



## Accessing and recognising the prior learning of migrants

Bridging the gap  
and paving the road  
to educational  
and social  
integration



## Policy Recommendation



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# About LIKEHOME project

The **overall aim** of the LikeHome project is to **foster the inclusion of newly arrived migrants and refugees to the host country education and training system, to the local economy and to the society in general**. More specifically, LikeHome project's strategic objective is to design and deliver a Framework of best practices, based on practices that have been successfully used in other cases, for the **assessment and recognition of migrants' prior learning, qualifications and competencies**. A set of e-tools is also delivered to support this goal.

Some countries are exceptions like Germany, Greece and Italy with huge numbers arriving, Portugal wishing to get more refugees and Turkey serving as a buffer zone. Four of these countries are represented in the consortium comprising 10 partners from 5 countries.

Around 25 million persons born in a third country are currently living in the European Union, representing 5% of its total population. Integrating immigrants is a fundamental and active process.

## Objective

To foster the inclusion of newly arrived migrants and refugees to the host country education and training system, to the local economy and to the society in general

## Strategic Objective

To design and deliver a Framework of best practices, based on practices that have been successfully used in other cases, for the **assessment and recognition of migrants prior learning, qualifications and competencies**.

# Background

According to the UNHCR<sup>1</sup> access to accredited quality higher education for refugees it is still problematic, much more than inclusion in primary and secondary education (only 1% of refugees worldwide has access to University, while it is 36% for non-refugees). Half of the world's refugees are children under 18 years of age. The average length of time a refugee spends in exile is about 20 years, which is more than an entire childhood.

In some countries immigration policy allows companies to quickly and in a straightforward manner recruit people with special skills from outside the European Union. This can be chance as a non-EU citizen to work and live in the European countries as what is referred to as a highly skilled migrant. The return on investment in education of young refugees has important aspect: in all fields of students, it nurtures future generations of highly educated individual as who are not only potential successful professionals, but who will also engage in their communities to make a difference.

Today, only 1 percent of eligible refugees have access to vocational education, compared to 36 percent of global youth.

In view of SDG4 Education 2030 and the current large movements of refugees, UNESCO seeks to draw attention to the fact that, it orders to effectively guarantee the right to education, it is critical that all people enjoy equal access to an education of good quality, including refugees.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/figures-at-a-glance.html>

# Background

OECD<sup>2</sup> are struggling with how to manage their unprecedented high level of migrants and refugees. The overall unemployment rate of migrants and refugees in the OECD decreased by a little more than 1% point to 9,5%, and the overall employment rate increased from 65,5% to 67,1%. More than 1.6 million family migrants received a residence permit in the OECD area in 2015, representing almost 40% of the total permanent migration inflow. In many OECD countries, more than 10% of marriages occur between a citizen and a foreigner.

At EU level, the constituency to push for education equity for immigrations is rather weak. Migrants are not always considered as a significant group by the influential education stakeholders, unions, schools' leaders, VET providers, advisory bodies and adult learning organisations. Education stakeholders do not realise how their work on education reform and equality would also promote societal integration.

The European Commission <sup>3</sup>has shown that over the past two years, Europe has received an unprecedented number of refugees and asylum seekers. Many of the new arrivals do not process any documentation of their formal qualifications.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=18319&langId=en>

# Recommendations

- ▶ Reduce Languages barrier to allows refugees' enrolment in courses. **The participation of refugees in education courses is a key factor in their inclusion in society. Historically, host countries have treated refugees as temporary residents, but most of the conflicts nowadays are unlikely to be solved in the imminent future.**
- ▶ States must seek durable and sustainable solutions ensuring the possibility of education which is crucial in all phases of the migration context
- ▶ The refugees should be included in national education systems. **Moreover, it has to be taken into account that there is an actual need for alphabetization in the target group. This issue has been often disregarded and literacy is absolutely fundamental to empowerment and participation in society. Alphabetization programs would make an enormous contribution to empowerment and sustainable development.**
- ▶ Vocational education and training institutions should be accessible for everyone, ensuring non-discrimination and physical and affordable accessibility. **Often obstacles are not about access to education and training as such, but rather are frequently results of the application of the bureaucratic systems around proving identity and residence rights.**
- ▶ Ensure full fruition and academic achievements to reduce drop-outs of refugees and disadvantaged migrants. **It's also important that VET articulates with employability.**

# Recommendations

- ▶ Mitigation of barriers to attract young, refugees and migrants into higher education, evaluating their potential and talent and offering facilitated and supporting paths in the initial period. **The prioritization of the education of children and young people cannot be disputed. Nevertheless, there should be a strong case for the education of adults. This would benefit the individuals as well as the children and young people who depend upon them. There is little understanding of how adult refugees (a group that could greatly benefit from VET) are included in this form of education.**
- ▶ Guidance, career services and job match with the labour market at **the end of the vocational education training and university**
- ▶ Recognition of their previous education careers, competences and knowledge to facilitate a transition of their vocational education systems. **Many asylum seekers may have vocational skills acquired through working experience or training but they do not have any education certificate for it. Therefore, more flexibility is required in order to provide access to the labor market integration.**
- ▶ Offer refugees and migrants intercultural skills sessions to facilitate the access for education training and the local labour market. **This is also a significant factor for a better adaptation into society.**

# Recommendations

Access to vocational education training and the education system is crucial for refugees and migrants to enable them to adapt their skills and qualifications to the labour market. Therefore, asylum seekers and persons with subsidiary forms of international protection should be given unrestricted access to vocational education system.

In most EU countries, national government focus on trying to get recognized refugees and migrants into any kind of employment as soon as possible to make people independent of state support. Therefore, Member States should develop a mechanism that facilitate access to suitable training and education for refugees and migrants. Furthermore, the Members States should ensure that languages courses are sufficiently available, adequate and affordable to enable refugees and migrants to reach the level necessary to access further training or education.

Migrants in particular with professional backgrounds and in particular refugees often face difficulties in accessing the same profession because their diploma are not, or only partially, recognised. Therefore, Member States and training providers should create opportunities for refugees and migrants to follow a suitable professional training in a sector in order to allow them to re-qualify and adapt their skills and experiences according to the receiving country's labour market requirements.

# Conclusions

**LIKEHOME** project policy recommendation addressed how the based immigration/refugee systems and education qualification assessment recognition influenced by the differences in regional and national policy and highlighted the challenges of secondary migration to Europe's common asylum regulations.

The most refugees and migrants who have experience of obtaining a narrative from asylum seekers from a different language, confidence in the interviewer and the interview process and some specific direction to pertinent questions is needed to adduce a comprehensive and adequate account





## Policy Recommendation

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