TRUST ACROSS BORDERS

A review of the literature on trust, migration and child welfare services
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Executive Summary

This review report is an outcome of the project “Trust across borders: State institutions, families and child welfare services in Norway and Poland” led by the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway, in cooperation with researchers from the University of Gdańsk in Poland. This report is based on a literature review and input from experts in the fields of child and family welfare.

The issue of trust, migrant families and the Norwegian Child Welfare Services (CWS) has received considerable media attention and has been the subject of public debate in Norway, Poland, and internationally. We argue there is a need for reliable and accessible information about child welfare services and issues of trust and migrants in English, due to the policy relevance of these issues and the high media and political interest internationally. The goal of this report is to provide researchers, journalists, practitioners and the general public with information based on research and facts.

Currently, the ability to read Norwegian is a precondition to access most existing, quality-assured sources of information about CWS and minorities. We find a similar pattern in Poland where sources that document and analyze child and family welfare issues are written in Polish only.

The scientific literature collected for this review report concentrates mainly on, but is not limited to, Polish and Norwegian institutions, focusing on child welfare services and migrants in those countries. Nevertheless, the knowledge presented in this report may have application and transmission value across contexts. The knowledge presented in this report is relevant to building trust between child and family welfare institutions and their clients, especially, but not exclusively, when these clients are migrants. This knowledge can also be transferred to other institutional settings which rely on building rapport and trust.

To that end, we have developed six thematic frameworks to organize this information: 1) communication and trust; 2) trust in relation to child welfare services as a broader trust problem in the society; 3) the role of the media in the trust-building process; and 4) shared and specific needs of minorities, migrants, and other clients of child welfare services. We also refer to research that 5) indicates a need for boosting competence within child welfare services. And, finally, 6) we briefly problematize some diagnostic methods and measurements used in work with migrants in child welfare evaluations and psychological testing.

Readers of this report also will find a comprehensive bibliography (including translation of titles) that may be useful for future research and applied to projects on trust-building between public institutions and migrants, beyond issues of child welfare.

In support of this effort, the ‘Trust across borders’ project also organized two workshops with stakeholders and practitioners from Norway and Poland, on the themes of trust across borders and child welfare services, to facilitate experience-sharing and increase mutual understanding, and system-knowledge. For more information on the workshops and outcomes, please see the PRIO policy brief ‘Building trust across borders: Polish-Norwegian exchanges on child and family welfare’.

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When using the term ‘minorities’, we refer to national and ethnic minorities as well as migrants. Our main attention, however, is on migrants and that term is used throughout this report. But we note that there are many similarities related to the challenges (and solutions) of building trust between public institutions and migrants, on the one hand, and indigenous, ethnic and religious national minorities, on the other hand.
1. Why did we write this report?

Trust is a key condition for well-functioning human relationships at societal, interpersonal, and cross-border levels. This report starts from the premise that trust is possible and desirable across borders, as well as between public institutions and residents, with or without migrant backgrounds in a given context.

The crisis of trust between Polish migrants and Norwegian Child Welfare Services (CWS) is well-known. Yet, balanced knowledge on this topic, informed by perspectives from a wide range of actors, about what contributes to produce this crisis of trust, and what sustains it, is fragmented or lacking. This report provides an overview of existing knowledge and research gaps on the topic of trust in CWS, especially among Norway’s migrant population.

While we focus on Polish migrants in Norway, our perspective goes well beyond this case. We build on literature on trust, migration and child welfare services from these two countries, but also take into account international literature on migrants’ trust in public institutions (other than child welfare).

The issue of trust, migrant families and CWS has received considerable media attention and has been the subject of public debate in Norway, Poland, and internationally. We hope this report will provide researchers, journalists, practitioners and the general public with information based on research and facts. Due to the policy relevance of these issues and the high media and political interest internationally, we argue that there is a need for reliable and accessible information about child welfare services and issues of trust and migrants written in English. At present, the ability to read Norwegian is a precondition to access most existing quality-assured sources of information about CWS and minorities, as relevant reports and articles on these topics are published in Norwegian only. We find a similar pattern in Poland: the sources which document and analyze child and family welfare issues in Poland are written in Polish only.

This purpose of this report is:

→ To review and summarize existing knowledge on trust across borders, specifically between state institutions, migrant families, and child welfare services in Norway and Poland, and to identify current research gaps.

→ To provide a concise, readable text (published in English, Norwegian and Polish) that will inform a broad audience of parents, researchers, policy-makers, stakeholders, and social workers in Poland, Norway, and beyond.

→ To draw attention to key patterns in the literature and provide a comprehensive bibliography (including translation of titles). This bibliography will be a helpful tool for researchers and practitioners alike to access knowledge on issues that are often contentious, politicized, and sensationalized in the media, and thus in need of balance from research-based evidence.

**II**
When referring to the Norwegian Child Welfare Services, we use the abbreviation CWS. When referring to institutions of child welfare in general – we do not. Hence, CWS refers to Norway’s Barnevernet. When referring to Polish institutions we will refer to specific institutions, as well as the set of institutions which jointly comprise child welfare services in the Polish context.

**III**
An exception is Maciej Czarnecki’s book available in Norwegian: ‘Norsk barnevern sett utenfra: Stiller det urimelige krav?’ [The Norwegian Child Welfare Services seen from the outside: Are demands unreasonable?] and in Polish: ‘Dzieci Norwegii: O państwie (nad)opiekuńczym’ [Children of Norway: On an (Over) protective Welfare State], which seeks to present different voices.
The manner in which systems of care, welfare and protection are organized is deeply anchored within the socio-cultural and institutional landscapes of a given geographic and nation-state context. Thus, particular practices, modes of work, and related vocabulary are often system-related and unique to a given country. Issues of language and communication are central to trust and shape perceptions and mis-perceptions in fundamental ways. This report is written in English, and subsequently translated into Polish and Norwegian, with an aim to contribute to a better understanding of child welfare services, institutional set-ups, and the challenges of building trust not least among migrants, across language-barriers, and national contexts.

Throughout the report, we seek clarity of terms and, where possible, use official translations of terms (e.g., Norwegian barnevernet as Child Welfare Services). However, this presents a challenge of retaining meaning through translation. Some terms convey certain nuances and implied understandings that native speakers may assume, but may escape non-native readers. Again, the Norwegian term barnevernet serves as a prime example because it lies at the heart of current controversies involving the crisis of trust between Polish migrants and CWS. A key challenge – as we return to – is the lack of available knowledge in English, rather than a lack of knowledge at all. This challenge presents a need to summarize existing knowledge on trust in family and child welfare institutions in Norway, and to position this body of information within the context of international research on child welfare, minorities, and trust. To accomplish this goal, this report will be available in English, Polish and Norwegian and made available to the public for free download.

A summary of key research findings and knowledge gaps on trust-building, public institutions and migrants can be found at the end of this report (see chapter 6). We have also included a comprehensive bibliography (appendix 2) related to the themes covered in our report that might be useful for future research and could be applied to projects focusing on building trust in public institutions among migrants.

This review report is an outcome of the project “Trust across borders: State institutions, families and child welfare services in Norway and Poland” led by the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), Norway, in cooperation with researchers from the University of Gdańsk in Poland. This report is based on a literature review and input from experts in the fields of child and family welfare.

In support of this research, the ‘Trust across borders’ project also organized two workshops with stakeholders and practitioners from Norway and Poland, on the themes of trust across borders and child welfare services, facilitating experience-sharing, increased mutual understanding, and system-knowledge. For more information on the workshops and outcomes, please see the PRIO policy brief ‘Building trust across borders: Polish-Norwegian exchanges on migrants and child family welfare’.

“Trust across borders” was funded by the Polish-Norwegian bi-lateral fund, one of the funding mechanisms of the European Economic Area (EEA) funds. It was thus a project that was agreed upon between representatives of the Polish and Norwegian governments, as an initiative worth supporting as one of several ongoing initiatives on related themes. For more information about the project please visit the website: www.prio.org/trust.
2. Methodology

We selected the materials for this report through a **double-track approach**: 1) systematic searches in relevant databases; and 2) an active use of reference lists from core literature on the topic of trust in child welfare services and other public institutions. Some additional international literature was selected for the review, after we assessed its relevance to the issues at hand. We ran our searches in late 2018 and early 2019 in three languages – English, Norwegian and Polish – careful to use the same key words in each search in the following databases: EBSCO, Google Scholar, JSTOR, SAGE journals, and Web of Science. We gathered different types of written research outputs: journal articles, reports published by research institutes and NGOs, books, book chapters, official reports and guidelines from authorities, PhD theses, and master’s theses. **Our dataset consists of sources from different disciplines**, including anthropology, business studies, economy, geography, migration studies, political science, psychology, security studies, social work, and sociology.

Taken together, the literature gathered helped us to see thematic and methodological development in this field over the span of almost 20 years.

Because we were working with Polish and Norwegian languages, there was need to **add country-specific key words to capture the diversity of both systems and to accommodate differences between them**. For example, the key term ‘child welfare services’ did not produce many relevant studies in the Polish context, but terms such as ‘social welfare’ or ‘welfare services’ did find many matches. The name of the Blue card procedure (applied in Poland to domestic violence-related police interventions) also produced relevant results in searches, but not in the Norwegian context. See appendix 1 for more information about these systematic searches.

Thus, the methodology for this review evolved and adjusted to contextual and linguistic needs, aided by our Polish-Norwegian research team, comprised of two researchers fluent in Polish and English and two researchers fluent in Polish, English, and Norwegian. In the process of developing this report, the authors actively used all three languages in discussions, thus sharpening their attention to linguistic challenges, and minimizing the potential for analytical slippage, which can occur when working in translation.

To ensure that the overview of research insights prepared for this report is up-to-date, the PRIO team invited researchers focusing on the CWS and minorities to an **expert meeting** in February 2019. Six researchers from the University of Bergen, Oslo Metropolitan University, and the University of Southeastern Norway provided feedback on the list of collected literature and on an early draft overview of knowledge status and research gaps (chapter 6). The meeting enabled us to anchor the project in the relevant research environments and quality-assure the conducted work on this review report.

In literature we found, not every paper bridged directly to the issue of trust. However, we recognized that reports on the integration of migrants in Poland, and several reports on minorities and CWS in Norway provided valuable insights for our analysis. Therefore, we decided to create a wider-ranging **appendix bibliography** (see appendix 2) divided into thematic categories. We translated the titles of all listed papers into the relevant language for each edition of the report, hoping this work will contribute to raising awareness about already-existing research in the fields of trust, institutions, minorities, and child welfare services. Many of the listed works are challenging to access internationally as they were not published in English.

In summary, the thematic scope of the searches concentrated on trust in institutions and their representatives, foregrounding child welfare
services, and specifically among migrants and minorities in Norway and Poland. We discovered that more research has been published in Norway than in Poland on the topic of migrant encounters with public institutions, so comparisons between the countries were possible only to a limited extent. Our report and adopted methodology will shed light on the gaps in the existing literature and identify key avenues for future research on trust, migrants, and public institutions.

3. What is trust in the context of migration?

→ Trust means we assume that other members of a given community are characterized by honest and cooperative behavior².
→ Trust is often called the foundation of society³.
→ Trust might be culturally determined and inherited ⁴ ³.

We can distinguish different types of trust, from personal trust (in specific people), trust in position (for specific social roles, professions, positions), institutional trust (for complex organizations involving numerous anonymous participants, such as a bank, hospital or university), and systemic or public trust (for the entire social system and its participants, such as the economy or civilization). Trust can be manifested by personal attitudes and shared as a common trait by the entire society, becoming an element of its culture⁵.

**Social trust** is assumed to produce certain positive outcomes to societies such as economic growth⁶, government efficiency⁷, improved health⁸, and happiness⁹. Generally, trust is manifested by action or a tendency to act within institutions, and trust correlates positively with the democratization of a country¹⁰ ¹¹. By contrast, post-communist countries in transition are characterized by lower levels of trust in state institutions ¹² ¹³ ¹⁴.

Trust is also thought to be transmitted from one generation to the next in many countries. Hence trust should be analysed from cultural and national perspectives, as individuals and group levels of trust may differ cross-culturally¹⁵ ¹⁶. Intergenerational transmission of trust may also influence how migrants build trust towards institutions in their country of settlement.

**Key success factors for building trust between migrants and public institutions**

Migrants may be more willing to interact with institutions when: 1) they are familiar with an institution; 2) can understand and interpret an institution; and 3) can predict, with reasonable certainty, an institution’s actions. These conditions for building trust apply more generally to processes of integration of migrants into a new society.

By contrast, if knowledge, understanding, and trust are not present, migrants will likely avoid contact or interaction with an institution. Such a situation is not conducive to building social harmony and institutional order. Therefore, a level of trust is necessary to create a safe space for social dialogue¹⁴.

**What other factors influence the level of migrants’ trust in public institutions?**

→ **Living conditions.** The levels of migrant’s trust depend on living conditions in the country of settlement, but also depend on the level of trust they felt to institutions in their country of origin¹⁷.
Migrants and their children. The children of migrants settling in Western European countries adapt more strongly to local trust levels, than the first generation after migration.\(^\text{18}\)

Migrants’ country of origin and settlement country. The settlement-country context has a large impact on the social trust of migrants, who show significantly higher levels of social trust than comparable respondents in their country of origin. Dinesen (2012) examined migrants from three low-trust countries of origin (Turkey, Poland, and Italy) to high-trust countries in Northern Europe\(^\text{19}\). He found that institutions in destination countries, rather than culture of origin, were more important for social trust, a finding that has been supported in other studies\(^\text{20}\).

Feeling of inclusion in the society of settlement: Trust is a key factor for successful adaptation to a new society, or what Berry\(^\text{21}\) refers to as ‘the acculturation process’. Building that trust with migrants depends highly on the approach or integration processes of the settlement society\(^\text{22}\). This insight has been acknowledged in the US context since the pioneering work of Znaniecki and Thomas (1996 \[1918\])\(^\text{23}\), and later Redfield et al (1936)\(^\text{24}\). A commonly used model of acculturation, developed by Berry\(^\text{21}\) (1997) identifies four strategies, each representing different attitudes of the settlement society’s policy towards immigrant.

Perceived discrimination of migrants affects mutual trust as well\(^\text{29,30}\) and discourages migrants’ willingness to engage in intergroup contact, which may lead to the development of negative attitudes toward the majority group\(^\text{31}\).

Information channels and the accuracy and availability of these channels can affect which institutions a migrant may choose to access.

In Berry’s model: ‘multiculturalism’ is based on the assumption that the cultures of the origin country and settlement country should be equally valued and produce diversity. The melting pot strategy expects migrants to become ‘assimilated’ to the values of the settlement society and to adopt them in their everyday life. ‘Segregation’ occurs when the settlement society does not desire any value transfer from the migrant population, which leads to the separation own enclaves. Finally, ‘exclusion’ represents an attitude that deprives migrants of contact with both their origin and their new homeland society.

Publications on this issue favour inclusion and integration as key term\(^\text{25,26}\). When migrants find themselves excluded\(^\text{27}\), or feel that some policies undermine their group identity\(^\text{28}\), they are more likely to form negative attitudes and identification patterns and develop low-levels of trust in settlement country institutions.

Building trust between migrants, public institutions, and the society of settlement is a precondition for the successful integration of migrants. Research supports the idea that successful integration allows migrants to maintain concomitant ties with people, places and cultures in their origin country and settlement country. Without establishing trust first, communications and effective service delivery between institutions and migrant groups will be significantly weakened.
4. Why trust across borders, state institutions, families and child welfare services in Norway and Poland?

States, migrants, and trust

In the context of international migration, trust involves both migrant and non-migrant populations, and as well as societies and institutions. As approximately 3.4% of the global population are international migrants, there is need to understand relationships between migration and trust. In Norway, the "crisis of trust" between Polish migrants and CWS is well-known. Perhaps it is an extreme case, but it is also part of a larger phenomenon that is neither surprising, nor unique.

As described in chapter 3, there are necessary preconditions for mutual trust to both be established and maintained, and in cases where such trust is either not established, or not maintained, communication and trust levels can deteriorate.

Taking a step back, trust, between states within the international system, is worth a brief mention. While the field of family and child welfare policy is a matter largely internal to states, it becomes international when migrants with citizenship in their country of origin enter into relationships with institutions in their country of settlement. In this case, trust between states becomes relevant as demonstrated through diplomatic ties, through cooperation between consular staff and the host nation, and through international treaties that articulate standards for exchange between the countries on various fronts.

In this report, we do not focus on trust between states, but acknowledge the salience of bilateral working relationships and international frameworks. For this reason, it is important to note that the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) has been ratified by both Norway and Poland. Norway and Poland also support the Hague Child Protection Convention which focuses on several child-related issues, including abduction across borders and resolving cross-border parental disputes and child welfare cases.

Families in transnational social fields

Since the 1990s, the study of international migration has increasingly acknowledged the reality of ‘transnational social fields’ – a fact which has been well-known since Znaniecki and Thomas analysed letters from Poles migrating to the United States in the early 1900s, yet also a fact that has received relatively scant attention for a long time: namely that immigrants are also emigrants. Becoming a member of a new society of settlement is necessarily placed in some relation to attachments held to the society left behind – whether such attachments are actively broken off, latently kept alive, or actively maintained and pursued over time.
But relationships between integration and maintaining transnational ties is not a zero-sum game of assimilating or remaining transnationally preoccupied. Research shows a more complex picture\textsuperscript{35}. Instead, simultaneous integration and transnational ties are fully possible, but also, individuals might neither be well-integrated nor much transnationally active\textsuperscript{16}. These are important research insights, as they underscore the need for understanding integration as a dynamic process, where time matters, but where the passage of time in itself neither empirically does – nor normatively should be assumed to aim to – lead to ‘assimilation’ as an end-goal\textsuperscript{21 37}. This research also points to the need for fuller acknowledgment of the relevance of transnational social fields to some migrants and migrant families. Elements within transnational social fields in general receiving the most attention are migrants’ attachments to families in countries of origin and other countries around the world. Transnational family networks are a key site of investigation to understand the everyday realities of many migrant families, whose everyday lives are anchored within particular settlement society contexts (e.g., Norway or Poland).

Over the past two decades, research on transnational families has focused on children whose parents migrate, often for work, leaving children behind in the care of extended family\textsuperscript{38}. This phenomenon is well-known in many contexts in Africa and Asia and becoming better known in Europe as increasing migration from Poland has drawn attention to so-called ‘Euro-orphans’ and the topic of transnational parenthood. It should be noted that the volume of the phenomenon is unclear; it may be unclear whether ‘children left-behind’ are only those where both parents are not present. Also, normative assessments of migrating parents’ choices – in terms of assessments of welfare for children and future prospects– are perhaps questions which are not easily judged from the outside\textsuperscript{39 40}. Key themes in this field include gender, care arrangements, legislation, class, communication, and moralities\textsuperscript{41}. For our purposes, transnational parenthood refers to ‘parenting across borders’– usually with parents and their children living in different countries – for longer periods of time. We will return to these points as they are themes that to a large extent intersect with issues of trust between migrant parents and institutions tasked with child welfare issues in a settlement society.

Migration and diversity in Norway

In this section, we introduce the context of migration and diversity in Norway to provide appropriate background for the themes that emerge in the reviewed literature.

Norway has a population of five million and occupies a vast, but sparsely populated, area. Apart from Oslo, the capital (pop. 680k), only Bergen has more than 200,000 residents. As one moves from south to north in the country the distances between small towns becomes substantial. As of January 2019, immigrants in Norway comprise 14.4% of the population (765,000), while 3.4% of the population are children born in Norway to two foreign-born parents (179,000). Migration-related diversity in Norway has increased rapidly, since the first labour migrants to Norway started arriving from countries such as Pakistan, Morocco and Turkey in the late 1960s and early 1970s\textsuperscript{42}. Due to a compulsory dispersal policy for refugees who receive protection in Norway, most municipalities in Norway have – or have had – migrants (including refugees) as inhabitants.

Approximately 25% of migrants in Norway today have a refugee background. Refugee numbers began to grow starting in the 1980s, initially with refugees from Vietnam and Chile, and, subsequently, from countries across Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. Today, the largest migrant groups in Norway by far are from Poland, Lithuania and Sweden, while other European countries round out the top-ten country of origin list. While approximately 10% of migrants to Norway are students, and the remaining two-thirds (apart from refugees) are labour and family reunification migrants, policies for active inclusion have been
targeted primarily at refugees, who are expected to participate in language and cultural training called introduction program (*Introduksjonsprogrammet*) to facilitate their entry into the Norwegian labour market. Other migrants are not offered language training or other courses about Norwegian society, in any systematic way. However, **information for migrants in different languages (but primarily English) offered by public institutions has been increasing, easing the accessibility to such institutions.** More and more civil society groups are beginning to offer a range of language training and other inclusion measures.

Demographic diversity in Norway includes national minorities, notably the indigenous Sami population, all of whom have been granted various protections in the national legislature. The protections evolved from a darker corner of Norwegian history in which many Sami were forced to assimilate, especially after World War II. Today, however, **diversity has become interwoven into the Norwegian national fabric,** reflected in school text books and King’s annual New Year’s speech to the nation. Meanwhile, for some Norwegians, as elsewhere in Europe, diversity — including migration-related diversity — and implications thereof, remain a contentious reality and a heated topic of debate in the media and on social media platforms, as well as in mainstream politics.

**Migration and diversity in Poland**

In this section, we provide context on migration and diversity in Poland in order for the reader to be able to assess the various references made and the empirical contexts they relate to.

Poland has 38 million people, about 5% of the population of Europe, living within a geographic area similar to Norway. Nearly 40% of the country’s population live in rural areas, and the largest city is Warsaw with a population of almost two million. **In Europe, Poland had gained notice for its high emigration number: more than 2.5 million Poles have left since the country joined the EU in 2004.** Despite government encouragement to its emigres to rejoin the country and Poland’s improving economy, relatively few Poles have elected to return.

The large number of emigrants from Poland has led to a labour shortage in country and attracted immigrants primarily from eastern Europe. Although hard to estimate exact numbers, due to the complexity of temporary and longer-term work and residence permits in Poland, close to a million Ukrainian migrants were estimated to be living in Poland in 2017. Significant numbers of immigrants to Poland have also arrived from Belarus, Moldova, Russia, Germany and Vietnam. Meanwhile, Poland is also attracting labour migrants — and some students — from a range of countries across the world, including India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, to name only a few.

Poland agreed to receive 7,000 Syrians in 2015 as part of EU-deals over migration and refugees in the wake of the European reception crisis (still to be received though). The country does process a small number of asylum applications, but overall immigration is markedly driven by work permits, often of a temporary nature, predominantly given to non-EU citizens.

While the Polish government openly keeps statistics on immigration, the individual permits are organized by types of temporary permits, mainly temporary work permits, by administrative unit. This system makes it difficult to verify the exact numbers of migrants, as permits are often renewed and vary in length. When it comes to policies of inclusion and the integration of migrants, it is the municipal level governments (e.g., Warsaw, Gdańsk, Kraków, Poznań) that pay closer attention to immigrant numbers over time.

For refugees receiving protection in Poland, there are **one-year Individual Integration Programs** (*Indywidualny Program Integracyjny*) run by
municipalities. The units responsible for these programs, incidentally, are the same units that address questions of family and social welfare generally (see section 5), namely Poviat Family Support Centres [Powiatowe Centra Pomocy Rodzinie (PCPR)] and Municipal Family Support Centres [Miejskie Ośrodki Pomocy Rodzinie (MOPR)].

**Diversity in Poland is also not a new issue, though diversity resulting from migration, on a large-scale is a new phenomenon.** During the Communist era, the country sponsored small-scale student migration. Also, a Greek minority established itself in Poland following the Greek civil war, in the early 1950s. A small but visible community of Vietnamese migrants settled down in Warsaw from the 1970s, opening Vietnamese restaurants, and bringing some diversity to local neighborhoods, not experienced elsewhere in Poland. The Vietnamese community today counts some 25 000 – 30 000 migrants and descendants. However, diversity as such, was sought limited during Communist times, including the use of regional dialects and ethnic identification with ethno-linguistic groups such as the Kashubian or Silesian. Since 1989, a re-awakening of such identities can be observed, along with varying – but persistent – recognition of the country’s long history of diversity, particularly with Jewish communities that formed a substantial part of the population until World War II. The specter of anti-Semitism and racism, more generally, in Poland as in other parts of central and eastern Europe, has remained a lingering threat and mobilized by far-right nationalist-oriented populist groups.

**Migration, degrees of trust (or lack thereof) and the potential for building trust**

Given these unique histories of immigration and diversity in Norway and Poland, and the cross-border realities of today, what are the prospects for building trust?

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**Trust levels are not static nor absolute. Rather, there are degrees of trust.**

To illustrate, when migrants settle down in a new country – whether Ukrainians in Poland, or Poles in Norway – they will always experience a sense of being foreign, of not knowing the system, of not mastering the language. This feeling breeds levels of insecurity that may lead to social distancing and a desire to keep away from formal systems that appear alien. However, there are parallel processes of being drawn in – of being included – even when this inclusion may not be desired by migrants, and whether or not this is the intention of society and its public institutions. By living in a specific location, working there, and participating in everyday activities, individuals encounter and interact with public institutions, such as schools, hospitals, and childcare units. Through these encounters with public institutions, the degree of trust between migrants and their settlement society may increase or decrease over time. Therefore, we contend, where there is scope for interaction and encounter, there is always a potential for building trust.
5. Similarities and differences: State institutions, families, and child welfare services in Norway and Poland

What are the institutional approaches to child welfare services?

The national legal frameworks for child protection are similar and significant in Norway and Poland. Regarding international frameworks, both countries have ratified The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. However, child welfare services in the two countries differ in terms of structure and mode of organization. National institutional solutions differ as well, and inspire different perceptions about the systems in each country, as viewed by migrants.

In the Norwegian context, CWS (Barnevernet) “provides help and support to children, adolescents and parents who are experiencing challenges or difficulties within the family”. CWS works based on the principle of “the best interest of the child” as noted in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. If there are concerns about the welfare of a child, the CWS is the unit that intervenes, working alongside authorities at the municipal level. Typically, CWS are notified by police, schools, or the health system if there are questions about a child’s well-being. At this point, the institution follows a strict protocol to clarify the situation and assess the need for further action. For more severe cases and immediate risk, there are urgency modes of operation.

In Poland, the role of District Courts is extensive and essential in decisions regarding family-related issues, custody, and foster care. As in Norway, concerns about the welfare of a child often develop among teachers in schools, practitioners in the health sector, and care-givers in kindergartens. In such cases, the concerned party brings the case to the attention of the District Court for their decision on whether or not to take action. When the District Court decides action is warranted, the police or Municipal Family Support Centres lead the intervention.

Cases which lead to intervention are those that are visible to the external world, such as to neighbours. Yet, the threshold for notifying child welfare services remains high. The grounds for this situation may be traced to cultural factors (e.g., not wanting to be a whistle-blower), but also to lacking or insufficient competence, or because child abuse, if not physically harmful and visible, often remains unrecognized as being abuse.
The service “Niebieska linia” (Polish: the Blue line) – is a help line for members of the public with child and family welfare concerns in Poland. This group collaborates with a range of actors, including the health sector, the courts, the police, Municipal Family Support Centres, and relevant non-governmental organizations. The ‘help line’ is run by non-governmental actors, but the service corresponds with the “Blue card procedure” to which institutions are bound by law, as a means of reacting to suspicions of domestic violence⁴⁹.

At the municipal level, several social work centers coordinate their efforts to provide a roster of child and family welfare support. These institutions include, Poviat Family Support Centres [Powiatowe Centra Pomocy Rodzinie (PCPR)] and Municipal Family Support Centres [Miejskie Ośrodki Pomocy Rodzinie (MOPR)] or Municipal Social Welfare Centres [Miejskie Ośrodki Pomocy Społecznej (MOPS)]. However, given that different municipalities (based on size) provide varying ranges of services, coordination can be difficult and inconsistent by town. While the ‘Blue card procedure’ sets out particular pathways for navigating the legal system, coordinating efforts among related institutions (e.g., schools, health care, social work) remains a challenge.

**Statistics on child welfare services and migrant families**

Given the media focus on the CWS in Norway and its interactions with families of migrant backgrounds, we briefly present some of the available official statistics from 2016 concerning this issue⁴⁴.

Taking the example of migrant families from Poland who are living in Norway, here the number of children who receive support in the home (tiltak i hjemmet) which can be measures such as financial assistance to help pay for football team participation fees, are 18 per 1000 children (0-17 years old). The comparable statistics for children without immigrant background are 26 per 1000. For children who are in care, so not living at home with their parents, but have been taken into the care of the child welfare institutions, the number for children of Polish migrants is 3 of 1000, whereas the comparable statistics for children from non-immigrant families are 8 of 1000.

There are statistics for other Eastern-European countries and beyond, and there are variations among country backgrounds. Notably the general statistics on children of migrant background above also include children who are unaccompanied minors, arriving in Norway alone seeking asylum, which inflates the number of ‘immigrant children’ in care. In Norway, about 0.8% of children were under the care of the CWS in 2016 – which includes foster care, foster care in extended families, institutions, and other types of care arrangements.

In Poland in 2017, more than 37,000 foster families received support from the national welfare system. While child protection in Poland focuses on de-institutionalization, this process is slow and gradual. In Poland, child adoption of foster children is relatively low, which underscores how national statistics are comparable only to a limited extent. We did not find data about how many of these children in Poland are migrant children⁵⁰.

**What do broader landscapes of family policies look like?**

While our focus is on child welfare services, these services operate within broader landscapes of family policy. Therefore, we would like to outline some broad trends in European welfare policies. They are divided between those that contribute to - familisation or to defamilisation ⁵¹ ⁵² ⁵³.
Familisation refers to a process in which care for children and others is increasingly maintained within the family. Defamilisation describes a system in which more of this work is performed outside the family. Existing policies have been also examined in relation to the differences between the Polish and Norwegian policy landscapes.

A deeper look into different types of policies finds emergent themes: policies that support the implementation of an egalitarian model of parenthood and dual-career families; policies that directly encourage women to return to professional life after childbirth; and policies that promote traditional family values.

Comparing with broader trends in Europe since the 1990s, four types of policy landscapes were identified\(^{52, 54}\).

1. Liberal systems that provide families only minimal support (e.g., the United Kingdom, Ireland, the Netherlands);

2. Social democratic systems that support dual careers and encourage women to return to paid work after childbirth (e.g., Nordic countries);

3. Conservative systems that directly support families, but do not support women’s return to the labour market after childbirth (e.g., Spain, Greece, France, Italy); and

4. Post-communist states that transitioned from socialist to capitalist systems in the early 1990s (e.g., Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and Czech Republic), where democratic and egalitarian values are adopted within professional aspects of life, however within domestic sphere there is the tendency to revive traditional cultural patterns pertaining to family life, marital, and parent-child relationships.

Recent developments in Poland resemble the social democratic welfare approach, in particular the “500+” plan that gives families with more than one child monthly cash support. In Norway, every family receives direct support, per child. However, beyond this similarity family policy landscapes in Norway and Poland differ to a large degree in terms of rights to parental leave, remuneration for parental leave, and access to nurseries and kindergartens for pre-school aged children. Norway and Poland both offer compulsory and free primary education starting at age 6 in Norway and 7 in Poland.

**Similar or different vs. similar and different?**

In this section, we reflect on the question of similarities and differences between the Norwegian and Polish contexts for systems of child welfare, and other institutional and policy dimensions.

On the topic of child welfare services, three main orientations have been identified in the literature\(^{55}\):

1. a child-centric orientation (e.g., Finland, Norway and the Netherlands): The state regards children as individuals with particular rights and needs;

2. a family-service orientation (e.g., Austria, Spain, Italy): The state emphasizes service provisions to families based on the idea that people can revise and improve their behaviors. In this context, child welfare services should avoid out-of-home placements when possible; and

3. a child protection orientation (e.g. Australia, England, Estonia and Poland): The state focuses on preventing harm, creating, in some cases, a high threshold for intervention when the risk level to a child may be serious.
Using these three orientations as a guide for discussion, it is important to note that Norway and Poland do not fit neatly into any one orientation, but generally may be categorized as child-centric and child-protective, respectively. Even so, the two countries do feature many similarities, such as their support for, and foundational use of, United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. They also feature similar policies for preventing domestic violence. We find Norway and Poland differ on child welfare services culturally and at the level of service implementation. Thus, a pattern of similarities and differences which run in parallel emerges and underscores a need for further mutual understanding of such contextual differences and similarities. We explore these similarities and differences below.

Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) have developed a model of cultural dimensions that helps to understand cross-cultural differences in parenting. In order to simplify and compare, such a model has to reify rather static conceptions of culture, but this does not negate the general usefulness of the model as it facilitates our thinking. Hofstede, Hofstede and Minkov (2010) argue that the level of country’s collectivism influences the quality of its societal networks, families, and in-group cohesion. Similarly, hierarchies of relations (e.g., within a family) can reflect to some degree the power-distance levels present in a given country. Power distance defines the extent to which individuals agree that power is distributed unequally in the society. Dimensions of collectivism and power-distance can shed light on some patterns of cross-cultural differences in parenting.

Norway and Poland present some interesting comparisons in this light. Poland scores higher than Norway with regard to both collectivism and power-distance. As a result, parenting styles among Poles (in general) may appear to be more authoritarian. By contrast, Norway exhibits lower power distances and a greater focus on individualistic values such as focusing on self rather than the group. This may be reflected in parenting which foregrounds equality and a desire for children to develop their own way. However, seeing this distinction, one must be careful not to draw absolute conclusions, because parenting styles in both Norway and Poland vary significantly depending on many factors: the age of parents, site of residence, socio-economic status, and education levels. Of these factors, education and socio-economic circumstances often explain as much or more than differences based on country of origin.
6. Knowledge status and research gaps: child welfare services and migrants

In this section, we assess the current state of knowledge on migrants and child welfare services in Norway and Poland with the aim to identify important knowledge gaps. We will say at the outset, however, that much more on this topic has been written about the Norwegian context. Nonetheless, this literature, we contend, has application and transmission value across contexts and is relevant to building trust between migrants and child welfare institutions, as well as other public institutions that rely on trust-building.

Trust between migrants and institutions in Poland

→ As most contact between migrants and public institutions in Poland occurs at the municipal level, it is important to note that child welfare policies that are derived from national regulations (cf. Gdansk Immigrant Integration Model) can be differently shaped across municipalities. Thus, the encounter between migrants and child welfare services and family welfare system can be described as an array of small initiatives on the local level. Therefore, future research on this topic in Poland needs to start from the premise that intervention programs are adapted to migrant needs in respective municipalities and cities. Existing research on the topic is small-scale and fragmented. Generalization of results to the larger Polish context is challenging.

→ Polish society continues to perceive of itself as relatively monocultural and this presents a practical challenge regarding systematic implementation of migrant support policies in Poland. Current programs for migrant support are linked to migrants’ places of residence, often concentrated around the biggest cities and primarily run by NGOs.

→ The issue of trust in Polish society has been well-studied, documented as a case study in several European and international studies. Furthermore, important resources are available that provide data about trust in the Polish context, including the European Value Survey, Migration Integration Policy Index, and European Social Survey.

→ Poland often serves as a country case in international research on transforming societies with a Communist past.

→ There is a growing body of literature on migrants’ contact with authorities in Poland, with special emphasis on labour migrants from Ukraine who are the largest migrant group in Poland.

→ Very little research has been conducted on migrants’ contact with authorities in Poland, these investigations are based primarily on refugees and institutions working with refugees. We have not discovered any report nor article that specifically examines the issue of trust and child welfare services among migrants in Poland.

Research on Polish migrants

→ Poland has been studied as a source country of migrants, as a country of destination for return migrants, and on the topic of Polish migrant families and Polish migrant children in Norway.
A distinctive strand of research related to Poles in Norway and return migrants to Poland has been funded from EEA Norway grants 2013-2016. There were 10 Polish-Norwegian work-life balance and gender equality research projects funded at that time, several of them included work packages for conducting research on family issues and parental styles. Trust in child welfare services and other institutions among Poles in Norway emerged, in one way or another, as an angle of analysis in most projects. See bibliography (appendix 2) for more information about the outputs from those projects.

Selected research gaps and knowledge status concerning trust in Child Welfare Services in Norway with primary focus on migrants and minorities

Having identified extant literature on trust, migrants and child welfare services involving Poland and Norway, we now distill some key themes as drawn from this body of research: communication and trust; trust in CWS as a broader trust problem in the society; the role of media in the trust-building process; and the common and different needs of minorities, migrants and other clients of CWS. We will also refer to research that indicates a need for enhanced competences in CWS. Finally, we will briefly problematize diagnostic methods and measurement applied to migrants. This section ends with concluding remarks on implementing research about trust in the everyday work of institutions.

What is the role of communication?

Communication between CWS workers and their clients is crucial for building trust. Research supports the assertion that communication between the minority family and caseworker determines to what extent there will be trust. Looking at CWS, it is important to distinguish between trust based on impression and trust based on experience of contact with representatives of a given institution. General society tends to form impressions of trust in an institution, while clients and former clients speak about trust based on their experience.

Reputationally, CWS are criticized for poorly communicating their services to the general public. Consequently, more input and efforts from CWS is needed to connect this institution with society in general and with migrant families in particular. All actors will benefit from this cooperation.

In Norway, many people ‘don’t know’ if they trust CWS, and there is little familiarity with the institution’s work.

What don’t we know about communication between migrants and child welfare services?

If CWS is to improve its communications, it is first necessary to know which are the preferred channels for accessing information about CWS among different groups of people, considering various characteristics, such as age, class, gender, nationality, digital literacy, and socio-economic status.

Ipsos found that people who received information about CWS from authorities reported higher levels of trust for the institution. Although this study used a small sample, the preliminary findings indicate the importance of institutional authorities in providing information to society. The same might be said for a variety of public institutions, such as health stations, schools, kindergartens, and so on.

More research is needed on trust and the experience of contact with CWS. While there are some small-scale studies on the experience of former clients with child welfare...
services\textsuperscript{95 94 96 97 98 99 100}, the field would benefit from more comparative and longitudinal research based on larger samples of informants, with a focus on specific user groups, such as families, parents, adolescents, and children\textsuperscript{101 102}. More substantive knowledge is also needed about child welfare services (not only the societal \textit{impressions})\textsuperscript{103}.

What do we know about trust in the Child Welfare Services?

Challenges with trust to CWS illustrate a broader trust problem.

\begin{itemize}
  \item Lack of trust in CWS appears to be widespread. Statistics show that migrants express lower trust in CWS compared to education, health care, and law enforcement\textsuperscript{93 104}. The level of trust toward CWS also differs depending on migrant groups, thus research into causes of such variation should also be analyzed.
  \item Many migrant parents view CWS as a threat rather than a helpful service\textsuperscript{105 106 107 108}. This fear can discourage families from contacting the institution when they need help and impede their use of broader opportunities to benefit from counseling, training, and economic assistance available through CWS.
  \item Trust connotes expectations about how one will be treated and lack of trust occurs when these expectations are not met\textsuperscript{109 110}. In this regard, social workers view lack of trust as a personal trait of a parent\textsuperscript{111}. This perception can hinder cooperation and inhibit future trust-building between parents and CWS.
  \item Many teachers in schools and kindergartens do not report cases to the CWS\textsuperscript{112}. There are similar findings on health personnel\textsuperscript{113 114 115}. Problems related to underreporting can be partly explained by negative impressions of the work of CWS. In some cases, CWS have been criticized for intervening too early, and, in other cases, for not intervening in time\textsuperscript{112}.
\end{itemize}

What do we not know about people’s trust in Child Welfare Services?

\begin{itemize}
  \item More research on migrant perceptions of CWS is needed to highlight pathways for improved trust-building\textsuperscript{102 116 93}.
  \item Similarly, there is a need for understanding how children perceive CWS and their feelings about contact with this institution, how they can be affected by parents’ fear\textsuperscript{117}.
\end{itemize}

Media influence on trust?

What do we know about media’s influence on trust in Child Welfare Services?

Understanding the influence of media reports on trust between migrants and CWS is not simple. Preliminary data come from a study on a very small sample of migrants and general society in Norway\textsuperscript{93}.

\begin{itemize}
  \item There was no role of exposure to (negative) information about CWS on the internet, social media, newspapers, TV or radio found on trust measures. Meanwhile, the same study found that migrants obtained knowledge about CWS primarily from TV, the internet, newspapers, and social media.
\end{itemize}

These insights from a small sample study indicate that the relationship between media discourses and trust levels require more investigation. To our knowledge, there have been no broad or qualitative studies conducted on the relationship between negative media portrayals and trust in the CWS. There is a need to further explore these issues.

What do we not know about media’s influence on trust in Child Welfare Services?

\begin{itemize}
  \item There is very little research on resistance to the CWS, for instance on social media groups, and in form of protests in Norway and other countries, and the topic needs further empirical attention\textsuperscript{90}.
\end{itemize}
Meanwhile, a comparative discourse analysis of media coverage in Norway and Poland shows that there is “moral panic” found in Polish media⁹⁸.

Do we need Child Welfare Services to be more migrant-focused?

Within debates about supporting children and families in diverse societies, much attention is drawn to the need for ‘cultural sensitivity’ or ‘cultural competence’ among professionals involved. Cultural competence is understood as the ability to interact effectively with people with different cultural backgrounds.

Cultural competence can minimize discriminatory practices among social workers who may treat a cultural background as a static, unchangeable characteristic of a person. For example, a social worker with a static view of culture may assess a family’s parenting as “flawed” without adequately considering other significant, non-cultural factors, such as poverty and low education. Experiencing discrimination in the country of residence exemplifies a phenomenon called culturalization [nor. kulturalisering], which can hinder trust-building between social workers and minorities, as differences are assumed to be explained by a black-box conception of ‘culture’⁸⁷⁸⁸. Families who belong to majority groups in society do not experience this form of discrimination. Cultural competence and sensitivity to economic factors, parents’ level of education, experienced discrimination and family’s migration history should receive more focus in core education for child welfare professionals¹¹⁹.

However, placing more emphasis on equipping child welfare state officers with higher cross-cultural competences can potentially lead to the development of two types of services: one for migrants and minorities, and the other for ‘the rest of the society’ (the majority). Hence, more research is needed to determine which approach leads to more trust towards the CWS among migrants.

But who constitutes ‘the majority’ among non-migrants and non-minorities? What is to be assessed as an “appropriate” or “normal” manner of raising a child in a given cultural context? Families without minority backgrounds present a wide range of parental practices, economic backgrounds, and religious beliefs. It is important to acknowledge that diversity has different aspects, and it is not a characteristic of the minority population¹²¹.

Minorities, majorities and the Child Welfare Services

We know from previous research that there are some common themes for all families in contact with CWS, regardless of their minority or majority background.

When engaging with child welfare services, success factors are the same for minority and majority group parents¹⁰⁵¹²²⁸⁷¹²³.

→ Parents’ needs are taken seriously in the process;
→ Caseworker is accessible to the family; and
→ Information is communicated to the family in a clear and open manner so that parents learn about their rights and the role of CWS in the present matter⁹⁵.

While these qualities are the same for both types of family, there is also a range of issues that are specific to the minority population regarding culture, religion, and language.

→ In a Norwegian study on a sample of people with backgrounds from Iraq, Poland, Somalia, Pakistan, Vietnam, and Bosnia-Herzegovina, and general society, few migrants had the impression that CWS help children maintain their culture, religion, and language⁹³.

→ We also know that clients’ experiences with racism and class inequalities are often
invisible in social workers’ assessments of parental skills and family dynamics in Norway. Studies found that social workers tend to focus on personal flaws and individual failures of people living in poverty.124, 125

Knowledge gaps on the topic of migrants and minorities and Child Welfare Services

→ The reasons for migrants’ overrepresentation in CWS, and a comparison of different migrant groups in this regard.93

→ Detailed knowledge on unaccompanied minors and their contact with CWS.126, 127, 87, 128

→ Parental approaches to violence by migrant groups. How do these attitudes change with migration and why?120

→ The use of interpreters in trust building between a client and caseworker.87, 102

Research on this topic to date shows conflicting results, sometimes helpful, sometimes a hindrance.87, 129

What do we know about social workers and their cross-cultural competence?

→ Many caseworkers experience work with minority families as challenging or problematic.87, 130, 131, 132, 133, 97, 88

→ In the study conducted by Berggrav (2013)120, social workers (in schools, health stations, and CWS) expressed a wish to improve their individual cross-cultural understanding. They also said that topic needs more focus at the core higher education.

→ Child welfare workers need the same level of competence of understanding the family’s situation when working with immigrant families as they do with host-country children and families.102

What don’t we know about social workers and cross-cultural competence?

→ How does the cultural competence of CWS meet with the needs of children from refugee backgrounds?94, 127, 129

→ How do unaccompanied minors experience contact with CWS?126, 87, 128

→ How do social workers assess their own competence to face challenges they meet in contact with minority families? What do they see as solutions? Oppedal and Borge (2015)134 note that it would be instructive to learn if caseworkers’ opinions and experiences are consistent with the perspectives of minority groups on this issue.

Methodological puzzle – trustworthy diagnostic measures?

Overall, there are several challenges related to the use of psychological and other diagnostic tools in culturally and linguistically-diverse societies, especially in regard to child and family support services. Methodological dilemmas are a significant concern for psychologists and other professionals working with applied measurements with minorities and migrants. These considerations seem also relevant to some discussions on methodological approaches in CWS.111

For psychological and other assessment (e.g., assessment of parental competences), clients should be evaluated in their dominant language to
ensure accurate communication and cooperation with the professional conducting the test\textsuperscript{135}. In some cases, it may be difficult to determine which is the “dominant” language for a migrant as they may be multi-lingual\textsuperscript{136}. In other cases, a migrant client may give the impression of being fluent in a certain language, but their vocabulary may actually be limited\textsuperscript{137, 111}.

Additionally, many psychological measures are deeply ingrained in society and culture, and based on context-specific knowledge, including fluency in a given language. Ignoring client’s cultural and language background could lead to unethical, discriminatory practices when assessing their skills and competence\textsuperscript{138}. Furthermore, psychological measures are translated and adapted to a limited number of languages and cultural settings, and it is not always possible to find a perfect tool to implement\textsuperscript{139}. For minorities and migrants, they may experience stress if required to use a secondary language in a psychological setting, which could alter test results. Finally, misunderstanding tasks and cultural codes can contribute to additional situational burdens on minorities\textsuperscript{137}.

Psychological diagnosis, and also assessment of parental competences, is a complex process. It requires a broader background picture drawn by a trained professional conducting the examination. For migrants, their particular history and background requires a special style of consideration\textsuperscript{138}.

What else do we need to know about the use of methods in the working with migrants?

- What other methodological approaches could be used to supplement the conversation-based assessment which dominates mapping and guidance in CWS?\textsuperscript{111}

- What can we learn from longitudinal and comparative studies on clients of CWS and the long-term results of interventions?\textsuperscript{101, 102}

Concluding remarks and recommendations for research and practice

This part of the report summarized selected knowledge and suggested research gaps in the literature on minorities and migrants in the CWS. We claim that many insights from research on trust-building in CWS can be applied to other institutional settings, such as education, health care, and other organisations that require trust, communication, and cooperation with families in Norway, Poland and beyond.

Meanwhile, keeping a critical eye on existing research is important. How much do we really know from the existing body of literature? We must acknowledge that some findings have been derived from studies on small samples that have a low generalisation value.

How much new knowledge about trust is still necessary to produce? Some practitioners claim that building trust is primarily about implementation of existing recommendations linked to financial and human resources in given institutions, not lack of knowledge. For instance, we know from public debates that employees in CWS feel overworked. Having enough resources to sustain family need for support in CWS seems a very important puzzle. This challenge is all the more significant because turnover rates among CWS staff is high\textsuperscript{140, 141}. Caseworkers, who work in this fast-paced environment, can burn out quickly and lose motivation to improve when subject to high levels of controversy in the media. Therefore, building trust between CWS and migrant families will require additional resources provided to social workers.

Furthermore, knowledge application must be adapted to any given context. Institutions should actively search for solutions that are applicable to their modes of work and the specific-context around each individual case.

Finally, in the wake of criticism toward CWS, there is a need for more communication about ‘success stories’ and ‘best practices’ in the field. These stories should be supported by more research that focuses on the efficiency of interventions and new tools used to foster trust between migrants and institutions.
7. Conclusions and take-away points

The research literature collected for this review report concentrated primarily on Polish and Norwegian institutions with a focus on migrants and child welfare services in the respective countries. Nevertheless, the conclusions presented below can be applied across national contexts, and we believe have applicability to other public institutions.

**Research**

**Evidence-based policies must be developed from robust knowledge.** Therefore, it is of critical importance that research includes both qualitative and quantitative data, and involves opportunities for generalized and representative results, comparatively across population groups, and across national contexts.

One of the factors relating to building trust among migrants is their perceived status among the settlement society members – this is a recurring sentiment in Norwegian public discourse. There appears to be a circular suspicion that the discrimination experienced by migrant populations influences their trust of public institutions, which minimizes the productive contact between the two. To address this situation, more light should be shed on relationships between migrants and public institution employees. More research focus should be also placed on issues of cultural diversity and competency in CWS, as well as antidiscrimination measures, as these specifically relate to building trust between migrants and public institutions.

Generally, individual child welfare official’s cultural competence plays a large role in his or her ability to build trust with their clients. More research is needed on the training of child welfare workers, as many workers, not only in Norway, report feeling inadequately prepared for working effectively with migrant families, and in contexts of increasing societal diversity.

Future research efforts must actively assess linguistic competence across languages, not only between them. It is important to understand how interpreters interact throughout the various stages of a migrant family’s experience with child welfare services.

**Practice**

**Building trust requires good relationships between professionals and families,** and building this relationship takes time. As turnover rates for CWS staff are high, more research could help address the relevant factors that lead to this problem and help identify solutions.

We need a better understanding of the moments when trust between migrant families and public institutions can be built. These moments should be marked and characterized, and the appropriate interventions for building trust should be tested.

Certain cultural practices that may be present in a migrant family may be perceived as in violation Norwegian legislation and thus could involve the Child Welfare System. Such a situation might be exacerbated by a lack of cultural dialogue on these matters and might be an underlying reason for low levels of trust between these families and institutions. Greater effort to develop cultural competence, again, would be helpful in this regard.

Many child welfare systems are based on the notion that children are in need of protection from adults. This marks another potential challenge as we understand little about children’s specific experiences in migration. How can improved attention to children’s experiences as migrants – or as the children of migrants – be implemented in the procedures of child welfare systems?
Communication

Public debates and the frequent criticism of CWS levelled in the media call for more attention to communication strategies and which tools can be deployed to foster more effective dissemination of ‘success stories’ and ‘best practices’ in the field.

The effectiveness of interpreters and their roles in the child welfare procedures should be more thoroughly analysed. Are interpreters sufficiently fluent in culture and language with the family they are assisting? More rigorous standards for interpreters should be established to ensure the highest quality communication possible.

Media, NGOs, and government authorities should improve their cooperation on the issue of trust between migrants and public institutions, and this would require not only cooperation within the settlement society, but also liaising with the origin society to ensure that child and family needs are adequately understood.

Finally, the use of appropriate channels of communication is critical. Information actions could be channeled via trusted platforms and spaces, such as through offices and organizations supporting migrants, as well as by other actors – from commercial to civil society.
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A review of the literature on trust, migration and child welfare services


Appendix 1. Key words and terms used for literature search

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key words for literature searches in English, Norwegian and Polish</th>
<th>Country-specific searches in English and Polish or English and Norwegian</th>
<th>Databases</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>→ Norway/Poland AND trust AND child welfare</td>
<td>→ NAV (The Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) AND trust AND Norway</td>
<td>→ EBSCO</td>
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<tr>
<td>→ Norway/Poland AND trust AND child protection</td>
<td>→ MOPR (Municipal Family Support Centre) AND trust AND Poland</td>
<td>→ Google Scholar</td>
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<td>→ Norway/Poland AND trust AND public institutions</td>
<td>→ MOPS (Municipal Social Welfare Centre) AND trust AND Poland</td>
<td>→ JSTOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>→ Norway/Poland AND trust AND state institutions</td>
<td>→ Niebieska Karta (Blue card procedure) AND trust AND Poland</td>
<td>→ SAGE journals</td>
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<td>→ Norway/Poland AND trust AND government institutions</td>
<td>→ Pomoc społeczna (social welfare / welfare services) AND trust AND Poland</td>
<td>→ Web of Science</td>
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<td>→ Piecza zastępca (Foster care) AND trust AND Poland</td>
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<td>→ Norway/Poland AND trust AND kindergarten</td>
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**Trust in Norwegian Child Welfare Services**

Aadnesen, B. N. (2012). "Jeg kan ikke være den afrikanske mammaen i Norge. Men de må også skjønne at min bakgrunn er en del av meg". En studie av samhandling i barnevernet mellom saksbehandlere og foreldre med minoritetsetnisk og muslimsk bakgrunn (PhD thesis) "I can’t be an African mum in Norway. But they also have to understand that my background is a part of me." A study of interactions in the Child Welfare Service between case workers and parents with ethnic minority and Muslim backgrounds.

Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway.


Baklien, B. (2009). Skole, barnehage, barneverntjeneste - bilder av ‘de andre’ hinder samarbeid [Schools, kindergartens, the Child Welfare Service – images of “the others” hinder cooperation]. Tidsskrift Norges barnevern, 86(04), 236-244.


Helsetilsynet (2019). Det å reise vasker ørene. Gjennomgang av 106 barnevernmøkkere [“Travelling clears the mind”]


Lundberg, M. (2014). Hvordan blir informasjon formidlet i barnevernet? Hvordan har barna forstått informasjonen og hvordan har informasjonen gitt mening for dem? (Master’s thesis) [How is information communicated in the Child Welfare Service? How do children understand the information and how has this information been meaningful for them?]. Oslo and Akershus University College, Oslo, Norway.


gender minority employees in the Child Welfare Service of working with ethnic minority families]. VID Specialized University, Oslo, Norway.


**Child, Family & Social Welfare Services in Poland**


TRUST ACROSS BORDERS


Modele życia w epoce globalnej

Demographic Studies, 17, in a universalistic welfare state: The role of labor market status, country of origin, and gender.


Migrants and Minorities, International Literature


Migrants and Minorities, International Literature


Migrants and Minorities, International Literature


Migrants and Minorities, International Literature


Migrants and Minorities, International Literature


Migrants and Minorities, International Literature


Migrants and Minorities in Norway, Overview Literature


Migrants and Minorities in Poland, and Polish Emigrants Abroad


Polish Migrants in Norway


The Experiences of Children Raised by Polish-Norwegian Mixed Couples in Norway. Migration Studies – Review of Polish Diaspora, 4(166), 87-111


Other Recommended Literature


'Trust is a key condition for well-functioning human relationships at societal, interpersonal, and cross-border levels. This report starts from the premise that trust is possible and desirable across borders, as well as between public institutions and residents, with or without migrant backgrounds in a given context.

The crisis of trust between Polish migrants and Norwegian Child Welfare Services (CWS) is well-known. Yet, balanced knowledge on this topic, informed by perspectives from a wide range of actors, about what contributes to produce this crisis of trust, and what sustains it, is fragmented or lacking. This report provides an overview of existing knowledge and research gaps on the topic of trust in CWS, especially among Norway's migrant population.'