

requalification  
of (recently)  
immigrated  
and refugee  
teachers in  
Europe

## IO5 - Evaluation Report of the Participatory Approach in R/EQUAL and the Partner Programmes

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### Contributing Members of the R/EQUAL Partner Programmes in IO5

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## 1. Introduction

The European R/EQUAL partner programmes for (recently) immigrated or refugee teachers offer qualification for teachers who want to re-enter into the teaching profession in their country of arrival and have to complete supplementary studies in order to receive full recognition. These programmes are designed quite differently at the four locations with regard to the time frame, the teaching obligations of the lecturers, the study topics and the follow-up offers. During the duration of R/EQUAL the partner programmes have also undergone a process of development – some of the changes motivated by the European collaboration itself and some regarding the respective regional or national regulatory framework, political change and experiences that were made during this time. Against the background of this professional experience and the importance of a high possible fit between the offer and the users, the (re-)qualification programmes offer the possibility, albeit to varying degrees, for the participants to take part in tasks related to the programme.

R/EQUAL is based on a participatory approach. As there is still quite little information on the gains of such an approach (as examples of such still rare evaluation studies from other research contexts, see: Leung et al. 2004; Bergmann et al. 2018), the need for further empirical results is given. This Evaluation is a report of the participation of (recently) immigrated and refugee teachers taking part in the R/EQUAL partner programmes. It explores the question of promising conditions and pathways for participation as well as barriers in participative approaches in re-qualification programmes for teachers from abroad. The idea of a participatory approach is not standard in (re-)qualification programmes in Higher Education and therefore, in the context of R/EQUAL, the partner programmes were interested to see how the participants themselves experience and judge the opportunity for participation and what ideas they have about possible (further) participation.

The aim of the report is to provide feedback to the R/EQUAL consortium as well as recommendations for (planned) programmes for and with (recently) immigrated and refugee teachers according to the empirical results. In order to analyse participation in the partner programmes and in R/EQUAL, a *mixed-method-design* was used to collect the participants perspective of the partner programmes regarding their experiences of participating as well as what they would have wished for in addition or instead. To do so, the following data was conducted:

- group interviews with participants of the four partner programmes and a qualitative content analysis with inductive coding,
- online-questionnaire with closed and open questions and descriptive statistic analysis as well as a coding of the open questions,
- in addition each R/EQUAL partner was asked to give their perspective regarding the practice of the participatory approach in the respective programme as well as in the R/EQUAL cooperation in a paper-based-interview.

## 2. The participatory approach: a theoretical framework

Participation means taking part and thus being involved in decision-making. The starting point for the goal of participation is usually the diagnosis of a lack of participation. Theoretical models of participation often represent a processual development in the form of ladder or stage models, some of which include stages of non-participation or preliminary stages of participation (Schröder 1995; Blandow, Gintzel and Hansbauer 1999; Oser and Biedermann 2006; Brydon-Miller and Maguire 2009; Wright, von Unger and Block 2010). In R/EQUAL the stage model of participation proposed by Wright, von Unger and Block (2010) was used as an orientation guide for the participatory approach of R/EQUAL (Proyer et al. 2019; Bodström et al. 2020):

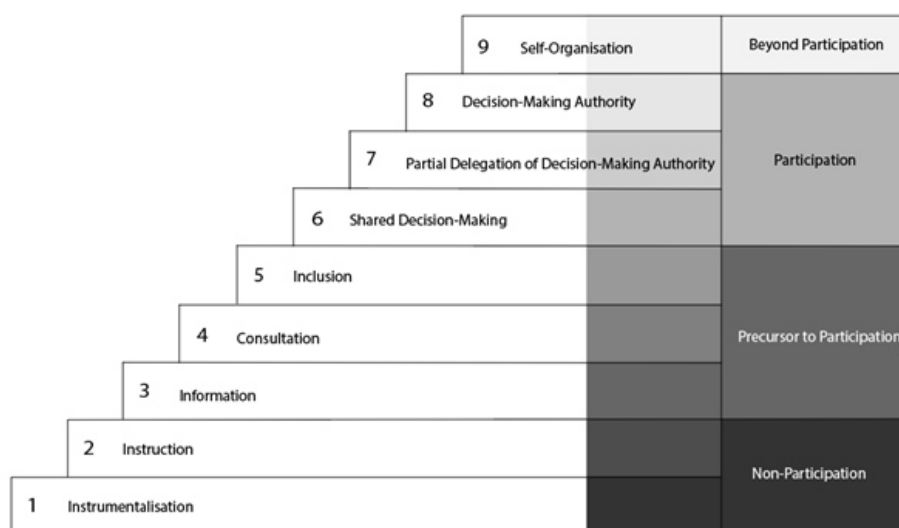


Figure 1: Stage model of participation (according to Wright, von Unger, Block 2010)

The stage model has also been used as the basis for the evaluation of the participatory approach of R/EQUAL and will be described in the following (Proyer et al. 2019, 13):

- Stage 1 “Instrumentalisation” and stage 2 “Instruction” are not considered to be participative at all, and therefore, labelled as “Non-Participation”;
- Stage 3 to 5 (3 “Information”, 4 “Consultation” and 5 “Inclusion”) are counted as pre-stages to participation;
- Stage 6 “Shared Decision-Making”, 7 “Partial Delegation of Decision-Making Authority” and 8 “Decision-Making Authority” qualifies as participation;

- The last stage, 9 “Self-Organisation” can be a stage “Beyond Participation”. According to von Unger (2014) participation starts from stage 6 upwards – considered that there are 9 stages in total, this is rather high. This stage level was built as a (self-)reflective tool for participatory research and not as a way to either boast with a high stage of participation or apologise for a low one. While one part in the research process can be highly participatory, another one could be not at all as such. As the level of participation tends to be fluid and modifiable, it has to be considered in several phases throughout the whole research process.

### Pathways and Barriers

As already extensively shown in the R/EQUAL Transnational Framework (Proyer et al. 2019) – used as main reference for the following section –, R/EQUAL opted for a participatory approach (von Unger 2014) for the whole project duration in order to give internationally trained teachers a voice. In choosing a participatory approach for the project, participants or/and alumni of the five requalification programmes get the opportunity to influence and decide on the project activities, participate in decision-making and state their individuality within the process. The aim is to guarantee user-friendly outcomes and designs of all outputs. However, the participatory approach was not used to the same extent and in the same way in all partner programmes. Depending on their previous experience and the general conditions of the programmes, all partners have agreed to reflect and enrich their work with this approach.

Concerning the empirical research that took place in R/EQUAL, the participatory approach was used in the Intellectual Outputs in different ways:

- For the transnational framework (for IO1 see Proyer et al. 2019) participants and alumni developed the interview questionnaire in a transnational process. The conducted interview questionnaire was used by some participants to interview participants from other programmes. The analysis of the interview transcripts was done by the participatory research group of staff and participants of the Viennese programme (for further research with refugees see Ellis et al. 2007; Aden et al. 2019; Otten 2019).
- For the Manual of language learning in multilingual contexts (for IO2 see Bodström et al. 2020) participants and alumni were part of the team preparing the google site with a special focus on teaching and learning in multilingual contexts in higher education.
- For the Method-Toolbox on Heterogeneity in Schools as a topic for working together with the participants in the requalification programmes, participants and alumni were part of the participatory workshops where teaching and learning methods from the partner programmes were presented and tested (Terhart et al. 2020).
- For the digital library the participants and alumni were part of a participatory research workshop in which the interview data of the group interviews on the topic of professionalisation held in all programmes were discussed (<https://blog.hf.uni-koeln.de/immigrated-and-refugee-teachers-requal/digital-library/>).

According to Brydon-Miller (1997, 657), the participatory approach “refers both to research practices that create social change and, in the process, transform those participating in the research as well as to a fundamental transformation of the field.” Key for participatory research is to explore and further study the topic with experts in the field, (e.g. refugee teachers) as opposed to doing research without involving them and consequently promoting empowerment by co-creating the (research) environment. Adopting a participatory research process, the R/EQUAL partner programmes want to make sure that instead of reproducing colonial, hegemonic power structures by implementing research about subjects, we do research with participants as experts on themselves – which in the same way needs to be critically reflected according to a postcolonial perspective (Castro Varela 2015; Mecheril & Rose 2012). Taking all characteristics of participatory research into account, the project team found it a suitable approach for the questions of R/EQUAL.

The following is an overview of the experiences made in the R/EQUAL partner programmes with the participatory approach in R/EQUAL.

### **3. The participatory approach in the partner programmes and in R/EQUAL: Perspective of the programme coordination**

#### **3.1 Method for data collection**

The following overview is based on paper-based interviews with the coordinator of each programme. The coordinators have been asked the following questions:

- Which role does participation play in your programme?
- How important is participation in your programme?
- What did you learn about participation through R/EQUAL?
- Would you say that R/EQUAL has made your programme more participatory?
- What difficulties have you encountered?
- Are there any recommendations how to solve them / how to deal with them?
- What are your tips for working with the participatory approach in requalification programmes with international teachers?

#### **3.2 Results**

##### **3.2.1 Cologne**

As one of the partner programmes of R/EQUAL, the principle of participation became an important element of the programme for refugee teachers/LehrkräftePLUS at the University of Cologne.



Within the given structure of the programme, various possibilities of participation have been continuously developed on different levels of the programme. The initial structure and time frame are intended to provide orientation, which is particularly important at the beginning to give participants confidence in coping with the new challenges and to be able to plan in advance. As the programme proceeds, participants' perspectives are increasingly integrated into many parts of the programme, from joint decisions on learning content in seminars at the beginning of the programme up to discussions on the overall structure, e.g. the length of the internships. This involvement is organised in various formats, e.g. through joint meetings and discussion rounds, participatory teaching and learning-methods and research workshops, personal consultations and formative evaluation complementing the programme.

A participative perspective has become particularly important for the Cologne programme because it recognises the recently immigrated teachers' expertise in teaching and learning, who know their own strengths, learning needs and interests best. The programme is primarily intended as a programme which aims to provide targeted information about the new school system that the participants require in order to develop their teaching skills. Nevertheless, not all ideas and innovations recommended by the participants could be implemented. Mostly because there is a lack of time and/or financial resources, e.g. the offer of more than one German course for teachers in a parallel structure due to different levels of language proficiency. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that the participants contributed some very concrete and good ideas regarding the programme. Some of them also pointed out critical issues that are very important for improving the programme.

When using the participatory approach, it has to be taken into account that the idea of participation requires time resources. One of the main difficulties noticed was the shortage of time of the participants, who often had family responsibilities in addition to the many tasks in the programme. The situation was further complicated by the fact that many participants had to cover quite long distances to get to university or also to the internship schools. Another obstacle was the requirement to speak English within the R/EQUAL context. This meant that not all participants in the Cologne programme were able to participate in R/EQUAL activities, while others participated quite frequently. However, the participants who attended regularly also showed an increasing confidence and self-confidence in participating in the research processes.

Based on the last years experiences, it became apparent that a high degree of flexibility in participation formats is particularly useful. This concerns, for example, flexibility in time planning, language use, forms of interaction and research settings. For example, it appeared to be very fruitful to organise discussions and group interviews in smaller groups in which the participants had the opportunity to also speak their first languages. Some of the participants seemed to feel a bit insecure in formulating constructive criticism precisely and appropriately in the German or English language, while, in using their first language (mostly Arabic or Turkish), they felt more confident in expressing their personal opinions.

Especially in the context of a project using the participatory approach to work with refugee teachers, it should continuously be remembered that communication is always situated within a certain power and dependency structure. Within requalification programmes, participants receive certificates and support through the programmes to help them to re-enter the school system, and therefore some may fear that criticism may have negative side-effects. Thus, it is of great importance to give the participants the certainty that ideas or critical remarks about the programme will not have any negative consequences for them, but rather that they are valued as a commitment to the further development of the programme. It is also important that the participants are given enough space to exchange ideas with each other or with participants from other programmes so that they can use the conversation to develop and formulate their opinions and suggestions for improvement. On the staff side, there should be many different persons to contact and communication possibilities, so that different participants can communicate in different ways with different lecturers, and so that both participants who like to express themselves in large groups and those who prefer more personal conversations can participate.

Overall, it became clear that a participatory approach to a programme for refugee teachers is a great asset. As experts in learning settings, the participants had brought in many important topics and strengthened their perspectives. At the same time, however, it must also be noted that the formal framework of the programme itself, which included the decision for a participatory approach, could not itself be questioned by the participants. Within the R/EQUAL context the opportunity to be able to experience a participatory research setting was of great importance. Even though, R/EQUAL cannot be called a fully participatory research project, rather a research project in which participatory elements were successfully integrated.

### 3.2.2 Vienna

Starting with the inquiry about the role and importance of participation in the programme, it can be noted that the level of participation was highly important. Nevertheless, it can always be questioned how participation could have been an even bigger factor. The “participatory part” already started with the potential participants before the programme began as attempts were made to develop the whole process of initiating the programme together with the participants. The main problem was that the framework of the programme was already set up to be carried out as a regular (non-participatory) study programme, so the people involved ended up discussing only some specific topics that could be changed or modulated within the given framework with the help of the participatory group.

In the course of this, the academic researchers involved recognised that they were beyond “telling people what to do” but were not close to a (full) participant autonomy in the research process. In the participatory process through R/EQUAL it was possible to observe quite an advanced set of skills in relation to the participatory research. Furthermore, it was also possible to gain a deeper understanding of the main concerns in this kind of research, especially for the partner universities involved that have had no previous experience with participatory research in the past. Looking back,

it can be concluded that along the way all people involved came to a full understanding of the setbacks of the research method, as it happened that sometimes they were prepared for possible barriers but other times they had to rely on improvisation, which made the whole process more difficult.

From a retrospective view the whole process started with a very natural or kind of “naive” approach; as the programme continued, it became evident that this left a lot of questions unanswered. The participatory approach in R/EQUAL made the whole programme more participatory: the meetings with the participants brought a lot of (profitable) content from the certificate course and vice versa. A fusion of contents happened as the borders between the certificate course and the project R/EQUAL got blurred, which turned out to be a big advantage, given that R/EQUAL had the opportunity to learn from the certificate course and – again – vice versa. To sum up, a mutual exchange and profitable enrichment at different levels was achieved. The exchange between different programmes (through R/EQUAL) made the participants more critical towards the programme and it helped them to find new ways to organise between each other. It would certainly be interesting to know what it would look like if there were only partners that are/were already experienced in participatory research (e.g. universities from Australia or New Zealand). Possibly, the approach could have gone even further with the help of this expertise using the participatory approach.

One of the major concerns was the power imbalance between the participants and the coordinator/s involved in the programme and in the participatory group/research team. For this reason, care has been taken to ensure a balance (as much as possible); for example, people involved in the organisation of the programme only attended every second or third meeting with the participatory research crew. The other difficulty was the natural/naive approach that led to unanswered questions and loose ends. The organisational and administrative difficulties also play a big role in the participatory research, since one needs a lot of resources – personal, structural, organisational and financial, to keep updating and coordinating the whole process. It is also significant to consider the importance of a personal willingness to conduct the research work in a participatory way; in addition, it is necessary to remain flexible and open-minded (to expect the unexpected, in a sense).

The shortage of a structured, strict plan forces one to be adaptable to change. In this context it is essential to have some kind of a “backup plan” in case the imagined scenario does not play out and to always remember that one is dealing and working with people that do have their personal lives, individual challenges they have to face etc. Due to this, it is necessary to remember not to take the potential setbacks, or rather detours, personally. The goals of participatory research in this field should be set as if one was dealing with a person who lacks the time to continuously participate. There should be an external display of acceptance of each and everyone’s individual conditions and circumstances, to really show the participants that any kind of input from their side is alright and very welcome. In addition, it can be noted as a concise insight that one needs to be careful not to (re-)produce or perpetrate more prejudices about the group/s of people one is working with and that the constant (self-)reflection about one’s thoughts and behaviour in all the directions relative

to the specific research area is absolutely necessary and can be seen as a never-ending integral part of participatory research in general.

### 3.2.3 Stockholm

#### Bridging Programme

The Bridging programme in Stockholm, Sweden, started 2007, and is well established at six higher institutions in Sweden. The government allocates financing for the programme annually. Before studying within the Bridging programme, all students are offered study guidance about how their studies are designed. The student has the opportunity to highlight additional qualifications that did not emerge during the admission process to the programme. It can have influence over the pace of study and in some cases also the length of the studies. The students in the Bridging programme (and throughout the University) have the opportunity to evaluate every course they take at the end. The evaluations are followed up and changes/developments in the course take place to increase students' throughput and results.

Stockholm University has since 2016 more actively been working and aiming for transparent working methods and information in the Bridging programme. In 2018 the programme council for the Bridging programme was established. The council is composed by members from various departments and office staff. The council also has a "studentombud" (student representative) who represents the students. The council has given rise to the exchange of information and discussions on development needs within the programme. In the end of 2020, the council had a discussion how to increase the students influence overall.

During their first semester in the Bridging programme the students has the opportunity to participate in a student-led SI-PASS (Supplemental Instruction-Peer Assisted Study Sessions)<sup>1</sup>. The SI-sessions help students to succeed with selected, often introductory, difficult courses. The students meet during the first semester in smaller study groups. The leader of the SI-sessions is a more experienced student who has taken the course previously, or a similar course, and acts as a role model and guide, but not as a teacher.

The experience from many years of coordination of the Bridging programme shows that continuous communication is of great importance. But also that the departments that provide courses in education need resources to develop teaching methods for students who have experience as teachers in other countries than Sweden. The coordination of the Bridging programme has changed its way of thinking over time and demands more follow-ups where students' perspectives are made visible – and R/EQUAL has been a push forward in that direction. Hopefully, it can lead to a student council being linked to the coordination of the education to increase participatory approach even more.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.si-pass.lu.se/en/about-si-pass> (access: 27.02.21)

The Bridging programme is an individually tailored programme, mostly 1-2 years of study. The students want to complete the programme as soon as possible so they can get their National certification to teach in Sweden. The students are often persons with family responsibility and do not have time to be more involved in the education. To be able to get more involved in the design of the programme, students need the right prerequisites to participate, for example receive compensation for working with the education. A more practical advice is practicing listening to the students – talk less, listen more.

### The Fast Track

The Fast Track was given between 2016 and 2019 at Stockholm University, in collaboration with the Swedish Public Employment Service. The education, offered by six higher education institutions in Sweden, comprises 26 weeks and is financed by the Swedish Public Employment. The course in the Fast Track is based on specially selected areas within Swedish teacher education.

The teachers in the Fast Track at Stockholm University used translanguaging as a resource, which means that the students can use all available language resources during the education. The education in the Fast Track contains both theoretical studies and internship at schools. All teaching has a contrastive perspective: the participant's experiences from education and the school system in their country of origin are continuously compared with the Swedish context. The course design with both a comparative and a translanguage perspective hopefully leads to a more participant-centered perspective and a participatory approach within the Fast Track.

The Fast Track is continuously offered at the following higher education institutions: Örebro University.

### 3.2.4 Weingarten

In the IGEL programme of the University of Education Weingarten, the idea of co-design and co-determination of the participants in the development of the concept or in decision-making areas during its implementation was not an original principle. The participants were meant to be the addressees of an offer that was intended to support them in focusing their commitment after they had finished teaching. Stimulated by the European project R/EQUAL, tasks have developed in the first areas, which lie in the wider environment of IGEL project activities, such as evaluative and research-related tasks, participation in external information and networking offers as well as the support of new participants by Alumni, which contain moments of co-determination. This is where one can find participation in the programme of the University of Education Weingarten.

With the first positive experiences of responsible co-designing, the idea of participation became more significant beyond mere participation and was pursued throughout the programme time where it served the purpose of both participants and team members to deliver the programme in Weingarten in a target- and address-oriented manner and to win everyone over.

What did the IGEL team learn about participation through R/EQUAL? The IGEL team found out from the R/EQUAL partners what knowledgeable joint research activities they had carried out. It gave the team the initial impulse to involve participants from the IGEL project in these activities. From the role of those responsible, the participants seemed to be more involved in the overall context. From the outside, however, we also had the impression that there was a difference if someone was also involved in the university or if they were only involved as participants in certain tasks. Whoever else was also involved in the University appeared more self-confident in their appearance. It also became apparent that the change of roles between programme responsible persons and the participants in teaching and in relation to the shared responsibilities must be made sensitive.

R/EQUAL definitely has made the IGEL programme more participatory, the example of the other partners as well as the exchange in larger groups with the participants in another role and the members of the consortium were stimulating. From the growing option of participation in the IGEL Programme, we see joy in the recognition and motivation of the teachers the IGEL team has invited to get involved. Since they only started to participate after their own active participation, they were already familiar with many contexts. It is unclear how this would be the case if the participants were involved in tasks such as curriculum planning, teaching, administration or finances before they were familiar with those. However, we also observe at the University of Weingarten that taking part in the programme, which leads directly to a lateral entry into the study programme, takes up all of their capacity in addition to family and other life support and there is not much room for further responsibilities. It seems to be rather up to the programme manager to integrate areas of participation carefully and moderately. The IGEL team has also observed that the group of participants is always willing to share their perspectives from outside, in networking activities or to be available for questions and exchange with the press and other interested members of the public.

Due to the fact, that the participation approach was only slowly integrated into the IGEL project at University of Education Weingarten, it turned out to be helpful to slowly take the participants along into certain responsibilities (for example, initially networking and press work), and with growing familiarity with the educational system and the programme team they can take part regarding other tasks. On the one hand, this gives the participants the opportunity to decline even if they do not have the time, and on the other hand, the careful involvement gives them hope that they can contribute their expertise accordingly.

Based on the experiences in the IGEL programme, it is recommended to discuss at what time it seems reasonable to review the relevant decision-making areas regarding possible participation and to consider at what points in the course of the programme the involvement of the participants can be appropriately set.

## 4. The participatory approach in the partner programmes and R/EQUAL: Perspective of the participants (group interviews)

### 4.1 Research Methods

#### Group interviews with participants of each programme

The design of the group interviews based on the participation approach by von Unger (2014) and the model of steps of participation by Wright, von Unger and Block (2010) from August to September 2019 (see in detail chapter 2 of this report). However, the primary aim here was not to precisely assign and classify certain phases in the programmes to the various levels. Rather, the stages described in the system served as an impulse for joint discussions and reflections on various forms of participation. To do so, the following impulses were used, provided by the R/EQUAL consortium:

- (1) What do you know about the Project R/EQUAL?
- (2) Were you able to participate in R/EQUAL and if yes, in which way?
- (3) What would have helped you to be able to strengthen your participation in R/EQUAL?

In the discussions with the participants, the stage model of participation by Wright, von Unger and Block (2010) was discussed with the participants. Thereby, the attempt to place the activities within this system also served as an impulse for a general discussion of various experiences and possibilities of participation. Different activities were often initially assigned to the system rather spontaneously, and sometimes also varying among different participants.

The group interviews with participants of each partner programme were conducted from September 2019 to February 2020. The group interviews were carried out multilingually by using the most functional languages (e.g. at the University of Cologne, the participants spoke German, Arabic and English during the group interview). Because of this international analysis-process all quotes from participants in this report have been translated into English when writing the transcripts. The group interviews were transcribed by each partner to June 2020. The University of Cologne collected the interview transcripts provided by each partner and conducted the analysis.

Interviews were conducted at the various programmes with the following number of participants:

- Cologne: 1 Group (6 Participants)
- Weingarten: 2 Groups (9 Participants)
- Vienna: 1 Group (3 Participants)
- Stockholm: 1 Group (2 Participants)

### Qualitative Content Analysis

The University of Cologne carried out a qualitative content analysis (see: Schreier 2014; Kuckartz 2018) with a focus on the participatory approach applied in R/EQUAL. The aim of the data analysis was to provide an overview on the perspectives of the participants on different possibilities of participation within the programmes and R/EQUAL. To do so, a qualitative content analysis was conducted. The category-based method was structured by main categories and supplemented by sub-categories developed out of the material. Even though the questions of the group interviews offered a certain structure, the main categories as well as the sub-categories were developed out of the material in an inductive process. Through a comparative categorisation of the interview data of all partner programmes, a variety of key issues addressed by the participants became apparent.

## 4.2 Results

In the following the results of the content analysis for the group interviews were structured in three main categories, that give insight in the central conditions of a participatory approach used in programmes for (recently) immigrated and refugee teachers.



Main categories Pathways for participation		Information and Communication (as preconditions for participation)	Networking (as a support strategy for participation)	Language sensitivity and the inclusion of multilingualism (as means to facilitate participation)
Sub-categories Supportive Conditions	Partner Programmes	good communication (about) organisation communication about topics and content regular personal meetings	exchange of experiences and knowledge among the participants regular contact between participants and schools thereby recognition of (intercultural and multilingual) knowledge as an important competence of teachers in (post-)migrant societies	possibility to work on tasks in the language of one's choice understanding the ability to speak several languages as an important competence to teach in multilingual and culturally diverse learning groups
	R/EQUAL	providing multiple information sources offering differentiated opportunities for involvement facilitating communication between participants	possibilities to share experience between participants of different programmes, for example through autonomously prepared partner interviews.	differentiated research settings, e.g. by forming small research groups to enable the use of different languages
Sub-categories Barriers	Partner Programmes	structural limits of participation uncertainty about one's own role in the programme	high workload of the participants	difficulties in working with professional terminology speaking about specific professional systems and shifts of meaning in literal translations of technical literature as well as individual learning needs
	R/EQUAL	uncertainty about aims and structures and thus in expressing one's own opinion due to so far little experience with research processes	merely indirect networking of some participants with programmes and participants of other universities	english as a prerequisite for participation in activities

Table 1: Overview over the categories

#### 4.2.1 Information and communication as preconditions for participation

Supportive conditions within the partner programmes: good communication (about) organisation, communication about topics and content and regular personal meetings.

A first important issue mentioned by the participants is the exchange of information and communication. With regard to the organisation of the programmes, it was positively emphasised that it was well structured and communicated to the participants via a variety of information sources (e.g. meetings, emails, Whats-App):

“As a person who was organising, she was great. That is my opinion. You now, everything was scheduled, everything was clear. I mean dates and our duties, what are we going to do, yeah and she sends us in the WhatsApp all information” (Participant, University of Vienna).

Therefore, the general objectives of the programmes (e.g. the requalifying for re-entry into the school system or preparation for further studies) were clear to the participants and could be named by them without difficulties. In organising the programmes, the needs of the participants were taken into account. “And they always take into consideration that we have families with us, we have other things to do, so no one took us under pressure regarding the meetings or the time” (Participant, University of Vienna). In general, the participants considered it as particularly important to be involved in time planning (e.g. Participant, University of Education, Weingarten).

Also, with regard to the content of the programmes, the participants appreciated it when a clear structure was predefined by the coordinators, but which took into account the needs of the participants and was open to suggestions:

“If there is anything we think about before, so not only will you send us information and this is information so you can just check and write. No, we have fully decided if we think something needs wondering, so we can send you back if we like this, and we as a team we all take these new ideas, or suggestions, to the best as we have seen. So we are not passive participants, we are active participants” (Participant, Stockholm University).

**Overall, the participants felt encouraged to contribute topics and contents:**

“For some seminars or tasks we had given information and suggestions and these were then worked on. And also with the topic of our homework, we had the freedom to choose which topics we wanted to work on and how to write it” (Participant University of Cologne).

Joint discussions and meetings with the possibility to discuss different topics face-to-face were seen as an important element for the exchange of information and joint communication between participants and lecturers/organisers:

“Yes, more meetings together, discussing more, in real life, not just via mail or Skype. (...) Because when we meet there is more focus, there is more participation in information with each other... via mail I may not be able to read mail right now and maybe I read it three or four days ago. And it is very important, I think we meet in one place all of the Stockholm team, so we focus better, we gather the information. Maybe I perceive the information in another way. It is much better to meet than write emails back and forth” (Participant, Stockholm University).

In these regular personal meetings an open and non-hierarchical atmosphere could develop, in which the participants felt encouraged to articulate their own perspectives and to listen to other perspectives:

“I want to tell you more about this team, no one knows more than the others, sometimes it means if I am just a participant and the other is the coordinator or more involved in this project sometimes I can explain more than them and vice versa. So it was a very comfortable environment to work in, there is no hierarchy pressure, or inner group and outer group, that you feel that because I am only a participant I do not get some information, no, everything was open and we discussed freely. Sometimes, (when) we had great difficulties understanding other perspectives we took it with a positive attitude” (Participant, Stockholm University).

Generally, the Participants seem to appreciate a clearly defined framework, but within this structure they want to be involved in decisions, e.g. on content, from the very beginning.

#### Supportive conditions within R/EQUAL: Providing multiple information sources, offering differentiated opportunities for involvement and facilitating communication between participants

When it comes to information and communication in the context of R/EQUAL, there are two groups to be distinguished. First, there were participants who regularly attended meetings and were involved in many decision-making processes. Over time, this structured engagement of these participants in various work phases and feedback sessions increased the feeling of being involved in the research process:

“I became more included when we worked at IO3 when I wrote about methods I have chosen myself. And when we were in Cologne, then we have also chosen which method is the best fit, and which is the one that gets the most choice of this method is better than the others. And where we have every person who has written about these methods has explained how the method works in schools or universities, and when we have scored or assessed these methods in different fields where they have written, then they have sent all the assessments that we have done to the participants. Then when we came back we were informed that we should write about other methods that they have already chosen, and it was a good time for us to become more involved in this programme” (Participant, Stockholm University).

Second, however, since good English language skills were a prerequisite for participating in many R/EQUAL-meetings, other participants were less involved and were informed rather indirectly about the results discussed in R/EQUAL:

“Of course we had not taken part in R/EQUAL, we had taken part in this program, but nevertheless we asked all the questions and we took notice of them (Members of R/EQUAL) and our colleagues also worked with them” (Participant, University of Cologne).

This communication among the participants is an important part of keeping everyone informed about the latest developments, and it is important to provide opportunities for this in the programmes. Through this exchange between participants, the general aims and contents of the R/EQUAL research network (e.g. the exchange of experiences from programmes in different countries) were also known to participants who had previously been little directly involved in R/EQUAL

activities. Overall, it is important to offer various opportunities for participation which allow all participants access, especially regarding languages spoken by the participants (more on this topic see 4.2.3).

Barriers within the partner programmes: Structural limits of participation and uncertainty about one's own role in the programme.

The way in which the participants were involved in communication depended very much on the respective situation. "It depends on the situation (...) For example, in some things we have only received instructions and in other situations we have been called. And often we also have a say in the decision-making process and we have some decision-making authority. Mrs. S has also given us the - freedom of choice - which is important to us" (Participant, University of Cologne).

Due to different subjects and areas of responsibility, the participants are sometimes little involved in certain issues and elements of the programmes. The participants showed understanding for this:

"With the administration and financial. Sometimes you come here, (...) they have already finished too many meetings. And we were not there. But I think that is not our concern. We don't have to do these, you know? Maybe sometimes some information is missed, you know? But I mean concerning all activities and the duties we have here done was clear for us. But these administrative issues, of course, we cannot be involved in all" (Participant, University of Vienna).

However, these variations in participation described above sometimes led to uncertainties among participants regarding their own role in the programmes: "So it's not always like our role is clear" (Participant, University of Vienna).

Barriers within R/EQUAL: Uncertainty about aims and structures and thus in expressing one's own opinion due to so far little experience with research processes.

With regard to R/EQUAL, some participants sometimes felt a bit insecure about expressing their opinions openly. This seemed to be due to the scientific framework (and the scientific background of the people involved), which was previously unfamiliar to the participants:

"I always felt shy to ask questions since I had always this feelings that I can't compete with this people. (...) This was wrong. I had to to ask from the beginning, that I had to be so clear that I don't understand what, what we have to do and what is the goal" (Participant, University of Vienna).

This statement also indicates that the aim of the various researches in R/EQUAL was often not clear at the beginning, which led to further barriers in communication: "And we have to do research but I don't know what is the goal. What I know that we have to answer these questions now, we have to analyse this but I don't know why" (Participant, University of Vienna). This was also due to the fact that this kind of research was new to many of the participants:

"Maybe it's clear in your head. Maybe in (Name of Researcher)'s head. Maybe because you have the target or you know how it's going on. But for me it's my first research or research work. Now, I know what's going on, but sometimes you (have to) set a goal" (Participant, University of Vienna).

To avoid these difficulties, it is important that researchers are aware that many of the participants have never been involved in research processes before. Processes and goals that are taken for granted in the daily work of experienced researchers are not always obvious to the participants. Therefore, the aims and methods of the research process should be explicitly clarified in advance.

#### 4.2.2 Networking as a support strategy for participation

Supportive conditions within the partner programmes: Exchange of experiences and knowledge among the participants, regular contact between participants and schools and thereby recognition of (intercultural and multilingual) knowledge as an important competence of teachers in (post-)migrant societies

The networking of the participants at different levels appeared to be of crucial importance for participation. In this context, networking among the participants themselves as well as with schools is of fundamental importance.

It was regarded as very important by the participants to network with each other and thus to better overcome the challenges related to professional reintegration in a new country:

“I can say as a group we have worked really well, because all participants were really open. We could work together all the time even though we encountered difficulties, then we discussed together and tried to look at the bright side. Sometimes for example if I didn’t understand, I asked the others and they are really nice and we laugh together and solve the task, or if I misunderstood the information the others can correct” (Participant, Stockholm University).

The quote shows that, in addition to the exchange of information and knowledge, an emotional strengthening in solving challenges is also achieved through networking among the participants.

The participants considered the programmes at the universities as very helpful while getting in contact with schools. “The schools respect when they hear ‘the University of Cologne’, for example. So, because I believe it was this kind of programme, (that) was run by the universities or with the support of the government, gives it a kind of a trend to be accepted by others” (Participant, University of Cologne).

The networking with schools puts the participants in a position where they can combine theory and practice and thus enrich the seminars as well as the schools with their knowledge:

“Because we are in the field, in the schools. We can describe what is happening during the course and then linking theory and practice in the schools and are giving feedback” (Participant, University of Vienna).

Through networking with and feedback from schools, participants increasingly regard themselves as professionals who can make important contributions to the society of their new country of residence:

“They have many children with a migration background and perhaps these children do not understand the mentality of this society. And they need trained teachers (...) to bring the experience of these people and put it into practice in school and the children do not need to be as far away from the culture where they live” (Participant, University of Cologne).

It was also emphasised by the participants, that the seminars in the programmes were based on the experience of the participants in their previous professional life and the possibilities of transfer of this experience to the education systems of the respective country.

“We talked a lot about our past as teachers. How can we use what we have learned here in Germany?” (Participant, University of Cologne).

Supportive conditions within R/EQUAL: Possibilities to share experience between participants of different programmes, for example through autonomously prepared partner interviews.

The exchange of participants between the four universities was perceived as very helpful and enriching. It was a strong support for the participants to realize that other participants shared their situation in other countries, which led to a feeling of solidarity:

“We share experience, we share knowledge, we share stories sometimes. So, it was about maybe we felt that we were not alone. We were many people in different parts of Europe, share the same things actually as were going to say. I felt as a part of a big thing” (Participant, University of Cologne).

A particularly useful method that combined networking and research was the partner interviews between participants from different R/EQUAL cooperation partners, in which the participants could create the questionnaires by themselves:

“Because I participated in interviews and wrote some questions on my hands. The decision (was) about us so I would say (that was) shared decision making” (Participant, University of Cologne).

Barriers within the partner programmes: High workload of the participants.

The high workload of the participants was identified as a major obstacle for networking, especially regarding the already above-mentioned face-to-face meetings.

“Yes, more meetings together, discussing more, in real life, not just via mail or Skype. But it is on the other hand (this is) very difficult because everyone has other jobs and work” (Participant, Stockholm University).

Another participant adds:

“Yes, I agree. And as I see it, it is better if we meet often and discuss everything that happens in the programme. It will be better for us to understand and discuss with each other what the whole programme is all about, and what comes next, and the next and the next. The problem is that sometimes, as (Name of another Participant) said, I work and he works, so the problem is that we cannot often meet at the same time. Yes, this is the problem” (Participant, Stockholm University).

Some participants therefore express the wish to be involved in the time planning, if this is possible. This applies both to the coordination with everyday duties and to the amount of time spent on certain topics (Participant, University of Education, Weingarten).

Barriers within R/EQUAL: Merely indirect networking of some participants with programmes and participants of other universities.

Although, as mentioned above, in principle all participants were informed about the activities of R/EQUAL, the rather indirect access to information for some participants was also partly seen as an obstacle to taking part in R/EQUAL:

“Frankly speaking, as I did not participate in the programme or what was that seminar or so, so frankly I do not have information about that. But as I heard from the group, I received information but if I mention the information that you have just heard, that will be repetition of information” (Participant, University of Cologne).

#### 4.2.3 Language sensitivity and inclusion of multilingualism offers pathways for participation

Supportive conditions within the partner programmes: Possibility to work on tasks in the language of one's choice and understanding the ability to speak several languages as an important competence to teach in multilingual and culturally diverse learning groups.

A translinguistic approach was applied in the programmes, which enabled the participants to use the language of their choice during many learning situations and (group) discussions: “We also have the freedom of choice, in which language we could also write our homework” (Participant, University of Cologne).

The ability to speak several languages in the programmes was subsequently seen by the participants as a competence in supporting multilingual students, who are newly arrived in the respective countries as well.

“There are many students in schools that have other languages and then here in Sweden we need teachers who know different languages and help these students who come to Sweden. It's not easy to teach them because they come from different countries and they have different cultures, and the language is not easy for them to master it. So it takes time and it's easier to attend these who are already teachers, they've joined this whole programme with other languages and it will be easier for them to complete their education and continue to become teachers and help these children who come from other countries” (Participant, Stockholm University).

This quote also shows that the participants partially associate language with cultural dimensions, so that trans-linguistic as well as transcultural contexts are seen as part of their teaching task.

“I want to add a little to what (Name of Participant) says, because of events like in the Middle East, many families have moved to Europe and the children who come to school they need, I think, extra help. (...) This extra help they can get through this project, or the result of this project, that they prepared these newly arrived teachers to help these children who came to school with some other culture, some other community, some other system, so I think this purpose also to this project” (Participant, Stockholm University).

Supportive conditions within R/EQUAL: Differentiated research settings, e.g. by forming small research groups to enable the use of different languages

Through various formats in R/EQUAL, participants had the opportunity to contribute in their first languages. For example, the partner interviews in IO1 were partly conducted in Arabic. Not least in the group interviews for IO5, which are the basis of this analysis, the participants were able to use several languages. In the Cologne interviews, for example, the participants spoke in German, Arabic and English.

Barriers within the partner programmes: Difficulties in working with professional terminology, speaking about specific professional systems and shifts of meaning in literal translations of technical literature as well as individual learning needs.

One topic that is frequently addressed by the participants are language challenges. The request to have additional offers for language learning is mainly related to professional requirements (e.g. working with specialised literature):

“I would definitely (...) take care of the language even more because both I and the others who have taken the C-exam have a lot of problems. When I say I have C1 level but I don't understand these texts anyway. This is embarrassing for me and of course the people who have a little less level and have lower level, they have of course more problems. For example, personally I find these subordinate clauses, which are placed one after the other, make the understanding of the text very, very complicated. Therefore, if I had to decide, I would really care more about the language and especially educational language” (Participant, University of Education, Weingarten).

The participants differentiate between different fields with regard to their language skills:

“For example, I have certain difficulties, I am good with language, with a good level, but I have for example beginner level in technology, for example in computer, or for example he also has a good level in language, but also I don't know how the system works in my studies” (Participant Weingarten).

Since some participants teach technically related subjects (mathematics, physics, etc.) and work in a professional system that is new to them, it is important to offer specific learning opportunities for specialised language. It is also suggested to establish a continuous contact to students in regular teacher training, e.g. to work on texts and prepare for exams etc.

“Because I think it would be better if, for example, the buddies are students who have to write the same tests as we do. (...) You can work on a lot of texts together with the students, for example. That would have a very different impact on motivation” (Participant, University of Education, Weingarten).

Particularly with regard to professional terminology, challenges of multilingualism are also pointed out, such as the fact that sometimes different concepts lie behind literal translations:

“Also, switching from one language to another is not easy for the terminology, or concepts changing from English to Swedish, sometimes they are not the same and it is very difficult to remember, or just this word that explains, or describe the word as you wish. Also use the possibility to apply the IO2 multilingual concept, in the project at once, I think it doesn't matter if it is



English, Arabic or another language, so it shows I actually believe in what we are investigating, or the purpose of this project” (Participant, Stockholm University).

Depending on the goal of the respective programme, special language requirements should be practiced, e.g. exam questions in preparation for further studies. As far as possible, individual learning needs should also be discussed with the participants and considered in the programmes:

“Secondly, we must also make an individual diagnosis of each participant, what are his strengths and what are his weaknesses. (...) For example, I have weaknesses... I am good with language, have a good level, but I have a beginner's level in technology, for example in computers, or he has a good level in language, but he doesn't know how the system works in the study, and then we can organise afterwards. For example, the three of us need support with computers, the other three need support with language” (Participant, University of Education, Weingarten).

Finally, in addition to technical language, colloquial language should also be learned, as students express themselves in this way and it is important that teachers have a good understanding of this kind of speech. “We also have to learn colloquial language, because the students (in school) speak colloquial language” (Participant, University of Education, Weingarten).

#### Barriers within R/EQUAL: English as a requirement for participation in activities

Although translanguaging was both a part of the programmes and a topic in R/EQUAL, in some events and research formats English was required, so that not all participants could participate in all activities:

“I could also participate, but because of the English language - I was told that in the room will be spoken also in English. And that is why I did not participate at all” (Participant, University of Cologne).

Based on the positive experience of the translanguaging approach in the programme, the proposal was made to consider an openness for many languages in research as well:

“(There) could be not only English as a prerequisite, maybe German and Arabic also. So, we have a translanguaging perspective, so we could use it in the project, too. That worked pretty good. Everybody maybe, almost everybody can join” (Participant, University of Cologne).

In addition to the inclusion of the first languages, it was also suggested to create opportunities to participate with the languages of the countries of the respective universities:

“I also wanted to say that it would be better in German. Especially those countries that cooperated and perhaps all the countries that cooperated were also German” (Participant, University of Cologne).

It becomes apparent that English as the shared language in R/EQUAL offers the opportunity to work together in an international partnership and functions as a bridging language in many situations on the one side, while it also excludes the participants that were not able to speak English from participating in R/EQUAL on the other side. Regarding the status of English as a *lingua franca* (ELF) in its ambivalence Saraceni points out: “It ignores the fluidity of ELF and would merely create another exonormative linguistic standard that excludes speakers who do not adhere to this norm, in a similar fashion as native standards exclude non-native speakers” (Saraceni 2010, 86).

A strategy to take the multilingual situation within the programmes as well as in R/EQUAL into account were the offer of multilingual interview settings. In the end, the participation in multiplier events, transnational project meetings as well as (research) workshops was dependent on proficiency in the English language.

#### 4.2.4 Overall evaluation of the group interviews with regard to the stage model

As described in 4.1, the group interviews were related to the stage model of participation of Wright, von Unger and Block (2010), which was visualised for the participants during the interviews. Overall, all levels from 1 to 7 were assigned in relation to different activities and phases of the programmes and of R/EQUAL. This broad spectrum of levels of participations that appeared in the course of the interviews was reflected by the participants:

“I think because our programme is new and everyone is learning from it - not only us, but also the complete ones before us, we have a large space to act from non-participation to participation for the seventh level, I think. So I think from one to six, seven” (Participant, University of Cologne).

In general, an increase in participation opportunities was seen as the programmes progressed.

“The more time passed, the more I got the feeling that (...) we had more participation and decision-making rights” (Participant, University of Education, Weingarten).

This applies both to the respective programmes and to R/EQUAL.

“I also participated in IO3, which we started in Germany, then afterward we make this assessment about the methods, so I also felt more involved with the decision is made. So if I look at this staircase I believe in IO1, I was only on step two, but IO2, IO3 I became more...I feel more than six, and a little more seventh also these stairs” (Participant, Stockholm University).

The participants in Vienna established a coordinate system for this purpose, which shows that the opportunities for participation increased rapidly at the beginning and were then continuously at a high level between levels 4 and 6.

Although the participants would like to be involved in questions of content and organisation from the very beginning, they also take into account the fact that the coordinators are familiar with the knowledge required for the new school system and should therefore set general guidelines for structure and topics:

“So the coordinators (names) they know better and more than we do, of course. I can't say, 'No we don't do integration or communication or stereotypes, that's not important', I can't say that, they can decide that better, I think. I would be reluctant to do that” (Participant, University of Education, Weingarten).

Nevertheless, the participants would like to be involved in decision-making and organisation from the beginning. For example, be involved in establishing contact with schools from the start, but at the same time receiving assistance in writing emails etc.

In addition to mere classifications, the presentation of the levels of participation (and their description by the authors) was intended to serve as a basis for differentiated reflections on different forms

and degrees of participation. Here, both particularly high and particularly low ratings were questioned by the participants and led to discussions on the different ways of involvement:

“Seven? No. We don't give decision this is beyond us, right?” (Participant, University of Cologne).

“We can tackle our problems and we have discussed this a lot with schools and what we can do better to solve our problems. Yes, and that's why I think we were in the sixth step of co-determination” (Participant, University of Cologne).

So, although – or rather because – the rankings of the participants were sometimes disputed or even contradictory, this resulted in an in-depth conversation about the possibilities and challenges of different aspects and structures of the programmes and R/EQUAL, from which the above structure of categories (see table 1) could be developed.

## 5. The participatory approach in the partner programmes and R/EQUAL: The perspective of the participants (online survey)

### 5.1. Research Methods

#### Quantitative questionnaire survey

After the participants of the four R/EQUAL partner programmes had exchanged views on participation in the group interviews within the qualitative study, a complementary quantitative questionnaire survey on the experience of and interest in participation as well as on the gains from participation opportunities was conducted. The questionnaire was developed in a cooperating process of the partners in the consortium and three participants of the programmes. The questions of the online survey were derived from the results of the content-analyses of the group interviews and supplemented by further topics that were of interest to the partners. The core aspects of the questionnaire include questions about the interest to engage in certain fields of activity both in the requalification programme the participants join and in the overall R/EQUAL project. It also inquires on the possible time investment, the gain for the universities and the participants if they take on a more responsible role in carrying out the activities, as well as opportunities, barriers and ideas for improving the participatory approach.

In addition to closed questions, which are formulated as statements (items), the questionnaire includes open questions. They refer to aspects such as describing examples of how participants have concretely experienced aspects of involvement, or ideas on how the programmes could further be improved so that opportunities for responsible engagement are exploited. Running the questionnaire serves to capture the perspectives of a larger number of participants and to explore which statements of the qualitative study are confirmed and which further experiences or ideas for improvement should be added.

## Genesis of the questionnaire

The questionnaire items were first prepared in German by team Weingarten and then translated into an English draft of the questionnaire, which was edited by all partners of the consortium. Finally, this version was translated back into German and into Swedish. Linguistically, the following aspects proved challenging:

- In German, the term “Partizipation” (participation) includes co-consultation, co-involvement and co-decision-making. The term captures both the scope of action and decision-making. The German term “Teilnehmer\*in” (participant) is more narrow, since it only refers to a person taking part in the programme, but not necessarily includes features of co-determination. The two terms have therefore quite clearly separated meanings. In English, however, if the term “participation” was used as the concepts of a general membership in the programmes it would be confusing using it also for its wider understanding of co-determination. It was therefore necessary to use other formulations to express the idea of being jointly responsible and also being able to have a share in decision making. In Swedish participation is translated to “deltagande/studentinflytande”.

All three versions, German, English and Swedish, were posted in the format of the survey-software *Evasys*. All three links were sent to the respondents via the four partners by email in December 2020; the distribution lists included both current participants and alumni. They were addressed in the usual style of contact at the respective programme, which could be more formal or more personal. The respondents were able to choose the language of the questionnaire. The partners followed up again with a reminder email in January 2021.

## Sample

In the project announcement, it was planned to survey at least 60 (recently) immigrated and refugee teachers and to provide a statistical analysis for this evaluation report. In the end, a number of 134 participants took part in the survey, exceeding the initial expectations.

Locations	Addressed N=605	Captured n=134	Response 22,1%
Cologne	56	31	55,3%
Stockholm	463	84	18,1%
Vienna	71	6	8,5%
Weingarten	16	13	81,2%

Table 2: Number of participants of the online survey with the response overall and by programme

In order to anonymise smaller sub-samples, a distinction was made with the following independent variables: participation status (current participant or alumni), gender (male, female, diverse) and location of the programme (Cologne, Stockholm, Vienna, Weingarten). In addition, all participants in the Weingarten programme, which is a rather small group of participants, were asked all to register as current participants, even if they attended their preparatory courses at different times, since conceptually the transition into the regular study programme of teacher education and the studies during the semesters are part of the programme and thus everyone is ultimately still an active person in the programme. This also served to ensure anonymity in this little group.

Since R/EQUAL took place over a period of two and a half years and the partner programme courses run between 26 weeks (Stockholm-Fast Track), one year (Cologne and Vienna) and the individual period of studying (Stockholm-Bridging Programme and Weingarten) it has to be taken into account that participants experienced different courses and thus involved in different parts of the R/EQUAL project, if they did at all. Only a few people were able to be part of R/EQUAL over the whole period of time, for example first as participants and then as alumni of a partner programme. Therefore, one has to keep in mind that data on the participatory approach was not collected from a fixed group of (recently) immigrated and refugee teachers that were part of the whole process, but from fluctuating groups taking part in different courses.

#### Data analysis

The quantitative data was initially analysed descriptively using mean values and standard deviations in order to be able to draw up an overall picture of the (former) participants' opinions on participation. Group differences were compared in relation to the above-mentioned characteristics *status in the programme*, *gender* as well as the programme named by *location*. The respective group comparisons largely proved not to be statistically significant and thus unproductive on the basis of the samples. Few differences with regard to the different programmes cannot be interpreted satisfactorily because of the fluctuation and changes within the curriculum and workloads of the programmes (e.g. Weingarten and Stockholm expanded their bridging programmes). Thus, they are not reported. In the gender comparison, two aspects proved to be statistically significant after T-test calculation and will be reported. The comparison on the status of former (alumnus/a) and current participant turns out with hardly any differences as to the mean values and no statistical significance.

The respondents had the opportunity to choose between four possible answers, from "disagree" to "agree" on a Likert scale as the following image shows. The values were assigned in ascending order (disagree - 1, agree - 4).

2. I would have liked to have more opportunity for participation in the programme (participation in arranging the programme and decision making).						
2.1 Organisation of the programme	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree
2.2 Official representative of the students	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree

Image 1: Example of the scale in the English version of the questionnaire

The adverb “strongly”, which is common in questionnaires in the English language, was not used in the Likert scale of this survey, because the parallel in German with the wording “trifft voll zu” and “trifft gar nicht zu” in a 4-point Likert scale did not seem appropriate since it stresses the extreme too much. In retrospect, regarding that most items do not show a normal distribution and there is a tendency towards positive agreement it might have been better to work with the 5-point Likert scale and use the wording of the original Likert scale.

Next to the set items, the participants had the opportunity to formulate an individual answer under “other” after each item block.

The answers to the open questions were categorised in terms of content if a sufficient number of answers were given, or are only presented as individual examples if only a few answers were given overall. It needs to be reported in advance that quite a few answers to the open questions do not meet the question exactly but seem to give feedback more broadly on the programme but not on the specific question of co-determination and responsibilities for the activities. We take it that participation was read less in the specific sense of participation in taking over jobs in the programmes and share decision-making, than in the meaning of participating in the courses in a general perspective of being part of it. If ever that was totally obvious such answers were not included in the data analysis, they were included though if not.

### Structure of the questionnaire

The questionnaire follows six main topics, some of which contain several blocks of items:

- Participation in the programmes’ activities
- Exchange with respected groups in the programmes
- Benefits of participation for the participants themselves and universities
- Barriers for participation in the programmes
- Communication and using languages
- Options of participation in R/EQUAL

The answers on open questions that were given in Swedish were translated into English. The coding process was initially carried out in German and English by team Weingarten. Parts of the answers to open questions that would allow conclusions to be drawn about individuals were made unrecognisable during the data processing. Open questions addressed the following issues:

- Examples of situations in which participants have been involved or felt responsible for activities in the programme
- Reasons why participants do not want to be involved responsibly in the planning, implementation or evaluation of the programme
- Suggestions on how to improve communication in the programme so that participants can be more involved in planning, implementation and evaluation
- Suggestions on how the use of languages in the programme could be improved to enable more participation in planning, implementation and evaluation.

The last part of the questionnaire dealt with the international R/EQUAL project and the possibilities of participation there. Only those participants who were familiar with the R/EQUAL project answered those questions. For reasons of anonymity, however, no further distinction was made between alumni and current participants and descriptive statistical numbers are later on given on the sampling of n=39. Finally, it should be noted that the online questionnaire makes a distinction between the programmes and R/EQUAL although the results of the group interviews showed that the participants don't distinct clearly the programmes and R/EQUAL activities and that the European project played a less important role from the participants' point of view.

### Insights into the questionnaire

15. Barriers that complicate participation in the programmes are ...				
15.1 ...language barriers in German / or Swedish (depending on where you live)	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree
15.2 ...language barriers in English	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree
15.3 ...little knowledge of the academic system	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree
15.4 ...time pressure on studying	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree
15.5 ...time pressure on fulfilling assessments	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree
15.6 ...time pressure on family responsibilities and jobs	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree
15.7 ...legal requirements	disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	agree
15.8 ...other like:				
<input type="text"/>				

16.
16.1 What could be a reason for people who attend the programme not to engage in participation?
<input type="text"/>

Image 2: Insight into the English version of the questionnaire

15. Erschwernisse, die eine Mitwirkung im Programm behindern, sind ...				
15.1 ... Sprachbarrieren in Deutsch	trifft nicht zu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> trifft zu
15.2 ... Sprachbarrieren in Englisch	trifft nicht zu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> trifft zu
15.3 ... geringe Kenntnisse des Hochschulsystems	trifft nicht zu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> trifft zu
15.4 ... Zeitdruck in Bezug auf das Studium	trifft nicht zu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> trifft zu
15.5 ... Zeitdruck in Bezug auf die Prüfungen	trifft nicht zu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> trifft zu
15.6 ... Zeitdruck in Bezug auf Familie und Jobs	trifft nicht zu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> trifft zu
15.7 ... rechtliche Vorgaben	trifft nicht zu	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> trifft zu
15.8 ... anderes:				
16.				
16.1 Was könnten Gründe sein, dass Teilnehmer*innen <u>nicht</u> an der Planung, Durchführung oder Evaluation des Programms mitwirken wollen?				

Image 3: Insight into the German version of the questionnaire

15. Anledningar som försvårar att aktivt vara med och påverka utbildningen inom ULV/ Snabbspåret är ...				
15.1 ... utmaningar i svenska	instämmer inte alls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> instämmer helt
15.2 ... utmaningar i engelska	instämmer inte alls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> instämmer helt
15.3 ... liten kunskap om det akademiska systemet	instämmer inte alls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> instämmer helt
15.4 ... tidspress på grund av studier	instämmer inte alls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> instämmer helt
15.5 ... tidspress att slutföra inlämningsuppgifter och examinationer	instämmer inte alls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> instämmer helt
15.6 ... tidspress avseende familjeansvar och jobb	instämmer inte alls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> instämmer helt
15.7 ... juridiska regelverk	instämmer inte alls	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> instämmer helt
15.8 ... annat:				
16.				
16.1 Vad kan vara anledningar för studenter som deltar i programmet att inte vara med och påverka utbildningen?				

Image 4: Insight into the Swedish version of the questionnaire



## 5.2. Results on the participants' perspective on participation opportunities in the (re-)qualification programmes (online survey)

### 5.2.1 Complementary survey to develop further opportunities for participation in the programmes

Based on the experiences of participation given in the group interviews the participants were asked if they would have liked to have had further opportunities to participate in the programme. For those who are currently participating in a programme, this line was put in the present tense. The item included 12 aspects (items) regarding co-determination as well as the answer option "other", where they could formulate an individual answer:

- Organisation of the programme
- Representation (spokesperson) of the students at the university
- Development of the programme concept
- Selection of course content/topics
- Coordination between programme and internship schools
- Development of teaching/learning materials for the courses
- Development of information material about the programme
- Advice for other (recently) immigrated and refugee teachers interested in the programme
- Advising as a mentor for fellow students in a subject/special skill-building area
- Deciding on assignment formats for the programme
- Developing tasks, tests, portfolios etc. for the programme
- Development/implementation of the evaluation of the programme
- Other

In the following figure 2 the areas of co-determination are sorted according to the degree of agreement, starting with the highest level of agreement by the mean value and then descending. In general the differences between the different activities that the participants rated are very small.

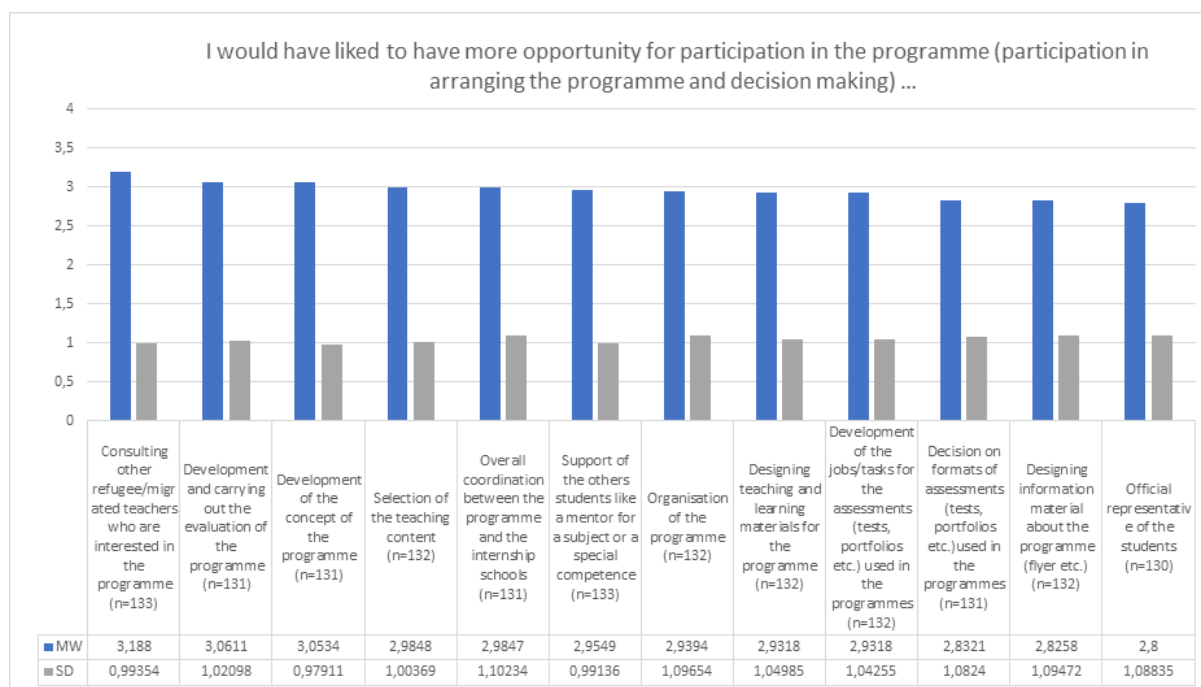


Figure 2: Further opportunities for participation in different areas of the partner programmes

Figure 2 shows that there are not a few outstanding aspects in which the participants - on average - would like to get more involved. However, it shows that all areas in which one could participate are of interest and range on a quite similar level. Altogether, there is a moderate positive agreement on the possibility of participation, with mean values ranging from 3.2 to 2.8. The relatively high standard deviations between 1.1 and 0.9 indicate that the opinions are seen heterogeneously, i.e. some participants would have liked to participate more or would like to participate more, while others would not participate at all.

One respondent also had concrete idea for activities that could be added to the programmes:

“I would have liked the opportunity for developing a similar shortened path into subjects such as mathematics, engineering, biology, physics, etc. as I experienced for educational sciences and psychology.”

Summing up the overall interest in participation in proportions, one can state a partly to clear interest in participation options for about two-thirds of the participants, which means that more participation, co-determination and co-decision-making would be a desirable option for quite a lot. Thematically, this interest proves to be variable regarding the activity: advisory tasks towards the own group members as well as contributing to research-evaluative tasks, but also involvement into the overall conceptual frame on the programme get approval. Aspects in which the desire to participate is pronounced slightly smaller refers to participation in the creation of assignments/tests, dissemination material and external representation of the group into the broader context of the university.

### Amount of time participants could potentially spend on participation during the programme

The participants were asked about the possible hours they could have invested or could invest in order to participate. There were four orders of magnitude to choose from:

- 1-2 hours
- 3-5 hours
- 6-10 hours
- 11 or more hours

The participants' answers indicate a relatively high number of hours they could contribute (have contributed) per week. Almost a half of the respondents could contribute about 25% of an average weekly working time, as figure 3 indicates. The interpretation of these numbers is challenging because in other parts in this data collection (as well as in other occasions) one can find a lot of evidence that most of the participants of the programmes feel quite burdened by the triple responsibility of studies, family responsibilities and need to earn money, which will be reported on further down.

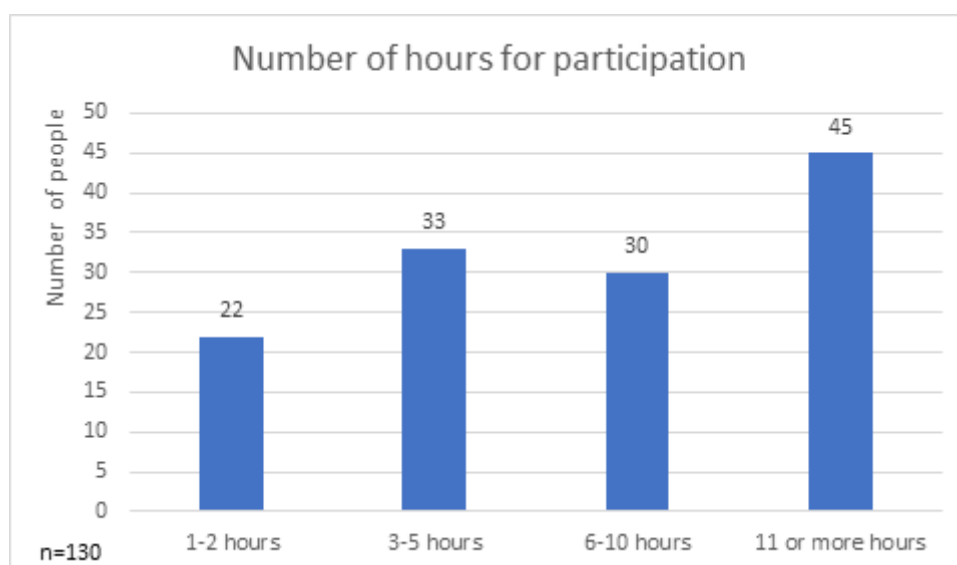


Figure 3: Number of hours of participation they could possibly spend/have spent in the programme

### Amount of time participants could potentially spend on participation after the programme

The former participants (alumni) were asked to give their opinion on the following statement in the 4-point scale:

“Now that I have finished the programme, I would rather be responsible for the tasks (planning, implementation, development) than before.”

The current participants received this adjusted statement:

“I would prefer to be responsible for the tasks (planning, implementation, development) after I have finished the programme.”

Comparing the overall mean values of both items, it can be deduced that most of the respondents agree to the idea to participate more after having finished the programme as figure 4 shows.

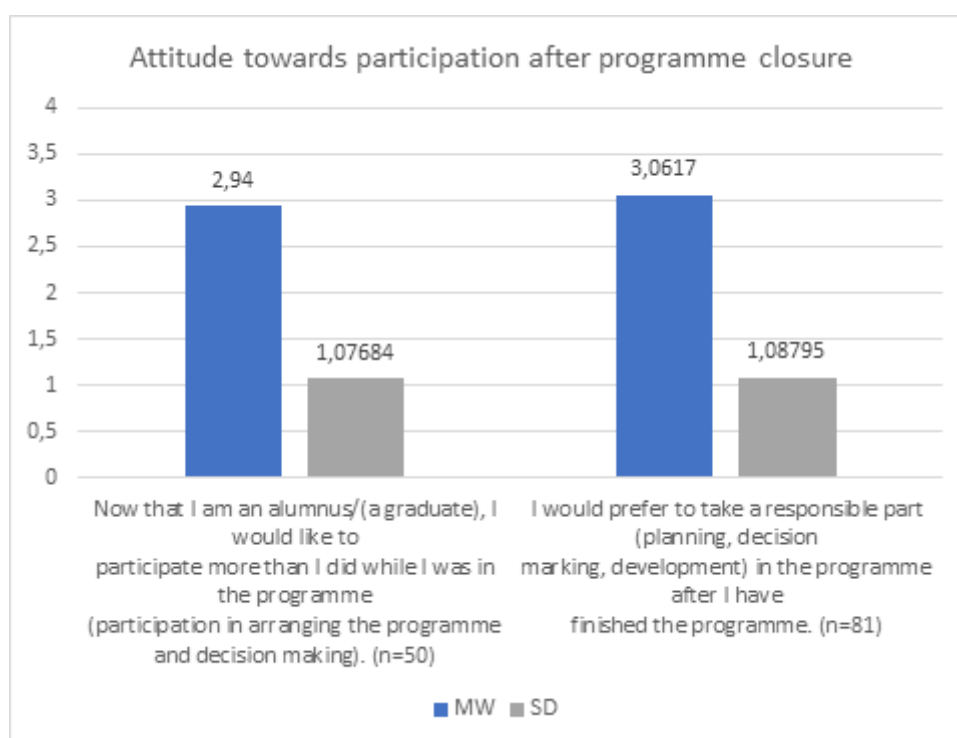


Figure 4: Interest in participation after having finished the programme

### Examples of participation

Participants were asked to describe a situation in which they have/have had an impact on the programme or felt responsible for a cause. The answers to the open questions can be grouped into 9 themes of participation experience, which in turn address as overarching categories (1) concrete areas of responsibility in the programmes, (2) participation through situations of feedback, (3) helping others, (4) sharing responsibility in studies and qualification work and (5) taking responsibility at school.

Concrete areas of responsibility in the programmes which the participants name refer to jobs that belong to the programmes' task field like steps of evaluation or preparation of material.

"I feel responsible when I did a survey in Module 2. The survey was with my colleagues about team-teaching. I felt responsible by answering a survey about team-teaching in module 2."

"Developing learning methods for better remembrance of newly learned words."

Within the group of the Swedish participants participation in the programme design has been reported and additional to that advertising and recruiting new participants.

"During VFU (internship), with a guide of supervisors, I think I was more involved and could influence the education within ULV<sup>2</sup>."

Participation in the sense of co-determination is also experienced when participants get to give feedback or when teaching methods give the opportunity to bring in their interests.

"The ULV management used to ask us for our opinions and edited the training as needed."

"Seminar that included reflection and discussion after lesson, Group work."

"The ongoing meetings and the cooperation between the IGEL-participants and executives helped to develop meaningful programmes, especially regarding language promotion."

Participation in the sense of co-determination is furthermore experienced when the participants' needs are heard in moments of counselling because they get the chance to make the team of the programme understand their personal situation.

"When I needed some form of information, help, teaching materials, the university organization was professional and staff were always so kind and helpful that I can think of them with a warm heart. Due to their way of receiving my case, I felt included and thought that I influenced my studies at SU."

Again further situations that are closer to the participants taking part in the courses, interacting and following their studies have been given as examples of co-determination in the programmes. Some experience it by helping other fellow students, others by being responsible for the assignments and learning contents.

"When we study math, I guide classmates on how to solve math problems."

"In choosing learning content, topics, ideas, decisions and advice."

Finally, there is a feeling of being involved in a responsible share when the participants share practice at school and get involved in their profession.

"During my first internship, I was able to team-teach, which made me feel responsible."

"I found the opportunity to hold a lesson during the time of the programme."

### Summary of participation options

When asked about their interest in participation, far more than half of the participants indicated that they would (or could) participate in various tasks of the respective programmes. The number of hours they would or could have made available for this seems quite high given the limited time resources due to the overall workload of the participants. Either this is caused by a misunderstanding of the item or the numbers represent a possible resource for the programmes. Against the background of the examples of the previous moments of involvement, it must be considered that possibly the generous amount of time expressed can be understood that at least some participants thought more of such tasks that come up in the course of the programmes anyway (helping fellow students, giving feedback, group work etc.) and were thinking less of those activities that the programme teams have to accomplish in addition to the courses teaching (advertisement, paper work etc.).

There is no priority for a specific task, both from the questionnaire and from the examples given, in which respondents would rather participate. However, those aspects seem to invite participation in which they feel competent, have a lot of knowledge (e.g. over newcomers) or can set new accents in the concept according to experience on structures and processes that are not satisfyingly designed yet. The mode of participation is experienced also through feedback and other forms of discussion, which are given as examples of participation in the sense of being involved.

Taking responsibility and getting involved are categories that respondents also associated with opportunities to exchange with others in learning arrangements in their studies as well as when teaching in the practical school context.

In return, tasks like the external presentation of the programmes is a less interesting field of participation. That leads to the conclusion that co-determination and the feeling of being involved is as aspects that participants connect to the studies, activities in and around the classes.

#### 5.2.2 Benefits of the participation of participants for the group and the institution

Furthermore, the participants were asked about the benefits of the participation idea for both the participant side and the institutional side. The questionnaire allowed them to choose between the following with regard to their own group:

- Gaining organisational competencies
- Getting familiar with the scientific system
- Getting familiar with the academic culture in university
- Improving language skills
- Developing an international network of personal contacts
- Raising chances to find a job

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<sup>2</sup> The Bridging programme at the Stockholm University.

- Feeling a belonging to society
- Be successful in studying
- Be of help for friends/family members
- Getting familiar with the school system
- Others

For the university, possible benefits were to be weighed up:

- Gaining organisational competencies
- Gaining helpful perspectives on the participants' situations
- Gaining more people, that support the programme actively
- Promoting talents for the university (e.g. later scientists)
- Bringing out a satisfactory programme
- Raising the reputation of the programme
- Getting initiated to reflect on the national education system
- Getting to reflect on teacher education in general
- Getting to reflect on successful teaching and learning in the classroom
- Getting to reflection on one's own intercultural competencies
- Other like:

#### Benefits of participation for the participants themselves

The provided topics set under the item "If the participants take part in the programme responsibly, this helps them ..." generally receive positive approval across all aspects. Besides topics that address direct activities such as knowing the school system better or being able to learn more successfully, there is also the support of the feeling of belonging to society. Furthermore, there are moments that make up a benefit to the family, the job chances or the international network that exists in the background of the programmes. In the response option "other" one respondent commented "...being more confident gaining confidence". A remark from another participant points out quite the opposite "Totally useless if you ask me!". This can be read as a reminder that there are also participants who are critical of the participatory approach and question its gains.

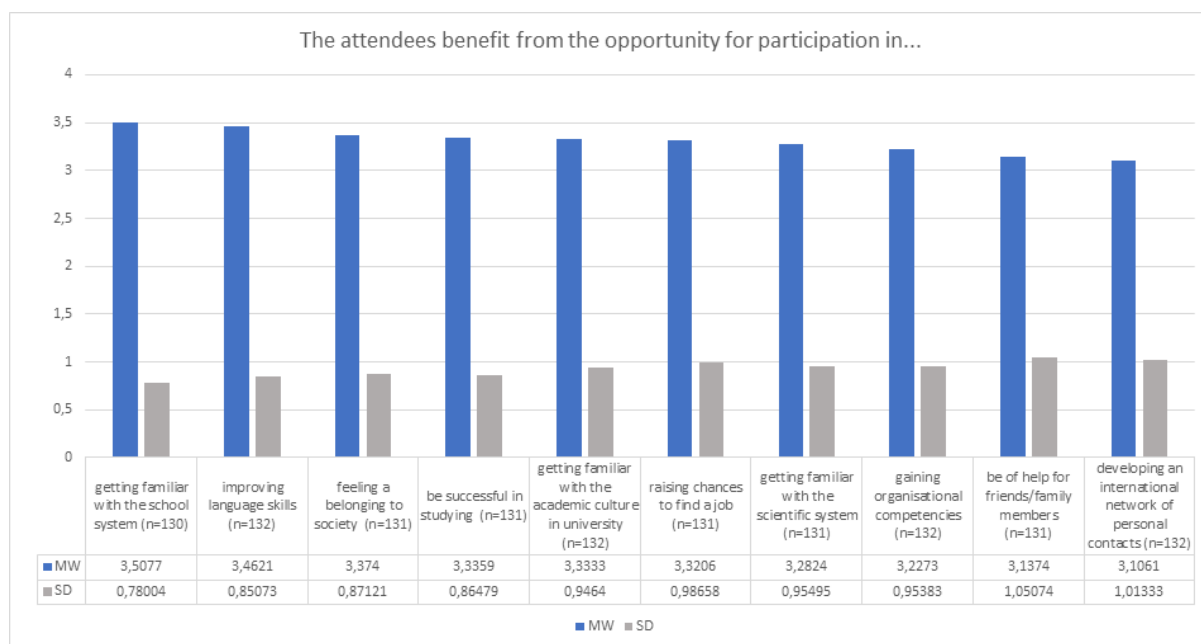


Figure 5: Benefits for the participants when cooperating responsibly in the programmes

### Benefits of participation for the institution

The benefits for the higher education institutions that bring out the programmes and provide participation opportunities for the participants are also rated quite positively and there are hardly any differences in mean values between the aspects. If one goes with the descending order, then the lecturers' learning and being able to better understand the situation of the participants gets more approval than aspects more to the system itself such as adaptation of the programme or promotion of young researchers. A single answer under "other" talks equally about "That they can gain insight into the problems and difficulties the participants deal with" which also refers to a better understanding but addresses the responsible leading people of the programmes .and need more time to develop confidence in the system, which is still new to them, and to express themselves in an openly critical manner.



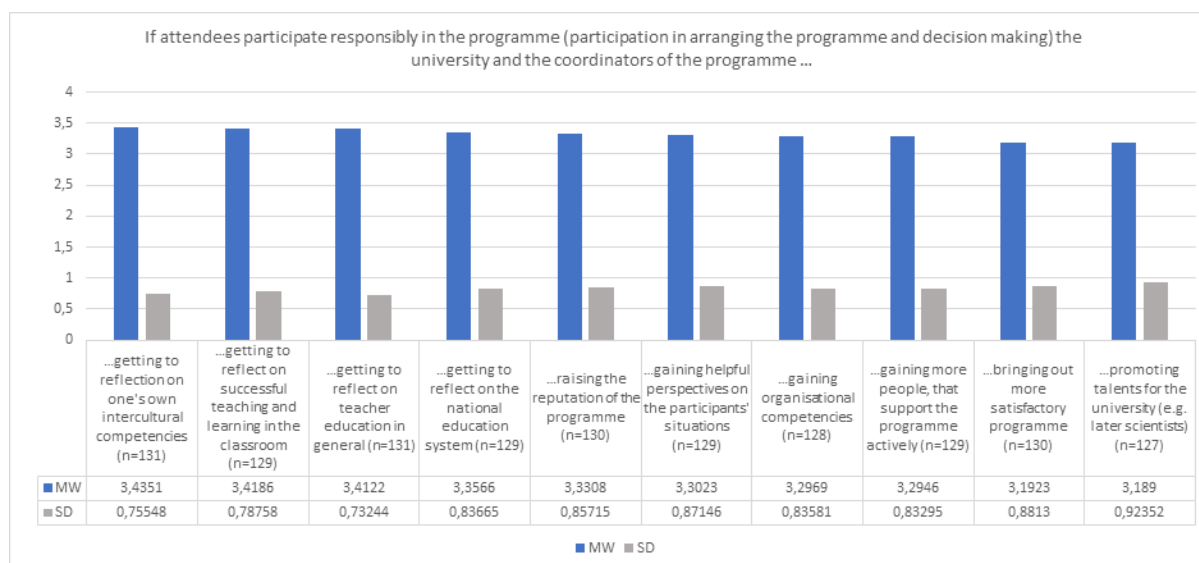


Figure 6: Benefits for the institutions/universities when participants cooperate responsibly in the programmes

### Summary of benefits

The items on the gain of participation have been derived from both, the objectives of the programmes and the rationale for co-determination of participants in (course) development and research. The items were enriched by aspects that came to the attention of the members of the R/EQUAL team through informal conversations and observations in everyday course life. The overall balance from the two perspectives of the benefits when the idea of participation is applied, both for the participants and for the institution, is quite encouraging. The participants are positive about their own gains as well as those they see for the institution. Their agreement lies more strongly in those moments – if one wants to set a gradation at all in view of the close proximity of the mean values – that correspond with their reasons for participating in such a programme, which is to progress and learn about the context they are in. For the group of participants, for example, they see the benefit of gaining more knowledge about the school system, better language learning or learning in general through the participation opportunity. Also the aspect of social affiliation receives a similarly positive vote.

For the institution aspects such as the gain in competence on the part of the lecturers as a benefit, among other things on intercultural perspectives, are given priority, while aspects such as the increase in the workload or external advertising receive somewhat less approval. Overall, however, those aspects that do not originally correspond to the concept of a participatory approach, but were discovered and included by the partner members, also meet with approval.

Last but not least, the findings show that – measured against the average – no area is rejected by the respondents for which an opportunity for gain was theoretically seen.

### 5.2.3 Barriers to participation

#### Assessment of possible complications

The participants were also asked which areas they thought hindered or could hinder their participation. The following aspects were available for evaluation:

- Language barriers in German
- Language barriers in English
- Little knowledge of the university system
- Time pressure in relation to studies
- Time pressure in relation to exams
- Time pressure in relation to family and jobs
- Legal requirements

In slight contrast to the previous overarching findings, the weighting of individual aspects in the ranking differs somewhat more strongly, as figure 7 shows. Language barriers and moments of time pressure in relation to the different requirements are rated more clearly as obstacles than knowledge of the system or lack of language skills in English. The latter are not necessary in the programmes, but are a requirement especially in the international R/EQUAL project context. The higher standard deviations indicate a heterogeneous picture of opinions.

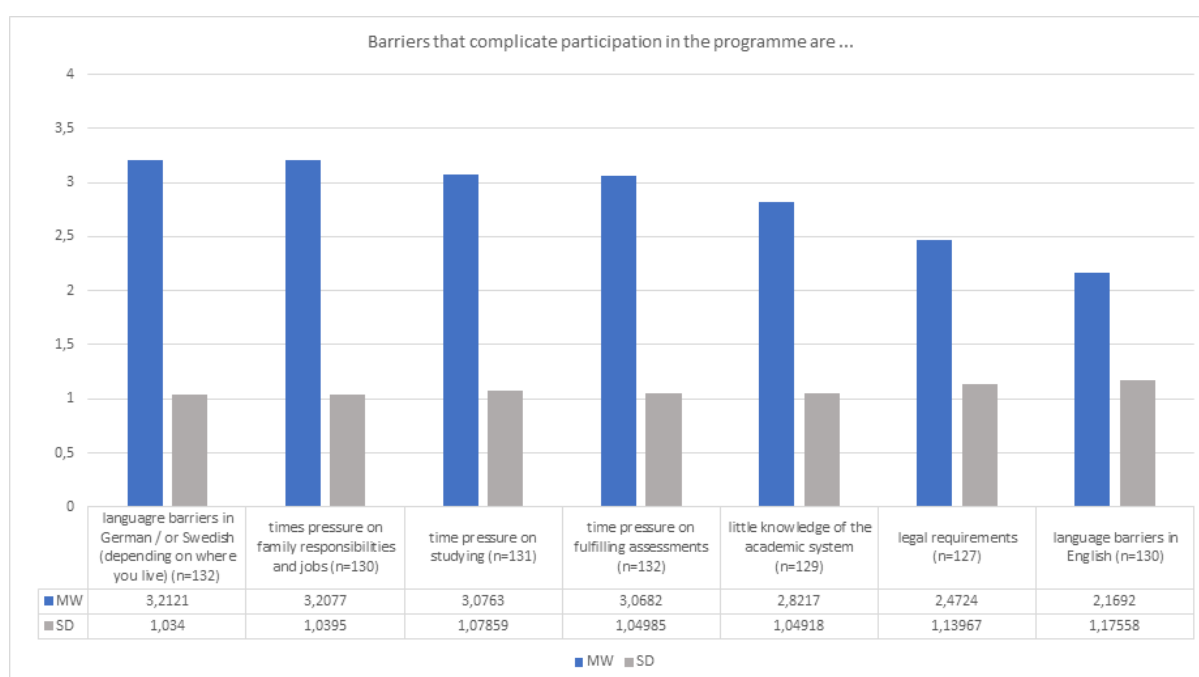


Figure 7: Barriers to participate in activities responsibly in the programmes

One of the few differences of statistically significant relevance are gender related. Two results, differentiated for men and women (diverse was not ticked) are both related to time pressure and family responsibilities. It is more women who confirm the item “time pressure in relation to family and job” ( $t=2,099$ ;  $p=0.041$ ;  $d=0.47$ ), as figure 8 shows.

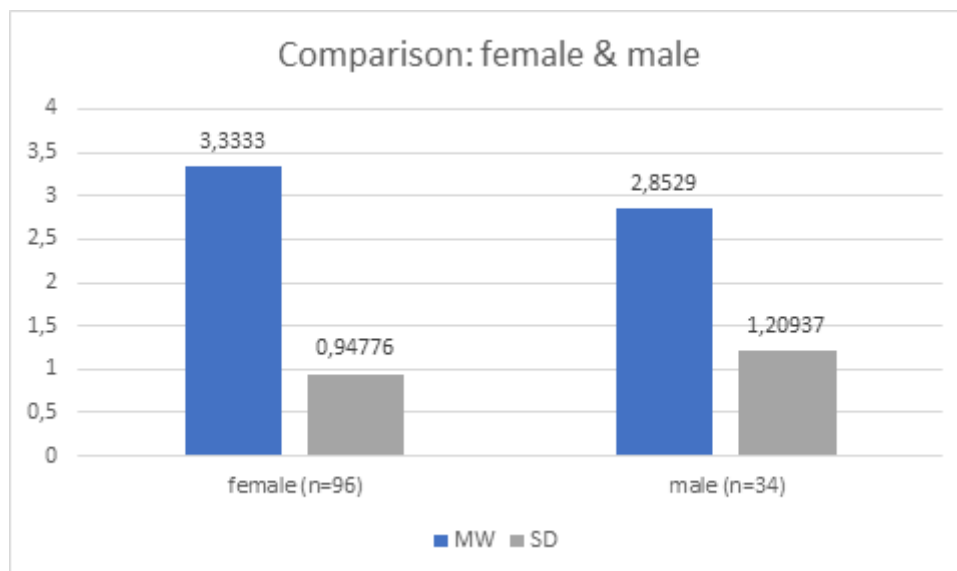


Figure 8: Gender comparison: time pressure in relation to family and job as a barrier for co-determination in the programmes

And there are less women who “would prefer to take a responsible part...” in the programme after they have finished it ( $t=3,062$ ;  $p=0.003$ ;  $d=0.631$ ), as figure 9 shows.

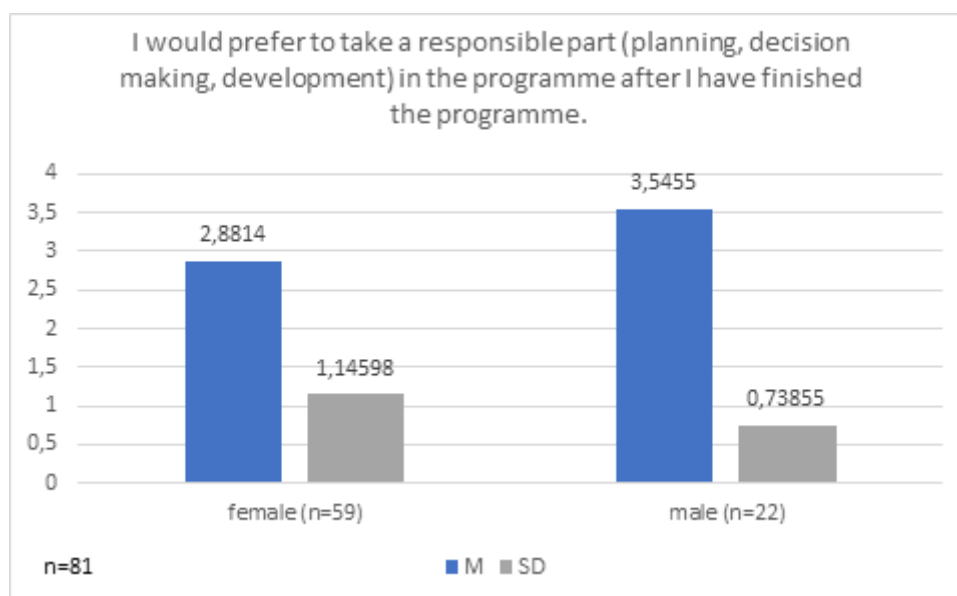


Figure 9: Gender comparison: taking over responsibilities in the programme after having finished it

We interpret from those two aspects that the pressure to cope with all the responsibilities in daily life concern women more than men.

### Opinions on reasons that might hinder participation

Respondents were asked via an open-ended response format what the reasons might be that participants do/did not want to participate in the planning, implementation or evaluation of the programme. For this purpose, some answers were given again, repeating the items. Language barriers, multiple family responsibilities and the need to earn money on the side were mentioned several times. One answer pictures that well:

“People's goals in life could make them only focus/concentrate on fulfilling the tasks to successfully finish the programme.”

In addition, a lack of knowledge of the system was mentioned, as well as the pressure to successfully complete studies and examinations. This also indicates a certain focus on completing the programme.

The following reasons have been named as moments that hinder participation. They can be read as a supplement in the categories: (1) limited general or professional competences, (2) unclear participation option, (3) lack of interest or trust in processes, (4) external barriers regarding space, time, equipment.

The limited general or professional competences that some participants see for them or for others not to take over tasks refer to language barriers, to content knowledge as much as to scientific skills.

“Because they are not able to explain everything well. Because they are not able to explain everything.”

“They do not feel suited to evaluate scientific work. They do not feel suited to evaluate scientific work.”

Also, sometimes the option to participate is not known or unclear or the ways one could participate are unclear. Sometimes participants should be invited directly to join the work.

“The lecturers did not give the chance to participate. The lecturers did not give the chance to participate. Students do not know that they themselves have the opportunity to influence.”

“You do not dare to take the initiative.”

Sometimes this meets a lack of security or a lack of interest with the participants themselves.

“Most of the participants come from dictatorships and are afraid of the negative consequences that could follow evaluation/criticism.”

Last external barriers regarding well-being (being sick), a long distance from home and university, the lack of time and poor equipment have been named by the respondents. Sometimes the jobs and the course hours don't fit.

“It can be illness or job or departure, etc.”

“Not having the needed device/ having a bad working device.”

### Summary of difficulties

The most frequently mentioned barriers concern the yet limited language skills in the official languages of the respective countries of the programmes and the double or triple burden of family obligations, studies and the need to earn money. It is occasionally said that participants consciously set priorities here.

In addition, limited knowledge of the system still quite new to the participants sometimes hinders interest or confidence in wanting to participate and making decisions, and there is also concerns in some cases of not being sufficiently competent for the various tasks. In addition, external circumstances are mentioned that make participation more difficult. Be it the lack of equipment, especially when processes have to take place online, or that participants live far away from the university or that their own course times overlap with the joint activities. Last but not least, some (former) participants consider the fact that some immigrated or refugee teachers need to develop confidence in the yet unknown university system and the option to participate, which might be new to them. Especially it is pointed out that some have experienced dictatorial regimes before their forced migration and therefore, they are not familiar to express themselves in an openly critical manner or claim options to participate. However, even though the experience of living in a country with a dictatorial regime can of course play an important role in individual biographies, this should not be overestimated in general. Apart from that, it can indeed be a new experience for many people to participate in the design of a programme in such an active and equality-oriented way and to express criticism openly. It needs to be carefully considered within programmes that it often takes some time to get used to this role of strong co-determination, especially when moving between different political or educational systems in general.

#### 5.2.4 Participants' perspectives regarding communication and language use

Following on from the assessments of opportunities and limitations as well as gains via a participatory approach, the participants were also asked for two development perspectives via the open response format. One question concerned general aspects of communication, the other the use of language(s) in the programmes.

When asked how communication in the programme could be improved so that participants could participate more in the planning, implementation and evaluation, the following picture emerges. In addition to a few positive evaluations of the overall way of communicating, there are a variety of suggestions. However, it is not clear whether the idea of participation was always considered strictly, as some suggestions rather address general aspects of structures and methodological arrangements of the programmes that could be improved. Furthermore, ideas on the specific use of language were already introduced here, as they were also called out again in the later question.

First of all, the recommendations that could specifically improve the possibility of participation should be addressed. Language use is addressed several times and two aspects arise from this: (1)

multilingualism/translanguaging as a universal principle, but also (2) speaking in a common language in group processes, the official language of the country of the respective programme or English, so that everyone can communicate.

“If teachers in ULV can influence students to always communicate in either Swedish or perhaps English, even when teachers are not present, education and community in the classes would be much better.”

Directly related to increasing participation is the idea of clearly highlighting the opportunities of participatory engagement at the beginning. One respondent suggests an explicit introduction on how to act in a participatory approach.

“I think it may work that you add a short course (like 1-2 months) about how important democracy is in society and constantly compare with other countries outside the EU and how it works there so that participation knows that you understand how society in his / her country works. And then the participant can start thinking again about their role in the education.”

This is followed by a suggestion to challenge the professional competence of the lecturers, and here the answers open up to general revision ideas for the courses. They are not designed to be programme-specific, but are used – although they do not actually answer the question – to illustrate communicative needs. Individual references are made to more information about the two system contexts of interest, programme and school. The suggestions for concrete changes in the courses include – this is more in line with the participatory approach – joint advance planning, but also individual ideas for more group work and methodical procedures up to the wish for direct contact, a wish that also arises from the conditions in the Corona pandemic.

“By highlighting some unclear points that are in the course description or in assessment matrices, or even to assess the course (students get a course assessment of each course you participate in).”

“You prepare first before the gathering, participate in classrooms (contexts), rehearse after the gathering, then can influence the education.”

In addition, the possibility of consultation is highlighted and, the desire for more networking between the participants and also with those responsible for the programme was mentioned. Last but not least, there is a demand for a certain type of lecturers. More practical relevance and less compulsory academic studies do not seem to be directly connected to increasing participation, still they were mentioned at this point.

“Multiple reconciliations via digital meetings.”

“With constant and regular contact, direct communication about it, forums etc., to meet physically with teachers and other students.”

“It must have knowledgeable senior lecturers to be able to teach teachers and be fair in assessment especially group work.”

The participants were also asked how the use of the languages in the programmes could be improved so that more participation in planning, implementation and evaluation is possible. Certain duplications of the language-related answers to the previous question can be seen. Multilingualism

is also a central suggestion here, as well as interpreting in relation to the English language; this language range is also recommended for the written material on the programmes.

“With language support and various programmes in which constant contact and communication is made possible.”

“An English interpreter could be hired.”

“The main ideas of the programme should be translated into many other languages.”

Language-sensitive teaching is suggested, basic recognition and a lot of dialogical steps in the methodological area as well as fair consideration of language restrictions in grades, but some also recommend a higher language entry level, i.e. more language skills before the start of the programme.

“Taking language sensitivity into account.”

“Participation in the course should require a c1 Niveau. More time in the German course before the programme.”

“With language support and various programmes in which constant contact and communication is made possible.”

Reference is made several times to the connection between language practice and internships, as well as language support, encouragement and a lot of speaking within the programmes.

“School Practice/Internships”

“Language should be practiced in certain situations.”

“Atmosphere in the classroom that welcomes students, perhaps.”

“Explaining the advantages and disadvantages.”

“To start from the most abstract in the teaching to the concrete. I myself benefit from the concrete activities we had during our seminars in my own lessons.”

“Develop the course language introduction on ULV.”

“More seminar on grammar and grammar lecture does not work so well for us. A large group it was and not everyone can communicate with teachers.”

“Grammar, which is the most important part, especially when it comes to writing and speaking.”

“My idea is as follows: Those who have a foreign teaching degree should be informed already when they go to SFI (Swedish for immigrants) that they have the ULV opportunity to become a teacher in Sweden. I think many people want to continue working as teachers because it is the world's best job, I think. But what makes them frustrated is the language, especially when they have passed the age of 40. When they decide to continue working as a teacher, they can read basic Swedish in a different way, which is a lot of orientation towards pedagogy. So, for example, to have at least one day at school where they get acquainted with the school system as well as with pedagogical concepts already when they are studying SAS<sup>3</sup>. And they will continue like that until they are done with SVA3<sup>4</sup>. Then it will be much easier for them to start ULV and study different theories, I think.”

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<sup>3</sup> Swedish as a second language.

<sup>4</sup> Swedish as a second language, course 3.

Finally digital technology is introduced as a difficulty but again a welcoming culture overall named as a helpful requirement.

“Nowadays e-learning is very relevant and useful. However, there is a big disadvantage. In language learning it is sometimes not so easy to handle the technology well. E-learning is very important and useful nowadays. But there is still one big disadvantage: Learning a new language it is often not easy to handle technology.”

### Summary of the development perspectives on communication and language use

When asked about the possibilities of how communication as a whole would have to be shaped so that more people can be encouraged to participate in the regional programmes, it first becomes apparent that many answers to these open-ended questions do not precisely address the idea of participation, but rather express general wishes for communication and language use in the context of the bridge programmes. If one bundles together those that clearly indicate that they refer to a broader possibility of participation, the following perspectives emerge:

The facilitation of language use is named as significant, fundamental and also for better participation. From the numerous statements, the desire for the possibility to use one's own mother tongue becomes apparent and support through interpreters is suggested. Another situation that is certainly helpful for the overall programmes as well as for this participatory approach is the suggestion to introduce the idea of this participation and the concrete possibilities more clearly at the beginning. In addition, better knowledge of the system is a suggestion. The wish for more consultation could be understood to mean greater involvement. Less clearly assignable are wishes for greater qualification reducing or the more precise explanations of the procedures in the courses. Although relief is mentioned here in connection with the courses, it could indicate a desire for relief that at the same time makes it possible to be more involved.

Further ideas on concrete language use, such as teaching in a language-sensitive manner and providing appropriate material, promoting language or claiming a higher entry level, seem to refer more generally to the courses offered. Interestingly, in this context, the problem is also raised that technology can not only be helpful but also a hindrance if participants do not have the necessary equipment or are not proficient in using the tools.

#### 5.2.5 Exchange interests of the participants

During the informal conversations, feedback on the school practice experience and in the first study step of the group interviews, it became apparent that some participants very much appreciate the exchanges with others. Therefore, the respondents were asked with which groups they would potentially have a more intensive exchange. Eight different contact groups from the field of universities and schools were offered. aspects to choose from.

- Other participants in the programme
- Those responsible for the programme
- Teachers of the programme



- Other lecturers at the university
- Students at the university
- Teachers from placement schools
- Mentors
- Headmasters of internship school
- Again, the aspect “others” was also made possible, but no one used it.

Overall, the approval ratings are moderately positive with regard to more exchange. In the ranking of the groups with which the participants most wanted to have more contact or any contact at all corresponds to the circles around them, first the other participants and lecturers, and then the programme leaders and also the mentors, where school practice participation is part of the programme. Consent decreases slightly in relation to other members at the university, students or lecturers, or there is also a more hesitant interest in exchange towards the school administrators of the internship schools.

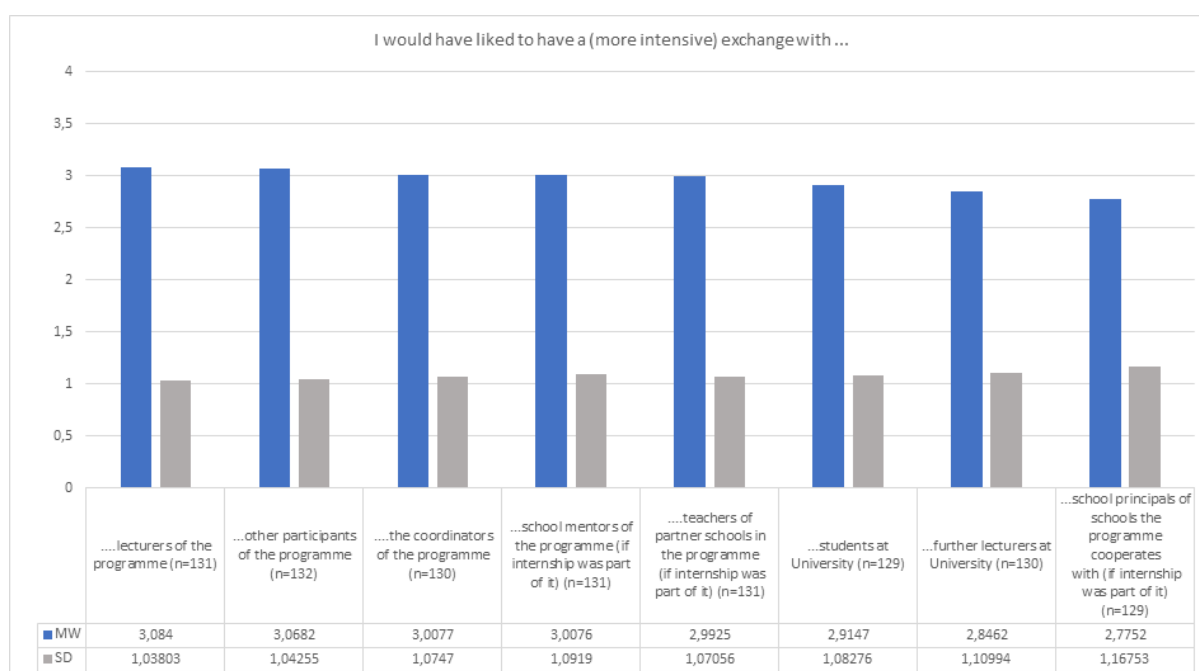


Figure 10: Overview of (more) exchange opportunities

### Summary of the exchange interests

Similar to previous questions about communication and language use, the participants indicate a moderately positive interest in engaging with different groups either get in contact at all, if they have not yet done so, or in a more intense contact. There is hardly any gradation in the order of their priorities. In first place is the desire for more exchange with the teachers, the other participants and those responsible for the programmes; the mentors also belong to this prioritized group (there are

no programmes with no contacts with mentors since not all programmes include phases of internship). Further activities like getting in contact with members of the university or into other levels of the school context, such as the principals/school administration, are of comparatively lower interest.

### 5.3. Results on the participants' perspective on participation opportunities in the R/EQUAL project

The last part of the survey referred to assessments of participation experiences in the international project R/EQUAL. First, the participants had to indicate whether they were familiar with the project. 39 participants answered yes and 95 of the participants were not familiar with the project.

Only those participants who knew about the project were further questioned. Firstly, whether they have participated in the activities of the R/EQUAL project. 19 of the participants voted "yes" and 20 "no".

#### 5.3.1 Interest in participation opportunities in the R/EQUAL project

The 39 participants were then asked to choose out of seven possibilities for completing the introductory sentence: "I would have liked to have had the opportunity to participate in the R/EQUAL project in ...":

- Working sessions with the R/EQUAL team of my university
- Working sessions with the whole R/EQUAL team at another university
- Presenting the results of the project at scientific conferences
- Presenting the results of the project at stakeholder meetings
- Contributing to the production of information material about the R/EQUAL project and its results.
- The joint production of academic papers on migration and teacher education
- Research activities for R/EQUAL (data collection, data analysis etc.).

The interest in the opportunities to participate in the international R/EQUAL project is lower compared to the interest in participating in the respective programme. The highest approval is given to working sessions with the R/EQUAL team of one's own location, which ultimately again refers to parts of one's own programme team. Further, there is a higher interest to present outcomes of R/EQUAL in meetings with stakeholders than in scientific meetings, as figure 11 below shows.

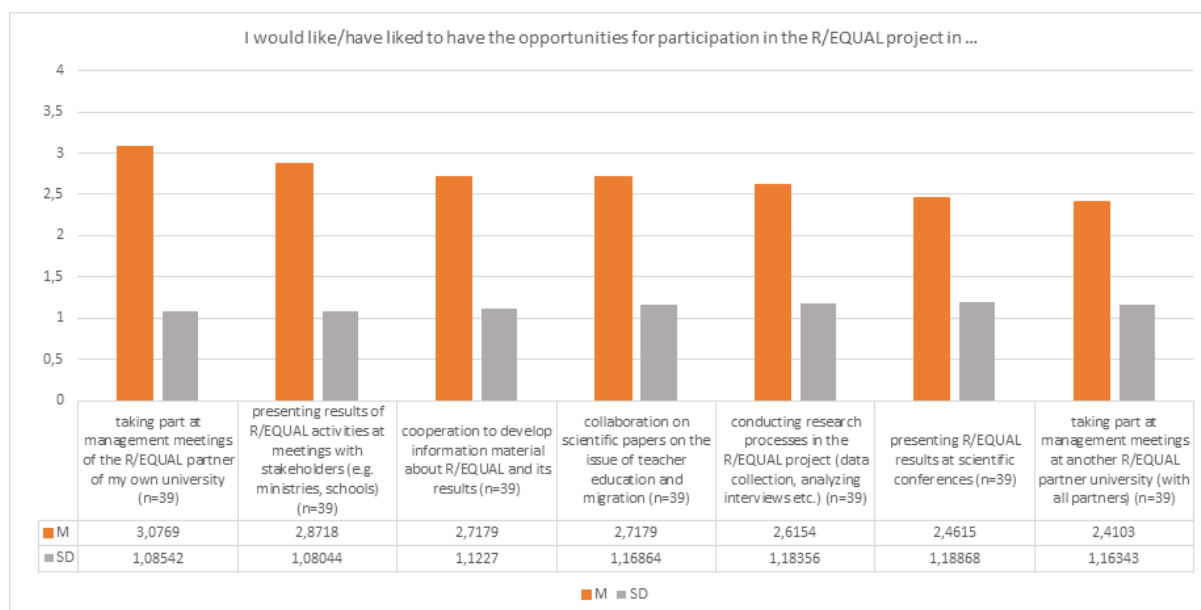


Figure 11: Areas of interest for (more) participation in R/EQUAL

### 5.3.2 Time investment

Furthermore, the 39 participants who know the R/EQUAL project at all were asked how many hours they could invest in the R/EQUAL project for participation. The capacities here are significantly lower than for the individual programmes (see above).

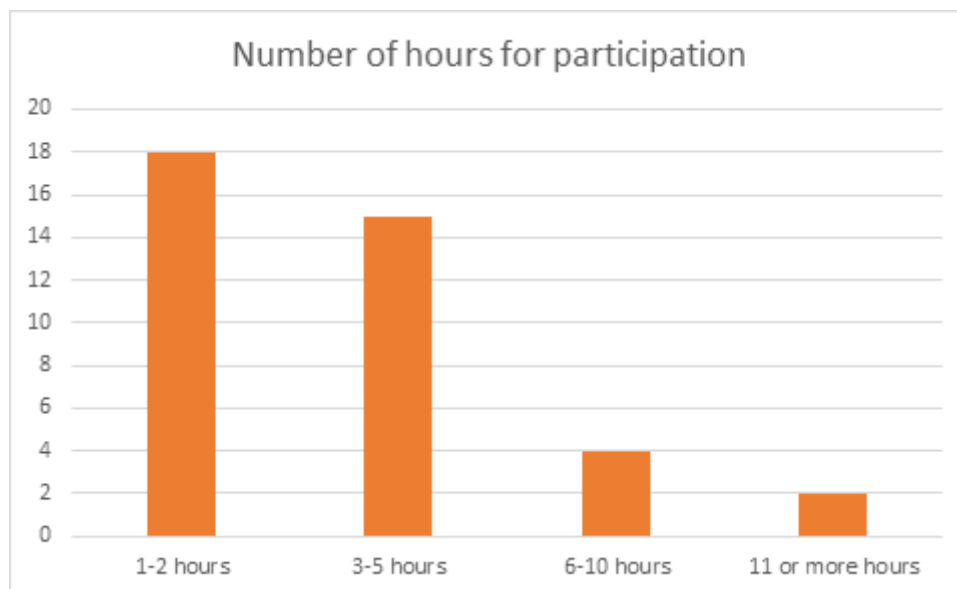


Figure 12: Number of hours that respondents could invest/could have invested for participation in the respective programme

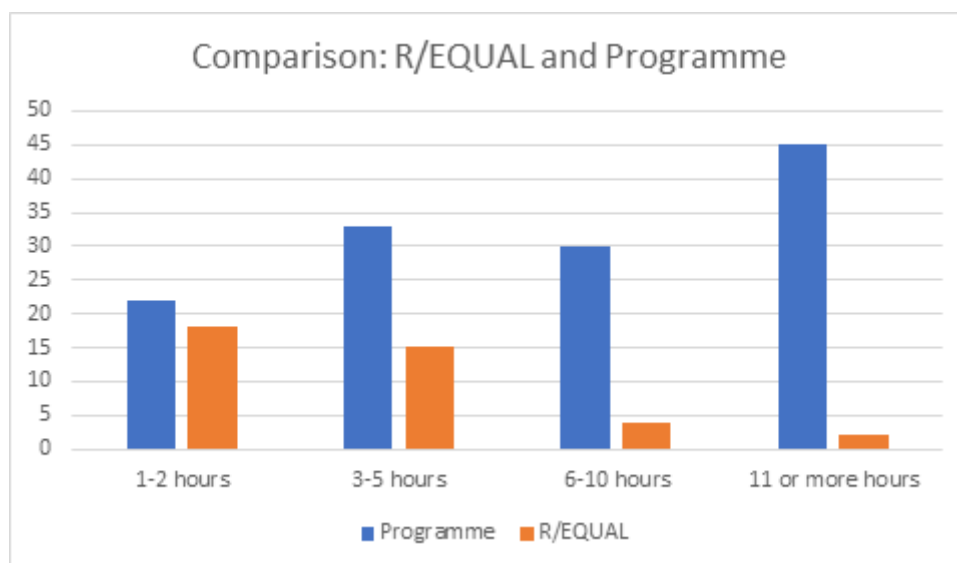


Figure 13: Comparison of number of hours that could be used for participation in the respective programme and R/EQUAL

### Ideas for motivating participation in the R/EQUAL project

Finally, the group of participants who know about the R/EQUAL project was asked in an open formulated question: "How could we achieve that more participants of the programme participate in the international R/EQUAL project (events, meetings, tasks etc.)?"

According to the respondents, increasing participation opportunities would be promoted through intensive information and constant contact with the R/EQUAL team. (Here, it is not clear whether it is referred more to the local programme team or to the whole international team. So also in this section, the difficulty was that it was not always obvious from the answers whether the ideas to increase participation were aimed at the R/EQUAL project or rather at the respective programme).

"Explaining the project so intensively and constantly Constantly and intensively explaining the project. always keeping in touch with the REQUAL team constantly."

It was further suggested to invest widely in advertising.

"Through social media (Facebook, Instagram.....), postings in the newspaper."

Participation could also be improved if the interests of the participants were more clearly affected. Finally, organisational simplifications including language support are suggested.

"Online meetings could be helpful. Online meetings could be helpful."

"It is important for participants to have interpreters at events Participants need to have interpreters at events."

### Summary of the participation interests in the R/EQUAL project

Only about one third of the respondents who filled in the questionnaire identified themselves as people who already know the international project R/EQUAL. The interests of these 39 people are more focussed on the cooperation with the regional R/EQUAL team and on tasks for which they

have the competences as teachers (presenting or creating material), while research-related participation or cooperation in the entire international context find less approval. Motivating more people to participate in this way would require a very clear introduction to the project contexts and would help to facilitate participation organisationally. This can be achieved via virtual channels, but it can also refer to support in language use. In addition, constant contact and also addressing are helpful means. Last but not least, the work in the project must also address the interests of the participants. Half of the 39 people see only a small amount of time that they could invest, about a few hours a week.

#### 5.4. Summary of the online survey

Drawing on the findings from the qualitative study, a quantitative questionnaire study was developed in order to examine whether the perspectives of the qualitative group interviews can be quantitatively confirmed by a significantly larger group of participants from all (re-)qualification programmes. The survey allowed to find out in which parts and activities of the programmes the participants have the highest interest in co-determination. Furthermore, the survey served to provide insight about what might hinder their participation or what preconditions have to be considered if one wants to pursue the participatory approach.

As the questionnaire was available in three languages, it was initially assumed that all participants would be able to cope with the questionnaire linguistically. However, some of the answers to the open-ended questions suggested that participation was understood in a very broad sense (from participation in the way of taking part to co-determination) and that specific connotations of participation were created by the translation. The open answers also revealed that the participants did not always respond narrowly to the question of participation, but rather that their thoughts were generally directed towards the course events and feedback on them or suggestions for them. However, taking this into account, the following overall conclusion can be drawn.

The overall approval of opportunities for participation can be classified as quite high; there are no fields of work or tasks in which the participants in the programmes generally do not want to participate. However, they tend to prioritise tasks that are closer to the specific course activity, while tasks that involve engagement in a broader university or international programme context are, in comparison, of smaller interest. The participants perceive the benefit of (potential) participation for themselves in a better understanding of both the school system and issues related to student learning and language learning, but also in a certain degree of social inclusion. Furthermore, the participants see the benefit of the participatory approach for the programme providers or the higher education institutions primarily in the broadening of the participants' perspectives, but less in researching or structure-building moments. The interest in exchange thus also relates more the individual learning group and its course situation than to the area of other groups in the university or school. In order to further encourage participation, they suggest reducing language barriers, which they consider to be among the strongest obstacles, through multilingualism and translation support.

It is evident that more differentiated introductions to the idea of participation and the tasks associated with it, as well as an understanding of the system, are needed in order to be able to clearly comprehend the approach and counter possible fears in the process of negotiating in an unknown system. Some participants experience involvement in moments when they are able to work in group forms in the courses, when they can give feedback in individual consultations or in a group situation. The tasks they would like to be more involved in are those that have to do with counselling (new participants) or concept development and concept contributions that are close to what they can grasp from the daily course offerings. It is an average interest in comprehensive research tasks or larger system-related steps. Overall, the willingness to participate in relation to the respective course programme and the regional team appears to be greater than in the international project R/EQUAL. This finding is well understandable since the programmes are their everyday context, they are taking part in to find their way back into the school system of the respective country of residence. In comparison a European cooperation is interesting and can be inspiring, nevertheless it is a rather abstract construct based on much less contact in comparison to the respective partner programme.

One of the biggest hurdles overall is the triple burden of family, studies and the need to earn money. In some cases, barriers also concern spatial distance or a lack of digital equipment.

## 6. Summary of the results of the mixed-method-design study and discussion

The starting point of the study was one of the core elements of the R/EQUAL project: participants of the programmes participate in their research development and representation while they are taking part in the courses. In order to capture the experience on participation and to be able to provide insights that can be helpful information for orientation in other programmes that pursue a similar interest, two strands of data have been carried out. First, group interviews were run to identify aspects that are supporting or hindering if one wants to realise participation options in a requalification programme. Second, an online-questionnaire was brought out to a large group of participants and former participants (alumni) of the programmes in Cologne, Stockholm, Vienna and Weingarten. They were asked to give feedback on items and contribute to further ideas in answers to open questions via the online-questionnaire.

In the analysis of the qualitative data of the study, it became evident that a central prerequisite for making participation in the sense of co-determination work is **to give information and to communicate about structures** of the programmes. This includes terms of arranging regular exchanges about perspectives and offer insights into the complex structure of such programmes embedded in a com-

plex cooperation system with schools and school administrations. Finding one's role in a new system is a general challenge and requires time. In order for participants to feel confident to actively contribute, it is necessary to offer orientation about structures as early as possible.

Furthermore, the participants regard **networking with others** as an important prerequisite that also benefits them when participating in the programmes. Possibly due to their own experiences of getting to know about the respective programme through help from other people and of hardly knowing their way around the university system in the country of residence at the beginning, advising new participants is one of the main tasks many would like to be involved in.

Another additional condition for participation is **language sensitivity as a basic principle and multiple language support**. Overall, it is important to offer various opportunities for participation which allow all participants access, especially regarding languages spoken by the participants. These preconditions for pathways of implementing participation are based on the analysis for the group interviews and were confirmed by the findings in the online-questionnaire survey.

In addition to the findings in the group interview and corresponding data in the online-questionnaire, the analysis of the quantitative data showed that a participatory programme should recognise that a participatory approach does not only offer opportunities and that not everybody wants to join in straight away, but that participation also indicates an investment of resources and working time. **The high workload caused by a threefold obligation with studies, family obligations and the need to earn money are recognised as hindering participation.** A majority agrees that the workload is not only an obstacle to participation within the programmes. Structural hurdles are not named in the same amount, but result indirectly from the fact that there is also mentioned a need for better information about the possibilities to participate and the specific participatory approach. This must be taken into account in the programme design and cannot simply be expected on top. One possibility of participatory research is the financial reward for participation, as used at some points in some programmes and R/EQUAL. Therefore, **participatory engagement needs to be seen as an integral part of the work done in and for the programme and must be counted as workload.**

The overall conclusion is that many participants welcome the option of having a say and could theoretically imagine many fields of activity in which they would be involved in (re-)thinking and developing the programmes. Although a hierarchical level is not permissible against the background of the data, at least the slight gradation within the order signals greater approval for those areas of responsibility that are more closely related to the programme activities and in which one's own interests and needs then also leave traces that benefit oneself (for example, participation in the conceptual framework). **The benefit in participation opportunities expressed by many participants is related to their own further professional learning** in terms of language or knowledge of the system. That their participation also has a benefit for their private situation is less assumed. The gain of the participatory approach for the university is seen mainly in an increase in competence in the field of intercultural reflection regarding the school system and teaching situations, while the potential additional employees or the promotion of future professionals was less mentioned.

## 7. Overall recommendations for (further) development of projects

In the course of the study, five pathways to support participation emerged. The three pathways, *Information and communication, networking and language sensitivity and inclusion of multilingualism*, became especially apparent in the qualitative study. The quantitative study, in addition, highlighted the *need for participation to be an integral part of the programmes* in respect to the work emerging from participatory engagement as well as the *personal relevance of the content strengthening participative effort*. Especially, when the five pathways are interrelated, promising support structure for participatory programmes can be developed. For example, strong networks among participants can spread important information precisely in different languages if there is enough time during the programmes provided for this purpose. The following figure 14 points out the interdependence of the five pathways.

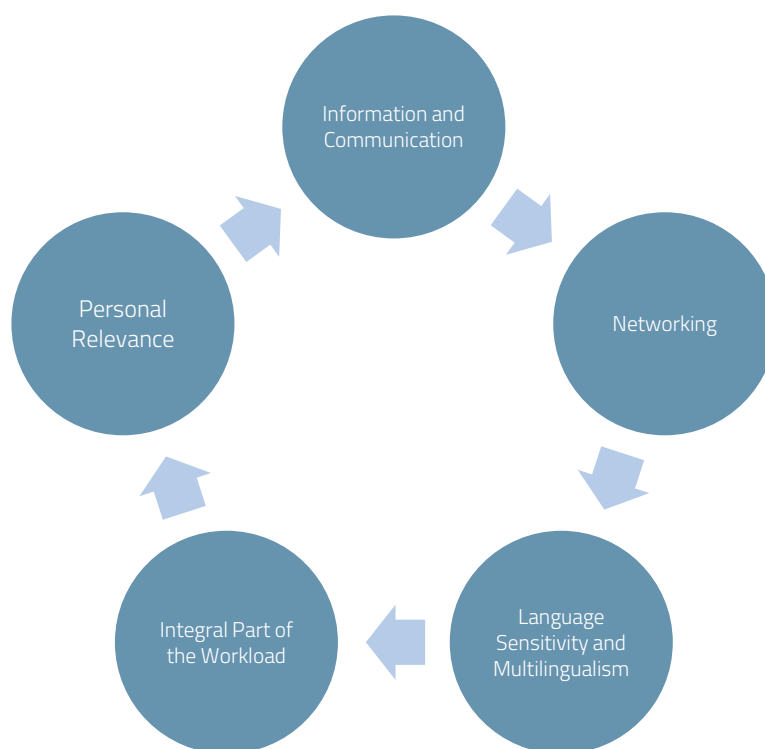


Figure 14: Five pathways to support participation



In the following, recommendations for programmes for (recently) immigrated and refugee teachers provide particularly good preconditions for participation when they are connected and interplay with each other:

### Information and Communication

It turned out to be crucial to make information accessible and establish communication structures from the start. As some participants suggested during the online-survey, it is important to clearly highlight the opportunities and benefits of participation from the beginning of the programmes. Here, also the alumni of the programmes can take on an important role, as they have already experienced the advantages of participation, especially with regard to the aspired employment as teachers in schools and can pass their experiences on to the incoming participants.

### Networking

Following from the above, it seems to be helpful to strengthen the networking between current participants and alumni in addition to a general networking between participants among themselves as well as with different professionals and stakeholders in their field of occupation. The participants described in the qualitative study, that they were sometimes unsure about their own role in the programme, especially at the beginning. Among other things, this inhibits their confidence to speak openly and critically about different aspects of the programme and to develop an open and confident communication in the programme. In this context, the alumni's willingness to share their experience with new or future participants in the programmes, which was particularly evident in the qualitative study (figure 10), may be important.

### Language sensitivity and inclusion of multilingualism

In order to establish a confident role and position within the programmes, it is further important for the participants to be able to express themselves as often as possible in the language(s) of their choice. In general, it is important to take the multilingual setting into account and develop language sensitive structures. The group interviews that were carried out multilingually showed, for example, that some participants were much more precise and thus more confident in their suggestions for improvement or criticism of the programmes when they were able to formulate these in their first language.

### Participation related to personal relevance and the individual learning process

It is important to strengthen the opportunity for participants to influence the structures that affect their personal learning paths. The large difference between the high willingness to invest time for participation in the programmes versus the time that would be invested for R/EQUAL (see figure 13) indicates that they focus more on content and structures within their immediate environment. Here, the participants want to be involved as already fully trained and competent teachers who know well in which contexts participation is helpful for them and their further development as teachers and it is important to create an atmosphere where they feel recognized as such. When it

comes to the selection of content in seminars, for example, the participants seek to exchange views on school-related topics with the lecturers on an equal level (see IO4) in order to discuss similarities and differences between the school systems and thus learn more about the underlying structures.

### Participation as an integral part of the workload

Finally, an important pathway to participation that became particularly apparent in the qualitative study, is to implement participation as an integral part of the programmes. The big difference in the amount of time that could be spent for participation within the programmes compared to R/EQUAL (figure 13) seems to indicate that there is a higher commitment to addressing concerns that affect the direct working environment. There is a great interest in investing time for taking part in designing different aspects of the programmes, which is, however, restricted by private and professional time constraints. Therefore, enough time should be provided in the programme itself for participation and networking activities. The aim to implement participation within the programmes is not just about co-determination. At the same time, important resources are also built up that the participants can draw on in their further professional careers. They can build and shape networks according to individual subject, school form, languages and thus gain a higher degree of autonomy and self-determination in forming their individual teacher profile, which further enables them to be actively involved in an increasingly changing society.

### Concluding remarks on the use of the stage model of participation

The stage model is initially considered an orientation aid for joint reflection on the structures of the programmes and the opportunities for participation that exist here. It can first help to become aware of the term and concepts of participation and perhaps also to uncover forms of only seemingly participation, in which participants take part but have no real power of co-determination. In all interviews, the discussion and understanding of the stage model took a lot of time, but this led to questioning structures of the programme more deeply.

However, it should also be pointed out that the stage model should not be read in the sense that a programme in which all parts are at a high stage are always better in all respects. In the studies and discussions with the participants, it became clear that there are many areas that should be the responsibility of the programme leaders themselves in order to give the participants orientation and/or a sense of security and to reduce their workload. Based on the stage model, it should be negotiated together with the participants in which fields which level of participation is requested.

However, the stage model can also help to gradually improve participation. Many forms of participation also require certain knowledge and skills. For example, participation in accompanying research requires knowledge of research methods, which may have to be acquired by some of the participants first. Here, the next level of participation can be aimed at, and together it can be discussed which support or learning units would be necessary to reach it. In this respect, the stage model can also be integrated into the general workload and the seminars of the programmes, because methods and concepts to enable as much participation as possible are also significant for the

work as a teacher, in order to be able to co-determine in the organisation of the respective school or also in educational policy processes.

Thus, the stage model is a variable instrument for reflection, for the design of lessons and for the organisation of programmes, but it must always be used in a context-sensitive way and itself in close consultation with the participants. The recommendations listed are based on the data collected and the evaluations by the partner programs involved. As stated at the beginning, the partners had different levels of experience working with the participatory approach. Overall, the approach has contributed to (critical) reflection processes in the programmes and thus strengthened the examination of the existing power relations in which requalification programmes for (recently) immigrated and refugee teachers are embedded.

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