

# Concepts and good practices

Currently, over 70 million people in the world are forcibly displaced due to conflicts, violence and persecutions. Among them, nearly 25.9 million are refugees.

Asylum is an international right stated in the 1951 Geneva Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol, by which the signatory countries commit among others to respecting the fundamental principal of non-refoulement. The Geneva Convention lays down some basic minimum standards for the treatment of refugees in different domains, including **access to education**, and specifies in Article 22 that “the Contracting States shall accord to refugees treatment as favourable as possible, and, in any event, not less favourable than that accorded to aliens generally in the same circumstances, with respect to education other than elementary education and, in particular, as regards access to studies, the recognition of foreign school certificates, diplomas and degrees, the remission of fees and charges and the award of scholarships.” This is important, as today, due to economic and technological developments, a growing portion of the workforce requires higher education qualifications.

These rights are also confirmed by the “no one is left behind” commitment of the United Nations’ Agenda for Sustainable Development, which explicitly mentions refugees and stipulates under Goal 4.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets: “By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including university.”

In the Italian context, the right to education for beneficiaries of international protection is regulated by Art. 26 of Legislative Decree 251/2007, which provides the right for children to access schools on equal footing as Italian citizens, and the right for adults to access the general education system within the limits and rules envisaged for third country nationals legally residing in Italy. The law foresees also that refugees are entitled to the validation and accreditation of titles and qualifications obtained abroad, even in the absence of the original certification. Furthermore, the National Integration Plan, approved by the Ministry of the Interior in 2017, identifies access to education and qualifications’ recognition as programmatic priorities.

However, beneficiaries of international protection face greater difficulties compared to both the resident population and other foreign citizens, when it comes to accessing these services, including access to education, particularly Universities. Universities offer an important opportunity to young refugees, representing a fundamental step on their path to social inclusion.

In 2018, there was an increase in the number of refugees going on to higher education, from 1 to 3 per cent. However, considering the global figure of 37%, the gap in secondary education opportunities for refugees continues to be dramatic and it is still a long way off UNHCR’s target of seeing 15 per cent of the eligible refugee population in higher education by 2030.

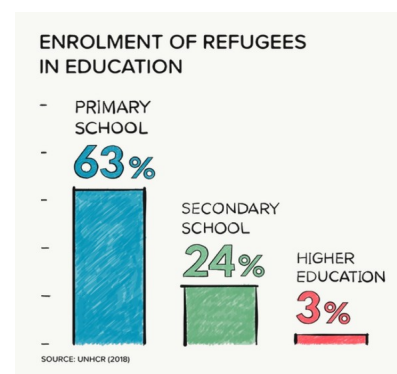
As pointed out by UNHCR, refugees tend to be at risk of educational marginalization: nowadays, only 1% of the refugee population enters higher education. Universities should seek active ways to reach out to and recruit refugees, contributing to a more equitable and inclusive educational system.

The lack of adequate financial resources might represent a major obstacle for refugees intending to continue their studies. To facilitate refugee access to higher education, universities should adopt financial solutions that are diversified and sustainable over time.

People fleeing from crisis-stricken regions may not be able to provide full – or even partial – documentation of their previous studies. To avoid their exclusion from the educational system, universities are responsible for designing flexible and fair enrolment procedures that take into account refugee-specific needs.

Language barrier and differences in the academic culture and methodological approach may discourage refugees to pursue higher education studies. Universities should help refugees to bridge gaps through tailored solutions thus facilitating their integration into the higher education system.

In response to these challenges, and building on the sensitivity and commitment shown by Universities on this front, UNHCR has proposed a **Manifesto on an Inclusive University** to promote refugees’ access to university education and foster social integration and active participation in academic life. Adhering to



this Manifesto contributes to the valorisation and use of knowledge for the social, cultural and economic development of society in the following general principles:

1. **Equality and non-discrimination.** Promoting the full respect for the human being, without any distinction of age, gender, nationality, and with respect for diversity, avoiding all forms of discrimination and exclusion, and guaranteeing equal access to services and equal career opportunities for refugee students, researchers and teachers, particularly refugee women and girls.
2. **Hospitality.** Promoting a welcoming academic culture focusing on hospitality, supporting the integration of teachers, researchers and students of different backgrounds and facilitating their introduction to the academic institution and the local territory, with particular regard to refugees.
3. **Knowledge.** Promoting and enhancing the scientific knowledge of issues relating to forced migration, international protection and asylum, in order to raise awareness of the situation in the countries of origin, the root causes of migration and refugees' fundamental rights. In addition to favouring a better understanding of forced migration, such knowledge can foster and facilitate dialogue between students, researchers and teachers of different nationalities, fostering the inclusion of refugees.
4. **Integration.** Promoting integration as a dynamic and articulated process involves not only foreign professors, researchers and students, who shall be ready to integrate without renouncing their cultural identity, but also local communities and educational institutions, entrusted to develop policies and programmes attentive to a multicultural environment, and, in particular, to the specific condition of refugees.
5. **Appreciation of diversity.** Facilitating opportunities for mutual knowledge between students, researchers and professors, locals and refugees, with a view to promoting a climate of exchange, inclusion and a shared sense of belonging, enhancing different cultural heritages as an element of inspiration and enrichment for the University.
6. **Participation.** Encouraging the active participation of refugees in academic life, facilitating the establishment of associations by refugee students and researchers, and involving them in public debates and other institutional events.

The universities signatories to this Manifesto, in light of the general principles set out above and with the aim of promoting and facilitating the inclusion of refugee students, researchers and teachers, are committed to adopt some of the following suggested measures (**action points**):

1. **Support to refugee students** • Universities and research institutes promote access to information, by ensuring that their administrative staff, in particular the offices in charge of international relations and student registration, have all up-to-date information regarding the entitlements connected to the recognition of international protection, and the implications of such legal status with regard to access to courses and exams, as well as information on the recognition procedures for titles and qualifications obtained abroad. Universities and research institutes also promote the exchange of know-how and good practices with other signatory institutions. • Universities and research institutes provide information and assistance to refugees in the registration process. Furthermore they will provide information on scholarships available for refugees, through specific brochures and other printed and digital information material which is available at the university's information desks, easy accessible and user friendly. • Universities and research institutes provide guidance and tutoring services for refugee students and researchers, in order to assist and support them in the registration as well as during their studies and research, including support with regard to Italian language courses, considered as a priority for the education pathway as well as for social integration. • Universities and research institutes facilitate refugee students in accessing internships, traineeships and stages, in Italy and abroad, in order to help them entering in the world of work.
2. **Support for recognition of titles and qualifications** • In accordance with Art. 7 of the Lisbon Convention (ratified through Law 148/2002), Universities and research institutes commit to adopt all necessary measures for the establishment of a fair, transparent and effective mechanism for the recognition of diplomas, certificates and other qualifications obtained abroad by beneficiaries of international protection, even in the absence of original certification by the State where the title or degree was obtained. • Universities and research institutes make available to the public information on the procedures for the recognition of titles and qualifications

obtained abroad. In accordance with Art. 25 of the Geneva Convention, refugees shall not be subject to any requirements involving contact with the authorities of their countries of origin (Embassies and Consulates).

3. **Scholarships and other incentives** • Universities and research institutes, within the limits of available resources, provide scholarships for refugee students and researchers as well as other incentives aimed, inter alia, at supporting board and lodging, study and urban mobility. Universities and research institutes promote, also through the involvement of the local community, private sponsorship initiatives aimed at supporting refugee students and researchers. • Universities and research institutes promote tutoring activities, including through the involvement of students and local associations, to support refugees in their academic and local integration, and contribute to disseminate information on scholarships and other incentives.
4. **Humanitarian corridors for refugee teachers, students and researchers** • Universities and research institutes support, in accordance with their internal rules, the registration of refugee students residing in third countries as a way to favour complementary legal entry pathways for refugees, and to facilitate their integration in the academic environment and local community. • Universities and research institutes commit to offer financial support, within the limits of the available resources, to refugee students, in order to cover university fees and additional costs, and provide tailored information, support and guidance services.
5. **Participation** • Universities and research institutes promote the participation of refugee students and researchers in academic life and support the establishment of refugee associations. • Universities and research institutes involve refugee associations in debates and public events organized by academia, including public discussions on international protection.

Refugees, as other groups of non-traditional learners, require special support and dedicated solutions to guarantee they can enjoy equal opportunities and a fair treatment. Universities should ensure that they can provide an adequate management of all issues related to the inclusion and retention of refugees in their institution, taking into account their unique circumstances and specific needs.

There are many different challenges posed by the inclusion of refugees. To tackle them efficiently and maximize the impact of their action, universities should capitalize on all their existing resources while creating synergies with external stakeholders.

The refugee crisis should be considered as a long-term phenomenon that requires structural and durable solutions. Universities should ensure a long-term commitment and include the integration of refugees in their institutional strategy, contributing to the realization of an open and non-discriminatory European higher education system.

Key issues for students from refugee backgrounds as well as for those from other disadvantaged groups, are access and retention. Research suggests that migrants – including second or third generation – face higher access barriers and are more likely to drop out. With a view to integrating refugees into higher education, and to foster their retention and study success, the initiatives selected for this GPC category use strategic planning to cover a full range of activities, from outreach and admissions to services for retention, at times also including considerations on the revision of learning and teaching practices. This could be framed as overarching diversity management, and while focused on the needs of the target group of refugees, these approaches could in the long run also be beneficial to other groups of non-traditional learners.

The services must aim at regaining **autonomy** and must be emancipating. This means providing social welfare and educational services.

On the contrary, welfarism can lead to another serious risk: passivisation of the person who, in that case, may not manifest oppositional behaviour but because his growth pathway is at a standstill, suspended: the risk of failure of the life project and the objective of a path of social inclusion aimed at autonomy is very high.

Orientation aims at the educational goal of autonomy as a fundamental capacity for the person to move in a complex society and lacking in total protection and guarantees.

**Access to information** remains a major challenge for refugees interested in Higher Education. Universities should ensure that general information about the university and enrolment procedures, in particular, is easy-to-find, up-to-date and inclusive.

European higher education information resources for refugees should be improved, and provided in the main languages spoken by refugees and in digital format, so that they can be accessed already in refugees' countries of origin as well as upon their arrival in the EU. Physical welcome desks dedicated to potential refugee students should be established in hotspot areas in the EU. By providing training and information materials to staff working at such contact points, but also to staff based in reception centres, camps, social services and unemployment offices, they would be better equipped to guide potential students and researchers and to make relevant onward referrals to institutions and social services as soon as refugees arrive.

Likewise, staff at higher education institutions, should be provided with training and guidance materials on different protection statuses, and on how the different protection statuses impact higher education access in their respective national education and social support systems. Matching study opportunities to the profile of a potential refugee student is time and work intensive and the institutions sometimes do not have sufficient staff capacity for this kind of support. In addition, outreach activities should take into account specific groups among refugees, such as women, and could also bring the information directly to the potential refugee students, for instance through info-days in reception centres, or through buddy and mentoring programmes, which in addition to enhancing access and integration, are also proven to be a valuable experience for the local students participating in them.

The success stories of refugees' pathways into higher education could, on the one hand benefit the institutions that can use this information to respond more accurately to refugees' needs and, on the other hand benefit newcomers. The refugees themselves could act as ambassadors providing information to peers. Likewise, positive narratives and refugees' stories could be disseminated in order to contribute to changing the perception of European societies about migration and to give a voice to refugees.

For refugee students, it might be very difficult to find their way around a new academic environment. To reduce the risk of dropouts, universities should provide adequate academic and administrative support and guide refugees throughout their entire course of study.

Universities are not only academic environments but also important agents of socialization. Therefore, universities should foster societal integration and cultural exchange among individuals while actively promoting the integration of refugees within the local community and society at large.

Refugees might be an especially vulnerable group, due to previous stressful events and the hurdles of starting a new life. Universities should play a role in helping refugees to overcome psychological barriers that might jeopardize their academic performance and integration.

Refugee students might not be familiar with the work culture and environment of the host country. Universities should provide tailored support to prepare refugees for – and ease their transition to – the labour market.

Employability is one of the key themes of European higher education, discussed at the level of the EU (e.g. in ET 202013, 2011 Modernisation Agenda14) and in the Bologna Process. Diverse concepts exist to define the term. According to the Bologna Process it is 'the ability to gain initial meaningful employment, or to become self-employed, to maintain employment, and to be able to move around within the labour market'. In this context, the role of higher education is 'to equip students with the knowledge, skills and competences that they need in the workplace and that employers require; and to ensure that people have more opportunities to maintain or renew those skills and attributes throughout their working lives' (...) (Bologna Implementation Report 201515, p. 182). For instance, higher education institutions might provide access to internships, and in addition, specifically for refugee students, information on the structure of the national labour market, interview training and mentoring with particular emphasis on the cultural context and differences.

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## STRATEGIC PLANNING:

[https://www.inhereproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/inHERE\\_Guidelines\\_EN.pdf](https://www.inhereproject.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/inHERE_Guidelines_EN.pdf)

**inHERE (HIGHER EDUCATION SUPPORTING REFUGEES IN EUROPE)** is a 2-years project co-funded with the support of the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. It aims at facilitating integration and access of refugees in European HEIs.

### **non discriminazione - cosa significa e forme di inclusione**

### **vittimismo / assistenzialismo - non partire da assistenzialismo: asimmetria**

#### ASSISTENZA O ASSISTENZIALISMO?

L'accoglienza integrata è emancipante. I servizi mirano, devono mirare tutti insieme, alla riconquista dell'AUTONOMIA. Questo significa erogare servizi socio-assistenziali e educativi. Al contrario, l'assistenzialismo può determinare un altro grave rischio: passivizzare la persona che, in tal caso, magari non manifesterà comportamenti oppositivi ma perché il suo percorso di crescita è fermo, sospeso: non sviluppa consapevolezza, non comprende cos'è l'accoglienza, che è temporanea, né cosa lo aspetta una volta terminata non essendo autonomo.

Anche in questo caso è elevatissimo il rischio di fallire il progetto individualizzato e l'obiettivo di un percorso d'inclusione sociale finalizzato all'AUTONOMIA sia secondo l'obiettivo del SAI, sia del prosieguo amministrativo.

Ricordiamo, infatti, cosa scriveva l'ISFOL (Istituto per lo sviluppo della formazione professionale dei lavoratori, dal 2016 INAPP Istituto Nazionale per l'Analisi delle Politiche Pubbliche) L'orientamento mira alla finalità educativa dell'AUTONOMIA come capacità fondamentale affinché la persona possa muoversi in una SOCIETÀ COMPLESSA E SCARSA DI PROTEZIONI E GARANZIE TOTALI.

Esso pertanto si iscrive a pieno titolo nell'ambito del processo di educazione e di formazione integrale intesa come "attenzione alla persona che corrisponde alla piena espressione della sua identità, professionalità e vocazioni in riferimento alla realtà in cui essa vive".

**autonomia**

**diritti / dialogo / diversità / partecipazione**

**uguaglianza / non discriminazione**

**decolonizzare immaginario / etnocentrismo / sapere critico e linguaggio dei corsi de-eticizzato**

Il sapere antropologico è rilevante nella comprensione delle migrazioni perché tende a vedere la realtà dal punto di vista degli attori in gioco, prende sul serio le persone migranti e il loro punto di vista. (Riccio)

Molte prospettive teoriche  
Transnazionalismo  
Etnografie multi – situate

Forme di razzismo contemporaneo  
Culturalismo

Retoriche dell'esclusione (Stolcke 2000)  
Politiche di chiusura delle frontiere, trattenimento coatto e restrizioni europee

Fassin 2006: studia in Francia politiche francesi nei confronti dei migranti, rivela la connessione fra ethos compassionevole e pratiche repressive  
La criminalizzazione dell'immigrazione irregolare  
La politica dell'immigrazione si concentra sulla sofferenza dei migranti ignorandone le cause (Quaranta 2006b)

Superare la tendenza a criminalizzare e vittimizzare

Per la guida sui concetti, credo che 10.000 caratteri (circa due pagine word spazi esclusi) siano sufficienti (senza includere la bibliografia). Poi metti a parte la bibliografia (massimo 5 riferimenti bibliografici).

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