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icon for social orientation

In 2021, the length of the obligatory orientation course was extended in Austria, while initiatives in Croatia, Poland, Romania and Slovakia focused on providing social orientation for migrants and beneficiaries of international protection through special information centres. National organisations developed relevant guidelines, for example in Spain, and with EU funding, civil society organisations developed digital applications to help with orientation and everyday life.

The obligatory orientation course for beneficiaries of international protection in Austria was extended from 8 to 24 hours to include modules on gender equality, antisemitism and the importance of voluntary work.1249

In Croatia, the Civil Rights Project Sisak (CRP Sisak) opened an integration centre in the town of Sisak to provide support for the integration of different groups of migrants, including beneficiaries of international protection and resettled refugees *(see Section 4.16)*.1250

Two pilot integration centres were launched in the voivodeships of Opolskie and Wielkopolskie, as the second phase of the AMIF-funded project “Building Structures for the Integration of Foreigners in Poland.” Their tasks include information provision, Polish language courses, orientation, and intercultural, legal and psychological counselling.1251

As a civil initiative, the Global Help Association, the IOM and the Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania opened a new regional integration centre in Giurgiu to support the social inclusion of beneficiaries of international protection and other third-country nationals in the south-east of the country.1252 The centre provides information, counselling, education, social services, in-kind support and facilitates access to housing, health care and the labour market. In Brasov county, another similar project was implemented by the Romanian Association for the Promotion of Quality and Best Practices and the Romanian National Council for Refugees, with an information point which provides support services. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the project forged ahead of schedule, in particular due to the high interest in language training.1253 Overall, six network regions were established and currently two integration centres function independently of government reception centres, with funding secured until the end of 2022.1254

To bridge the gap between locals and newly-arrived beneficiaries of international protection, 1255 the NGO Mareena in Slovakia used crowd-funding to open a café for a month in February 2021, where women refugees shared typical cuisine from their country of origin.1256 The civil society organisation Human Rights League launched the first accredited service to support beneficiaries of international protection and migrant victims of hate crime, through free legal, social and psychosocial assistance.1257

Academic and civil society partners from Austria, Cyprus, France, Malta and Portugal implemented the Erasmus+ KA2 project IEUME, aiming to develop innovative educational tools to support the integration process of migrants, including beneficiaries of international protection *(see Section 4.9)*.1258

The Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities developed a guide promoting the inclusion of refugees, asylum seekers and stateless persons with disabilities *(see Section 5)*.1259 JRS Europe provided examples of their integration initiatives designed specifically for women in Greece and Portugal, in addition to individual success stories in Germany and Italy.1260

Among practical issues faced in everyday life, a report commissioned by UNHCR in Bulgaria found that not only applicants *(see Section 4.7)* but also recognised beneficiaries of international protection face challenges in opening bank accounts in the country due to the bank's policy. 1261

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