior knowledge, attitudes, and perceptions about migratory grief. This guided the further design and creation of teacher training and adapted it to their needs.

In addition, interviews helped to identify emerging issues and to design more precise training. For example, they were valuable in gathering information about the specific needs of students in migratory grief. This allowed teachers to better understand students' experiences and challenges throughout these conversations.

Both techniques complemented each other: interviews offer qualitative richness, while questionnaires provide more structured data.

Google Forms questionnaire

A questionnaire was prepared using Google Forms divided into two sections.

The initial section of the questionnaire comprised 11 questions designed to elicit the teaching staff's perceptions of the needs, challenges, and current resources required to welcome new students to the center effectively. The second part of the questionnaire comprised eight questions designed to ascertain the level of knowledge of the teaching team on issues about intercultural education and migratory mourning. The results of this section enabled us to identify any training needs or areas for further improvement within these fields.

The questionnaire comprised both multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The initial draft of the questionnaire was subjected to a review by the management team of the Escola Univers to ensure that they were able to comprehend and discern the intended meaning of the questions. After some modifications, the questionnaire was disseminated to the entire teaching team (the management team attached it to all cycle meeting agendas, informing attendees about the project and requesting participation).

A second questionnaire was sent to the management team, coordinators, and reception classroom teachers to evaluate the whole process. The questionnaire consisted of two sections and comprised both multiple-choice and open-ended questions. The first five questions asked about the level of satisfaction, usefulness, and satisfaction with the counseling process received. In the second five questions, the level of knowledge about migratory mourning and intercultural education was assessed.

Semistructured interviews

An interview script has been developed with about 15 questions about the difficulties, challenges, and resources during the reception process at the school, as well as questions about the emotional states experienced, interpersonal relationships, and the migration mourning experienced by the children.

The interviews were recorded using a mobile phone voice recorder and subsequently transcribed into a Word document to facilitate qualitative analysis.

3. Results

3.1. Teaching Team

Below are the results obtained from the questionnaire sent to the team of teachers at Escola Unvers. A total of 30 of the 33 teachers at the school (representing 91% of the sample) have completed the questionnaire. In the following section, we take the 30 participants as the total of the sample to facilitate comprehension. The other 3 teachers were not able to answer due to personal issues. A total of 96.4% of the teaching team had a newcomer student at some point during their teaching career at the school.

3.1.1. About the Reception Process at the Escola Unvers

Furthermore, 100% of the teaching team believes that a plan to welcome new students is essential. This is justified by several factors, including the following:

- (1) The need to streamline actions and provide a clear guide for the school;
- (2) It allows the team to reflect on the available resources and tools and those that may be required;
- (3) It enables the team to address the specific needs of newly arrived pupils;
- (4) It enhances the school community's overall well-being.

Concerning the reception of newcomer students, it is evident that there are discrepancies between the current and proposed approaches to the accompaniment that the teaching team is offering to the children during the migration grief process and to work on social relations. In both instances, the teaching staff considers that new students are not being accompanied following the requisite standards, as seen in Figure 1.

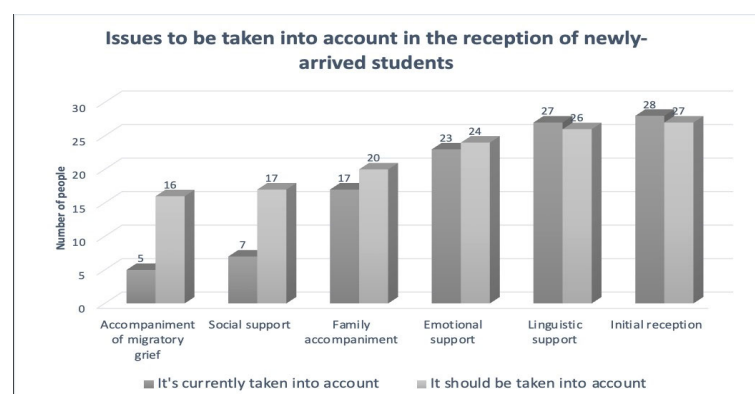


Figure 1. Comparison of the issues that are currently taken into account and those that should be adopted in the school during the reception of newly arrived students.

Faced with these new support needs for new students, Table 4 contains the resources that the teaching team considers to be missing.

Table 4. Resources that teachers (the other five teachers do not think that the school needs more resources than the incorporation of the reception classroom has been enough) feel are lacking at *Escola Univers*.

Resource	N° of People Who Thinks So
Personal: more teachers/lower pupil ratio	27
Material: didactic material adapted	24
Training: to better accompany migratory grief, blocks. . .	17
Time to coordinate all the professionals working together	16
Easy translator resources in the classroom	14
Elaborate on the Reception School Plan	13

Finally, 100% of the teaching team considers that the reception classroom has made a positive contribution to the newcomer students.

3.1.2. Level of Knowledge about Intercultural Education and Migratory Grief

It has been found that 14% of the teachers had never previously encountered the concept of intercultural education, while 25% did not know about the phenomenon of migrant grief.

However, after a brief explanation of what intercultural education is, 100% of the teachers believe that intercultural education is important when it comes to welcoming newly arrived students. Despite this, they recognize that in school, they still do not work uniformly from a perspective that includes intercultural education.

Concerning migratory grief, the responses are deficient when identifying the correct symptoms. In the final question, respondents were asked to identify the domains that comprise migratory mourning. Of the 28 responses, 23 marked “I don’t know any of them”.

3.2. Newly Arrived Students

Based on the interviews conducted with the newly arrived students, the results presented below have been obtained and classified into two categories: (a) migratory grief and emotions and (b) interpersonal relationships.

3.2.1. Migratory Grief and Emotions

As previously stated, emotional education represents a crucial protective factor for pupils undergoing migration processes. During the interviews, the children were frequently asked about their emotional state. In response to the question “How are you? How do you feel?”, 75% of the children answered “Calm, comfortable”, and the other three children indicated feelings of “I feel tired”, “A bit sad” and “A bit embarrassed”. Nevertheless, difficulties were noted in the ability to accurately assess their current emotional state, and examples of emotions had to be provided.

Related to this, a compilation has been made of emotional aspects that these children have experienced over the last year (due to the changes experienced during the migration and the arrival at the new school). In this period, emotions such as sadness (100% of the sample) and anxiety (83.3% of the sample) predominate. The results are presented in Figure 2:

It is important to note that some children have emotional and memory impairments when recalling parts of their migration process and the reception process at school.

N: I say, ah, well look, I’m going to talk to you about this, but at the same time.... It’s like I’m about to write it down, but at the same time I forget. It’s like the idea disappears.

When migratory grief has been addressed, different subcategories have been obtained, as shown in Figure 3.

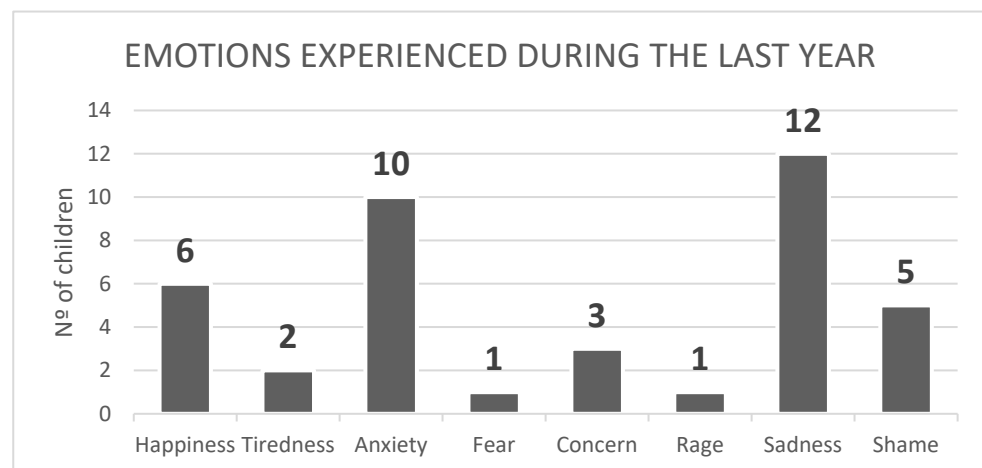


Figure 2. Emotions experienced by newly arrived students during the last year.

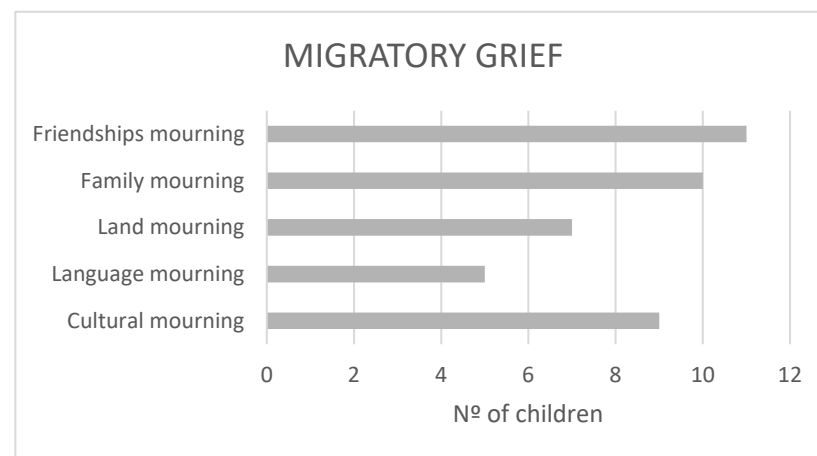


Figure 3. Representation of the presence of migratory mourning domains collected in interviews with newly arrived students.

Most children (11 of the 12) show a presence of mourning for the friendships they have left in their country of origin.

B: “I had friends (...) I don’t talk to them (...) it makes me sad.”

Ten of the twelve children show family mourning. Often a large part of the family has remained in the country of origin, and this is one of the main reasons why these children would like to return. Grandparents stand out as the family figures they miss the most.

“P: Do you miss someone?”

R: Yes, I miss my sister and my grandmother too. Sometimes I’m sad and moved by the things we did.”

With a smaller but considerable presence (more than half of the children), they express their mourning for the language, culture, and land of their country of origin.

“In the summer season I felt better (...) because in my origin country we have a warm climate, so since the cold arrived here I started feeling less... I wasn’t used to it.”

“I liked my other clothes. (...) They are very comfortable (...). On the weekends I wear them, when I have school I don’t wear that clothes. (...) I am ashamed.”

“Q: And what do you miss the most?”

E: Well, Christmas. Because in Colombia at Christmas they set off firecrackers. Everyone goes out to the streets to celebrate with the neighbors... there is a lot of music and a lot of partying there.”

“And also, what I missed most about Venezuela was how I spoke there in Venezuela.”

In the context of migratory grief, emotions such as sadness, nostalgia, or shame may emerge. Consequently, the manner in which individuals cope with these emotions has been the subject of analysis. Generally, a low level of strategies for managing emotions was observed, with a predominance of individual strategies (relaxation, distraction) and difficulties in seeking external support and building a support network.

“S: My head reboots, and I start thinking about other things. Because at home I have to do a lot of tasks.”

“Q: And what do you do when you are sad thinking about Bolivia?”

F: I try to distract myself with the phone, I try not to think.

Q: And that makes you feel better?

F: Yes, I don't want to be sad because then they ask me and I don't like it.”

Only 3 of the 12 children share it with someone else (teacher or friend from the reception classroom) when they do not feel well towards the process of migratory grief. Usually, the other person initiates the contact when they detect the children's distress. Students also emphasize that they would like to create spaces for sharing, given their difficulty in actively seeking help.

P: And you're talking to someone when you miss your country?

S: No, no. I only talked to a teacher one day because she asked me why I was sad.

Another relevant aspect is the construction of a multiple identity. In this sense, 11 of the 12 children express difficulty in choosing a unique country (home or host), and they are clearly ambivalent in identifying which one best represents their identity.

“Q: And what culture do you feel most identified with? With the Latin American, with the Catalan, with the Spanish...”

E: With the Spanish... and a part with the Latin American one. It's hard to choose.”

“S: And it's also like I was another person. I woke up and did... where am I? A new person? And then I realized that I was like another person, but it's me.

L: That you had changed a little.

S: Sure, I was changing. It was like my mind was changing... You learn things... My mind was telling me things in Spanish and Catalan... and it says... I don't understand what's going on. I understand Spanish, but not Catalan.”

Four children stated that all these factors affect their school performance in some way (difficulties in communication, doing homework, or lack of concentration).

“R: When I try to communicate, sometimes I remain silent with my friends or teachers. I go blank. I block myself.”

However, two children have also stated that they consider that the whole process of migratory mourning does not affect their school performance.

3.2.2. Interpersonal Relationships

Throughout the interviews, there were many references to the difficulty of the children in establishing new interpersonal relationships during the migration process and the arrival at the Escola Univers. This results in a lack of or deficient support network, which could be a risk factor for the elaboration of the migratory grief. As represented in Figure 4, 4 of the 12 children had been (or still are) victims of bullying at school. When the results were communicated to the teaching staff, they activated the anti-bullying protocols to stop it and to assist the children concerned.

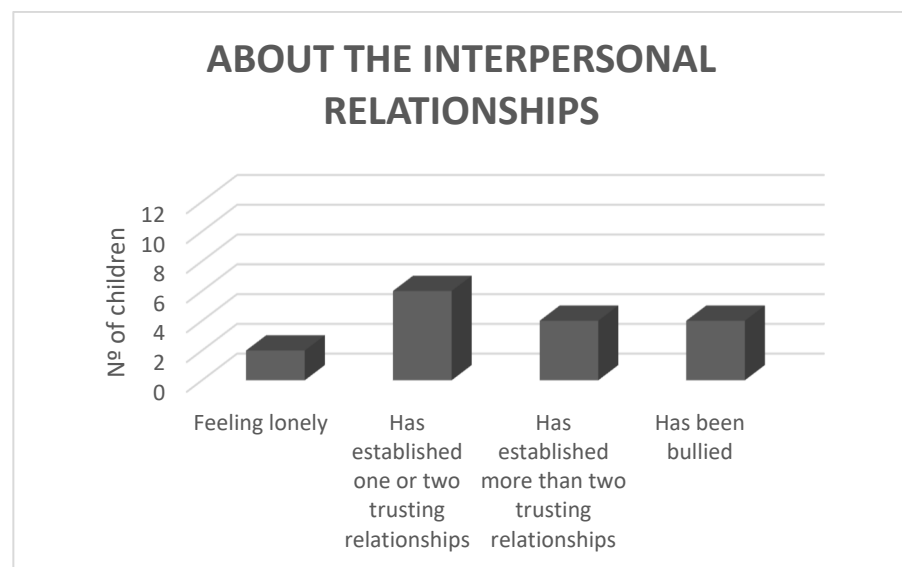


Figure 4. Representation of the interpersonal relationships of the newly arrived students.

“U: Yes, I was constantly silent in fourth grade, at this school, but it’s something I try to overcome. I had another teacher. And there was a boy but he is no longer in my class, and I like that he is no longer there. Supposedly, I was chubbier in fourth grade, you know? I was still new here. There was a boy who told me I was fat and who called me names, calling me... “whale” and so on.

Q: And when this happened, how did you feel?

U: Well, the truth is that it’s bad.

Q: Did you talk about it with anyone?

(starts crying)”

On the other hand, although one-third of the sample has managed to establish more than two trusting relationships at school, the rest have only established one or two (with migrant students as well), and one participant acknowledges feeling lonely and not finding any trusting relationships at school.

“L: And at playground time, do you have friends to play with?

B: Usually not, I wish I had.”

“P: And what has helped you feel at ease?

A: My friends. They are good.

P: And what do they do to make you feel good?

A: Play with me, soccer...”

3.3. Needs and Challenges during the Reception Process

Regarding the needs of new students when they arrive at the school, two perspectives have been compared: the teaching staff and the newly arrived students.

Tables 5 and 6 reveal that learning the Catalan language is the second most important need for newcomers to the Universe School, a view that is shared by both teaching staff and the recently arrived pupils. Nevertheless, the teaching staff considers emotional support for newcomer pupils to be the primary need. In contrast, the newcomers themselves tend to emphasize the need for a support network, creating trustworthy friendships as a priority. It is also noteworthy that newcomer pupils express a need to communicate with another person during the first few days. This was most frequently mentioned by individuals from non-Spanish-speaking countries, who indicated a need to find someone who could speak

their native language or English in order to feel more comfortable at school. The teaching staff has not addressed this aspect.

Table 5. Teacher’s perspective on the newly arrived children’s needs when entering the school.

Needs of Newly Arrived Children (Teacher’s Point of View)	
Need	N° of People Who Thinks So (Total 28)
Emotional support	27
Learning Catalan	24
Visibility of their country of origin	17
Didactic material adapted to their level	16
Creating a support social network	14

Table 6. Children’s perspective on the newly arrived children’s needs when entering the school.

Needs of Newly Arrived Children (Children’s Point of View)	
Need	N° of People Who Thinks So (Total 12)
Creating a support social network (make friends)	12
Learning Catalan	7
Finding people who speak the same language (communicate)	5
Having trusting environments to share their difficulties	4

Regarding the challenges of welcoming newly arrived pupils, we can also contrast the difficulties faced by the teaching staff when including the students in the classroom with the challenges faced by the newly arrived pupils when they have to become part of the Escola Univers.

As can be seen in Figure 5, the teacher’s view of the difficulties and challenges involved in the reception process is not the same as that of the pupils.

The main challenge for newcomer pupils is to establish trusting relationships with classmates, while only 3 of the 30 teachers consider this to be a relevant difficulty.

At the same time, learning Catalan is an important difficulty for both groups (26/30 teachers and 10/12 children).

“And, because I don’t know how to say things, and I’m shy. I only know English. If I speak English I know they don’t know what I’m saying.”

Some other difficulties or challenges expressed by both groups are the difficulty of managing the emotions that come into play during this process of change, the emotional blocks that may appear, and the difference in the pupils’ previous level of learning compared to that of the Escola Univers. It is worth highlighting here the Latin American pupils and their difficulty in learning English, given that the four children who shared the same experience acknowledged that they had never studied English in their country of origin.

Finally, the teaching team highlights the difficulties related to the lack of resources to accompany newcomers. This difficulty is related to a major challenge for newcomer pupils: establishing trusting bonds with teachers.

P: And could you talk about it with a teacher?

E: No. I felt ashamed and I didn’t feel very confident.

P: And would you have liked to have had someone at school to talk to?

E: Yes.”

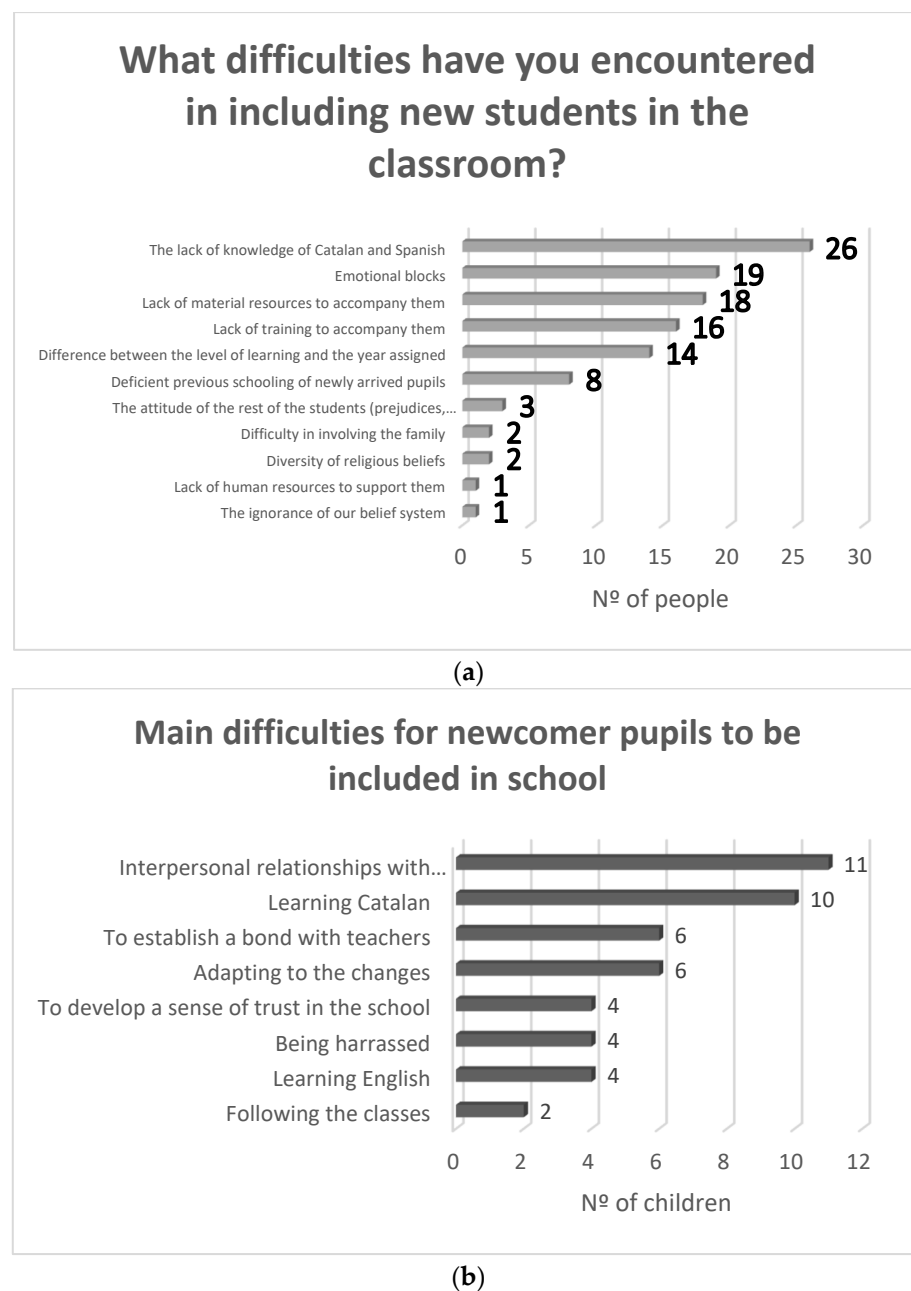


Figure 5. This figure compares different perspectives: (a) Teachers' difficulties in including newly arrived students in the classroom; (b) Difficulties for newcomers to feel included in the school.

3.4. Proposals for Improving Reception at the Escola Univers

Despite the difficulties and lack of resources detected by the teaching team, the newcomer students have already commented on several resources (collected in Figure 6) existing in the Universe School that were beneficial during their arrival at the school.

Even though one of the difficulties for newly arrived students is to create a trusting bond with the teachers, this has been the main resource that has helped them feel better during their welcome at the school. Other resources that have also been beneficial include being shown an interest in them and making efforts to show them around or to speak their mother tongue (even if it is a translator).

On the other hand, excursions outside the school have also been a very positive resource for the children because they create a relaxed space that facilitates socialization among classmates.

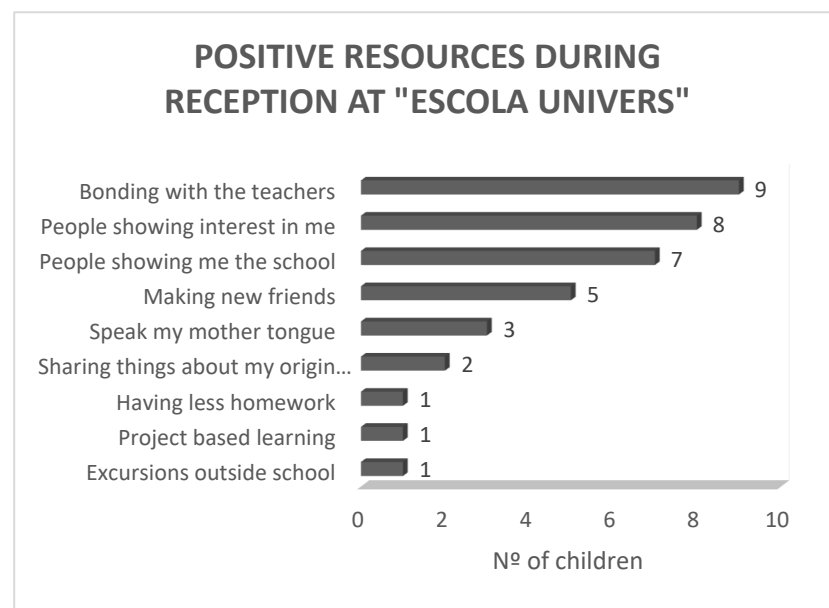


Figure 6. Resources from the Escola Univers that have helped newly arrived students during their reception process.

At the same time, the 5th-grade students have been making presentations about their country of origin, and they agree that talking about it has been a very positive experience.

Finally, the newly arrived students have made proposals to improve the reception process based on their personal experiences. The most times mentioned, and original ones are presented below:

Having a guiding partner: a person in their class who, from the first day, is a reference figure and can show them around the school, introduce them to people, create a first bond. . .

Being treated with respect and understanding

Implementing more flexible timetables on the first days of the academic year. This would allow students to attend school at a pace that suits their individual needs. Some students may feel more confident if they attend school for three hours a day and know that they will be at home afterward rather than spending seven hours directly at school.

Doing activities in the classroom:

Talking about the origin country

Helping build a social network with classmates (group cohesion)

Working on the emotion of shame

Having access to a language with which they are already familiar, particularly during the initial stages of their integration. This facilitates communication, which is impeded by the language barrier, and enables newly arrived students to overcome isolation and interact with others.

Having others demonstrate an interest in them and that they do not experience feelings of marginalization or discrimination.

3.5. Design of the School's Reception Plan

The creation of a template for the school reception plan allowed the teaching staff to become more involved in the creation of this highly important document for the school, as they were provided with an easy-to-use tool that they could start working with. In addition, after the training courses, more inclusive actions were included in the reception plan, which took more into account the needs of newly arrived pupils and the accompaniment of the migratory grief in the reception process.

The teaching team highlighted positively the template received as well as the guidance received during the process of creating the reception plan. They highlighted the practicality, visual presentation, and ease of use of the document provided.

3.6. Teacher's Training about Intercultural Education and Migratory Grief

In the questionnaire, a low level of knowledge about intercultural education and migratory grief was detected among teachers. Given these results, two training programs on these two topics have been developed for the teaching staff of the school (a brief representation is shown in Figure 7), which include a good introduction to the theoretical concepts in order to facilitate the subsequent understanding of the practical proposals to be implemented (see Section 2.4 for more details).

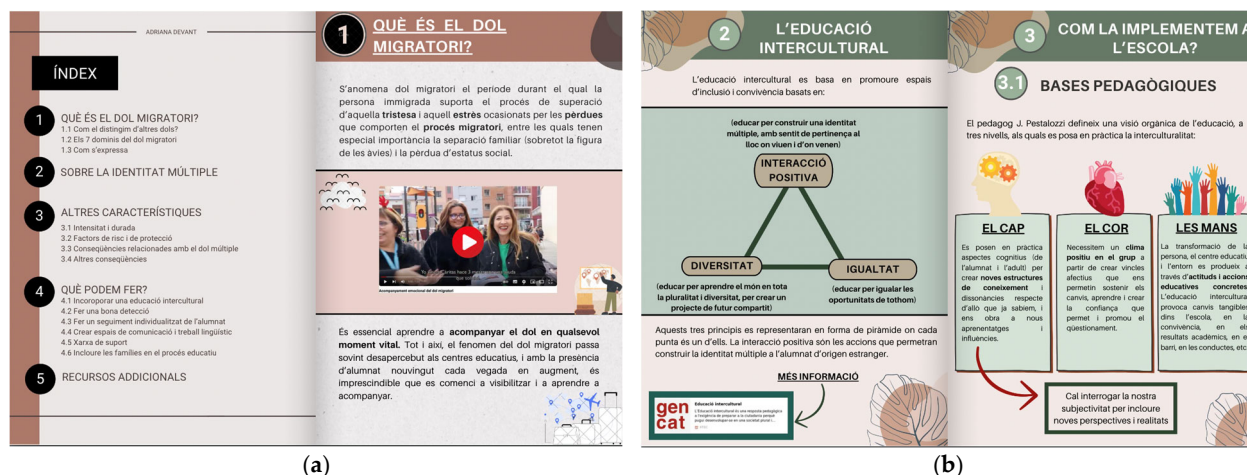


Figure 7. Two-page extract from the teacher training in a visual format on migratory grief (a) and intercultural education (b).

In addition to sharing the Google Sites (the tool where the teacher training courses are collected) with the whole team of teachers at the school, the two training courses were implemented live in front of the whole teaching staff. The presentation format of the two training programs was slightly modified, using the “mentimeter” tool, to create a more interactive and dynamic performance. The session lasted for an hour and twenty minutes, after which a discussion was held between the members of the teaching team. The discussion reflected a high degree of awareness of the necessity for change in the school's approach to migration and the importance of intercultural education.

A second questionnaire was sent to the management team, coordinators, and reception classroom teachers to evaluate the whole process.

The results obtained in the second part of the first questionnaire were compared to those of the second questionnaire to evaluate the degree of knowledge about migratory grief and intercultural education, as well as the effectiveness of the training courses. The results of the second questionnaire indicate that 100% of participants believe that their knowledge about migratory grief has increased significantly. In comparison, 75% of respondents believe that their understanding of intercultural education and the reception process of newcomers has largely increased. The remaining 25% of participants believe that their knowledge has increased slightly. As illustrated in Table 7, there has been an increase in the number of correct responses to questions about intercultural education and migratory mourning, which is consistent with the perspective of educators.

On the other hand, this second questionnaire also includes an assessment and satisfaction survey on the assessment process carried out at the Escola Univers, to evaluate the rest of the interventions of the project. On a scale from 1 (not useful) to 5 (very useful), 100% of people consider that the advice and material received has been a 5 (very useful). Of all the tasks, it is observed that all have fairly satisfied the staff of the Universe School: 28.6% considered the live presentation of the training courses more useful, 28.6% returned rate of the analysis and results to the teaching team, 28.6% for the assessment during the creation of the Reception School Plan, and 14.3% for the Google Sites tool.

Table 7. Synthesis of the percentages that represent the number of answers to the questionnaires sent to the teaching team of the Universe School.

Teacher's Level of Knowledge about Intercultural Education and Migratory Grief		
Item	1st Questionnaire	2nd Questionnaire
Capable of defining "intercultural education"	72.3%	100%
Capable of identifying areas of migratory grief	17.8%	100%
Capable of identifying the consequences of migratory grief	65%	95%

As a result, there have been no suggestions for additional training materials to complement the existing program for newcomers.

The information was further supplemented by the feedback gathered on the day of the training capsule presentation to the entire teaching team, as well as three questions presented in the live presentation. The responses indicate that there has been an increased level of awareness regarding the significance of the migratory grief process among the teachers and that they have been furnished with the necessary tools to accompany this process with newly arrived students.

It can be concluded that the implementation of the aforementioned methodology has resulted in the achievement of all specific objectives at the commencement of this project.

4. Discussion

The emotional support of newly arrived pupils is an aspect that is still neglected in schools [20,25]. The results of the research in this study show a contrast between the teachers' perception of the needs of newly arrived pupils (prioritizing the learning of Catalan) and the reality experienced by the children (emphasizing the need to build a social support network).

This project has involved making visible the discomfort that newly-arrived pupils experience when they arrive at a public primary school in Barcelona and the resources needed to reduce it. The interviews conducted have made it possible to explore migratory grief and the emotional processes experienced in childhood. Some studies have begun to explore this stage of life [66,67], but migratory grief continues to be explored mostly in adulthood [46]. Even so, the symptomatology detected (predominant emotions such as anxiety and sadness) and the low level of strategies to manage it correlate positively with research on migratory grief in other fields.

Marxen's study on migratory grief in adolescents provides further evidence of the necessity to establish stable and healthy reference figures for these children [68]. This study has enabled the development of guidance and training materials for reference figures in schools, with the aim of enhancing the support provided to newly arrived children. Moreover, the real-time demonstration of the training sessions enabled an assessment of their beneficial influence on the educators. Furthermore, the incorporation of the experiences of students who had recently enrolled at the educational institution provided additional insights that augmented the existing theoretical framework on the subject of migratory mourning and intercultural education.

It has been demonstrated that enhancing the knowledge of teachers in the area of migrant bereavement serves to act as a protective factor for children in such circumstances [60]. This finding has been corroborated by the students' requests to establish bonds of trust with the teachers, indicating a need for greater support and guidance.

Nevertheless, in educational establishments with a high number of newly arrived pupils, it would be recommended to incorporate the role of a specialized psychologist, with the objective of conducting weekly visits to the center to engage in dialogue with both pupils and teaching staff. This would allow for the psycho-emotional support received by newly arrived pupils to be intensified, which would also serve as a protective factor.

Of the three degrees of intensity of migratory grief, the majority of children manifest what is defined as 'complicated migratory grief', which is characterized by the presence of depressive symptoms and memory blocks [45]. The children interviewed from the *Escola Univers* exhibited depressive symptoms, including emotional blocks and difficulty in identifying their emotions. In general, the group interviewed has been found to lack effective coping strategies and to possess low socio-emotional skills. These factors have been identified as potential risk factors for experiencing a more complicated form of migratory grief [52].

Furthermore, the grief is complicated by the presence of external stressors and/or a poor reception from school [69]. The lack of training for teachers in how to support students who are grieving the loss of loved ones who have migrated and the lack of healthy coping strategies among the students themselves can impede the effective processing of this form of grief [34]. The project has facilitated the implementation of protective factors, including the introduction of intercultural education in the school's curriculum, and has contributed to an enhanced awareness from the teaching team of the significance of migratory grief and the necessity of a supportive reception process. Nevertheless, it will require a few months to evaluate the project's effectiveness, given the gradual nature of its development.

As has been demonstrated in previous research, newly arrived students are frequently subjected to bullying and social isolation [33]. This study identified four cases of unreported bullying among children in the reception classroom, which enabled the necessary services and protocols to be activated to provide support and address these situations.

Additionally, recent findings have indicated that newcomer students tend to perform at a significantly lower level than their counterparts [31]. This study aimed to identify the difficulties and challenges that could explain lower school performance. The results revealed several noteworthy findings. These include difficulties in learning Catalan, particularly among non-Latin American students, and English, particularly among Latin American students. Additionally, the students encountered difficulties in establishing a support network and experienced social isolation. Furthermore, emotional blocks were observed, which led to attention deficits, memory loss, and lack of concentration in the classroom.

The project has resulted in the creation of materials and tools that are adapted to the specific needs and context of the *Escola Univers*. The material can also be employed by other educational establishments, particularly to enhance awareness of the phenomenon of migratory grief among young people and to facilitate intercultural education within the context of the school curriculum. Thus, it would be imperative to develop a set of tools and protocols that can be implemented in all educational institutions, giving special attention to the training courses received by teachers. This process should commence with each school formulating an inclusive School Reception Plan.

Schools can also play a crucial role in facilitating smoother transitions for migrant students through a number of strategies. First, it is critical to remove bureaucratic obstacles during the enrolment process and to ensure that students are properly assessed for placement in the appropriate educational level [70]. In addition, the implementation of mentoring and emotional support programs can help migrant students better adapt to their new school environment by providing a sense of belonging and ongoing support [41].

Another effective strategy is training teachers in intercultural competencies, which will enable them to better manage diversity in the classroom and foster an inclusive and respectful environment. Collaboration with families and the community is essential to create a comprehensive support network that facilitates the integration of migrant students and their families into school and community life [70].

It would be interesting to explore another avenue of research to determine whether there are age-related differences in the expression of migrant grief. Consequently, the counseling provided to professionals could be more specific and appropriate to the children with whom they work.

Furthermore, it is essential to continue investigating the needs of recently arrived students once they have lost the support of the reception classroom. At the same time, it is

crucial to give a voice to native students to gain insight into their challenges, concerns and needs when a newcomer joins the classroom.

5. Limitations

This study has been limited by a temporary factor: the academic year has not seen significant changes in the process of welcoming newly arrived students, as this event mainly occurs at the beginning of the school year. To this end, it is proposed that a follow-up take place during the next academic year or within two to three years. This follow-up will assess the implementation of the measures included in the PEC, their use of Google Sites, and the resources offered, and will also ensure that the school is operating from an intercultural perspective.

Another limitation of this study is the use of a self-report instrument to collect information from the teaching staff, which may have been biased by social desirability. Nevertheless, during the meetings with some of the teaching staff and during the live training, it was proven that the answers to the questionnaire were positively correlated with the comments they made during the live training courses.

It is also worth noting that a very high number of people have participated in this project. The teaching team was eager to respond, and the children were forthcoming during the interviews. The results of this project are adapted to the specific context of the Escola Univers. To be able to generalize these results, a larger and more representative sample of the population is needed.

At the same time, the lack of the perspectives of families and autochthonous pupils could be seen as a limitation of the project. Even so, the representation of the two main groups involved in the reception process at the school (newly arrived pupils and teaching staff) has been very high and representative.

6. Conclusions

In the educational context, it is imperative to consider strategies for establishing a more welcoming, respectful, and inclusive school environment. This entails understanding the resistance mechanisms that may impede newly arrived students from feeling integrated within the school and the broader community [27]. Perhaps it would be beneficial to alter our perspective, and instead of focusing on differences, barriers, and difficulties, we could begin to consider how we can enhance, develop, and contribute to the creation of a superior educational system that incorporates newcomer learners and the diversity that this entails. This project represents a modest yet crucial step towards the inclusion of diverse student populations in the classroom, transcending the limitations of segregation and exclusion. The vision and reception of Escola Univers' teaching staff serve as an excellent example of professionals with an inclusive outlook and a commitment to personal and professional growth. These outcomes are reflected in the results obtained, the high level of participation and involvement demonstrated by the entire team of educators, and the enhanced knowledge and understanding of intercultural education and the migratory mourning. Furthermore, these educators exhibited remarkable sensitivity when engaging with the subject during the deliberations that arose during the training sessions.

The new multicultural reality at the Escola Univers is a reflection of the social reality of our country. In order to achieve a more diverse society that is enriched by this diversity, it is necessary to implement an intercultural perspective. This can be achieved through dialogue and understanding. Moreover, it is recommended that teacher training in intercultural education be enhanced, given its proven efficacy and necessity, as evidenced by the findings of this study.

In recent years, with the increase in immigration in Catalonia, there has been a shift in focus towards the process of welcoming newly arrived students [6]. Nevertheless, there has been an increase in cases of bullying, emotional distress, and school failure among this group [33,37]. In this study, we have detected four victims of school harassment from the 12 participants.

In light of this final observation, it is imperative to assess the efficacy of the strategies employed to support newly arrived pupils and to emphasize the critical role of education and mental health as cornerstones for children's growth and development, enabling them to reach their full potential. Ultimately, it is they who will constitute our future society.

It is crucial to extend the intercultural perspective beyond the realm of education to encompass all facets of society in order for it to be genuinely efficacious.

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