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Cultural Diversity and the Governance of School Policies in Italy and in France. A Comparative Analysis of the National Regulations

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Cultural Diversity and the Governance of School Policies in Italy and in France. A Comparative Analysis of the National Regulations

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Abstract: In Italy, non-Italian pupils represent 9.4% of school population and 61% of them were born in Italy; in France, allophone students are 0.56% in first and second-degree enrolment (Rosenwald, 2017). Our work reflects upon the dimensions and strategies identified by the Italian and French school systems to manage cultural diversity. Our focus is exclusively on school policy concerning cultural diversity, adopted by the Ministries of Education of both countries: in particular, our paper aims at illustrating value orientations, guidelines and target groups identified by these policies. Our theoretical reflection starts from a comparative perspective, adopting the study approach to integration policies, proposed by Penninx and Garcés-Mascreñas (2016) and the interpretative approach to public action, proposed by Moïni (2013), and adapting them to analysis of public policies relating to school. Firstly, we provide a short review of the school policies concerning cultural diversity in Italy and France; later, we develop an analysis of these policies, highlighting elements of similarity and/or divergence between the two countries.

Keywords: cultural diversity, school-policies, Italy, France

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Introduction

The future of Western Europe and the safeguarding of its values are also linked to the children of immigrants: it's essential to pay attention to their training and to the conditions necessary to realize their full potential, at school, in the labour market, in the family context, in the identification with the country of origin, in the full participation in civic and political life (Crul & Mollenkopf, 2012). All this can not ignore a reflection on the opportunities offered by the receiving society, linked to the way in which it views immigration and to the mechanisms – among these, the school system – that at national and local level hinder or promote assimilation or integration (*ibidem*): the success or failure of the integration process of the children of immigrants depends not only on individual characteristics, but also on the interaction with the different institutional contexts (Özdemir, 2012).

If School, as “mediating institution”, plays an important role on the fate of the children of migration (Ambrosini, 2011), then this opportunity depends on the “good functioning of an educational system”, that is “able to grasp, accept and deal with cultural diversities” (p. 195¹) in organizational-managerial and pedagogical-didactic terms. Our reflection moves towards the analysis of school policies. The educational policies for immigrants in Europe, in fact, are between a before (history, migration path and insertion) and an after (integration) (Santagati, 2013, p. 180).

We present a comparative analysis of Italian and French school policies, because, as highlighted by Bergamaschi, “[Italy and France] are two contexts that summarize the fracture existing in Europe on the theme of immigration” (2013, p. 267), for the time dimension (immigration being a recent phenomenon for Italy, and a rooted reality in France), and for the political one, which sees a different level of influence of the State in the management of the phenomenon (reduced in Italy, more pronounced in France). In the European context, committed to integration, focused on positions within the social structure (Crul & Mollenkopf, 2012), Italy is characterized by an implicit and unintentional model of inclusion, in which poor institutional regulation and greater limelight of local actors have responded to the spontaneous settlement of migrants (Ambrosini, 2011); France instead qualifies as “the most strongly assimilationist” country (Crul & Mollenkopf, 2012), with the aim of transforming immigrants into French culturally and politically, making, under the principle of equality, diversity as invisible in the public sphere, the results of which have been unsuccessful (Zanfrini, 2016).

This fracture also concerns the educational policies, as highlighted by MIPLEX2015 (Huddleston *et al.*, 2015), which includes Italy among the countries with ineffective “weak targeted education policies” and France among

¹ All direct quotations into non-English language have been translated by the authors.

the countries which are “less responsive to their large number of immigrant pupils”. The “Italian case”, moreover, was also characterized by the inability to “treasure” (for better or for worse) the experiences of other countries, or to propose innovative and intentionally constructed solutions (Berti, 2008).

Therefore, we want a) to analyze which orientations (conveyed integration models) and strategies (organizational and pedagogical-didactic indications) the Italian and French Ministries of Education (center) serve as indicators at each level of an educational organization (periphery) and b) to verify if Italy and France, so close geographically, and whose educational policies are assessed as slightly unfavorable (Huddleston *et al.*, 2015), have similar or different attitudes concerning multicultural school management.

Before defining our analytical framework, we want to clear up any justified confusion related to the choice of our object of study (school policies), that would refer more to a disciplinary political perspective, rather than a reflection related to the different cognitive domains of the educational sciences.

In this regard, we find support in the sociological approach to public action proposed by Moini (2013), that we apply, with due caution and appropriate adaptations, to the analysis of public policies². In fact, as Moini states, public policy is part of public action and is defined as “what makes it possible to observe empirically the forms, contents and effects of public action. Public policy can be considered [...] an empirical reference for the concept of public action” (p. 29).

Precisely because public policy is included in the public action, we believe—unlike Moini—that it can be the object of sociological analysis and, for the purpose of our work, the object of educational sciences’ analysis. Our focus is not only on the object of our study (policies) but on their possible interpretation.

According to Bevir and Rhodes (2004), interpretive approaches place the role of meanings in the spotlight, since they shape actions and institutions. Thus, the sociological interpretation of public policies is based on the possibility of analyzing the meanings underlying socio-political phenomena, an aspect which has already been defined by Fisher and Forester (1993) as “argumentative turn”. The possibility of revealing the meanings conveyed by public policies is the basis for undertaking an epistemologically-based analysis on the knowledge of the various cultural backgrounds that inform policies.

² Moini, stressing the difference between the two concepts, favors that of public action, since it is more suited to a sociological analysis for its reference to social interaction, its greater breadth and greater historical depth than that of public policy.

Following Moini's logical path, we believe that policies³ represent the "symbolic objectification of intention" (2013, p. 53) of policy makers about cultural diversity management at school and, starting from the different kind of actions prescribed by them, we can trace the *référentiel* (Jobert & Muller, 1987), and the frame (Rein, 1983; Rein & Schön, 1993) of the school policies of the two countries, beyond the formally declared intent.

One of the elements that reveals the meaning of the forms of public action (for us, public policies) are the actors' behaviors involved in a phenomenon (Moini, 2013): among these, written formal statements such as laws, regulations and press releases. Taking this into account, our analysis focuses on ministerial documents—ministerial circulars (hereinafter M.C.), notes, publications—and/or normative provisions of both countries. Aware of the large number of ministerial documents, for the purposes of our reflection we decided to analyze only those aimed *exclusively* and *directly* at managing cultural diversity at school: this choice allowed us to limit a field that is complex and—as we will see—presents a very differentiated documentation.

In this respect, the comparative analysis proposal moves along some study dimensions, identified as *observational variables* (Table 1). Specifically, we take the study approach to integration policies proposed by Penninx and Garcés-Mascareñas (2016) that focuses on three areas of analysis:

1. problem definition;
2. what should be done;
3. for whom integration policies are meant.

For the first point we summarize the legislative frame on immigration in Italy and France, that represents a regulatory framework that allows to focus on the representation of the immigration phenomenon in the two countries, and the "policy paradigm" (Hall, 1993). Moreover, we highlight which elements refer to the presence of the cultural diversity in the school and its quantitative importance. It's also useful and necessary in order to relate our reasoning to this phenomenon's dimensions in the two countries, and to trace the interpretative parameters.

We analyze the second point by adopting Moini's theoretical proposal (2013) and its analysis' dimensions:

- a. the *normative* dimension, that is values, norms, consolidated ways of thinking, shared collective expectations, beliefs, ideas, which constitute the value constraint;
- b. the *cognitive* dimension, that is causal theories, or guidelines, which "specify the ways in which to implement certain actions (public policies, *authors' notes*) to achieve certain results" (2013, pp. 67-68).

³ Moini defines the policies as "a shared set of knowledge, visions, ideas, representations, perceptions and images of the world" (2013, p. 55).

These variables are traceable in the value-driven orientations (i.e. conveyed integration models) by school policies and in their organizational and pedagogical-didactic indications provided to the school organization, assuming in our interpretative proposal a close link between normative and cognitive dimensions.

Finally, regarding the third point, we highlight the target groups of multicultural school policy.

Table 1–Comparative analysis: observational variables

Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas (2016)	Moini (2013)	<i>Observational variables</i>
Problem definition		Regulations frame
		Descriptive frame
What should be done	<i>Normative dimension</i>	Value-driven orientations (conveyed integration models) by multicultural school policy
	<i>Cognitive dimension</i>	Organizational and pedagogical-didactic indications of multicultural school policy
For whom integration policies are meant		Target groups of multicultural school policy

Our work consists of three parts. In the first part, introduced by the legislative frame on immigration in Italy and France, we expose a descriptive (quantitative) frame of the multicultural component of the Italian and French school populations. In the second part, we propose a short review of the school policies promoted in both countries. Finally, in the third part, we present the comparative analysis, highlighting elements of similarity and/or divergence in the two case studies.

The context: problem definition

The Italian normative frame on immigration and the quantitative dimension of the cultural diversity in Italian school

The normative references in force in Italy regarding immigration are:

- the Legislative Decree of July 25th 1998, n. 286–*Testo unico delle disposizioni concernenti la disciplina dell’immigrazione e norme sulla condizione dello straniero*⁴;

⁴ The Legislative Decree refers to the Law of March the 6th 1998, n. 40–*Disciplina dell’immigrazione e norme sulla condizione dello straniero* (known as “Turco-Napolitano Law”).

- the Law of July 30th 2002, n.189–*Modifica della normativa in materia di immigrazione e asilo* (known as Bossi-Fini Law)⁵;
- the Law of July 15th 2009, n. 94, *Disposizioni in materia di pubblica sicurezza* (known as “Pacchetto di sicurezza”⁶).

The Law 189/2002 confirms the educational provisions of the piece of legislation 286/1998; therefore, we refer only to the latter and its subsequent modifications⁷. The Law 94/2009, on the other hand, does not add provisions concerning education. The piece of legislation 286/1998 uses the term “foreigner” to refer to “citizens of non-EU states and stateless persons”⁸ (Title 1–General principles, Art. 1). With strict regard to the topic of education, art. 38 is dedicated to the education of foreigners and to intercultural education⁹. The provisions assume the fundamental principles of equality (right to education, access to educational services, participation in the day to day of the school community) and the promotion of linguistic and cultural differences. The initiatives and activities aiming to achieve the full realization of these principles are evident in the teaching of the Italian language, in the welcoming of the students, in the protection of native culture and language, in the realization of common intercultural activities. In the provisions for the implementation of Chapter II, the importance of the training of school staff (inspection, management and teaching), the adaptation of teaching programs, the recognition of educational qualifications and study paths achieved in countries of origin, criteria and methods of communication with families, inclusion through the use of cultural mediators, criteria for enrollment, inclusion and distribution of pupils in classes and for the activation of language support activities.

It also indicates the identification of local needs and integrated territorial planning as the organizational principles of the interventions.

To delineate the quantitative framework of the Italian multi-cultural school we use the document *Gli alunni con cittadinanza non italiana A.S. 2016/2017*¹⁰ (MIUR–Ufficio Statistica e studi, 2018). As specified by the title, the document uses the expression “student with non-Italian citizenship” (hereinafter referred to as *nic*) to describe the students of migratory origin.

⁵ Our focus is on educational provisions.

⁶ That is “security package”.

⁷ Here we referred to the subsequent modifications to the Titolo V – Capo II, updated April the 9th 2014. <http://www.altalex.com/documents/news/2014/04/09/testo-unico-sull-immigrazione-titolo-v#titolo5>

⁸ In Italy, therefore, the foreign category is equivalent to the non-EU component of the migratory presence. This is an arbitrary category whose limits are mobile because of the political changes that characterize the European Union (Busso, 2007). We emphasize this aspect to highlight, in line with Busso, the importance of the symbolic value of a label—which in fact creates a sociological category—for the policy making process.

⁹ Disposizioni in materia di istruzione e diritto allo studio e professione (Title V – Chapter II), that is Provisions for education and the right to education and profession.

¹⁰ Students with non-Italian citizenship School Year 2016/2017.

Described as an integral part of Italian school population, in 2016/2017 *nic* students numbered 826,091, representing 9.4% of the entire school population (8,741,828 pupils). Diachronic analysis reveals that the presence of *nic* students has increased between the years 2000/2001 and 2012/2013; today there is a slowdown in the number's growth.

Nic students are present in all the orders of the Italian school system, accounting for 10.7% of the entire school population in pre-school (ISCED¹¹ 0), 10.8% in primary school (ISCED 1), 9.7% in lower secondary school (ISCED 2) and 7.1% in upper secondary school (ISCED 3).

The distribution of these students around the nation reveals a considerable variability and the prevalence of foreign students—in Northern Italy higher than the national one, in Southern Italy lower than the national average—highlights a gap between the north and the south of the country.

The document also analyzes the different composition of the *nic* school population according to country of birth, taking into consideration the first (not born in Italy) and second generation (born in Italy): the latter represents 5.8% of the entire population, 61% of *nic* pupils and the majority share in pre-school (85.3%), primary school (73.4%) and in lower secondary school (53.2%) compared to those of the first generation.

Sicily, Molise, Sardinia, Basilicata and Campania record to a greater extent the share of neo-arrived students in the total amount of *nic* students (respectively 5.9%, 5.7%, 5.3%, 5.3% and 4.3%). As evidenced in the document, many of these regions are at the center of migratory flows.

Compared to Italian students, *nic* students have a disadvantage with regard to the normality of the scholastic path: there is indeed a delay in school attendance, i.e. their inscription in lower classes than those corresponding to their age (*nic* students: 31.3% vs Italian students: 10%), the schooling rate decreases especially in the 17-18 age group (equal to 64.8%, vs 80.9% of Italian students) and they are at higher risk of school dropout.

The French normative frame and the quantitative dimension of the cultural diversity in French school

As for the French case, the question is rather complicated, given the difficulty or impossibility of collecting data concerning the ethnic origin and therefore the cultural diversity of people. A discriminating element which strongly influences the capacities of action and intervention concerning the subject of our article, in fact, is Article 8 of the law of January 6th, 1978 (formerly article 31), modified by the law No. 2016-1321 of October 7th, 2016. In its first point, this Law states that “It's forbidden to collect or process personal data that directly or indirectly reveals racial or ethnic origin, political, philosophical or

¹¹ International Standard Classification of Education (UNESCO. Institute for Statistics, 2012).

religious opinions, or trade union membership of the persons, or relating to their health or sexual life". In addition, the CNIL (Commission Nationale de l'Informatique et des Libertés¹²) considers that an analysis carried out on the basis of the consonance of the name or the surname of a person or certain multicriteria treatments should be related to this same Law.

Thus, the data we can analyse is somewhat patchworked, and only shows a few particular trends. While on the one hand the MIPEX2015 and Eurostat data show that 15% of 15-year old students have an immigrant background (Huddleston *et al.*, 2015), on the other hand very few statistics or studies exist concerning the topics at the heart of our paper—among these, the work of Lacerda and Ameline (2001). These authors' work can help to depict an interpretative frame of the cultural diversity of French school. The family reunification policy introduced in 1975 increased the number of pupils of foreign nationality (from 7.7% in 1975 to 10.6% in 1984), knowing that contrary to the Italian case, there is no foreign nationality quota in French classes.

At the time when they wrote their paper, there was a very large disparity between public and private institutions, this remains the case. With regard to public schools, for example, foreign pupils are three times more numerous in schools in the educational priority zones (ZEP—Zone Education Prioritaire) (21.8%). Conversely, in private establishments, 93.1% of them have fewer than 5% foreign students. Added to this, we can find a strong territorial disparity. Schools with very high proportions of foreign students are located in the suburbs of Paris, Lyon and Marseille (as also highlighted by Audren and Baby-Collin, 2017) as well as in French Guyana. Academies in western France and overseas (except Guyana) have very few schools with many foreign children.

More recently, some research was conducted concerning the presence of immigrant students in schools, but the data were rather confusing or based on small samples. This is because, as stated by Ichou (2013), most of them share a number of limitations that function as methodological and conceptual barriers. These barriers are partially related to those we introduced. Among these works, the one of Fougère *et al.* (2017), which is quite recent but based on 2007 data concerning middle school students, is particularly interesting as the authors declare that in the schools they analyzed 2.9% of the students were immigrants. According to them, the data would be representative of the French school population.

The "Department of Evaluation, Foresight and Performance" of the Ministry of National Education regularly provides information on allophone students. This aspect can give us an interpretative key on the situation regarding

¹² National Commission on Informatics and Liberties, an independent French administrative regulatory body whose mission is to ensure that data privacy law is applied to the collection, storage, and use of personal data.

foreign pupils in the territory, even if it is not exactly the same type of population, as it doesn't mention the ethnic dimension. In the volume of 2017 we find information concerning the previous years. In particular, during the 2014-2015 school year, 52,500 allophone pupils were accommodated in first and second level schools: 25,500 in elementary schools (ISCED 1), 22,300 in secondary schools (ISCED 2), and 4,700 in high schools (ISCED 3). In total, these students represent 0.56% of first and second-degree enrolment (out of a total of about 12,824,000 pupils in France in 2015). What's more, 1,600 young allophone pupils were taken charge of by the school dropout missions (Missions de Lutte Contre le Décrochage Scolaire–MLDS) mainly because of their age.

The distribution of allophone students in the territory is mixed. The Ile-de-France (academies of Paris, Créteil and Versailles) alone welcome three students out of ten.

School policies in Italy and in France: a short review

School policies on immigration in Italy: normative and cognitive dimensions and target groups

Given that the presence of students with migratory origins in Italy increased in the first decade of the 21st century (MIUR – Ufficio Statistica e studi, 2018), here we consider the ministerial documents prepared from this period to today.

The principal of universalism appears constant through time in the documents we analyzed. The focus is on the need to guarantee the right to study for all, based on the principle of the recognition of equal rights and the centrality of the person in relation to the other. Some documents, in particular, depict universalism as the manifesto of cultural diversity management of the Italian school system: M.C. of March 1st 2006, n. 24¹³; the document *La via italiana per la scuola interculturale e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri*¹⁴ (MPI¹⁵, 2007); M.C. of January 8th 2010, n. 2¹⁶. These documents recall some Italian legislative sources, declarations and international conventions that establish the right of access to education for young immigrants. Italian school policies combine the principle of universalism with intercultural education, which refers to both the normative dimension and the cognitive dimension.

¹³ *Linee guida per l'accoglienza e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri*, that is *Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign students*.

¹⁴ That is *The Italian method for intercultural school and the integration of foreign students*.

¹⁵ Ministero della Pubblica Istruzione (Ministry of Public Education), that then becomes Ministero dell'Istruzione, dell'Università e della Ricerca–MIUR (Ministry of Education, University and Research).

¹⁶ *Indicazioni e raccomandazioni per l'integrazione di alunni con cittadinanza non italiana*, that is *Indications and recommendations for the integration of pupils with non-Italian citizenship*.

Defined in a more detailed way over the years, intercultural education becomes a container of convergent approaches: anti-racism education, against Islamophobia, education for diversity (cognitive, affective and relational) and, more generally, as a dimension of citizenship education (MPI, 2007).

Intercultural education – that “interprets diversity as an asset and an educational resource rather than as a trait to be ignored or silenced” (Gobbo, 2011, p. 151) – recalls the models that problematize the relationship between different cultures. It seems to lead to interculturalism¹⁷ through different expressions: confrontation, dialogue and mutual transformation, recognition and appreciation of differences, social cohesion (MPI, 2007); dialogue and social cooperation (M.C. 2/2010); meeting, mutual recognition and progressive integration (MIUR Note of February 19th, 2014, No. 4233¹⁸); exchange and comparison; cohabitation and new citizenship (MIUR Note September 9th 2015, No. 5535¹⁹). Therefore, intercultural education is viewed as a “barter of knowledge and experience” (Bianchi, 2017, p. 2). In fact, the importance of promoting intercultural education is highlighted not only in the presence of foreign students at school, but also in the absence of them, to generally form a comparison between cultures.

The realization of the values of Italian educational policies is pursued through various indications, both organizational and pedagogical-didactic, which reveal the cognitive dimension. In fact, some documents are proposed as “indications and lines of action”, “compasses for navigation” (MPI, 2007), “operative indications” (M.C. 24/2006; Note MIUR 4233/2014) and “proposals for actions” (Note MIUR 5535/2015).

Regarding the organizational plan, the indications, in line with the desire to guarantee everyone’s right to study, highlight the welcoming, defined by the M.C. 24/2006 as “a set of obligations and provisions through which the relationship of the pupil and his/her family is formalized with the scholastic reality”.

The indications, paying attention to the balanced distribution of enrolments between schools and to the heterogeneity of citizenship in the composition of classes (M.C. 24/2006) – in order to combat school segregation, but also to contain the foreign presence (Colombo, 2017a) – establish a maximum presence of immigrants students per class equal to a share of 30% of foreign students out of the total number of enrolled students (M.C. 2/2010).

¹⁷ This model postulates intercultural integration as a reconciliation of universal rights with cultural differences. The model of interculturalism “focuses on the relationships between different cultures, based on the bidirectional, symmetrical and personal exchange, based on the principle of acculturation” (Cesareo, 2010, p. 80). Based on the principle of the centrality of the person, this model identifies the need for a common cultural nucleus based on sharing values for all human beings (Cesareo, 2008).

¹⁸ *Linee guida per l'accoglienza e l'integrazione degli alunni stranieri*, that is *Guidelines for the reception and integration of foreign students*.

¹⁹ *Diversi da chi?*, that is *Different from whom?*

However, this was done without any reference to the way in which this quota was chosen. More recently, the MIUR Note 4233/2014 adds the warning against prevention of school/educational segregation, focusing on “catchment areas”, on the orientation of foreign students, on access to pre-school for foreign minors and on the awareness of Italian parents about the potential of cultural class heterogeneity.

At later stages, the indications on the management of insertion and reception take on a more systematic character, starting from M.C. 24/2006, in the administrative, communicative-relational and educational-didactic areas. Therefore, the indications of the way students are distributed in classes and schools gradually become more detailed, giving more attention to the *ex ante* conditions–migration experience and resources of the scholastic organization–and the resources to be activated to deal with these issues. The care of the resources for the management of the presence of non-Italian students at school, takes the form of two sides, that of the students and that of the teaching staff.

On the first side, there is a growing recognition of the need for formative evaluation and the preparation of individualized work plans (MPI, 2007). In general, the emphasis is placed on the importance of the “biographical and relational uniqueness” of each student, to whom they can adapt programs and evaluations (formative vs. certificative) (*ibidem*). In fact, the ministerial directive of 27 December 2012²⁰, adopting the bio-psycho-social model of the WHO’s ICF (International Classification of Functioning), includes students with linguistic and cultural disadvantages in the area of Special Educational Needs, an area that requires personalized study pathways (Law 53/2003) all teachers to assume responsibly, not simply the one designated to support (Law 170/2010). However, as Colombo points out (2017a), only students with these difficulties fall in this group, not all students of migrant origin.

Moreover, the documents offer a clear and increasingly articulated definition of the students coming from a context of non-Italian origin. “Immigrants”, “foreigners”, “community and non-community”, “students with non-Italian citizenship”, “students of foreign origins” these are the expressions that have been used over the years. Attention is drawn to the different experiences of migration and to the “migratory project”, distinguishing, for example, between pupils of recent immigration and more distant immigration in terms of time, as well as the precise knowledge of the type of immigration. The 2014 Guidelines provide an overview of the terms referring to the different groups of pupils with foreign origins, including those with non-Italian citizenship, non-Italian-speaking family environment, unaccompanied minors, children of mixed

²⁰ Strumenti d’intervento per alunni con bisogni educativi speciali e organizzazione territoriale per l’inclusione scolastica, that is Intervention tools for pupils with special educational needs and territorial organization for school inclusion.

couples, those who have arrived for international adoption, Roma, Sinti and Caminanti pupils and university students with foreign citizenship. The different locutions seem to shy away from a mere classificatory logic and reveal, rather, greater care “in order to better define school programs for a more complex school population” (Gobbo *et al.*, 2011).

In terms of the management of teaching staff and their resources, non-Italian students have a big impact on school organizations. Resources are thus focused on the critical training and sensitization of teachers in order to reconsider their role (MPI, 2007). This second side has been implemented since 2007 with a view to the training of school staff (administrative, technical and auxiliary) and providing university education.

Among the organizational indications, the reference to the influence of Italian and non-Italian parents, linguistic mediators, cultural and/or mother-tongue experts is constant, above all in order to set the conditions for an adequate dialogue and communication exchange.

Moreover the organizational indications, responding to an integrated planning logic of the intervention (as foreseen by the Legislative Decree 286/1998), prescribe the involvement of various institutional actors who are active on the territory for the integration of foreign students. We observe the progressive structuring of this involvement, firstly to formalize through memoranda of understanding, more recently through “territorial pacts”, “network agreements” between the educational institutions, “coordination structures” at the local (hub schools), regional (task force) and national (national working group) levels (M.C. 2/2010).

Regarding the pedagogic and didactic guidelines, the participation of foreign students in the global activities of the class, and the attention to the relational climate in the classroom is recommended. The normal classes represent the “identity building space of all the students” (MPI, 2007). An exception to the dimension of confrontation and dialogue is only permitted for the intensive teaching modules of Italian as L2 (second language), with the aim of promoting the “linguistic integration” of foreign students. A “good competence in written and spoken Italian, in the receptive and productive forms”—considering both the language to communicate and the language for study (respectively ItalBase and ItalStudio, MPI, 2007)—is seen as “one of the main factors of scholastic success and social inclusion” (M.C. 24/2006), as “a condition for dialogue and social cooperation” (M.C. 2/2010).

Also, attention is given to the valorisation of foreign languages and cultures of origin—with specific integrative teachings in the field of intercultural education projects for Italian and foreign students—and in the progressive promotion of plurilingualism (foreign languages and languages of origin).

The normative dimension of intercultural education finds its place in the pedagogical-didactic orientation that provides the critical formation of re-

spect, dialogue, openness, exchange, multi-belonging, the disruption of obstacles to intercultural communication (racism, stereotypes, prejudices), as well as the intercultural interpretation of teaching approaches and tools for the whole school community. In this frame, the value of the intercultural perspective invests in disciplinary teachings, which must be oriented in this direction (allowing comparisons with different contents and different ways of thinking; MPI, 2007).

We dedicate a separate reflection to the Note MIUR 5535/2015, as it provides *proposals*—rather than indications—on the basis of critical issues that still emerge in the multicultural school’s management and that indicate that much is still to be done (Ostinelli, 2017). In this regard, the document proposes 10 corrections for the scholastic organization designed to: 1) Reaffirm the right to the immediate insertion of the newly arrived pupils; 2) Increase awareness of the importance of pre-school; 3) Counteract the scholastic delay; 4) Accompany during the steps; adapt the program and the evaluation; 5) Organize an effective orientation towards the continuation of the studies; investing in the protagonism of the students; 6) Support the learning of Italian L2, language of schooling; 7) Enhance linguistic diversity; 8) Prevent school segregation; 9) Involve families in the educational project for their children; 10) Promote intercultural education in schools.

Finally, regarding target groups for these policies, the guidelines reveal the need for the mutual adaptation of the local society and the alien communities: the learning of the Italian language for foreign students, intercultural education as citizenship education for all the students, the assumption of responsibility of the whole educational community through the training of staff at all levels and the adaptation of school materials from an intercultural perspective.

School policies concerning immigration in France: normative and cognitive dimensions and target groups

For the purposes of our reflection we will only analyze the documents aimed exclusively and directly at managing elements related to the cultural diversity at school, with the aim to manage the restrictions caused by the law No. 2016-1321 of the October 7, 2016. So, we will focus on the Article L131-1 of the French Code of Education, on the Ministerial Circular No. 2002-063 of March 20th, 2002, and on the Ministerial Circular No. 2012-141 of October 2, 2012.

As indicated by the French Code of Education in Article L131-1 “Education is compulsory for children of both sexes, both French and foreign, between six and sixteen year olds”. The current government, elected in June 2017, has just lowered the age of compulsory education to 3 year old, and that will be come into effect in the Fall of 2018-2019.

Article L131-1 is fundamental, because it is the starting point for the policy of reception of children in the educational structures: even if the teaching can be provided by the parents with the annual authorization of the academic inspection services, allophone parents will not be able to provide this instruction; which implies the need to use public or private structures.

Returning to the topic of allophony, it is for us the closest feature to the ethnic factor and cultural diversity. When allophone pupils enter the French education system, 88.3% of them benefit from linguistic or schooling support in a specific system. This kind of care is more frequent in middle school (91.2% compared to 86.7% in elementary schools and 83.1% in high schools). Regardless of the degree of schooling, allophone students mostly integrate a teaching unit for incoming allophone students (UPE2A). The schooling of foreign students, as we wrote, is currently regulated by two main ministerial circulars: the Ministerial Circular No. 2002-063 of March 20th, 2002 which fixes the modalities of registration and schooling of pupils of foreign nationality, and the Ministerial Circular of October 2, 2012 on the organization of the schooling of allophone students who are newly arrived in France.

As for the first point, it was addressed to the rectors of the academies, to the inspectors of the academy, to the directors of the departmental services of national education, to the heads of the schools. The main objective of this Ministerial Circular is to reconsider and specify the registration and enrollment procedures for first and second degree foreign students taking into account legislative and regulatory developments following the circular of 16 July 1984. According to the previous circular no distinction could be made between students of French nationality and foreign nationality for access to the public service of education. According to the new Circular, the persons that are responsible for a child of foreign nationality subject to compulsory schooling must ensure his/her education. In addition, the International Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989, ratified by France, guarantees children the right to education free from any distinction related to their nationality or their personal situation.

An interesting element in this Circular is the fact for foreign minors between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, that even if they are not subject to compulsory schooling, care must be taken to ensure that their schooling can be ensured, taking into account, of course, their degree of education, fluency in the French language and their level of education. The Circular also specifies that the refusal to scholarize a young person no longer subject to compulsory schooling must be motivated (sectional decision of the Council of State of 23 October 1987). This refusal may be justified by a pedagogical motivation.

Subsequently, the circular explains that foreign pupils have the same right to be educated as students of French nationality. However, particular difficulties may be encountered, especially when these students are not con-

sidered legal under immigration laws. The circular's concern is to guarantee equality of opportunities, also with regard to the pursuit of studies.

Similarly to the first one, the Ministerial Circular of October 2, 2012²¹ was addressed to the rectors of the academy, to the academic directors of National Education Services, to the regional pedagogic inspectors, to the primary schools' inspectors, to the heads of secondary schools, to the principals, to the first and second degree teachers, because it states that the schooling of allophone students concerns all educational teams. This Circular's objective is to reaffirm the principles implemented by the school regarding the organization of the schooling of newly arrived allophone students. It abrogates the previous Circular No. 2002-100 of 25 April 2002²² on the organization of the schooling of children who are newly arrived in France.

Having stated that the registration and enrolment conditions of foreign students are laid down in the above mentioned Circular No. 2002-063 of 20 March 2002²³, the education of allophone students is a matter of common law and compulsory education: ensuring the best conditions because the integration of allophone students arriving in France is a duty for the Republic and for its schools.

This Circular stated that School is the decisive place to develop inclusive educational practices with the goal of social, cultural and professional integration for allophone children and adolescents. This inclusion involves socialization, learning French as a second language, the mastery of which must be acquired as quickly as possible and the taking into account of school skills acquired in other areas of education in the school system, in France or other countries, in French or in other languages.

The Circular also states that the School must be viewed as a place of safety by these children and their families who are often weakened by changes in their personal situation. As for the designation of the class of enrollment, the Circular states that incoming allophone students who do not speak the language of schooling, regardless of the fact that they are at the age of compulsory kindergarten, or older than 16, pupils subject to compulsory schooling and pupils over 16 must be enrolled in the class of their age. It's important to stress, for this Circular, the emphasis on the families of children, on the importance

²¹ Organisation de la scolarité des élèves allophones nouvellement arrivés, that is Organization of the schooling of newly arrived allophone pupils.

²² Organisation de la scolarité des élèves nouvellement arrivés en France sans maîtrise suffisante de la langue française ou des apprentissages, in English Organization of the schooling of newly arrived pupils in France, without sufficient control of the French language or teachings.

²³ Modalités d'inscription et de scolarisation des élèves de nationalité étrangère des premier et second degrés. In English Registration and enrollment conditions for first and second degree foreign pupils.

of the feeling of well-being and safety, and on the role of the different actors of education acting as a team to guarantee the inclusion of allophone children.

Thus, starting from this premise, the newly arrived children in France are welcomed in an ordinary class. The obligation to attend school applies, as for other pupils, to students arriving from abroad to France for the first time. The student is first assessed to know his/her acquired knowledge skills. Depending on his/her level, he/she will be assigned to a school and will attend regular or adapted schooling.

As explained by Armagnague-Roucher and Rigoni (2016), there is potentially a multitude of ways to implement, qualitatively, the right to schooling of migrant students. In France, this compulsory education has been accompanied by a change in the methods of their treatment in the classroom and in their school, as we just introduced. But this path led to a view of these students as full-time special needs learners, just like disabled ones, but it took a long time, and according to the authors, nowadays the management and school life teams receive very little support in the schooling of these students and the accompaniment of their families, as stated by the Ministerial Circular of October 2, 2012, while the needs of mediations are sometimes quite complex.

The concept of Special Needs Education, strongly linked to the topic of migrant or allophone children, even if it was adopted slowly in the French context: promoted by supranational institutions since the 1990s, it was based on a social model which refused the exclusion of people, and promoted the acceptance of their difference. This movement was supposed to be opposed to any form of schooling in a specialized environment or to a segregative device that could lock people into a stigmatizing and vulnerable dimension, as well as providing a form of schooling that allows the student's integration. Assuming that the schooling of any student benefits everyone, this paradigm shift in the French school system was designed to develop a sense of community and mutual support. Inclusion thus referred to the terms of social justice and equal opportunity (Dubet, 2004, 2010), with the principle that the school system must adapt itself to students with particular needs rather than the other way around.

To conclude this part, we can say that what emerged from the "evolution" between 2002 and 2012 is a universalistic vision of the ecological environment of the "allophone" pupils, that should now be discussed considering their family, with an inclusive aim, based on a supposed ethic of well-being.

Comparative analysis: similarities and/or divergences?

On the basis of the above mentioned policy documents, we now undertake a comparative analysis between the two countries (Table 2). First of all, it's fundamental to stress the idea that Italian data refers to students

with “non-italian citizenship”, recalling only the legislative criterion, which distinguishes natives from non-native basing on citizenship (Caronia & Bolognesi, 2015); the French data refers to the “allophones”. This result – or this premise – requires caution in interpreting the proposed comparison. However, it allows us to highlight that in France we have to face the difficulty or impossibility of collecting data on the “racial or ethnic origin, political, philosophical or religious opinions, or trade union membership of the persons, or relating to their health or sexual life” because of the above mentioned Article 8 of the law of January 6th, 1978 (formerly article 31), modified by the law No. 2016-1321 of October 7th, 2016.

Given the divergence concerning the statistical categories used to outline the presence of cultural diversity at school, in the documents of both countries we register a lack of data on the real conditions of the immigrant children and/or children of immigration, as shown by Portes (1996) in the late 90s for the American context, denouncing a gap between the strategic importance of the immigrant second generation—to which is recognized a crucial role for the long-term consequences of immigration—and the lack of official sources on its condition, with reduction to broad statistical categories.

Therefore, a comparative analysis in the European context, is influenced by the “different policies regarding survey questions about race, ethnicity, religion, or sexuality” (Crul & Mollenkopf, 2012, p.21). As evidenced by Foner and Lucassen (2012) regard the second generation, the study approaches to the children of immigration are conditioned by the different national policies and attitudes towards ethnic and cultural diversity.

In any case, both labels refer to the multicultural component of the school, which presents a different incidence in the two countries: in Italy *nic* students are 9.4% of school population; in France allophone students are 0.56% of school population.

Even if Italy presents a more important number of normative documents, compared to a French system which is based mainly on a limited number of language-focused documents, we could analyze the *normative* and the *cognitive* dimensions of both school policies.

Assuming a circularity between the two dimensions, we could see that Italy highlights the intercultural aspect of education, while France stresses the importance of language.

Italian school policy places emphasis on dialogue, exchange and mutual enrichment of different cultures, making inter-culturalism (Cesareo, 2008; 2010) its manifesto. However, despite Italian attention to intercultural education for all—defined over the years as education, sensitivity to anti-racism and Islamophobia, education about diversity (cognitive, affective and relational) and, more generally, as a dimension of citizenship education—in the documents analyzed no detailed information on how to develop it at school was provided.

Table 2 – Comparative analysis: similarities and divergences between Italian and French multicultural school policy

Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas (2016)	Moini (2013)	<i>Observational variables</i>	Italian multicultural school policy	French multicultural school policy
Problem definition		Regulations frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreigners = citizens of non-EU states and stateless persons. • Education of foreigners. • Intercultural education. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impossibility of collecting data concerning the ethnic origin
		Descriptive frame	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non Italian citizenship (<i>nic</i>) students • 9.4% of school population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allophone students • 0.56% of the school population
What should be done	<i>Normative dimension</i>	Value-driven orientations (conveyed integration models) by multicultural school policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interculturalism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assimilation
	<i>Cognitive dimension</i>	Organizational and pedagogical-didactic indications of multicultural school policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception and modalities of enrollment • Contrast to school segregation • Attention to biographical uniqueness of <i>nic</i> student • “Integrated model” support • Intercultural education • Training in and sensitization of teachers • Various institutional actors’ involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modalities of registration and schooling • Language
For whom integration policies are meant		Target groups of multicultural school policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students with and without Italian citizenship • Whole educational community • Parental (family) involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allophone students • Parental (family) involvement

As MIPEX2015 highlights, “Guidelines, funding and monitoring for intercultural education are under-developed in IT [Italy].” (Huddleston *et al.*, 2015, p. 64). Moreover, this way of caring seems to clash with the legislative scenario in force, which a) returns an ambivalent representation of immigrants (Berti, 2008²⁴), b) for the purpose of integration orientates to *civic integration*, puts the emphasis on “sharing Italian values and culture and on the centrality of learning Italian L2” (Lovison & Riniolo, 2018, p. 256), and c) could give way to unpredictable future scenarios, given the recent establishment of the national government.

The French model, instead, can be traced back to assimilationism, which unfortunately leads France to miss out “on most of the opportunities that immigrant pupils bring to the classroom” (Huddleston *et al.*, 2015, p. 32).

In France, school institutions have historically chosen a relatively constant position, that of having the absolute priority of mastering the French language, which partially explains the focus on the “allophone” characteristic, that becomes the target and the justification of this perspective.

Armagnague-Roucher and Rigoni (2016) explain the priority of mastering French as an answer to a challenge which is at once practical—not knowing the language of the host country harms the full social participation of migrants—but also related to the national narrative that was built in the nineteenth century of France using its language as a primary tool of cultural assimilation. This dynamic was concomitant with that of the establishment of the public school in the early 1880s and with the arrival in large numbers of European immigrants, so it’s rooted in the tradition of French history and education.

Consequently, in line with Armagnague-Roucher and Rigoni’s explanation (*ibidem*), the objectives pursued are the structuring of the spoken language in the family environment, the promotion of the personal fulfilment of young people from other cultures and the diversification of languages in schools. In this perspective, the lack of mastery of the language makes communication difficult or impossible, with the family sometimes having remained in the country of origin, but sometimes living with the family in France, and which does not necessarily have a good level of French. This difficulty can have consequences for the emotional development of the individual, and increases the gap between generations, while limiting the transmission of family experience (Dubet *et al.*, 2015).

²⁴ As highlighted by the author, the Turco-Napolitano law and the Bossi-Fini law outline a different scenario: the Turco-Napolitano law assumed as “fundamental points” the principle of security, the respect for the rights of the person, the full integration of the regulars, an interaction based on pluralism and communication; the Bossi-Fini law, on the other hand, based on the tightening of controls, offers a representation of immigrants as a necessary presence for the labor market, but also as a danger from which to defend oneself.

The shift, in the lexicon of the French educational system, from “non-French” to “allophone” ceases to define the speaker by his/her lack of mastery of the French language, and emphasizes and reifies a difference that remains linguistic when it is far from being only that: we should talk about an ethnic and cultural *Otherness*. Instead of providing that “equality of chances” and valorising multiculturalism, being in the spirit of the last law dispositions to the students with different cultural capital, as Dubet *et al.* highlighted (2015) this approach reproduces part of its inequalities, and it does it through the reification imposed by the separation into two categories: the “mother tongue” and the “allophone” pupils. This is also highlighted by the MIPEx2015 data: “The general policies and inequalities within the FR [French] education system probably have a greater impact on the outcomes of migrant and other disadvantaged pupils than FR’s weak targeted support for immigrant pupils does” (Huddlestone *et al.*, 2015, p. 34).

The different integration ideas underlying the analyzed policies confirm the presence of different national models in the European context (Zanfrini, 2016).

In line with the different approaches, the two countries differ regarding the target groups of policies: in Italy all students—Italians and non-Italians; in France, only allophone students. The Italian policy also recommends giving attention to biographical uniqueness of *nic* students with targeted measures of support, especially in the presence of difficulties due to the impact of a different language and culture, identified as a special educational need. The support provided to *nic* students, therefore, is configured as an “integrated model” that provides for their “direct integration with the support provided within the ordinary classes” (Eurydice, 2004, pp. 43-44).

Furthermore, Italy recalls the responsibility of the whole educational community: in fact, the guidelines underline the importance of teacher training and awareness, as well as that of administrative, technical and auxiliary staff, for the management of the phenomenon. However, until 2015, the ministerial guidelines show “indifference” with regard to multilingual and intercultural competences for teachers in training (Colombo, 2017a): over the years there have been “formalized opportunities for preparation in these professional areas, but without touching the entire teaching body” (p. 16) and self-training initiatives by teachers and aspiring teachers.

Although it cannot be considered a target group, the Italian guidelines recommend the various institutional actors’ involvement for the management of the phenomenon.

The only similarities, observed among the two case studies, concern indications about the registration and the parental/family involvement: in fact, both offer guidelines for the enrolment of *nic*/allophone pupils, emphasizing the involvement of the family environment and of its/their well-being. The

two countries, therefore, are united by the desire to guarantee equal access to opportunities (equity) and social equality. Moreover, to counteract school segregation, the Italian policy focuses on the equal distribution of *nic* students between schools and classes, not reporting the rationale of the prescribed maximum quota of presence.

To conclude, assuming the classification of Busso (2007)²⁵, we can qualify the Italian school policies as both “citizenship” and “coexistence and intercultural” policies, while the French ones can be qualified as “citizenship policies”.

Closing and opening

In summary, the above comparative analysis shows more divergences than similarities between the two case studies. The divergences concern several aspects. Firstly, the monitoring of the alien presence in the school: in the Italian case most structured and articulated, in the French one instead conditioned by the limitations imposed by the regulatory framework on the collection of data referable to the ethnic sphere. Secondly, the idea of integration at the base of the educational policies: in the Italian case oriented to interculturalism, although in contradiction with the legislative scenario in force, in the French case instead to assimilationism, aspect that seems to confirm the fracture existing in Europe on the theme of immigration management. Finally, the organizational and didactic-pedagogical indications: in the Italian case more comprehensive as regard the entire scholastic organization, in the French one instead more limited with regard to activities and target. The few similarities concern the guarantee of the principle of equality in access to the educational institution.

These results should be enriched with a study of the *policies measures* implemented locally in the two countries. That’s why we consider this conclusion as an invitation to further analysis: because we believe that the policy frames can influence the “perceptions and practices of immigrants and welcoming society as well as their reciprocal reactions to difference and diversity” (cultural/religious dimension; Penninx & Garcés-Mascareñas, 2016, p. 160), we hope that our work can represent a premise for any study of the integration processes through education.

It’s important to focus on public policies, as they give an image of the immigration phenomenon and of its management. To this image both the indigenous society and the allochthonous ones will consequently respond, not according to a deterministic logic, but with reference to “performative in-

²⁵ Busso proposes four types of policies for immigrants by reference’s sector of the public administration and beneficiaries (entire population and allochthonous).

tent/potential” of policies, which, as Gargiulo affirms, can be registered in the “community of people working in the sector of reference” and “in different political and intellectual environments or, even, in the broader public debate” (2014, pp. 231-232), the latter characterized by a “general climate of distrust towards multiculturalism”, hindering the dialogue between people and between cultures (Colombo, 2017b). In short, our reflection converges towards the position of Berti (2008), that defines “massive mistake” the overlap of the policies and the integration processes, that are “linked to the intervention of a multiplicity of factors” (Ambrosini, 2008, p. 202), including the action of school that, although not detached from a cultural context, is the protagonist in the formation of minds and hearts (Colombo, 2017b).

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