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7.12.9 Access to education

Some key initiatives in 2019 aimed to improve access to education and the educational outcomes of migrant children and youth, including pre-school, compulsory primary and secondary education, and higher education. A special UNHCR campaign on refugee and migrant children's access to education (*see also Section 7.7.2.5*) underlined the fact that beneficiaries of international protection are entitled to education under the same conditions as nationals, but they do not automatically receive the corresponding benefits, which can restrict their access to quality education. The report mentioned that a full comparative analysis was difficult since the data and definitions are not aligned across Europe.[647] Other relevant report looked into higher education for third country nationals.[648]

The general scheme in Norway that offers low-income families 20 free core hours a week in pre-school was expanded to include children aged 2 (rather than starting at age 3). The Directorate of Education and Training commissioned the development of a tool to map the Norwegian language knowledge of pre-school children. The renewal of a more inclusive primary and secondary education curricula was ongoing and planned to be implemented as of August 2020.

The general upper secondary education core curriculum was under revision in Finland to ensure better educational outcomes for both native and second language students. A government working group report was published, building on the results of two previous reports, which put forward 40 new proposals to facilitate the integration of migrant children in Finnish education.[649] The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre published an evaluation of students with an immigrant background in higher education, which revealed challenges in entering higher education and receiving support throughout the studies. The new Finnish government planned to draft a higher education accessibility plan.

Special programmes from the Flemish and French communities in Belgium continued in 2019, focusing on increasing the participation of migrant children in pre-school education and strengthening the system of bridging classes in compulsory primary and secondary education.

Applicant and beneficiary children could still benefit from preparatory and supplementary language classes in Croatia, upon approval from the Ministry of Science and Education.[lix] Beneficiaries of international protection could also apply for one of the state-provided scholarships for support in higher education. However, the NGO, Are you Syrious, noted that some public officials were not adequately aware of the rights to enrol for beneficiary children and some specific support programmes were cancelled as the number of participating children

did not reach the minimum requirement.[650]

AMIF co-funded projects in Estonia and Latvia to support teaching staff to adapt their skills to provide support for newly-arrived migrant children.

The Italian government set up 100 higher education scholarships for beneficiaries of international protection to allow them to continue their studies which were interrupted in their countries of origin. Additionally, the Migrant Integration Portal[651] (*Portale Integrazione migranti*), developed in collaboration with UNHCR, has a dedicated section on scholarships offered by Italian universities.

In contrast to these initiatives, due to the low number of unaccompanied minors in the 'children's home' in Hungary, the school programme of the NGO, Menedék, ceased to operate.[652]

[lix] The Ministry of Education and Science noted that the inclusion of children and youth in primary and secondary education was ensured in cooperation with local governments, i.e. offices in municipalities and cities. At the request of schools, the Ministry of Education and Science provides teacher support to students with asylum or subsidiary protection and other forms of support for the integration of students into the education system

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647 UNHCR, IOM and UNICEF. (2019). *Access to education for refugee and migrant children in Europe*. https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/71202?utm_source=&utm_medium=email&utm_content=https%3a 134324451.1547206849

648 IOM and European University Association. (2019). *Higher Education for Third Country National and Refugee Integration in Southern Europe.* https://eea.iom.int/publications/higher-education-third-country-national-and-refugee-integration-southern-europe

649 Ministry of Education and Culture. (2019). *Maahanmuuttajien koulutuspolut ja integrointi: Kipupisteet ja toimenpide-esitykset III*. http://julkaisut.valtioneuvosto.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/161285/OKM_1_2019_Maahanmuuttajien%20koulutuspolut.

650 Are You Syrious. (2020). *Input to "EASO Asylum Report 2020: Annual Report on the Situation of Asylum in the European Union"*. /sites/default/files/easo-annual-report-2019-Are-You-Syrious-contribution.pdf

651 Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, Ministry of the Interior, & Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *Migrant Integration Portal*. Retrieved 20 May 2020, from http://www.integrazionemigranti.gov.it:80/Pagine/default.aspx

652 AIDA Hungary. (2020). *Country Report: Hungary - 2019 Update*. Edited by ECRE. Written by Hungarian Helsinki Committee. https://www.asylumineurope.org/sites/default/files/report-download/aida_hu_2019update.pdf

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