



Combined Desk Research Report

Learning Skills for Refugees and Immigrants with low or no educational background

Ref. No: 2022-1-NO01-KA220-ADU-000088627

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Introduction

LEARN Project

The Erasmus+ funded LEARN Project, identified with project number 2022-1-NO01-KA220-ADU-000088627, aims to assist refugees and migrants who have low level of education in fulfilling their educational needs. In order to better assist this population, the project intends to develop a comprehensive training programme for professionals in adult education.

The LEARN Project is funded by the Erasmus+ program, a European Union initiative supporting education, training, youth, and sport. The project aims to contribute to the Erasmus+ programme through the promotion of high-quality and inclusive education, the facilitation of opportunities for lifelong learning, and the encouragement of social integration among refugees and migrants.

The primary goal of the LEARN Project is to develop a training program that equips adult education professionals with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively address the learning needs of refugees and migrants with low education levels. By improving the capabilities of educators, the project aims to enhance the educational experiences and outcomes for this marginalised group.

The project consists of four work packages, Work package n°1 - 'Project Management', Work package n°2 – 'LEARN Structured Training Course', Work package n°3 – 'LEARN Digital Toolkit', Work package n°4 – 'LEARN Dissemination and Exploitation Strategy'.

Work Package 2 (WP2) is primarily focused on conducting primary and secondary research in each participating country. The objective of the research carried out in WP2 is to identify specific needs, barriers, and optimal methodologies in delivering education and training for migrants and refugees who possess limited educational attainment. National Reports summarising the research findings of the participating nations are required. These reports will function as a structured training course, comprising essential materials such as a curriculum, trainer's manual, and exercises handbook. A ready-to-use toolkit for delivering high-quality training both offline and online will be the final deliverable of WP2.

Through the LEARN Project, the involved organisations and stakeholders endeavour to narrow the educational disparity encountered by migrants and refugees who possess inadequate levels of education. The project aims to facilitate inclusive learning environments and improve the language proficiency of adult education professionals. This, in turn, will enable refugees and migrants to gain access to education, ultimately leading to increased employment and social integration opportunities.

In general, the Erasmus+-funded LEARN Project is important for addressing the educational requirements of migrants and refugees with limited formal education. The project endeavours to make a contribution to the advancement of educational strategies, policies, and practises that facilitate the successful integration and incorporation of this vulnerable group into European societies through its emphasis on research and training programmes.

Consortium

Norway

Eining for innvandring og integrering is a municipal department located in the municipal of Aukra, dealing with resettlement, integration and qualification of refugees. The organization's main department was established in 2016 and consists of:

- A refugee service,
- An adult learning center,
- the department for minor refugees.

The municipality of Aukra has about 3500 inhabitants but has, despite its size, resettled and qualified a large number of refugees over the last few years. Our department's mission is to qualify and integrate refugees who have been granted a residence permit in Norway and make them become active, responsible and independent citizens in Norwegian society.

If you would like more information about the Eining for innvandring og integrering department, please visit the website aukra.kommune.no or contact them at post@aukra.kommune.no.

Greece

E-SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL GROUP is an Adult Education Centre and VET provider in Greece. It is accredited by the Greek Ministry of Education & Qualifications and Vocational Guidance as a lifelong learning centre (ID 2000112). It was founded in September 2003 to educate VET and adult learners in job-related skills. Our commitment is to provide quality education and accreditation and support our learners in developing skills to ensure their smooth and successful transition into the labour market. E-SCHOOL activities target the following Groups:

(Disadvantage groups such as Ethnic Minorities, Migrants, People with Disabilities, Isolated Elderly People, etc.)

- Unemployed
- Employees
- Entrepreneurs
- Trainers, teachers, educators
- Adults and VET learners

The main responsible staff member for this project is Maria Kotrotsiou. Ms Maria Kotrotsiou holds a Degree in the Greek Language. She got a master's degree in Foreign Language Teaching (TSGOL) and a second master's in Planning & Development of Tourism and Culture. She is also an active adult and VET trainer. She has extensive experience designing and developing innovative curriculums and interdisciplinary programs for education. She has experience in research, education, inclusion, literacies, innovation, and project management. She has also participated in many EU-funded projects.

Website: <https://www.euprojects.gr/en/home/>

Spain

INDEPCIE (Institute for the personal development, entrepreneurship, coaching and Emotional Intelligence) is a training company founded in 2018 focused on the attitudinal training and the improvement of human performance. The company works with clients to increase their results both in personal or professional areas, developing techniques and strategies in the areas of coaching, Emotional Intelligence, soft skills and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP).

INDEPCIE trains persons so both the individuals and their organisations acquire skills and habits leading to a continuous improvement. The staff uses the most advanced techniques in training

to develop and achieve this ambitious goal as experts in team management, emotional management and motivation.

INDEPCIE learns from the experience gained by its staff, professionals with years of background in the fields of training and the development and management of transnational projects in the frame of the Erasmus + Program. INDEPCIE comprises a multidisciplinary team of 8 people with backgrounds in languages, translation and interpreting, psychology, international relations, pedagogy and communication.

Link to INDEPCIE's website: <https://indepcie.com/>

Belgium

Welcome Home International ASBL is a non-profit organisation based in Brussels, Belgium, that aims to assist and support refugees and migrants in their integration process. Their mission is to facilitate the social and professional integration of refugees and migrants and to foster intercultural exchange and dialogue. Welcome Home International ASBL offers various programs and services to refugees and migrants, including language courses, vocational training, and career coaching. They also provide legal assistance, housing support, and cultural activities.

If you would like to learn more about Welcome Home International ASBL, visit their website at www.welcomehome.international or contact them at info@welcomehomeinternational.org.

Cyprus

CARET is one of the leading research and development centres in the Mediterranean region with global expertise in project design and implementation, capacity building, and e-learning. It is independently affiliated with universities and institutions worldwide, such as the Yale University, the University of Nicosia and the International Council of Educational Media. CARET has completed numerous projects relating to the development of capacity building and planning in education and VET, youth support, adult learning, literacies, digital tools, eLearning, educational technology, and social integration of marginalised groups. One of our core strengths is our ability to carefully plan, implement, execute and evaluate projects in various contexts.

If you would like to learn more about CADRET, visit our website at <https://www.caret.org/> or contact us at info@caret.org.

National Context

Governments and non-governmental organisations in a number of European nations, including Norway, Greece, Spain, Belgium, and Cyprus, have made ensuring that migrants and refugees with limited or no formal education have access to education the highest priority. Specific policies and programmes have been implemented by each nation in order to aid in the educational integration of these individuals.

Norway

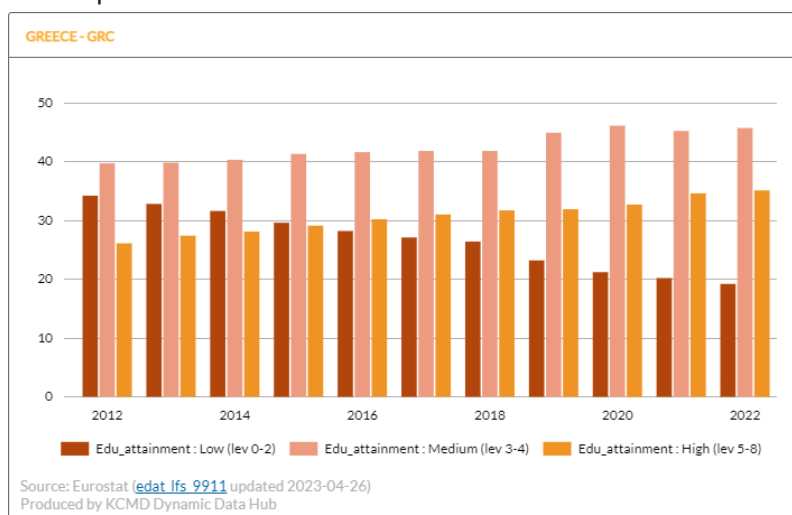
Access to education for migrants and refugees with low or no education in Norway is regulated by the Integration Act. The Integration Act from January 1, 2021, replaced the Law of Introduction from September 1, 2004. Participation in the introduction programme is regulated in the Acts mentioned above. The purpose of the Integration Act is for immigrants to be integrated into Norwegian society at an early stage and to become financially independent.

Greece

Education serves as a mechanism to promote the assimilation of immigrants and refugees in Greece. In response to the substantial influx of asylum seekers and refugees into the nation, educational initiatives have been devised to cater to their requirements. Nonetheless, obstacles persist, particularly for students of immigrant descent who might confront further impediments, including linguistic barriers. Attempts are being made to prevent these students from dropping out of school by providing assistance with language learning.

In a 2016 survey of 13,159 individuals, both male and female, who crossed the Eastern and Central Mediterranean, the mean age of respondents was 29 years. Of the respondents, fifty percent indicated that they had completed secondary education, twenty percent primary education, seventeen percent higher education, and seventeen percent neither vocational training nor education. 33% of Iranians and 22% of Syrians reported having attended college or university, in contrast to 12% of Iraqis, 10% of Pakistanis, and 10% of Afghans (IOM, UN Migration, 2016).

The graph below illustrates the proportions of immigrants and refugees in Greece who possess low, medium, and high levels of education, respectively. The graph illustrates the latest findings, having been revised in April 2023.



Spain

Similarly, in Spain, education for immigrants with low or no education is based on principles of inclusion and equal opportunities. While education is primarily the responsibility of autonomous communities, national measures are in place to facilitate the educational integration of migrants and refugees. Access to education is regulated by the Integration Act, which aims to integrate immigrants into Spanish society and promote their financial independence. Various programs and initiatives are implemented at both the national and regional levels to support the educational needs of these individuals.

Belgium

In Belgium, the government has enacted laws and regulations, such as the 2011 Act on Reception of Asylum Seekers and Certain Other Categories of Foreigners, which provide the right to education for asylum seekers, refugees, and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection. Language learning programs are also implemented to support their integration into Belgian society. The government has launched initiatives like language courses, vocational training, and job coaching to promote the

integration of refugees and migrants. Non-governmental organisations like Caritas International Belgium and the Red Cross also play a crucial role in providing refugee education and training programs.

Cyprus

In Cyprus, the issue of learning skills for refugees and immigrants with low or no educational background has gained significant attention due to the increasing number of displaced individuals arriving there. The government has implemented policies and initiatives to ensure access to education for all children, including refugee and immigrant children. Special reception classes and language support programs are established in schools, and efforts are made to provide adult education and skills training opportunities. Collaboration between the government, NGOs, and other stakeholders is emphasised, and the recognition of prior education and qualifications is also addressed.

Conclusions

Overall, in these European countries, governments and various organisations are committed to addressing the educational needs of migrants and refugees with low education. Efforts are being made to provide language learning programs, vocational training, and support for integration into society and the labour market. However, ongoing challenges and evolving contexts require continuous adaptation and improvement in educational initiatives.

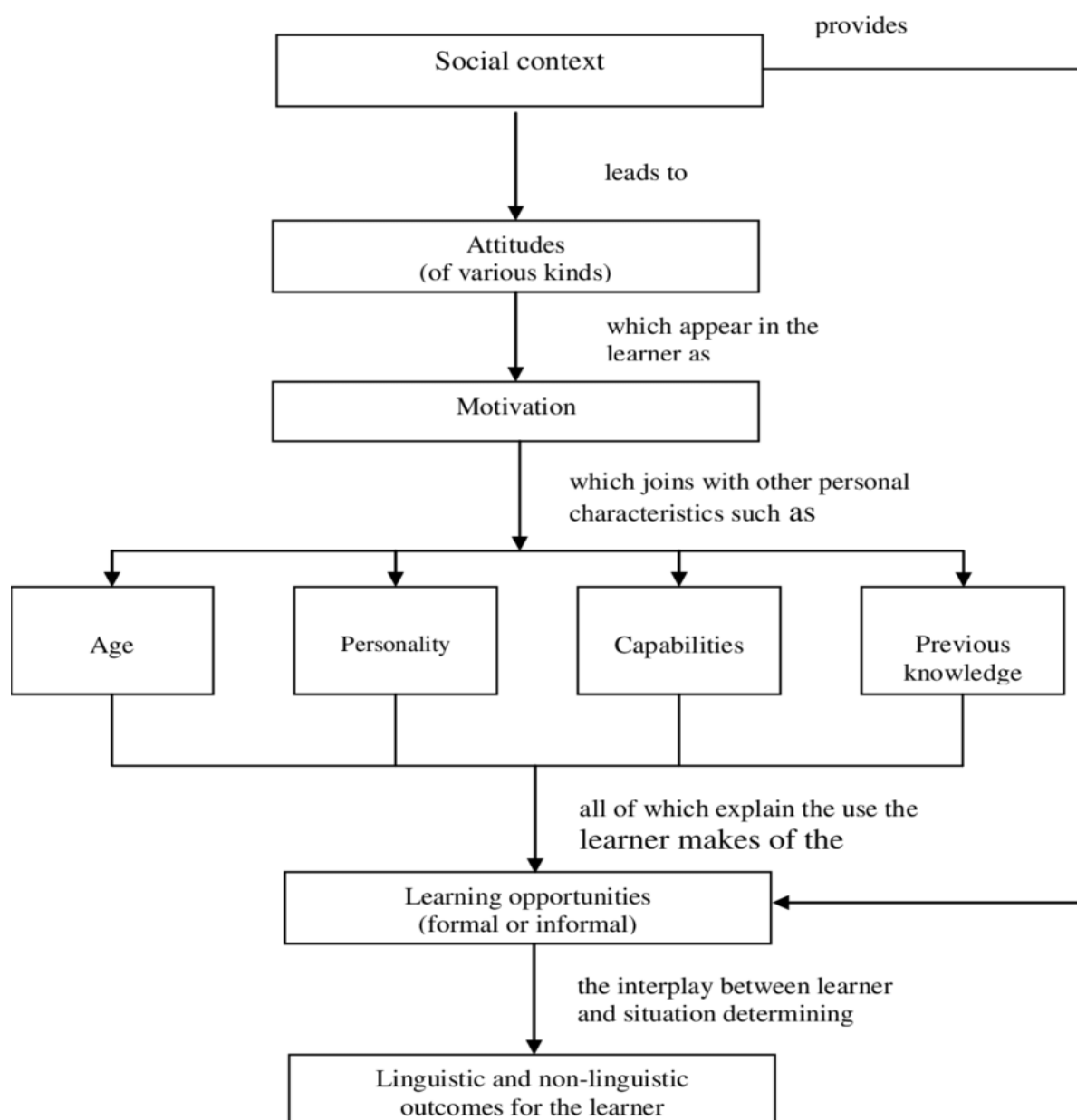
Theoretical Background

Adult second language learning is a complex process, guided by a set of principles and theories, based on the idea that adults learn differently from children. Adults have different motivations for learning a second language. But no theory alone can give us a comprehensive understanding of this learning process. Some of the key principles include the importance of meaningful communication, the role of prior knowledge and experience, the need for explicit instruction, and the benefits of immersion and practice. We seek to understand second language learning in the light of several central processes, divided into second language learning as a social process, a cognitive process, and a linguistic process. In particular, this model can be explained as follows:

- **Second language learning as a social process.** Social theories of second language learning focus on connections between societal and social relationships and learning. On a macro level, it can be about the relationship between the group which the learner belongs to, and its relationship with society at large. It can also be about the group's knowledge of society, and rights and duties in the relationship between the group and individual and society at large. Relationships at a micro level can concern the individual's social position or the learning context. The individual's attitude towards society also have a social basis and can have an impact on motivation to learn a new language.
- **Second language learning as a cognitive process.** Language learning as a cognitive process implies a psychological point of view. Attention is directed to how the brain's processing of new linguistic information can explain second language learning. This process involves, not only the acquisition of new vocabulary and grammar rules, but also the development of new cognitive and metacognitive strategies for learning and using the language.

- Second language learning as a linguistic process.** Typological language theory is a branch of linguistics which, by studying the structural features of many languages, map what is common to languages, and how much languages can vary between them. An important reason why language typology is interesting in second language research, is that there are parallels between languages' typological descriptions and the purely linguistic development patterns. Skills learned in one language can often be transferred into other languages. Features in the mother tongue are important when it comes to how easily features in the second language are perceived.

Spolsky's Model of Second Language Learning encapsulates that there is a relationship between contextual factors, individual learner differences, learning opportunities and learning outcomes:



Policies and access to education for refugees and migrants with no or low educational background.

Norway

All refugees between 18 and 55 years of age who arrive in Norway shall participate in the **introduction programme**. The same applies to family members who arrive in the country at a later date. The **introduction programme** is a training programme intended to prepare refugees for participation in Norwegian working life.

The participant will gain knowledge of Norwegian society and the Norwegian language through the introductory programme. The participant shall acquire knowledge and training pertaining to the Norwegian working environment. If required, the participant will also receive educational services. The ultimate objective of the introductory programme is for the participant to secure employment or further their education. The introduction programme must commence within three months of the refugee's settlement in a Norwegian municipality, or earlier. The course is offered on a full-time basis. The introduction programme provision falls under the jurisdiction of the municipality in which the refugee is a resident.

Each individual enrolled in the introductory programme is assigned a programme advisor who is capable of offering counsel and direction. There are parts of the introductory programme that are universally applicable to all attendees, while others may be customised to suit individual needs. It is mandatory for all participants to acquire proficiency in the Norwegian language. During the introductory phase of the programme, the instructor will set an objective for each participant's Norwegian language development. The Norwegian language objective is contingent on the prior training of the participants. Additionally, each participant will gain knowledge of Norwegian society. The purpose of the training is to facilitate social participation. The courses offered by Norwegian Society are conducted in the native language of the participants or in an understandable second language. Participation in the course "Mastery of life in a new country" is mandatory for all attendees, in addition to acquiring knowledge of Norwegian society and the Norwegian language. The objective of this course is to facilitate smart decision-making in Norway and positively impact the personal circumstances of the participants. Participants who are parents or who are in the process of becoming parents will be provided with parental guidance. The participant will gain an understanding of what it is like to be a parent in Norway and the services that are accessible through this guidance.

The introduction programme will also include content that is adapted to the participant's goal. This may involve unpaid participation in working life or education. Many participate in working life and in education during the time of the introduction programme. The participant and the programme advisor shall jointly draw up a plan for the content of the participant's introduction programme and its duration.

Before the participant starts in the programme, he or she will receive career guidance. This is guidance regarding the opportunities for education and work in the future. The career guidance is based on the information regarding the participant's work experience and education from the home country. After the participant has received career guidance, the participant and the programme advisor shall determine what the participant should achieve over the course of the introduction programme. For participants with low or no education from their home countries, the goal may often

be to complete basic education to make them able to take further education in Norway. The goal can also be to find a job.

The duration depends on the participants' education from the home country. The duration can be from 3 months up to 3 years, and for refugees with low or no education from their home countries, most participants will need 3 years in the programme. It is a paid programme. It is referred to as "introduction benefits". The introduction benefits means that the participant does not have to earn an income while participating in the programme. The rules for holidays, absence and leaves of absence from the programme, are very much similar to ordinary Norwegian working life.

The introduction programme in Norway is for refugees who have been granted a residence permit or refugees who have been granted temporary collective protection, and who are residing in a municipality based on an agreement with the directorate of integration and diversity (IMDi). There are also other groups of migrants that have the right and/or obligation to participate in Norwegian language training and social studies, depending on what type of resident permit the person has been granted.

Participants with the right and/or obligation to participate in Norwegian language training, both inside and outside the introduction programme, shall receive training according to the Curriculum for Norwegian language training for adult immigrants. The curriculum has been revised as a result of the introduction of the new law. Revised curricula in Norwegian and social studies entered into force 1 August 2021 and are regulations of the Integration Act. The right and obligation of Norwegian language training is regulated in the Integration Act and in the Regulations to the Integration Act (the Integration Regulations). Norwegian language training for adult immigrants, together with social studies, not dependent on the educational background, is intended to prepare Norwegian immigrants for everyday life, education and working life to the greatest extent possible. The training will help them acquire the language skills they need to participate actively in Norwegian society, create good lives and contribute their skills. The training will lay the foundation for using the Norwegian language for lifelong learning and participation in a constantly changing working life which requires strong linguistic and digital competence.

The curriculum for Norwegian language training for adult immigrants is based on the view of communication and language learning in the Common European Framework for Languages (CEFR). In order for the language training to be effective, it must be based on participants' experience, needs, resources and plans for the future. This requires the mapping of each participant before and during the training. Among other things, it is important to gain an understanding of participants' experience with the Latin alphabet, so that this is taken into consideration in the training. The mapping of participants should also clarify their short and long-term goals for learning Norwegian, their work experience, their digital skills and their health and life circumstances, including sight and hearing.

Section 28 in the Integration Regulations stipulates minimum levels of Norwegian for different participants. A participant's Norwegian language goals is the minimum level, and this must be specified in the participant's Norwegian language plan. The duration of the training for the different groups is stipulated in section 32 of the Integration Act. The Norwegian language goal of a participant must be equal to the recommended minimum level or higher, but the Norwegian language goal can be adjusted either up or down, based on their progress.

The participants must achieve a minimum level of Norwegian language skills, and there is no longer a specific number of hours that need to be completed. The recommended levels of Norwegian

for different groups of participants are specified in section 28 of the Integration Regulations. People are divided into groups according to their educational background. The duration of the training for the different groups is up to 3 years or 18 months, with the addition of approved leave.

The core elements describe the main components of the training. The core elements of this curriculum are language learning strategies, reception, production, interaction and mediation.

Norwegian language training for adult immigrants will support and facilitate the use and further development of participants' digital and oral communication skills and their basic skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. For some people, this means gaining Norwegian language skills that allow them to utilise their inherent basic skills in Norwegian language context, while others will need adapting and systematic work in order to develop basic skills throughout the training.

The curriculum describes four of the levels in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: A1, A2, B1 and B2. The curriculum also contains basic instruction in reading and writing for participants who have little experience with writing, or who have not learned to read or write before.

Basic training in reading and writing will be provided for participants with a need to develop basic skills in this area to a level that enables them to benefit from the training under the competence goals in reading and writing at level A1. These are often participants who have little experience with writing or who have not learned to read and write in any language. Parallel to this, participants will receive training in spoken Norwegian based on their current proficiency level, but with work methods that do not require reading or writing.

Learning to read and write for the first time is easier when working in a language that is familiar. Languages that participants have experience with must therefore be used actively in the training. This is often solved by having bilingual support in the classroom.

At the end of the language training, all participants have to pass a Norwegian language test, which has the following four parts:

- Reading comprehension
- Listening comprehension
- Written presentation
- Oral communication

Participants must pass the test at a required level to be able to renew the residence permit in Norway or to obtain a Norwegian citizenship.

Asylum seekers who live in a refugee camp in Norway, and who are in the target group for Norwegian language training, have an obligation to participate in 175 hours of Norwegian language training and 25 hours of information about the Norwegian society.

The NGO's in Norway do not play a significant role in the formal Norwegian language training, since the municipal where the immigrant is residing is responsible for this training. However the NGO's play an important role when it comes to activities where immigrants can practice the Norwegian language, i.e. activities for asylum seekers who live in a refugee camp, meeting places which encourage inclusion and where the immigrants can practice oral Norwegian language.

Greece

In Greece, the immigration policies and regulations are primarily governed by national laws and European Union (EU) directives. EU directives regarding immigration aim to ensure consistent

policies among member states. However, each member state, including Greece, has some flexibility in implementing these directives.

Natural disasters, pandemics, and conflicts, as well as the resultant internal and international migration, can leave entire generations traumatized, uneducated, and unprepared to contribute to the social and economic recovery of their country or region. Crisis is a significant barrier to access to education, stalling and, in some instances, reversing progress towards the Education for All (EFA) objectives over the past decade. Education in emergency situations is instantaneously protective, as it provides crisis-affected individuals with lifesaving knowledge and skills and psychosocial support. In addition to preparing children, adolescents, and adults for a sustainable future, education equips them with the skills to prevent disaster, conflict, and disease (UNESCO, 2015).

Education is not only one of the highest priorities of refugee communities (Dryden-Peterson, 2011, p. 6), but also one of the most crucial factors that can assist them in achieving a brighter future and integrating into host societies.

Greece has its own immigration laws that outline various categories for entry and residence permits, including those related to employment and education. However, the specific requirements for immigrants with a low educational background may vary depending on the circumstances and the purpose of their stay.

If you are referring to immigrants with a low educational background, it typically means individuals who do not possess formal qualifications or specialized skills. In Greece, as in many other countries, the requirements for immigrants with a low educational background might be more challenging. The availability of job opportunities may be limited, as employers often prioritize individuals with higher qualifications or specific skills. However, it does not mean that it is impossible for immigrants with a low educational background to find employment or gain residence permits. In Greece, adult immigrants and refugees have access to education and are supported by a variety of initiatives and programs. Together with international organizations and non-governmental organizations, the Greek government has been working to improve adult immigrants' and refugees' access to education. Here are some key aspects of adult immigrant and refugee education in Greece:

- A. Adult immigrants and refugees have access to the primary, secondary, and tertiary education levels of the Greek education system. However, language barriers and educational differences may present obstacles.
- B. Courses in the Greek Language The Greek government offers courses in the Greek language to adult immigrants and refugees in order to facilitate their integration and improve their language skills. Typically, these courses are provided by language centers or schools designed specifically for immigrants.
- C. Integration Support: In Greece, numerous organizations and NGOs offer integration support programs, including language assistance, cultural orientation, and vocational training. These programs are designed to assist adult immigrants and refugees in adapting to Greek society and acquiring employment skills.
- D. Training for Adult Immigrants and Refugees There are vocational training programs for adult immigrants and refugees to develop specific skills that can improve their employment prospects. These programs are tailored to the requirements of various industries and sectors.
- E. Adult immigrants and refugees have access to non-formal education programs that emphasize basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills. These programs aim to impart knowledge and skills necessary for daily life.

- F. Recognition of Prior Learning: Efforts have been made to recognize the prior learning and credentials of adult immigrants and refugees, particularly those with academic and professional backgrounds. Individuals can access further education or employment opportunities that align with their skills and experience through the recognition of prior learning.
- G. Access to Higher Education: Adult immigrants and refugees can pursue higher education in Greece if they meet the requirements. Universities and colleges may offer programs or services tailored to this population.

It is essential to recognize that the availability and accessibility of educational programs can vary, and that some regions may have more resources and support than others.

Spain

As mentioned in the introduction, there are general state laws and regional laws in Spain.

Among the notable general laws on this topic are:

- Organic Law of Education (LOE): The LOE establishes the general framework for education in Spain. This law guarantees equal opportunities in access, retention, and educational success for all students, including immigrants. The LOE promotes inclusion and sets principles for adapting education to the individual needs of students.
- Diversity Support Programs: Autonomous communities in Spain implement diversity support programs, which include specific measures to address the educational needs of immigrant students. These programs offer pedagogical, linguistic, and cultural support, as well as reinforcement and curriculum adaptation measures to facilitate the integration of students.
- Strategic Plan for Citizenship and Integration (PECI): The PECI is an initiative of the Spanish government that promotes the integration of immigrants in various areas, including education. This plan seeks to ensure immigrant students' access to quality education, fostering equal opportunities and intercultural coexistence in educational institutions.
- Asylum and International Protection Law: This law establishes the rights and guarantees of asylum seekers and refugees in Spain. Among these rights is access to education, allowing immigrant children and young people applying for asylum to enroll in educational centers.

Regarding the regional laws in Andalusia, the following are noteworthy:

- Immigrant Student Support Program (PROA): This program aims to provide additional educational support to immigrant students at risk of social and academic exclusion. It provides educational reinforcement, linguistic and cultural support activities, as well as individualized guidance and counseling.
- Welcome Classrooms: Welcome classrooms are intended for primary and secondary education immigrant students arriving in Andalusia with limited knowledge of the Spanish language. These classrooms offer a supportive environment where Spanish as a second language is taught, and guidance is provided to facilitate academic and social integration.
- Adult Education Centers (CEPA): CEPA offers educational programs for adults who wish to improve their skills and knowledge. These programs include literacy courses, basic education, and basic vocational training, allowing adult immigrants with limited formal education to access learning opportunities.
- Roma Student Support Plan: In Andalusia, a specific plan is implemented to address the educational needs of Roma students, promoting their inclusion and academic success. This

plan aims to combat discrimination and facilitate access to education for the Roma community.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a fundamental role in the field of immigrant education in Spain. Some of them include:

- **CEAR (Spanish Commission for Refugee Aid):** CEAR is an NGO dedicated to the protection and defense of the rights of refugees, asylum seekers, and other vulnerable individuals. Through their Education and Minors program, CEAR works to ensure access and equal educational opportunities for migrant and refugee children and youth.
- **Spanish Red Cross:** The Spanish Red Cross offers various programs to support the integration of migrants and refugees in Spain, including educational guidance services and academic training. Through their projects, the Red Cross promotes equal opportunities and access to education for migrants.
- **Save the Children Spain:** Save the Children is an organization working to protect the rights of children worldwide. In Spain, they implement programs aimed at ensuring access and quality education for migrant boys and girls, providing academic support, extracurricular activities, and social integration programs.
- **Accem:** Accem is an NGO dedicated to the care and reception of migrants and refugees in Spain. Through their educational support programs, Accem works to facilitate school integration and access to quality education for migrant children and youth.

These organizations, among others, collaborate with educational institutions and governmental bodies to provide support, resources, and advocacy to ensure the educational inclusion and success of immigrant populations in Spain. However, it is important to acknowledge that there is still work to be done to ensure the effective implementation of these policies and to provide adequate support for refugees and migrants with little or no educational background. While the existing laws and programs aim to promote inclusion and equal opportunities, it is crucial to address the specific needs and challenges faced by individuals who lack formal education. This includes providing comprehensive language support, tailored educational programs, and targeted assistance to facilitate their integration and success in the education system.

Belgium

Belgium has implemented several policies to improve access to education for refugees and migrants with no or low educational background. Some of these policies include:

- **Integration courses** are designed to help refugees and migrants with no or low educational background learn the local language, understand Belgian culture, and navigate Belgium's education and employment systems.
- **Basic education programs:** Basic education programs are available to help refugees and migrants with no or low educational background to acquire basic literacy, numeracy, and life skills.
- **Vocational training:** Vocational training programs are available to help refugees and migrants with no or low educational background to acquire the skills needed to find employment in Belgium.

- Recognition of foreign qualifications: Belgium has established procedures to recognise foreign qualifications, which can help refugees and migrants with no or low educational background to access higher education or skilled employment.
- Access to scholarships and financial assistance: Scholarships and financial assistance are available to help refugees and migrants with no or low educational backgrounds access education and training programs.
- Inclusive education policies: Belgium has adopted inclusive education policies to ensure that all students, regardless of their background, have access to education and support services that meet their individual needs.

Overall, these policies demonstrate Belgium's commitment to improving access to education for refugees and migrants with no or low educational background. However, there is room for improvement, and policymakers and educators must continue working together to address this population's specific needs and challenges.

According to a report published by the European Migration Network in 2019, access to education remains a significant challenge for refugees and migrants with no or low educational background in Belgium. The report notes that while Belgium has taken steps to improve access to education for this population, significant barriers still need to be addressed. These barriers include language barriers, lack of recognition of foreign qualifications, financial barriers, and discrimination. Statistics from the European Commission's 2020 report on the integration of non-EU nationals in the EU show that in Belgium, 40% of non-EU nationals aged 25-54 have a low level of education, compared to 19% of nationals. The report also notes that non-EU nationals in Belgium are more likely to be unemployed or in precarious employment than nationals.

A study published in the Journal of International Migration and Integration in 2021 examined the impact of integration policies on the education outcomes of refugee children in Belgium. The study found that while integration policies such as language courses and socio-economic support were beneficial, discrimination and negative attitudes towards refugees were significant barriers to educational success.

Overall, the literature and data highlight the need for continued efforts to improve access to education for refugees and migrants with no or low educational background in Belgium. This includes addressing barriers such as language and recognition of qualifications, providing financial support, and combatting discrimination.

In Belgium, refugees and migrants with no educational background are protected by several laws and regulations. Some of the key legal frameworks that seek to support this population include: The Act on Reception of Asylum Seekers and Certain Other Categories of Foreigners establishes the legal framework for the reception of asylum seekers and other categories of foreigners in Belgium. It includes provisions for language classes, basic education, and vocational training:

- The Flemish Integration Decree: This decree aims to facilitate the integration of immigrants into Flemish society, including by promoting access to education and training programs.
- The Walloon Integration Decree establishes the legal framework for integrating immigrants in Wallonia and includes provisions for language classes and vocational training.
- The Brussels-Capital Region Integration Decree establishes the legal framework for integrating immigrants in the Brussels-Capital Region by promoting access to education and training programs.

In terms of governmental organisations that ensure support and oversee the implementation of these laws, there are several key bodies in Belgium. These include:

- The Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (Fedasil): Fedasil is responsible for the reception of asylum seekers in Belgium and provides support services, including language classes and vocational training.
- The Flemish Agency for Integration and Civic Integration (Agentschap Integratie en Inburgering) implements integration policies in Flanders and provides support services, including language classes and vocational training.
- The Walloon Agency for the Integration of Migrants (Agence Wallonne pour l'Intégration des Migrants): This agency is responsible for implementing integration policies in Wallonia and provides support services, including language classes and vocational training.
- The Brussels-Capital Region Agency for the Integration of Migrants (Agence Bruxelloise pour l'Accueil de l'Intégration des Migrants): This agency is responsible for implementing integration policies in the Brussels-Capital Region and provides support services, including language classes and vocational training.

These laws and organisations demonstrate Belgium's commitment to supporting integrating refugees and migrants with no educational background. However, there is still work to ensure that these policies are implemented effectively and that refugees and migrants with no educational background can access the support they need to succeed.

Cyprus

In Cyprus, policies and access to education for refugees and migrants with no or low educational backgrounds have been developed to ensure inclusive and equitable opportunities for all individuals. Here are some key aspects:

- Inclusive Policies: The government of Cyprus has implemented inclusive policies that prioritize access to education for refugees and migrants, including those with no or limited educational backgrounds. These policies aim to provide equal educational opportunities and promote integration into the educational system.
- Preparatory Programs: Preparatory programs are offered to refugees and migrants with no or low educational backgrounds. These programs focus on foundational skills, language acquisition, and basic education to bridge the educational gap and prepare individuals for further studies.
- Language Support: Language support is provided to facilitate the integration of refugees and migrants into the education system. Language classes are offered to improve proficiency in the official language(s) of Cyprus, enabling better communication and participation in educational settings.
- Remedial Education: Remedial education programs are implemented to address the specific learning needs of refugees and migrants with no or low educational backgrounds. These programs provide targeted support to enhance literacy, numeracy, and other essential skills required for academic success.
- Vocational Training: Vocational training programs are available to equip refugees and migrants with practical skills and knowledge for employment. These programs focus on developing specific vocational skills that align with the local job market, enabling individuals to secure livelihoods and contribute to the local economy.

- **Psychological Support:** Recognizing the potential trauma and psychosocial challenges faced by refugees and migrants, schools and educational institutions provide psychological support services. These services aim to address mental health needs, promote well-being, and create a conducive learning environment.
- **Outreach and Awareness:** Efforts are made to raise awareness among refugees, migrants, and host communities about the importance of education and the available support systems. Outreach programs, community engagement initiatives, and information campaigns are conducted to ensure that all individuals understand their rights and access educational opportunities.
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** The government collaborates with international organizations, NGOs, and civil society groups to enhance educational opportunities for refugees and migrants. These partnerships contribute to resource-sharing, capacity building, and the implementation of effective educational programs.
- **Recognition of Prior Learning:** Efforts are made to recognize and validate the prior learning and qualifications of refugees and migrants. This process enables individuals to access higher education or advanced vocational training based on their existing skills and knowledge.
- **Policy Monitoring and Evaluation:** Ongoing monitoring and evaluation of educational policies and programs are conducted to assess their effectiveness and make necessary improvements. Feedback from refugees, migrants, and relevant stakeholders is taken into account to ensure continuous enhancement of the education system's inclusivity.

It is important to note that the specific policies and programs in Cyprus may evolve over time, and it is recommended to refer to the latest information and resources provided by relevant government departments and organizations supporting refugees and migrants.

Digital Transformation amongst Refugees and Migrants

Overall, digital transformation can play a vital role in supporting the integration of refugees and migrants into their new communities. By providing access to information, skills development, social connection, and language learning resources, digital technology can help refugees and migrants overcome barriers to integration and improve their chances of success. Incorporating digital competencies into adult immigrant language instruction entails utilising digital resources for interaction, information retrieval, text creation, and the development and expression of one's own language competence.

There are numerous reasons why refugees and migrants need to undergo digital transformation:

- **Information accessibility** Digital technology may provide refugees and migrants with vital information, including details pertaining to educational opportunities, health services, and legal rights. Refugees and migrants who have access to the internet and digital devices are able to remain informed and connected to the resources they require.
- **Capacity building:** Digital technology can offer prospects for refugees and migrants to acquire new competencies and skills that will facilitate their assimilation into society. Gaining proficiency in digital competencies, such as coding or using productivity tools, can augment an individual's marketability and chances of achieving favourable outcomes in the labour market.
- **Social connection:** Despite geographical separation, digital technology can assist refugees and migrants in maintaining contact with their families and communities. Messaging applications

and social media platforms can enable refugees and migrants to maintain meaningful connections and stay in touch.

- Language acquisition: Migrants and refugees may gain access to language learning resources via digital technology, which may assist them in acquiring the requisite language proficiencies for effective communication and assimilation into their host societies.

Examples of digital tools per country

In recent years, there have been several digital educational initiatives in Greece aimed at assisting exiles and migrants with limited or no formal education. These initiatives utilise technology to make learning materials accessible and interactive. Here are some instances:

A. KOLIBRI: An Adaptable Product Ecosystem for Offline-First Teaching and Learning (<https://learningequality.org/kolibri/>)

Kolibri is an adaptable set of open solutions specially developed to support learning for the half of the world without Internet access. Centered around an offline-first learning platform that runs on a variety of low-cost and legacy devices, the Kolibri Product Ecosystem includes a curricular tool, a library of open educational resources, and a toolkit of resources to support training and implementation in formal, informal, and non-formal learning environments.

Kolibri is being used in over 200 countries and territories around the world, and serving millions of learners and educators living in underserved contexts where the internet is costly, unreliable, or simply beyond reach.

B. Kiron Open Higher Education (<https://kiron.ngo/>)

Kiron is an online learning platform that provides free higher education courses to refugees in Greece and around the globe. It provides remote access to a variety of courses from prestigious universities, enabling individuals to obtain certificates and pursue academic degrees.

C. "Education4All" Online Learning Platform (<https://education4all.co/>)

Education4All is an online learning platform developed by the Greek Ministry of Education. It offers free educational resources and courses for refugees and migrants of all ages. The platform covers a wide range of subjects, including language learning, mathematics, science, and social studies.

D. "BeAware" Digital Learning Program

BeAware is a digital learning program created by the Greek Council for Refugees and the Norwegian Refugee Council. It aims to provide refugees and migrants with essential knowledge about their rights, responsibilities, and integration processes. The program includes interactive modules, videos, and quizzes to enhance learning and engagement.

E. "Digital Learning Lab" by SolidarityNow

(https://www.solidaritynow.org/en/digital_skills/)

A Greek NGO has established Digital Learning Labs in various refugee camps and urban centres. These labs offer access to computers and digital educational resources, including language learning software, online courses, and interactive exercises. Trained facilitators provide guidance and support in using these resources effectively.

These are just a few examples of the digital educational materials and initiatives available in Greece to assist refugees and migrants with limited or no formal education. Nevertheless, digital tools.

Summary of main findings per country

Norway

1. Norway has a well-functioning system for language training for adult immigrants with low or no education from their home countries. The introduction programme is individually tailored to meet all participants' needs. However, the documentation for efficient methods for language training for adult immigrants with low or no educational background, is limited. Based on a report from FHI from 2018, it is not possible to give any guidance about which teaching method, or combination of methods, suits this group of immigrants the most.
2. Lately there has been a lot of projects, where language support in the immigrants' own language is included as a method for teaching the Norwegian language for immigrants with low or no educational background. Among others, a project conducted by the university college in Volda in 2019-2020, has included this method in their project and has as a result prepared a guideline for this method. The guideline is based on the experiences throughout the project. The project was in cooperation with Ålesund adult learning centre.
3. The language assistants make it possible to communicate with the participants in a language they can understand, and that gives the teacher a unique possibility to get to know the participant, their experience from their own country and what needs and goals they have for the future. A beginner level in the Norwegian language is not sufficient to express what the participant wants to achieve. For adult participants it is important to be able to use an adult and nuanced language to express who they are and what they stand for. Good communication between the teacher and the participant build the base for developing good relations. The language assistants make it possible to get to know the participants well. That makes a good start and contributes to a good learning environment.
4. The experiences made in different projects where language support in the participants' own language has been used, seems to improve the learning process, and should be used to a greater extent by all adult learning centres.
5. Experiences made locally at our own adult learning center, made the basis for wanting to learn more about a certain perspective when it comes to teaching adult immigrants with low or no educational background from their home country.

Over the last few years, we have experienced that immigrants who have spent many years in exile in another country or have spent many years in refugee camps in a neighboring country, combined with having low or no educational background from their home country, need a pre course before they can start the process of learning a new language. Lack of learning strategies, concentration problems, traumas, lack of practical skills, misinformation, and other barriers, has to be sorted out to make them ready to start the process of learning a new language. Exchange of experience with other learning centers in the county and other governmental agencies we cooperate with, confirms that this is a well-known issue.

Greece

1. Nearly 20% of the immigrants living in Greece has low to no educational level.
2. In Greece, as in many other nations, the requirements for immigrants with a low level of education may be more stringent. The availability of employment opportunities may be limited, as employers frequently prioritise candidates with advanced degrees or specialised skills. However, this does not imply that immigrants with low levels of education cannot find employment or obtain residence permits.
3. These are just a few examples of the digital educational materials and initiatives available in Greece to assist refugees and migrants with limited or no formal education. It is important to note that the landscape of such initiatives is constantly changing; therefore, it is advantageous to investigate local organisations and resources for the most current information.

Spain

Despite the existence of educational initiatives aimed at assisting immigrants, most of these programmes are designed for children under the age of 16. There are some guidance and support institutions, such as NGOs, that can assist this demographic regarding adult education; however, their capacity is not always sufficient to accommodate all the immigrants in need of aid. In this context, therefore, the development of an open and accessible digital tool is essential. In particular:

1. **Regional Variations:** Education in Spain is primarily governed by the autonomous communities, resulting in some variations in programs and services across regions. It is essential to consult local educational authorities and specialized institutions to obtain accurate and up-to-date information on available programs in a specific area.
2. **Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):** NGOs play a significant role in supporting the educational needs of refugees and migrants in Spain. Organizations like CEAR, Cruz Roja Española, Save the Children España, and Accem provide crucial assistance through educational and integration programs, focusing on language learning, academic support, and social integration.
3. **Digital Tools and Digital Transformation:** The digitalization of education has contributed to supporting youth, including refugees and migrants, in their educational journey. Online language learning platforms, digital inclusion programs, online courses, and educational platforms have emerged as valuable resources to enhance access and educational opportunities for refugees and migrants with limited formal education.
4. **Legal Framework:** Spain has established laws and policies at the national and regional levels that emphasize inclusion and equal opportunities in education for all, including refugees and migrants. The Ley Orgánica de Educación (LOE) serves as a fundamental legal framework, guaranteeing equal access and success in education.
5. **Support Programs:** Various support programs are in place to facilitate the educational integration of refugees and migrants. These programs encompass measures such as language support, cultural orientation, academic reinforcement, and individualized guidance. Examples include the PROA program, Aulas de Acogida, and Centros de Educación de Personas Adultas (CEPA).

Belgium

1. Language proficiency is a significant barrier to education and training for refugees and migrants in Belgium. They must gain more language skills to participate in language courses and access employment opportunities.
2. Education policies and programs in Belgium do not adequately address the specific needs and challenges faced by refugees and migrants with low education levels. There is a need for more targeted and comprehensive approaches to refugee and migrant education.
3. The lack of recognition of prior learning and qualifications obtained in the home country is a significant challenge for refugees and migrants seeking employment in Belgium. This leads to underemployment and a waste of human capital.
4. The digital divide and limited access to technology and internet connectivity challenge refugees and migrants with low education levels, especially in online learning and job search.
5. Finally, there is a need for more intercultural awareness and dialogue among educators and the wider society in Belgium. This will foster a more welcoming and inclusive environment for refugees and migrants and contribute to their successful integration into Belgian society.

Cyprus

1. **Inclusive Policies:** Cyprus has implemented inclusive policies to ensure access to education for refugees and migrants, regardless of their educational backgrounds. These policies prioritize equal educational opportunities and promote integration into the educational system.
2. **Language Support:** Language support programs are provided to facilitate the integration of refugees and migrants into the education system. These programs focus on improving language proficiency in the official language(s) of Cyprus, enabling better communication and participation in educational settings.
3. **Preparatory Programs:** Preparatory programs are offered to refugees and migrants with low educational backgrounds. These programs focus on foundational skills, language acquisition, and basic education to bridge the educational gap and prepare individuals for further studies.
4. **Remedial Education:** Remedial education programs are available to address the specific learning needs of refugees and migrants with limited educational backgrounds. These programs provide targeted support to enhance literacy, numeracy, and other essential skills required for academic success.
5. **Vocational Training:** Vocational training programs are implemented to equip refugees and migrants with practical skills and knowledge for employment. These programs focus on developing specific vocational skills that align with the local job market, enabling individuals to secure livelihoods and contribute to the local economy.
6. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** The government collaborates with international organizations, NGOs, and civil society groups to enhance educational opportunities for refugees and migrants. These partnerships contribute to resource-sharing, capacity building, and the implementation of effective educational programs.
7. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** The government collaborates with international organizations, NGOs, and civil society groups to enhance educational opportunities for refugees and migrants. These partnerships contribute to resource-sharing, capacity building, and the implementation of effective educational programs.

8. Recognition of Prior Learning: Efforts are made to recognize and validate the prior learning and qualifications of refugees and migrants. This process allows individuals to access higher education or advanced vocational training based on their existing skills and knowledge.

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