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7.12.9 Access to education

Some key initiatives in 2019 aimed to improve access to education and the educational outcomes of migrant children and youth, including pre-school, compulsory primary and secondary education, and higher education. A special UNHCR campaign on refugee and migrant children's access to education (see also [Section 7.7.2.5](#)) underlined the fact that beneficiaries of international protection are entitled to education under the same conditions as nationals, but they do not automatically receive the corresponding benefits, which can restrict their access to quality education. The report mentioned that a full comparative analysis was difficult since the data and definitions are not aligned across Europe.⁶⁴⁷ Other relevant report looked into higher education for third country nationals.⁶⁴⁸

The general scheme in Norway that offers low-income families 20 free core hours a week in pre-school was expanded to include children aged 2 (rather than starting at age 3). The Directorate of Education and Training commissioned the development of a tool to map the Norwegian language knowledge of pre-school children. The renewal of a more inclusive primary and secondary education curricula was ongoing and planned to be implemented as of August 2020.

The general upper secondary education core curriculum was under revision in Finland to ensure better educational outcomes for both native and second language students. A government working group report was published, building on the results of two previous reports, which put forward 40 new proposals to facilitate the integration of migrant children in Finnish education.⁶⁴⁹ The Finnish Education Evaluation Centre published an evaluation of students with an immigrant background in higher education, which revealed challenges in entering higher education and receiving support throughout the studies. The new Finnish government planned to draft a higher education accessibility plan.

Special programmes from the Flemish and French communities in Belgium continued in 2019, focusing on increasing the participation of migrant children in pre-school education and strengthening the system of bridging classes in compulsory primary and secondary education.

Applicant and beneficiary children could still benefit from preparatory and supplementary language classes in Croatia, upon approval from the Ministry of Science and Education.^{lix}

Beneficiaries of international protection could also apply for one of the state-provided scholarships for support in higher education. However, the NGO, Are you Syrious, noted that some public officials were not adequately aware of the rights to enrol for beneficiary children and some specific support programmes were cancelled as the number of participating children

