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Welcome, Ukraine- A comparative analysis of the Ukrainian and Austrian primary school curriculum

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Abstract

The integration of children at compulsory education age in the respective education system has been subject of discussions ever since. Due to increasing numbers of especially Ukrainian refugees fleeing their war-torn home country, European and especially Austrian education systems face the challenge of having to ensure a somewhat smooth transition from the Ukrainian school system to its Austrian counterpart. Therefore, the present study aims at a profound analysis of the Ukrainian primary school curriculum and highlights both similarities and differences to the Austrian primary school curriculum. The analysis revealed that huge differences in terms of subjects implemented in both curricula and lessons allocated for the specific subjects occur. However, apart from the obvious subject-specific differences, both curricula state learning methods and techniques; while the Austrian curriculum highlights eight 'didactic principles', 'didactic recommendations' can be found in its Ukrainian counterpart. Regarding evaluation and assessment strategies, both educational systems focus on national evaluation tools. Austria implements an evaluation of students' competencies (i.e. 'iKM^{PLUS}') in German and Mathematics, whereas Ukraine, due to its split primary school system (grades 1&2 and 3&4, respectively), conducts formal assessment after grade 2 and 4 to test whether or not predefined objectives have been achieved by students.

Key Words: adolescent refugees, primary school curricula, Ukraine, Austria, integration;

1. Introduction

After officially recognizing the two breakaway regions in the East of Ukraine, Donetsk and Luhansk, Russia launched a wide-ranging attack on Ukraine on February 24th, 2022. Without further analysing the conflicting parties, committed war crimes and fatal attacks on cities, wars – no matter where on earth they take place - always cause humanitarian crises. Merely a small proportion of depression, disease and suffering among afflicted people is experienced by either neighbouring or non-adjacent countries – most commonly in the form of media coverage about people fleeing their home country. Likewise, in the latest European refugee

movement (in 2015 and the following years) during which a huge proportion of migrants (some of them might even be considered as refugees) started their journey from countries torn by war, for example Syria and Afghanistan (Austrian Ministry of Interior, 2021) together with their parents or relatives. However, a constantly rising number (nine per cent) among newly arrived people, reached Austria individually (without parents or close relatives), thus being referred to as UMF¹ or “unaccompanied minor refugees” (Austrian Ministry of Interior, 2021). Disregarding different reasons for migration or persecution in former years compared to the attack on Ukraine, the saying ‘history repeats itself’ seems to be true, especially from the perspective of another migration movement within the borders of Europe. Currently, almost eight million people are displaced and recorded as refugees across Europe (UNHCR, 2022; International Organization for Migration, 2022).

A high proportion of people fleeing from Russian invasion of their country are women accompanied by their children as the majority of male Ukrainians aged 18 to 60 must not leave their country because they have to serve in the Ukrainian army (CNN, 2022). Despite minor differences in terms of origin, major differences among migrants and displaced people will definitely be revealed in terms of their history of origin including flight experiences, literacy embracing first (and possibly second or third) language skills; most importantly, many of the displaced children and adolescents leaving Ukraine are students at compulsory education age similar to the aforementioned migration crisis (Puschautz, Dauer, & Hager, 2022; Blossfeld et al., 2016; Burrman & Mutz, 2016; etc.).

Due to the above mentioned differences among refugees in terms of language skills, experiences with curricular education as well as possible traumata before or during their flight in combination with the increasing quantity of displaced people having arrived in Austria since 2015, many of whom being obliged to attend school (ÖIF, 2018), the Austrian education infrastructure again seeks assistance to cope with that challenge similar to other European nations.

Discussions have been held about whether and to what extent displaced people can be integrated ‘correctly’ into educational institutions of the target country. Frequently physical education and sports programs are considered as school subjects facilitating the integration of potentially vulnerable human beings (Australian Sports Commission, 2006; Tiemann, 2013; Tiemann, 2015). Likewise, integration of newly arriving students from Ukraine also plays a crucial role in other subjects, and knowledge previously acquired by students in their ‘regular’ classes might be of particular interest since teachers of the target country might relate to these prior educational experiences. Consequently, the integration process for Ukrainian students might be slightly facilitated if target countries were informed about the general education system and its structure and, most importantly, also about the subjects and the content taught in Ukraine.

2. Material and Methods

2.1 Study design

The present study, therefore, aims at a profound analysis of the Ukrainian primary school curriculum. As many Ukrainian upper secondary students are equipped with well established distance learning tools and programs (Austrian Ministry of Education, 2022b), the focus of this paper lies on younger students at elementary school level. In particular, Ukrainian primary school curriculum has been analysed in terms of a) content b) learning methods and techniques and c) strategies for assessment and evaluation. Thereafter, similarities and differences to the Austrian primary school curriculum are indicated.

The design of the study mainly consists of content analysis (Mayring, 2017), embracing the primary school curricula of both Ukraine and Austria next to documents published by governmental organizations², most

¹ This abbreviation stands for “Unbegleiteter minderjähriger Flüchtling” and means unaccompanied minor refugee.

² Austria, for example published a separate document on how to treat refugee students from Ukraine (cf. Austrian Ministry of Education, 2022b).

prominently by the countries' educational ministries. Patterns (i.e. similarities) between individual codes revealed major themes which can either be derived from already existing literature on the field of study or through so called in-vivo-coding by using terms for concepts showing up in the data itself which is also applied "in educational ethnographies with youth" (Saldana 2016, p. 106).

After a first cycle of separate analysis of both curricula (sections 2.3 and 2.5), a section focusing on similarities and differences (section 4) is also integrated in this study. The paper concludes with future goals, measurements and further challenges (section 5).

2.2 General structure of the Ukrainian education system

Ukrainian educational system is basically divided into four major parts, starting with pre-primary education. Facilities in this stage either embrace nursery schools, so called 'dytyachi yasla' or kindergartens, so called 'dytyachi sadki'; while the latter is intended for children aged three to six years, nursery school s care for toddlers and infants as early as six weeks up to three years (Education encyclopedia, 2022).

After pre-school education, children attend elementary (i.e. primary) school which lasts four years and is split into grade one (aged six and seven years) and grade two (aged eight and nine). At the end of grade four students are sitting for exams in Ukrainian language, mathematics and reading. For the following years (aged ten to fourteen) students attend middle school in which the core curriculum focuses on subjects like Ukrainian language and literature, foreign language(s), sciences (mathematics, biology, chemistry and physics), history, music, art and sports. At the end of grade nine students receive a state certificate after successfully taking state examinations.

The final phase of the Ukrainian educational system – upper secondary- can be attended as early as fifteen and lasts three years. Students either attend the "academic stream" where they can enroll at universities or other higher education facilities offering bachelor courses; the second option students can choose is the "vocational stream" in which a specialized education is foregrounded. In either of the aforementioned options, students have to choose three obligatory subjects in which they take state examinations. Subjects included in the state examination are: Ukrainian language and literature, mathematics or Ukrainian history and a third subject with freedom of choice (Irish Department of Education, 2022).

The subsequent text highlights Ukrainian primary (i.e. elementary) school and includes an analysis of the core curricula in grade one and two.

2.3 Data analysis: Ukrainian primary school curriculum

The standard educational program of primary education outlines the recommended approaches to the planning and organization of educational components by a primary education institution for students to achieve obligatory learning goals defined by the standards for primary education in Ukraine. In the course of the Ukrainian primary school curriculum one can find information about typical educational programs which – according to the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine (2022, p.1) - are defined by:

- ✓ the total volume of the educational load and the expected learning outcomes of education seekers, submitted within the framework of educational branches;
- ✓ the list and proposed content of educational fields, arranged according to content lines;
- ✓ approximate duration and possible interrelationships of educational fields, subjects, disciplines, etc., including their integration, as well as the logical sequence of their study;
- ✓ recommended forms of organization of the educational process and tools of the system of internal quality assurance of education; requirements for persons who can start studying under this program.

Both educational curriculum programs (grade 1 and 2 as well as grade 3 and 4) propose a list focusing on mandatory educational fields which will be mentioned subsequently (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2022, p.3):

- ✓ Linguistic and literacy, in particular: the Ukrainian language, languages of indigenous peoples and of national minorities, literature; foreign language education
- ✓ Mathematics
- ✓ Natural sciences
- ✓ (general) technology
- ✓ Information technology
- ✓ Social and health care science
- ✓ Civil and historical science
- ✓ Artistic science
- ✓ Physical education

The tasks to be implemented in each of the aforementioned fields of study are defined by the teacher in accordance with the general goals outlined by the State Standard of Primary Education. The expected learning outcomes are presented in correlation with indexes³ highlighting the mandatory goals in each of the study fields. Since the Standard Educational Program is based on a competency-based approach, the topics do not involve students memorizing definitions of terms and concepts; however, the focus lies on active construction of knowledge and the formation of skills and ideas through the experience of practical activities.

With regard to the measurements of students' learning outcomes, formal assessment focusing on individual educational processes as well as on educational achievements is applied in correlation with expected learning results defined by the Ministry of Education in grades 1&2 and 3&4, respectively.

Concerning organization forms of the educational process interactive forms and methods of learning are recommended in the curriculum. Expected learning outcomes in each educational field are achievable if research, art projects, role-playing games, dramatizations, simulations, situational exercises, excursions, etc. are applied.

An obligatory component of the educational program of an educational institution is the curriculum, which specifies the organization of the educational process. In addition to certain educational components which are of free choice for education seekers, it may contain other components, in particular a corrective and developmental component for persons with special educational needs⁴. Nevertheless, constant monitoring of the students' educational progress by teachers, parents and students themselves is of tremendous importance in order to reach the benchmark for the evaluation of the educational achievements of each student.

Based on the expected achievements, the teacher can formulate individual learning outcomes for the student according to their mastery of a particular skill (e.g. tries to identify keywords, identifies keywords, confidently identifies keywords, etc.); thus tracking students' progress for a specific period of time (e.g. for two months) is common throughout all grades of Ukrainian primary school (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2022, p.4).

Subsequently, two tables are presented; while the first one highlights the curriculum for grades 1 and 2, the latter illustrates the curriculum for grade 3 and 4. In both curricula the lessons per week for each subject are

³ The number at the beginning of the index indicates the serial number of the year of study (class). The abbreviated letter means the field of education. The first number after the letter indicates the number of the content line, the second number (after the hyphen) is the serial number of the general goal outlined in the standard. The number after the dot means the serial number of the mandatory learning result. The last digit is the serial number of the expected learning result

⁴ The individuality of each student can affect the pace of learning; consequently children can achieve the specified results earlier or later than stated in the specified cycle or level.

shown and the language of instruction throughout all grades is Ukrainian (Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine, 2022, p.4f):

Table 1: Extent of lessons for grades 1-2 of Ukrainian primary school

Educational subjects / Integrated courses	Number of lessons per week in classes		
	1	2	Σ
Ukrainian language	5	5	10
Foreign Language ⁵	2	3	5
Mathematics	3	3	6
I explore the world*	7	8	15
Art**	2	2	4
Physical Education ***	3	3	6
<i>In sum</i>	20+3	21+3	41+6
Additional lessons for studying subjects of the invariant component, elective courses, conducting individual consultations and group classes	1	1	2
Maximum permissible weekly educational load per student	20	22	42
The total number of training lessons of invariant and variable components financed from the budget (excluding division of classes into groups)	23	25	48

Table 2: Extent of lessons for grades 3-4 of Ukrainian primary school

Educational subjects / Integrated courses	Number of lessons per week in classes		
	3	4	Σ
Ukrainian language	5	5	10
Foreign Language	3	3	6
Mathematics	4	4	8
I explore the world*	7	7	14
Informatics	1	1	2
Art**	2	2	4
Physical Education ***	3	3	6
<i>In sum</i>	22+3	22+3	44+6
Additional lessons for studying subjects of the invariant component, elective courses, conducting individual consultations and group classes	1	1	2

⁵In Ukraine foreign language education consists of the following selectable languages: English, German, French, Spanish and other languages.

Maximum permissible weekly educational load per student	23	23	46
The total number of training lessons of invariant and variable components financed from the budget (excluding division of classes into groups)	26	26	52

* Approximate distribution of hours between educational branches within the framework of this integrated subject: language and literature – 2; mathematical – 1; natural, technological, social and health-preserving, civil and historical -1; 4 lessons in total;

** Integrated subject or separate subjects "Fine Arts" and "Musical Arts"

*** The lessons provided for physical education are not taken into account when determining the maximum permissible educational load of students.

2.4 General structure of the Austrian school system

Compulsory education in Austria lasts nine years and starts at the age of six. Children before age six can attend nursery schools and kindergartens; the latter can optionally be attended from age two and includes mandatory attendance from age five to six as it fosters psychological, cognitive and social development and, therefore, forms the basis for a successful educational career (Office of the Federal Chancellor, 2022).

Austrian elementary (i.e. primary) school lasts four years and students aged 10 can either attend lower secondary ('AHS Unterstufe') or middle school for another four years. For handicapped or disabled children so called special needs schools are offered separately, while it is common that disabled children are integrated into 'regular' classes.

At the age of fourteen, teenagers can either opt for higher secondary ('AHS Oberstufe'), where they experience general education, or higher vocational schools emphasizing technical or economic education. In all these school types students have to take state leaving exams allowing them to enroll at university or attend any other tertiary education after the successful examination. However, at the age of fourteen another education possibility can be chosen – if students prefer labor over school, they can attend a prevocational school and start an apprenticeship after one year of school. The average apprenticeship in Austria lasts three years, depending on the job one has chosen.

The subsequent text highlights Austrian primary (i.e. elementary) school and includes an analysis of the core curriculum in grades 1-4.

2.5 Data analysis: Austrian primary school curriculum

The Austrian primary school curriculum is a framework comprising several sections among which the 'general educational objectives', 'competence orientation', 'general regulations', 'general didactic principles', 'cross-cutting topics', and 'overall (number of) lessons' are the first and somewhat crucial sections issued and re-edited in 2023. Furthermore, the curriculum even consists of a separate section on special German tuition for students not being able to follow the language of instruction (Austrian Ministry of Education 2023a, p.117ff.).

Basically, Austrian primary school curriculum consists of basic level I and basic level II; while the latter embraces classes 3 and 4, basic level I entails classes 1 and 2 as well as pre-school classes.

One of the major aims stated in the curriculum is educating young people to become ambitious, dutiful and responsible members of society and citizens of both the Republic of Austria and of the European Union. On that basis cosmopolitan attitudes which are accompanied by a joint responsibility and empathy for problems of mankind shall be fostered; consequently, education actively aims at an understanding of democracy based on human rights, the rights of the individual, and the ability to take criticism and to act.

What is more, children shall experience balanced education in social, emotional, intellectual and physical scopes. Taking into account the diversity of school children the so called 4C-model (i.e. '4K-Modell') forms the basis for learners in the 21st century, and is regarded as sine qua non in Austrian primary school education. The '4C-model' is composed of 'collaboration', 'communication', 'critical thinking' and 'creativity' (Austrian Ministry of Education 2023a, p.3) and can be regarded as an extension of the six pedagogic aspects stated in the previous issue of the curriculum (2005, p.1f.):

- ✓ Unfolding and promoting joy of learning and curiosity
- ✓ Developing and strengthening confidence in personal capability
- ✓ Composing and extending the capacity to act (i.e. recognition of rules and regulations, integration and collaboration, etc.)
- ✓ Extending linguistic abilities (i.e. communicative skills)
- ✓ Conveying knowledge, skills and abilities which promote exposure with the environment and a development in artistic, technical and physical realms.
- ✓ Developing a gradual attitude to learning, starting from playful learning leading to goal-oriented learning

In order to characterize and facilitate educational instruction aimed at children, eight didactic principles are stated in the Austrian primary school curriculum (2023a, p.4ff.):

- ✓ The consideration of individual learning requirements highlights the importance of focusing lessons and lesson plans on the diverse personalities of children in class. Differences in terms of speed, readiness and ability of learning have to be taken into consideration by teachers.
- ✓ Teachers provide a digital supportive way of teaching. The application of media and digital tools, on the one hand, connect to the living environment of students and, on the other hand, ensure state-of-the-art methodological learning opportunities.
- ✓ Vast differences in terms of social behaviour, communicative skills, autonomy, motivation, previously acquired knowledge, attitude to work, etc. occur especially at the beginning of elementary school; consequently, individualization and differentiation have to be considered in all forms of teaching. Various individualization opportunities can be implemented embracing for example different kinds of task, diverse social forms, varying instruction tools including media, support through teachers and children, respectively.
- ✓ Education has to be vivid ensuring that children can relate to the content addressed in class. Teachers plan individual lessons profoundly and ensure a competence facilitating learning environment. Thereby all forms of senses can be stimulated in various learning situations.
- ✓ Teachers accompany individual learning processes of students. The development of social skills is of tremendous importance for both children and adolescents, therefore, goal-oriented social learning fosters the personality of the children and aims at strengthening their self-esteem. Teachers have to create an atmosphere of mutual understanding and trust.
- ✓ Mutual understanding for all participating people at school is considered a core aspect since appreciation with diverse cultures and customs shall become commonplace in the daily life of the students.
- ✓ A holistic language sensible education shall be foregrounded in all subjects throughout all ages in order to teach and foster the erudite language.
- ✓ Instruction through trial and error is considered a long lasting and effective way of teaching (except for orthography).
- ✓ Backup and control measurements of instruction have to be implemented through continuous and diversified forms. Teachers are responsible for both a transparent and competence-oriented feedback culture. Formal assessment of achievement has to be disconnected from the mere observation of achievement in the course of the learning process.

The Austrian primary school curriculum differentiates between subject-specific, supra subject-specific and interdisciplinary competences. While subject-specific topics are directly linked to the individual subject, supra subject specific competencies embrace motivation, self-confidence, social- as well as methodological competences. Interdisciplinary competences, on the other hand, shall be fostered through an analysis with subsequent superordinate topics (Austrian Ministry of Education 2023a, p.3):

- ✓ Orientation in the realms of education, profession and life
- ✓ Entrepreneurship education
- ✓ Health promotion
- ✓ Information Technology education
- ✓ Intercultural education
- ✓ Media education
- ✓ Political education
- ✓ Gender equality education
- ✓ Sex education
- ✓ Language education and reading
- ✓ Environmental education for sustainable development
- ✓ Traffic education
- ✓ Economy-, fiscal- and consumer education

Regarding the amount of lessons in primary school, two tables are subsequently presented; while the first table focuses on preschool level (Austrian Ministry of Education, 2023a, p.21f.), the second illustrates the overall lesson plan for Austrian primary school (years 1-4) including mandatory subjects, remedial education and non-committal subjects (Austrian Ministry of Education, 2023a, p.22):

Table 3: Extent of lessons in Austrian preschool

Mandatory subjects	Recommended lessons⁶
Religious education	2
<i>Language and communication; preparation for reading and writing⁷</i>	3,5
<i>Mathematics, sciences, economy and society</i>	
Early Mathematics Education	2
General studies	1,5
<i>Music, art and creativity</i>	
Singing and playing music	1,5
Design and art	1
Handicrafts	1
Traffic education	0,5
Musical and rhythmical education	1
Playing	1
<i>Health education</i>	
Sports and movement	5
Total number of lessons	20

⁶ Lessons of individual subjects are considered an approximate value; lessons can also be split into several smaller learning sequences.

⁷ Special tuition in the children's mother tongue in an extent of three lessons per week simultaneous to regular classes can be granted in this subject.

Table 4: Extent of lessons in Austrian primary school (year 1-4)

Mandatory subjects	Number of lessons per week in classes				
	1	2	3	4	Σ
Religious education	2	2	2	2	
<i>Languages</i>					
German	7	7	7	7	
Foreign language			1	1	
<i>Mathematics, sciences, economy and society</i>					
Mathematics	4	4	4	4	
General education	3	3	3	3	
<i>Music, art and creativity</i>					
Music	1	1	1	1	
Design and art	1	1	1	1	
Design and technology	1	1	2	2	
<i>Health and movement</i>					
Physical education	3	3	2	2	
Mandatory tutorials					
Foreign language	x ⁸	x	-	-	
Traffic education	y ⁹	y	y	y	
Maximum permissible weekly educational load per student	20-23	20-23	22-25	22-25	90

In addition to the subjects and lessons displayed above students can select from a range of non-committal lessons including for example choir, music and play drama, sports activities, acting, musical and artistic arrangements, first and foreign language education and talent promotion.

3. Discussion

The aim of the present study was to analyse both Austrian and Ukrainian primary school curricula in terms of similarities and differences. The prime motivation underlying this study is to facilitate teaching and instruction in Austrian and other countries' elementary school classes for teachers. Nonetheless also the integration of migrant and refugee children in Austrian primary school classes is a major goal of this paper since it simultaneously aims at contributing to a more extensive idea of Ukrainian refugees in both national and international pedagogy.

As other studies focusing on juvenile refugees have indicated that a high number of adolescent refugees suffer from impairment or even traumatization (Kölbel, 2022), and several other studies drawing comparisons between primary school curricula due to increasing numbers of migrants or even refugees in specific target countries (e.g. Tanriverdi & Apak, 2010) have been published, the forced migration of many Ukrainian families including children at compulsory education ages requires further scientific analysis.

⁸ The subject 'foreign language' has to be taught 'integratively' (i.e. in smaller units) across the years with an amount of 32 lessons per year.

⁹ Traffic education can be integrated in all of the four years with an amount of 10 lessons per year.

4. Results

As already mentioned in the introduction, this study focuses on several aspects of both curricula including a) content, b) learning methods and techniques and c) strategies for assessment and evaluation.

As for content, it can be seen that both curricula emphasize first language education in the course of four years of primary school education with 20 (for Ukrainian) and 28 lessons (for German), respectively. However, the promotion of the specific mother tongue is also integrated in other subjects; while the subject 'I explore the world' in the Ukrainian curriculum consists of language and literature parts, the main tool for the subject 'general studies' is of course German and the development of the German language.

One of the most striking features of both curricula is foreign language education. In contrast to the Ukrainian curriculum, in which foreign language education is represented with eleven lessons in the course of four years, Austrian curriculum states that foreign language education has to be taught 'integratively' (i.e. in smaller units) across the years. Despite the somewhat low amount of lessons in classes 3&4 (two lessons in sum) foreign language education is listed as a mandatory and can, additionally, also follow the concept of "Content and Language Integrated Learning-CLIL" (Austrian Ministry of Education, 2023a, p.16); thus foreign language teaching and learning can also be integrated in other subject.

Regarding the subjects which are simultaneously mentioned in both curricula (Mathematics, Physical education and Art), Ukrainian curriculum grants more lessons for health and physical education, but less for Mathematics (14 lessons for Mathematics and twelve for Physical Education, compared to 16 and ten in the Austrian curriculum), while Art combines 'traditional' art and music in the Ukrainian curriculum, these two subjects are combined in 'Music, Art and Creativity' and split up into the subjects 'Design and Art' (four lessons) and 'Design and Technology' (six lessons) in the Austrian curriculum.

Interestingly, neither handicraft nor religious education studies are represented in the Ukrainian curriculum. While religious education - variations among different religious orientations are considered - constitutes eight lessons, handicraft is integrated in the previously stated subject "Music, Art and Creativity" in the Austrian curriculum. In both curricula students can choose from a range of additional non-mandatory subjects and courses including so called tutorials. Thus, the weekly educational load per student in each of the curricula slightly varies between the countries – 98 lessons for Ukrainian students compared to 90 lessons for Austrian students in the course of four years of primary school education.

As far as learning techniques and methods are concerned, both curricula embrace strategies to be implemented by teachers. While Austrian curriculum in its section 'competence-orientation' highlights the importance of a competence-based curriculum on which eight didactic principles (cf. section 5) are based on, Ukrainian curriculum differs in this aspect as definite didactic principles cannot be found in a specific section; however, 'didactic recommendations' (i.e. competency based approach) stated by the State Standard of Primary Education are integrated and, thus, can be found throughout the curriculum.

Moreover, both curricula repeatedly highlight the importance of individuality and differentiation in terms of learning progress. In this context, Austrian curriculum says that "various individualization opportunities can be implemented [...]" (2023a, p.4), while the Ukrainian counterpart (2022, 4) states that "[t]he characteristics of the individual student can affect the pace of learning, as a result of which children can achieve the specified results earlier or later [...]". Furthermore, both curricula consist of sections highlighting the importance of individualization in classes including children with special needs.

The curricula at hand differ in terms of assessment and evaluation strategies. While the Austrian curriculum itself speaks only of diversified measurement forms taking into consideration varying student learning progress, Austrian Ministry of Education (2023b; 2023a) states that students' competencies (i.e. 'iKM^{PLUS}') are evaluated nationwide in German and Mathematics in grades three and four of Austrian primary school.

Analysing the Ukrainian curriculum within this scope, permanent monitoring of students' performances among all protagonists alike (i.e. teachers, parents and students themselves) is of tremendous importance in order to achieve certain state defined benchmarks. Since Ukrainian primary school system and, therefore, also the curricula are separated into grades 1&2 and grades 3&4, expected learning outcomes are defined for each of the grades. Formal assessment conducted by the Ukrainian Ministry of Education in which predefined benchmarks have to be achieved are considered the core evaluation tool.

5. Conclusion

The prime aim of this study, on the one hand, is to publicize (parts of) the Ukrainian primary school curriculum, to make people aware of certain educational peculiarities, which all curricula independent of nationality, share. On the other hand, curiosity might also be aroused for both Ukrainian education and for Ukrainian people and their culture. Many of them had to flee and continue to leave their war-torn home country due to violent aggression and war. Regardless of the reasons behind large scale migration and flight movements worldwide, target countries including school and education infrastructure have to be prepared more frequently in the times to come. Apart from the necessary establishment of early psychological screening in order to differentiate between (highly) impaired and non-impaired (student) refugees in terms of flight or war experiences (Metzner & Mogk, 2016; Kölbel, 2022), a critical examination of national curricula seems to be of tremendous importance. Thereby, prior educational experience of refugees or forced migrants can be classified and transitions to altering educational programs can be facilitated enabling juvenile refugees (and possibly also their parents) to lead a prosperous future life in a new country. The analysis of the Ukrainian curriculum might contribute to that ambitious goal.

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