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# Guidelines for Migrant Inclusion in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education



Malta, Sweden, Slovenia, & Cyprus, 2018

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These guidelines have been developed by the following organizations:

**Foundation for Shelter and Support to Migrants (FSM)** is a Maltese non-governmental organization focused on community development, adult education, research and service provision; working with diverse vulnerable third country nationals, including asylum seekers and persons with international protection.

**Integration För Alla (IFALL)** is a Swedish NGO which works in promoting integration between cultures and counteract violence between cultures in Sweden and in another countries.

**The Institute for African Studies (IAS)** NGO and think-tank focused on research, migration and integration, diversity, human-trafficking and advocacy through training, seminars, and conferences.

**Centre for Advancement of Research and Development in Educational Technology LTD (CARDET)**

one of the leading research and development centers in the Mediterranean region with global expertise in project design and implementation, capacity building, and e-learning in the fields of education and VET, social justice and integration.



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# SUPPORTING MIGRANT INCLUSION IN ADULT EDUCATION (SMILE)

Erasmus + Project - Malta, Cyprus, Slovenia, Sweden - 2017-1-MT01-KA204-026966

SMILE is a 2-year Erasmus+ project, started in October 2017, and led by the Foundation for Shelter and Support to Migrants (FSM) in Malta, together with Integration for All (IFALL) in Sweden, the Centre for the Advancement of Research and Development in Education Technology (CARDET) in Cyprus, and the Institute for African Studies (IAS) in Slovenia.

The SMILE project is developing information and training resources to support policymakers, teachers, migrant communities, learning support staff and adult education institutes in promoting migrant inclusion in adult education.

All the project resources and information can be found on the project website:  
<http://www.project-smile.eu/en/>

# Guidelines for Migrant Inclusion in Lifelong Learning and Adult Education

The inclusion of migrants in adult education is paramount to maximise the great contribution that migrants can have for the economic growth of the European Union.

The current situation across the EU indicates that more needs to be done; 1/3 of working-age non-EU citizens are not in employment, education or training according to the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX). Several barriers prevent them from finding adequate employment and/or gaining the necessary skills to meet the labour market demands. Difficulties in accessing education programmes, weak systems for the recognition of foreign qualifications and prior-learning, limited access to scholarships and weak targeted support services are widespread.

Project 'SMILE' aims to develop educational resources and capacity to support the inclusion of adult migrants in education. Throughout the first phase of the project, research on the inclusion of migrants in adult education was conducted in Malta, Sweden, Slovenia, and Cyprus. A transnational meeting was also held in Sweden, where the project partners and stakeholders from the different countries came together to exchange expertise.

The current document is based on the data gathered in the first phase and supported by additional research on the inclusion of migrants in education in other EU member states.

This document presents a set of guidelines which have been deemed crucial for the inclusion of migrants in adult education. It is addressed to policymakers, programme developers, administrators, directors of colleges and institutes of learning, curriculum development. The guidelines have been divided into 4 main themes: language learning, adult education, educators, and recognition of prior-learning and skills. Each section offers a list of informative resources to facilitate the implementation of the guidelines.

# Language learning

The provision of language courses is critical in ensuring inclusion in education and the general inclusion of migrants in the host society.

- Newcomers need to be engaged in language learning as soon as possible upon arriving in the host country, since early inclusion facilitates future participation in different education and employment pathways, and in opportunities for participation in the host society.
- Making language courses mandatory can be an effective strategy but adequate motivation and support needs to be guaranteed for migrants, whether they combine learning and employment, or focus solely on language learning.
- Language provision needs to consider the different levels of literacy skills of the students as well as their language backgrounds and familiarity with the language of the host country. Hours of training should be linked to needs; persons with poor language skills should benefit from more hours of training.
- Non-formal methodologies need to be recognized, funded and utilised as they can be highly effective in engaging and motivating adult migrants, especially those with poor literacy skills and those who face exclusion from mainstream systems of formal provision which prove inaccessible.
- Opportunities should be made available for adult migrants to learn the host language through 'work-based learning'; this methodology has proven very effective in promoting language acquisition while enhancing employability.

## Resources

- Sweden: a national system of compulsory sponsored learning that incorporates fast-tracking.

Education in Swedish for Immigrants - SFI. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.kungsbacka.se/English/Care-support-and-help/New-in-Sweden/Education-in-Swedish-for-Immigrants---SFI/>

- Work-based language instruction:

McHugh, M., & Challinor, A. E. (2011). *Improving immigrants' employment prospects through work-focused language instruction*. Retrieved from <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/pubs/workfocusedlanguageinstruction.pdf>

- Non-formal language instruction:

Morrice, L. (2016). Why non-formal language learning can be more effective for migrants. Retrieved from <https://ec.europa.eu/epale/en/blog/wider-benefits-language-learning-migrants>

- Language cafes. The case of Stockholm's library:

Hjerpe, A. (n.d.). Voluntary language learning. Retrieved from <http://slq.nu/?article=volume-47-no-1-2014-3>

- Language cafes. Norwegian case study:

Audunson, R., & Johnston, J. (2017). Supporting immigrants' political integration through discussion and debate in public libraries. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 0(0), 1–15. <https://doi.org/doi.org/10.1177/0961000617709056>

# Adult Education

Ensuring the inclusion of adult migrants in vocational training and further education is key to meeting the changing labour market needs of host countries and to facilitate the inclusion of migrants in the host societies.

- The accessibility of available courses needs to improve by considering the financial restrictions, time and mobility limitations that certain groups might encounter.
- Increasing the offer of evening courses and providing subsidised childcare at training centres can improve accessibility significantly.
- Vocational courses need to be adaptable to the different skills of the learners; for example, courses adapted to illiterate persons who might however, have technical skills.
- Improving outreach to migrants is necessary to ensure that they are aware of the education opportunities available to them for improving employability. Engaging migrants as outreach workers within educational centres, as well as targeted outreach efforts, can greatly improve outreach impact. One-stop shops are also highly effective in meeting the information needs of migrants regarding the host country's labour market needs and available opportunities to advance their skills accordingly.
- Offer individual counselling to each adult student and ensure ongoing evaluation of their learning and social inclusion progress.
- Curricula, methods of assessment and pedagogies developed with the participation of adult student participation, build communities of trust.
- Ensure that learning institutes work together with the local community and civil society organizations in order to facilitate the inclusion of students into local social networks.
- Promote Informal teaching methods and "learning by doing", which are better methods for promoting language learning and employment.
- Improving availability and accessibility of psychosocial support services at training centres is essential to ensure that vulnerable migrants and persons at risk of social exclusion can succeed in their education.
- Social inclusion units within education centres which incorporate migrants from different backgrounds among their staff, have a great potential to provide culturally sensitive support and motivate students to address their own barriers to learning and achieve personal goals.

## Resources

- Work-based learning in Europe:

European Commission. (2013). *Work-Based Learning in Europe: Practices and Policy Pointers*. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/work-based-learning-in-europe\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/policy/vocational-policy/doc/alliance/work-based-learning-in-europe_en.pdf)

- Lifelong guidance in Europe:

Borbély-Pecze, T. B., & Hutchinson, J. (2014). *Work-based Learning and Lifelong Guidance Policies: ELGPN Concept Note No. 5*. Retrieved from <http://www.elgpn.eu/publications/browse-by-language/english/elgpn-concept-note-no.-5-work-based-learning-and-lifelong-guidance-policies/>

- Intercultural education policies across Europe:

Sikorskaya, I. (2017). *Intercultural education policies across Europe as responses to cultural diversity (2006-2016)* (CSE Working Papers No. 17/04). Italy, Salerno. Retrieved from [http://elea.unisa.it/bitstream/handle/10556/2552/2017\\_-\\_cse\\_wp\\_4\\_irina\\_sykorskaya\\_intercultural\\_education\\_policies\\_across\\_europe\\_as\\_responses\\_to\\_cultural\\_diversity.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y%0A%0A](http://elea.unisa.it/bitstream/handle/10556/2552/2017_-_cse_wp_4_irina_sykorskaya_intercultural_education_policies_across_europe_as_responses_to_cultural_diversity.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y%0A%0A)

- Strengthening local education systems for newly arrived adults and children:

Salant, B., & Benton, M. (2017). *Strengthening local education systems for newly arrived adults and children: Empowering cities through better use of EU instruments*. Belgium, Brussels. Retrieved from [https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/MPIEurope\\_Urban\\_Agenda\\_Education-FINAL.pdf](https://www.migrationpolicy.org/sites/default/files/publications/MPIEurope_Urban_Agenda_Education-FINAL.pdf)

- Policies to increase participation of adults in activities aimed at raising basic skills:

European Commission. (2015). *Policies to increase participation of adults in activities aimed at raising basic skills: Synthesis of country reports*. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/experts-groups/2014-2015/adult/adult-participation\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/experts-groups/2014-2015/adult/adult-participation_en.pdf)

# Educators

Educators are at the forefront of promoting migrant inclusion within education, but continuous professional development and support needs to be improved.

- Educators should be given opportunities to learn more about intercultural approaches to education in order to get acquainted with the cultural, social, and religious backgrounds of their students and to learn practical skills of working in multicultural and multilingual environments.
- Teachers should receive training on informal teaching methods and be able to incorporate them in their teaching environments.
- Continuous and accredited CPD for teachers should include:
  - The building of a classroom community, including building trust and a sense of belonging among students.
  - Information on migration and migrant background, and the impact of these on migrant education.
  - Improving empathy, communication, social and sensitivity skills.
  - Facilitation of student support through referral to other services.
  - The subject of human rights and conflict resolution.
  - Awareness raising materials on students' personal and social development in learning.
  - Information on appropriate pedagogies and approaches in adult education.
- Supervision and consultations for teachers should be provided.

## Resources

- Non-formal education and innovative teaching methods course:

<https://www.erasmustrainingcourses.com/non-formal-education-teaching-methods.html>

- EU portal on VET teachers and trainers' professional development:

<http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/projects/teachers-and-trainers-professional-development>

- Intercultural education guidelines:

UNESCO. (n.d.). *UNESCO Guidelines on Intercultural Education*. France, Italy. Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001478/147878e.pdf>

- Digital, social and civic competences development for adult educators working with migrants and refugees:

<http://disoci.eu/tp-for-educators>

# Recognition of Prior-Learning and Skills

Migrant adults often possess skills and qualifications acquired prior to their arrival in the host country. Recognising them is essential to ensure that migrants skills and talents do not go underutilised to the detriment of their personal development and of the host country's economy and society.

- National Institutes should be able to accredit prior learning, running the necessary tests, with the government and private companies acknowledging the importance of such accreditation.
- Policies need to address the recognition of skills in a more comprehensive manner, considering that illiterate persons also possess skills and should be able to receive the respective accreditation.
- Career planning needs to be provided in order to identify individual interests and skills as early as possible, and link individuals to future employment prospects.
- Developing the 'skills card' concept, including Prior Learning accreditation tools for the skills building and validation of workers interested in specific industries.

## Resources

- Council Recommendation of 20 December 2012 on the validation of non-formal and informal learning, OJ C 398/1, 22.12.2012. Retrieved from [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/Council\\_Recommendation\\_on\\_the\\_validation\\_20\\_December\\_2012.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/Council_Recommendation_on_the_validation_20_December_2012.pdf)
- Cedefop. (2015). *European guidelines for validating non-formal and informal learning*. Luxembourg. <https://doi.org/10.2801/008370>
- OECD portal on the validation of non-formal and informal learning:

<http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/recognitionofnon-formalandinformallearning-home.htm>

- Finland: a long-standing system of competence-based validation with strong connections to the labour market.

Karttunen, A. (2016). *Country report: Finland: 2016 update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning*. Retrieved from [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/2016\\_validate\\_fi.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/2016_validate_fi.pdf)

- Portugal: Centres for Qualification and VET and National Competences Standards.

Guimarães, P. (2016). *Country report: Portugal: 2016 update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning*. Retrieved from [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/2016\\_validate\\_pt.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/2016_validate_pt.pdf)

- Norway: a comprehensive national system of validation of prior learning

European Commission. (2018). EURYDICE: Norway: Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning. Retrieved from [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning-51\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning-51_en)

- Italy: a decisive shift towards a more concrete and comprehensive stage in the implementation of a national strategy on validation.

Perulli, E. (2016). *Country report: Italy: 2016 update to the European inventory on validation of non-formal and informal learning*. Retrieved from [http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/2016\\_validate\\_it.pdf](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/files/2016_validate_it.pdf)

- Poland: extramural examinations to validate learning outcomes achieved outside the formal education system.

European Commission. (2018). EURYDICE: Poland: Validation of Non-formal and Informal Learning. Retrieved from [https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning-53\\_en](https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/validation-non-formal-and-informal-learning-53_en)





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