



# FILM: A LANGUAGE WITHOUT BORDERS PROJECT REPORT

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In 2017, a consortium of BFI, Danish Film Institute, and German school-cinema organisation Vision Kino, were awarded project funding by the European Commission's MEDIA programme to bring groups of school children with refugee backgrounds into dialogue with their peers at a series of cinema screenings in the three countries. The project funded licensing of 8 feature and 3 short films; the creation of study guides for the films; and research into how teachers used the materials, and felt about the screenings. The project ran from January 2018 until the end of March 2019. This is the report on the project; it is also translated into Danish, German, Greek, and Italian.

Image: Paddington



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## Migration in Europe and 'Film: A Language Without Borders'

The starting point for this programme was that modern societies are shaped by political and social processes such as industrialisation, colonisation, globalisation and indeed migration, and that film can help us understand how these processes work, and their impact on individuals and society as a whole. Based on this understanding, German non-profit organisation **Vision Kino**, together with the **British Film Institute** and the **Danish Film Institute**, developed an education programme, consisting of films, study guides and research.

Since its very beginnings, European history, culture and society has been shaped by inward and outward migration. Europe's founding texts and stories, its religions, even its alphanumeric system, all came from somewhere else, epitomised by the figure of Europa in Greek myth – a Phoenician princess trafficked by Zeus to Sicily. However, despite the rich contributions made by migrants over the centuries, and the sanctuary offered to refugees, inward migration to Europe is often portrayed as problematic, and never more so than in recent years.

The project partners believed that film has the capacity to be 'a language without borders', and therefore can be a space where children who have recently arrived in Europe can encounter this new continent and its stories, culture and values, alongside the children who are European already (but whose forebears may well have made similar journeys).

For most children, school is the place where encounters with 'the other' can take place safely. The project therefore actively created spaces – in cinemas, schools, and after-school clubs – where children could meet each other, exchange views and experiences, and ask questions, all through the medium of film. The environments necessarily reflected the different ways in which the UK, Denmark, and Germany welcome, accommodate, and educate children of migrant background.

## Creative Europe funding: 'Film: A Language Without Borders'

The three project partners, (Vision Kino, the Danish Film Institute, and the British Film Institute), responded to a call from Creative Europe in 2017 for projects to support film literacy and audience development.

The purpose of the bid was to:

- License a small number of feature and short films for cinema screenings in all 3 countries - and for on-line streaming in Denmark and NordRheinWestphalen in Germany – to mixed migrant and non-migrant groups of schoolchildren in the three countries; the films were curated according to diversity in genres and topics.
- Reach children between the ages of 7 and 18, with films chosen to reach each of three age ranges – 7-11; 12-14; and 15-18.
- Create study guides to help teachers create supportive learning environments for their pupils and students, and to help them engage with and discuss questions of movement between countries and neighbourhoods;
- Research the impact of the screenings, study guides, and learning environments to see whether in fact film could be 'a language without borders.'
- Run the project in the calendar year 2018

## What we did

The films we licensed were *Paddington* (2014, UK), *Ernest and Célestine* (2014, France), *Emil and the Detectives* (1931, Germany), *Billy Elliot* (2000, UK), *Sing Street* (2016, Ireland), *We Shall Overcome* (aka *Drømmen*; 2006, Denmark), *My Life as a Courgette* (2016, Switzerland), *Fighter* (aka *Fightergirl / Aicha*; 2007, Denmark), and three short films: *Jemima and Johnny* (1966, UK), *Palle Alone in the World* (1949, Denmark), and *The Red Balloon* (1956, France). Different films from this list were licensed in each territory, but the majority were shown at least once in all three countries.

The project contracted leading German resource writer Laura Zimmerman to create study guides that supported each of the films, as well as a generic guide to working with films in a migrant school context. These resources were translated into Danish and English, and additionally into Greek and Italian. The study guides can be found here:

[bfi.org.uk/education-research/education/film-language-without-borders](http://bfi.org.uk/education-research/education/film-language-without-borders)

[dfi.dk/en/english/children-and-youth/film-language-without-borders](http://dfi.dk/en/english/children-and-youth/film-language-without-borders)

[visionkino.de/projekte/film-a-language-without-borders/](http://visionkino.de/projekte/film-a-language-without-borders/)

[ekome.media/education/ekome-launches-film-study-guides-in-greek/](http://ekome.media/education/ekome-launches-film-study-guides-in-greek/)

[zaffiria.it/sezione/film-a-language-without-borders](http://zaffiria.it/sezione/film-a-language-without-borders)

The project played out differently in each country, reflecting the different approaches, infrastructures and profiles that migrant populations have.

In Germany **26,246 children came to 546** screenings of the chosen films, across the whole of the country. In NordRheinWestphalen there were **152 streams** of *My Life as a Courgette*, and 182 downloads of study guides in the country as a whole.

In Denmark, there were **7,343 streams** of the chosen films, and **1,006 attendances** at seven screenings in the Cinematheque in CPH. Two films, *My Life as a Courgette*, and *Billy Elliot*, were chosen as part of Med Skolen i Biografen – the Danish national school-cinema programme, in which 260,000 children go to the cinema with their school. **35,907 children**, or 5% of Danish schoolchildren, **saw these two films** as part of Med Skolen in Biografen. There were **4,696** downloads of study guides in Denmark.

In the UK, BFI programmed 10 screenings with cinema partners, and a series of family workshops, in 5 cities, for a total of **965** children. The study resources were made available to the UK's network of after-school film clubs, and were booked **200** times by film clubs, with **136 downloads** of resource guides to support them.

### Numbers in total (for 2018):

63,118 children saw one of the films at the cinema

863 screenings across three countries

7,495 streams of films

5009 study guides were downloaded

'In Greece, EKOME as an external partner of the project, also promoted the study guides for the films *Paddington*, *My Life as a Courgette* and the three short films through its website [ekome.media](http://ekome.media), social media platforms, events and festivals. The educational resources had significant reach through EKOME's social media (6.324 views) as well as through the website (2163 unique views) for the period 1.11.2018 – 30.4.2019.'

## What we found

The research dimension of this project took the project title and turned it into three questions:

- Can film be a language without borders?
- Can 'migration society' benefit from European film and the various abilities and learning resources it could trigger?
- How far can mixed school groups (migrant and non-migrant background) benefit from learning experiences enabled by film and film education? What contexts and materials, enable successful learning and exchange to take place?

The researchers in Germany (Prof. Petra Anders), Denmark (Pernille Clemmensen), and the UK (Michelle Cannon) examined the contexts, processes, and products for the learning experiences. They **interviewed 28 teachers**; held group interviews with **45 students**; made observations in school and during the film screenings; and took **114 Danish, and 2,956 German responses to questionnaires**.

### They found that:

Film, with its audio-visual language, music, and colour, was **accessible to the vast majority of children**.

The films **brought out emotions**, some of them challenging, that could be **shared in a 'safe space'**.

The films **prompted shared conversation**, drawing, writing and play.

The choice of European films **empowered minority groups** to have a voice, especially where young people like themselves were represented. They enabled **sharing and exchanging ideas and experiences** about different cultures and countries, and **reflections on values, culture, and history** – both European, and globally.

The teaching and learning contexts enabled children **to bring up and deal with challenging emotions** and ideas, to think about **stereotypes and prejudice**, and to bring context and perspective to bear on them. Children were able to deal **directly with war, flight, and migration** as both represented, and as real things, experienced by their classmates. And the learning contexts enabled children to **interpret complete films and learn about film as an art form**, but in the context of 'the real world'. Many teachers commented on a variety of sad, strange and embarrassing subjects, that normally were considered very challenging to deal with, but easier through the language of film,

The researchers found **some obstacles and difficulties** in regard to the use of European films, with the emotional maturity of the pupils a huge factor. For some children in first grade it was the first cinema experience at all, and managing their emotions while watching the film could be a challenge. Some teachers mentioned they received more questions than they could answer.

Many teachers regretted the **time limits** placed on the possibilities to work with European film. They wanted **editable material** so that they could adapt it to their class situations. Primary school teachers asked for **more practical work with scissors and glue** or other material, and some teachers were uncertain as to whether the tasks stood for themselves or were meant as a sequence to follow lesson after lesson.

External technical circumstances in some schools presented challenges. Not all primary schools have **interactive whiteboards or colour printers**, and some teachers downloaded the material at home because there is **no wifi in the school**. Streaming offers often cannot be used.

The **short film format was highlighted as particularly manageable** and useful in classes for recently arrived foreign pupils. **No teacher mentioned language obstacles** for children and young adults while working with the films.

### Conclusions

The researchers found overall that film has a value in providing a **'third space'** between home and school, between a child's family origin and their new home, between 'indigenous' and 'migrant' children, between teachers and pupils, and between school and the world. European film has a potentially special role in **bringing people together to better understand how society is shaped**, and how European people are **responding to change and difference**. It also enables children to learn from each others' experience, to **generate empathy**, and to 'see themselves in the face of the other.'

Film cannot do this work on its own. The learning contexts, supporting materials and activities, and the skills and experience of the educators, are crucial in enabling this powerful and important work.



**1.**  
**INTRODUCING,**  
**FILM: A LANGUAGE**  
**WITHOUT BORDERS**



# ‘I wonder how it would be if Denmark was bombed by Norway or Sweden’

Pupil, Denmark

## 1. Introducing ‘Film: a language without borders’.

The starting point for this programme was that modern societies are shaped by political and social processes such as industrialisation, colonisation, globalisation and indeed migration, and that film can help us understand how these processes work, and their impact on individuals and society as a whole. Based on this understanding, German non-profit organisation **VISION KINO**, together with the **BRITISH FILM INSTITUTE** and the **DANISH FILM INSTITUTE**, developed an education programme, consisting of films, study guides and research.

Film has a limitless language and thus connects people, regardless of origin, age, gender and life experience. Stories about friendship, growing up, dreams, role models, generation conflicts, rebellion, overcoming difficult life situations, family issues etc. are at the same time universal as well as determined by social and cultural backgrounds. The fact that films create separate worlds for each viewer, which is both perceived together and interpreted individually, creates enormous potential for communication, exchange of perspectives and shared emotions – a potential that is especially important for a world, which overcomes physical barriers but not automatically mental barriers.

The selection of eight European feature films, as well as three classic European short films, was supplemented by educational materials (study guides) which provided students and teachers with opportunities to discuss emotions, identity and the common exploration of European film.

In in each of the three countries, researchers examined the way in which the selected films might offer children and young adults a collective cinema experience as well as an opportunity for intercultural learning. Joint results from the three countries formed the starting point for the dissemination of the programme in other European countries.

Image: Drømmen



## **2. SCHOOL AND CINEMA IN UK, GERMANY AND DENMARK**

## 2.1 School and cinema: Germany

The film education landscape in Germany is very diverse, not only because of its federal structure, which is reflected, for example, in the different curricular anchoring of film education in the curriculum and the decentralisation of cultural institutions.

Since 2005, Vision Kino has been working nationwide to improve the networking and mediation of film culture education. At the state level, this is achieved by film education institutions of the federal states such as Film + Schule NordRheinWestphalen. Museums and film institutes, film festivals with their own schools, media centres and cinemas continue to play a major role at the local level.

The largest initiative for school film education in Germany are the SchulKinoWochen (School Cinema Weeks). For one or two weeks a year, a cinema programme tailored to curriculum content is shown in all federal states, accompanied by numerous film discussions, meetings with film-makers and other experts and further training for teachers. The aim of the SchulKinoWochen is to strengthen cooperation between schools and cinemas and to raise awareness of film education and cinema as a place of cultural education in the context of school lessons.

The selection of films is based on the needs of the teachers and the requirements of the curricula.

The basis is a film pool consisting of approx. 250 titles, current films, repertoire films and film classics, which are made available by the film distributors without a minimum fee and which have received a film educational recommendation from Vision Kino and for which teaching materials are made available. The teaching materials are made available by various institutions, partly also commissioned by film distributors themselves and differentiate between them in approach and form, but they are intended to enable the teacher to adequately integrate the selected film into her teaching under various themes and with regard to its aesthetic and expressive possibilities.

Intercultural learning with film has been discussed within the projects of Vision Kino since its first conference in 2008. And since 2015, initiatives have intensified in the field of film education that are engaged in the practical and discursive field of 'flight', or migration. The range of projects and initiatives include distributors and cinemas inviting fugitive children to the cinema to see the film *Shaun the Sheep*; a film-suitcase ('Cinemanya') created by the Goethe Institute in cooperation with the Federal Association for Youth and Film, which was used to organise film events in refugee shelters; the practical film project *Mix it!* by the German Film Academy and the Federal Agency for Civic Education in which local children and young people produce their own films together with refugee children and youths. In another project, 'Kino Asyl', asylum seeking young people curated their own film series with films from their respective home countries.

In 2016 Vision Kino realised the project 'Learning German with Film'. Vision Kino tested the suitability of selected children's and youth films as well as associated media educational teaching materials for use in school lessons with migrants and refugees. The aim was to find out what the needs of the teachers in these classes are and which films are suitable for supporting German learners at the language levels from A1 to B1. Teaching materials were produced for six selected children's and youth films.

Vision Kino also presented film series in the SchulKinoWochen in cooperation with the Federal Agency for Political Education, which were accompanied by film discussions and dealt with the topic of flight and expulsion.

## 2.2 School and Cinema: UK

The UK has a number of different School-Cinema, or Film Education programmes, making for a complex ecology. The Film Audience Network is a chain of independent cinemas, supported by the UK National Lottery Fund, whose monies are distributed by BFI. There are other 'independent' chains of cinemas not directly funded by the Film Audience Network – principally Picturehouses, with 22 cinemas in England, and Curzon and Everyman cinemas, with slightly fewer. All independent cinemas and cinema chains will have some element of education or audience development in their programming.

Into Film supports a network of some 9,000 after-school film clubs, with free-to-rent DVDs (with a school-streaming service being explored), and supporting classroom materials. Into Film runs a school film festival every November, reaching around 500,000 children in 500 cinemas across the UK.

BFI Southbank is the national cinematheque, running 70 school-cinema study days every year, for ages 7 to 19, reaching around 15,000 pupils and students. The different UK curricula (in England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Wales) are differently able to support film education – either as an elective option for 14-19 year olds (all four nations), or as part of mother tongue literacy (Northern Ireland and Scotland), or Information Technology and History (Northern Ireland). Consequently, recruiting schools to cinema study events can be difficult, as schools only respond to events outside school if those events directly support the curriculum. The Into Film Festival is a special case – free screenings for three weeks in November that schools can access.

BFI Southbank, and one or two other arthouse cinemas (HOME in Manchester; Glasgow Film Theatre; Queen's Film Theatre Belfast; Edinburgh Filmhouse; Chapter Arts Centre in Cardiff) are able to offer 'study days' that directly relate to the curriculum. Picturehouses offer contextualised screenings – a feature film on a theme with an introduction – in the mornings only.

In the UK, a number of programmes actively encourage the role of film – in cinemas or in film clubs – in encouraging conversations and exchange about the experience of children and young people who have recently arrived in the UK. [Refugee Week](#) runs every June, bringing the refugee experience into focus through a wide range of cultural activity, including film screenings and film-making activity in communities throughout the UK.

Publicly-funded film education organisation Into Film publishes a [range of resources](#) for schools who want to engage in debate around migration through film, including resources on Refugee Week, and World Day for Cultural Diversity Through Dialogue and Development.

In this context, offering 'Film: a language without borders' cinema events to schools in the UK was challenging, with only HOME, the Gulbenkian Cinema in Canterbury, the Glasgow Film Theatre, and BFI Southbank offering events directly to schools. One cinema, based in the Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima), took the FaLWB programme into its Families programme, proposing it to its audience of migrant families.

### 2.3 School and Cinema: Denmark

Denmark traditionally places a high priority on films for children and youth and acknowledges a child's right to experience artistic reflection of the realities of life. The Danish Film Institute has a strategy that all children and young people in Denmark should have the opportunity to experience, understand and create film. The film education strategy coupled with activities in Denmark have a wide outreach, effect and impact on the educational system nationwide. In order to reach this goal the Danish Film Institute cooperates with partners in the field such as regional resource centres, municipalities, libraries and cinemas and supports other key players in different regions. The best way to reach all children and young people is through the educational system combined with out of school programs such as children's films clubs etc.

The three key activities that target experiencing, understanding and creating films are:

- Med Skolen i Biografen – a national school cinema scheme that covers more than 80% of Denmark and reaches on average 260.000 students a year, or 30% of Danish schoolchildren.
- Filmcentralen.dk – a streaming and educational site that offers close to 1,800 films and 700 teaching materials and study guides. The platform covers more than 90% of Danish schools and has more than one million unique users. In 2018 the Danish Film Institute invented a new app version of Filmcentralen.dk directed at kindergartens – the three to six-year olds.
- FILM-X – a computer-based, interactive film studio for children situated at the Film Institute in the Cinematheque in Copenhagen. 10.000 students produce their own films in the studio each year.

In Denmark there is a long tradition of using film and TV-programmes as an educational tool when teaching immigrants and refugees, as well as in teaching Danish as a second language. The popular Danish TV-series, Matador, for example, was widely used in the 80s, as it contained many examples of everyday life in Denmark from a historical perspective. The obvious advantages of the film medium in this context are the visual element, which may be understood independently of language, and film's ability to portray cultural mores and traditions. TV-programmes from the reality genre have also been used to afford insight into typical interactions between people in a Danish cultural context.

Film has also played a substantial role in the education of Danish students with a view to giving them knowledge of the cultural and political background for migration. That applies partly to films that focus on the migration process, and partly to films that focus on the situation migrants and refugees find themselves in after arriving in Denmark with respect to asylum, integration, etc.

The Danish Film Institute has for many years produced a series of theme-based educational materials for documentary films about immigrants, refugees and the meeting of different cultures. It has continually presented feature films covering the same thematics in the Danish school scheme with the Med Skolen i Biografen programme. In addition, DFI has produced educational materials for teaching Danish as a second language on three levels: primary school, middle school, and post-16.

Film production has been used as a tool in integration projects, particularly for children and young people in different localities, because production gives them an opportunity to express themselves in a way that is not dependent on language proficiency. The Film Institute's interactive film studio, FILM-X in the Cinematheque in Copenhagen, offers individual experiences with workshops in which the target group has produced films about their life situations.

Image: Sing Street

SYNGE STREET CBS

**3.  
CREATIVE  
EUROPE FUNDING:  
'FILM: A LANGUAGE  
WITHOUT BORDERS'**



### 3. Creative Europe funding: 'Film: A Language Without Borders.'

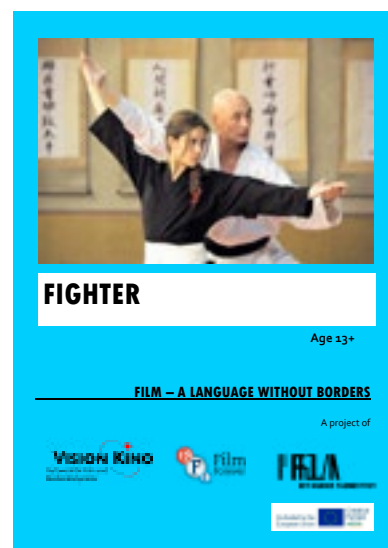
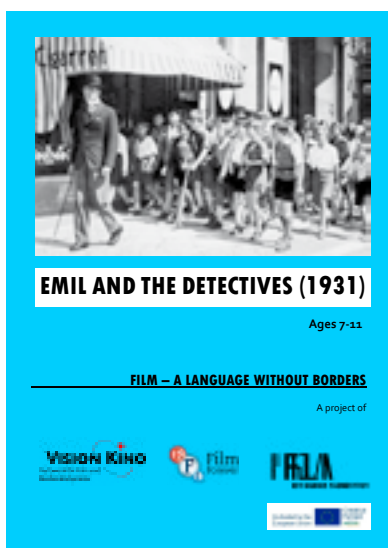
The three project partners, (Vision Kino, the Danish Film Institute, and the British Film Institute), responded to a call from Creative Europe in 2017 (EACEA/25/2016 ) for projects to support film literacy and audience development.

The purpose of the bid was to:

- License a small number of feature and short films for cinema screenings to mixed migrant and non-migrant groups of schoolchildren in the three countries;
- Reach children between the ages of 7 and 18, with films chosen to reach each of three age ranges – 7-11; 12-14; and 15-18.
- Create study guides to help teachers create supportive learning environments for their pupils and students, and to help them engage with and discuss questions of movement between countries and neighbourhoods;
- Research the impact of the screenings, study guides, and learning environments to see whether in fact film could be 'a language without borders';
- Run the project through the calendar year 2018.

The films that were chosen for the programme did not necessarily deal directly with migration, but feature characters who might have arrived in an unfamiliar place (like *Paddington*, or *Jemima and Johnny*), who feel out of place in their community and want to assert their identities (*Billy Elliot*; *My Life as a Courgette*; *We Shall Overcome*), or who are suddenly on their own (*Palle Alone in the World*; *The Red Balloon*). What they all have in common is that they tell stories of solidarity, hope, friendship and cohesion, despite the difficulties of growing up and being confronted with social expectations, rules and prejudices. There are plenty of other examples, all age appropriate, from *Sing Street* and *Fighter* for older teenagers, to *Ernest and Célestine* and *Emil and the Detectives* for younger children.

The films represent European cinema in so far as the stories are set in concrete historical, geographical and historical European settings and representing these in diverse cinematic languages.



Examples of study guides created for *Emil and the Detectives*, Short film programme and *Fighter*.

Image: *My Life as a Courgette*



# 4. PROJECT DELIVERY





## 4.1 Study Guides

Together with author/film pedagogue/migration expert Laura Zimmermann, Vision Kino, the Danish Film Institute and the British Film Institute created study guides for all films of the programme, which were subsequently written by the author. Furthermore, a general guide on 'Film education in migration society' was developed.

The study guides were hosted, in each language, and English, on the partner websites, and can be found here:

[bfi.org.uk/education-research/education/film-language-without-borders](http://bfi.org.uk/education-research/education/film-language-without-borders)

[dfi.dk/en/english/children-and-youth/film-language-without-borders](http://dfi.dk/en/english/children-and-youth/film-language-without-borders)

[visionkino.de/projekte/film-a-language-without-borders/](http://visionkino.de/projekte/film-a-language-without-borders/)

In addition, the three Guides on the films Paddington, My Life as a Courgette and on the Short Films as well as the General Teaching Guide were also translated into Greek by EKOME SA, the new National Centre of Audiovisual Media & Communication and further endorsed under their strategy on teaching media and film literacy in schools. The teaching material was received with great enthusiasm by the Greek educational and film community due to the popularity of the films chosen in Greece as well as carrying the expertise and film education speciality by the partners of the project. The Study Guides as well as the General Report can be found on the website of EKOME: [ekome.media/education/ekome-launches-film-study-guides-in-greek/](http://ekome.media/education/ekome-launches-film-study-guides-in-greek/). The material was enriched with extra supporting material on the use of color in the film as well as accompanied by online assessment forms.

The study guides were also translated into Italian by Italian Media Education providers Zaffiria, at: [zaffiria.it/sezione/film-a-language-without-borders](http://zaffiria.it/sezione/film-a-language-without-borders).

The pedagogical approach of the teaching materials was to live up to the title of the programme, 'Film: a language without borders'. They were intended to be inclusive, to promote communication, to deal with the language of film, and reflect the reception context of the school in 'migration society'. This meant in particular the recognition of cultural diversity and the consideration of immigration and migration not as an interruption of the normal, but as a constant throughout history.

While other film study guides tend to focus more on film aesthetics, film analysis or thematic discussion, these materials were primarily intended to strengthen the examination of film as a 'common space of experience'. Students were to be given as much space as possible to share their own emotions and experiences with the film. That is why every film guide begins with completely open questions, offering as much group work as possible, and is as action-oriented as possible, highlighting connections to one's own living environment in order to take account of individual approaches and backgrounds.

Furthermore the guides were intended to offer teachers opportunities to reflect for themselves, on the one hand to get students to actively engage with the film, and on the other hand to encourage teachers to reflect their own approaches to the topics diversity and culture.

## 4.2 Germany

'Film – a language without borders' was included as a special series of events and screenings as part of the SchulKinoWochen or School Cinema Weeks. Each project team of the SchulKinoWochen in the federal states made a selection of at least four films from the programme together with the cinemas. They were used as widely as possible, so that at least half of the participating cinemas (approx. 400 cinemas) were able to see a film from the programme.

The programme was presented in all programme booklets on an extra page and teachers were informed about the programme via information letters and newsletters. In addition, the respective contact persons at the school authorities for the topics of flight and integration were also made aware of the programme, so that they also could advertise the programme, and teachers of German as a second language, refugees and newly arrived children and young people in classes for teaching German, are informed.

In the course of the year in all **547 screenings** were planned which were visited by **26.246 pupils and their teachers**. What is interesting about these results is that films that had previously been shown in the School Cinema Weeks (like *Ernest & Célestine*, *My Life as Zucchini* and *Sing Street*), got more attention through the communication of the programme than was the case in the years before. *Billy Elliot* could be offered for the first time on a DCP, so this film was a rediscovery for film education in Germany.

## Number of attendees

Film	Screenings	Attendees
<i>Ernest &amp; Célestine</i>	75	5,184
<i>My Life as a Courgette</i>	83	1,842
<i>Sing Street</i>	65	1,932
<i>Billy Elliot</i>	114	5,222
<i>Paddington</i>	168	10,314
<i>Emil and the Detectives</i>	26	1,223
<i>We Shall Overcome (Drømmer)</i>	12	452
Short film programme	4	77
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>26,246</b>

The program 'Film – A Language Without Borders' could not be shown in all the regions (Länder), because the study guides were only available from February on and there are School Cinema Weeks in January in Brandenburg and Northrhine-Westphalia. For this reason the licence for the film *My Life as a Courgette* was bought for online streaming service for schools in Northrhine-Westphalia. The film was streamed 152 times, with 4039 click throughs to different parts of the streamed content.

The teaching materials were offered via the website of Vision Kino, as well as the websites of the SchoolCinemaWeeks in the 14 Länder, where the programme was offered. Every teacher who registered for a film from the program received the teaching material automatically.

The teaching materials were downloaded 182 times from the Vision Kino website. It should be noted again that the material was distributed to the teachers in different ways and via different websites, so that the number is much smaller than the actual distribution of the material.

### Additional downloads of resources in Germany from the Vision Kino website were as follows:

<i>Paddington</i>	57
<i>Billy Elliot</i>	48
<i>My Life as a Courgette</i>	41
<i>Emil and the Detectives</i>	17
<i>Ernest &amp; Célestine</i>	13
<i>Sing Street</i>	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>182</b>

## 4.3 UK

BFI, with a much smaller number of refugee children in UK schools, took a targeted approach to bringing school groups to cinemas in areas of relatively high amounts of inward migration and refugee groups. One event was held at BFI Southbank in June, for 6 primary aged children (8-11), using the short films *Jemima and Johnny*, and *Palle Alone in the World* as the basis of discussion work on what it might mean to arrive in an unfamiliar place.

Another event, around *Paddington*, was held in the Gulbenkian Cinema, in Canterbury, Kent – an area which 'disperses' groups of asylum-seeking families newly arrived in the UK. The Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (mima) is similarly situated in a 'dispersal' area, and has a proactive programme of engagement with local community groups of recent arrivals, one of which, 'People and Culture' has for some years been programming a cinema programme for refugee groups. mima put together a sequence of 6, monthly family screening events, using the films in the programme, with People and Culture.

The Glasgow Film Theatre has a long tradition of engaging with refugee youth groups and schools in its education programme. GFT programmed six events, around *Ernest and Célestine*, *Paddington*, *Sing Street*, *Fighter* and *Billy Elliot*, in June and October, for school classes with refugee children. Similarly HOME, Manchester's independent cinema, programmed *Paddington* as part of the Into Film Festival in November.

All participating teachers in these events were encouraged to use the study guides in follow-up lessons after the events, and the BFI researcher contacted teachers for telephone interviews.

Finally, Into Film promoted the Study Guides to their film clubs, with the expectation that some of the clubs would book the films, and follow the study guides.

## BFI Film: A Language Without Borders Screenings

Glasgow		
06/06/2018	<i>Ernest &amp; Célestine</i>	66
07/06/2018	<i>Ernest &amp; Célestine</i>	126
07/06/2018	<i>Paddington</i>	218
15/06/201	<i>Sing Street</i>	22
16/09/2018	<i>Aicha</i> (part of GYFF)	12
17/09/2018	<i>Billy Elliot</i>	7
11/10/2018	<i>Fighter / Aicha</i> screening	Cancelled due to poor uptake

Other locations		
05/06/2018	BFI Southbank	196
04/09/2018	Middlesbrough institute of Modern Art.	51
20/06/2018	Gulbenkian Cinema, Canterbury	131
23/11/2018	HOME Manchester	136

## Into Film bookings of the films in after-school film clubs were as follows:

<i>Paddington</i>	76
<i>Ernest and Célestine</i>	24
<i>Sing Street</i>	6
<i>My Life as a Courgette</i>	61
<i>The Red Balloon</i>	23
<i>Jemima and Johnny</i>	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>199</b>

The best guess for numbers of children attending film clubs is 25 per screening, so we estimate 5,000 children seeing these films between January and October 2018.

Online resources in English to support the school cinema screenings and after-school screenings were hosted at [bfi.org.uk/education-research/education/film-language-without-borders](http://bfi.org.uk/education-research/education/film-language-without-borders)

## Download figures of resources were:

<i>Paddington</i>	23
<i>Ernest and Célestine</i>	17
<i>Billy Elliot</i>	17
<i>Sing Street</i>	5
<i>We Shall Overcome</i>	5
<i>My Life as a Courgette</i>	17
<i>Emil and the Detectives</i>	4
<i>Fighter</i>	18
Short film programme	25
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>131</b>

## 4.4 Denmark

Significant experiential knowledge was gained through the Danish Film Institute's work with 'Film: A language without borders' and involvement with several initiatives in the Middle East and Africa in recent years. As an example, the project, 'Cinema on the Road Lebanon' focussed particularly on the use of film in working with children and young people in conflict zones and refugee camps: [dfi.dk/en/english/children-and-youth/cinema-road-lebanon](http://dfi.dk/en/english/children-and-youth/cinema-road-lebanon)

With regards to the framework of this project, the Danish Film Institute's many years of experience with film-pedagogical offers to schools and daycare centres across the country, has been very significant. The Film Institute decided to use its established brands, which were already firmly anchored in the Danish school students' daily life. As Denmark, amongst one of the few countries in Europe, has built up a well-functioning digital platform for schools, parallel to cinemas as a delivery platform, it was obvious to weigh digital as well as analogue experience equally.

Specifically, the activity portfolio consisted of:

### 4.4.1 Film screenings in the cinematheque for specially invited schools, April-May 2018

The Cinematheque is an audience area open to the public. It presents Danish and international films in three cinemas and also contains a research library, a restaurant and FILM-X, which is a creative film studio for children and young people.

Classes in Copenhagen for newly arrived students, as well as regular classes with students of various ethnicities, were invited to free film screenings in the Cinematheque. To begin with there was a programme of four screenings of the films: *Fighter*, *Billy Elliot*, *We Shall Overcome*, and *Paddington* for students from Years 2-11. When interest proved greater than expected, an additional three screenings were programmed.

The screenings began with a presentation of the film and the project itself. After the film, the presenter opened up a facilitated conversation. The project research asked the following questions:

- How are films about integration and cross-cultural understanding experienced from a child's perspective?
- Can film help to open up conversations about difficult, elusive, unfamiliar and sensitive subjects?

The screenings all had in common that they clearly initiated feelings and thoughts among the students, many of whom had the courage to speak about the message and thematics of the film. The general experience was that the children were direct, courageous and honest in their comments, including around potentially sensitive and difficult subjects such as fleeing from one's homeland, daring to follow one's dream, forced marriages and family relations, as well as the importance of belonging to a place in the world. Many posed questions regarding the narrative of the film and were even brave enough to share very personal comments and reflections. Three of the screenings were observed by a researcher, as appears in the research report.

**Numbers:** Seven film screenings with 1.006 students and their teachers

#### 4.4.2 Film screenings with Med Skolen i Biografen during the school year 2018/2019

The main idea behind the national school cinema scheme Med Skolen i Biografen, is to let teachers and students use their local cinema as a classroom. You watch films and then analyse and work with them afterwards.

The school cinema scheme presents films from all over the world. There are films suitable for age groups from six to 18 years. Every film is accompanied by educational material that is available for free through the DFI educational site filmcentralen.dk. The school cinema scheme covers 80% of municipalities – with about 260.000 yearly participants, equivalent to a little more than one third of all school children in Denmark. The scheme is a collaboration between the Danish Film Institute, cinemas, local government and teachers.

The two films, *My Life as a Courgette* and *Billy Elliot*, were screened as part of the project. *My Life as a Courgette* had screenings in the spring of 2018, and *Billy Elliot* was screened in the Autumn.

Both films have been very popular. Teachers and students regarded the films as entertaining and educational, as well as providing access to a common experience around film language and the key topics, especially around diversity, being different and being alone in the world as orphans.

Film	Participants	Screenings
<i>My Life as a Courgette</i>	16,875	138
<i>Billy Elliot</i>	19,032	162
<b>TOTAL NUMBERS</b>	<b>35,907</b>	<b>300</b>

#### 4.4.3 Streaming of films and educational materials at filmcentralen.dk

filmcentralen.dk/Undervisning is the Danish Film Institute's online teaching platform and streaming service. The platform contains educational materials, lists of themes, articles, as well as a film dictionary, and at the same time functions as an online portal for the Med Skolen i Biografen and the interactive film studio, FILM-X. Filmcentralen/Undervisning has approx 1,070,000 unique users and about 770,000 streams per year. 2,000 educational institutions subscribe to the platform, amounting to 90% of the country's schools and high schools. There are approx 700,000 primary school pupils and 150,000 high school students in Denmark.

There were three short films connected to the project: *Palle Alone in the World*, *Jemima and Johnny*, *The Red Balloon*, and three feature films: *My Life as a Courgette*, *Ernest & Célestine* and *Fighter*, all made available on Filmcentralen.dk. The film *We Shall Overcome* is accessible on 'mit CFU', another streaming site for schools.

The above mentioned films, and the project's other films, which have only been screened in the cinemas, all have accompanying educational material on Filmcentralen.dk. In addition, basic material has been developed, which elaborates on the film-pedagogical basis for working with this subject area and can be used if one wishes to continue the work with other films of one's own choosing. The educational materials contain ideas and assignments for the study of filmic tools, film analysis and thematics. It is also about encouraging the students' own reflections, to further their awareness of the cinematic form from a cross-cultural perspective, and their relation to the meeting with European film.

All of the materials present the project as well as the content and purpose of the material. Both the basis material and other material can be found on the project's main page on Filmcentralen, with a focus on teaching Danish as a second language.

The materials were developed in Germany and translated into Danish. It proved to be more challenging than expected to ensure that language usage and content would work optimally in a Danish educational context.

#### 4.5 Other countries

In Greece, EKOME as an external partner of the project, also promoted the study guides for the films *Paddington*, *My Life as a Courgette* and the three short films through its website [www.ekome.media](http://www.ekome.media), social media platforms, events and festivals. The educational resources had significant reach through EKOME's social media (6.324 views) as well as through the website (2.163 unique page views) for the period 1.11.2018 – 30.4.2019. The educational material was enriched with extra resources on the use of colour for the film *Paddington* and online assessment forms. Educators and school advisors expressed their will to work with the actual films themselves and EKOME highlighted the need towards targeted educational workshops.

**Numbers** Three short films and four feature films are available online, and these are the streams as per 31 December 2018:

Three European short films	
<i>The Red Balloon</i>	1,358
<i>Jemima and Johnny</i>	50
<i>Palle Alone in the world</i>	1,834
Feature films	
<i>Ernest &amp; Célestine</i>	1,289
<i>Fighter</i>	Not informed
<i>My Life as a Courgette</i>	363
<i>We Shall Overcome</i>	Not informed
<b>TOTAL NUMBERS</b>	<b>7,343</b>

Eight of the project study guides are accessible online and the unique page views as per 31 December 2018, were:

Basic Guide	1,160
<i>Billy Elliot</i>	831
<i>We Shall Overcome</i>	785
<i>Ernest &amp; Célestine s</i>	470
<i>Fighter</i>	470
<i>My life as a Courgettet</i>	523
<i>Paddington</i>	557
Three short films: ( <i>The Red Balloon</i> , <i>Jemima and Johnny</i> and <i>Palle Alone in the World</i> )	63
<b>TOTAL NUMBERS</b>	<b>4,696</b>

Educational material for the subject area and for the films in the project, are all accessible via Filmcentralen.dk:

- Undervisningsmateriale om filmisk dannelse i et flerkulturelt perspektiv: [filmcentralen.dk/files/teaching\\_material/attachments/basisguide\\_final.pdf](http://filmcentralen.dk/files/teaching_material/attachments/basisguide_final.pdf)
- *Billy Elliot*: [filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/billy-elliott#.XLBf2aOZNuU](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/billy-elliott#.XLBf2aOZNuU)
- *We Shall Overcome*: [filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/droemmen#.XLBf\\_6OZNuU](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/droemmen#.XLBf_6OZNuU)
- *Ernest & Célestine*: [filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/ernest-celestine#.XLBfK6OZNuU](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/ernest-celestine#.XLBfK6OZNuU)
- *Fighter*: [filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/fighter#.XLBgMaOZNuU](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/fighter#.XLBgMaOZNuU)
- *My Life as a Courgette*: [filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/mit-liv-som-squash-0#.XK9s8qOZNuU](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/mit-liv-som-squash-0#.XK9s8qOZNuU)
- *Paddington*: [filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/paddington#.XK9slaOZNuU](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/paddington#.XK9slaOZNuU)
- Three European short films: *The Red Balloon*, *Jemima and Johnny* and *Palle Alone in the world* [filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/europaeiske-kortfilm#.XK9tKaOZNuU](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/europaeiske-kortfilm#.XK9tKaOZNuU)
- *The Children's World*: [filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/laerdansk-med-kortfilm-1#.XNF9Y-SP7L8](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/laerdansk-med-kortfilm-1#.XNF9Y-SP7L8)  
[filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/laerdansk-med-kortfilm#.XNF9q-SP7L8](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/laerdansk-med-kortfilm#.XNF9q-SP7L8)  
[filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/laerdansk-med-kortfilm-0#.XNF-HuSP7L8](http://filmcentralen.dk/grundskolen/undervisning/laerdansk-med-kortfilm-0#.XNF-HuSP7L8)



# 5. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

## 5.1 Research questions and focus

The research dimension of this project took the project title and turned it into a question: 'can film be a language without borders?' Specifically, the research team asked 'can a migrant society benefit from European film and the various abilities and learning resources it could trigger?' and then more specifically still, 'can school groups where children of recent migrant background mix with children who have been domiciled for longer, benefit from learning experiences enabled by film and film education? And if so, what contexts, materials, preparation, dispositions enable successful learning and exchange to take place?'

Identity formation, and literary and intercultural learning are inner processes and therefore difficult to quantify and even a challenge to examine. The study 'Film - A language without borders?' follows the suggestion of *Albrecht/Hornberger* (2014) to investigate the contexts that could foster capabilities in children and young adults rather than just to investigate the formation and experience itself. As teaching cannot itself guarantee identity formation, literary and intercultural learning, but can often make it possible, the researchers decided to look at the teaching conditions like the teaching material, the preparation of the film screening, the film screening itself, and the debriefing activities. The research study therefore used qualitative research methods, but also used quantitative data to underline the qualitative perspectives.

Besides the context of learning, the researchers also examined the products and processes of those learning contexts: in interviews, group discussions, student texts or drawings, where children and young adults made their experiences transparent. These verbal and nonverbal-documents can give indications of the learning experience, even if teachers just reproduce what their students mentioned during the film screening or in the class. The research team then triangulated different resources and interpreted the data. The results are partial in that interviews, student texts, drawings etc. are (only) excerpts of what is imagined and experienced by the child or young adult (Spinner 1998, 51).

## 5.2 Research methods

In Germany the researchers used semi-structured telephone interviews (average duration of 30 minutes) derived from the key questions with 19 teachers from Bremen and Baden-Württemberg, whose children had attended screenings of one of *Ernest and Célestine*; *Billy Elliot* (called *Billy Elliot – I Will Dance*, in Germany); *My Life as a Courgette*; and *Paddington*.

In the UK the researcher conducted telephone-interviews with four teachers and one Learning Co-ordinator (of a Family Learning workshop), and observed one family learning workshop, and two cinema events.

In Denmark, the researchers observed participants during three film screenings (*Fighter*, *Billy Elliot*, *Paddington*); carried out three group interviews with a total of 15 students, aged 8-14, about their immediate experiences following the screenings; visited two schools; interviewed four primary school teachers (*Fighter*, *Billy Elliot*, *Paddington*); and sent a questionnaire aimed at teachers around the country who teach in classrooms where the students have diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds (with 114 respondents).

In total, there were individual interviews with 28 teachers, talking about circa 600 children; group interviews with 45 students; two observations in school visits; 6 observations during the film screening; and 114 Danish, and 2,956 German responses to questionnaires.



### 5.3 Outcomes

The outcomes of the research are summarised as answers to three questions, all derived from the overarching question: can film be a language without borders?

- What is the potential of European films to support classes with migrant children?
- How did this potential manifest itself in classrooms and screenings?
- What obstacles and difficulties have arisen in the focus classes with regard to the use of European films?

#### **What is the potential of European films to support classes with migrant children?**

The researchers found overall the value of film in providing a ‘third space’ between home and school, between a child’s family origin and their new home, between ‘indigenous’ and ‘migrant’ children, between teachers and children, and between school and the world. In particular, the films offered

- A source of empowerment for the minority group, where students’ mother tongues are represented, and they feel ‘visible’ in a narrative;
- A resource for sharing thoughts and impressions, for example about fleeing your native country, following your dream, homosexuality, loss, integration, forced marriages and family relations;
- A resource for reflections on values in a society/ community, for example the idea of ‘home’, or helping understand the extent to which society has changed, or learning about the society into which you have arrived;
- An opportunity for teachers to respond to the values and norms in our society;
- A resource to foster empathy and tolerance, and enabling children to express and explore emotions, for example about racism;
- A resource for learning about the medium of film, to show that films are a mirror of the society they come from, and broadening children’s experience of film: ‘sometimes it is just the task of the school to show something different’.

#### **How did this potential manifest itself in the classes examined?**

Teacher use and impression of resources:

The average teaching time with the materials was 4 lessons (each 45 minutes) in the classroom, with 2 hours for preparation and 2 hours for activities after the screening. Teachers tended to choose material because of a strong single task or focus on a main topic (eg. home or friendship). They liked to adapt the material to their own ideas and working style, often exploring a second viewing of the film with an alternative critical perspective.

The quality of the resources was rated as very high (‘brilliant material with a few key ideas, not overloaded... and the questions at the end too... it was helpful to have the guidance’), emphasizing the importance of establishing a clear framework and structure when the students are going to work with film.

#### **Children’s engagement with the films**

The films triggered a series of associations to which children responded in a visceral and emotionally direct way. The colours and music in film convey emotion non-verbally, offering a bridge to verbal expression. The films made emotions more concrete and thus more memorable and personally relevant (‘Film makes it all more real for me. It has a greater impact on me when I can see it happen than when I read about it in a book.’ DK, Year 3 student, 8-years old).

Suspense and fun were two important components in gaining access to a film, and the bilingual aspects made the film accessible (‘I understood the language (Turkish) better and it’s better for me than to read.’ DK, 7th grade). Beyond this, the films were not language-heavy, but still inspired conversation. Even young children were able to follow the film language (‘And in the beginning they (the children) found everything in the house so oppressive, also the colors, the rain, which came then, when the mother died. (...) Then one child said to me: Don’t you think: It is as if it had to be like that – it had to start raining right then (when the mother died).’)

#### **What the teaching (material) offered**

The teaching resources were especially tailored to children’s engagement, facilitating a mixture of action and reflection; use of role play and other nonverbal ‘body-active’ responding and debriefing; and mixtures of both drawing, writing, and collage.

# ‘I would bring Paddington home to me. Then get him something to drink and to eat. Then I would give him overalls’

Second Grade student describes his plan for *Paddington*, sitting at the station

## How the classroom became more inclusive through working with film

The screenings and follow up lessons enabled a high level of participation by all students, with film’s audiovisual qualities helping quieter children and children with different language backgrounds to have a voice. Even pupils with poor language skills or intellectual disabilities were able to comment on the film afterwards, even though their understanding remained mostly at a very superficial level.

## What obstacles and difficulties have arisen in regard to the use of European films?

Overall, children and students were engaged by the films, the cinema experience, and the activities and resources. They felt for the characters and enjoyed themselves with them. Emotions and identifications became clear. However, the selection of films also posed challenges.

The emotional maturity of the pupils is a huge factor, because for many reflection tasks the ability to change perspective was a prerequisite. For some children in first grade it was their first cinema experience, and primary school children offered various emotions while watching the film: they cuddled up with each other and even with the teacher when scenes caused anxiety; tears of joy and relief were visible from both, boys and girls. Uncertainty was also expressed.

Many teachers regretted the time limits placed on the possibilities to work with European film. The teachers noticed as difficulty the time to implement all the suggestions. They wanted editable material so that they could adapt it to their class situations. Primary school teachers asked for more practical work with scissors and glue or other material, e.g. *Paddington* as a figure to cut out or rebuild, and some teachers were uncertain as to whether the tasks were ‘standalone’, or were meant as a sequence to follow lesson after lesson.

Sometimes the teachers felt that the material for preparation came a little late into their hands and their own preparation time was too short to feel safe.

Teachers reported that a visit to the cinema is a very personal experience with the class which is also a personal challenge for them as teachers.

External technical circumstances in some schools presented challenges. Not all primary schools have interactive whiteboards or color printers, and some teachers downloaded the material at home because there is no WLAN in the school. Streaming offers often cannot be used.

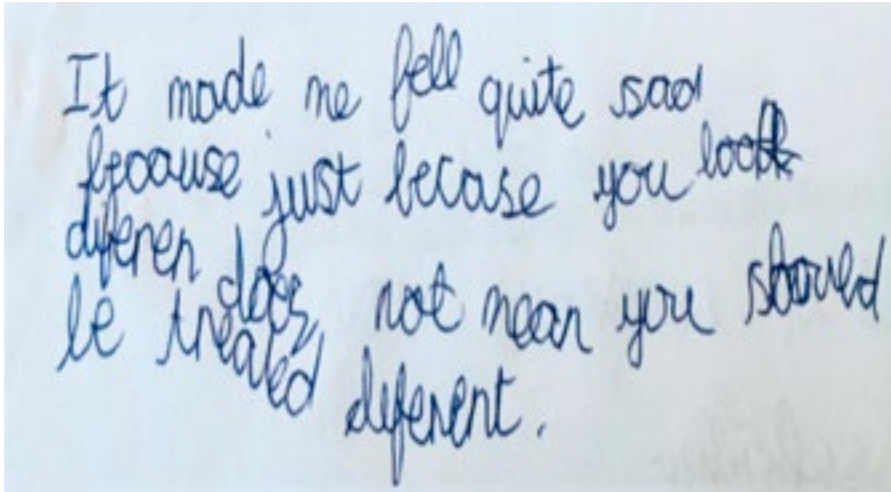
There were challenges relating to the film content, for example the Miners’ Strike as historical context in *Billy Elliot*. However, even students with special needs got the main idea of the film (e.g. accept your own passion). Some teachers and pupils were not prepared for the issue of sexuality in *My Life as a Courgette* and in *Billy Elliot*, and sometimes history is presented in biased and essentialised ways; as one teacher put it ‘we should be talking about it more collectively and not be afraid to do some unpicking.’ (UK)

The short film format was highlighted as particularly manageable and useful in classes for recently arrived foreign pupils.

No teacher mentioned language obstacles for children and young adults while working with the film.



# 6. CONCLUSIONS & FINAL REMARKS



Taken from student feedback form

## 6. Conclusions

The project 'Film: a language without borders' has brought into clear focus the value of film as a 'common' or 'third' space, between home and school, but also between 'now' and 'then', and 'here' and 'there', and 'us' and 'them'. The films in the project, together with the study guides, enabled teachers to create safe situations where children could bring their own experiences into the classroom, inviting their peers to listen, ask questions, and learn.

It is clear that film can facilitate powerful emotional and empathic responses from children, fulfilling one of the key goals of education which is to change perceptions, understanding, and ultimately even behaviour. Many of the children in these settings were new or recent arrivals to the school, community and country in which the project was placed. For some, the project enabled them, their language and heritage culture to be made more visible to their peers who maybe knew little outside their own immediate environment.

The research associated with the project has revealed the complexity behind what is sometimes glibly called 'European film', covering as it does many hundreds of different languages and cultures, some of them quite isolated within a more dominant language and culture.

For the project team, as a group of film educators with many years experience, the project has revealed the need to deepen and extend the conception of film literacy, to include wider emotional and subjective responses to film, and to be informed by multiple perspectives on what individual films might mean for different groups of learner. 'Film literacy' is multiple, not singular in its address; it must be revised and renegotiated every time a film is shown to children and young people in either a cinema, a classroom, or online.

The project implies that film can indeed be 'a language without borders', especially where films screened tell powerful stories without too much reliance on monolingual dialogue, and where the learning context (in cinema or classroom) is safe, and teachers are supported with high quality study materials and suggested activities.

## 7. Final remarks

In times of political uncertainty, both in Europe, and beyond, the three partners in this project – from Denmark, Germany, and the UK – have found strength in working together around and through film to foster positive attitudes in young people towards the world, themselves, and their peers. Film has truly ‘crossed borders’, not just geographically, but socially, culturally, linguistically, and emotionally. We thank the many teachers, cinemas, cultural partners, film distributors, NGOs and of course children and young people for joining these conversations with enthusiasm and an open heart. We hope that the ideas and resource created and shared here will continue to resonate and inspire for years to come.

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Image: Billy Elliot



**APPENDIX:  
MIGRATION AND  
SCHOOLING IN  
GERMANY, UK,  
AND DENMARK**

## Germany

Germany is a country shaped by migration. Since the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, this fact has been repeatedly debated, stated and questioned. The worldwide increase in movement of people has had a big impact on the country. Between 2015 and 2018, some 1.5 million asylum seekers entered, with 890,000 refugees at the peak in 2015. (Source: Migration Report of the Federal Interior Ministry [bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2016-2017-zentrale-ergebnisse.pdf?\\_\\_blob=publicationFile](https://bamf.de/SharedDocs/Anlagen/DE/Publikationen/Migrationsberichte/migrationsbericht-2016-2017-zentrale-ergebnisse.pdf?__blob=publicationFile))

Further formative phases of immigration were between 1955 and 1973, when, as a consequence of the economic boom, agreements were initially concluded with Spain, Greece, Turkey, Morocco, Portugal, Tunisia and Yugoslavia on the influx of guest workers to compensate for the shortage of skilled workers. After years of relative stability during the oil crisis, this tendency changed again at the beginning of the 1990s after the fall of the Iron Curtain, the influx of ethnic German immigrants, wars and 'ethnic cleansing' in former Yugoslavia as well as the escalating situation in the Kurdish populated part of Turkey.

At time of writing, in 2018, almost a quarter of the people living in Germany come from an immigrant family, have either travelled themselves or have immigrant ancestors. Just under half of these, 9.4 million people, have a foreign passport. On 31.12.2017 about 900,000 refugees lived in Germany. 36 % of all people with a migration background in Germany have a family connection to a member state of the European Union.

(Sources: Geschichte der Migration in Deutschland, Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, [bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/dossier-migration/252241/deutsche-migrationsgeschichte](https://bpb.de/gesellschaft/migration/dossier-migration/252241/deutsche-migrationsgeschichte), Bevölkerung mit Migrationshintergrund, [m.bpb.de/wissen/NY3SWU,0,0,Bev%F6lkerung\\_mit\\_Migrationshintergrund\\_1.html](https://m.bpb.de/wissen/NY3SWU,0,0,Bev%F6lkerung_mit_Migrationshintergrund_1.html), Statistisches Bundesamt, Fachserie 1, Reihe 2.4, 2017)

The inward arrival of peoples is reflected in the diversity of school classes in Germany, although this naturally differs greatly depending on the region or district. While in urban areas in 2017 about 59.9% of children and young people have a migrant background, this figure is far lower in rural areas at 13%. Since the number of children under the age of three with a migration background more than tripled from 2006-2015, it is assumed that the number of children and young people with a migration background in Germany will continue to rise continuously.

Since the arrival of immigrant workers, new approaches have been established for integrating the children who have moved in into the school system. These range from 'foreigner pedagogy', which is directed exclusively at children and young people who have moved in, to 'intercultural pedagogy', which addresses all pupils but retains specific group constructions, to 'racism-critical' approaches to migration pedagogy, which addresses these constructions and mechanisms of allocation and affiliations against a background of institutionalised power asymmetries. If these debates have shaped pedagogical discourses for decades, they have also become politically topical, when in 2015 a large number of children and young people joined the school system from outside the country.

Although structures exist in all federal states for the integration of children and young people to help their acquisition of German as a second language, these were not prepared for the massive increase in the number of new pupils\*. The BMBF expected a new demand of 10,500 to 14,000 teachers and 600 to 800 social workers for the children and young people who have arrived since 2015.

## UK

The history of modern migration to the UK begins with the arrival of Jamaican immigrants on the Empire Windrush in 1948, a symbolic marker of the start of mass migration from the Commonwealth, in an attempt to address the labour shortages after World War Two. By 1971, there were over 3 million immigrants in the UK, and in 1972, Commonwealth immigration was heavily restricted, following years of tension, race riots and widespread discrimination. Britain joined the European Economic Community in 1973, opening the doors for more European workers to come to the UK. A new wave of immigration came after the fall of the iron curtain in 1989 prompted many Eastern Europeans to leave home. Asylum applications increased significantly in 1998 (by 42%) as Kosovan refugees fled Yugoslavia. In the year ending June 2018, net migration to the UK was 273,000. This represents a significant reduction from a peak of 332,000 in 2015 (ONS 2018). The top countries of origin for immigrants in the UK in recent years are Poland, India, Pakistan and Ireland, and net migration has been higher than 100,000 every year since 1998.

The UK is a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention, and currently hosts 162,299 refugees and asylum seekers. There are two routes to refugee status in the UK: claiming asylum on arrival, or participation in an official resettlement scheme. In the year ending September 2018, 27,966 people applied for asylum in the UK. This was 4% higher than in 2017, but in general the upward trend seen in application numbers between 2011 and 2015 has reversed (Home Office 2018, Refugee Council 2018). The top three countries of origin for asylum claimants are Iran, Pakistan and Iraq; other notable countries include Bangladesh, Sudan, Albania, Afghanistan and Eritrea.

Refugees may be resettled to the UK via the Gateway programme (to which UNHCR refers approximately 750 refugees each year), the Mandate scheme (accepting around 30 people per year) or the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (Refugee Council 2018). In 2015, the UK significantly expanded the scope of this latter scheme (originally launched in 2014), with a commitment to resettling 20,000 people displaced by the Syrian conflict by 2020. As of February 2018, just over 11,000 refugees have been resettled in the UK via this scheme (Full Fact, 2018).

In 2017 there were 5,655 asylum applicants who were dependant children (under 18s who came with family members), and around half of those settled via the Syrian

VPRS are children. There are not reliable statistics on the true number of refugee and asylum seeking children in families.

Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) are those who have come to the UK without a parent or guardian. Around half (56%) of UASC are granted status (refugee or other form of leave to remain), and because of their age and vulnerability, a further 17% are granted a limited form of leave to remain, which expires when they are seventeen and a half, meaning that they must submit a fresh asylum claim, or apply for an extension of their leave to remain. Whilst under 18, they are considered 'looked after children' and are cared for by the local authority. 2,399 UASC applied for asylum in 2017, a 27% decrease from 2016. Sudan, Eritrea and Vietnam are the top countries of origin for UASC. Currently 4480 UASC are looked after by English local authorities: 89% of them are male, and 78% are age 16 or 17 (Department for Education, 2018).

21% of primary school pupils and 17% of secondary school pupils have English as an additional language (EAL) (Bell Foundation 2018), but this varies regionally, with the average percentage of EAL learners in Inner London schools sitting at 56%, but only 6% in the North East of England (Education Endowment Foundation 2015). Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) in England are concentrated in London, the South East, the East of England and the West Midlands, and 85.3% of these pupils are enrolled in mainstream schools (O'Higgins 2018).

Refugee and asylum seeking pupils of compulsory school age (5-16) have exactly the same rights to free education as British citizens. However, this group faces many barriers to accessing and thriving in education in the UK. No one region of the UK has met the 20 day target for local authorities to arrange an education placement for all the UASC in their care, meaning that many unaccompanied minors wait months for a school or college place (UNICEF 2018). This is due to the fact that many of these pupils arrive mid-year and in some cases, schools are reluctant to take them on for fear of negatively influencing exam results profiles. For children in asylum seeking families, the language barrier and complexity of online school application processes is also a delaying factor. Children in families on the Syrian Resettlement scheme generally receive more help from local authorities and NGOs to navigate school admissions.



Once in school, refugee pupils' experiences are affected by the availability of suitable placements (for some, further education colleges where they can study full time ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) are more appropriate settings than secondary schools), insufficient EAL support, bullying and social issues, and lack of training for teachers about the needs of refugee pupils. Mental health difficulties can also be a major barrier, stemming from traumatic experiences in their home countries or on their journey to the UK, and anxieties about the status of their asylum claim can also affect pupils' ability to thrive. Despite the challenges they face, it is widely acknowledged that refugee children tend to be highly motivated in education and to value it highly, as a pathway towards language acquisition, integration and employment, as well as providing a stabilising routine to help them cope with the challenges of their present situation (O'Higgins 2018).

Schools and local authorities in the UK are developing good practice to enable refugee pupils to integrate and overcome these challenges. For example, some Local Authorities are developing interim provision for pupils whilst they wait for a school place, which combines intensive English, Maths and IT skills with an introduction to life in the UK (the NHS, laws in the UK, British culture, and life skills such as budgeting and, first aid). Once in school, integration and educational achievement can be encouraged by good pastoral support - including having designated teachers in charge of welcoming refugee pupils, and training school staff in 'mental health first aid' skills. The UK government advocates for a whole school approach to integration and anti-bullying policies, including a commitment to inclusion and equality. Over 120 schools have adopted a school wide approach to peer support for refugee pupils specifically, under the Schools of Sanctuary initiative. Funding for EAL provision has declined since 2011 when specific pots of government funding for EAL pupils and Ethnic Minority pupils were ended or absorbed into other funds, but sufficient EAL support (including training for teachers in supporting EAL pupils, and dedicated EAL leads) in schools is also a crucial step for enabling refugee and migrant pupils to access the curriculum (UNICEF 2018).

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## Denmark

Immigration into Denmark has occurred in various forms throughout its history. Denmark has 5.8 million inhabitants, of which 13% are immigrants (10%) and descendants of immigrants (3%). In January 2017 that amounted to a total of 742,000 people. More than half are from non Western countries – a growing tendency over the last couple of 9 years. In 2017, the five largest groups of immigrants based on country of origin were from: Turkey, Poland, Syria, Germany and Iraq.

Following WWII, about 275,000 refugees, nearly all German, came to Denmark, and a large group of Hungarians arrived after the Hungarian Uprising of 1956, which was also the year the Danish Refugee Council was established. During the 1960s, many Turkish guest workers arrived in Denmark due to a lack of workers in several areas of Danish industry. At the end of that decade many Polish Jews also arrived. Over the following years, more refugees arrived from trouble spots around the world, such as Uganda, Chile, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Somalia, Sri Lanka and Afghanistan. In 2015 a massive stream of refugees arrived in Europe as a result of the Syrian civil war – including to Denmark. More than 21,000 people sought asylum in Denmark that year.

Until 1984/85, refugees were largely greeted with goodwill but in later years, questions about refugees, asylum seekers, family reunifications, integration etc., increasingly became contentious issues in the public debate, partly as a result of an increase in the number of asylum seekers after 1984, just as the need for foreign workers decreased. After 2015, the public debate about immigration and integration further intensified.

It was estimated in 2017, that there were amongst the population of Denmark around 296,000 people who could be considered Muslim (from all the various factions of Islam), amounting to ca. 5.15% of the population. The political discourse is currently strongly affected by the mixed attitudes towards Islam and integration.

The above is based on 'Immigrants in Denmark 2017', from Denmark's Statistics' publication:

[dst.dk/da/Statistik/Publikationer/VisPub?cid=20705](http://dst.dk/da/Statistik/Publikationer/VisPub?cid=20705)

In Danish schools around 10% of the students have a non Danish language background (the official designation in Denmark). However, the number of minority-language students varies greatly from school to school. Many schools in the capital area and other bigger cities, have a proportionally larger share of minority-language students, while quite a few schools in outlying areas have very few or none. Minority-language students going to school in Denmark, have a right to receive 'Danish as a second language' education<sup>1</sup>. Furthermore, the subject 'linguistic development', has been an across-the-board topic all school subjects are obliged to include.<sup>2</sup>

Teaching minority-language children is generally a challenge for Danish schools. There are significant differences between the schools in how efficient they are at handling the task, and generally, minority-language students do considerably worse than their fellow students in Danish, math and science.<sup>3</sup> One of the reasons for this is that many teachers don't have the necessary skills to fulfil the charter of linguistic development.<sup>4</sup> The challenges to create effective education for minority-language students are also mirrored politically. Following the influx of refugees in 2015, a law reform made it possible for the municipalities to enrol newly arrived minority-language students directly into regular classes. The political reasoning behind this was that the change in the law would help the students learn Danish faster, and become integrated in the local society more quickly. Before this change, the students were taught Danish for up to two years. Now students, following the new model, will be taught the various subjects in Danish, while for a shorter period receiving supplemental classes in basic Danish. Several Danish researchers following this development, have criticised the solution for reducing the students' possibilities for obtaining an effective education, as the students risk not receiving the necessary pedagogical and linguistic support they require. Ca. 40% of the country's municipalities followed this model in 2017, but statistics regarding exactly how many students it affects have not been compiled.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Bekendtgørelse om folkeskolens undervisning i dansk som andetsprog (2016): [retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=183352](http://retsinformation.dk/Forms/R0710.aspx?id=183352)

2 Nye Fælles Mål – sproglig udvikling (2015): [emu.dk/modul/sproglig-udvikling-intro](http://emu.dk/modul/sproglig-udvikling-intro)

3 Pisa Etnisk (2015): [uvm.dk/internationalt-arbejde/internationale-undersogelser/pisa/pisa-2015/pisa-etnisk-2015](http://uvm.dk/internationalt-arbejde/internationale-undersogelser/pisa/pisa-2015/pisa-etnisk-2015)

4 Dansk som andetsprog og ny skolereform (2015): [videnomlaesning.dk/media/1403/18\\_thomas-thorning.pdf](http://videnomlaesning.dk/media/1403/18_thomas-thorning.pdf)

5 Flygtninge sendes direkte i almindelige klasser uden at kunne tale dansk (2017): [skoleliv.dk/nyheder/art6130028/Flygtninge-sendes-direkte-i-almindelige-klasser-uden-at-kunne-tale-dansk](http://skoleliv.dk/nyheder/art6130028/Flygtninge-sendes-direkte-i-almindelige-klasser-uden-at-kunne-tale-dansk)



Co-funded by the  
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Cover image: Jørgen True