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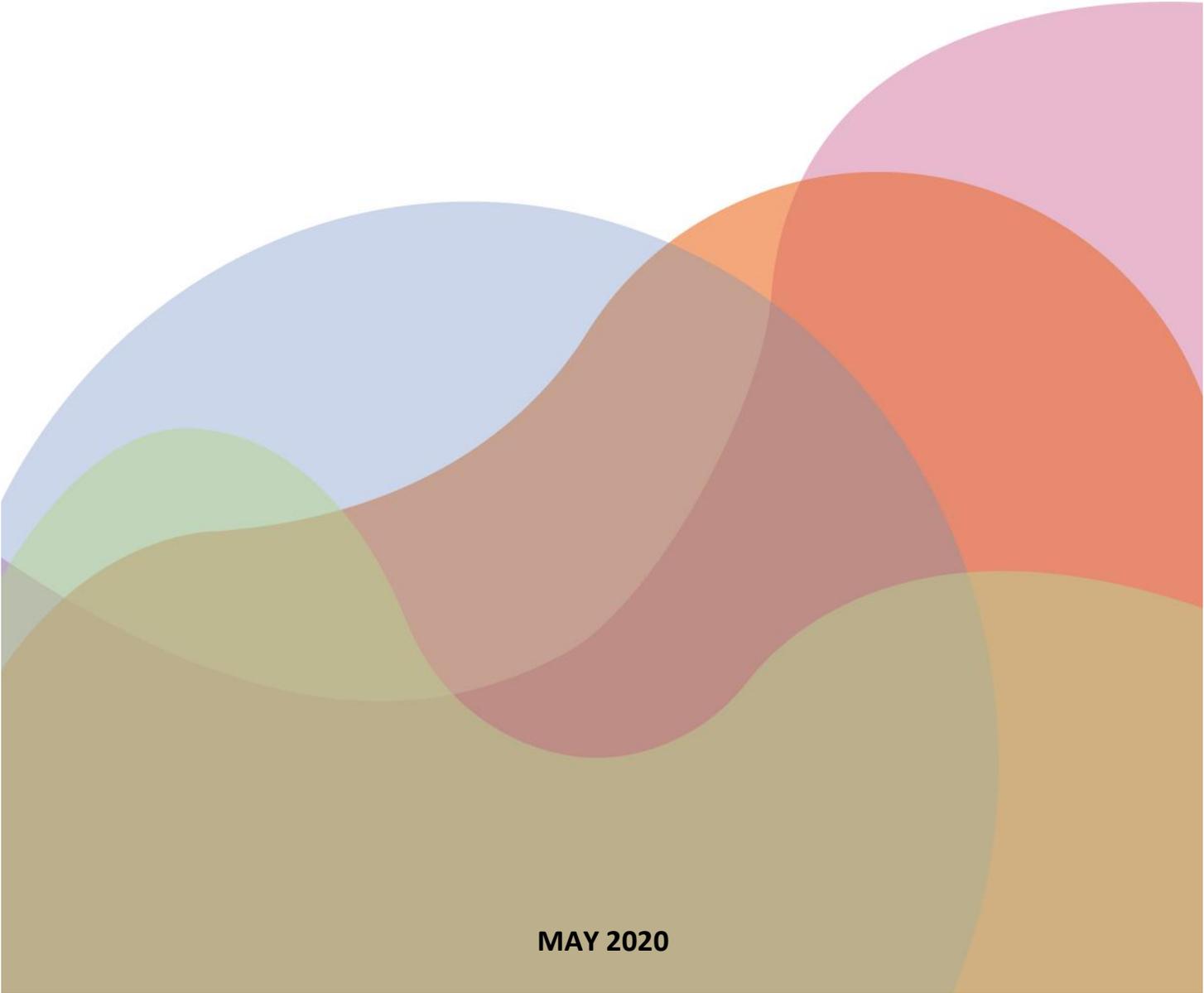
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Interactive Database “ACCESS” Summary

Prepared by: Center for Competence Development Cyprus - COMCY



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INTRODUCTION

The Interactive database “ACCESS” is an online resource of essential information and guidelines for adult educators to use as reference and guidance. This online database will be hosted on an online platform together with the online training course of the project. The database and the training programme will be linked so that the users, mainly the adult educators, of the platform can connect with both elements. The main aim of this innovative online platform is to create a space for ongoing e-learning and for this reason the platform will be open-access and will contain different categories: case studies, research reports, collection of good practices, the training course and the ACCESS database.

The “ACCESS” Database contains information on:

- Legislation
- Social Services
- Guidance on the national social welfare and protection system
- Accessibility information
- List of support and mediating organisations that can provide advice, advocacy and practical support

The database and this summary will mainly focus on two distinct categories, one on issues that affect immigrants and another on issues that affect people with disabilities and on collecting information that can be transferrable.

During the first phase, all partner organisations have collected important information and resources per category. Below, there is a brief summary of all the collected information per category concerning the national and European legislation and policies.



CHAPTER 1: LEGISLATION

1.1. IMMIGRANTS

Immigration is one of the most significant international movements of people to a destination country to become permanent residents or citizens of this country. Immigration happens for several reasons, but historically this process has had great social, economic, and cultural benefits to states (Parry, 2020).

The number and inflows of international migrants and asylum seekers every year is increasing especially in the countries of the European Union (EU). For that reason, immigration law, that refers to the national statutes, regulations and legal frameworks of each European and non-European country became a necessity.

After collecting all the relevant information for this category, we concluded to the fact that in all the countries a migration section is implemented into each national regulatory framework. Furthermore, on the EU level, there is a specific anti-discrimination law as well as Directives against the discrimination based on racial and/or ethnic origin.¹ In the EU level, Commissioner for Human Rights works and advises all member states to improve the protection of human rights of migrants by ensuring their right to basic health care and education, especially for migrant children.

The legal status of immigrants/ foreigners in each partner country is regulated in accordance with international rules, laws and treaties in all countries. All the national legislations, accept the existence of the immigrants into their territory by giving them equal rights and equal treatment as legal citizens of their country if the foreigners are legally residing in the territory of a state. It is important to note that, in all EU's countries the Acts, provisions and legislations regarding immigration do not apply to foreigners whose legal status is regulated by the General Freedom of movement for EU citizens (who are citizens of the Member States of the EU).

Anti-Discrimination provisions are an integral and directly connected element to immigration law. It acquires legal status in social and economic life, education, employment etc. In some countries, like Germany, there are also agencies where offer counselling and information regarding any sort of discrimination following the General Equal Treatment Act.

Another important aspect that is interrelated with the immigration aspect and affects the lives of immigrants is their rights regarding employment. An important result of the research is that in all partner countries, there are regulations, special provisions and legislative frameworks for immigrants and asylum seekers that permit them, under some conditions, to access the labour market of the country already living legally (e.g. certified permission required by law, or temporary

¹ EU Anti-Discrimination Law (Article 21), Directive 2000/43/EC, Directive 2000/78/EC, Directive 2006/54/EC.



residence permit for employment). In general, in the EU countries, there are some time limits for asylum seekers and immigrants for access to the labour market from the date of their asylum application submission.² For instance, in some EU countries, like Germany, foreign nationals, especially those who are asylum seekers or stay in the country for political reasons, have the right to work if they have been residents in the federal territory for three months.³ In addition, these people have the opportunity to exercise internships, vocational training, employment of spouses, life partners, etc. if they have the relevant permissions and provisions from their employment and valid residence permission. A procedure that is followed, for example in Greece and Cyprus, is that immigrants have the permission to work in specific fields and sectors, according to their qualifications in order to integrate more efficiently into the social cohesion.

Regarding qualified professionals and high-level education immigrants, there are provisions in each partner country for them to work on their field of profession. Education is another element that all partner countries have taken actions and have created provisions. Under the integration strategy of all countries, there is the children's integration into the educational system of each country. In Greece for example, the integration of immigrants in the school system of the country is supported through the strengthening of the operation of intercultural schools and their efforts to establish classrooms and tutoring departments for the education of refugees and immigrants. For this reason, in 2016, and after the big migration crisis, the Ministry of Education, Research and Religions has created a special scientific committee to support the children of applicant and beneficiaries of international protection.⁴ In addition, a special working group formed by the Ministry of Immigration Policy is responsible for monitoring the integration of children and the non-formal education activities within refugee accommodation structures and places. Something very similar also happens in Italy and Cyprus, where the creation and provision of extra hours for the learning of Italian and Greek languages respectively is an important initiative.

In all partner countries, children of immigrants and asylum seekers have access to primary and secondary education and in some cases, such as Italy, schooling for immigrant's children is compulsory.⁵ However, the financial problems, as well as the language barriers are two of the most popular issues and problems that immigrants face in each partner country. In all EU countries, intercultural education is promoted, and values such as mutual respect, tolerance and protection of

² European Migration Network, 2019, Ad hoc query on 2019.5 Right to work for asylum seekers, *European Commission*. Retrieved from: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/20195_uk_right_to_work_for_asylum_seekers.pdf

³ Bundesministerium der Justiz und für Verbraucherschutz, Asylum Act.

Informationsverbund Asyl und Migration, (n.d.), Access to the labour market, *AIDA*. Retrieved from: https://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/germany/reception-conditions/employment-education/access-labour-market#footnoteref1_zux61gn

⁴ Immigration and Asylum, National Strategy for Integration. Policy Axis 3- Promoting inclusion in education (<http://www.opengov.gr/immigration/?p=766>)

⁵ Law no. 40/ 1998, Immigration regulations and rules on the condition of the foreigner, Chapter II, Art. 36.



the culture play a primary role. As noted before, adult immigrants and asylum seekers have the opportunity to participate in different training programs and adult education courses for further education, for learning the language of the host country and/or their specialization in a specific professional sector.

Finally, special provisions and frameworks exist also within the health system and care. As many EU countries have National Health Services, immigrants/ foreigners and asylum seekers who are legal residents of the country, once they register (which is compulsory), they can receive equal treatment and full equality of rights and duties as the citizens of the host country. In Cyprus, the National Health System (GESY) is in effect for the first time and this system introduces a personal GP in the community. From this new system, asylum seekers are excluded and their access to health services continues under the provisions of the previous system (Hospital Card to have access to free medical care in public medical institutions).⁶

⁶ Cyprus Refugee Council, Health Care (Cyprus), *AIDA*. Retrieved from:
<http://www.asylumineurope.org/reports/country/cyprus/health-care>



1.2. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) defines a person with a disability as someone “who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities” (Disabled world, 2009). People with disabilities should enjoy the same rights, opportunities and access to different services as people without disabilities.

The EU has created clear provisions and legal frameworks for the rights of persons with disabilities. EU recognises and respects the right of people with disabilities to benefit from provisions designed “to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration, and participation in the life of the community” (Article 26 of European Charter of Fundamental Rights) and at the same time condemns any discrimination on this issue. EU has also adopted strategies and concrete actions for the rights of people by adopting the European Disability Action Plan in 2003, as a follow up to the European Disability Strategy adopted in 1996. Furthermore, European Commission adopted the ten years European Disability Strategy 2010-2020, which focuses on the elimination of barriers in eight main areas: accessibility, participation, equality, employment, education and training, social protection, health and external action

In all partner countries, there is specific legislation that regulates and recognizes persons with disabilities as holders of rights and equal opportunities as other citizens. The laws also, prevent the discrimination of people with disabilities, ensure their participation in society and prevent the disadvantage of people with disabilities. Public authorities are responsible for promoting the objectives of these laws and taking into account all the provisions when planning new measures and rules for social life.

Furthermore, there are clear provisions for women and children. The usage of the sign language for people with hearing impairments and language disabilities is necessary and they have the right to communicate with public authorities to exercise their rights. Sign language is equal to the national language of each country. Therefore, in all partner countries, there are special provisions and legal frameworks especially for public authorities to provide the appropriate communication aids, free of charge. Furthermore, public authorities are forced to take into account any kind of disability when design notices and special forms. The European Disability Card is also available in some EU countries from 2016 onwards (Cyprus and Italy among them), and gives the opportunity to people with long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments to participate fully and in effective basis with others as their disability is certified by the Disability Assessment Centers.⁷ However, this card

⁷ European Disability strategy 2010-2020, EU disability card, *European Commission*.
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1139>



does not change national eligibility criteria or any national rules regarding the definition of disability in each country.

People with disabilities have the same rights to employment in the public and the private sector and there are legislations and special provisions for their recruitment. They have the opportunity to participate in working life, in education and social events. In the case of Spain, for example, there is a section through the law addressing to specialised employment centres for the labour inclusion of people with disabilities. These centres have as main objective to carry out the production of goods and/ or services and their purpose is to ensure paid employment for people with any disability.⁸ It is important to note that in all the partner countries, the principle of equal treatment consists of the basis in order to guarantee full equality at work. It is also clear that this principle shall not prevent the obligation of the employers to adopt all the necessary measures for the adaptation of the job and the accessibility of the company depending on the needs of the specific situation.

People with disabilities are not excluded from education and health care services. Inclusive education is a priority in all partner countries with special provisions and laws. People with disabilities have the right in all partner countries to free education on equal terms with others. They have the right to receive specialised and inclusive education that means free education in education centres when their needs cannot be met in ordinary schools. It is important that in the case where a person with a disability can attend an ordinary school, all the educational administrators are responsible to ensure that the system is inclusive for this person and guarantee support and appropriate adjustments for those who need special attention. Furthermore, if we are talking about an ordinary school, in some countries (i.e. in Cyprus⁹ or Germany¹⁰) there are special education teachers who are responsible to accommodate the needs of the children.

These provisions and legal frameworks apply for any disability and for all the levels of the educational system (from primary school to university level).

Regarding the health system, as mentioned before, in all partner countries, persons with disabilities have the right to health protection according to the legal framework and the procedures followed in each country.

⁸ Royal Legislative Decree 1/2013, Chapter VI (Section 3: Protected employment).

⁹ Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2017, Committee on the Rights of persons with disabilities considers initial report of Cyprus, *United Nations: Human Rights*. Retrieved from: <https://ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=21446&LangID=E>

¹⁰ European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2020. Country information for Germany- Systems of support and specialist provision. Retrieved from: <https://www.european-agency.org/country-information/germany/systems-of-support-and-specialist-provision>



CHAPTER 2: SOCIAL SERVICES

2.1. IMMIGRANTS

Each country, as it follows specific legislation for migration and asylum, it is important to provide the relevant information and the necessary procedures for access to any health, educational or citizen services.

At the EU level, information regarding the rights of immigrants can be found through online platforms, forums¹¹, reports¹² and portals (such as the [European Association for the Education of Adults-EAEA](#)).¹³ Furthermore, there are various non-profit organisations that provide useful information online so immigrants can visit them to learn about any news, humanitarian help and/or for topics regarding health and education. The European Citizen Action Service ([ECAS](#)) for instance, is one of these organisations and their mission is to empower all European citizens to create a stronger and more inclusive EU by providing information regarding legislation, network and EU rights. Moreover, the European Asylum Service ([EASO](#)) provides to all migrants the appropriate information regarding the legislation of the EU, common standards for the treatment of all asylum seekers and necessary applications. There are also support agencies and offices that offer help procedures directives, regulations and legislation.

Non-governmental organisations, migration advice centers, as well as public authorities provide the appropriate information for immigrants in different languages (English is a mandatory language). A good example is the case of Germany where there are migration advice centers in the federal states, and migrants can visit specific websites and databases to find their nearest local center.¹⁴

Furthermore, there are online platforms that help immigrants or refugees by providing online and phone services for social support, job finding, advocacy etc. It is important to note that immigrants and refugees can find also useful information in the official websites of public authorities that they are always updated with any changes on existing laws, new schemes and funds or opportunities that may have in the wider public sector.

In Cyprus, the web platform "[Help Refugees Work](#)" is also an initiative of the UNHCR in Cyprus in collaboration with the Cyprus Refugee Council that offers free information regarding job

¹¹ European Migration Forum (EMF), 2009: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/legal-migration/european-migration-forum_en_en

¹² Migration Policy group, 2014. A clear agenda for Migrant education in Europe. Available here: <http://www.sirius-migrationeducation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Agenda-and-Recommendations-for-Migrant-Education.pdf>

¹³ European Association for the education of adults (EAEA): <https://eaea.org/>

¹⁴ Federal Office for Migration and Refugees, Migration advice centres: https://www.bamf.de/EN/Service/ServiceCenter/BeratungVorOrt/Migrationsberatungsstellen/migrationsberatungsstellen_node.html?jessionid=A394EE5637419D8D24991526E0E40E9E.internet281

PRO ASYL der einzelfall zahlt, Local advicecentred for refugees and migrants: <https://www.proasyl.de/beratungsstellen-vor-ort/>



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opportunities for refugees in Cyprus. It brings motivated refugee job seekers in contact with employers and training providers easily and efficiently. The main aim and idea is to support refugee integration through work. They provide internships, provide career guidance, scholarships, vocational trainings, offer jobs to qualifying refugees etc.¹⁵

The Migration Services and departments in the partner countries have online platforms and websites where immigrants can find clearly and in detail all the information regarding the ways of the asylum procedures, visas, cards etc. and their application forms accordingly. These services also provide links that refer to the responsible centres, and/or ministries to get the necessary information and learn about the procedures regarding specific sectors of the social service (e.g. healthcare, education etc.).

¹⁵ Help Refugees Work, UNHCR, Cyprus. Available here: <https://www.helprefugeeswork.org/>



2.2. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Even if specific laws and frameworks have been adapted in all partner countries for people with disabilities, the provision of clear information regarding their rights and duties is necessary.

The [Academic Network of European Disability Experts \(ANED\)](#) in EU level is a web portal containing information about accessibility, health provisions, education rights, employment among other topics in Europe for people with any disability. It also provides information regarding this issue for all European countries.¹⁶ Furthermore, there are associations of service providers for people with disabilities and non-profit organisations in the disability sector that provide services for a different kind of disability. These associations provide all the important policies that exist for people with disabilities at the EU level for all areas of society.

Public services, as in the case of immigrants, provide all the necessary information and procedures for the rights of persons with disabilities. Departments for the inclusion of People with Disabilities are under specific Ministries and their purpose is to promote and improve the rights of these people. They provide the relevant schemes, application forms for specific procedures regarding the public sector and detailed texts for the criteria needed to access social services with the relevant links. In some countries, there is the idea of Commissioner for the affairs of persons with disabilities and represents the interests of these people, influences the political decisions and promote the idea of inclusion (i.e. Germany).

Except for the public sector, there are special centres and social service organisations that provide people with any kind of disability with the appropriate information regarding their rights and give them special help, such as the Greek “National Centre for Social Solidarity”.¹⁷ They also offer 24-hour assistance services of urgent psychological and social support to vulnerable groups, actions of social care and solidarity.

A good initiative is also the German web platform [EUTB](#)¹⁸ that is free of charge (Supplementary Independent Participation Advice) which supports and advises people with disabilities, people at risk of disabilities, but also their relatives on questions of rehabilitation and participation. The main aim of the initiative is to improve the opportunities for those people to lead a self-determined life and to realise opportunities for involvement in a wide variety of areas of life.

In general, all partner countries have a system, both in the public and the private sector for providing important information. There are provisions for the relevant procedures in all sectors, for the health system, education and citizen services. Moreover, in the private sector, the organisations that deal

¹⁶ The Academic Network of European Disability Experts (ANED). Available here: <https://www.disability-europe.net/>

¹⁷ EKKA- National Centre for Social Solidarity, Greece. Available here: <http://www.ekka.org.gr/>

¹⁸ Supplementary Independent Participation Advice (EUTB), Germany. Available here: <https://www.teilhabeberatung.de/>



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with people with disabilities try to cooperate with other organisations at the national or at the EU level to promote their rights and give voice and opportunities to these groups.





CHAPTER 3: GUIDANCE

3.1. IMMIGRANTS

The national social welfare and protection system is one of the most important sectors for the promotion of inclusion and equality of immigrants and people with disabilities. The organized public or private social services for the assistance of disadvantaged groups, such as immigrants and asylum seekers/ refugees, can protect them and empower their voice in the community.

The EU has designed social protection systems to protect all of its citizens. Special strategies have been designed for social inclusion and equality as well as policies.¹⁹ The [Red Cross EU](#)²⁰ office, for example, is one of the organisations that examine all the challenges and opportunities for the social inclusion of migrants in the territory of the EU. It launches handbooks and strategies for their social inclusion and how the Red Cross works with and for migrants across Europe in order to raise awareness and encourage public authorities to increase their support and facilitate social inclusion. That is why the Red Cross works closely with the local level and with each country separately as social inclusion happens at the local level. Furthermore, the Red Cross EU tries to work and overcome with the legal challenges (that play a significant role in their access in employment, healthcare, education etc.) that exist.

At the national level, the partner countries also have Asylum and Migration Services and offices. Their responsibility is mainly to examine the protection claims and apply the national legislations and obligations regarding the recognition of refugee status. Important initiatives, both in the private and public sector, are available in the majority of the countries. There are available web-platforms, portals and/or guides where immigrants and refugees can find useful and basic information about living, orientation and processes for migration and integration (e.g. “[The Welcome App Germany](#)²¹” and/ or “[The Reception website of Catalonia](#)²²” in Spain). The responsible Ministries also provide integrated programs and projects to support the mental health and psychological welfare of these categories by providing help and emergency services.

Another great initiative is the Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia ([OBERAXE](#)²³). It gathers information on projects, resources, reports etc. promoted by the Secretary of State for

¹⁹ European Commission, Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion: Social protection & social inclusion: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=750>

²⁰ RED CROSS EU office: <https://redcross.eu/latest-news/challenges-and-opportunities-for-the-social-inclusion-of-migrants-in-the-eu>

²¹ Welcome App Germany: <http://welcome-app-concept.de/en/>

²² Reception Guide of Catalonia: <http://dps.gencat.cat/WebAcollida/AppJava/en/Main/Home.jsp.html>

²³ Spanish Observatory on Racism and Xenophobia (OBERAXE): <http://www.mitramiss.gob.es/oberaxe/en/>



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Migration and other public departments and entities to offer information and motivate the public to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and other forms of intolerance. This initiative is implemented in cooperation with civil organisations, EU and international organisations and institutions.

In addition, international organisations that are active in several EU countries (such as IOM- International Organisation for Migration) work closely with governmental and non-governmental partners to ensure the social inclusion, promote the international cooperation on migration issues and provide humanitarian assistance to migrants and refugees in need.



3.2. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

As in the case of immigrants, people with disabilities are vulnerable groups of the society, so welfare and protection system support their inclusion in the community. Social rights are an important element in the agenda of most partner countries, and they provide schemes and financial assistance to facilitate the life of people with disabilities in their territory.

At the EU level, online platforms, portals and networks promote the rights of these people and the protection of their human rights. Various centres across Europe are responsible for Social Welfare policies and for giving a voice to people with disabilities at the European level.²⁴ The European Union has created networks such as the “[European Social Network](#)²⁵” that provides through an online platform social services in Europe and beyond. It is composed of 20 national and regional organisations and they bring together directors of social services. They connect local and practice-based experience with European policy-making, and they empower social service users by promoting quality assurance in service management.

At the national level, there are also various centres, organisations and networks that are responsible for the promotion of the rights of these people both in the private and in the public sector. There are great initiatives in the partner countries, where organisations they provide medical care, physiotherapy, hygiene, occupational therapy for those in need at appropriate health facilities, such as in Greece ([Social Welfare Centre Epirus Region](#)). “[SIPROIMI](#)²⁶” in Italy is also a great initiative, a network of local authorities that their main aim is to provide support by providing individual programmes to enable people to regain the sense of independence and to enjoy involvement in the life of Italy (employment, housing, access to local services and social interactions).

In the public sector, there are also detailed information and clear guidelines regarding the inclusion of these groups in society more efficiently. As mentioned before, there are responsible departments for social inclusion of persons with disabilities and navigation maps that help them find the information they need.

²⁴ European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research: <https://www.euro.centre.org/aboutus>

²⁵ European Social Network: <https://www.esn-eu.org>

²⁶ SIPROIMI, Italy: <https://www.sprar.it/english>



CHAPTER 4: ACCESSIBILITY

4.1. PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

People with disabilities often face several problems regarding the accessibility to services in both the private and public sector. There are not always properly designed spaces and facilities for people with disabilities and most of the time they find difficulties to complete their daily works and duties. For this reason, both in the EU level, as well as in all the partner countries there should be a clear provision of the guidelines and information about guidance and duties of entities in the public and private sector to make their goods and services accessible to people with disabilities.

Starting at the EU level, an important initiative is the [European Disability Strategy 2010-2020](#)²⁷, where there is a key commitment to “ensure accessibility to goods, services including public services and assistive devices for people with disabilities’ and making progress on this issue at the European level is seen as a ‘precondition for participation in society and the economy” (Priestley, 2013, p.2). There are general obligations and specific requirements in public buildings, transport and other consumer services and products throughout the single market. Furthermore, as the technology and especially web plays a significant role in the accessibility of EU citizens to the regulations, rights and duties provided by the EU, there are specific guidelines for the web accessibility. “Digital inclusion” plays a significant role in the EU level and for this reason, a series of actions have been taken, at both a policy and a legislative level, which make European websites accessible to people with disabilities.²⁸

In addition, various web portals provide concrete information regarding accessible destinations and cities for the promotion of tourism. Such portals are “[ENAT](#)²⁹” or “[Accessible](#)³⁰”, and they aim to create barrier-free tours for people with disabilities, their friends, family etc. The European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT) works to make tourism in Europe accessible for all, by providing the European Accessible cities that provide a good level of access both to their citizen with disabilities but also tourists for all ages and abilities. In addition, this portal provides and publishes the profiles of the countries that wish to exhibit their achievements and good practices regarding their efforts to improve accessibility.

At the national level, countries have legislative frameworks, as it is mentioned before, regarding the rights of people with disabilities in the different sectors of the society. The European Disability

²⁷ European Commission, European Disability strategy 2010-2020: <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=1484>

²⁸ Ferri, D. & Favalli, S. (2018). Web Accessibility for people with disabilities in the European Union: Paving the road to social inclusion, *Societies* 8(2). Retrieved from: <https://www.mdpi.com/2075-4698/8/2/40>

²⁹ European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT): <https://www.accessibletourism.org/>

³⁰ Accesable: disabled accessible travel: <https://disabledaccessibletravel.com/services-for-an-accessible-holiday/>



Strategy, also helps the EU members to follow a common line for the establishment and the provision of the necessary accessibility conditions so that all buildings, products, services etc. guarantee equal opportunities and autonomy of these people. It is important to note that, in the majority of the partner countries, the basic regulations regarding the accessibility of people with disabilities mainly covers the public institutions and services. It is also clear that, even if there are special provisions and guidelines from the EU, each country has the right to create its frameworks, and for this reason, in some countries, people with disabilities still faces difficulties related with the accessibility in public transportation, health, employment etc.

Various federations, organisations and associations are working to change and improve these living conditions by providing also political representation. The “Italian Disability Forum” for instance, brings together organisations of a national nature, representing people with disabilities and or their families members who fight for the protection of the rights of these people³¹. This type of forums, work to make proposals and to have an active role in the decisions taken regarding the lives and rights of people with disabilities. Moreover, the special provisions for accessibility should not be limited only for the citizens of a country, but also for immigrants and refugees with disabilities. “AMiD³²” for example is a European Project, which enables the access for migrants with disabilities and supports the efficient management of the reception and integration of asylum seekers and migrants with disabilities in EU. This Training assessment tool, available in Cyprus, is designed for identifying and assessing the disabilities of migrants. It also aims to improve cooperation among local authorities and Non-Governmental Organisations.

Another great initiative is the project “[Crossroads, Escape. Migration. Disability](#)” developed by a German non-profit organisation, the *Handicap international*. The main aim of this project and the organisation is to build basic structures with nationwide impact in the fields of networking and advocacy, capacity building and empowerment of refugees with disabilities³³. In the field of advocacy, they also coordinate the establishment of a nationwide network of organizations that on migration and disability.

³¹ Italian Union of the blind and visually impaired. The Italian Disability Forum: <https://www.uiciechi.it/AttivitaInternazionali/fid.asp>

³² AMiD: Access to services for Migration with Disabilities: <https://amidproject.eu/en/>

³³ Handicap International. Project: Crossroads/Escape. Migration. Disability: <https://handicap-international.de/de/crossroads/>



CHAPTER 5: LIST OF SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS

Both immigrants, refugees and people with disabilities are vulnerable groups of society and a community. As mentioned in the previous categories and chapters, various organisations and centres work on the rights of these groups and promote their inclusion into society.

Some organisations and forums are active in the EU or international level and have representative offices in several countries. These organisations are, for example, the “[Caritas EU](#)”, which consists of a network of organisations on the European continent, is represented in 46 European countries (including all member states of the EU and the vast majority of Council of Europe member countries) and is one of the major social actors in Europe. The main aim of the network is to work with people of all faiths to end poverty and to promote the dignity of all people.³⁴

The European Association for the education of Adults (EAEA) is the voice of non-formal adult education in Europe. EAEA is an NGO with 133 member organisations in 43 countries and represents more than 60 million learners Europe-wide. Its main aim is to provide access and participation in non-formal adult education for all, by promoting intercultural learning, integration, equality in education and in general, social inclusion etc.

At the EU level, there are various significant initiatives with forums and associations that are working on anti-racist and anti-discrimination issues. They promote advocacy for racial equality and facilitate cooperation among civil society and other actors with the same visions in Europe. The “ERA European Law”, since 2003, has organized every year a series of seminars devoted to the EU anti-discrimination directives adopted under Article 19 TFEU regarding the prohibition of all forms of discrimination based on race or ethnic origin and also in employment based on religion or convictions³⁵.

At the national level, the partner countries, show remarkable initiatives and inspirations for the inclusion of both immigrants and people with disabilities into society. Except for the national councils and the national organisations that work closely with people with disabilities and they are widely known, various NGOs and organisations from private and independent (individual) initiatives have accomplished many successes. Some organisations are focusing on people with specific disabilities (such as blind people, deaf etc.) and they mainly focus on their social integration. Furthermore, church and religious organisations play a significant role in the integration of these

³⁴ Caritas Europa: <https://www.caritas.eu/>

³⁵ Article 19 (ex. Article 13 TEC): PART TWO: Non Discrimination and citizenship of the Union. Available here: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:12008E019:EN:HTML>



groups by providing them help and support (i.e. there are numerous initiatives in Germany³⁶). They offer humanitarian assistance to people in danger, those who are marginalised, to older people etc.

In Italy, the “[Frantz Fanon Association \(AFF\)](#)³⁷” and in Greece, “[BABEL](#)³⁸” bring together professionals with different backgrounds, such as psychologists, psychiatrists, educators, etc. who share an interest in health, migration and culture and are committed to the development of clinical interventions in the field of mental health of migrants. Something very similar is the “Spain Mental Health Confederation” but with a particular focus on people with mental disorders and their families.

Furthermore, some organisations are working closely with EU or international organisations and promote the protection and integration of those people. A good example is the Greek organisation “[Iliaktida](#)³⁹” which is a civil society actor that was created through the needs of the local community in the island of Lesbos, to combat social exclusion through providing employment and personalized counselling to people with disabilities and other vulnerable population groups.

³⁶ [Johanniter-Unfall-Hilfe e.V.](#), [Malteser Hilfsdienst e.V.](#), [Diakonie Deutschland e.V.](#)

³⁷ Associazione Frantz Fanon: https://associazionefanon.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=2&lang=it

³⁸ Babel-Mental Health Unit for Immigrants:
https://associazionefanon.it/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1&Itemid=2&lang=it

³⁹ Iliaktida MAKE: <https://iliaktida-amea.gr/en/about/>



CONCLUSIONS

Based on the evidence presented in the previous and next sections of this document, the following conclusions can be deduced:

- I. From a 'needs' perspective, there is a clear consensus that further research and training on empowering immigrants with disabilities is a societal requirement. Among the resources that the partner organisations identified, resources designed specifically on and for immigrants with disabilities were hard to be identified or in some cases, did not exist.
- II. From a policy perspective, the European Commission has published the European disability strategy 2010-2020 that aims to empower people with disabilities so that they can enjoy their rights and participate fully in society and economy. The Disability Strategy has led to a number of projects, such as the EU disability card project. The Commission has begun an evaluation process of the strategy in 2019.
- III. From an implementation perspective, there is a significant gap in knowledge and provision for immigrants with disabilities. There is a number of initiatives and projects courses available and on an international, European, or national level that focus either on the inclusion of immigrants or people with disabilities. There is very few information available on the experience and status of immigrants and refugees with disabilities, except for anecdotal evidence and individual reports. Therefore, the main contribution (and challenge) of the inclEUtion project will be to adapt and enhance existing training policies, guidelines, and material so that the online course for adult educators will build effectively the capacity of adult educators who are designing and delivering learning activities to/with immigrants with disabilities.



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