

***Annual Report 2024/2025 WERA International Research Network
(IRN): Minority and Minoritised Teachers: Exploring Social Justice
in Schools Around the World***

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Purpose and Mission of the Network: The IRN "Minority and Minoritised Teachers" is dedicated to examining critical issues of justice and equity through the lens of minority and minoritised teacher leadership in global educational contexts. Our primary aim is to understand how educational leaders from minority backgrounds navigate and respond to different forms of crisis, whether they be political, social, economic, security-related, or ecological. Our objectives are fourfold:

1. To facilitate regular online events that allow members to share innovative research and exchange knowledge across borders.

2. To promote long-term international collaboration and research development within the field of minority educational staff and leadership.
3. To organize in-depth face-to-face discussions and collaborative sessions at major scientific conferences.
4. To prepare a major international collaborative publication based on empirical studies, aimed at synthesizing insights gained through the network's activities.

Network Launch and Membership Growth: The IRN was formally launched with the publication of our inaugural newsletter in December 2024. This newsletter served as a platform to introduce the network's mission, research foci, and core team. It also provided a public call for new members and laid the groundwork for our ongoing international collaborations. The network currently includes approximately 40 members from over 20 countries, spanning all continents except Australia (a gap we are actively working to address). This diverse membership reflects the global relevance of the themes we address. Several members joined the network with strong interest in research development and contributed their insights and findings to the major collaborative manuscript currently in progress. Their engagement highlights the growing commitment to cross-border academic dialogue within the IRN. Link to launch newsletter: <https://weraonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Newsletter-IRN1-WERA-IRN-Minority-and-Minoritised-Teachers.pdf>

Annual Online Webinar: In December 2024, the IRN hosted an annual webinar focused on the wartime experiences and leadership strategies of Ukrainian educators. The webinar, organized by our IRN members Nataliia Lazebna (Universität Würzburg, Germany) and Kateryna Lut (National University „Zaporizhzhia Polytechnic“, Ukraine), brought together a panel of educators, policy actors, and researchers working in and around the Ukrainian education

system during the ongoing conflict. The webinar highlighted the civic and professional leadership roles played by higher education teachers in times of war, with particular emphasis on educational resilience, trauma-informed pedagogy, and the ethical responsibilities of minority teachers in crisis. The session attracted international participants and served as a model for further cross-national webinars. and leadership strategies of Ukrainian educators. Summary and follow-up article: <https://weraonline.org/updates-from-the-wera-irn-minority-minoritised-teachers-newsletter/>

Preparation for ECER 2025 Symposia in Belgrade: The IRN is proud to be sponsoring two research symposia at the upcoming ECER 2025 conference hosted by EERA in Belgrade, Serbia (September 9-12, 2025).

Symposium 1: "Minority/ Minoritised Teachers: Barriers, Benefits and Challenges". In this symposium the following questions shall be at the centre of scrutiny, comparison and discussion: In what ways do minority/ minoritised teachers experience barriers in their institutional settings? What are the resources and/or benefits they contribute from their particular perspective and experience? What kind of challenges or constraints do they face when trying to bring their resources into their teaching practice? Papers include case studies from the Middle East, Australia, Asia and Eastern Europe.

Symposium 2: "Minority/ Minoritised Teachers: Role Expectations and Roles as Mediators". In this symposium, we aim to focus on this bundle of questions, as empirical findings and insights in this regard mirror implicit institutional logics that need to be understood more thoroughly. Each symposium brings together six WERA-affiliated conveners (Carola Mantel, Lisa Rosen, Zbynec Nemec, Mary Gutman and Naomi Kagawa) and their colleagues to foster meaningful dialogue, with the goal of developing future publications and collaborations.

Convenors' Publications: Throughout the past year, members of the convening team have made significant scholarly contributions, most notably through journal articles, book chapters, and edited volumes.

Selected Journal Articles and Book Chapters:

Arslan, S., & **Lengyel, D.** (2023). An “Intellectual” Migration: Educational Backgrounds, Purposes, And Needs. *American Journal of Qualitative Research*, 7(1), 73-93. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ajqr/12819>

Frei-Landau, R., & **Avidov-Ungar, O.**, Heaysman, O., Abu-Sareya, A., & Idan, L. (2023). Conceptualizing Bedouin teachers’ social-emotional learning in the context of teaching children with neurodevelopmental disorder. *Teaching Education* 35(3), 235-258. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10476210.2023.2261385>.

Gutman, M. (2023). Ethiopian Origin Teachers in Israel: Prejudices, Pedagogical Expectations and the Pygmalion Effect in the Shadow of the COVID-19. In: M. Gutman, W. Jayusi, M. Beck, & Z. Bekerman (eds), *To Be a Minority Teacher in a Foreign Culture: Empirical Evidence from an International Perspective* (pp. 15-25). Cham: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25584-7_2

Gutman, M. (2023). Teachers of Ethiopian origin in Israel: early career journeys and obstacles to being a teacher in the shadow of affirmative action. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15595692.2023.2217968>

Lazebna, N., Dieser, E., & **Lut, K.** (2025). Educational and social integration challenges of Ukrainian refugee students in Würzburg, Germany. In M. Gutman (Ed.), *Challenges facing education leadership in the shadow of war* (pp. 113–121). Routledge.

Mayer, L. & Gottau, V. (2023). Convergences and Divergences in Career Paths: Recruiting Foreign Teachers in Binational Schools in Argentina. In: Gutman, M., Jayusi, W., Beck, M., Bekerman, Z. (eds) *To Be a Minority Teacher in a Foreign Culture: Empirical Evidence from an International Perspective* (pp. 217-231). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25584-7_14

Němec, Z. (2023). “They Respect Me as a Person Who Can Help” Roma Teaching Assistants in the Czech Republic. In: Gutman, M., Jayusi, W., Beck, M., Bekerman, Z. (eds). *To Be a Minority Teacher in a Foreign Culture: Empirical Evidence from an*

International Perspective (pp. 365-379). Cham: Springer.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25584-7_23

Rosen, L., & Lengyel, D. (2023). Research on Minority Teachers in Germany: Developments, Focal Points and Current Trends from the Perspective of Intercultural Education. In: M. Gutman, W. Jayusi, M. Beck, & Z. Bekerman (eds), *To Be a Minority Teacher in a Foreign Culture: Empirical Evidence from an International Perspective* (pp. 107-123). Cham: Springer.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25584-7_8

Edited volumes:

M. Gutman (eds). (2025). *Challenges facing Education Leadership in the shadow of War: International and Multicultural Perspectives from Zones of Conflict*. Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003571575-1>

M. Gutman, W. Jayusi, M. Beck and Z. Bekerman (eds). (2023). *To Be a Minority Teacher in a Foreign Culture: Empirical Evidence from an International Perspective*. Springer Nature: Cham, Switzerland. [E-book, open access, ISBN: 97830-3-125583-0]. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-25584-7>

M. Gutman and D. Court (eds). (2023). *Dilemmas and Issues in Teaching in the Multicultural Context: Internalization, Intercultural Integration and Education for Multiculturalism*. Tel Aviv: Mofet Institute. (In Hebrew)
<https://store.macam.ac.il/store/books/2323/>

These publications, authored and edited by IRN convenors and members, reflect a wide range of contributions to global discourse on minority and minoritised teacher leadership. The upcoming edited volume, currently under review, continues this work by contributing directly to the themes of our IRN. It was featured in the WERA newsletter and has helped amplify the impact of our network within the global research community. It was featured in the WERA newsletter and has helped amplify the impact of our network within the global research community.

Development of a Major Collaborative Manuscript: A central objective of our IRN has been the development of a major collaborative scholarly work. This year, Mary Gutman compiled and submitted a comprehensive book proposal to Routledge for an edited volume titled **Minority School Leadership during Crises: Global and Cross-Continental Perspectives**. The book brings together empirical studies from 15 countries, including Canada, Japan, Finland, Portugal, South Africa, Georgia, Myanmar, Israel, Argentina, Ukraine, Uganda, Türkiye, and the Negev Bedouin region in Israel, addressing topics such as wartime education, natural disasters, displacement, economic instability, and cultural marginalization. The current volume focuses on acute or ongoing crises in the last decade and the way minority or minoritised leaders have navigated them. Drawing on original research from five continents, it brings together case studies of minority educators leading through crisis, such as war, forced migration, environmental disaster, political marginalization, and economic hardship. The volume reveals how identity, power, and history intersect with minority leadership in urgent and often unstable conditions. Organized around four types of crises: social and political conflict, economic instability, armed violence, and environmental disaster, the book provides a comparative look at minority leadership in communities that are too often overlooked in mainstream education research. This is a timely and necessary contribution for anyone working at the intersection of education, equity, and crisis. It offers practical and conceptual insights for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers committed to understanding how minority leadership takes shape, and takes action under pressure. Below is the working title and a tentative table of contents for the planned edited collection:

Minority School Leadership during Crises: Global and Cross-Continental Perspectives

Introduction: *Minority Educational Leadership at the Crossroads of Crisis*

Part 1 | Political & Social Crises

1. Post-colonial educational crises and Indigenous leadership in Canada

2. Minority teachers (Korean/Chinese) navigating geopolitics and social-justice pedagogy in Japan
3. Creating “safe and brave” spaces in teacher-training for migrant communities in Portugal
4. Identity and crisis among post-Soviet migrant educators in Finland

Part 2 | Resource Scarcity, Economic Crisis & Workforce Shortages

5. Implementing school reform among Armenian and Azeri minorities in Georgia
6. Systemic constraints on minority school leadership in South Africa
7. Refugee teachers as leaders in refugee-run schools on the Thailand-Myanmar border

Part 3 | Security Tensions & War

8. Leadership in Jewish and Islamic schools in Argentina during the October 7 crisis
9. Haredi teachers as community mediators after October 7 in Israel
10. Cultural identity and crisis response in Druze schools in Israel
11. Digital civic-school leadership for vulnerable children in wartime Ukraine

Part 4 | Natural Disasters & Ecological Crises

12. Responding to natural disasters in Ugandan minority communities
13. Leadership during Hurricane Harvey and COVID-19 in Houston, USA
14. Crisis management in unrecognized Bedouin villages facing infrastructure challenges (Negev)
15. School leadership after the 2023 earthquake in Türkiye for Syrian immigrant students

Conclusion: *Cross-case implications and lessons for minority school leadership in times of crisis*

The volume is currently under external review by Routledge and is expected to make a significant scholarly contribution to the fields of minority educational leadership and social justice.

Joint Talks

- **Online Presentation:** *Transformative Leadership: Innovative Strategies for Sustainable Education in Resource-Limited Contexts (Ukraine–Germany Case Study)*. Presented by Nataliia Lazebna, Kateryna Lut, and Elena Dieser at the Third International Multidisciplinary Conference *Resilience in Education Amid War and Global Challenges: Ukrainian Perspective*, Winnipeg, Canada – April 22, 2025.
- **Project Presentation:** *Implementing AI in Foreign Language Classes for Refugees and Displaced Students*. Presented by Nataliia Lazebna, Kateryna Lut and Elena Dieser at the invitation of the interdisciplinary research network *Vision Ukraine: Bildung, Sprache, Migration* (Germany) – May 9, 2025.

Preplanned Activities:

1. Community-Led Citizen Science Project: “Lingua. Kultura. Anima” (Nataliia Lazebna and Kateryna Lut)

This initiative is part of the Citizen Science platform focusing on community-led integration and well-being for displaced Ukrainians. The project is designed to address the complex challenges faced by Ukrainian teenagers and their families who have experienced displacement, both within Ukraine (particularly in frontline regions) and in host countries such as Germany, including Würzburg. The project promotes linguistic and cultural education, psychological well-being, and community cohesion. It brings together volunteers, university students, educators, certified philologists, psychologists, and researchers from Ukraine and abroad, creating a collaborative framework grounded in citizen science. This participatory approach empowers communities to contribute to meaningful research and social impact while simultaneously supporting displaced families. The project is planned to begin upon receipt of third-party funding and is expected to span approximately 24 months.

2. Edited Book: *Colossus of Resilience: Ukrainian Educators During Times of War* (Nataliia Lazebna and Kateryna Lut)

This forthcoming book will offer a comprehensive account of the experiences of distinguished Ukrainian educators during the ongoing war. Each chapter will highlight individual narratives of resilience, including stories of integration, adaptation, professional development, and academic contribution. The book aims to showcase best practices, reflect on the real-life challenges faced by educators in crisis, and provide insights into the transformative role of education in times of upheaval. These testimonies will serve not only as documentation but also as sources of guidance and inspiration for educators globally, particularly those displaced by war, natural disasters, or political unrest.

By sharing solutions, coping strategies, and reflections, the book aspires to support displaced professionals in navigating their own crises and continuing to serve their communities under challenging conditions.

Future Directions for International Collaboration between our Conveners

As part of our ongoing efforts to deepen and expand research in the field of minority and minoritised teachers, we are currently developing four thematic directions that we believe are both timely and essential:

- 1. Minority Teacher Education in Contexts of Migration and Displacement** – exploring the preparation and support of teachers navigating temporary or forced relocation.
- 2. Minoritised Faculty in Higher Education Under Duress** – examining the professional and emotional impact of displacement and disruption in academia.

3. **School-Based Minority Leadership in Times of Crisis** – investigating how ethnic, linguistic, and cultural identities shape school leadership during emergencies.
4. **Culture as a Pedagogical Resource: From Prejudice and Discrimination to Affirmative Action** - Advancing Beyond Symbolic Multiculturalism to Harness Cultural Knowledge in Addressing Structural and Linguistic Inequalities in Schools.

To support these emerging lines of inquiry, we warmly invite WERA colleagues to engage in the following collaborative initiatives already underway:

- A **special issue** on theme 1, led by Lisa Rosen and Carola Mantel, for a peer-reviewed journal in multicultural education.
- An **edited book** on theme 2, coordinated by Nataliia Lazebna and Kateryna Lut; publisher to be confirmed.
- A **webinar series** on theme 2, led by Nataliia Lazebna and Kateryna Lut, will explore the academic mobility and integration of Ukrainian war-displaced scholars, with a focus on humanities and linguistics in higher education systems across Europe.
- A second **edited volume** on theme 3, led by Mary Gutman, with Routledge/Taylor & Francis as the planned publisher.
- A **joint research grant** application on theme 3, *Educational Leadership from the Margins: Minoritized Educators in Jewish and Shared Schooling Contexts*, submitted through the **CONICET** foundation, authored by Liliana Judith Mayer and Mary Gutman.
- An **international comparative article** on theme 4, examining Ethiopian Origin teachers in Israel and Roma teachers in the Czech Republic, with an emphasis on prejudice, discrimination, and affirmative action to counter bias, authored by Mary Gutman and Zbyněk Němec.

- A **theoretical review** on theme 4, authored by Drorit Lengyel, Lisa Rosen, and Zbyněk Němec, to be submitted to Bloomsbury's series on School Leadership: Theory and Practice.

We encourage members of the WERA community to reach out and join us in these growing scholarly.

Looking Ahead

Looking ahead, the IRN plans to continue expanding its reach by organizing another global webinar in late 2025, pursuing further interdisciplinary collaborations, and encouraging new regional representation. We are committed to sustaining our momentum through future publications, conference presentations, and new partnerships. More specifically, over the coming year we anticipate publishing three new articles by our conveners, Zbyněk Němec, Mary Gutman, and Lisa Rosen, in similarly ranked international journals, and we are also working toward the release of an edited volume titled *Minority Leadership in Times of Crisis* (edited by Mary Gutman, drawing on contributions from the IRN conveners and members) as our major paper. We also aim to expand our collaborative comparative work, for example, a joint article involving multiple IRN members that examine how different countries support the employment of minority educators. We thank WERA for its support and look forward to another productive year of research and exchange.

Our Convener for 2025/2026

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