Life careers
of *young immigrants*
opportunities, resources and obstacles between family and school

Elena Besozzi, PE, Brussels 15 March 2016

A framework (1)

- A wide and rich documentation of studies and national and international research

- The numerous documents and recommendations of the European Commission and the European Council on migrant minors or foreigners

- A very different migratory reality between the various European countries

- but also a common and transversal nature of the issues beyond the specific national situations

At the center of the discussion ...

Which paths of inclusion? What possible integration for the new generations of migrants ? What possible integration in European societies ?

A framework (2)

The "new generations" of foreigners

have a strong resemblance with the new autochthones   generations ,
live in the same cultural climate , they are

" digital natives " and **"intercultural   natives "**

it is important to take into account the common   traits

but also of the many differences : living conditions ,

linguistic pluralism , religions, expectations , motivations ,
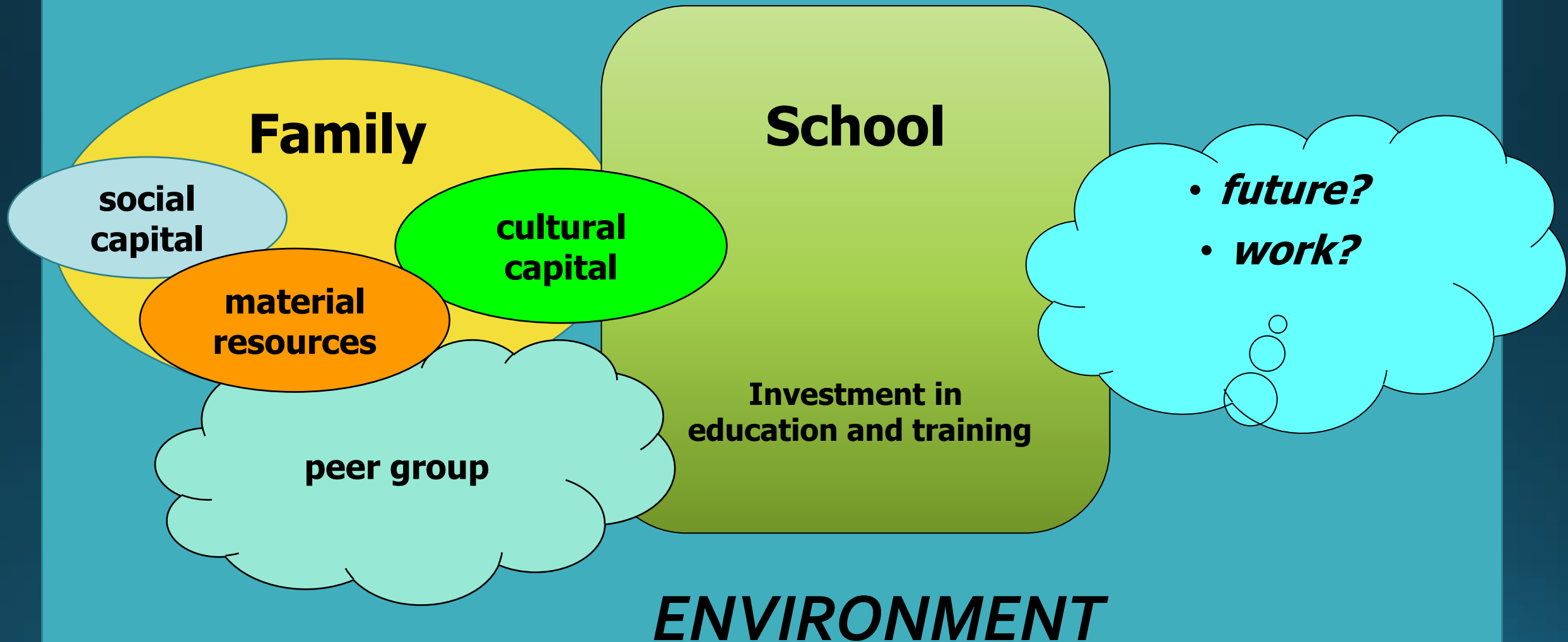
migratory project, life projects ...

A basic option…

- a *holistic approach* which considers the many factors at stake
- a *dynamic approach* that considers not only a *condition* but also and above all a *process*

based on the *agency* of the subject
(capability to decide and act in the light of structural and cultural conditions)

Youth in transition ... standard biography

Family

social capital

material resources

cultural capital

peer group

School

Investment in education and training

- *future?*
- *work?*

ENVIRONMENT

Standard transition or de-standardised transition?

- understand young people's agency requires a *biographical* perspective

- pay more attention to the complexity of decision-making processes

- the dynamics and the social inequality reflective of their motivational careers

- In fact, their transitions imply increasingly **biographical dilemmas**

[Andreas Walther, *Youth - actor of social change? Differences and convergences across Europe*, 2012]

The immigrant family

- **Heterogeneous** migratory projects and routes
- **Diversity of situations** (about economic, cultural, relational aspects)
- **Different composition of households** (many single-parent families)
- Care of family ties , **transformations** of intergenerational ties and between genders
- put into play **the roles into the family**, the parenting roles, the role of women (redefinition , adaptation, tensions , conflicts)
- **Investment in children** (they are part of the migration project)

# Between similarities and differences…

- The foreign family has many **similar** problems to the autochthonous family

- However , the migration path has a significant effect on expectations, opportunities, difficulties, conflicts

Many risks : economic, cultural,relational impoverishment … and intergenerational and intercultural conflicts

Between autochthonous and immigrant parents … open problems

- **Reduced contact** in the various contexts of life (school , etc.).

- **feelings of indifference** , distrust , but also **mutual** respect , curiosity …

- mutual exploration, but little encounter and exchange
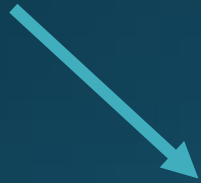
Looks that cross …

but often only «parallel roads»

The background is a submerged...

«The **background of students and family** exerts an **important influence** on their performance. Students from families with low education, negative attitudes towards schooling, inability to support their children, or poverty stricken single parents have a higher likelihood of dropping out» [OECD, 2012].

The school as a resource …

Council of the Europe (2012)

3201st EDUCATION, YOUTH, CULTURE and SPORT, Council meeting, Brussels, 26 and 27 November 2012

« a growing number of studies have shown that young women and men with a migrant background continue to face major disadvantages in education, on the labour market, and in transition from education to the labour market, despite the fact that a large portion of this group of people has been socialised or born in their country of residence. Furthermore, data indicate that young women with a migrant background are more affected by unemployment and social exclusion than young men …»

The school as a resource …

- **Strong investment** of foreign students (especially first generation) on education and vocational training
- **But** early channeling of low-profile addresses (prejudices of teachers , bad orientation, poor parental information …)
- Evident lack of academic success (and school delay)
- **But** good relations with teachers (respect, esteem … good classroom climate)
- relationship difficulties with their classmates (discrimination , isolation …)

From the research ...

Three profiles of foreign students ... the first generation
[from a research in lower secondary school (2005 - 2006)]

1. Low profile	2. Realistic acquisitive	3. Exploratory acquisitive
• few economic and cultural resources • evident school failure • few aspirations • frequently work experience • orientation to the workers' job • they would like to return to their home country	•few resources • scholastic success of a good standard with a lot of effort • need of emancipation through the work • investment in relations • stabilization project in Italy	• wealth of economic and cultural resources • excellent educational attainment • strong investment in education • exploratory , looking for opportunities • they may also go to another country
255 **(25%)**	341 **(34%)**	412 **(41%)**

Pathways of school integration

[from research in lower secondary school, 2010-2012]
(cluster analysis)

1. *Failure integration*	2. *Partial Integration*	3. *Full Integration*
160 (15%)	365 (35%)	515 (50%)
poor success and poor relations	**poor success but good relations with classmate and teachers**	**success and good relations**
• low status • relationship difficulties inside and outside the school High presence of foreigners born abroad (44.3%) , classes with high incidence of foreigners, predominantly males (52%)	• low status • average levels of relatedness Male prevalence (53%) , presence of foreigners born abroad (40%) and in Italy (15%), Italian (44%)	• medium-high status, • high family cultural capital, • good relations, • high level of scholastic well-being Prevalence of Italians (77%) and females (51%), incidence of foreigners under average

First and second generations

First generations
- strong desire for social mobility, commitment to a better future , but many academic difficulties
- strong commitment to cultural and linguistic adaptation (be similar ...)

Second generations
- Strong resemblance to the natives , lower school commitment , but also skills and achievements
- Commitment to the identity , needs identification and reconstruction (be similar or different ?)

Between school and family…

resources	obstacles
• positive classroom climate	• Misunderstandings in communication, poor access to information
• intercultural communication skills of teachers and increase of social capital	• Wrong orientation, reductive family choices , low profile
• Opening of the school community and common educational plan	• impoverishment of social and cultural capital at school
• Orientation non-discriminatory	• Economic and cultural poverty of the family , living disadvantaged environment
• Support and accompaniment (coaching and mentoring)	• poor participation , isolation, loneliness of the family (low social capital)
• networking between formal, non - formal, informal education	• Distrust …
• Trust …	

Disadvantaged parents tend to be less involved in their children's schooling, for multiple economic and social reasons. Policies need to ensure that disadvantaged schools prioritise their links with parents and communities and improve their communication strategies to align school and parental efforts. The more effective strategies target parents who are more difficult to reach and identify and encourage individuals from the same communities to mentor students. *Building links with the communities around schools*, both business and social stakeholders, can also strengthen schools and their students.

Equity in education

Equity in education …can be seen through two dimensions: **fairness** and **inclusion**

Equity as inclusion means ensuring that all students reach at least a basic minimum level of skills. Equitable education systems are fair and inclusive and support their students to reach their learning potential without either formally or informally pre-setting barriers or lowering expectations.

Equity as fairness implies that *personal or socio-economic circumstances, such as gender, ethnic origin or family background are not obstacles to educational success*.

An equitable education system can redress the effect of broader social and economic inequalities. In the context of learning, it allows individuals to take full advantage of education and training irrespective of their background

OECD (2012), *Equity and Quality in Education: Supporting Disadvantaged Students and Schools*, OECD Publishing.

Which integration?

Crisis of traditional models
(assimilation or neo - assimilation , multiculturalism ...)

A new way to integration ?

a **dialogic integration**
built
in everyday spaces of life
(family, school, neighborhood...)

Integration as social practice

daily multiculturalism ...

- One approach **to understanding the dynamics** that develop in everyday life

- In the foreground is the study of **the relation identity / difference** (procedural dimension of identity)

- They are **highlighted the practices**, the characteristics of a context, the experience of the individuals, their strategies and actions ...

Integration
as social practice

It builds ...
social,
civic,
cultural
citizenship