

NIEM Baseline report - Hungarian National Report of 2018

The Hungarian National Report of 2018 intends to prepare key actors concerning general conditions of integration in 15 EU Member States, one of which is Hungary, focusing on the BIP integration situation of 2016.

Hungary has always been considered a transit country for asylum applicants and BIPs, but for the lack of integration prospects and unpromising conditions family members in Western European EU states encourage the BIPs to leave Hungary. During the 'refugee crisis' 177135 asylum applications were registered by the authorities, in 2016 the number decreased to 29432 applications mainly from Afghanistan, Syria, Pakistan, Iraq, and Iran.

The continuously shrinking space of asylum created an 'asylum system without refugees' which affected the mainstreaming of integration policies. The country has no established specific strategy on the matter. In 2013 the first Migration Strategy was adopted by governments which call for a specific Integration Strategy which has not happened yet. In the absence of a specific integration strategy, the protection of BIPs is based on provisions of legislation granting equal right with nationals and on an informal social contract' between state authorities, civil society organizations, NGOs, and church-based organizations in the fields of integration: in housing), guidance, facilitating labor market integration by job-seeking assistance, internship programs and facilitating access to social assistance, and health care.

The Hungarian system provides for equality but not for equity. BIPs enjoy the same rights to employment, healthcare, social assistance, and education, however, accessing the rights they are entitled to can be problematic. In 2016 the government shut down the reception center Bicske; currently, there is only one open reception facility that accommodates BIPs. BIPs do not receive a residence permit, they receive ID cards and cards verifying their permanent address. Family members of BIPs may have the same status with their sponsor or they can be holders of residence permits for family reunification; family members of refugees shall be granted refugee status to preserve family unity; children of refugees born in Hungary shall be granted refugee status.

The legislation concerning citizenship provides preferential conditions for people of Hungarian ancestry; family members of Hungarian nationals; children born in Hungary; stateless people; refugees, etc. These preferential conditions are realized as a shorter waiting period than the general rule of 8 years of continuous residence, but some categories of applicants are waived even from the condition of having a fair standard of living. Refugees benefit from a shorter waiting period: they shall have a continuous residence in Hungary for at least 3 years.

In Hungary, housing policies are determined by the dominance of the share of the owner-occupied sector as a consequence of the privatization before EU accession. Neither the national nor the regional/local governments have started social housing projects, the margin of maneuver of social housing is very limited to the small share of flats owned by municipalities or the project-based housing projects implemented by local government authorities, NGOs, church organizations.

Employment is a field where BIPs can find opportunities in Hungary. BIPs may be employed without a work permit, the only activity required from the employee is to provide statistical information to the labor authority on the number of beneficiaries of international protection employed, however, it is mainly the characteristics of the Hungarian labor market that facilitates their access to employment. From 2011 the mobility of the Hungarian nationals in

the EU increased resulting in a large demand for labor force in Hungary, which resulted in a labor shortage in the national economy creating job opportunities for BIPs.

The system of vocational training in Hungary is based on training provided in the framework of general secondary public education, vocational training in the framework of tertiary education, and vocational training in non-formal education. BIPs face difficulties in accessing vocational training. There are a few educational institutions mainly in Budapest that facilitate access to BIPs. There are no social orientation programs or specific language training provided or even supported by the national or local governments, the vocational training providers receive no funding for such activities. The knowledge of the national language is crucial concerning integration, however, there are no publicly funded Hungarian language courses for BIPs; free language courses are provided by NGOs or church organizations only.

In Hungary, basic health care is freely provided for BIPs. Integration is a two-way process, it necessitates an inclusive attitude from the society of the host country, but it also requires the BIPs acceptance and respect for the laws and customs of the host countries. According to Eurobarometer polls between 2015 and 2017, the majority of Hungarians (82% in 2015, 81% in 2016, and 78% in 2017) responded that they felt negatively towards immigration from outside the EU.