



**VADEMECUM TO INTEGRATE ASYLUM SEEKERS  
IN ESF ACTIONS**

<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>2</b>
Why a Vademecum?.....	2
What can you do with this vademecum? .....	3
<b>EQUAL and the European Social Fund .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Guidelines, hot topics and suggestions .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Advice, education and training .....	10
Employment and employer relations .....	13
Capacity building and awareness-raising .....	16
Empowerment.....	19
<b>Synergies and complementarities between ESF and ERF .....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>ANNEX A – Glossary on asylum and existing EU asylum measures .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>ANNEX B – Asylum Seekers’ access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States .....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>ANNEX C – Country Fiches .....</b>	<b>37</b>

## INTRODUCTION

---

**The European Social Fund (ESF)** is one of the Structural Funds of the European Union (EU), created to reduce differences in prosperity and living standards across the EU Member States and regions. The Structural Funds therefore promote both economic and social cohesion. The specific role of the ESF is to promote employment in the EU. The fund helps Member States to make Europe's work force and enterprises better equipped to face new, global challenges such as demographic changes and an ageing population. Over the period 2007 – 2013 around €75 billion euro will be distributed to the EU Member States to achieve its goals. Each Member State has put in place one or more Operational Programmes which set out the specific national objectives and actions proposed.

The EQUAL Community Initiative, an innovative programme funded by the ESF, has been testing since 2001 new ways of tackling discrimination and inequality experienced by those in work and those looking for a job. One of the themes included in EQUAL was the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers, a unique theme given that no EU funding had ever specifically supported this very disadvantaged target group to find employment and access vocational education and training. However, EQUAL will come to an end in 2008 and its lessons and good practices will have to be mainstreamed into the new ESF Operational Programmes.

Regulation 1081/2006 for the ESF 2007-2013 says (whereas): "New lessons have been learnt from the Community Initiative EQUAL, especially in respect of the combination of local, regional, national and European action. These lessons should be integrated into ESF support. Particular attention should be paid to the participation of target groups, the integration of migrants, including those seeking asylum, the identification of policy issues and their subsequent mainstreaming, innovation and experimentation techniques, methodologies for transnational cooperation, outreach to groups marginalised in relation to the labour market, the impact of social issues on the internal market, and access to and management of projects taken on by non-governmental organisations."

Around eight Member States have specifically included asylum seekers in their Operational Programmes 2007 – 2013 and more than 10 are making references to asylum seekers. This means that funds have been set aside for the development of projects to support this highly disadvantaged group to access employment and vocational education and training. In several other countries, there is a possibility that asylum seekers can be included in ESF programmes, even though they are not specifically mentioned. This Vademecum is developed to help all those that will be developing and implementing measures for asylum seekers to understand the specific situation and needs of this disadvantaged group to access employment and vocational education and training, by offering background information on the specific EU and national contexts and on the target group, examples of good practice and guidelines. Collaboration between countries working with high shares of asylum is highly recommended.

### WHY A VADEMECUM?

For the first time, asylum seekers are explicitly mentioned in an ESF Regulation. They are a very particular target group who have arrived in the EU to seek protection, and should not be mixed with other groups of immigrants who have arrived in the EU voluntarily, e.g. to find employment. In order for any project or other type of activity aimed at promoting the employment of asylum seekers to be successful, they have to take account of their specific characteristics and a series of contextual challenges. At the same time, asylum seekers also provide a significant opportunity, as they can make a valuable contribution to any Member State in which they are staying. However, any effort to help integrate them in the labour market has to take into account all negative and positive factors.

The purpose of this Vademecum is to help national authorities responsible for the ESF and those implementing projects funded under the ESF to understand what these challenges and opportunities are, in order to develop initiatives that are relevant and truly effective. The specific objectives of the Vademecum are to:

- Present the EU and national contextual situation with regard to asylum seekers' access to education, training and employment and attitudes towards their social and vocational integration.
- Discuss the specific challenges of the target group, to be taken into account when developing future ESF initiatives.
- Review the overall approaches undertaken in the EQUAL Asylum Seeker theme which can be replicated in ESF mainstream programmes.
- Identify and highlight innovative and good practices, by analysing success factors and obstacles, to serve as examples for future ESF funding.
- Present checklists of issues to be taken into account when developing ESF initiatives for asylum seekers.

Finally, the Vademecum includes information on other programmes at EU level, in order to avoid overlaps with other funding streams that support asylum seekers.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH THIS VADEMECUM?

This Vademecum is meant to be a short, highly practical guide for national authorities responsible for the management of ESF sponsored programmes and for the selection of projects. It consists of an introductory part setting out the EQUAL 'history', especially in relation to the theme concerning the socio-vocational integration of asylum seekers, and a chapter providing examples of approaches that could be undertaken, with 'checklists' summarising the key issues to be taken into account when working with asylum seekers.

**National or regional authorities managing the ESF can use the Vademecum when preparing Calls for proposals**, in order to ensure that the Calls include appropriate references to what kind of initiatives are desired and to introduce specific requirements and considerations on the latter. In particular the information on contextual issues and good practices could inform the content of the Calls. These additional details will ensure the receipt of relevant proposals from organisations which have appropriate know-how in this area. At the same time, organisations that are 'new' in this area will have the chance to make a realistic judgement as to whether they have the capacity and resources to undertake similar actions.

**National authorities or regional authorities managing the ESF can also use the Vademecum when appraising and selecting proposals** that have been submitted in response to their Calls for proposals. Especially the checklists included in the Vademecum setting out the key issues to be taken into account are useful when assessing whether a proposal is relevant, feasible and compatible with the national regulatory framework. The checklists will therefore ensure that the proposals (and their promoters) selected are realistic and of high quality.

**National authorities managing the ESF can, in addition, use the Vademecum as a basis for identifying indicators and integrating information and data concerning actions for asylum seekers in on or more of the annual reports** required by the ESF Regulation 1081/2006, either in relation to the reporting on "participation of migrants in employment" (art.10, b), on "social inclusion of minorities" (art.10. c), or concerning "employment and social inclusion of other disadvantaged groups" (art.10 d).

The Vademecum can also be used by national or regional authorities managing the ESF as a basis for preparing guidance documents and other support tools with a stronger territorial focus, thus taking account of national contexts (e.g. the legal and social situation), the number and type of asylum seekers hosted by the country and their specific needs and potential.

In addition, organisations interested in putting forward and implementing ESF projects may also find the Vademecum when preparing their proposals. Especially the background information on what has been done under EQUAL and the good practice examples can feed into the elaboration of the approaches and methods to be included in the grant applications. The checklists included

in the Vademecum can be used to verify whether the application has taken all important issues into account.

A glossary is provided in Annex A.

Information on asylum seekers' access to education, training, employment, and health care is provided in Annex B.

Country information for the 27 Member States is provided in Annex C.

## EQUAL AND THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL FUND

---

Funded by the European Social Fund (ESF), the EQUAL Community Initiative operated within eight themes linked directly to the European Employment Strategy (EES) and a ninth, which specifically promoted the socio-vocational integration of asylum seekers. EQUAL differed from the European Social Fund mainstream programmes in its function as a laboratory (principle of innovation) and in its emphasis on active co-operation between Member States.

EQUAL was implemented in two periods, namely a first round (2000 – 2004) including all ‘old’ Member States (the EU15) and a second Round (2005 – 2007) covering the enlarged EU (EU25). The resources available for the activities within the theme varied according to the size of the country and the priority given. More than 200 Million euro were allocated to the Asylum Seekers Theme, financing nearly 100 Development Partnerships (DPs) in every Member State of the EU, including all New Member States, which in the second Round were requested to include at least one EQUAL partnership focusing on the social and integration of asylum seekers. In this sense, EQUAL Asylum Seekers differed from the other EQUAL themes, where the decision to implement Partnerships under a certain theme was left to the discretion of the New Member States.

For each EQUAL theme, a European Thematic Group was established to enhance learning through transfer and dissemination at an operational level between actors, to encourage mainstreaming of good practice to impact at European policy level, and to match good practice supply to policy demand. The European Thematic Group established for the Asylum Seekers Theme (ETG5) aimed to identify good practice and capture new ideas and lessons emerging from EQUAL that were having a positive impact on the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers in the EU. The ETG5 was led by representatives of the governments of Sweden and the Netherlands. In addition there has been close co-operation between DG Employment and Social Affairs, DG Justice, Freedom and Security within the European Commission, and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) to ensure that the work focuses on the issues which are most relevant at EU level.

The involvement of another Directorate General and a European NGO reflected the specific position of the EQUAL Asylum Seekers theme in the political landscape of the EU. Whilst EQUAL as a whole was directly embedded in Employment and Social Policy and in particular the EES, asylum was covered by another policy area, namely that of Freedom, Security and Justice. Since the late nineties, there have been a range of important developments in EU policy and legislation in relation to asylum, starting with the creation of a Common European Asylum System (CEAS) and followed by the adoption of several legislative instruments in its wake. One of the most important instruments relevant for EQUAL was the Reception Directive<sup>1</sup>, aimed at guaranteeing a common quality of reception, services and opportunities for asylum seekers to integrate into their new society while waiting for a decision on their application.

As part of the minimum standards included in the Reception Directive, two Articles referred specifically to access to the labour market and vocational training for asylum seekers. Article 11 established that asylum seekers had the right to access the labour market at the latest one year after they lodged their asylum application. However, Member States could give priority to EU citizens and nationals of the EEA and legally resident third country nationals for ‘national labour market reasons’. Article 12 referred to vocational training, and established that Member States could allow asylum seekers to participate in vocational training whether they have access to the labour market or not (but only if the vocational training is not linked to an employment contract). The Directive has been transposed and implemented into the national legislation of the 27 Member States. A recent evaluation has shown that there are, however, still great national disparities in the quality of reception and the rights granted to asylum seekers. The European Commission is currently examining the possible need for amending the Directive to increase overall standards.

---

<sup>1</sup> Short title for Council Directive 2003/9/EC laying down minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers

Building on this political and legislative context, the ETG5's sub-themes were:

- **Advice, education and training**

The sub-theme covered all activities which helped asylum seekers to find their way in the new society, to assist them with practical, social and psychological issues and to have their skills and competences assessed and validated. In addition, it also included all activities to help asylum seekers into education and training, including the development of specific programmes and methodologies.

- **Employment and employment relations**

This sub-theme covered activities to help asylum seekers find a job, or, where legal employment was not possible, access other forms of work experience. This ranged from counselling, lobbying, mediation, work placements and volunteering to the organisation of employment fairs, direct lobbying with employers and the development of specific job profiles.

- **Capacity building and awareness-raising.**

Around this sub-theme, activities focused on improving the skills and competences of people working with asylum seekers, research and studies to better understand the conditions in which asylum seekers live and initiatives to empower asylum seekers and to involve them in decision-making processes of the EQUAL partnerships. In addition, the sub-theme also included activities to involve the local community and to raise awareness with a wider public, through the organisation of events, campaigns and through the use of the media (television, film, radio, etc).

**Empowerment** was considered a horizontal issue throughout the work of the ETG5. It is of particular relevance to asylum seekers, who are amongst 'the least empowered' people in any host society. Asylum seekers have often little control over their lives while waiting for a decision on their application and are unable to take actively take part in the host society due to a range of restrictions, for example on access to education, training and employment. EQUAL partnerships explored many different ways to increase empowerment of asylum seekers, thus boosting their self-confidence and motivation.

Each of the sub-themes of EQUAL Asylum Seekers had its own specificities and characteristics. Whilst for example initiatives to get asylum seekers into mainstream schools met several bureaucratic hurdles, the activities aimed at involving the local community had to face initial xenophobic reactions and a general reluctance of people to take part.

The ETG5 launched a range of initiatives to support the EQUAL partnerships in the development of their practices and approaches, to promote exchanges of experience and transfer of good practices and to influence policy developments at national and EU levels.

Initiatives addressing the EQUAL Asylum Seekers theme as a whole included:

- The organisation of a European conference to present the main results of Round one to an audience of policy makers, Development Partnerships and other national and international actors active in the area of asylum.
- Support to the organisation of a European Policy Forum aimed at disseminating the main policy lessons and good practices emerging at the end of Round two.
- The preparation of Success Stories on more than 20 Development Partnerships.
- Publishing articles on events, funding, policy developments and other topics related to asylum.

Specific initiatives focusing on the sub-themes included:

- The preparation of Policy Briefs for each sub-theme, issuing recommendations for politicians and decision makers built on EQUAL evidence.
- The organisation of four practice-oriented events, providing an opportunity for EQUAL practitioners to meet and exchange experiences.
- The development of guidelines for actors setting up Development Partnerships.

Most documents prepared by the ETG5 can be accessed on the [EQUAL website](#).

## **GUIDELINES, HOT TOPICS AND SUGGESTIONS**

---

EQUAL has shown that any approach to further the integration of asylum seekers into the labour market, has to take account of a number of contextual factors in order to be relevant and successful. There are many factors to be taken into consideration, relating to the specific national context and to the characteristics of asylum seekers as a target group. EQUAL however has shown that with a good understanding and knowledge of the challenges ahead, projects can produce some truly impressive results and outcomes, going far beyond providing direct assistance to a relatively small group and impacting positively on local development, cultural diversity and corporate social responsibility.

This chapter sets out the most important issues to be taken into account when managing, implementing, monitoring and even evaluating initiatives aimed at the social and vocational integration of asylum seekers. It is by no means exhaustive, as Member States still have very different rules, traditions and approaches to asylum and migration, but it offers some basic guidelines to ensure that, from the very start, programmes and projects are well thought through and tailor-fit to the specific needs and potential of this target group. It is important that initiatives aimed at helping asylum seekers to integrate are by no means more complicated or more challenging than similar actions for other disadvantaged group; like any other initiative they mainly require good preparation and some creative thinking.

The division into sub-themes, as used by the EQUAL European Thematic Group on Asylum Seekers, is also followed in this Vademecum. In addition, a fourth, horizontal theme on 'empowerment' has been added. Whilst the four sub-themes are strongly interlinked and interdependent, the division helps to spell out the specific contextual factors to be taken into account and to present good practice approaches which can both be used for the development of individual practices as well as act as building blocks of a truly integrated approach. For each sub-theme, the following information is provided:

- **The wider context**

Despite the Common European Asylum System and in particular the Reception Directive, there are still great differences in the extent to which Member States provide access to education, training and employment for asylum seekers. These differences are highlighted for each sub-theme. In addition to a discussion on the regulatory frameworks, other contextual challenges and opportunities are also reviewed, including considerations on the role of the local community, on the awareness levels of important partners (e.g. employer associations) and on general problems such as racism and discrimination.

- **Specific challenges of the target group**

Asylum seekers are by no means a homogeneous target group and what works for one person will therefore not automatically work for another. For each sub-theme, the specific differences are elaborated. This can relate to the levels of education, age, cultural and religious differences and to the fact that many asylum seekers are severely traumatised. Some common misconceptions are also discussed, such as the fact that asylum seekers are often confused with refugees, or worse, with irregular migrants.

Being an asylum seeker is a transitory status. On average, more than 80% of those seeking asylum will not be accepted and will have to return to their country of origin. Many go through lengthy appeal processes, which in most cases will mean that they are no longer entitled to any integration support. Far fewer sign up for voluntary return programmes which provide them with practical and financial support to reintegrate. Others disappear into illegality. Those that receive refugee status or another form of international protection are in general granted rights that are similar to those of long-term third country residents. They are often invited to take part in integration programmes designed for newcomers in general.



## **EQUAL lessons and good practices**

For each sub-theme, the main lessons that emerged from the EQUAL Asylum Seekers theme are briefly discussed. A few good practice approaches are highlighted to illustrate the general messages and to show how a specific approach worked concretely.

- **Key issues to take into account**

The last part on key issues summarise the above considerations into a checklist of the most important elements to be taken into account when managing Operational Programmes which include asylum seekers, when appraising applications from projects that wish to support asylum seekers to access employment and vocational education and training, and when running a project aimed at integrating them into the labour market.

## ADVICE, EDUCATION AND TRAINING <sup>2</sup>

### The wider context

Increasingly Member States are lifting earlier placed legal restrictions and are providing opportunities for asylum seekers to follow mainstream education and training or to take part in educational / vocational programmes specifically developed for them. However, in some Member States asylum seekers are still not allowed to register with mainstream education and training institutes. An overview is provided in Annex B to this Vademecum. It is also important to consider that not all education and training providers are prepared for working with asylum seekers. This also links to the duration of the education and training programmes, as there is always the risk of asylum seekers having to quit a course prematurely. Only very few Member States allow asylum seekers to continue once a first negative decision on their status has been reached. In addition, in many Member States asylum seekers have to change integration programme when they receive refugee status, as this means that they are considered a different target group.

Despite the existence of information and support services for asylum seekers, these are in a number of countries rather 'scattered' and not easy to find. Newcomers struggle to identify the most relevant organisations to receive information, support and face-to-face counselling on the new society they are living in and on their realistic chances to learn and work. 'Mainstream' public services, such as those aimed at assisting jobseekers, are not accessible to asylum seekers or not tailored to their specific needs.

### Specific challenges of the target group

Asylum seekers are a very heterogeneous group. In relation to education and training, this means that they have very different skills levels, competences and qualifications. Some will have university diplomas but face difficulties to have these recognised, whilst others are lower-skilled or illiterate. Cultural differences also influence the extent to which people can participate in courses. Some are simply not used to class-room teaching. The specific position of women is to be taken into account as in some cultures women are not expected to receive anything but compulsory basic education. This means that some asylum seekers can easily be placed in education and training programmes, whilst others require extensive preparation and orientation, as well as language training.

As already mentioned above, one of the issues is to identify the skills and competences that asylum seekers possess. A large part of the asylum seeking population will not have any evidence and will have difficulties in describing these. Some may overestimate their skills and competences, whilst others will severely underestimate their potential. It will be important to also take into account the socio-psychological well-being of the target group, as some asylum seekers are heavily traumatised and others highly de-motivated as they have been inactive since a long time.

Finally, some specific challenges may also be encountered when large shares of asylum seekers do not speak the language of the host country, nor any other language which is commonly understood (e.g. English). This makes it difficult for education, training and advice providers to support this group. There would be scope in Member States working together when the face such a challenge.

### EQUAL lessons and good practices

The experience of the EQUAL partnerships in the area of advice, vocational education and training illustrated the benefits that this could bring not only to individuals but also to the host society. Member States which allowed asylum seekers to access education and training testified higher levels of motivation and faster integration. Asylum seekers faced with the necessity to return to their country of origin are also better prepared and more positive about their future.

---

<sup>2</sup> See in particular whereas 7 and Art. 3, 1 of the ESF Regulation 1081/2006.

Civic orientation and intercultural learning helped both asylum seekers and the host society. Integration is a two-way process. EQUAL has shown that civic orientation helped asylum seekers to better understand the host society and its basic values. Intercultural learning was a successful tool to increase dialogue and mutual understanding between newcomers and the local community.

As part of the Danish *Want2Work* Partnership<sup>3</sup>, each participant underwent an assessment of his or her skills and competences, with a strong focus on identifying the skills gained through “life experiences”. This was particularly helpful for people who did not receive much formal education, or who could not prove that they were qualified in certain professional areas. The results of the individual assessments were put in a central online database and helped project workers to advise asylum seekers to choose the learning modules they could best follow, and to decide how the content and method of the courses could best be adapted to suit their pupils’ learning needs and potential. This was not an easy exercise when considering that want2work dealt with participants from many different cultures and backgrounds, speaking many different languages. Examples of the courses developed by want2work include: the European Computer Drivers Licence (ECDL); Start your own business; Media and journalism; and social and health care. Where possible, asylum seekers could combine their training with voluntary work placements to put the learning into practice. More than 1000 asylum seekers participated in the courses.

Most Partnerships did not provide a sole activity, but emphasised the importance of parallel or linked activities to assist asylum seekers in their entire integration process into the host society. At the same time as providing asylum seekers with advice, education and training, most Partnerships organised awareness raising activities targeting the general public and initiatives to prepare potential employers for hiring asylum seekers, by giving them information about the contributions asylum seekers can make and their specific needs.

The *Asylum Seekers Partnership*<sup>4</sup> in Malta developed an integrated training package for asylum seekers, consisting of three consecutive modules: English language, ‘life skills’ and labour market orientation. The English literacy courses were often set outside the customary classrooms and made use of games. In addition to this informal format, the lessons were highly interactive, placing the trainee at the centre of this learning experience. The labour market orientation module was also taught in small groups and had a strong focus on interview skills. The national trade union, which ran the course, drew on its extensive experience of job interviewing to identify key skills, such as communication and timeliness, and impart these to asylum seekers. The third module, ‘life skills’, was facilitated by two therapists, who encouraged asylum seekers to share their experiences and expectations through games, writing and working together. The holistic approach to the socio-vocational integration of asylum seekers was also reflected in the creation of a small vocational guidance team of experienced social workers that encouraged asylum seekers to join the newly established courses and to follow them from beginning to end. Around 50 asylum seekers completed the entire course, whilst another 50 managed to follow one or more separate modules.

### Key issues to take into account

There are a number of issues to be taken into account when planning and implementing activities to provide asylum seekers with advice and access to education and training. The checklist below lists the most important ones.

---

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.want2work.org/index\\_e.html](http://www.want2work.org/index_e.html)

<sup>4</sup> Websites: [www.appogg.gov.mt](http://www.appogg.gov.mt) - [www.sapport.gov.mt](http://www.sapport.gov.mt) - [www.sedqa.gov.mt](http://www.sedqa.gov.mt)

**Checklist for advice, education and training for asylum seekers** with a view to help them access employment and further vocational education and training

- The added value of undertaking a 'mapping' of the context, checking:
  - What is legally possible for asylum seekers
  - What the services are of existing providers of advice, education and training
  - What the needs are of asylum seekers
  - Who the key territorial partners are
- The relevance of advice activities to include:
  - Skills assessments
  - Portfolio / CV development
  - Information on education and training opportunities
  - Information on employment opportunities
- The importance for education and training activities to include:
  - Orientation
  - Language acquisition
  - Vocational training
  - Interviewing practice
  - Counselling
  - On-the-job training
- The need for 'creative' approaches for this specific target group, including:
  - Language courses combined with skills training such as computing or vocational training
  - Specialised training programmes focusing in areas with strong labour market needs
  - Training combined with or followed by internships or job placements
- The usefulness of involving asylum seekers in:
  - The design of their own integration pathway
  - The development and testing of education and training methods
  - The provision of different forms of advice
  - Coaching and mentoring of other asylum seekers
- The need to involve relevant strategic partners, including:
  - Education and training institutes
  - Reception centres
  - Local and/or regional authorities
  - Civil society organisations, including cultural associations and migrant organisations
  - Trade unions and employment services

## **EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYER RELATIONS<sup>5</sup>**

### **The wider context**

Only in very few countries asylum seekers have direct access to the labour market. The majority of Member States require them to wait between a few months up to one year (in line with the Reception Directive) before they can start looking actively for a job. Some countries have placed additional restrictions, for example on the duration or the type of employment that can be accessed, or they prioritise job openings to nationals and EU citizens. Only very few Member States still allow asylum seekers to work after having received a first negative decision on their application. As many countries have reduced the asylum procedure to a few months, this means that in some national contexts it will be practically impossible to get asylum seekers into employment. An overview of access to employment for asylum seekers is attached as Annex B to this Vademecum.

Employers and employer organisations are often not aware that asylum seekers are allowed to work. Even when made aware, they are often put off by the heavy administrative requirements in some countries for obtaining a work permit. Public and private employment services are often unable to help asylum seekers as they cannot provide services to a client who may only be in the country for a few months and who requires special treatment in terms of administrative processing.

### **Specific challenges of the target group**

As mentioned earlier, asylum seekers are a very heterogeneous group. In relation to employment, this means that some can be easily placed on the labour market after having received some basic language training and orientation, whilst others will require substantial support in the form of skills assessment, education and training, mediation and counselling. In this sense, there are great similarities with other disadvantaged groups, such as migrants and lower skilled groups.

Cultural differences can also influence the extent to which asylum seekers can access employment. Some will need to understand what is expected on the work floor or are not used to the 'European' ways of conducting job interviews. The specific position of the woman is to be taken into account as in some cultures women are not considered members of the workforce. As for Advice, education and training measures, it will be important to take into account the socio-psychological well-being of the target group, as some asylum seekers are heavily traumatised and others highly de-motivated as they have been inactive since a long time.

Unfortunately, asylum seekers who are not allowed to work or who do not know what procedures to follow for accessing employment, often turn to the black market. This may have disastrous consequences as working conditions are often very poor.

### **EQUAL lessons and good practices**

EQUAL has shown that integrated employment pathways work best for asylum seekers. Such pathways often included language acquisition, in particular with regard to the vocabulary necessary to be able to function on the work floor, labour market orientation, vocational training, on-the-job training, job counselling and direct liaison with employers. This required close collaboration with specialised organisations such as education and training institutes, local authorities, trade unions, business representations and migrant organisations.

Building strong relations with employers, employer associations and social partners proved essential for enhancing awareness of the potential of asylum seekers and the value that they can bring to a company and the overall community. Through on-going mediation, employers have been able to overcome their initial reluctance to hire asylum seekers and benefit from such

---

<sup>5</sup> See in particular whereas 9 and 14 and Art. 3, 1 a, b, of the ESF Regulation 1081/2006.

schemes. Those who accepted the “challenge” are now convinced of the benefits of doing so and have also been helping to convince others. They were provided with highly motivated staff with relevant, tailor-fitted skills and benefited from the process of intercultural learning and understanding.

The Italian Partnership *Orizzonti*<sup>6</sup> created an integrated approach targeting both asylum seekers and employers. The Partnership organised language courses with civic orientation and awareness-raising activities towards employers by involving local entrepreneurs’ associations. It also analysed the needs of companies in specific sectors, introduced the asylum seekers into these sectors of the labour market through supported internships and monitored the work experience through an individual tutor.

More than 133 asylum seekers contacted on their own initiative the Province of Ferrara, which had developed a database to include the job profiles of more than 270 persons which could be searched by potential employers. Nearly 25 asylum seekers accessed apprenticeships which were co-funded by the EQUAL Partnership, six of which resulted in regular employment contracts.

Traineeships, job placements and other forms of work experience constituted a first and important step to help the vocational integration of asylum seekers and to address skills shortages and other labour market needs. Traineeships, job placements, and other approaches such as job shadowing offered an excellent way of ensuring, where possible, access to regular employment as asylum seekers were able to show proof of experience in the host country as well as being given the opportunity to “network” with employers and promote their skills.

Several Partnerships generated new types of work experience and jobs for asylum seekers in Member States with a tight labour market and restricted access to the labour market. The creation of new vocational profiles and/or the uncovering of niches in the labour market proved a particularly successful strategy of integrating asylum seekers into the national labour force while avoiding competition with, and apprehension from, the national workforce.

The German Development Partnership *TransKom gesund und sozial*<sup>7</sup> created an entirely new job profile for refugees and asylum seekers, which were selected to participate in a 2.5 years qualification programme to become qualified Language and Cultural Mediators (LCM) for the social and health sectors. The *SpraKuM* qualification followed the German ‘dual education’ tradition, and included one and a half years’ of theory and one year practice. Language training was supplemented with basic knowledge about social law and social science, the history of migration in Europe, critical reflection on their own experience of migration and information about the German social and health care systems. This was further complemented with training in interpretation, intercultural communication and mediation. During their qualification, the participants had to complete two to four internships in institutions in the health care and social services fields. Additionally, the participants had the possibility to obtain further certificates that were useful also in case of return, for example, the European Computer Drivers Licence, the German language certificate (“Basic German Language Diploma” that authorises them to teach German abroad), the youth leader card, certificates for mediation and communication etc.

*TransKom gesund und sozial* also organised several informative meetings and exchanges with potential employers to obtain internships. The partnership also collaborated intensively with local institutions to establish networks within the municipalities. Support was needed especially in negotiations with local authorities to solve employment law issues concerning refugees and asylum seekers, and in negotiations with potential employers concerning fees and employment regulations. A total of 31 municipalities in North Rhine- Westphalia co-operated; 300 institutions in the social and health sectors now call upon LCMs. Within the project, 27 LCMs qualified in EQUAL Round 1 and 64 in Round 2. Together they are able to provide services in 61 languages. Of the 27 LCMs that qualified in Round 1, 21 (80%) work as freelancers or in part-time jobs; 7 of

---

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.equal-orizzonti.it/default.aspx>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.transkom.info/>

them have even found permanent, full-time employment; and, 6 refugees are working as volunteers.

### **Key issues to take into account**

There are a number of issues to be taken into account when planning and implementing activities to support asylum seekers in finding employment. The checklist below lists the most important ones.

#### **Checklist for helping asylum seekers to find employment**

- The added value of undertaking a 'mapping' of the context, checking:
  - What is legally possible for asylum seekers
  - What the labour market needs are
  - What is offered by asylum seekers
  - Who the key territorial partners are
- The importance of preparatory activities for asylum seekers, including:
  - Orientation
  - Language acquisition
  - Training
  - Counselling
  - On-the-job training
- The usefulness of mediation and building relations with employers in general, including:
  - Individual contact with employers
  - Organisation of meetings with employers
  - Coaching and mentoring
  - The development of searchable databases with job profiles of asylum seekers
  - Assistance with the administrative procedure for obtaining the work permit
- The need for creative approaches where access to employment is restricted, such as:
  - Organising traineeships, voluntary placements and other forms of work experiences
  - Developing new job profiles
  - Identifying 'niches' in the labour market
- The need to involve relevant strategic partners, including:
  - Education and training institutes
  - Employment services
  - Chambers of commerce, business representations, etc.



## **CAPACITY BUILDING AND AWARENESS-RAISING<sup>8</sup>**

### **The wider context**

There are marked differences between the quality and extent of the services provided in the Member States as well as the financial and human resources available for reception and integration support, especially following Enlargement. In some cases, the resources available are being used inefficiently due to lack of experience or because support and hosting structures are at an early stage of development, especially in the New Member States. This means that even where asylum seekers have the opportunity to enter the labour market, the appropriate relays do not exist to help them in their search for employment.

In addition, the legal systems in the countries often affect the extent to which good quality services can be delivered to asylum seekers. It is however positive to notice that the capacity of some Member States has been increasing, often as a result of increased cooperation with small to medium scale actors from civil society operating for the benefit of asylum seekers. However, in cases where the provision of services require cooperation between such organisations from different levels (private, public, NGO), such cooperation is not always easy to achieve due to a lack of trust and a need to first establish good and clear working relations. Services for asylum seekers are sometimes overlapping or showing serious gaps, due to a lack of coordination and cooperation. People working with asylum seekers often have a lack of experience, knowledge and understanding of asylum seekers' conditions, needs, and, more importantly, the potential of asylum seekers to contribute to the host society.

It is also important to highlight that in some Member States, the public has a very negative attitude towards asylum seekers. This is often the direct result of incorrect or incomplete media coverage and the 'abuse' of information by politicians, which leads them to confuse asylum seekers with irregular migrants and assume that all asylum seekers are living comfortably on state welfare. As a result, local communities are hesitant to engage themselves in initiatives taken to help asylum seekers integrate in the host society.

### **Specific challenges of the target group**

In the context of capacity building with a view to improving access to employment and vocational education and training, asylum seekers are certainly not the only beneficiaries. Those that will be important to address are, as already described above, in particular people working with asylum seekers, be that as civil servants, practitioners or volunteers, employment services and the wider public as a whole, with particular attention to local communities which host asylum seekers. The specific contextual challenges, as mentioned earlier, basically all relate to insufficient understanding and knowledge. For people working with asylum seekers, this can reduce the overall quality and relevance of the services provided. For the wider public, such ignorance can result in xenophobic reactions and discrimination.

However, asylum seekers also have to be involved in any capacity building measures to make sure that these are relevant and responding to real needs. At the same time of increasing the quality of the measures, their involvement is also empowering, a key result when considering that the asylum seekers often spent long periods of waiting for a decision, feeling that they do not have a say in their very uncertain future.

### **EQUAL lessons and good practices**

EQUAL Partnerships have shown that the provision of training for all those who work with asylum seekers in a professional capacity whether through the public, private or voluntary sector should be seen as standard practice in the same light as diversity training or professional training for working with disabled or other disadvantaged groups. Asylum seekers are a unique client group. Any training should hence include basic guidance on dealing with disadvantaged groups in

---

<sup>8</sup> See in particular whereas 10 and Art. 3, 2 b , of the ESF Regulation 1081/2006.



general and highlight the characteristics of this group of vulnerable people in terms of cultural backgrounds, living conditions, special needs and potential. This would strongly favour the efficiency and effectiveness of the support provided to asylum seekers in accessing employment and vocational education and training.

The Finnish EQUAL partnership *Becoming More Visible*<sup>9</sup> developed, in collaboration with the University of Joensuu, a supplementary study programme for staff working in the 13 reception centres across Finland. The content of the programme was based on a needs assessment conducted in the centres amongst asylum seekers and staff, which showed that, although many people had vast experience of working with asylum seekers, there were still a number of areas in which their skills and knowledge could be further increased.

The study programme was divided into four courses on different subjects. Participants could either follow the whole programme or opt for an individual course which matched their needs. At the end of the programme, the students were asked to prepare a final assignment. Some of these used this opportunity to increase the quality of the services provided in the reception centre they worked in. Teachers and lecturers not only included university staff, but also specialists such as lawyers and psychiatrists, employees from the Refugee Advice Centre and from the Directorate of Immigration. The programme, or its individual courses, was attended by 38 students. Of these, 24 went through the full programme.

Networks and networking tools substantially improve communication and coordination, thus improving the quality of service providers and increasing the chances to a successful integration or reintegration of asylum seekers. EQUAL partnerships have managed to create important and sustainable operational links between public authorities, NGOs and private sector organisations.

The Spanish *DP ENEAS – EQUAL*<sup>10</sup> developed specific collaboration agreements between regional authorities, training providers, reception centres and employers or employer representations to integrate asylum seekers into regular vocational programmes with the possibility of receiving a work contract upon the successful completion of the courses. The agreements set out the roles and responsibilities of the partners and confirmed the commitment of all actors to the end result, namely the employment of the asylum seekers. The Partnership also developed a DVD which was used to convince employers to enter such agreements, describing the purpose and benefits of the job placements and showing interviews with asylum seekers, employers and representatives of training organisations. The reactions to the DVD were very positive, attracting substantial interest from employers interested in taking part in the scheme. During Round two, the ENEAS-EQUAL Partnership reported that 666 men and 208 women had found jobs through their project.

The main benefits of awareness-raising and improving the interface with the local community related to creating an environment of understanding and empathy, as well as improving the integration and empowerment of asylum seekers. EQUAL partnerships placed substantial efforts on promoting a more positive image of, and attitude towards, asylum seekers in host societies. Nearly all projects organised events and other opportunities for the local community to meet asylum seekers. The positive reactions to these initiatives showed that ignorance and fear of the unknown are the main factors causing hostile and xenophobic reactions to asylum seekers.

---

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.becomingmorevisible.net/www/english>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.eneas-equal.mtas.es/ingles/ques.htm>

**Checklist for capacity building measures** to improve access to employment and vocational education and training.

- The added value of undertaking a 'mapping' of the context, checking:
  - The overall legal context relevant to asylum seekers
  - The overall attitudes towards asylum seekers
  - The types of organisations active in the territory (reception, integration, employment, education, training, etc.)
  - The capacity of these organisations
  - The skills and competences levels of people working in these organisations
  - The existence of existing networks and opportunities for new forms of cooperation
- The importance of providing people working with asylum seekers with appropriate training, including understanding of:
  - The main characteristics of the target group
  - The needs and potential of asylum seekers
  - The national context
  - Basic training for working with disadvantaged groups
  - Issues of cultural diversity, intercultural learning, etc.
- The benefits of establishing networks of organisations, including:
  - Public authorities
  - Reception centres
  - Employment services
  - Education and training providers
  - Employer representations
  - Social partners
  - Civil society such as NGOs, migrant organisations, religious associations, etc.
- The different foci that networks can have, such as:
  - Strategic alliances
  - Practical cooperation mechanisms
  - Operational collaboration agreements
- The importance of awareness raising, including:
  - Information and media campaigns
  - Conferences and workshops
  - Cultural and recreational events and activities

## **EMPOWERMENT**

### **The wider context**

The idea that asylum seekers are not merely beneficiaries, but also active agents in their integration into society lies at the heart of this horizontal theme. Asylum seekers are subject to long waiting times and experience a lingering fear of being sent back to the country of origin. They are often in a position where other persons continuously speak and act on their behalf. This sense of dependency or disempowerment that asylum seekers experience in relation to the decision-making process on their asylum application is sometimes extended when they access other services or engage in other activities in the host society, which further reduces their autonomy, self-confidence and motivation. Furthermore, their skills and potential may not or hardly be recognized and they may have no or limited access to vocational training or the job market.

Clearly, the theme of empowerment intertwines with the other three EQUAL themes. The theme of 'Advice, education and training' covers, among other things, counselling and civic orientation for asylum seekers. The theme of 'Capacity building' is also relevant as EQUAL partnerships seek to make professionals more skilful in identifying the resources and capacities that allow asylum seekers to solve or cope with the problems they face and regain control over their present and future. As to the theme of 'Employment and employer relations', activities undertaken by development partnerships to establish positive relationships with employers and employment offices open to working with asylum seekers are key to their integration in the labour market and local community.

It is important to highlight that, as with the other three themes, hostile attitudes towards and negative imagery of asylum seekers fostered through, for example, the media or politicians function as an obstacle to (attempts of) empowerment. Some EU Member States are taking their first steps towards the development of a multicultural society. The arrival of asylum seekers may constitute a new phenomenon and may alter an otherwise demographically and culturally homogeneous population. Other countries may experience economic downfall, fanning the perception of migrants as threats to employment. In these phases of societal development, grassroots level actions against racism and networking are of utmost importance in order to open society to the acceptance of asylum seekers migrants as fellow citizens.

### **Specific challenges of the target group**

A key step towards the goal of empowerment is to recognise the skills, knowledge and resources that asylum seekers already possess and to help them in putting these to use in their everyday life in the new society. Asylum seekers need to be offered the opportunity to play a leading role in their personal integration process and in any decision-making on this process. Those working with asylum seekers should professionally pursue the aim of rendering asylum seekers autonomous and independent, i.e. (renewed) authors of their future. To determine how an individual or group of asylum seekers can be successfully empowered and with what expected result, professionals working with this target group need to map the knowledge, expertise, skills and resources of asylum seekers – what are they good at, what networks can they draw upon, what do they like to do, etc.

Some asylum seekers aspire to take up a particularly active role vis-à-vis the community or larger group of asylum seekers they belong to. These individuals may lie at the start of refugee- or other types of community-based organisations, self-help groups, etc. They may have become inspired by personal or communal experiences of deprivation, especially because they successfully overcame these. There should however be no expectation or imposition on the asylum seeker to adopt an overly active role in his or her personal pathway to integration or that of his or her community. Some will prefer, and have the right, to remain service users and not service managers or personnel.

The format through which help or advice is best provided differs significantly among asylum seekers, but is not of lesser value and significance to the goal of empowerment. Many different formats have been developed, ranging from after-school or homework clubs for the children and

young people, internships and vocational training for adults, civic orientation, self help groups, and discussion forums. Informal contacts and gatherings, such as drinking tea, preparing food together, and conversations at the school gates may have an equally empowering impact. As to which practices and activities may be appropriate to empower asylum seekers, other social characteristics or dimensions are of importance (e.g. gender, age and cultural identity). Some EQUAL partnerships for example, have encountered problems when seeking to recruit female volunteers, as husbands or other family relatives may frown upon or even prohibit this type of participation in the public sphere. When considering empowering practices and activities, professionals thus need to take account of cultural practices and habits or actively draw upon these to strengthen the problem-solving skills of asylum seekers (e.g. performances staged where humour is used to narrate difficult experiences faced during flight or settlement into the host country).

## **EQUAL lessons and good practices**

EQUAL partnerships have provided a wealth of concrete examples of how asylum seekers can be empowered and with the result of improved personal well-being and socio-economic integration into the host society. Three types of empowerment have been pursued by these partnerships: (1) Activities to empower vulnerable groups or individuals; (2) Activities to foster an empowering environment, for example, by building bridges between services working with asylum seekers; and (3) Activities targeted at employers to facilitate asylum seekers' access to the labour market.

In order to create an empowering environment, several EQUAL partnerships undertook steps to ensure the participation of asylum seekers in the planning, implementation and evaluation of projects throughout the programme. Their drive, energy and ideas were perceived as a source for improving the lives of other asylum seekers, as a source for wider empowerment.

The Advisory Group's work (AG), established by the *UK EQUAL partnership Easi*<sup>11</sup>, addresses the general lack of meaningful consultation and involvement of beneficiaries in the design of programmes. In many cases beneficiary consultation takes place too late or at a level that has little eventual impact on the proposed project. The creation of and work of the AG was to assist in overcoming the invisible barriers between service providers and beneficiaries to create a mutually beneficial partnership between the two groups. The level of support and training offered to the AG recognises the vulnerable and socially excluded position many asylum seekers occupy and aims to empower members to become skilled, engaged and confident in their role. An acknowledgment of members' existing skills, knowledge and expertise is crucial to empowering the AG members. In addition, in order to develop a group that felt able to confidently participate in consultation and meetings, further development of specific skills was identified by the AG members and has been met through customised training.

Other partnerships target employers in the public and private sector, motivating them to recruit asylum seekers for voluntary or paid work. The example below illustrates the success deriving from a training course developed by an EQUAL partnership for asylum seeker volunteers. The key objective was to support them in their role within the service. The positive contribution made by these trained asylum seekers to the service resulted in sustained recruitment of asylum seekers by the service in question and by employers in sister organisations.

The Maryhill Citizens' Advice Bureau, a partner of the development partnership of *ATLAS in Scotland*<sup>12</sup>, developed a tailored training package for asylum seeker volunteers, who following training, acted as advisers offering support to other asylum seekers. This training package was adapted from the Bureau's mainstream training programme by adding components including one-to-one language support for technical terms used in everyday work concerning benefits and housing, for example. An interesting by-product of this model was the development of a training dictionary compiling technical terms as well as slang words and phrases commonly used in

---

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.equal-works.com/DPDetail.aspx?ety=5750628a-ad4c-4a18-90a9-0a281c567143>

<sup>12</sup> <http://www.equal-works.com/DPDetail.aspx?ety=0ed2425d-907e-488b-8962-9f6309f9179b>

Glasgow. Once trained, asylum seeker volunteers were able to assist all of the Bureau's clients and not only asylum seekers, bringing them into contact with the host community and in this way assisting their integration. A quarter of volunteers at Maryhill Citizens' Advice Bureau are now asylum seekers or refugees, offering services in more than 20 languages to their clients. This successful model is currently being implemented in Citizens' Advice Bureaux in Greater Pollok and Parkhead (in Glasgow). There has also been interest in the project from other Bureaux located in England. The Scottish Executive is providing the necessary funding for the extension of this programme to other Citizens' Advice Bureau offices.

To empower vulnerable groups or individuals, support has to be tailored to the characteristics of the asylum seekers targeted (e.g. in the example below: age) and to the empowerment goals set (e.g. in the example below: self-expression).

The *Austrian EQUAL Partnership EPIMA*<sup>13</sup> offers a variety of possibilities through creative art programmes for young asylum seekers (15-25 years, focus on unaccompanied) to tell their stories and communicate with the public. The participants have produced their own DVD and created postcards featuring their self-portraits and messages they want to "tell to the world". The participants have organised cultural events like an intercultural cafe with catering and readings and an exhibition of photographs and photo-stories and discussions. One participant wrote a script for a play which was staged. The aim is to raise the empowerment of young asylum seekers and to improve awareness and understanding of this group in the local community. The combination of different subjects for basic education with creative possibilities for the young asylum seekers to talk on their own behalf and show their potential to the population of the host country has proven to be successful. The young participants have not only improved their language and other types of skills, but also experienced a stabilizing influence on their health.

The key issue is that professionals give asylum seekers access to different types of empowering practices and activities. Often asylum seekers already engage in empowering activities – although it is not labelled as such – and the role of the service manager or staff member is merely to facilitate or support this activity through, for example, providing material or financial resources, making a meeting room available, and bringing potential interested parties in contact with those already participating.

---

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.integrationshaus.at/en/news/>

**Checklist for empowerment measures** to improve access to employment and vocational education and training.

- The added value of undertaking a 'mapping' of the context, checking:
  - The overall legal context relevant to asylum seekers
  - The overall attitudes towards asylum seekers
  - The types of organisations active in the territory (reception, integration, employment, education, training, etc.)
  - The tools to access these organisations (e.g. brochures, manuals, electronic databases, information sessions, handholding)
  - Migrant-, refugee- and other community-based organisations or other types of social networks active in the territory that can provide support to asylum seekers
- The added value of undertaking a 'mapping' of the individual and collective problem solving skills of (groups of) asylum seekers, including:
  - Knowledge
  - Expertise
  - Skills
  - Experiences
  - Social relations, family and community ties, networks
  - Cultural practices and habits
  - Social events
  - Social dimensions (e.g. gender, age, ethnicity)
- The importance of, and strategies to, promote the empowerment of asylum seekers by involving them in:
  - The design of activities
  - Decision making processes
  - The development and steering of their integration pathways
  - The provision of different forms of advice
  - Coaching and mentoring of other asylum seekers
- The importance of improving the interface between asylum seekers and the host community, including:
  - Information and media campaigns
  - Cultural and recreational events and activities
  - Civic orientation classes



## SYNERGIES AND COMPLEMENTARITIES BETWEEN ESF AND ERF

---

As mentioned in the Introduction, **the European Social Fund (ESF)** is one of the Structural Funds of the European Union (EU), created to reduce differences in prosperity and living standards across the EU Member States and regions. The Structural Funds therefore promote both economic and social cohesion. The specific role of the ESF is to promote employment in the EU. The fund helps Member States to make Europe's work force and enterprises better equipped to face new, global challenges such as demographic changes and an ageing population.

When dealing with the access to employment and to vocational education and training, the ESF Managing Authorities should take into account that, in the asylum broader dimension, the **European Refugee Fund (ERF)** is from 2008 (ERF III) the main financial instrument in support of the Common European Asylum Policy. The European Refugee Fund (ERF) aims to support and encourage the efforts made by the Member States in receiving and bearing the consequences of receiving refugees and displaced persons. For the period 2008 – 2013, a total of 628 million euro has been set aside.

Ninety percent of these funds is allocated to the Member States (shared management) for actions targeting a) reception conditions and asylum procedures; b) integration of persons whose stay in a particular Member State is of a lasting and stable nature; c) enhancement of Member States' capacity to develop, monitor and evaluate their asylum policies in the light of their obligations under existing and future Community legislation; d) resettlement of persons in need of international protection (the transfer of such persons from a third country to a Member State) and e) intra-community transfers of persons for international protection. The other 10% is to be used, at the Commission's initiative, for Community Actions (directly managed by the Commission), to finance transnational actions or actions of interest to the Community as a whole.<sup>14</sup>

Regarding asylum seekers and refugees, the ERF is a holistic financial instrument concentrating on all asylum and refugee aspects, while the ESF focuses on activities related to access to employment and vocational education and training for this disadvantaged group. There is therefore a strong need for coordination between the national authorities responsible for the implementation of the ESF and ERF. Due caution should be paid to possible overlaps and duplication between the two funding streams.

In particular, it has to be noted that when looking at the types of activities that could be implemented in relation to:

- Advice, education and training: the ERF can fund all kind of services and initiatives which are 'consistent with the status of the person concerned'<sup>15</sup>. The ESF should mainly keep a

---

<sup>14</sup> These ERF funded actions shall amongst others

(a) support the setting-up of transnational cooperation networks and pilot projects based on transnational partnerships between bodies located in two or more Member States designed to stimulate innovation, facilitate exchanges of experience and good practice and improve the quality of asylum policy;

(b) support transnational awareness-raising campaigns;

(c) support studies, dissemination and exchange of information on best practices and all other aspects of asylum policies, including on the use of state-of-the-art technology and on cooperation at national level between key partners, such as local and regional authorities, refugee associations and voluntary groups;

(d) offer to networks linking non-governmental organisations which assist refugees and asylum seekers and which are present in at least 10 Member States structural support intended to facilitate exchanges of experience and sound practice and to ensure that the development of Community asylum policy and practice takes into account the experience gained by non-governmental organisations and the interests of refugees and asylum seekers;

On 29 November 2007 the Commission adopted for the ERF strategic guidelines setting out the priorities and specific priorities for the multi-annual programming for the period 2008-2013. 3 priorities have been identified:

1: Implementation of the principles and measures set out in the Community *acquis* in the field of asylum, including those related to integration objectives.

2: Development of reference tools and evaluation methodologies to assess and improve the quality of procedures for the examination of claims for international protection and to underpin administrative structures in an effort to respond to the challenges brought forward by enhanced practical cooperation with other Member States.

3: Actions helping to enhance responsibility sharing between Member States and third countries (optional).

<sup>15</sup> - structures and training to ensure access to asylum procedures for asylum seekers;

- social assistance, information or help with administrative and/or judicial formalities and information or counselling on the possible outcomes of the asylum procedure, including on aspects such as voluntary return; - legal aid and language assistance; - education, language training and other initiatives which are consistent with the status of the person

labour market focus, but can in principle offer vocational education and training to all asylum seekers.

- Employment and employer relations: The ESF is the main European funding stream through which Member States can promote the job insertion of asylum seekers. Still, as part of action a) reception conditions and asylum procedures, the ERF can fund advisory services in relation to legal, social and administrative assistance, which may include information on the labour market or vocational training opportunities.
- Capacity building: It is in the scope of the ESF to fund capacity building of authorities, intermediate bodies and others dealing with the access to employment and vocational education and training of asylum seekers. Still, as part of action a) reception conditions and asylum procedures, the ERF can fund all kinds of activities<sup>16</sup> related to building the capacity of public authorities, civil society and other actors.

---

concerned; - information for local communities as well as training for the staff of local authorities, who will be interacting with those being received in the host country; - advice and assistance in areas such as housing, means of subsistence, integration into the labour market, medical, psychological and social care; -actions enabling such persons to adapt to the society of the Member State in socio-cultural terms, and to share the values enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; - actions to promote durable and sustainable participation in civil and cultural life; - measures focusing on education, vocational training, or recognition of qualifications and diplomas; - actions designed to promote self-empowerment and to enable such persons to provide for themselves; - actions that promote meaningful contact and constructive dialogue between such persons and the receiving society, including actions which promote the involvement of key partners such as the general public, local authorities, refugee associations, voluntary groups, social partners and the broader civil society; - measures to support the acquisition of skills by such persons, including language training; - actions that promote both equality of access and equality of outcomes in relation to such persons' dealings with public institutions.

<sup>16</sup> - actions enabling such persons to adapt to the society of the Member State in socio-cultural terms, and to share the values enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union; - actions designed to promote self-empowerment and to enable such persons to provide for themselves; - actions that promote meaningful contact and constructive dialogue between such persons and the receiving society, including actions which promote the involvement of key partners such as the general public, local authorities, refugee associations, voluntary groups, social partners and the broader civil society; -actions that promote both equality of access and equality of outcomes in relation to such persons' dealings with public institutions.



## **ANNEX A – GLOSSARY ON ASYLUM AND EXISTING EU ASYLUM MEASURES**

*Source: European Commission, DG Justice, Freedom and Security, May 2008*

### **Glossary**

#### **Asylum**

Asylum is a form of protection given by a State on its territory based on the principle of 'non refoulement' and internationally or nationally recognised refugee rights. It is granted to a person who is unable to seek protection in its country of citizenship and/or residence in particular for fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

#### **Asylum seeker**

An asylum seeker is a person requesting asylum. Asylum is a form of protection given by a State on its territory based on the principle of 'non-refoulement' and internationally or nationally recognised refugee rights. It is granted to a person who is unable to seek protection in its country of citizenship and/or residence in particular for fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

#### **Common European asylum system**

Rules and principles at European Union level leading to a common asylum procedure and a uniform status, valid throughout the Union, for those granted asylum. The major aims and principles were agreed to in October 1999 at the European Council in Tampere (Finland) by the Heads of State or Government. The second phase in the establishment of the common European asylum system started with the adoption of The Hague programme in November 2004.

#### **Dublin system**

The Dublin Convention and its successor, the Dublin Regulation, set the rules concerning which Member State is responsible for handling an asylum application. The objective of the System is to avoid multiple asylum applications, also known as 'asylum shopping'. The Dublin system comprises the Dublin and Eurodac Regulations and their implementing regulations.

#### **Eurodac**

The Commission has launched a database called Eurodac to store fingerprints of asylum seekers in order to help Member States to determine whether a person has previously applied for asylum status in another Member State.

#### **Geneva Convention**

The convention relating to the status of refugees done at Geneva on 28 July 1951. The convention is supplemented by the New York Protocol of 31 January 1967. All Member States are party to the convention and the protocol, which are the basis on which the Common European Asylum System is built.

#### **Mixed flows**

Mixed flows are created when persons in need of protection move/travel together with migrants whose motivation is mainly the search of better living conditions, without protection motivations. Within these flows it is often difficult to identify the persons in need of protection, who therefore risk 'refoulement'. These flows are increasingly important at the Southern EU maritime border.

## **Non-refoulement**

The key principle of international refugee law, which requires that no State shall return a refugee in any manner to a country where his/her life or freedom may be endangered. The principle also encompasses non-rejection at the frontier. Its provision is contained in Article 33 of the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and constitutes the legal basis for States' obligation to provide international protection to those in need of it. Article 33(1) reads as follows: 'No Contracting State shall expel or return (refouler) a refugee in any manner whatsoever to the frontiers of territories where his life or freedom would be threatened on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion'. Article 3 of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, in the light of the jurisprudence of the European Court of Human Rights and Article 3 of the UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane and Degrading Treatment or Punishment, are also considered as bases for 'nonrefoulement' obligations.

## **Non-removable persons**

In general, these are the persons covered by the principle of non-refoulement. The expression however often refers to the persons who are in a Member State and who have not been granted any type of international protection status but who cannot be returned to their country of origin. For example, certain persons do not qualify for obtaining international protection (because they are not being persecuted or because they do not fulfil all the requirements to receive international protection) but cannot be sent back for humanitarian, medical or other reasons. Currently there is no common approach for the treatment of these persons.

## **Protected Entry Procedures**

These are procedures implemented from diplomatic representations of some Member States, allowing a non-national to approach the potential host country outside its territory with a claim for asylum or other form of international protection and subsequently to be granted an entry permit in case of a positive response to that claim, be it preliminary or final. Protected entry procedures, if they are well crafted, can drain parts of the market for human smuggling and partially eliminate the problem of returning the rejected caseload. There are currently no EU rules on this type of procedure.

## **Refugee**

A person who fulfils the requirements of Article 1(A) of the Geneva Convention, Article 1(A) defines a refugee as any person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

## **Refugee status**

This is defined in the EU legislative instruments as the status granted by a Member State to a person who is a refugee and admitted as such to the territory of that Member State. In terms of The Geneva Convention refugee status is defined as the status possessed by a person who fulfils the requirements of the refugee definition as laid down in the convention.

## **Regional Protection Programmes**

Regional Protection Programmes were first proposed by the Commission in a 2005 Communication as a tool to enhance the capacity of areas close to regions of origin to protect refugees. The aim should be to create the conditions for one of the three Durable Solutions to take place – repatriation, local integration or resettlement. The development of Regional Protection Programmes, in cooperation with UNHCR and third countries in regions of origin requires the coordination of EU, refugee, humanitarian and development policies to address the full range of protection needs as well as the impacts of refugee populations on local communities

to ensure that benefits are maximised for all. However, humanitarian aid operations in favour of refugees are not as such part of the Regional Protection Programmes. Currently there are Regional Protection programmes being implemented in Tanzania, Ukraine, Moldova and Belarus.

### **Resettlement**

Resettlement means the transfer of third-country nationals or stateless persons on the basis of an assessment of their need for international protection and a durable solution, from a third country of first asylum to a Member State, where they are permitted to reside with a secure legal status. UNHCR usually advises the Member States which implement resettlement programmes on the most adequate caseloads of refugees to be resettled. The main countries of resettlement of refugees in 2006 were the US (41,300 resettled refugees), Australia (13,400), Canada (10,700) and Sweden (2,400). Only a limited number of EU Member States implement resettlement schemes and there is currently no common EU resettlement scheme.

### **Subsidiary protection**

The EU Qualification Directive created the subsidiary protection status in order to give protection to certain categories of persecuted people, who are not covered by the 1951 Geneva Convention on refugees. It grants a lower level of rights than the Geneva Convention status.

### **Tampere European Council**

In October 1999 the Tampere European Council adopted a comprehensive approach to put into practice the new political framework established by the Treaty of Amsterdam in the area of Justice and Home Affairs. The Council set ambitious objectives and deadlines for action in all relevant areas, including asylum and immigration, police and justice cooperation and fight against crime.

### **Temporary protection**

People sometime need temporary protection after being temporarily displaced from their homes, e.g. Kosovo in 1999. The EU adopted a directive on temporary protection in July 2001, the provisions of which have not been enacted so far.

### **The Hague programme**

The Tampere programme, adopted at the Tampere European Council in 1999, set the agenda for work in the area of Justice and Home Affairs for the period 1999-2004. Likewise, the European Council adopted in 2004 The Hague programme, which covers the period 2005- 2010, and provides, among others, for the continuation of the efforts in establishing common European asylum and immigration policies.

### **Existing EU asylum measures**

During the first phase of the CEAS (1999-2005) several **EU instruments** were adopted, establishing for the most part common minimum standards. As these instruments were often Directives, they had to be transposed into national law:

**Council Directive 2003/9/EC** laying down **minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers**: the Directive guarantees minimum standards for the reception of asylum seekers (certain material reception conditions, family unity, medical and psychological care, access to education for minor children), in order to ensure a dignified standard of living, comparable in all EU Member States.

**Council Directive 2004/83/EC on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals** or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted: it establishes common criteria

for the identification of persons who need international protection and ensures a minimum level of rights and benefits in all Member States for those granted protection.

**Council Directive 2005/85/EC on minimum standards on procedures** in Member States for granting and withdrawing refugee status: the Directive is intended to ensure fair and efficient procedures for granting and withdrawing the refugee status, to reduce the disparities between national examining procedures and to safeguard the quality of decision-making in the Member States.

**Council Regulation (EC) No 343/2003** establishing the criteria and mechanisms for determining the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application lodged in one of the Member States by a third-country national: the regulation (also called Dublin II Regulation) is intended to identify the Member State responsible for examining an asylum application in a time-efficient fashion, to establish reasonable time limits for each of the phases of determination of the Member State responsible, and to prevent abuse of asylum procedures in the form of multiple applications. The basic principle is that each asylum application should be examined by one, and only one, Member State and the system is designed to prevent phenomena such as "asylum shopping" (where a third-country national goes to several Member States to seek asylum) and "asylum in orbit" (where no Member State considers itself responsible for examining an asylum application).

**Council Regulation (EC) No 2725/2000** concerning the establishment of 'EURODAC' for the comparison of fingerprints for the effective application of the Dublin Convention: it establishes a system for comparing the fingerprints of asylum seekers and illegal immigrants in order to facilitate the implementation of the Dublin II Regulation. Indeed, by comparing fingerprints, the EURODAC system enables Member States to determine whether an asylum applicant or a foreign national who is found to be in an illegal situation within a Member State has previously claimed asylum in another Member State or whether an asylum applicant entered the Union territory unlawfully.

Other relevant instruments in the area of asylum and international protection are identified as follows:

**Council Directive 2001/55/EC on minimum standards for giving temporary protection** in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof.

The **European Refugee Fund (ERF)**: the ERF promotes economic and social integration, as well as fostering solidarity between Member States by supporting their efforts in the reception of refugees and displaced persons in the event of a massive influx. The Fund, which was initially set up for a period of five years (2000-04), has been extended twice: for the 2005-2010 period and for 2008-2013.

The **Regional Protection Programmes (RPPs)** do not have a precise legal base but are currently being implemented and financed as Community cooperation programmes with third countries in order to improve the protection available and the asylum systems in specific regions of the world.

It is important to note that the different times of adoption of the legislative instruments mentioned above have entailed a certain lack of consistency. For instance, the procedural guarantees of the Procedures Directive are not included in the Dublin procedures as the Directive was adopted two years after the adoption of the Dublin Regulation. The same occurs with the scope of the Dublin Regulation, which does not cover applicants for subsidiary protection, as that status was created by the Qualification Directive (adopted after the Dublin Regulation).



## ANNEX B – ASYLUM SEEKERS’ ACCESS TO EDUCATION, TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT, HEALTH CARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES IN THE EU MEMBER STATES

**Table 1 - Asylum Seekers’ access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States**

Member State	Schooling and education for minors	Access to vocational training	Access to employment	Access to health care and social services
Austria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free access to language classes.</li> <li>▪ Compulsory schooling for asylum seekers’ children between 6-15.</li> <li>▪ Pupils above 15 may attend institutions of higher education, but at the discretion of the individual schools.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Free access to language classes</li> <li>▪ Access to training provided by Public Employment Service only under certain conditions.</li> <li>▪ No access to apprenticeships</li> <li>▪ Access to university/higher education: in principle same requirements for application as for other foreign students, but not eligible for public student grants.</li> </ul>	<p>Asylum seekers can work after 3 months with a work permit subject to the perceived performance of the overall national labour market and only in seasonal work. Such permits however are less and less provided.</p> <p>Overall, access to the labour market is granted one year following the submission of the asylum claim.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening, only carried out in the induction or reception centres.<sup>17</sup></li> <li>▪ Access to medical treatments funded by governmental health insurance, i.e. free doctor/hospital consultations, free prescription drugs, but no dental prosthesis, glasses, psychological therapies.</li> <li>▪ Access to emergency care only if asylum seekers leave the reception centre before they are assigned residence in a federal state.</li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Belgium	Children of asylum seekers are entitled to free school attendance. Possible to attend special reception classes, but often subject to long waiting times.	Access to adult education system, but may have to pay an additional registration fee. Those who receive material aid do not have to pay the registration fee for adult education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asylum seekers in the admissibility procedure are not allowed to work.</li> <li>▪ Provided that their prospective employer submits a request, applicants in the normal determination procedure may be granted a work permit, valid until the final decision recognising or rejecting refugee status.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening.</li> <li>▪ Access to health care.</li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Bulgaria	Children of asylum seekers are entitled to free school attendance, including secondary school and language training.	The State Agency for Refugees organizes and conducts Bulgarian language courses and vocational training for adult asylum seekers.	Asylum seekers are entitled to labour activities at the centres of the State Agency for Refugees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Info on medical screening not found</li> <li>▪ Access to medical care.</li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> This means that newly arrived asylum seekers who do not enter these centres access medical screening randomly.

**Table 1 - Asylum Seekers' access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States**

Member State	Schooling and education for minors	Access to vocational training	Access to employment	Access to health care and social services
Cyprus	No information available	Access to education and training is practically non-existent. The educational programmes funded by the European Commission, such as through EQUAL and the European Refugee Fund, are the only ones available to this group.	Asylum seekers are entitled to gainful employment. In practice, only a limited number are authorised to work, depending on whether employers have obtained a permit to employ migrant workers or can prove that a Cypriot cannot fill a job vacancy. Asylum seekers often work in the agricultural sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>No specialised treatment for traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Czech Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unaccompanied minors have access to primary school.</li> <li>Young people below the age of 16 (age of mandatory school attendance in CR) go to schools. They first attend a special class where their education level is estimated, they learn Czech and they are brought roughly to the education level which corresponds to their age (if possible). This is maximum one year. Then they attend regular schools.</li> <li>Access to secondary school (a good grasp of Czech is required).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to university (a good grasp of Czech is required).</li> <li>No access to the public training system. NGOs provide training courses depending on funds available.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to the labour market is granted one year following the submission of the asylum claim, but a work permit is granted only for the period of validity of the asylum seeker's visa (usually two months).</li> <li>Few employers are willing to extend work permits every two months and pay the fees for extension.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Denmark	<p>Children of asylum seekers do not have access to the ordinary Danish school system.</p> <p>The Red Cross is required to provide education to all minor asylum seekers under the same conditions as Danish children. Children who have been in Denmark for more than 12 months are, under certain conditions, given access to ordinary Danish schools, financed by the Danish Red Cross.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No access to universities, but exceptions can be made</li> <li>Adult asylum seekers over 17 are offered up to 10 hours of education per week by the reception centres.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not allowed to work. However, if an asylum seeker has an employment contract in a field where there is a shortage of qualified manpower, he/she can seek a residence or work permit on those grounds.</li> </ul> <p>Denmark has opted out of the Reception Directive.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to basic primary health care and hospital care in case of emergency.</li> <li>Restricted access<sup>18</sup> to economic support if an asylum seeker has a chronic disease.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Estonia	Children of asylum seekers can access	No information available.	Asylum seekers can access gainful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> </ul>

<sup>18</sup> According to the Danish Immigration Service, this support can only be provided if the treatment is necessary, to relieve pain or to deal with a life threatening situation.

<b>Table 1 - Asylum Seekers' access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States</b>				
<b>Member State</b>	<b>Schooling and education for minors</b>	<b>Access to vocational training</b>	<b>Access to employment</b>	<b>Access to health care and social services</b>
	schools.		employment one year after their asylum application has been lodged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Finland	Access to public schooling for asylum seekers' children aged 7-16.	Adult asylum seekers may apply to any school, institute or university.	After 3 months asylum seekers have the same access as the country's own nationals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening.</li> <li>▪ Access to free health care provided through the assigned reception centre, and through the municipal health system for urgent treatment or essential dental treatment.</li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
France	Compulsory schooling for asylum seekers' children aged 6-16.	No particular arrangement. De facto vocational training is not accessible for asylum seekers – having only short-term residence permits they cannot enter formal training / public training or education. May attend vocational and/or language training organised by associations without public funding. Hence, this is done purely on voluntary basis by associations.	Asylum seekers can apply for a work permit after one year of stay in the country. The demand for a work permit implies agreement by the departmental labour office as for any other non EU foreigner. The condition for obtaining this agreement is the fact that the national labour supply cannot satisfy the job description. Hence de facto the work permit is nearly impossible to obtain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening, only carried out in the induction or reception centres.</li> <li>▪ Free medical and hospital treatment for asylum seeker who has filed an asylum application, his/her spouse and minor children under the Universal Health Care scheme.</li> <li>▪ For those who do not have healthcare insurance coverage, access to free emergency healthcare through hospitals where there is a Healthcare Access Service (PASS).<sup>19</sup></li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Irregular access to language courses</li> <li>▪ Some classes are organised by NGOs in reception centres.</li> <li>▪ Not compulsory, but children of asylum seekers may attend schooling in most Länder (depending on the schools' resources).</li> </ul>	Limited access to public education and training.	Asylum seekers are not allowed to work for a year. After this, access is granted only if not competing with German nationals or EU citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening (regional variations).</li> <li>▪ Health care limited to acute care, maternity care and pain relief.</li> <li>▪ 36 months after arrival, full access to care similar to citizens.</li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured</li> </ul>

<sup>19</sup> In addition, certain associations offer access services for dental care, ophthalmologic care, and psychological care for those who do not have healthcare insurance coverage.



**Table 1 - Asylum Seekers' access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States**

Member State	Schooling and education for minors	Access to vocational training	Access to employment	Access to health care and social services
				and traumatised asylum seekers.
Greece	Asylum seekers' children have the right to attend Greek public schools free of charge.	Adult asylum seekers have the right to attend Greek schools and universities free of charge, as well as subsidised vocational training programmes. They require a diploma from a school of their country of origin translated in Greek and an official certificate of knowledge of the Greek language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access after 3 months, but must hold valid asylum card (the so-called 'pink card' which indicates that the asylum seeker has registered his/her request to be recognised as a refugee).</li> <li>▪ Asylum seekers can be granted a temporary work permit which is valid while their application is under the determination procedure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening restricted to those who applied for work permits.</li> <li>▪ Access to free medical, pharmaceutical and hospital care for asylum seekers who filed an asylum application.</li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Hungary	Education is compulsory for all children between 5 and 16.	Adult asylum seekers have access to education and training if self-supporting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Asylum seekers are allowed to work in Hungary after one year with a facilitated work permit. Up to that time, asylum seekers can only work in reception centres, but chances of doing that are slight.</li> <li>▪ Work permits are issued on the employer's request. The Migration Office examines the request and takes a decision within 30 days. The request is then sent to the Labour Office, which may issue the permit within another 30 days.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening.</li> <li>▪ Access to basic health care and to emergency treatment by specialists.</li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Ireland	Education is compulsory for all children between 6 and 16.	All asylum seekers have free access to adult literacy and English language courses.	Asylum seekers are not allowed to work.  Ireland has opted out of the Reception Directive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening.</li> <li>▪ Access to free general practitioner services, and to exceptional needs payments through Community Welfare Officers.</li> <li>▪ Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Italy	Education is compulsory for asylum seekers' children.	No access to the public education and training system, but local and regional authorities organise language courses and vocational training.	Asylum seekers are allowed to work after six months, if during this time no decision has been issued by the competent authority and the applications cannot be held responsible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Access to medical screening (regional variations).</li> <li>▪ During detention in the centre of identification, access to medical assistance.</li> </ul>



**Table 1 - Asylum Seekers' access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States**

Member State	Schooling and education for minors	Access to vocational training	Access to employment	Access to health care and social services
			for this delay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During stay in the reception centre, access to the free basic assistance like Italian citizens. Specialist visits foresee a contribution ("ticket"), not to be paid by asylum seekers during the first six months of their stay and if they are without a job.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Latvia	Access to primary and secondary education to asylum seekers' children.	No information available	Asylum seekers are granted a work permit which is valid until they receive a decision on their asylum applications.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compulsory medical screening of newly arrived asylum seekers.</li> <li>Access to free emergency medical assistance and primary health care.</li> <li>No specialised treatment for traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Lithuania	Access to compulsory school system for asylum seekers' children.	No access to the public education and training system.	While the law does not explicitly mention that asylum seekers have a right to access the labour market, in practice, first instance decisions are usually issued within three months. In exceptional cases they can take longer, but this is usually up to 6 months. Reception Directive has been transposed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to emergency medical care, cash allowances/vouchers for minor medical expenses.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Luxembourg	Access to compulsory school system for asylum seekers' children.	No access to the public education and training system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to employment is allowed after 9 months, if no decision has been made. Renewable 6 month temporary work permits are issued.</li> <li>Temporary permits issued for one specific profession at a time and subject to perceived performance of overall labour market.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to free medical treatment during the first three months of the asylum application. After this period, full access to care in the same way as citizens (i.e. are able to claim back up to 80% of the total cost encountered for medical visits).</li> <li>No specialised treatment for traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Malta	Free education is provided	Access to State education and training	Asylum seekers are allowed to work if an employer applies for, and successfully obtains, a work permit for	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to free medical primary and</li> </ul>

<b>Table 1 - Asylum Seekers' access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States</b>				
<b>Member State</b>	<b>Schooling and education for minors</b>	<b>Access to vocational training</b>	<b>Access to employment</b>	<b>Access to health care and social services</b>
			them.	<p>emergency health care on a humanitarian basis (similar to Maltese Pink Card-holders).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Netherlands	Education is compulsory for all children between 5 and 16.	Free Dutch classes, as well as education about Dutch culture, are often organized at the asylum seekers centre and are given by volunteers. Asylum seekers staying outside the centre are not eligible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access after 6 months</li> <li>Only allowed to work for period of 12 weeks a year but no longer limited to seasonal work which seriously restricts access to labour market</li> <li>Employer needs to ask for the permit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to health and long-term care costs. No free choice of physician and dental care for 18+ is restricted to acute treatment/pain relief</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Poland	Access to public schooling for asylum seekers' children up to age 18.	No access to the public education and training system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asylum seekers are allowed to work after 12 months.</li> <li>Employer must request work permit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to free medical care (first doctor contact takes place in reception centre).</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Portugal	No access for asylum seekers' children to the compulsory education system	The provisional residence permit gives asylum seekers access to education and vocational training.	<p>Post Transposition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asylum seekers whose application has been declared admissible are issued with a provisional residence permit, which allows them to work.</li> <li>If asylum seekers arrive at the airport, they are given this permit directly when they lodge their asylum application and a preliminary check has been made that they have the right to apply for asylum.</li> <li>For asylum seekers arriving at other borders, it generally takes 20 days to receive the permit.</li> </ul>	<p>Access to health care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to medical care through the national health service.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul> <p>Access to social services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portuguese Refugee Council = first contact point for asylum seekers. As it runs the reception centre(s), it provides access to accommodation, language courses, day care for children, leisure activities (e.g. sports),</li> <li>Access to vocational programmes offered through the Vocational Training Centre for the</li> </ul>

**Table 1 - Asylum Seekers' access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States**

Member State	Schooling and education for minors	Access to vocational training	Access to employment	Access to health care and social services
				<p>Alimentary Sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Competences are validated through the Centre for the Recognition, Validation and Certification of Competences (CRVCC) / Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa (SCML).</li> </ul>
Romania	No information available	No particular arrangement. De facto, a number of NGOs continue to encourage asylum seekers to participate in Romanian and English language classes. Computer courses are also provided by NGOs, notably by Jesuit Refugee Service, Romania (JRS). A number of legal, social and cultural training sessions are also organised.	No information available	No information available
Spain	Education is compulsory for all children between 3 and 16. Possible access to the education system at any age if requirements are met.	Access is allowed on the same conditions as Spanish citizens (but few enrol because of qualification requirements).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to work after 6 months by getting a stamp in identification documents.</li> <li>Asylum seekers have the same access to the labour market as country's own nationals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening, only carried out in the induction or reception centres.</li> <li>Access to health care in reception centres.</li> <li>Access to the health system, similar to citizens.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Slovakia	Asylum seekers' children and unaccompanied minors have the right to attend primary and secondary schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adults have access to education but no access to universities.</li> <li>Re-qualification courses are arranged for asylum seekers by employment offices.</li> </ul>	An asylum seeker has access to the labour market if he/she has not received a decision within one year after the application for asylum was lodged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
Slovenia	Access to primary and secondary education is allowed.	No access to vocational training. NGOs offer computer and language training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asylum seekers have access to the labour market one year after they filed an asylum application if during this time no decision has been issued by the competent authority and the applications cannot be held responsible for this delay.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to health care services is limited to emergency health care.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>

**Table 1 - Asylum Seekers' access to education, training, employment, health care and social services in the EU Member States**

Member State	Schooling and education for minors	Access to vocational training	Access to employment	Access to health care and social services
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For that purpose, applicants have to acquire a work permit. This permit is valid for 3 months. They are only allowed to work 8 hours a week.</li> </ul>	
Sweden	Education is compulsory for all children between 7 and 18.	Asylum seekers must have had a residence permit for more than 3 months to attend upper level education. Attendance levels are however extremely low.	<p>Asylum seekers are allowed to work if the application procedure of the Migration Board is expected to take more than 4 months.</p> <p>Asylum seekers are still allowed to work when appealing a negative decision.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening.</li> <li>Access to emergency medical and dental care.</li> <li>Pregnant female asylum seekers: have the right to receive free maternity care, abortion as well as contraceptive advice.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>
United Kingdom	Education is compulsory for all children between 5 and 16.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No restrictions to access to university and other further education, but not eligible for student grants and usually charged overseas students fees.</li> <li>May attend further education courses as home students.</li> <li>Level 2 occupational standards entry to training only, unaccredited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access after 12 months after they filed an asylum application if during this time no decision has been issued by the competent authority.</li> <li>Need to apply for permission to work from Home Office, no time limit for when decision needs to be made, applications not routinely processed.</li> <li>Must receive written permission from Home Office before taking employment, once this is granted the asylum seeker has the same access to the labour market as country's own nationals.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Access to medical screening, only carried out in the induction or reception centres.</li> <li>Persons with an outstanding application for asylum (and their dependents) have access to the National Health Service (NHS) without charge, like UK residents.</li> <li>Failed asylum seekers: no right to NHS<sup>20</sup>, except emergency services, sexually transmitted diseases (except HIV/AIDS), communicable diseases, family planning, and compulsory psychiatric care.</li> <li>Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.</li> </ul>

<sup>20</sup> However, according to a judicial review from April 2008 regarding a failed AS receiving free hospital treatment, it is possible for failed asylum seekers to be considered 'ordinarily resident' in the UK, and, consequently, entitled to free NHS hospital treatment.

## ANNEX C – COUNTRY FICHES

---

Austria.....	39
Belgium.....	42
Bulgaria.....	45
Cyprus.....	47
Czech Republic .....	49
Denmark.....	52
Estonia .....	54
Finland .....	56
France .....	58
Germany .....	61
Greece.....	66
Hungary .....	69
Ireland .....	71
Italy.....	73
Latvia.....	77
Lithuania .....	79
Luxembourg .....	81
Malta.....	83
Netherlands .....	85
Poland .....	88
Portugal .....	91
Romania.....	94
Slovakia .....	96
Slovenia .....	99

<b>Spain .....</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Sweden .....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>United Kingdom .....</b>	<b>107</b>



## AUSTRIA

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Austria by year

Austria	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	225	110	25	5	20	0	85	0	0
2006	130	105	30	25	5	0	75	0	55
2005	115	90	15	5	10	0	75	0	unknown

In Austria, the number of asylum claims has almost doubled from 2005 to 2007. Except for the year 2006, the number of humanitarian statuses has been higher than the number of Geneva Convention statuses granted.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

The children of asylum seekers aged between 6 and 15 years may benefit from Austrian schooling system on the same conditions as Austrian citizens.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

There are no state-provided language courses for adult asylum seekers. Single language courses exist - provided by the NGOs on irregular basis, held by volunteers and mostly only in large towns. Similarly, there is no state-provided vocational training. Some accommodation houses which are run by NGOs support asylum seekers in looking for a job. A major obstacle to providing vocational assistance on a larger scale by NGOs is lack of proper funding. Local offices for employment are obligated to provide such assistance only to recognized refugees, and not to asylum seekers.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- No access to labour market for asylum seekers within the first 3 months
- During the further asylum proceeding limited access to labour market: it is possible to get a "seasonal working permission" for maximum 6 months (farming, tourism). In practice this permission is very difficult to obtain for asylum seekers, because the department of work can only gain a certain number of it and has to prefer other job applicants. In 2006

approximately 30,000 asylum seekers were living in Austria and 500 seasonal working permissions for asylum seekers were issued.

- Therefore illegal work is usual and mostly necessary to finance private living.
- Since 2006 asylum seekers with subsidiary protection have free access to labour market after 1 year.

#### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening, only carried out in the induction or reception centres.<sup>21</sup>
- Access to medical treatments funded by governmental health insurance, i.e. free doctor/hospital consultations, free prescription drugs, but no dental prosthesis, glasses, psychological therapies.
- Access to emergency care only if asylum seekers leave the reception centre before they are assigned residence in a federal state.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

#### Inclusion of asylum seekers in Austrian ESF Operational Programmes

**Table 2 - Inclusion of asylum seekers in Austrian ESF Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
AT	AT - esf- op 2007 - 2013 PO001	Regional	Ready	(Possible) Inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	Priority 2 - Labour market integration and social inclusion Action field 2.2: Measures for disabled, socially disadvantaged and persons distant from the labour market Specific objective Z2.5: Increasing labour market access of socially disadvantaged and people distant from the labour market through the development and testing of new measures and through the improvement of collaboration between relevant institutions	The text reads 'anerkannte asylantInnen', which means 'recognised woman asylum seeker'. It is not clear whether this means refugee or admissible asylum seeker.

<sup>21</sup> This means that newly arrived asylum seekers who do not enter these centres access medical screening randomly.



**Table 2 - Inclusion of asylum seekers in Austrian ESF Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
AT	OP Employment 2007 - 2013	National	Ready	Reference to AS	No reference	No reference		Priority Axis 2 - Combating unemployment The text refers to the lessons that are to be drawn from EQUAL Asylum Seekers but it is unclear whether asylum seekers are included as a target group.

**Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL:** 8 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Austria in Round 1 (4) and Round 2 (4).

**Round 1**

Integrationsmaßnahmen f. unbegl. minderjähr. u. junge erw. AsylwerberInnen, [AT-6-01/20](#)

DON'T WAIT - Arbeit und Ausbildung für AsylwerberInnen!, [AT-6-01/55](#)

Job-Shop Chance für Asylwerber am Tiroler Arbeitsmarkt, [AT-6-16/96](#)

Testing of new ways to train and provide asylum seekers with qualifications, AT-6-18/13

**Round 2**

EPIMA 2, [AT-6-01-318](#)

First Aid in Integration, [AT-6-11/261](#)

FLUEQUAL, [AT-6-15/283](#)

InPower, [AT-6-18/342](#)

## BELGIUM

### Number of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Belgium by year (Eurostat)

Belgium	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	11,575	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown
2006	8,870	8,345	2,440	2,230	210	unknown	5,905	unknown	unknown
2005	12,575	17,585	3,700	3,700	unknown	unknown	10,345	3,545	unknown

In Belgium, the number of asylum applications has remained stable. The number of Geneva Convention statuses granted seems to be higher than the number of Humanitarian statuses granted. However, due to a large number of data missing, drawing conclusions on the trends of asylum applications in Belgium appears difficult.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Children of asylum seekers are entitled to free school attendance. Possible to attend special reception classes, but often subject to long waiting times.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

Access to adult education system, but may have to pay an additional registration fee. Those who receive material aid do not have to pay the registration fee for adult education

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Asylum seekers in the admissibility procedure are not allowed to work.
- Provided that their prospective employer submits a request, applicants in the normal determination procedure may be granted a work permit, valid until the final decision recognising or rejecting refugee status.

## Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to health care.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

Out of the six OPs reviewed for Belgium, three include one or more of the relevant target groups

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Belgian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
BE	PO Compétitivité régionale et emploi - Troïka Wallonie-Bruxelles	Regional	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	No reference		Section 4 - Implementation modalities of the ESF Asylum seekers are mentioned under d) Organigramme of the ESF agency, as part of the "Service Animation et développement thématique"
BE	OP Competitiveness and Employment - German Community	Regional	Ready	Inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	(Possible) inclusion of refugees	3.2.3. Objective 3: Promoting social integration Asylum seekers (or rather, asylum applicants) are mentioned under measures for immigrants. Activities include language courses, literacy and numeracy and cultural orientation.	Reference to ESF measures during the 2000 - 2006 period 2. Strategic direction of the 2007 - 2013 OP 2.1.5 The ESF in the German-speaking Community

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Belgian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
BE	OP Competitiveness and Employment - Bruxelles Capitale	Regional	Ready	No reference	No reference	Reference to refugees		2. Analyse de la situation socioéconomique 2.2 Evolution des principaux indicateurs de contexte 2.2.3 Indicateurs de chômage 2.3 Evaluation interne Description of activities of the Brussels observatory of labour market and qualifications, which include information on job seekers, students, etc.

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

### Round 1

Demandeurs d'asile, [BEfr-36](#)

SAMIRA, [BEnl-01/EQ/5.X/001](#)

Refugee Impulse Job, [BEnl-01/EQ/5.X/002](#)

### Round 2

Une réponse aux besoins de la société multiculturelle, [BEfr-83](#)

Right to learn, [BEnl-11](#)

## BULGARIA

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Bulgaria by year (Eurostat)									
Bulgaria	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	unknown	770	335	15	320	0	245	190	1,310
2006	unknown	695	95	10	85	0	215	345	1,110
2005	2,440	945	85	10	80	0	380	480	unknown

In Bulgaria, the number of humanitarian status granted has been higher than the number of Geneva Convention status granted.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Children of asylum seekers are entitled to free school attendance, including secondary school and language training.

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

The State Agency for Refugees organizes and conducts Bulgarian language courses and vocational training for adult asylum seekers.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers are entitled to labour activities at the centres of the State Agency for Refugees.

#### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Info on medical screening not found
- Access to medical care.

- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### **Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes:**

Out of the two OPs reviewed for Bulgaria, none of them include a relevant target group.

### **Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL**

NA

## CYPRUS

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Cyprus by year (Eurostat)

Cyprus	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	6,780	7,170	210	25	185	unknown	2,315	4,640	9,830
2006	4,540	5,585	170	30	140	unknown	1,780	3,635	10,215
2005	7,715	5,795	160	40	120	unknown	3,125	2,510	11,300

In Cyprus, apart from the year 2006, the number of asylum applications has been quite stable. The granting of humanitarian statuses or of other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum has been higher than the granting of Geneva Convention statuses. The high number of other non status decisions seems to be quite specific.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

No information available

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

Access to education and training is practically non-existent. The educational programmes funded by the European Commission, such as through EQUAL and the European Refugee Fund, are the only ones available to this group.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers are entitled to gainful employment. In practice, only a limited number are authorised to work, depending on whether employers have obtained a permit to employ migrant workers or can prove that a Cypriot cannot fill a job vacancy. Asylum seekers often work in the farming and agricultural sectors.

### **Asylum seekers' access to health care**

- Access to medical screening
- No specialised treatment for traumatised asylum seekers.

### **Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes**

For Cyprus, the ESF OP 2007–2013 was reviewed. The OP did not include or refer to any of the relevant target groups.

### **Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL**

**Round 1:** NA

**Round 2:** Equality and Solidarity for Asylum Seekers, Social Rights for All [CY-5](#)



## CZECH REPUBLIC

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Czech Republic by year

Czech Republic	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	1,585	2,280	390	140	250	0	1,570	315	705
2006	2,730	3,020	365	220	85	60	2,195	460	945
2005	3,590	4,375	330	210	40	80	2,635	1,410	825

In Czech Republic, the number of asylum applications has been reduced by half from 2005 to 2007.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

- Unaccompanied minors have access to primary school.
- Young people below the age of 16 (age of mandatory school attendance in CR) go to schools. They first attend a special class where their education level is estimated, they learn Czech and they are brought roughly to the education level which corresponds to their age (if possible). This is maximum one year. Then they attend regular schools.
- Access to secondary school (a good grasp of Czech is required).

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

- Access to university (a good grasp of Czech is required).
- No access to the public training system. NGOs provide training courses depending on funds available.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Access to the labour market is granted one year following the submission of the asylum claim, but a work permit is granted only for the period of validity of the asylum seeker's visa (usually two months).
- Few employers are willing to extend work permits every two months and pay the fees for extension.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

**Table 2 - Inclusion of asylum seekers in Czech ESF Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
CZ	OP Human resources and Employments (Lidské zdroje a zaměstnanost)	National	Adopted	(Possible) Inclusion of asylum seekers	Inclusion of HT victims	Inclusion of refugees	Priority 3 - Social inclusion and equal opportunities Action fields (p.124-125): 1) Support to social inclusion (70,71) the target groups are among others: immigrants, refugees, victims of human trafficking (also organisations supporting these)	No explicit reference (however there is inclusion of migrants in general) + there might be ambiguity with the term used to refer to refugees (azylant). It might be interpreted as AS. There are other references in the context chapter p. 30-31 and 60
CZ	OP Prague Adaptability (Praha - Adaptabilita) - Objective 2	Regional	Adopted	No reference	Reference to HT victims	Reference to refugees		Refugees, migrants as well as victims of HT are mentioned in the chapter on context under "groups at risk". It is however not clear whether they are a target group or not

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 4 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Czech Republic.

### Round 1

NA

### Round 2

Net 2005, [CZ-66](#)

Human Step, [CZ-68](#)

The integration and information centre for asylum seekers "LIFE SPRING" New DP, CZ-70 (link not provided on the EQUAL website)

Support to Unaccompanied Minors Seeking Asylum, [CZ-79](#)

---

## DENMARK

### Number of asylum seekers

Denmark	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	2,225	850	475	70	405	unknown	375	unknown	410
2006	1,960	925	170	110	60	unknown	755	unknown	265
2005	2,280	1,325	230	95	135	unknown	1,100	unknown	270

In Denmark, the number of asylum applications has remained stable. In 2007, the number of humanitarian statuses granted has been increasing.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Children of asylum seekers do not have access to the ordinary Danish school system.

The Red Cross is required to provide education to all minor asylum seekers under the same conditions as Danish children. Children who have been in Denmark for more than 12 months are, under certain conditions, given access to ordinary Danish schools, financed by the Danish Red Cross.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

- No access to universities, but exceptions can be made
- Adult asylum seekers over 17 are offered up to 10 hours of education per week by the reception centres

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Not allowed to work. However, if an asylum seeker has an employment contract in a field where there is a shortage of qualified manpower, he/she can seek a residence or work permit on those grounds.

- Denmark has opted out of the Reception Directive.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to basic primary health care and hospital care in case of emergency.
- Restricted access<sup>22</sup> to economic support if an asylum seeker has a chronic disease.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

The single OP reviewed for Denmark includes a relevant target group.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Danish Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
DK	DK - esf- op 2007 - 2013	National	Adopted	No reference	No reference	Reference to refugees		Section 8 Inddragelse af partnerskabet (description of organisations in section on partnership)

### Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 2 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Denmark in Round 1 (1) and Round 2 (1)

**Round 1:** want2work, [DK-21](#)

**Round 2:** want2work, [DK-41](#)

<sup>22</sup> According to the Danish Immigration Service, this support can only be provided if the treatment is necessary, to relieve pain or to deal with a life threatening situation.

## ESTONIA

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Estonia by year (Eurostat)									
Estonia	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	15	15	5	0	0	0	10	0	5
2006	5	5	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
2005	10	15	5	0	0	5	10	0	unknown

In Estonia, the number of asylum applications has slightly increased from 2005 to 2007. Nevertheless, the number of asylum applications remains very low. Neither Geneva Convention Statuses nor humanitarian statuses have been granted over the last three years.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Children of asylum seekers can access schools.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

No information available.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers can access gainful employment one year after their asylum application has been lodged.

### **Asylum seekers' access to health care**

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### **Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes**

For Estonia, the ESF OP 2007–2013 was reviewed. The OP did not include or refer to any of the relevant target groups.

### **Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL**

#### **Round 1**

NA

#### **Round 2**

Increasing the Readiness of the Estonian Society for Integrating Asylum Seekers, [EE-11](#)

## FINLAND

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Finland by year (Eurostat)

Finland	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	1,405	2,020	840	65	490	280	1,045	140	unknown
2006	2,275	2,520	695	40	100	560	1,540	285	unknown
2005	3,595	3,455	570	10	135	425	2,515	370	unknown

In Finland, the number of asylum applications has been reduced by half from 2005 to 2007. The number of positive decisions is substantial. The granting of humanitarian statuses or of all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum is higher than the granting of Geneva Convention statuses.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Access to public schooling for asylum seekers' children aged 7-16

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

Adult asylum seekers may apply to any school, institute or university.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

After 3 months asylum seekers have the same access as the country's own nationals.



### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to free health care provided through the assigned reception centre, and through the municipal health system for urgent treatment or essential dental treatment.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

Out of the two OPs reviewed for Finland, one includes a relevant target group.

Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Finnish Operational Programmes

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
FI	MANNER-SUOMEN ESF OP 2007 - 2013	National	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	No reference		<b>Section 3.5</b> Experiences and evaluation results from 2000-2006 programme period (refers to asylum seekers): <b>section 4.6 Migration policy</b> (refers to activation of asylum seekers)

### Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 2 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Finland in Round 1 (1) and Round 2 (1)

#### Round 1

Becoming Visible, [FI-29](#)

#### Round 2

Becoming More Visible, [FI-93](#)

## FRANCE

### Number of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in France by year (Eurostat)

France	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	29,160	29,150	3,350	3,205	145	unknown	25,800	unknown	unknown
2006	30,750	37,495	2,855	2,670	185	unknown	34,640	unknown	unknown
2005	49,735	51,070	4,105	3,995	110	unknown	46,965	unknown	unknown

In France, the number of asylum applications has been decreasing over the last three years. The granting of the Geneva Convention status has been far higher than the granting of humanitarian statuses.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Compulsory schooling for asylum seekers' children aged 6-16.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

No particular arrangement. De facto vocational training is not accessible for asylum seekers – having only short-term residence permits they cannot enter formal training / public training or education. May attend vocational and/or language training organised by associations without public funding. Hence, this is done purely on voluntary basis by associations.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers can apply for a work permit after one year of stay in the country. The demand for a work permit implies agreement by the departmental labour office as for any other non EU foreigner. The condition for obtaining this agreement is the fact that the national labour supply cannot satisfy the job description. Hence de facto the work permit is nearly impossible to obtain.

## Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening, only carried out in the induction or reception centres.
- Free medical and hospital treatment for asylum seeker who has filed an asylum application, his/her spouse and minor children under the Universal Health Care scheme.
- For those who do not have healthcare insurance coverage, access to free emergency healthcare through hospitals where there is a Healthcare Access Service (PASS).<sup>23</sup>
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

For France, the ESF OP 2007–2013 was reviewed. The OP did not include or refer to any of the relevant target groups.

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

**In total, 12 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in France in Round 1(4) and Round 2 (8).**

### Round 1

Accueil et formation des demandeurs d'asile, [FR-IDF-2001-10473](#)

DALIA: Demandeurs d'asile et innovations dans l'accueil, [FR-MDP-2001-10838](#)

Aide à la réintégration des migrants dans leur pays d'origine – ARMIPO, [FR-NAT-2001-10806](#)

Voyageurs en recherche d'asile, [FR-NPC-2001-10966](#)

### Round 2

FAAR, Formation, accueil des demandeurs d'asile et réfugiés, [FR-IDF-2004-43486](#)

Longue marche, [FR-IDF-2004-43653](#)

OASIS (Observatoire pour l'accueil des demandeurs d'asile), [FR-MDP-2004-44060](#)

---

▪ <sup>23</sup> In addition, certain associations offer access services for dental care, ophthalmologic care, and psychological care for those who do not have healthcare insurance coverage.

Se reconstruire et s'insérer, [FR-NAT-2004-43039](#)

Mieux encadrer les demandeurs d'asile, [FR-NAT-2004-43609](#)

P.A.R.A.D.E. Projet d'accompagnement à la réinsertion par des activités de développement, [FR-PAC-2004-40982](#)

ACTES (Actions et concertation contre le trafic et l'esclavage sexuel), [FR-RAL-2004-42564](#)

Lutte contre le trafic par l'empowerment des femmes et l'accès aux droits, [FR-RAL-2004-44005](#)

## GERMANY

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Germany by year (Eurostat)

Germany	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	19,165	28,570	7,870	7,195	675	unknown	12,750	7,955	10,925
2006	21,030	30,760	1,950	1,350	605	unknown	17,780	11,025	8,835
2005	28,915	48,100	3,120	2,465	655	unknown	27,450	17,530	9,115

In Germany, the number of asylum applications has been decreasing. As a noticeable point, the number of Geneva Convention statuses granted has been higher than the number of humanitarian statuses granted. In spite of the decrease of the number of asylum applications, the number of applications pending at the end of the period remains stable.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

- Irregular access to language courses.
- Some classes are organised by NGOs in reception centres.
- Not compulsory, but children of asylum seekers may attend schooling in most Länder (depending on the schools' resources)..

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

Limited access to public education and training.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers are not allowed to work for a year. After this, access is granted only if not competing with German nationals or EU citizens.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening (regional variations).
- Health care limited to acute care, maternity care and pain relief.
- 36 months after arrival, full access to care similar to citizens.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

Nine of the German OPs reviewed included one or more of the target groups<sup>24</sup>.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the German Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
DE	OP des Bundes für den ESF (Federal ESF programme)	National	Adopted	Inclusion of asylum seekers	Reference to HT victims	Inclusion of refugees	Asylum seekers and refugees are mentioned under the strategic objective to increase (self) employment and Priority axe C with the same title - C.1 and C.2 Employment and social integration. 1. Strategisches Ziel: Erhöhung der Beschäftigung/ Erwerbstätigkeit Schwerpunkt C: Prioritätsachsen C.1 und C.2 Beschäftigung und soziale Integration	1.1 Einführung 1.12 Empfehlungen aus Evaluierungen 4 Durchführungsbestimmungen 4.4 Koordination mit anderen Gemeinschaftsprogrammen The link to the ERF is specifically mentioned
DE	DE - esf - op Schleswig-Holstein 2007 - 2013	Regional	Adopted	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	Reference to refugees		Reference to "Land in Sicht" EQUAL DP only in the part of the OP that describes 2000-2006 measures

<sup>24</sup> No references to the target groups were found in the following OPs: DE - ESF-OP Brandenburg 2007 – 2013, DE- ESF-OP Berlin 2007 – 2013, DE- ESF-OP Mecklenburg 2007 – 2013, DE- ESF-OP Bayern 2007 – 2013, DE - RP / DE - ESF-OP Rheinland-Pfalz 2007-2013, DE - ESF-OP - Bremen 2007 – 2013.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the German Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
DE	DE - esf-op Niedersachsen (except Region Lüneburg) 2007 - 2013	Regional	Adopted	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	Reference to refugees		Reference to "Spuk" and "Saga" DPs in the section describing 2000-2006 period.
DE	DE -esf-op Thüringen 2007 - 2013	Regional	Adopted	No reference	No reference	(Possible) inclusion of refugees		Reference to inclusion of migrants and other disadvantaged groups. Not clear whether this includes refugees. Section 2 on strategy - 2.4.1 on horizontal themes. Aktion C.2 Soziale Eingliederung von Benachteiligten durch Erhöhung der Beschäftigungsfähigkeit . It seems that around 2 million euro are set aside for migrants.
DE	DE- esf- op Hamburg 2007 - 2013 PO005	Regional	Ready	(Possible) inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	(Possible) inclusion of refugees	<p>Priority Axe C: Improvement of access to employment and social inclusion of disadvantaged persons For refugees (migrants with insecure residence status?) measures to avoid their social exclusion will be planned. The target group of asylum seekers and 'tolerated' can also be included after they have received permission to stay and to work.</p> <p>Aktion C2: Integration of migrants in working life Specific objective: "Integration or reintegration of disadvantaged persons in working life. Typical instruments will include Personal development measures with a vocational focus, Networks and partnership building, Support employers and HR staff.</p>	Reference to Hamburg DP in part describing the context.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the German Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
DE	DE- esf- op Sachsen 2007 - 2013	Regional	Ready	No reference	No reference	Reference to refugees		Section 1 Macro-economic analysis of the context 1.6 Social inclusion, 1.6.2 Migrants
DE	DE - BW / DE- esf- op Baden Wurtemberg 2007 - 2013	Regional	Draft	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	No reference		Reference to QUASI DP in Section 2, describing the 2000 - 2006 period
DE	DE - HE / DE- esf- op Hessen 2007 - 2013	Regional	Ready	No reference	No reference	Reference to refugees		Section 1 Macro-economic analysis of the context 1.6 Social inclusion, 1.6.2 Migrants
DE	DE - ESF OP - Saarland 2007 - 2013	Regional	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	Reference to refugees		2. Framework and strategies at EU, national and regional levels 2.5 Results of the ESF Employment programming period Saarland 2000 – 2006 2.5.2 EQUAL Community Initiative Reference to SEPA DP

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 16 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Germany in Round 1 (8) and Round 2 (8).

### Round 1

TransSpuk - Transfer von Sprache und Kultur in Gesundheits- und Sozialversorgun [DE-EA-10276](#)

Volkshochschulverband Baden-Württemberg e. V. [DE-EA-14345](#)

SEPA - Saarländische Entwicklungspartnerschaft Asylbewerber / Flüchtlinge [DE-EA-37692](#)



Berufliche Qualifizierung von Flüchtlingen in Regelmaßnahmen [DE-EA-44530](#)

Perspective - Berufliche Qualifizierung für Flüchtlinge in Schleswig-Holstein [DE-EA-45052](#)

SPuK - Sprache und Kultur - Grundlagen für eine effektive Gesundheitsvorsorge [DE-EA-46113](#)

Flüchtlinge Qualifizieren - sektorale EP Bayern zum Themenbereich Asyl [DE-EA-51251](#)

Qualifizierungsoffensive für Asylbewerber/innen und Flüchtlinge in Hamburg [DE-EA-83671](#)

## **Round 2**

SAGA - Selbsthilfe, Arbeitsmarktzugang und Gesundheit von Asylsuchenden [DE-XB4-76051-20-20/205](#)

Fluchttort Hamburg: Berufliche Qualifizierung für Flüchtlinge [DE-XB4-76051-20-20/221](#)

Arbeit und Bildung International [DE-XB4-76051-20-20/260](#)

Land in Sicht! - Berufliche Qualifizierung fuer Fluechtlinge in Schleswig-Holstein [DE-XB4-76051-20-20/275](#)

TransKom gesund & sozial [DE-XB4-76051-20-20/298](#)

Reintegrationsförderung von Menschenhandelsopfern - Stärkung nationaler Akteure [DE-XB4-76051-20-20/301](#)

Bridge - Brücke zur Reintegration durch Grundlegende Kompetenz-Entwicklung [DE-XB4-76051-20-20/308](#)

Süddeutsche Entwicklungspartnerschaft Asylbewerber und Flüchtlinge [DE-XB4-76051-20-20/359](#)

## GREECE

### Numbers of asylum seekers

**Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Greece by year (Eurostat)**

Greece	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	25,115	20,990	165	95	75	0	20,685	140	8,145
2006	12,265	11,180	195	65	130	0	9,600	1,380	2,985
2005	9,050	10,420	125	40	85	0	4,585	5,710	62,555

In Greece, the number of asylum applications has dramatically increased from 2005 to 2007. This may explain why the number of applications pending at the end of the period remains high. However, it should be noted that the number of applications pending at the end of the period has been reduced compared to 2005.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Asylum seekers' children have the right to attend Greek public schools free of charge.

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

Adult asylum seekers have the right to attend Greek schools and universities free of charge, as well as subsidised vocational training programmes. They require a diploma from a school of their country of origin translated in Greek and an official certificate of knowledge of the Greek language.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Access after 3 months, but must hold valid asylum card (the so-called 'pink card' which indicates that the asylum seeker has register his/her request to be recognised as a refugee).

Asylum seekers can be granted a temporary work permit which is valid while their application is under the determination procedure.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening restricted to those who applied for work permits.
- Access to free medical, pharmaceutical and hospital care for asylum seekers who filed an asylum application.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

All three OPs reviewed for Greece includes one or more of the relevant target groups

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Greek Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
GR	ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΙΝΟΥ ΔΥΝΑΜΙΚΟΥ 5	National	Ready	Inclusion of asylum seekers	Inclusion of HT victims	Inclusion of refugees	Thematic Axis 4 - Full Inclusion of all human resources into a society of Equal Opportunities Special Intervention 1 - Prevention and confrontation of social exclusion of vulnerable social groups Action (e) - Targeted array of actions in order to integrate, support and skill specific social groups, including specific reference to refugees, asylum seekers and victims of human trafficking.	Reference to AS, HT victims and refugees in analysis of issues facing the Attiki Region: there is greater concentration of these groups in this region compared to others in Greece. Note that great weight should be given to actions of Greek language learning. (p 142). Good practise lessons from EQUAL DP which linked electronically NGOs and other organisations which provide information and services to asylum seekers. (p 235).
GR	ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΑ ΒΙΟΥ ΜΑΘΗΣΗ 6	National	Ready	No reference	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	Axes 7, 8 and 9 - Strengthening Lifelong Learning. Actions to support and expand lifelong learning opportunities and services with an aim of targeting vulnerable groups including refugees - through alternative funding methods, specific incentives and flexible provision.	Refugees identified as a group which are vulnerable to social and educational exclusion and inequality in general analysis of targets of educational system. (p 73).

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Greek Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
GR	ΔΙΟΙΚΗΤΙΚΗ ΜΕΤΑΠΡΥΘΜΙΣΗ 7	National	Ready	No reference	Reference to HT victims	No reference	General Target 3 - Strengthening political equalities throughout public activities Special target 2 - Strengthening the position of Women in the public and social sphere. Actions supporting local and municipal infrastructure for the benefit of women and to combat violence.	Reference to victims of human trafficking along mention of women who have been victims of violence.

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

### Round 1

ΑΝΑΔΡΑΣΗ – ΙΣΤΟΣ 2002 [GR-200906-201006](#)

### Round 2

Ακτινεργία 2006 [GR-232252](#)

ΙΘΑΚΗ2006 [GR-232375](#)

## HUNGARY

### Number of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Hungary by year (Eurostat)

Hungary	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	3,420	2,805	250	170	85	0	1,375	1,175	1,195
2006	2,115	2,020	200	100	100	0	1,215	605	530
2005	1,610	1,655	190	95	95	0	855	610	335

In Hungary, the number of asylum applications has doubled. This could explain why the number of pending applications was much higher in 2007 than in 2005. The granting of Geneva Convention statuses compared to the granting of humanitarian statuses has been balanced.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Education is compulsory for all children between 5 and 16.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

Adult asylum seekers have access to education and training if self-supporting.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Asylum seekers are allowed to work in Hungary after one year with a facilitated work permit. Up to that time, asylum seekers can only work in reception centres, but chances of doing that are slight.
- Work permits are issued on the employer's request. The Migration Office examines the request and takes a decision within 30 days. The request is then sent to the Labour Office, which may issue the permit within another 30 days.

## Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to basic health care and to emergency treatment by specialists.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

The single OP reviewed for Hungary includes a relevant target group.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Hungarian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
HU	HU - esf- op 2007 - 2013 State Reform Operational Programme	National	Adopted	Inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	Priority Axis 3 – Promoting an equal and inclusive labour market Operational objective B Activities focusing on access to training and employment for refugees and asylum seekers to facilitate their integration ESF interventions targeting refugees and asylum seekers are complemented by other funds, namely the European Refugee Fund, ARGO and the External Borders Fund	Other references: Section 1 Labour market analysis - section 1.2.5 Undeclared work Section 1.5 Social inclusion Section 1.8 SWOT analysis Section 1.9 Lessons learnt 2002-2004 period

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 2 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Hungary in Round 2.

### Round 1 NA

**Round 2** "Önállóan - egyenlő esélyekkel", [HU-25](#)

ESÉLY" Munkaerőpiaci orientáció menedékkérőknek, [HU-26](#)

## IRELAND

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Ireland by year (Eurostat)									
Ireland	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	3,935	3,810	375	375	unknown	unknown	3,430	unknown	1,280
2006	4,240	4,245	395	395	unknown	unknown	3,845	unknown	925
2005	4,305	5,240	455	455	unknown	unknown	4,785	unknown	unknown

In Ireland, the number of asylum applications has been slightly decreasing. It seems that all positive decisions were equivalent to the granting of Geneva Convention statuses.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Education is compulsory for all children between 6 and 16.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

All asylum seekers have free access to adult literacy and English language courses.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers are not allowed to work.

Ireland has opted out of the Reception Directive.

## **Asylum seekers' access to health care**

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to free general practitioner services, and to exceptional needs payments through Community Welfare Officers.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

## **Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes**

For Ireland, the ESF OP 2007–2013 was reviewed. The OP did not include or refer to any of the relevant target groups.

## **Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL**

### **Round 1**

SONAS Ireland, [IE-21](#)

### **Round 2**

Transition Supports Project, [IE-42](#)

Roma Cultural Mediation Project, [IE-43](#)



## ITALY

### Numbers of asylum seekers

**Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Italy by year (Eurostat)**

Italy	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown
2006	10,350	9,260	5,215	880	4,340	unknown	3,680	365	1,090
2005	9,345	20,055	5,295	940	4,355	unknown	7,285	7,475	unknown

In Italy, the data for the year 2007 regarding the number and decisions on asylum claims are not yet available. For the years 2005 and 2006, the number of asylum claims has been quite stable. The number of humanitarian statuses granted has been higher than the number of Geneva Convention statuses granted.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Education is compulsory for asylum seekers' children.

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

No access to the public education and training system, but local and regional authorities organise language courses and vocational training.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers are allowed to work after six months, if during this time no decision has been issued by the competent authority and the applications cannot be held responsible for this delay

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening (regional variations).
- During detention in the centre of identification, access to medical assistance.
- During stay in the reception centre, access to the free basic assistance like Italian citizens. Specialist visits foresee a contribution ("ticket), not to be paid by asylum seekers during the first six months of their stay and if they are without a job.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

In Italy, seven OPs referred to or included one or more of the relevant target groups<sup>25</sup>

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Italian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National/ regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
IT	OP Campania	Regional	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	No reference		Reference to Aeneas, the DG JLS programme for cooperation with third countries in relation to asylum and migration 4 Priority axes for interventions 4.C Inclusion sociale 4.5.C Specificità aggiuntive 4.5.3.C Complementarietà con altri programmi transnazionali
IT	OP Veneto	Regional	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	No reference		3. Strategia 3.1 Quadro generale di coerenza strategica 3.1.1 Coerenza con gli OSC, il QRSN, il DSR

<sup>25</sup> The following OPs were also reviewed: OP Emilia Romagna, OP Bolzano, OP Lombardia, OP Puglia, National Operational Programme - Obiettivo Convergenza, National Operational Programme - Regional competitiveness and employment objective, OP Marche, OP Toscana, OP Friuli Venezia Giulia, OP Valle d'Aosta, OP Piemonte, OP Liguria, OP Trento, OP Umbria, OP Molise, OP Sardegna, OP Sicilia.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Italian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National/ regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
IT	OP Lazio	Regional	Ready	No reference	No reference	Reference to refugees		1 Contextual analysis 1.4. Lessons of the programming period 2000-06 1.4.1. Results and lessons
IT	National Operational Programme - Governance and system actions	National	Ready	No reference	Reference to HT victims	No reference		1 Contextual analysis 1.1. Description of the context 1.1.3 State of equal opportunities
IT	OP Abruzzo	Regional	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	No reference		3.1. QUADRO GENERALE DI COERENZA STRATEGICA 3.3. LE SPECIFICITÀ DELLA PROGRAMMAZIONE FSE 3.3.4 Altre specificità della strategia FSE regionale
IT	OP Calabria	Regional	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	Inclusion of HT victims	Reference to refugees	4. Intervention priorities 4.3 Axis 3 - Social inclusion 4.3.4. Target groups, beneficiaries, sectors and geographical areas Measures relate to specific objective G - the development of integration pathways and improving job (re)insertion of disadvantaged groups to combat any form of discrimination in the labour market.	1 Contextual analysis 1.1. Description of the context 1.1.3. State of equal opportunities and social exclusion

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Italian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National/ regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
IT	OP Basilicata	Regional	Ready	No reference	Inclusion of HT victims	No reference	4. Priorities 4.1 Priority axes and specific objectives 4.1.4. Axe C – Social inclusion 4.1.4.1. Specific and operational objectives Specific objective G - the development of integration pathways and improving job (re)insertion of disadvantaged groups to combat any form of discrimination in the labour market. Measures focus on the improvement of human resources and their potential in a framework to increase self-esteem of disadvantaged persons.	

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

### Round 1

Asylumisland [IT-IT-S-MDL-294](#)

Integ.R.A. - Integrazione Richiedenti Asilo [IT-IT-S-MDL-328](#)

### Round 2

AGORA - Agenzia Orientamento Richiedenti Asilo, IT-IT-S2-MDL-098 (link not provided on the EQUAL website)

Coopera. Processi di cooperazione per l'integrazione dei richiedenti asilo [IT-IT-S2-MDL-103](#)

INTEGRA 2004 - Integrazione sociale dei richiedenti asilo [IT-IT-S2-MDL-147](#)

Inclusion Refugees Network, IT-IT-S2-MDL-350 (link not provided on the EQUAL website)

Orizzonti, IT-IT-S2-MDL-074 (link not provided on the EQUAL website)

IntegRARsi - Reti locali per l'integrazione di Richiedenti Asilo e Rifugiati, IT-IT-S-MDL-328 (link not provided on the EQUAL website)

## LATVIA

### Number of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Latvia by year (Eurostat)

Latvia	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	35	20	10	5	5	0	10	5	15
2006	10	15	10	0	10	0	0	5	5
2005	20	10	0	0	0	0	5	5	unknown

In Latvia, the number of asylum applications has been increasing from 2005 to 2007.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Access to primary and secondary education to asylum seekers' children.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

No information available

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers are granted a work permit which is valid until they receive a decision on their asylum applications.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Compulsory medical screening of newly arrived asylum seekers.
- Access to free emergency medical assistance and primary health care.

- No specialised treatment for traumatised asylum seekers.

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

The single OP reviewed for Latvia includes a relevant target group.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Latvian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
LV	LV ESF OP Human Resources and Employment 2007 - 2013	National	Ready	No reference	Inclusion of the HT victims	No reference	Measure 4.1 "Social Inclusion"	1. Introduction 1.4. Social Inclusion

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

### Round 1

NA

### Round 2

Solim pa solim (step by step), LV-6 (link not provided on the EQUAL website)

## LITHUANIA

### Number of asylum seekers

Lithuania	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	125	145	60	10	50	unknown	50	35	30
2006	145	130	95	10	85	0	25	10	50
2005	100	95	60	15	45	0	25	10	40

Among the Baltic countries, the largest number of asylum applications is in Lithuania.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Access to compulsory school system for asylum seekers' children.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

No access to the public education and training system.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- While the law does not explicitly mention that asylum seekers have a right to access the labour market, in practice, first instance decisions are usually issued within three months. In exceptional cases they can take longer, but this is usually up to 6 months.
- Reception Directive has been transposed.

### **Asylum seekers' access to health care**

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to emergency medical care, cash allowances/vouchers for minor medical expenses.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### **Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes**

For Lithuania, the ESF OP 2007–2013 was reviewed. The OP did not include or refer to any of the relevant target groups.

### **Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL**

**Round 1** NA

**Round 2** IN CORPORE, [LT-1](#)



## LUXEMBOURG

### Number of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Luxembourg by year (Eurostat)									
Luxembourg	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	425	1,035	540	155	345	40	430	65	unknown
2006	525	890	370	40	290	45	495	25	unknown
2005	800	1,480	670	95	205	370	555	255	unknown

In Luxembourg, the number of asylum applications has been cut by half. The number of humanitarian statuses granted has been increasing.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Access to compulsory school system for asylum seekers' children.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

No access to the public education and training system.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Access to employment is allowed after 9 months, if no decision has been made. Renewable 6 month temporary work permits are issued.
- Temporary permits issued for one specific profession at a time and subject to perceived performance of overall labour market.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.

- Access to free medical treatment during the first three months of the asylum application. After this period, full access to care in the same way as citizens (i.e. are able to claim back up to 80% of the total cost encountered for medical visits).
- No specialised treatment for traumatised asylum seekers.

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

The single OP reviewed for Luxembourg includes a relevant target group.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Luxemburgish Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
LU	OP - Regional competitiveness and employment objective	National	Ready	Reference to Asylum Seekers	No reference	Reference to refugees		Asylum seekers and refugees mentioned as target groups for monitoring and evaluation 4. Dispositions de mise en œuvre du programme 4.2. Description des procédures de mise en œuvre 4.2.3. Procédures de suivi qualitatif 4.2.3.2. Contenu du système de suivi qualitatif et d'évaluation

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 1 EQUAL Partnership was implemented in Luxembourg in Round 1.

### Round 1

Franchir les obstacles, [LU-4](#)

### Round 2

NA

## MALTA

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Malta by year (Eurostat)

Malta	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	1,380	955	625	5	620	unknown	330	unknown	unknown
2006	1,270	1,185	550	30	520	unknown	635	unknown	unknown
2005	1,165	1,160	520	35	485	unknown	580	60	unknown

In Malta, the number of asylum applications has been stable over the last three years. The number of positive decisions has been higher than the number of rejections. The humanitarian status stands as the most granted one.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Free education is provided.

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

Access to State education and training.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers are allowed to work if an employer applies for, and successfully obtains, a work permit for them.

#### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to free medical primary and emergency health care on a humanitarian basis (similar to Maltese Pink Card-holders).

- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

One OP was reviewed for Malta, which included asylum seekers and refugees as target groups.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Maltese Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
MT	MT - esf- op 2007 – 2013 Operational Programme II	National	Adopted	Inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	Priority Axis 3 – Promoting an equal and inclusive labour market.	1.2.5 Undeclared Work 1.5 Social Inclusion 1.8 SWOT Analysis 1.9 Lessons learnt - 2004-2006 programming period 5.4.4 Co-ordination with other Funds and Programmes

### Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

#### Round 1

NA

#### Round 2

ASYLUM SEEKERS PARTNERSHIP [MT-5](#)

## NETHERLANDS

### Number of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in the Netherlands by year (Eurostat)

The Netherlands	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	7,100	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown
2006	14,465	14,180	4,345	360	3,985	unknown	7,520	2,320	7,260
2005	12,345	19,750	8,820	965	7,855	unknown	8,085	2,850	7,285

In the Netherlands, the number of asylum applications has been decreasing. The number of humanitarian statuses granted has been higher than the number of Geneva Convention statuses granted.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Education is compulsory for all children between 5 and 16.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

Free Dutch classes, as well as education about Dutch culture, are often organized at the asylum seekers centre and are given by volunteers. Asylum seekers staying outside the centre are not eligible.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Access after 6 months
- Only allowed to work for period of 12 weeks a year but no longer limited to seasonal work which seriously restricts access to labour market
- Employer needs to ask for the permit

## Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to health and long-term care costs. No free choice of physician and dental care for 18+ is restricted to acute treatment/pain relief
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

The single OP reviewed for the Netherlands includes a relevant target group.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Dutch Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
NL	NL - esf- op 2007 - 2013 ESF Objective 2	National	Adopted	No reference	No reference	Reference to refugees		Section 2.11 Synergies with other programmes (reference to ERF)

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 9 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in the Netherlands in Round 1 (6) and Round 2 (3)

### Round 1

Hersteld vertrouwen in de Toekomst, [NL-2001/EQI/0001](#)

Matchingsmakelaar, [NL-2001/EQI/0002](#)

Arbeid en Activering Asielzoekers: "Zelfredzaamheid in de praktijk", [NL-2001/EQI/0004](#)

EQUAL AMA, [NL-2001/EQI/0005](#)

AMA's Zoomvliet College, [NL-2001/EQI/0007](#)

Back To Work, [NL-2001/EQI/0009](#)

## **Round 2**

Project "Mobilee", [NL-2004/EQI/0001](#)

Terugkeer Ontwikkelings Project (TOP), [NL-2004/EQI/0003](#)

Terug naar je Toekomst, [NL-2004/EQI/0004](#)

## POLAND

### Number of asylum seekers

Poland	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	7,205	6,185	3,035	150	2,870	15	1,835	1,310	4,450
2006	4,225	7,280	2,465	420	2,045	unknown	935	3,875	2,055
2005	5,240	8,840	2,145	310	1,830	unknown	2,285	4,415	2,145

In Poland, the number of asylum applications has increased. The number of humanitarian statuses granted is higher than the number of Geneva Convention statuses granted.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Access to public schooling for asylum seekers' children up to age 18.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

No access to the public education and training system.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Asylum seekers are allowed to work after 12 months.
- Employer must request work permit.



## Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to free medical care (first doctor contact takes place in reception centre).
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

The single OP reviewed for Poland includes a relevant target group.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Polish Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
PL	PL - esf- op 2007 - 2013	National	Ready	Reference to Asylum Seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	<p>Some programmes (called activation instruments) have been put in place by the government (ministry of labour) to support the employability of groups excluded from the labour market. One of the objectives of these actions is the integration of refugees.</p> <p>Some of these actions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The social contract</li> <li>- Individual programme for social employability</li> <li>- Support to employment</li> <li>- Social economy</li> </ul> <p>- These programmes/actions provide tools to foster the employability of vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>Asylum seekers, refugees and migrants are described as a group particularly affected by exclusion from the labour market (Chapter 1 Socio-Economic analysis, section 1.3 Actions to tackle social exclusions).</p> <p>Chapter 2, Existing foreign support in the development of human capital, Section 2.2, foreign support in the years 2004-2006, Section 2.2.3 describes the EQUAL Initiative. Asylum seekers and refugees are mentioned as a specific target group of EQUAL.</p>

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 4 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Poland in Round 2.

### Round 1

NA

### Round 2

@IterCamp, [PL-93](#)

Edukacja dla Integracji - Partnerstwo na Rzecz Uchodźców (EDI), [PL-94](#)

Integracja społ. i zawod. cudzoziemców "Możesz uczyć się rozumieć" – MUR, [PL-95](#)

Powitanie – Projekt zapoznania się azylantów ze społeczeństwem polskim, PL-96 (link not provided on the EQUAL website)

## PORTUGAL

### Number of asylum seekers

Portugal	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	225	110	25	5	20	0	85	0	0
2006	130	105	30	25	5	0	75	0	55
2005	115	90	15	5	10	0	75	0	unknown

In Portugal, the number of asylum applications has been increasing.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

No access for asylum seekers' children to the compulsory education system

### Asylum seekers' access to training

The provisional residence permit gives asylum seekers access to education and vocational training.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Post Transposition

- Asylum seekers whose application has been declared admissible are issued with a provisional residence permit, which allows them to work.
- If asylum seekers arrive at the airport, they are given this permit directly when they lodge their asylum application and a preliminary check has been made that they have the right to apply for asylum.

- For asylum seekers arriving at other borders, it generally takes 20 days to receive the permit.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to medical care through the national health service.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

Out of the four OPs reviewed for Portugal, one includes a relevant target group.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Portuguese Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
PT	OP Human Capital	National	Adopted	No reference	Inclusion of HT victims	Possible inclusion of refugees	<p>5 Objectives and priorities Priority axe 7 Gender equality: To prevent gender violence, including victims of HT Under same priority, victims of HT are included under Intervention typology 'Support to organisational development', 'Training', 'Information and dissemination actions', 'Integrated prevention measures for victims of discrimination Priority axe 8 Algarve, victims of HT mentioned under specific objective concerning prevention of gender violence Priority axe 9 Lisbon, victims of HT mentioned under specific objective concerning prevention of gender violence</p>	<p><b>High focus on integration of migrants which may include refugees</b> 2 Diagnostico (analysis of the context) 2.3 Social Cohesion and Inclusion, victims of human trafficking mentioned under 'vulnerable groups' and under 'immigrants' 2.5 SWOT analysis also includes reference to HT victims 4 Strategy to strengthen human capital 4.1 Priorities of the operational agenda for human capital, victims of HT mentioned under 'gender equality'</p>

## **Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL**

In total 2 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Portugal in Round 1 (1) and Round 2 (1)

### **Round 1**

Acolhimento e Integração de Requerentes de Asilo, [PT-2001-057](#)

### **Round 2**

VIAAS - Vias de Interculturalidade na Área do Asilo, [PT-2004-293](#)

## ROMANIA

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Romania by year (Eurostat)

Romania	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	660	590	135	125	5	0	340	120	0
2006	380	365	55	45	5	0	270	40	0
2005	485	470	55	40	15	0	415	0	0

In Romania, the number of asylum applications has been slightly increasing. However, it seems too early to confirm this tendency. The Geneva Convention status is the more granted one. It should be noticed that no application remains pending at the end of the period.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

No information available

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

A number of NGOs continue to encourage asylum seekers to participate in Romanian and English language classes. Computer courses are also provided by NGOs, notably by Jesuit Refugee Service, Romania (JRS). A number of legal, social and cultural training sessions are also organised

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

No information available

#### Asylum seekers' access to health care

No information available.

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

One of two OPs in Romania included asylum seekers and refugees as target groups<sup>26</sup>.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Romanian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
RO	OP Human Resources	National	Adopted	Inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	Asylum seekers and refugees are part of the Joint Inclusion Memorandum. They are eligible under: 3.2.6 Priority Axis 6: Promoting social inclusion Specific objectives: • Promoting and supporting job creation in structures of social economy; • Increasing the qualification level of persons belonging to vulnerable groups; • Improving the level of skills and competences of professionals in the field of social inclusion.	Information not provided

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

NA

<sup>26</sup> OP Administrative Capacity

## SLOVAKIA

### Number of asylum seekers

Slovakia	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	2,640	2,970	95	10	80	0	1,180	1,695	unknown
2006	2,850	2,815	10	5	0	0	860	1,945	unknown
2005	3,550	3,785	25	10	15	0	825	2,935	unknown

In Slovakia, the number of asylum applications has been decreasing while the number of rejections has been increasing. The number of humanitarian statuses granted has been higher than the number of Geneva Convention statuses granted.

### Asylum seekers' access to education

Asylum seekers' children and unaccompanied minors have the right to attend primary and secondary schools.

### Asylum seekers' access to training

- Adults have access to education but no access to universities.
- Re-qualification courses are arranged for asylum seekers by employment offices.

### Asylum seekers' access to employment

An asylum seeker has access to the labour market if he/she has not received a decision within one year after the application for asylum was lodged



## Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

## Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

Two OPs reviewed for Slovakia include one or more of the relevant target groups

Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Slovakian Operational Programmes

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
SK	OP Employment and social inclusion (Zamestnanosť a sociálna inklúzia)	National	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	<p>For the entire OP refugees are one of the categories of the definition of a disadvantaged person.(p.30)</p> <p>In the below actions the OP specifies that <b>migrants including refugees</b> are one of the target groups:</p> <p>Priority Axis 2 - Support to social inclusion</p> <p>Action 2.1 - Support to social inclusion to people in danger of social exclusion or already excluded, through development of social care services with a particular focus on roma minority - refugees are included as a TG</p> <p>Priority Axis 3 - Support to employment, social inclusion and capacity building in Bratislava Region (Objective 2)</p> <p>Action 3.2 - Support to social inclusion, gender equality and work-life balance in Bratislava Region</p>	There is a reference to AS in the socio-economic analysis p. 57 where they speak about AS and other groups of migrants as one of the disadvantaged groups + there are figures on AS in SK
SK	OP Education (Vzdelávanie)	National	Ready	No reference	No reference	(Possible) inclusion of refugees	<p>Priority axis 3 - Support to education of people with special education needs - migrants and refugees are a target group p.122</p>	<p>However there is confusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- while the Priority axis 3 (p.122) says that migrants and refugees are a target group of this OP</li> <li>- the scheme on p. 127, which shows the division of competence and focus between the education and the employment OPs (see above) says that migrants and refugees are a TG of the employment OP</li> </ul>

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

### Round 1

NA

### Round 2

OZ Človek v ohrození, [SK-101](#)

Krajská rozvojová agentúra Prešov, [SK-86](#)

Spoločnosť ľudí dobrej vole, [SK-90](#)

## SLOVENIA

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Slovenia by year (Eurostat)

Slovenia	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	370	540	10	0	5	0	270	260	95
2006	500	900	10	0	10	0	570	325	200
2005	1,550	1,785	25	15	10	0	665	1,095	unknown

In Slovenia, the number of asylum applications has been importantly decreasing. One may pay attention to the high number of other non status decisions, which stands as a specificity in Slovenia.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Access to primary and secondary education is allowed.

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

No access to vocational training. NGOs offer computer and language training.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Asylum seekers have access to the labour market one year after they filed an asylum application if during this time no decision has been issued by the competent authority and the applications cannot be held responsible for this delay.
- For that purpose, applicants have to acquire a work permit. This permit is valid for 3 months. They are only allowed to work 8 hours a week.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to health care services is limited to emergency health care.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

One OP was reviewed for Slovenia. This programme included asylum seekers and refugees as target groups.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Slovenian Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
SL	OP for Human Resource Development 2007-2013	National	Ready	Inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	3. Development strategy OP HRD priority axes 3.3.4 Equal opportunities and reinforcing social inclusion 3.3.4.1 Equal opportunities in the labour market and reinforcing social inclusion	2. Socio-economic analysis 2.2 Socio-economic analysis per development area with SWOT analysis 2.2.4 Social inclusion and equal opportunities 3. Development strategy 3.1 Past experience Measure 9: assist asylum seekers in integration (asylum seekers 3.2 Key objectives, targets and indicators 3.2.3 Basic principles

### Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

#### Round 1

NA

#### Round 2

PROGRES [SI-26](#)

## SPAIN

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Spain by year (Eurostat)

Spain	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	7,195	5,400	245	240	5	unknown	5,155	unknown	unknown
2006	5,295	4,065	205	185	20	unknown	3,860	unknown	unknown
2005	5,050	5,140	345	235	110	unknown	4,795	unknown	unknown

In Spain, the number of asylum applications has been increasing. The number of Geneva Convention statuses granted is higher than the number of humanitarian status, which remains rarely granted.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Education is compulsory for all children between 3 and 16. Possible access to the education system at any age if requirements are met.

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

Access is allowed on the same conditions as Spanish citizens (but few enrol because of qualification requirements).

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- Access to work after 6 months by getting a stamp in identification documents.
- Asylum seekers have the same access to the labour market as country's own nationals.

### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening, only carried out in the induction or reception centres.
- Access to health care in reception centres.
- Access to the health system, similar to citizens.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

One Spanish OP refers to asylum seekers.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Spanish Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
ES	Lucha contro la discriminacion (Combatting discrimination) PO plurirregional	National	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	No reference	Information not provided	<p>Section 2 Labour market 2.4. Factors of inequality and/or discrimination in the labour market Detailed elaboration of the fact that asylum seekers and those under humanitarian protection provided by the State are also disadvantaged, like immigrants with regard to access to the labour market, related to the different socio-economic context and needs of the hosting country.</p> <p>Section 3: Transversal objectives 3.2 Promotion of non-discrimination and social inclusion Reference to the need to integrate anti-discrimination based on race, ethnic origin, etc into all measures. However, whether this would cover asylum seekers is not clear</p>

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

### Round 1

ENEAS EQUAL [ES-ES617](#)

### Round 2

ENEAS EQUAL 2 [ES-ES20040664](#)

## SWEDEN

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in Sweden by year (Eurostat)

Sweden	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	36,205	32,470	15,640	855	13,720	1,065	12,185	4,650	23,035
2006	24,320	46,395	22,745	680	20,765	1,295	12,680	10,970	17,405
2005	17,530	23,920	5,360	335	4,425	600	15,925	2,640	9,030

In Sweden, the number of asylum applications has more than doubled between 2005 and 2007. Consequently, the number of pending applications at the end of the period has also been increasing. The more often granted status is the humanitarian one.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Education is compulsory for all children between 7 and 18.

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

Asylum seekers must have had a residence permit for more than 3 months to attend upper level education. Attendance levels are however extremely low.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

Asylum seekers are allowed to work if the application procedure of the Migration Board is expected to take more than 4 months.

Asylum seekers are still allowed to work when appealing a negative decision.



### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening.
- Access to emergency medical and dental care.
- Pregnant female asylum seekers have the right to receive free maternity care, abortion as well as contraceptive advice.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

One OP reviewed for Sweden includes one or more of the relevant target groups

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the Swedish Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
SE	SE- esf- op 2007 - 2013	National	Ready	Inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	<p>OP 2: Objective no. 3: Contribute to the facilitate access to the labour market for persons with a 'foreign' background.</p> <p>Quantified goals: at least 75,000 participants, of which 15,000 should have been born abroad.</p> <p>Target groups:</p> <p>(a) Persons who are long-term unemployed (at least a year) with a particular focus on foreigners.</p> <p>(d) Persons who receive introduction benefits for refugees or certain other foreigners</p> <p>Anti-discrimination work also mentioned.</p> <p>Transnational work possible.</p>	<p>Preward, point 6: Learning lessons have been made from the EQUAL initiative, in particular concerning the combination of local, regional, national and European activities. These lessons should be taken into account when funding is given from the ESF.</p> <p>Particular attention should be given to the participation of target groups, integration of immigrants, including asylum seekers, political issues and the integration of the latter group, innovative and experimental ways of working, methods for transnational cooperation, activities targeting groups which are marginalised in relation to the labour market, the impact of social aspects on the internal market and NGOs' access to and possibilities to lead projects.</p>

## Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 5 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in Sweden in Round 1 (3) and Round 2 (2).

### Round 1

Arrival Goteborg, [SE-47](#)

Modul 16-20, [SE-48](#)

RE-KOMP, [SE-49](#)

### Round 2

Nove, SE-89 (link not provided on the EQUAL website)

AROS –Asyl, [SE-90](#)

## UNITED KINGDOM

### Numbers of asylum seekers

Table 1 – Number of asylum claims and decisions on asylum claims in UK/Great Britain by year (Eurostat)

UK/Great Britain	Number of applications	Number of decisions	Total of positive decisions	Geneva Convention status granted	Humanitarian status or all other types of subsidiary protection equivalent to asylum	Other positive decisions	Rejections	Other non status decisions	Applications pending at the end of the period
2007	27,905	27,630	6,805	4,480	2,325	unknown	19,485	1,340	unknown
2006	28,320	27,520	5,045	2,630	2,410	unknown	20,430	2,050	unknown
2005	30,840	36,650	5,425	2,470	2,955	unknown	27,780	3,440	unknown

In the UK/Great Britain, the number of asylum applications has been stable. The number of Geneva Convention statuses granted is higher than the number of subsidiary statuses granted.

#### Asylum seekers' access to education

Education is compulsory for all children between 5 and 16.

#### Asylum seekers' access to training

- No restrictions to access to university and other further education, but not eligible for student grants and usually charged overseas students fees.
- May attend further education courses as home students.
- Level 2 occupational standards entry to training only, unaccredited.

#### Asylum seekers' access to employment

- .Access after 12 months after they filed an asylum application if during this time no decision has been issued by the competent authority.
- Need to apply for permission to work from Home Office, no time limit for when decision needs to be made, applications not routinely processed.

- Must receive written permission from Home Office before taking employment, once this is granted the asylum seeker has the same access to the labour market as country's own nationals.

#### Asylum seekers' access to health care

- Access to medical screening, only carried out in the induction or reception centres.
- Persons with an outstanding application for asylum (and their dependents) have access to the National Health Service (NHS) without charge, like UK residents.
- Failed asylum seekers: no right to NHS<sup>27</sup>, except emergency services, sexually transmitted diseases (except HIV/AIDS), communicable diseases, family planning, and compulsory psychiatric care.
- Access to specialised treatment for tortured and traumatised asylum seekers.

### Inclusion of asylum seekers in ESF Operational Programmes

Five out of the six OPs reviewed for UK/Great Britain includes one or more of the relevant target groups

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the British Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
UK	UK - esf- op England and Gibraltar 2007 - 2013 PO001 Doc1 - Doc13	Regional	Adopted	No reference	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	Priority Axis 1: Extending employment opportunities Indicative activities:	

<sup>27</sup> However, according to a judicial review from April 2008 regarding a failed AS receiving free hospital treatment, it is possible for failed asylum seekers to be considered 'ordinarily resident' in the UK, and, consequently, entitled to free NHS hospital treatment.

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the British Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
UK	UK - esf - OP East Wales Regional Competitiveness and Employment Programme 2007 - 2013	Regional	Adopted	No reference	Inclusion of HT victims	No reference	Chapter 5 Cross-cutting themes Objective 1: Increase the number of individuals who have multiple disadvantages accessing employment and self employment.	
UK	UK - esf- op West Wales and the Valleys 2007 - 2013 doc2 PO002	Regional	Adopted	No reference	Inclusion of HT victims	No reference	Objective 1: Increase the number of individuals who have multiple disadvantages accessing employment and self employment.	
UK	UK - ESF - Highlands and Islands Scotland 2007 - 2013	Regional	Ready	Reference to asylum seekers	No reference	Inclusion of refugees	<p>First objective: "to broaden and increase sustainable participation in the Highlands &amp; Islands workforce, particularly for groups which face severe and multiple disadvantages" includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other disadvantaged unemployed/inactive groups such as prisoners prior to release, ex-offenders, people with drug or alcohol problems, homeless people, migrant workers and refugees</li> </ul>	<p>3. Policy background 3.1 Policy context 6 Coordination with other funds 6.7 The EU Lifelong Learning Programme Similarly, actions taken through the ESF Programme – especially through Priority 1 – will be complementary to actions undertaken in the framework of the European Refugee Fund. Annex E: Equal Opportunities Impact Assessment So what changed because of the Equal Opportunities Assessment? Generally special targeting was welcomed, although there was a feeling that thematic targeting should also be considered – particularly mentioned were the young NEET group, ex-mining communities, low paid female workers, ethnic minorities and asylum seekers</p>

**Table 2 – Inclusion of target groups in the British Operational Programmes**

MS	OP	National / regional	Status	Inclusion / reference to target groups			Details (priority axe, type of eligible actions, etc)	Other relevant details
				Asylum seekers	HT victims	Refugees		
UK	UK ESF Lowlands & uplands scotland 3007 - 2013	Regional	Ready	(Possible) inclusion of asylum seekers	No reference	(Possible) inclusion of refugees	No information provided	2. Socio-economic background 2.1 General background 2.2 Employment and employability 2.3 Workforce skills Annex E: Equal Opportunities Impact Assessment So what changed because of the Equal Opportunities Assessment?

### Overview of EQUAL Partnerships in Round 1 and 2 of EQUAL

In total 7 EQUAL Partnerships were implemented in UK/Great Britain in Round 1 (3) and Round 2 (4).

#### Round 1

Liverpool Asylum Seeker and Refugee (LASAR) Development Partnership, [UKgb-41](#)

ATLAS - Scotland (Action for Training and Learning for Asylum Seekers), [UKgb-5](#)

UK Asylum Seekers, [UKgb-62](#)

#### Round 2

ASPIRE (Asylum Seekers Pursuing Integration, Refuge & Empowerment), [UKgb-146](#)

Haringey ASPIRE DP, [UKgb-150](#)

Empowering Asylum Seekers to Integrate (EASI), [UKgb-93](#)

ATLAS Scotland, [UKgb-94](#)