



EVALUATION REPORT: SIRIUS KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE PAST 7 YEARS

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1. INTRODUCTION

7 years after SIRIUS' creation, the organization thinks it is time to rethink its strategy since the current one dates from 2014 and reflects the SIRIUS' Clear Agenda for Migrant Education in Europe.

It is then time to analyse if the recommendations from the Agenda are still valid and build a strategic plan with a new vision, mission, values, clear goals and activities based on discussions with members and SIRIUS' key achievements so far since its creation in 2012.

To analyse our key achievements over the past 7 years, a survey was sent out to members and desk research to evaluate SIRIUS' impacts was also undertaken.

This report intends to give an overview on SIRIUS' Key achievements so far based on the answers from the survey and the desk research.



2. The table below summarizes the main achievements identified through the survey to members and desk research:

Areas of work/function	SIRIUS' Key achievements
<p>Co-creation of knowledge</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Co-production of knowledge has been SIRIUS' key achievement, according to our members. Diverse stakeholders bring together their practical experience to recommend changes in policy and practice. - SIRIUS members use this knowledge to better understand their situation, design new research and practice and raise awareness at national and international level. - SIRIUS is cited extensively (1200 mentions on Google Scholar) by researchers and international actors. Our praxis-based reports are often seen as the main reference on innovative and emerging topics because, according to one member, "there is hardly any other literature that would offer better insights into the state of knowledge and available findings.
<p>Development of SIRIUS as a network</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a new network, SIRIUS has a committed board and a diverse and stable membership, consisting of practitioners, researchers, migrant-led education initiatives and the main EU education networks. - For a majority of members, SIRIUS' activities to co-create knowledge increase their contacts with different types of stakeholders, especially EU and national policymakers. - SIRIUS has an engaged Policy Advisory Board (PAB) of national policymakers, particularly from new destination countries with limited experience with migrant and refugee pupils. - Policymakers who join the PAB participate more often in our activities, feel trust and ownership of the activities and report back to the network about our impacts on their policymaking.
<p>Policy engagement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SIRIUS recommendations and policy briefs are our most cited publications as these short summaries of all our activities seem to be the most strategic form of external communications to policymakers. - National policymakers have reported that SIRIUS' impact on their policymaking has depended on their national reform priorities. For example, SIRIUS was an important pushing force to start dialogue and exchange between Baltic Ministries of Education in solving similar challenges Baltic countries face, such as re-integration of returning nationals, promoting inclusive education and ensuring the rights of minority population and modernizing existing education systems to respond to the needs of increasing number of new-comers. Malta is using SIRIUS to review and refocus its emerging practices. Portugal realised the importance of Head Teachers and included them in its Intercultural Schools network. Cyprus reported to the EU that its 2016 Action Plan for a single coordinated migrant education policy was based on the SIRIUS recommendations. - SIRIUS' most frequently cited recommendations concern multilingualism, newcomers, refugees and teacher training on diversity. These recommendations have been incorporated into the work of the European Commission with national education ministries through its Eurydice network and Education and Training 2020 Working Groups. A good example of this is the Draft 2015 Joint Report of the Council and the Commission on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) - New priorities for European cooperation in education and training.



Creating a Forum for agenda-setting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- SIRIUS is recognised as a 'model of good governance' for migrant education, with its recommendations for reform cited by major national and international education actors (UNESCO, OECD, UNHCR), such as the UNESCO' 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report.- The European Commission regularly takes up SIRIUS' recommendations in its reports, recommendations and working groups and helps us to reach the diverse national departments that should be opening up to migrant and refugee education.- Over the years, members have used SIRIUS to be heard in these European fora and to raise several new priorities for reform, particularly on support for newcomers, refugees and promotion of multilingualism and teacher training for diversity.
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1/ Evaluation of answers from members on key achievements

1st question: According to your organisation, to what extent has SIRIUS helped you to gain greater:

According to your organisation, to what extent has SIRIUS helped you to gain greater				
	No	Yes, a little	Yes but it is not very relevant	Yes and it is very relevant
Knowledge on challenges and solution in the education sector	3%	36%	8%	53%
Impact in terms of changing specific policies or practice	33%	47%	6%	14%
Access to migrant-led organisations	35%	39%	14%	14%
Access to researchers	14%	36%	6%	44.4%
Access to practitioners	8%	50%	14%	28%
Access to policy-makers at the national level	33%	31%	3%	33%
Access to EU networks	11%	28%	3%	58%
Access to EU policy-makers	19.5%	50%	8.3%	22.2%
Impact on EU policy debates/consultations	17%	58%	8%	17%
Audience for your organisation/work	17%	44%	3%	36%
Project opportunities	17%	39%	5%	39%

Evaluation based on the answers from members

From the answers, we can see that the biggest impacts of SIRIUS were in terms of:

- gaining more knowledge on challenges and solutions in the education sector and its impact on migrant pupils and of the specific needs of refugee pupils thanks to the possibility of exchanging information and practices within the network and also through the activities, such as the policy conferences, National roundtables or peer-learning activities;
- enhancing connections with researchers which allowed members to generate further knowledge, gaining additional perspectives and informing their research work;
- gaining greater access to the actors on EU level (EU networks);
- the opportunity to participate in projects which allowed members to explore new topics thanks to the small projects related to SIRIUS;
- supporting the work in the area of migrant education, increase members' recognition among various actors in the field of migrant inclusion in the education thanks to the links between the different member organisations;
- increasing members' access to policy-makers at the national level and thus the knowledge in policy setting. According to SIRIUS' member in Estonia, for instance: "SIRIUS has been crucial to focus on concrete challenges that the country faces and policy questions of a moment as oppose to keeping it very broad discussion;



We could also observe that when a member is a policy-maker, SIRIUS has actually helped them in concretely impact policy/practice changes, for instance:

- the Ministry for Education in Malta reported that in the short time they have been a member and during the opportunities presented they could already see how SIRIUS can help the Ministry in its policy setting and reviewing as well as on the ground implementation. The links between the different member organisations also supports the work the Ministry is doing in the area of migrant learners in schools;
- the High Commission for Migration in Portugal informed that SIRIUS influenced them in the composition of their National School Network on Intercultural Education by learning from the documents produced by SIRIUS and inviting SIRIUS for a lecture in Portugal to gain further knowledge.

2nd question: To what extent has SIRIUS helped your organisation to become important/active on the reform agendas below?

To what extent has SIRIUS helped your organisation to become important/active on the reform agendas below				
	No	Yes, a little	Yes, it became important but no actions have been taken	Yes, it become important and actions have been taken
Multilingualism	47.2%	25%	8.3%	19.5%
Non-formal education	33%	39.2%	8.3%	19.5%
Teachers' training on diversity	30%	36%	17%	17%
Parental involvement in education	47%	25%	11%	17%
The role of school leaders	42%	39%	5.5%	13.5%
Socio-economic segregation/inequalities	42%	30%	17%	11%
Socio-emotional learning	56%	36%	8%	0%
Refugee education	30.5%	25%	19.5%	25%
Role of migrant-led initiatives/education professionals	39%	28%	19%	14%
Peer to peer mentoring	44%	36%	14%	6%
Support for newly arrived pupils	39%	22%	3%	36%

Evaluation based on the answers from members

From the answers of the survey, we can observe that SIRIUS has had impact in helping members becoming more active/important in almost all reforms based on members interest and importance for their national contexts. Members who answered SIRIUS helped them in becoming more active in reforms agenda, they generally pointed out it was in three or four reforms agenda. As a member reported, "answer 'No' does not mean that these issues are not important, but rather means that in the work of the organisation on these issues SIRIUS did not have an influence".

So, we can say that thanks to SIRIUS members gained more knowledge on challenges and solutions in the education sector and were able to take concrete actions of the knowledge gained. The only reform in which SIRIUS apparently had no impact yet in helping any member to become more active was on "socio-emotional learning".

It is important to mention that most of the members who stated SIRIUS has had an impact in helping their organisation to become important/active in some reforms agenda are founding members that have been involved in SIRIUS since the beginning, participated in different projects and several different activities. The other members who also stated SIRIUS has had an impact are the ones more recent but involved in



the EC project and are thus either conducting or attending activities. Hence, it has been mainly through projects and concrete activities that SIRIUS has had an impact in helping members to become important/active on reforms agenda.

Actions taken by members regarding the reforms agenda have been mainly in the following sense:

1/ building further partnerships on different issues of migrant education to propose common research.

Some examples:

- Member Migration Policy Group (MPG) reported that SIRIUS allowed MPG to develop more in-depth recommendations, research and future partnerships on refugee education, support for newcomer pupils and general inequalities within the education system and now MPG has better connections with the other EU education networks on this topic to propose common research and actions with the migration sector;
- Member European Parents Association (EPA) stated that the membership has allowed to further develop certain topics and take more or more concrete action in general by participating in projects such as The Erasmus+ project IntegratED, for example, that deals with the better inclusion of migrant children in the education systems via a peer-to-peer mentoring program;
- Member Network of Education Policy Centres (NEPC) reported that being a member of SIRIUS allowed them to open new topics in their network they had not been working on before, such as the role of school leadership;
- In Lithuania, as a result of work on SIRIUS Watch 2018, member Public Policy and Management Institute (PPMI) gained more knowledge and awareness of the current views on the issue in Europe and broader, and took this knowledge as a basis to explore further project opportunities in the post-soviet space;
- In the Netherlands, SIRIUS helped our member to lead a project (AVIOR), connect with SIRIUS members and beyond to share information, learn and collaborate on various topics: teacher training on diversity, inclusive classrooms, parental involvement and refugee education.

2/ creating new cooperation opportunities and take SIRIUS' findings and expertise to a bigger audience.

Some examples:

- in France, SIRIUS helped the member to build a common platform with various stakeholders for inclusive actions and shared training sessions thanks to the NRTs they have to organize in the scope of the EC project (mainly in non-formal education);
- SIRIUS work on teachers' training is helping member PPMI to currently inform the discussions and reforms in Lithuania on initial teachers' training;
- some ideas from SIRIUS activities (such as the Watch 2018) have been introduced in some members' countries, such as in Slovenia and Poland, to a network of actors (schools, NGOs, researchers) and thus indirectly impacting some changes at the level of organizations (schools, NGOs);
- SIRIUS' German member reported that thanks to their participation in several SIRIUS' projects (AVIOR, ALFIRK, PERAE and RefuEdu), they were able to contribute to the use of multilingualism, the involvement of parents with a migrant background in education processes and to the knowledge base on refugee education and to the dissemination and implementation of good practices in seven EU countries;
- In the Netherlands, our members stated that SIRIUS allowed them to participate in EU workgroups and be also invited to them by the EU to share expertise in migrant education;



- individual member Liesma Ose informed that she uses SIRIUS' findings and expertise from other members in a lot of her work: "Still using what I have learned from colleagues in the annual meetings of experts on multilingualism in Brussels, 2016, 2017, I am engaged in TT on Diversity, using some ideas borrowed as SIRIUS member, doing study on inequality, have used knowledge from SIRIUS on adult education and recognition of qualifications"

3/ helping members become important in terms of impacting policy or practice changes.

Some examples:

- the High Commission for Migration in Portugal reported that the role of school leaders became an issue in their National School Network on Intercultural Education thanks to SIRIUS;
- the Ministry of Education in Malta stated that they have been working on these issues (reforms agenda of the survey) for some years and various actions had already been taken. However, according to the Ministry, "SIRIUS enables our Migrant Learners' Unit (MLU) to review and refocus its work according to the realities that Malta is facing, and new developing issues being found in schools. In this way SIRIUS can be seen as an organisation does help to be at the forefront of sound practical implementation in the field of migrant education";
- Belgian member Flemish Education council (Vlor) informed that "the knowledge and network they gained on these topics through SIRIUS were important for the thinking group who explore education for refugees from a strategic and long-term perspective";
- Individual member Liesma reported that "working in Ministry of Welfare in Latvia can position myself as an expert on refugee education thanks being involved and learning in SIRIUS".



2/ Evaluation of SIRIUS' Key achievements – Desk research

- It is more than an evidence that if there is something SIRIUS really managed to achieve this is the co-production of knowledge. The amount of SIRIUS publications used by external stakeholders when writing about migrant education is very expressive.

SIRIUS' researches and findings are largely used to produce new knowledge and provide concrete recommendations on migrant education mainly on three topics: multilingualism; refugee education and teachers' training on diversity. But also, some on parental involvement and role of migrant-led initiatives. To a smaller extent, findings on the role of school leaders and socio-economic segregation/inequalities are also cited in some papers.

In addition, our researches have been proved to be of high quality being also used as references in high-level organisations papers/reports, such as OECD (we can find SIRIUS' citations in at least six different OECD papers), UNESCO (SIRIUS findings mentioned in the 2019 GEM report), UNHCR and EU papers/reports. SIRIUS researches and findings are also very known in the scientific community: we find more than 1200 mentions to SIRIUS on Google scholar.

Also, SIRIUS' research and findings are also used by SIRIUS' members themselves when writing about migrant education. As a member mentions it: "there is hardly any other literature that would offer better insights into the state of knowledge and available findings".

- Based on the desk research, we could observe SIRIUS recognition by several actors as a good model of governance in promoting the education of migrant and refugee kids and influencing the debate on policy development in this sector. Reforms priorities arising from SIRIUS' clear agenda for migrant education are widely disseminated and used as references when talking about migrant education.

- It is also clear that SIRIUS achieved to systematise knowledge into recommendations and provide evidence-based recommendations on policy/reform changes needed to enhance inclusive education for migrant and refugee pupils. The draft of SIRIUS' policy briefs and statements are many times used as good examples of policy recommendations in several papers/researches, including for recommendations at the EU level.

- SIRIUS has also been able to impact changes in practices and policies and the agenda setting as we can see in the few examples below:

- In the policy paper "the integration of pupils with a migrant background to the Cyprus educational system" of the Ministry for Education in Cyprus, SIRIUS is mentioned as a platform the Ministry joined to study the existing programmes for the integration of children with migrant background in Cypriot education and to submit recommendations for short and long term management of the issue and to improve integration programmes within the context of the philosophy and planning for new curricula. As a consequence, "In 2016, an action plan based on recommendations by the EU's SIRIUS network for the education of children with a migrant background, was developed by Cyprus to coordinate individual actions by schools and create a single educational policy on integrating migrant (including refugee) children."
- The Eurydice report from the EC on "Integrating Students from Migrant Backgrounds Education" that used SIRIUS' findings to stress the needs of supporting newly arrived migrants;
- The final report to DG EAC by Ecorys on "Study on the Diversity within the Teaching Profession with Particular Focus on Migrant and/or Minority Background" in which SIRIUS is mentioned as a good example of initiative to support increased teacher diversity;
- The Report "European ideas for better learning: the governance of school education systems" Produced by the ET 2020 Working Group in which SIRIUS is mentioned as "a network whose work is important to support education through school improvement but also to influence governance";
- The draft 2015 joint report from Commission and Council to the Parliament on the implementation of the Strategic Framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020) - New priorities for European cooperation in education and training" in which some of SIRIUS' recommendations were used to raise awareness on the relevance and effectiveness of Initial Teacher Education.



Conclusion

In sum, looking into how SIRIUS is mentioned and cited by its members and several other stakeholders, SIRIUS has achieved to secure commitment to migrant & refugee pupils as part of broader agenda on inclusive education by:

- raising awareness on the needs of migrant and refugee pupils for an inclusive education;
- providing through its researches and findings evidence-based knowledge;
- keeping migrant education on the agenda and being a good example of "good knowledge governance, European level policy implementation on migrant education or yet as a good example of measure to support increased teacher diversity", by some high-level organisations such as OECD and the EC;
- influencing the policy debate, development and policy setting at the national and EU levels since SIRIUS' findings are used by several international organizations, national governments and the EC to promote concrete policy change, write papers and recommendations for migrant education.