



Research Compilation Report

DIGITAL PRACTICES FOR INCLUSIVE PROGRAMS

IO1 - COMPILATION OF RESEARCH REPORTS FROM EACH PARTNER
COUNTRY

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Digital Practices
for Inclusive Programs

Project Partners



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1. Background to the project DPIP

The Erasmus+ funded EU-project DPIP aims to promote the use of digital pedagogies in integration and educational programs. Educators and advisers cannot always provide face-to-face support, for example due to staff shortage, illness, or other unforeseeable circumstances, such as the current COVID-19 crisis. Now, more than ever, it is apparent how necessary online services are in facilitating continued learning and participation opportunities. By utilizing digital tools that are suitable for integration and educational programs, this project supports strengthening the providers' digital capabilities and introduces an innovative non-formal methodological approach to creating inclusive programs.

Key objectives include:

- Developing an innovative program based on existing digital tools that focus on individuals' specific needs.
- Enhancing educators' and advisers' digital competencies; validated through certifications.
- Improving the digital competencies of migrants with special needs through an online course tailor-made to their needs.

2. Background to this Research Compilation Report

The Transnational Research Report based on the findings of this report is available in another document, containing infographics and an interactive design. The purpose of uploading this report is to offer a deeper understanding on the national situations in addition to the general report.

Each partner's national report will be more detailed below, considering:

- Desk research in their country looking at:
 - Migrant and refugees first steps in the host country.
 - How those with special needs are treated.
 - The supply and demand for language support and counselling services specialised for them.
 - Organisations working with migrants with special needs.
 - Information about the current training available for educators and advisers working with this population.
- Survey and interviews formulated based on the Digital Competence of Educators European Framework (Redecker, 2017).

All findings of the national research activities were gathered in a national report template. The following partners provided national research reports:

- CLAVIS – Sprog & Kompetence: national report Denmark
- iberika education group gGmbH: national report Germany
- Active Citizens Partnership: national report Greece
- CESIE (Centro studi e iniziativa europeo): national report Italy
- SwIdeas AB: national report Sweden

3. Definitions

For the purposes of this report the following definitions will be used:



Migrants – people with a foreign citizenship registered in the host country.

Migrants with special needs – migrants with additional, non-immigration related need that require extra assistance when interacting with areas of society and daily life (such as healthcare, and language and integration programs).

These can include those with:

- Non-normative abilities (e.g., physical, or mental disability).
- Dependents that can restrict professional or personal development.
- Experience of traumatic situations in their home country or discrimination.
- Experience of psychological difficulties.

4. Current situation for migrants with special needs

4.1. Denmark

In Denmark, migrants are defined as a person born outside of Denmark with no-Danish parents and in the first quarter of 2021 there were a total of 817,438 migrants. These can be divided into 4 groups: (1) migrants from western countries with 260,304 people, (2) migrants from non-western countries with 357,466 people, (3) migrants born in Denmark with parents of western background with 34,494 people and (4) migrants born in Denmark to non-western parents with 165,174 people. Over the last 5 years each group has increased as follows: 15.17 % (group 1), 13.67% (group 2), 36.31% (group 3) and 19.64% (group 4). In total the 4 groups have increased from 703,873 to 817,438 giving an increase of 16.13%.

As of 2021 the population of Denmark is 5,840,045 people meaning that 13.99% of the population belongs to the 4 groups mentioned above. (Danmarks statistik, 2021).

When the refugee crisis peaked in 2015, 10,415 people migrated with asylum as a basis for residence. This is the highest number so far in Denmark. In 2020, 1,515 people applied for asylum in Denmark. This is a decrease of 44% compared to the previous year, and the lowest number since the start of the survey in 1984. The highest number of asylum applications was submitted in 2015. (Danmarks statistik, 2021).

WHO - The World Health Organization and the European Disability Forum, say that about 10-15 percent of a population has a disability. (Dansk Handicapforbund, 2021). This estimate is supported by a report from the SFI - the national research centre for welfare (SFI – det nationale forskningscenter for velfærd, Larsen, 2015) stating that: “In the first quarter of 2014, approx. 17 pct. of the Danish population in ages 16-64 years have a disability or long-term health problem.” The report examines disabled persons’ positions at the labour market and finds that: “The employment rate is particularly low among people with a major disability or long-term health problem (28 percent) and among persons with a mental illness as the most significant handicap (25 pct.)” (Larsen, 2015). If we look at people with a mental illness, the report confirms results from earlier studies showing that the inclusion of persons with a mental illness in the labour market is a particularly big challenge. People with a mental illness have a very low employment rate.



4.2. Germany

Disabled people with migration backgrounds have a higher risk of discrimination and social exclusion, due to a combination of several factors that favour discrimination and vulnerability. They also face lack of access to education, which results in fewer or lower educational qualifications, according to BMAS (Bundesministerium für Arbeit und Soziales). Insufficient access to education in turn makes access to the labour market even more inaccessible for people in this situation, which in turn results in an increased risk of poverty and exacerbates their vulnerability. In addition, women with disabilities or special needs and migrants face multifactorial discrimination.

Representative statistical data on refugees with disabilities is not available. For example, the micro census only collects data on people living in private households, so a large proportion of the refugees who came to Germany in 2015 and 2016 are not recorded. In addition, there is no systematic recording of disabilities upon entry or initial reception.

Based on numerous assessments from academia and practice, it is undisputed that the situation of refugees with disabilities is often particularly problematic. There are major gaps, especially in the areas of accommodation and care, access to day-care centres, schools or the labour market (cf. DIMR 2016: 63ff. Behindertenbeauftragte/DIMR 2016). Furthermore, there are barriers to accessing adequate housing, healthcare and participation services in general (cf. Schülle 2017a and b). Moreover, this varies greatly from region to region. Especially in rural regions, there are major problems with regard to adequate care for refugees with disabilities. The lack of multilingual services and information material is a particularly high barrier. The legal basis for dealing with refugees in need of protection is the EU Reception Directive for Protection Seekers (2013/33/EU). So far, Germany has only partially implemented this EU directive.

What medical care is available for refugees with disabilities?

Refugees with chronic illnesses or disabilities can receive medical treatment in Germany. The problem is that exactly what these are is not clearly regulated. The authorities can decide for themselves whether or not to provide assistance and benefits. This is called "official discretion". Depending on the federal state, city or municipality, medical care therefore varies greatly. Currently, refugees and asylum seekers are only entitled to medical services for acute illnesses or pain conditions. Other services are only paid for if a doctor says that the treatment is absolutely necessary. (Section 4, Asylum Seekers' Benefits Act).

This is different for asylum seekers who have been living in Germany for longer than 15 months. They are entitled to the same medical care as recipients of social assistance. Asylum seekers then also receive an electronic health card.

The "Health Guide for Asylum Seekers in Germany" is published by the Federal Ministry of Health and the Ethno-Medizinisches Zentrum e.V.. The booklet offers information on health care for asylum seekers in several languages: German, English, Arabic, Pashto, Dari, Farsi and Kurdish-Kurmanci, Russian, Spanish, Italian, French, Serbian, Bosnian, Croatian, Polish, Romanian.

Asylum seekers and migrants without a residence permit do not normally receive integration assistance for people with disabilities. It is advisable for them to first go to a counselling centre for refugees. They should already say during the first conversation that it is not about monetary benefits, but about offers of help. For example, for a child with a disability. There is often help and exceptions for hardship cases. Sometimes it is possible for "tolerated" refugees to attend a workshop for people with disabilities. In any



case, it makes sense to go to an advice centre with your questions or problems.

Counselling centres for refugees and migrants exist in many cities and districts in Germany.

4.3. Greece

To begin with, according to the revised version of the Greek Constitution in 2001 the term “people with special needs” has been replaced by the term “people with disabilities” and therefore we aim to follow such pattern in the Greek report.

According to Eurostat report published in 2017 the percentage of people with disabilities in Greece is reaching 24%. The data on migrants with disabilities are limited as there is not extensive research on the topic. Yet, findings from national and international federations have shown the hazard situation these social groups are in.

According to the Ministry of Migration (Gemi & Triandafyllidou, 2019) Policy’s monthly statistics on resident permits, in 31st of August 2019 the stock of migrants legally residing in Greece stood at 552,485, recording thus a slight increase of 1.5 percent compared to August 2018 (544,443). If we added to that, the 93,962 resident permit applications that were pending on 31st August 2019, the total number of legally residing TCNs, in contrast to EU, in the country could be estimated at 646,447, which in turn corresponds to 6 percent of the total population (of 10,722,300 inhabitants) living in Greece (GSMPRAS September 2019). Similarly, 44,898 asylum applications (including Dublin cases) lodged up until 31st August 2019 showed around 8 percent increase compared to the same time cohort in 2018 (41,358) (Statistical data on of the Greek Asylum Service, September 2019).

With regards to the total number of migrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers with disabilities in Greece, coming from third countries, unfortunately there is no reliable national data. These people still represent an invisible group of individuals. Apart from the challenge to survive the journey, refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities encounter several barriers while being hosted in the hot spots and other accommodation centers in the country. One of the major concerns is the lack of information on their legal rights, international protection, and challenges in safe access to legal, and psychosocial services, as well as Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities. These people face lack of accessibility to assistance related to their disability, lack of access to medical care and insufficient access to assistive technology which could make communication and mobility easier. Women, children, unaccompanied minors, and older persons with disabilities face an even higher risk of being discriminated or excluded from receiving appropriate support (HUMAN RIGHT WATCH report, 2017).

According to the HRW report, people with disabilities are being overlooked in terms of getting basic services, even though they are among the most vulnerable groups. While some efforts have been made to respond to the needs of asylum seekers and migrants with disabilities, Greek authorities, the EU, the UN, and aid organization should put more effort to help these groups and ensure their smooth integration into the society.

Migrants with disabilities are not properly identified in Greece, partially because of the rushed registration process as the migration flows have been reaching unprecedented numbers lately. Additionally, the lack of a well-equipped staff causes even more problems (HUMAN RIGHT WATCH report, 2017). Migrants with invisible disabilities like intellectual disabilities, and psychological disabilities have difficulty to register (hrw.org, 2017). As a medical certificate is needed and most migrants lack one, they hindered to register any invisible disability (HUMAN RIGHT WATCH report, 2017).



4.4. Italy

It is not easy to extrapolate specific data on migrants with special needs, because statistics are generally calibrated on one or the other characteristic. The existing national statistics do not return data and information capable of capturing the double condition, therefore the characteristics of the phenomenon in its entirety cannot be easily detected. Unfortunately, the lack of knowledge of the phenomenon in its entirety foster the fragmentation of interventions.

Looking further at public services (the educational system, the healthcare system, social services), the will to deepen the link between special needs and migrants arises from the challenges foreign disabled people pose to the organizational, institutional and welfare structures: communication difficulties, the evident limit of effectiveness of the tools, a very high number of functional diagnoses of foreign minors in terms of language disorders, and the identification of hardly recognizable disabilities. These problems seem to indicate a certain inadequacy and the lack of certainty of ordinary tools.

According to the latest available national survey (from December 2019) foreigners residing in Italy amounted to 5,306,548, equal to 8.8% of the total population (ISTAT, 2020). Resident foreigners are broken down by origin as follows: 2,500,330 from Europe, 1,107,213 from Africa, 1,060,323 from Asia and 369,020 from America. This incidence represents constantly growing data. Important signs of stabilization of the migratory phenomenon in Italy such as: acquisition of citizenship, request for long-term residence permits, reunification for family reasons are growing trends (*Cittadini stranieri in Italia – 2019*). In 2020, 34,154 people landed in Italy, a number that has seen a large increase compared to the previous year (2019) when 11,471 people arrived (UNHCR, 2020).

Data on migrants with special needs in Italy

With regard to migrants with special needs, data are disaggregated in terms of both the analysis of levels of social inclusion and of the risks of multiple discrimination. The retrieval of statistics is based on sectorial information. In 2016 (last official survey) 70,648 foreign citizens who have worked in Italy until the maturity of a full social security requirement (16,232 EU citizens registered in the registry of the municipality of residence, and 54,416 non-EU citizens with residence permit for long-term residents) benefited from assistance (Il Sole 24 Ore, 2018). This assistance consists of social allowances or civil invalidity, of an average annual amount just over €6.000. Foreigners enrolled in the targeted placement lists (*i.e., special lists, or targeted placement lists*, are public lists formed according to a single ranking that gathers all disabilities; the enrolment in the targeted placement lists governed according to Law n. 68/99 is one of the conditions for the employment of disabled people¹) exceed 150,000 units per year. They represent for 2016 and 2017 just over one fifth of the total number of enrolments, while in 2018 the ratio is slightly below one fifth (Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, 2021).

In 2017, there were 10,546 adult foreigners (18-64) with disabilities and mental disorders in residential social care facilities. There were among them individuals with disabilities and psychiatric pathology (1,149), and pregnant or adult mothers with children (950), while elderly foreigners (both self-sufficient and non-self-sufficient) amount to 677. As regards to young foreigners staying in social welfare residential

¹ With sentence no. 454 of 30/12/1998, published in the *Official Gazette - Special Series* of 13/1/1999, the Constitutional Court recognized the right of non-EU citizens who are invalid civilians to register on the compulsory employment lists governed by Law no. 482/1968, like Italian citizens.



structures (up to 18, or up to 21 years old with the “administrative continuation²”), they amount to 9,302, of which 438 are suffering from physical and mental disabilities (ISTAT, 2017).

Since the 2007/2008 academic year, foreign students with disabilities have more than tripled, from 11,760 to 38,056 in the 2018/2019 academic year. The increase concerned all school orders, with a percentage of growth above the average recorded in upper secondary schools (MIUR, 2020). Overall, in the 2018/2019 academic year, there was a percentage of foreign students with disabilities of 13.4%. Out of the total number of foreign students, the percentage of foreign students with disabilities was 4.4%; higher than the corresponding share of Italian students with disabilities out of the total of students with Italian citizenship, equal to 3.2% (MIUR, 2020).

Table 1 - Foreign students out of total students and foreign students with disabilities out of the total students with disabilities

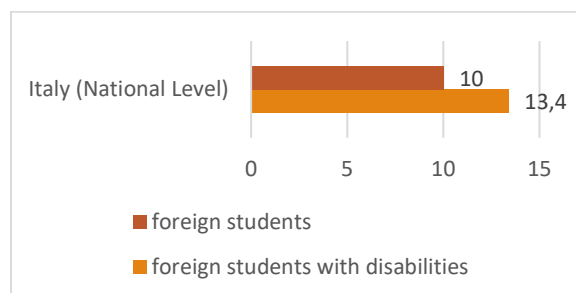
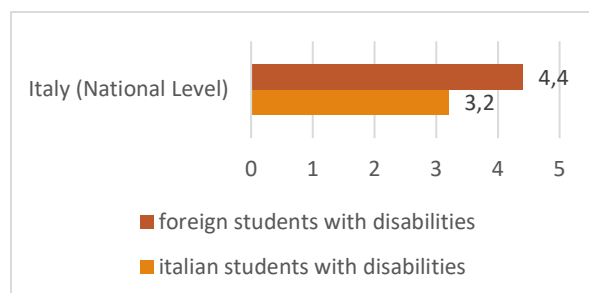


Table 2 - Foreign students and Italian students with disabilities out of the total number of students



Source: MIUR-Statistical Office

However, these data are not exhaustive and unable to provide us with an overview, and the resulting number is certainly well below the real number of foreign people with disabilities in Italy. In 2019, according to the data available in the *Atlante SIPROIMI 2019*, 844 projects have been financed (-3.4% compared to 2018), by the FNPSA³ (National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services), 631 of which intended for the reception of applicants and holders of international protection belonging to the ordinary categories, 166 for unaccompanied minors and 47 for people with mental illness and/or physical disability.

² The right to appeal to the “administrative continuation” is guaranteed by Law n. 47/17, “Provisions on the protection of foreign minors unaccompanied”, as per art. 13, “Accompanying measures towards the age of majority and long-term integration measures”.

³ The National Fund for Asylum Policies and Services (FNPSA) was founded in 2002 (Law n. 189/2002) to finance the programs implemented by local authorities within the Protection System for Applicants Asylum and Refugees (SPRAR), established with the same provision. Access to fund takes place through the submission of projects to the call for the allocation of funded places.



For this last category, the percentage of dedicated projects decreased by 9.6% compared to the previous year.

Integrated reception projects guarantee material reception (room and board), while social accompaniment activities are planned, aimed at getting to know the territory and effective access to local services, including social and health care. Overall, the projects financed by the FNPSA made 33,625 places available in reception, of which 85.3% were dedicated to ordinary categories, 12.7% to unaccompanied minors and only 2.0% to people with mental illness and/or physical disability (Ministry of the Interior, 2019).

Despite this residual percentage, conditions of vulnerability are quite widespread among the migrant population. A series of scientific evidence accumulated in recent years (Médecins sans Frontières, 2016) has found an increased incidence of mental disorders among immigrants, in particular higher rates of psychosis, depression, Post Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD), mood disorders and disorders anxiety. Those conditions have led to the need to tackle these vulnerabilities with a reception network capable of guaranteeing an effective and widespread take-over, through a homogeneous reception and an increasingly integrated approach into the local welfare system.

From the analysis of the annual activities carried out in 2019 by the projects that welcomed both adults and minors, a significant presence of beneficiaries in conditions of vulnerability emerges (*Atlante SIPROIMI*, 2019). The most significant percentage refers to the victims of torture and/or violence equal to 8.4% of the total number of people accepted, followed by the victims of trafficking equal to 4.9% and the beneficiaries with mental problems equal to 3.7% (Ministry of the Interior, 2019).

4.5. Sweden

By 2020, there were over 2 million foreign-born/migrants in Sweden, amounting to 19.6% of the whole population (10 million). The reasons for newcomers to arrive in Sweden are very different: some are fleeing from their home country, whereas some simply wish to relocate to study, work or start a family (Migrationsverket.se, 2020). There seems to be very little information about the number of disabled migrants in Sweden due to the sensitive nature of this information.

Migrants with residence permits receive the same rights to support as Swedish residents, which means that the below information relates to both groups (informationsverige.se, 2019). This comes in the form of special needs provided to individuals regulated under several Swedish laws (European Commission, 2020):

1. Swedish Social Services Act (Socialtjänsten, SoL, Lag 2001:453) (Riksdagen, 2021a)
2. Support and Service for Persons with Certain Functional Impairments (Lagen om stöd och service till vissa funktionshindrade, LSS – Lag 1993:387) (riksdagen.se, 2020)

These laws give individuals with disabilities the right to disability allowance (handikappersättning), personal assistance, supported housing, transport services (färdtjänst), assistive devices and housing modifications. These are organised by local municipalities in collaboration with the social security service (Försäkringskassan).

As of 1 October 2019, a total of 118,100 LSS support services were used according to Sweden's official statistics (Socialstyrelsen, 2020a). Socialstyrelsen also reported that around that time, 57,200 people with a disability used at least one social service under the SoL law (Socialstyrelsen, 2020b), most commonly housing support.



However, despite the amount of support available other statistics further elaborate the situation for people with disabilities in Sweden at the moment. The “Leaving no one behind” statistical review from October 2020 by Statistics Sweden (Statistics Sweden, 2020), shows that individuals with disabilities:

- Use fewer medical services than non-disabled individuals
- Have a lower educational level than their non-disabled counterparts,
- Experience more difficulty with coping with the distance learning due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The situation with asylum seekers is a little different but it is important to note that Sweden is legally required to do health screening when asylum seekers arrive, and this must include a look into the person’s past and present physical and mental health (riksdagen.se, 2019). The quality of these checks for identifying non-visible disabilities, is questioned by personal reports from asylum seekers with disabilities, as researched by Disabled Refugees Welcome (DisabledRefugeesWelcome.se, 2019). The research also shows that asylum seekers do not have rights to social services or personal assistance nor accessible Swedish language education until they receive their residence permit (Bunar, N., 2017).

5. First steps in each country

5.1. Denmark

Before you move to Denmark and start working, you need to find out whether you are required to apply for a residence and work permit or not. The conditions for a permit vary according to the purpose of your stay. If you are coming to work in Denmark, it is important that you apply for a residence and work permit before you begin working. Be aware that voluntary or unpaid work may also require a work permit. (Lifeindenmark.dk)

The conditions for a permit are complex, but main factor involves which country you are coming from and what you will be doing in Denmark. Nordic citizens are free to enter, live, study and work in Denmark without a permit, EU/EEA/Swiss citizens can reside in Denmark according to special regulations and should apply for EU residence document upon arrival to Denmark, non-EU/EEA/Swiss citizens must apply for a residence permit to stay in Denmark. Many residence permits include a work permit, but it is important that you have the correct permit for the job you are going to do. You may need to apply for a specific work permit if you are going to do unpaid work or seek side-line employment.

To get help taking care of everything you need to do visit your local International Citizen Service center (ICS) located in Copenhagen, Odense, Aarhus and Aalborg. All the public authorities you typically need in relation to your entry to Denmark are represented at these four International Citizen Service centers. So, in most cases, you will only need to visit an ICS to take care of paperwork and find answers to your questions.

You have the opportunity to obtain a permanent residence permit in Denmark when you have had a temporary residence permit in Denmark for at least 8 years. In some cases, at least 4 years. You must meet several conditions (described more Lifeindenmark.dk). **You do not have to live up to several of the requirements if you are prevented from doing so due to a disability.** <https://www.nyidanmark.dk/>

In Denmark each person has a personal registration number, which is called a CPR number. CPR stands for Central Person Register. The CPR number is essential in relation to any contact with the Danish



authorities and especially in connection to tax and social security issues. If you are coming to Denmark to work for more than three months (six months if you come from an EU/EEA country or Switzerland), you need to apply for a CPR number at the Danish National Register (Folkeregistret)". The CPR number gives the right to The Danish Education – learn Danish at a language school (see that section).

Asylum seekers First steps

You can obtain a residence permit as a refugee if you are covered by the UN Refugee Convention. You are covered by the Refugee Convention if you: have a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of your race, religion, nationality, your affiliation with a social group or your political views, and you are outside the country of which you are a national. In these cases, the residence permit is granted in accordance with section 7 (1) of the Aliens Act. 1.

Conditions for obtaining protection status: You can obtain a residence permit as a refugee with protection status if you risk the death penalty or risk being subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment if you return to your home country. In these cases, the residence permit is granted in accordance with section 7 (1) of the Aliens Act. 2.

A temporary residence permit means that a refugee can lose their residence permit and be sent back to their home country if the reason for their stay in Denmark changes. If an asylum seeker no longer needs protection because conditions in the home country have changed, the residence permit may be revoked or refused. Family reunified spouses may also lose their residence permit if the marriage is dissolved or if the spouse loses his or her residence permit because the Danish authorities assess that he or she is no longer at risk in the home country. (<https://drc.ngo/da/>)

Conditions for obtaining **temporary** protection status: You can obtain a residence permit as a refugee with temporary protection status if you risk the death penalty or risk being subjected to torture or inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment if you return to your home country, and if this risk is due to a particularly serious situation in your home country. Characterized by arbitrary violence and assaults on civilians.

5.2. Germany

The integration process for all migrants settling in Germany is very complex and the lengthy procedure varies greatly depending on the migrants' country of origin and reasons for coming to Germany.

First Steps Migrants (non-refugee status or asylum seekers):

For any newcomers in Germany who have come without persecution, they must apply for residency at the Ausländerbehörde (immigration authorities). There are various ways to obtain a visa depending on your financial and personal situation, this includes vocational training, job hunting, university or language studies, employment for skilled workers, EU Blue Card, self-employment, recognition of foreign professional skills, research work, and family reunion.

To apply for a residency permit with these conditions, it is typically mandatory to have proof of livelihood; a certain sum of blocked money to be self-sufficient during the duration of your visa. Most work positions grant you the right to health insurance, either discounted or paid in part by your employer. In this situation, for any newcomers with disabilities to apply for support from the state, you must apply for a Disability Card (Schwerbehindertenausweis). The local pension office (Versorgungsamt) will then



determine which benefits you apply for; these are applicable to all residents in Germany including German natives, migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The state will determine which benefits you qualify for including: special medical care, assistance in job hunting or protection from dismissal, a household helper, support for childcare costs, cost-free use of buses & trains, early retirement, and lower taxes.

While there is a process in place to assist those with special needs, disadvantaged groups are even more vulnerable within this process. According to the EU Human Rights Report in 2019, migrants with disabilities (both mental and physical) are “particularly susceptible to intersectional discrimination” and EU countries lack the infrastructure and policies to migrants with special needs and this discrimination is apparent in Germany as well.

First steps for asylum seekers and refugees:

All refugee and asylum seekers arriving in Germany must report to a state organisation on arrival or immediately thereafter. They can do so as soon as they reach the border or later within the country. Those who request asylum at the border are sent directly to a reception centre; anyone who does not make a request for asylum until they are in Germany can report to a security authority (such as the police), an immigration authority, a reception facility or directly to an arrival centre. All individuals reporting as seeking asylum in the Federal Republic of Germany are registered, after which they receive a temporary identification document. Only then can the asylum procedure begin.

Asylum seekers and refugee applicants receive benefits in kind at subsistence level during their stay and a monthly amount of money to cover their everyday personal needs. The nature and amount of the benefits are regulated by the Asylum-Seekers’ Benefits Act. These include basic benefits for food, housing, heating, clothing, healthcare and personal hygiene, as well as household durables and consumables, benefits to cover personal daily requirements, benefits in case of sickness, pregnancy and birth, as well as individual benefits which depend on the individual case.

The Residence Act (§ 3 par.1 Residence Act) gives recognised refugees the same rights as those entitled to asylum. Recognized refugee status is given to “individuals who have been persecuted for their race, religion, nationality, political beliefs or association to a particular social group in their home country”. These shared rights of refugees and asylum seekers apply regarding access to health insurance, financial aid, child and parental allowance, and family reunification. Both asylum seekers and refugees are given three year permits to stay in Germany, after which time they must apply for an extension at the Ausländerbehörde (immigration office).

Newcomers seeking asylum status with special needs are considered “particularly vulnerable individuals entitled to special rights”. Individuals must inform the Federal Agency for Migration when registering during their personal application for asylum at the BAMF or at an arrival centre. This interview is held by a ‘decision maker’. For those with special needs, they may have the right to special housing, extra financial aid, medical services and or counselling services.

However, this system does not work adequately. Caritas’ lawyer, Barbara Weiser, reports that staff at the reception centres can recognize physical disabilities but not psychological or cognitive, which poses great restrictions for care. It is reported that under the Asylum Seekers Benefit Act, asylum seekers are entitled to the same health care as the rest of the population in the first 18 months; they only receive acute care



and inadequate support. Due to this complex process, the first steps in Germany are slow-going, chaotic, and hard to understand.

5.3. Greece

Greece as situated in a peculiar geographical place – in the crossroad of Europe, Africa, and Asia – received an extensive number of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, most of them seeking protection. According to the Greek law (Law 4550 Article 2 of Directive 2013/33/EU), there is a categorization of reception applicants seeking protection: applicants, family members, minors, unaccompanied minors, representative of unaccompanied minor, applicant with special reception needs.

There are no specialized protocols for the registration of refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities, apart from the “vulnerability” criteria described generally in the Greek law of the operation of the Reception and Identification Centres, and they do not follow up the person during transfers to urban environment within the country (Asylum Information Database, 2020).

‘Vulnerability’ is recognized by law as a factor that requires special treatment of the persons concerned, regarding their reception and detention conditions. The law enlists certain categories of people such as separated minors, people with special needs and mental disorders, victims of torture etc. Persons found to be vulnerable may exit the fast-track border procedures and enter the regular asylum procedure. Initially, vulnerability was also a factor that allowed asylum seekers to leave the islands despite the general geographical restriction of movement. Vulnerability has been used by the Greek administration as an argument to support the lawfulness of the geographical limitation (World Migration Report, 2020).

There is no official individual plan to follow a person with a disability and/or chronic disease that would cover health and disability issues, needs and pre-conditions for any movement and accommodation within the country, as well as provisions for general services and programs that would ensure full social and professional integration (Theodoropoulou, 2019).

Support is often interrupted by the transfer refugees in different detention centres or their departure for various reasons from the hosting structures. In many cases communication difficulties between doctor and patient leads to abandonment of treatment (Slobodin and de Jong 2015). Another obstacle is the concern of refugees about the negative consequences it may have has an, albeit apparent, improvement in their health in the process approval of the asylum application. A possible rejection of the asylum application generally leads to the cessation of any care (Slobodin and de Jong 2015).

Staff and stakeholders involved in the refugee crisis in Greece are lacking the information about the appropriate structures and services that exist for persons with disabilities, as well as information about the rights of refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities in Greece (e.g. right for disability allowance) (HUMAN RIGHT WATCH report, 2017). Although most of the staff working with refugees and asylum seekers on the field are social scientists - social workers, psychologists, sociologists and other professionals - they have no or little knowledge about disability and, above all, they do not know how to approach and communicate with a person with a disability and how to respond to their specific needs (e.g. accessibility needs). There is also a lack of information about public support services addressed to persons with disabilities for even the general population (Theodoropoulou, 2019). For example, they are not aware of the Community Centres or the Disability Certification Centres (KEPA), etc.



5.4. Italy

The reception system in Italy has multiple levels: migrants rescued or irregularly entering Italy are taken to local centres for primary health care and pre-identification procedures, those who want to apply for asylum in Italy are transferred to the First Reception Centres (CPA). CPAs are first-level reception facilities, where migrants remain the necessary time for carrying out the identification operations. Here the health conditions of the guests are ascertained, with the aim of verifying any vulnerable situations. They can then access the second reception level.

The second reception level consists of the Reception and Integration System (SAI), a type of reception that is more aimed at integration. The inclusion in the new SAI circuit has been extended, within the limits of the available places, not only to holders of international protection and unaccompanied foreign minors, but also to applicants for international protection, (who had previously been excluded from it by the previous Legislative Decree n. 113/18), as well as to adult (18 years-old) entrusted to social services and to holders of different categories⁴ of residence permits provided by the Consolidated Law on Immigration (Legislative Decree n. 130/20).

SAI is developed on a double level of services: the first is reserved for asylum seekers, and is based on material, legal, health and linguistic assistance⁵. Second-level services are reserved for international protection beneficiaries (those who have already the asylum request been accepted and have recognized the right to international protection), providing counselling, integration, and career guidance services. The peculiarity of this system lies in its public nature, financed, and managed by public bodies (Ministry of the Interior; ANCI - National Association of Italian Municipalities and local authorities) according to a multilevel governance model. The synergies between different entities (voluntary organizations and associations, NGOs, cooperatives) at the local level provide an essential contribution to SAI's activities.

If the available places in the first and second reception systems run out, the prefectures can provide for the establishment of Extraordinary Reception Centres (CAS) and entrust them to subjects. Although it is an extraordinary system, the use of CAS (established by Legislative Decree n. 142/15) has become the majority over the years so far (InMigrazione SCS, 2018).

Once verifying any vulnerable situations, for those who enter in the reception system, it is necessary to provide for the activation of specific interventions, with targeted services, which implement the assistance and support measures in relation to their needs. The objective of these interventions is to support applicants and holders of international protection in undertaking socio-economic and cultural integration paths. The peculiarity consists in pursuing this objective through "integrated reception" methodologies. Consequently, projects targeting vulnerable people must, depending on the vulnerability:

⁴ The categories provided by the Consolidated Law on Immigration (Legislative Decree n. 130/20) available at: <https://www.altalex.com/documents/codici-altalex/2014/04/09/testo-unico-sull-immigrazione> are: special protection, medical treatment, social protection, (art. 18), domestic violence (art. 18 bis), calamities (art. 20-bis), particular labor exploitation (art. 22, paragraph 12-quater), acts of particular civil value (art. 42-bis).

⁵ The SAI system establishes that all reception facilities have to guarantee free courses of Italian languages to hosted beneficiaries of international protection. These courses are constituted by not less than 10 hours for week and they provided records of knowledges progressively acquired by foreigner. Courses could take place within the reception facilities or in external structures, such as Provincial Centres of Adult Education (CPIA), education institutes and social private organisms.



- Provide suitable reception facilities and facilitate access to public structures that take into account particular requirements provided by national legislation such as the absence of architectural barriers;
- Provide an adequately trained operators and staff together with specialists (psychologists, educators, psychotherapists, psychiatrists, legal, advisor, etc.) who are able to manage vulnerabilities of those victim of violence or torture, shipwreck, trafficking, mental distress, psychological fragility, and to prepare an adequate therapeutic plan;
- Build a network with the local social services (*i.e.* ASL - Local Healthcare Company) and the private entities competent in socio-economic-housing integration. Those entities can take care of people whose conditions (housing or economic hardship) do not allow them to have a completely independent life. This will be essential, so that the beneficiary can be supported even outside the SAI system, once the reception period is over. This is especially important for people with: physical disabilities and/or with mental or psychological distress, and for people with the need for specialized and/or prolonged health, social and home care (Ministry of the Interior, 2017).

Furthermore, the National Health Service provides prosthetics even for a limited period, to disabled people, or to those in need. This type of assistance provides citizens with four types of devices:

- equipment: tools that allow the disabled person to perform an act that he would not be able to do in normal conditions (*i.e.* the wheelchair);
- prosthetics: devices that replace missing parts of the body.
- orthoses: devices that improve the functionality of a compromised part of the body.
- medical devices: objects that help prevent or treat certain pathologies.

5.5. Sweden

Local public policies and programmes for integration in Sweden focus mainly on issues such as unemployment of immigrant and refugee groups, supporting their entrance into the labour market as well as facilitating access to education. Social orientation and introduction courses on the Swedish language, culture and society are offered by municipalities, targeting all types of migrant groups. Great emphasis is placed on language learning, housing policies, the right to health care, and labour market participation.

The first steps for migrants in Sweden differ depending on the migrant's home country and the reason why they are moving to the country. First of all, it is necessary to check if the person needs to apply for a residence permit and then apply for a personal identity number "personnummer", which you cannot get by without in Sweden. The website Flytta⁶ offers information for those who wish to move to Sweden. The Swedish Migration Agency's official website (2021) states that:

EU/EEA/Swiss citizens

EU/EEA/Swiss citizens who work, study, or have sufficient means to support themselves, automatically have the right of residence in Sweden, therefore do not need to apply for a permit or even contact the Swedish Migration Agency. Those who do not fulfil these criteria can apply for a residence permit if their family member is residing in Sweden. They can apply from Sweden and the application is free of charge. EU citizens can receive permanent right of residence after five years, or three years if they are cohabiting with a partner for at least two of those.

⁶ Flytta, n.d. Available at: <https://www.officialswedishservices.se/>



To get a Personnummer you must notify the Swedish Tax Agency (Skatteverket) that you have moved to Sweden by visiting one of the service offices (servicekontor). Their website⁷ has a “Move to Sweden” service where you can prepare for your visit to the service office by filling in the relevant information and then printing this in advance.

Moving to join someone

A person may be granted a residence permit if they are married, have entered into a registered partnership, have been cohabiting with someone who now lives in Sweden, or if are planning to do so.

Working in Sweden

To obtain a work permit in Sweden, one must:

- have a valid passport.
- have been offered terms of employment that are at least on par with those set by Swedish collective agreements or which are customary within the occupation or industry.
- have been offered a salary that is at least on par with that set by Swedish collective agreements or which is customary within the occupation or industry.
- be offered a position that will enable them to support themselves. In order to satisfy this support requirement, a person needs to work to an extent that will result in a salary of at least SEK 13,000 per month before taxes.
- have an employer who intends to provide insurance covering health, life, employment and pension when they begin to work.

Asylum seekers in Sweden

At the moment, Sweden has more restrictive laws for asylum seekers and refugees. A person can apply for asylum in Sweden if they are a victim of persecution or at risk of persecution or inhumane treatment in their home country. The person must be in Sweden or at the Swedish border to apply for asylum. The only exception is for quota refugees who can apply for asylum via UNHCR in another country.

“A quota refugee is a person who has fled his or her home country and been selected by the UN’s refugee agency, UNHCR, to be resettled to a third country which offers them protection. This process is called resettlement. Sweden usually accept 5,000 quota refugees for resettlement every year.” (Migrationsverket, 2021)

Migrants with special needs

With a residence permit, migrants with special needs receive the same support as Swedish citizens. However, it may take some time to receive the residence permit and the accompanying personal number (personnummer), which is crucial to almost every aspect of Swedish life: from opening a bank account, getting a telephone contract and starting Swedish language courses.

When it comes to support with applying for a personal number or a residence permit, the organisations mentioned in the next section (2.1.3.) do help with the process, but there is a substantial lack of information available on official websites. It is noteworthy that even before receiving a residence permit

⁷ Skatterverket, n.d. Available at:

<https://skatterverket.se/servicelankar/otherlanguages/inenglish/individualsandemployees/movingtosweden.4.7be5268414bea064694c40c.html>



or a personal number, migrants with special needs are entitled to some support under the SoL law and it is important to contact the municipality to have this assessed.

6. Organisations working with migrants with special needs

6.1. Denmark

- **Danish Refugee Council** (<https://drc.ngo/da/>) – is a leading, international humanitarian displacement organisation, supporting refugees and internally displaced persons in 40 countries. They provide protection and life-saving humanitarian assistance. DRC was founded in Denmark in 1956, employs 9.000 staff members and is supported by 7.500 volunteers in Denmark.
 - DRC also have Centre for Vulnerable Refugees. Centre for Vulnerable Refugees is a knowledge centre on the integration and rehabilitation of refugees with trauma and other vulnerable refugees. They provide knowledge, inspiration and tools. And you can get free advice or order a presentation. (<http://www.drc.ngo/cuf>)
- **Rehabilitation Centre for Refugees** (<https://flygtning.rn.dk/>) - provides treatment to traumatized refugees diagnosed with PTSD. Including persons with refugee status in Denmark who have been exposed to trauma or in some other way have been severely burdened mentally, physically and / or socially as a result of war, persecution, imprisonment, torture or other forms of organized violence and abuse.
- **Competence Centre for Vulnerable Patients and Patients with Other Ethnic Backgrounds** (<https://www.sundhed.dk/>) - Patients who have difficulty navigating healthcare. Patients who, due to complex health-related issues, need special course coordination. Patients with a Danish or other ethnic background with complex issues that are rooted in, for example, cultural or social challenges that create a need for special course coordination in connection with illness.

6.2. Germany

A handicap faced by migrants with special needs in Germany is that in most cases organisations specialised in working with migrants' rights issues and organisations specialised in working with the physically or mentally disabled do not work together, so that in these cases they have to go from one place to another to find relevant information to ask for support from the relevant institutions.

However, we can find some organisations and institutions that have experience and expertise in dealing with this joint problem, for example:

- Caritas - <https://www.caritas.de/> – online counselling for migrants and refugees.,
- Welfare organisations, for example the German Parity Welfare Association - <https://www.der-paritaetische.de>, the Workers' Welfare Association - <https://www.awo.org> or the German Red Cross - <https://www.drk.de/en>.
- PRO ASYL <https://www.proasyl.de/en/>
- Federal association Lebenshilfe - <https://www.lebenshilfe.de/>
- Church congregations
- The Independent Patient Counselling Service (UPD) - <https://www.patientenberatung.de/de> - offers free counselling by telephone and by email. Here you can ask your questions about health. Counselling is available in various languages, including Arabic.



- Information about and for unaccompanied minor refugees can be found on the website of Diakonie Deutschland <https://www.diakonie.de/>
- Advice centres in towns and municipalities, like Migration counselling centre for Adults.
- Federal Association of Psychosocial Centres for Refugees and Victims of Torture (Bundesweite Arbeitsgemeinschaft Psychosozialer Zentren für Flüchtlinge und Folteropfer e.V.) <http://www.baff-zentren.org/>

Besides there are some organizations that provide information and counselling for young migrants and refugees, for example: Youth Migration Service (JMD) in your area.

You can also contact one of the five organisations and associations which offer support to people with disabilities in Germany- where you can find detailed information about everyday life, law, work, health insurance and various other matters related to the people with disabilities (in German):

- Federal Association for the Blind and Partially Sighted ("Deutscher Blinden – und Sehbehindertenverband", DBSV)
- Federal Association for People with Physical and Multiple Disabilities ("Bundesverband für Körper und Mehrfachbehinderte", BVKM)
- Federal Association for the Disabled ("Bundesverband Selbsthilfe Körperbehinderter e. V.", BSK)
- German Association for the Deaf ("Deutscher Gehörlosenbund")
- Federal Association of Lifetime Help for People with Mental Disabilities ("Bundesvereinigung Lebenshilfe für Menschen mit geistiger Behinderung")

The most important institution dealing with migration and refugee issues in Germany is the BAMF (Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge). However, as explained above, they do not offer any special services for people with disabilities or special needs, apart from some special courses, which we will detail in the next section.

As far as we can deduce from the literature used for the study, most of the support and assistance available to people with special needs is based on their own initiative and in most cases handled by non-profit organisations, to which the BAMF delegates.

5.3. Greece

There are no organizations working with migrants with disabilities specifically. Infrastructures across the country hosting migrants do provide medical care but mostly connected to “visible” injuries, maybe a psychologist does provide guidance and assistance, but it is not something long-lasting (Theodoropoulou, 2019).

A few organizations/services though that provide support to people with disabilities in general can be found in the following section. Such disabilities include mental and physical disabilities and people that are socially marginalized. The following organizations aim to integrate migrants and refugees peacefully and gently in the new country they are living in and people that are interested in their work can easily contact them through the Internet on their official websites. EPAPSY and Koinoniko EKAV are organizations that provide accommodation options and assistance through special educational programs for migrants in general as well as disabled migrants. As for the National Confederation of Disabled People and HELIOS, both are organizations that represent migrants and their rights.



- **National Confederation of Disabled People:** The National Confederation of Disabled People (N.C.D.P.) is an umbrella organization representing the disability movement of Greece. The NCDP of Greece has officially been recognized as the national partner of the Greek State dealing with disability issues, promoting policies so that those concerned are included socially, economically, and politically in the everyday life of the country.
- **Koinoniko EKAV:** Kinoniko EKAV (a Greek acronym for Kinoniko "Hellenic Social Welfare Assistance Unit" [in Greece, the "EKAV" is the National Direct Aid Center of the public health system]) is an independent social organization aiming at combating any form of social exclusion. The name "Kinoniko EKAV" refers to the concept of responding to emergencies, where socially marginalized people are literally traumatized in their social status. Kinoniko EKAV aims at reaching out and helping people who have lost the capacity to meet their basic needs by themselves (accommodation, food, health care, etc.), and often even the capacity to ask for help, being in deep desperation. Such groups are, for example, street children, homeless individuals, unaccompanied minor refugees, isolated women, refugees with disabilities, unemployed without support, etc. With Greece remaining in a prolonged crisis, their numbers are growing; social marginalization is now hitting people who belonged to the well-off social groups until recently.
- **EPAPSY:** Organization's goal is to provide a model of integrated mental health care to the community. The quality of care is ensured through interdisciplinary cooperation, the implementation of WHO guidelines, the connection with local services, local agencies, users and families, the fight against stigma and social exclusion, the continuing education and training of professionals.
- **HELIOS project (funded by IOM):** HELIOS is implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and its partners with the support of the Greek Government and is funded by the Directorate -General of the European Commission for Migration and Home Affairs. HELIOS is a pilot integration project that aims to support beneficiaries of the International protection (refuges and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection) to integrate into the Greek society. The project offers services such as independent living, including rental subsidies, integration courses, employability support and integration monitoring.

5.4. Italy

The Consolidated Law on Immigration has established, within the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies, the "*Register of associations, entities and other private bodies that carry out activities in favour of immigrant foreigners*" (Presidential Decree n. 334/04, art. 52). The Register, whose membership represents a requirement of accessibility to public funding, has been active since November 1999 and is divided into two sections (Ministry of Labor and Social Policies, 2019):

1. Entities and associations that carry out activities in favour of the social integration of foreigners can register, as required by art. 42 of the Consolidated Law on Immigration.
2. Entities and associations that carry out assistance and social protection programs governed by article 18 of the Consolidated Law on immigration can register in this section.

The registered associations and entities must draw up an annual report on the activities carried out in the previous year which must be submitted by January 30 of each year, in order to update the Register. The



analyses carried out on the collected data allowed the elaboration of reports (i.e. *Report on the activities carried out in 2019*) that return a composite and articulated picture of the work carried out by the associations.

At a first analysis, the associations involved in disability do not deal with foreign and/or migrant people (with disabilities), the associations involved in migration do not deal directly with people with disabilities (foreigners and/or migrants). The result is that migrant people with disabilities, both first and second generation, find themselves in a situation of fragmentation of the reference points, where the conditions of disability add up and combine with each other, producing multi-discriminations that therefore make the access to rights, goods and services, and social participation severely limited.

Despite this discrepancy, the above-mentioned *Report on the activities carried out in 2019* shows that prevalent activities in 2019 for the associations of both sections are related to the "assistance and social protection" area (96% of the associations of the entities and associations included in the Second section and 76% of those enrolled in the First section). A total of 3,904 projects (1,368 projects, about third of the total, are relates to the management of reception facilities for migrants and related services, while 751 projects concerns the activities of training and support for the schooling of migrant children) were carried out by the associations of the First Section in 2019, with an average of about 5 projects per association. In the same year, the associations of the Second Section carried out a total of 300 projects (over half of them are represented by interventions in favour of emergence and protection of victims of trafficking and sexual or labour exploitation), with an average of about 2 projects per association. The beneficiaries are divided as follows:

First Section - Beneficiaries by category and age (values per 1000 beneficiaries)

Type of beneficiary	Minors	Adults
Asylum seekers, refugees, in humanitarian protection, refugees	95.1	173.3
People with deviant behavior, with psycho/social vulnerability	13.6	10.4
People with disabilities (physical/intellectual), health problems	22.5	31.5
People in economic/housing difficulties (e.g. homeless)	21.2	116.0

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Policies

Second Section - Beneficiaries by category and age (values per 1000 beneficiaries)

Type of beneficiary	Minors	Adults
Trafficked persons	282.9	264.3
People with deviant behavior, with psycho/social vulnerability	51.9	56.7
People with disabilities (physical/intellectual), health problems	3.5	1.0
People in economic/housing difficulties (e.g. homeless)	48.4	113.1

Source: Ministry of Labour and Social Policies



It is unquestionable to grasp from this reconstruction, albeit partial, that migrants with special needs, both minors and adults, have few projects targeted to their needs (Ministry of Labor and Social Policies, 2020).

Below are some concrete examples of Italian organizations working with migrants with special needs and the type of services they offer. There is a general lack of information about organizations working with migrants with special needs, and most of them focus on specific issues such as the psychological ones:

- **Alisei Coop** (<http://www.aliseicoop.it/>) - offers a series of activities ranging from personal services to initiatives to combat exclusion. Alisei Coop offers housing brokerage services to facilitate access to tenancy by migrants, with the aim of:
 - assist in the search for a house, in accessing public grants and social housing.
 - inform about the rights and rules existing in lease relationships and relating to housing.
 - identify suitable solutions from the point of view of the quality of the accommodation and from the point of view of contractual conditions.
- **La casa per gli immigrati** (<http://www.lacasapergliimmigrati.it/>) - offers a series of housing brokerage services, among them:
 - buy or lease properties for homeless migrants.
 - help migrants in real estate transactions that can lead them to own the house.
 - participate in all actions for the protection of migrants in relation to the right of obtaining the home property.
- **Centro PENC** (<https://www.centropenc.org/>) - carries out social solidarity and mental health activities aimed at the most vulnerable people (unaccompanied minors, women survived violence and victims of trafficking, refugees, victims of torture and trauma) and their care givers.
 - The Ethnopsychology Centre is the core activity of the Penc Centre and carries out clinical psychological care according to the GeoClinical Ethnopsychiatry approach, through competent linguistic-cultural mediation. Other than the Ethnopsychology Centre, it also offers:
 - trainings activities for social workers, mediators, educators, psychologists.
 - counselling services for both patient care and advocacy.
 - individual and group psychotherapy and psychological support (both in person and remotely).
 - linguistic and cultural mediation available in 15 languages.
- **ETNA - Etnopsicologia Analitica** (<https://www.etnopsicologianalitica.com/>) - provides psychological, psychiatric and psychotherapeutic service to migrants (adults, minors and their families) refugees, women victims of trafficking and unaccompanied minors. Sessions do not have a predetermined duration, and medical prescription is not required.
- **Associazione Frantz Fanon** (<https://associazionefanon.it/>) - provides counselling, psychotherapy and psychosocial support service for migrants, refugees and victims of torture. More than 2000 migrant users (single users, families, couples) have been taken care of by team which is composed by doctors-psychiatrists, psychologists, cultural mediators, anthropologists and professional educators.



5.5. Sweden

In Sweden, there is one organisation that is specialized in working with and supporting migrants with special needs in particular, which is described below. More counselling and job support services for migrants with special needs can be found [here](#).

- **Disabled Refugees Welcome** (<https://disabledrefugeeswelcome.se/en/>) - DRW was started to provide support and information to individuals who are new in Sweden with non-normative abilities (special needs/disabilities). The website provides information and research into this group of people as well as important links and tools that can help.

Counselling and Job Support Services for Migrants with Special needs

- **Activa** (<https://www.s-activa.se/>) - opportunities for people with disabilities to find their own paths at their own pace and time. With high competence, long experience and solid knowledge, they guide and support people to get a job. The goal of their work is to let the jobseeker and the employer feel secure and see the opportunities and benefits of a job.
- **Arbetsförmedlingen** (<https://arbetsformedlingen.se/for-arbetssokande/extra-stod/funktionsnedsattning>) - has specialist services available for individuals with special needs providing personal assistance in the form of specialist consultants, technological assistance as well as grants towards further support if needed. Make sure to ask for a specialist who are called: Särskild stödperson för introduktions- och uppföljningsstöd – SIUS.
- **Arbetsmarknadsutbildning (Vocational Advancement)** <https://arbetsformedlingen.se/for-arbetssokande/extra-stod/stod-a-o/arbetsmarknadsutbildning> - provides information on a labor market-focused education and training specific for certain jobs, directed at persons who have difficulties finding jobs, including individuals who are younger than 25, and have a disability that affects their work ability.
- **Att välja utbildning (Choosing your education)** <https://arbetsformedlingen.se/for-arbetssokande/yrken-och-studier/utbildning/att-valja-utbildning> - provides information on different education paths and how to find the option that best suits the person's interests and background.
- **Baskurs - AKO (Basic Courses - Activity Knowledge Orientation)** <https://www.rjl.se/Varnamofolkhogskola/Kurser/Baskurs/AKO/> - course on activity knowledge orientation target persons with intellectual disabilities who want to learn something new or meet new people. Provides education on topics such as English, iPad and computer skills, library therapy, sports and wellness, and social skills.
- **Jobbsprånget** (<https://jobbspranget.se/about/>) - Run by the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences (IVA), Jobbsprånget is a four-month internship program for non-EU migrant engineers, architects, scientists and economists with a degree. This is funded by Arbetsförmedlingen also which means you would need to be registered as job seeking (jobbsökande) to apply. **You are considered a priority group if you have disabilities!**
- **Samhall** (<https://samhall.se/sa-funkar-samhall/>) - works specifically with individuals with disabilities, especially those with intellectual disabilities. It aims to get people into the job market by training and matching workers to appropriate jobs. They have a specific project working with migrants which includes job training for three days a week and working on language training through Swedish for Immigrants (SFI) for the remaining two days. They use translators and mentors who work one-to-one with the individual.



- **Välkommen till framtiden** (<http://www.valkommentillframtiden.se/>) - An initiative aimed at migrants in Sweden with a lower educational background. Through the Swedish Employment Agency (Arbetsförmedlingen) participants have the opportunity to sign up and map out a personalised plan, learn and practice Swedish, and finally be matched to an appropriate job.

Organisations supporting migrants in Sweden

- **Mitt Liv** (<https://mittliv.com/se/>) - Mitt Liv is a social enterprise working for an inclusive society and a job market that values diversity. Their core activity, Mitt Livs Chans, is a mentorship program for individuals with a foreign background who do not have a job befitting their qualifications, contacts and networks. The program is at no cost to the mentees and is financed by our partners (businesses and organisations), who understand the value and benefits of increased diversity in the workplace. They also offer seminars, training sessions and networking events for organisations that want to address issues connected with diversity and development.
- **Support Group Network** (<https://supportgroup.se/>) - seeks to promote: 1) Empowerment of asylum seekers, refugees and migrants' own initiatives; provide them guidance, tools and resources to self-organize in different fields: (social, culture, education, sports, business, health and psychological care), and gather advocacy for their cases at all levels; 2) promote interculturality; 3) Business empowerment and job market inclusion; 4) Academic inclusion.
- **Kompis Svergie** (<https://kompissverige.se/>) – opening up Sweden through meetings between people to help newcomers in Sweden to receive help from established Swedes.
- **Nya Kompisbyrån** (<https://www.nyakompisbyran.se/>) - aims to increase communication and solidarity in society between new and established Swedes. They do this through friend matches. They are currently located in about 15 locations around Sweden. Anyone over the age of 18 can sign up for our activities and it is always free to participate.

Organizations/Individuals supporting refugees in Sweden

- **w2eu.info - Welcome to Europe** - This hyperlink w2eu.info - leads to an independent source of information for refugees coming to Europe. w2eu.info might be useful on their journey to and through Europe by giving access to counseling and useful contacts in different European countries.
- **Caritas Sweden** (www.caritas.se)
- **Center for Refugee Solidarity** (www.refugeesolidarity.org) - monitoring the situation of refugees in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and to advocate on their behalf. Making rights abuses visible through monitoring, documentation and advocacy, the Center for Refugee Solidarity aims to push key national and international stakeholders to ensure that the rights of refugees in the region are respected and upheld.
- **Flyktinggruppernas Riksråd (FARR) - The Swedish Network of Refugee Support Groups** (www.farr.se/) - helping and coordinating groups and individuals who work voluntarily for asylum rights at the grass root level. The members deal with asylum cases, participate in protests against unfair deportations, and support undocumented people. They produce information about asylum rights and procedure in several languages.
- **Rädda Barnen Sweden (Save the Children)** (www.rb.se) - Works with asylum seekers, especially families and unaccompanied minors.



- **Swedish Red Cross** (www.redcross.se) - provides information and support for asylum seekers. The Red Cross also works specifically with unaccompanied minors. They visit the accommodation for unaccompanied children and young people, arrange tours and provide educational support as well - all to facilitate their stay during the initial period in Sweden. They also provide a family tracing service.
- **Swedish Refugee Advice Centre** (<http://sweref.org/engelska.aspx>) - provides legal counselling and assistance in all matters concerning asylum, family reunification, Swedish citizenship and other matters referring to the Swedish Aliens' Act. It also collects and supplies country of origin information, legal documents and general information on migration issues as well as analyzing, studying and campaigning on the implementation of national and international law relating to refugees.
- **Mr Arido Degavro, Lawyer** (www.septadvokat.se) - Arido Degavro is a member of The Swedish Bar Association specialising in all aspects of refugee and immigration law, policy and practice, providing legal counselling and assistance in all matters concerning asylum, human rights law, family reunification and other matters referring to the Swedish Aliens' Act.

6. After permanent residence in each country

6.1. Denmark

When you get (temporary) residency permission, and you get your social security number (CPR.nr. – Central Person Registration) you will get several rights. This includes the right to take a Danish education – an education in Danish language at a language school. The language schools in Denmark are under administration of the local municipality. Every fourth year they will send out a public procurement and both public (municipal) and private language schools can develop and send an offer. Here both quality and price are in focus. This is worth mentioning because schools must speed up the time each student gets to match a competition price. This can also have an impact on migrants with special needs as they often need more time to learn.

The Danish Education has 3 different segments or levels: Danish Education 1 (DU1), Danish Education 2 (DU2) and finally Danish Education 3 (DU3). DU1 is for migrants with no or little school background. The second segment (DU2) is for students that have some school background and might have passed primary school. The last segment (DU3) is for students who all have an education from their homeland and can speak English.

All 3 educations are structured with 6 modules, and each have a test that must be passed before the student can go to the next module. Each module has a time frame from the Danish government which dictates how long time the student can spend on the module. This system is called the voucher system (klippe-kortsordning). If a student cannot pass a module test within the time frame/voucher for the module the student will start using the next voucher which was meant for the new module. Hereby the student can lack vouchers to the final modules. If a student does not have vouchers the student has to pay the full price for the tuition. Depending on the student's financial situation this is not always an option. To complicate this system there is another time frame for each module made by the local language school. This time frame is shorter as the school gets paid by each passed module. To be able to give a competition price, the school must get the students ready for the test quickly. The graphs below illustrate the system and the timeframes from the government versus the local language school (CLAVIS).



The students at language schools in Denmark are divided into several groups.

Overall, we can simplify these in two; I-students (I stands for integration salary) and S-students (who are self-supported financially). The I-students have a longer time frame – 5 years maximum but also a higher risk as they cannot fulfil one of the basic and obligatory criteria to obtain permanent residence.

6.2. Germany

After a person gets the permanent residency in Germany, the German Government provides a series of courses free of charge and to facilitate the learning of the language, as well as the integration and adaptability of the person to the German work system. These courses are administered by the Ministry for Immigration and Refugees issues, BAMF.

Each integration course consists of a language course and an orientation course. The general integration course comprises 700 lesson hours and depending on the orientation of the course that applies to you, the course may last for up to 1,000 lessons in total.

The language course forms part of the integration course. The general integration course takes up a total of 600 lesson hours, whilst the special courses are made up of up to 900 lesson hours. The fast-track course consists of 400 lesson hours.

The language course will cover important aspects of everyday life such as: work and career, basic and further training, bringing up and raising children, shopping/trade/consumption, leisure time and social interaction, health and hygiene/human body, media and media use, and housing.

You will also learn to write letters and emails in German, complete forms, make telephone calls and apply for jobs. Topics will vary depending on which type of course you attend. If for example you attend a youth integration course, you will deal with topics which are of particular interest to young people such as applying for an apprenticeship. The final stage of the language course consists of the "German language test for immigrants" (DTZ). Following the language course, you take part in the orientation course. It takes 100 lesson hours to complete, whilst the fast-track course version lasts 30 lesson hours.

In addition to these general courses, there are other courses for people in special situations or who have additional needs or difficulties:

- The literacy course is designed for people who have not had the opportunity to learn to read and write in their home country, which is an additional obstacle to learning German.
 - Students learn during the 1,000 lesson hours that they too can successfully learn to read and write, learning takes place in small groups. This means that the teacher has more time for each attendee, the participants learn what helps them to learn, as well as learning how to help themselves and each other to make progress, the attendees find out more about their potential and discover that they can also play an active role in society, attendees learn how to use a textbook so that they can attend other German courses later or can continue to learn alone.
- The integration course for students learning an additional alphabet.
 - comprises up to 1,000 lesson hours, and targets migrants who have learned to read and write in a non-Roman alphabet. They now need to learn the Roman alphabet in order to be able to read and write and successfully learn German.



- The integration course for women enables them to improve their German language skills to the point where they are able to live actively in Germany. In addition, it will offer the following benefits:
 - they will get to know their children's kindergarten or schools during the course.
 - the course will be taught by a woman.
 - they will meet other women with similar interests to yours.
 - the course will enable them to discuss subjects which particularly interest them.
- Course for parents: they are very similar to women's courses, but besides they will give them information about German educational system.

The following agencies can provide with more information:

- The Migration Advice Service for Adult Immigrants and the Youth Migration Service, <https://www.make-it-in-germany.com/en/living-in-germany/advisory/migration>
- The immigration authority, Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge.
- The Employment Agency, Agency, JobCentre, <https://www.arbeitsagentur.de/> & <https://www.jobcenter-ge.de/>

6.3. Greece

Education in Greece is compulsory for all children in Greece including refugees and asylum seekers who are aged between 5 and 15 years old. It is important to mention that migrants under the age of 15 years old living in hosting infrastructures are obliged to attend Greek public school in correspondence to their age.

Unfortunately, there are no language courses provided by the Greek government (Eurydice Report, 2019). Most common way for a migrant to attend Greek language courses is through non-governmental organizations working with migrants, refugees, or asylum seekers. As the demand for these courses is high and in conjunction with the number of refugees wishing to learn the language and the fact that the courses are free of charge it is inevitable to cover all requests resulting many people to finally not manage to attend any of the courses.

There is only one federal organization offering Greek language courses, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, yet the cost is high, so migrants do not even try to enroll. To enroll in language courses provided by the federal or non-governmental organizations it is needed to have legal papers and residence permit to have access to any kind of educational activity.

As there are no findings about migrants with disabilities, it has been observed (according to observations with cooperating organizations) that those who have any kind of disabilities either do not attend school at all or follow the classic school curriculum.

However all migrant minors (free of disabilities) have the right to access complementary compulsory education in Greece. Greece has made it a priority and considers it a duty and obligation to ensure and facilitate access to education for all minors living in reception structures. A training program was prepared by the Ministry of Migration Policy in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and is implemented on a large scale from 2016 onwards, with massive support from local societies despite exceptions. The program aims to ensure the right to education, which is a basic human right of every child. Moreover, to



ensure psychological support and the gradual integration of refugee children into the Greek education system or the education system of another European country in the event of relocation.

Families of disabled students and immigrant backgrounds are a critical issue in Greek society. The analyses reveal that this group of people generally do not make use of the support services as much as they could. The most cited reasons, among other things, are that: the student's family does not speak the language of the country host; the student's family does not understand satisfactorily the system and the services offered in this population or is not used to being provided with such support in the country of origin.

6.4. Italy

Once in Italy and at the moment of the receiving a resident permit, migrants have to sign the agreement and commit themselves to specific integration goals within two years. Specifically, immigrants must:

- learn Italian to an adequate level of knowledge (equivalent at least to level A2).
- obtain a sufficient knowledge of the Italian constitution and institutions.
- know Italian civic culture (the health system, the educational system and social services, taxes).

At the time of signing the agreement, the regulation does not provide migrants for the assignment to a caseworker. The Integration Agreement is articulated in credits: at the moment of signing 16 credits are given to migrants, but they have, to score 30 credits within two years by carrying out activities such as:

- Enrolment in professional training.
- Registration to the National Health Service and choice of a general practitioner.
- Stipulation of a lease agreement or certification of the taking out of a mortgage for the purchase of a property for residential use.
- Achieving of an academic title or diploma.
- Conduct economic or entrepreneurial activities.

Credits can be lost in the following cases: criminal sentences and (even non-definitive) application of personal security measures. However, migrants with special needs and disabilities do not need to fulfil all credits (migrants integration portal).

Concerning language courses, these are not compulsory. Many non-profit organizations together with the Italian educational system offer language courses free of charge, but just few of them are specifically targeted to migrants with special needs. Overall, language courses, are mainly provided by Provincial Centres of Adult Education (CPIA) or local permanent centres (CTP), together with civic education sessions aimed at learning the fundamental principles of Italian Constitution, civic culture and life in Italy. Italian courses concern A1 and A2 levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). At the end of the course, after an assessment of the concepts learned, the Provincial Centre of Adult Education releases a level certification.



The Italian legislation does not establish predetermined models of language course for the beneficiaries. It ended up that courses provided by CPIA are most of the time the same for all foreigners, not taking into account the needs or requirements of individuals who may have special needs or different learning levels⁸

The Italian legislation does not provide either a compulsory presence of a linguistic-cultural mediator neither within the CPIA (where language courses and civic education sessions are provided) neither at the Unique Immigration Desks, which are located inside each prefecture. Regarding civic education sessions, the materials used are translated into the language more suitable to the foreigner or, if this is not possible, into another language according to his/her preference⁹.

The law only establishes – only in relation to who has signed the Integration Agreement – that one month before the 2 years period expires, the competent administrative authority (i.e. *Sportello Unico per l'Immigrazione/Unique Immigration Desk*) has to start the process of verification of the fulfilment of the integration agreement. The foreigner is required to deliver the useful documentation to the Unique Immigration Desk in order to certify the achievement of the requested knowledges (art. 6 of Presidential Decree n. 179/2011 and circular n. 824/ 2014).

- If final credits are **above 30** and attainment of level A2 of Italian language is achieved, the agreement ends because of its fulfilment.
- If final credits **higher than zero but lower than 30**, the extension of the agreement for one year is declared under the same conditions. The verification will be carried out one month before the expiry of the extension year.
- If final credits **equal to or less than zero**, the termination of the agreement for non-fulfilment is decreed, with the revocation of the residence permit or the refusal of its renewal and the expulsion from the national territory (the revocation of the residence permit or the refusal of its renewal does not apply to migrants with special needs. If they suffer from certificated pathologies or disabilities such as to seriously limit self-sufficiency or to cause serious difficulties of language and cultural learning, they do not need to score credits to issue the residence permit) (Bianco R., Ortiz Cobo M., 2019)

The documentation relating to language skills must be issued by institutions approved by Minister of Interior and recognised by Minister of Education, University and Research. The certification can be obtained: at the end of the attendance of an Italian language course at CTIA or CTP, or by the achievement of a diplomas or licence with legal value of qualifications.

In relation to the guidance and counselling services, their implementation, involves local authorities, the Police Headquarters and trade unions and are activated through the signing of memoranda of understanding. Usually, the subject of the protocols is the regulation of the activation of information desks on territorial services and bureaucratic practices that are the responsibility of the Unique immigration Desk (*Sportello Unico per l'Immigrazione*), such as the issuance of residence permits, the submission of applications for family reunification, the formalization of the request for protection, and others, as well as the institutionalization of specific tools or services (Ministry of the Interior, 2017).

⁸ European Commission, European Migration Network (2019), *AD HOC QUERY ON 2019.15 Early language support*, pp. 17-21, available at: https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/default/files/201915_early_language_support_wider_dissemination.pdf

⁹ MIUR (2013), *Linee guida per la progettazione della sessione di formazione civica e di informazione, di cui all'articolo 3 del DPR 179/2011*, available at: http://archivi.istruzione.it/emr/istruzione.it/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/allegato-988_2013-Linee-guida-per-la-formazione-civica-C.pdf



These services are free of charge and are provided directly in first and second reception structures; anyway, there are also examples of agencies born with the precise purpose of providing counselling and orientation services for migrant and other vulnerable individuals (i.e. CLEDU – La Clinica Legale per I Diritti Umani - The Legal Clinic for Human Rights – it is a desk of orientation and legal advice born from the signing of a memorandum of understanding between the Department of Law, University of Palermo with "L'altro diritto. Inter-university research centre on prison, deviance, marginality and government of migration" and that, among other things, offers a help desk for legal advice and legal consultancy).¹⁰

6.5. Sweden

After gaining the permit to live in Sweden, the most important things are to: 1) to be registered in the Swedish population register; 2) find a place to stay; 3) learn the language.

1) It is important to have an identity number in order to be a part of the Swedish society. Sweden has two types of identity number: the personal identity number and the coordination number. In order to get the personal identity number, the person must have a permit that is valid for at least one year and stay in Sweden for at least one year. It is necessary to have a personal identity number in order to have a Swedish e-ID. Those who have work or study permits for less than one year can only get the coordination number, are not able to register in the Swedish population register and will not have rights to social benefits. Examples of situations where you will need a personal identity number or coordination number (Flytta, n.d.):

- Registering your car
- Joining a waiting list for municipal housing
- Registering your children at a preschool or school
- Registering as a jobseeker with the Swedish Public Employment Service
- Taking your municipality's course in Swedish for Immigrants (SFI)
- In Sweden, many authorities provide their services digitally.
- To take advantage of this, you need to be able to identify yourself using a Swedish e-ID.

There are other situations where a coordination number can't be used, for example (Flytta, n.d.):

- Getting an insurance policy
- Signing up for a phone contract
- Renting a car
- Collecting store loyalty points
- Buying a gym membership
- Shopping online

2) Finding a place to stay in Sweden can be a long and tiring process, especially in a larger city like Stockholm, Gothenburg or Malmö. There are municipal housing agencies that can be resourceful for renting options, however the waiting lists can be long. Sub-letting, buying property, or renting a room in someone else's apartment or house are also common ways to find accommodation in Sweden. Migrants with disabilities have priorities when it comes to housing according to the LSS law.

¹⁰CLEDU – Clinica Legale per i Diritti Umani, at: <http://www.cledu.it/>



3) An immigrant who has a personal identity number or is an EU citizen living in Sweden is eligible to have access to Swedish language courses (SFI) free of charge, which are organized by the municipality. Specialist SFI services are provided to individuals with special needs. Enrolling on these courses differs depending on the municipality and it can sometimes be difficult to apply, but all the information should be found on the municipality website. It is best to call when in doubt.

7. Current situation of supply and demand of language support for individuals with special needs and counselling provisions in each country

7.1. Denmark

In Denmark there is a political focus on improving the lowest educated part of the country. One of the biggest efforts here is the **preparatory adult education (FVU)**. FVU is targeted at adults who want to clarify, improve and supplement their basic and functional skills in reading, spelling, writing, arithmetic, digital problem solving and English.

The purpose of FVU is to improve and supplement the basic skills of adults with a view to further education and to strengthening their preconditions for active participation in all aspects of society.

The target group for FVU is adults over the age of 25, who have the prerequisites to follow the teaching with benefits. It will typically be short-educated adults and will improve their ability to take an education or need skills they can use at work or in everyday life. FVU digital and English are only aimed at adults in the workforce, while FVU start is targeted at bilingual adults and migrants with special needs. (<https://www.uvm.dk/forberedende-voksenundervisning-fvu>)

7.2. Germany

Germany is working to digitize educational and immigration services in order to create more inclusive and interactive programs for learners/newcomers. The Federal Government acknowledges the need for creating inclusive E-Learning programs for learners with special needs as an important policy goal. While these courses are already available, our research finds that the use of digital technology is limited, which ultimately restricts migrants with special needs from accessing these programs.

Individuals with special needs are still not an important target group for the e-learning industry. E-learning is an important tool to enable people with disabilities to obtain qualifications that increase their chances of finding employment. The experts interviewed unanimously state that people with disabilities are often more motivated than average to learn. For them, further education, whether professional or private, is particularly important. The new media are seen as having an additional motivational potential, even if it is still too seldom used.

The aspect of learning support is of central importance for many people with disabilities in two respects. On the one hand, many of them are dependent on personal support, on the other hand, online tutors are indispensable for the success of distance learning courses for them as for every other participant.

7.3. Greece

When it comes to incorporation of digital tools into the educational practices, things have drastically changed. Teachers and trainers try to elevate their methodologies by using more available digital tools



online and discovering means that will ensure a better and sufficient learning process. Unfortunately, there are no specific trainings a teacher or trainer could follow up to advance himself into such new technologies. It is up to the willing of the teacher/ trainer to do research and try tools that would support the educational process.

It is worth mentioning at this point that the Ministry of Education does recommend a more technology oriented educational process, yet it does not provide neither tools nor resources for teachers/trainers to follow a specific training. To the contrary, NGOs across the country offer training using digital tools but it is up to each teacher/trainer to discover any learning opportunities and participate.

Language support programs for people with special needs and counselling service provision do not exist in the country.

Based on the present desk research and the citations made, we summarize the fact that migrants with special needs (either mental or physical) have limited options to be catered equally by public schools, although great leaps have been made for migrants and refugees to be integrated at the Greek educational system. However, non-government organizations offer a plethora of alternatives, including language and computer courses, either with synchronous or asynchronous options. The digital tools that are used during the training are up to each organization and, unfortunately, none, or not all of them, refer to them in advance on their official websites. Additionally, special digital equipment for disabled students usually has a high cost, thus organizations and public schools do not opt for it because they could not afford it.

7.4. Italy

In the academic year 2019-2020 in Italy the number of disabled pupils attending Italian schools increased again (+13.000, which represents the 3.5% of the total enrolled). Pupils with special educational needs¹¹ increased by 60.000. Those currently represent 11% of those enrolled in secondary school and 6.5% in primary school (ISTAT, 2020).

Unfortunately, in Italy the Covid-19 pandemic situation has highlighted the poor accessibility for pupils with motor disabilities (only in 32% of schools) and the availability of supports (2%) for pupils with sensory disabilities. With distance learning, the participation of pupils with disabilities has decreased, and there are several reasons: among the most frequent are the severity of the pathology (27%), the difficulty of family members to collaborate (20%) and the social-economic distress (17%). For a less substantial but not negligible share of children, reasons for the exclusion are due to the lack of technological tools (6%) and the lack of specific teaching aids (3%). When it comes for foreign pupils, the situation is the same if not even worse, given the fact that they face multiple difficulties, other than the above-mentioned ones, such as the lack of knowledge of Italian language of both the pupils and also of their families that find themselves unable to support their children (ISTAT, 2020).

For what concerns educators and trainers, training in specific educational technologies for individuals with disabilities is still not widespread, although it is essential for the correct use of the instrumentation to support teaching, both face-to-face and remotely: in one school out of 10 no teachers for support has attended a specific course for the appropriate use of these technologies; in 61% of schools only some teachers attended courses, while in the remaining cases (28%) all teachers attended at least one course.

¹¹ Special Educational Needs as defined by the Ministerial Directive 27/12/2012, *Strumenti d'intervento per alunni con bisogni educativi speciali e organizzazione territoriale per l'inclusione scolastica*, include: specific developmental disorders such as Specific Learning Disorders, language deficits, non-verbal deficits, motor deficits, attention deficit hyperactivity (ADHD); social, cultural and linguistic disadvantages:



In line with the levels of training, the use of educational technologies by educators for support has not yet reached its maximum diffusion: there are less than 60% of schools where all teachers use these tools (ISTAT, 2020).

7.5. Sweden

There are several specialised services provided for migrants with special needs learning Swedish and these are provided by various organisations, for example Komvux, Folksuniversitet, Hermods, Iris Hadar, Avanti.

Courses available are:

- SFI for those with special needs (Behovanpassad sfi-BAS)
- SFI for those with vision and hearing impairments/ deaf or blind
- SFI for those with learning disabilities
- SFI for those with PTSD and migration related difficulties

Komvux (<https://www.skolverket.se/undervisning/vuxenutbildningen/sarvux-grundlaggande>)

Lärvux, Särvox and SUV are all names for this service provided by Komvux. It provides specialist educational services including language learning for individuals with learning difficulties, brain damage or intellectual disabilities.

Folksuniversitet (<https://www.folkuniversitetet.se/kontakt/goteborg/kurser-for-manniskor-med-funktionsvariation/>)

Specialist services in adult education provided for individuals with special needs.

Iris Hadar AB (<https://www.iris.se/vi-erbjuder/stodinsatser/>)

They offer many services for individuals with special needs, in particular support for those with hearing or visual impairments, psychological difficulties, psychiatric difficulties (including ADHD and Autism). Swedish sign language support for asylum seekers with special needs.

Avanti SFI (<https://sjalvservice.malmo.se/oversikt/overview/910>)

Swedish language courses in Malmö for those with PTSD and migration related difficulties.

Digital tool methodologies suitable for individuals with special needs

During the current pandemic many of these learning platforms have been transferred online and municipality websites provide information for how they have succeeded with this, for example with specialised apps and free digital material online. The Specialist School Organisation (Specialpedagogiska skolmyndigheten) provides a list of currently free online resources at: <https://webbutiken.spsm.se/kostnadsfria-digitala-laromedel/>.

According to the law in Sweden (Skollagen) all students (child and adult) should have access to digital materials to help them with learning. It is not a new thing with regard to the Covid-19 pandemic, it should already be part of the school environment. Specialpedagogiska Skolmyndigheten explains the use of different digital tools for those with special needs:

1. **Digital reading materials** (<https://www.spsm.se/stod/specialpedagogiskt-stod/digitalt-larande/stod-med-digitala-verktyg/lasa-med-digitala-verktyg/>)



- Having reading material presented digitally helps with translation to other languages, improves access to different written materials, text to speech possibilities, the opportunity to individualise content with regards to colour, size, font, voice.
2. **Digital writing materials** (<https://www.spsm.se/stod/specialpedagogiskt-stod/digitalt-larande/stod-med-digitala-verktyg/skriva-med-digitala-verktyg/>)
 - Writing with digital tools can help with ensuring the text is right as students can have the text read back to them, dictation, spelling mistakes and even translation opportunities.
 3. **Digital mathematical materials** (<https://www.spsm.se/stod/specialpedagogiskt-stod/digitalt-larande/stod-med-digitala-verktyg/rakna-med-digitala-verktyg/>)
 - Digital mathematical tools help with visualising, problem solving and developing skills in mathematics. Learning the worth of money and learning how to tell the time, digital tools can help even by providing a digital white board to work interactively with and save progress.

8. Teachers' current digital skills and solutions

8.1. Denmark

A new survey shows that Denmark maintains its position as one of Europe's digital pioneers. It shows the latest edition of the EU Digital Economy and Society Index (DESI). Overall, Denmark is number three in Europe when it comes to which countries are at the forefront of the digital transition. Denmark scores significantly higher than the EU average on almost all indicators in the survey. The DESI survey covers both digitalisation in the public and private sectors and focuses on areas such as the development of digital competencies and public digital service, where data sharing plays a role. The survey further covers that in Denmark: Fewer than 2% of individuals have never used the internet and only three out of ten still lack basic digital skills (DESI, 2020).

8.2. Germany

As highlighted in OECD's 2019 report "Measuring the Digital Transformation", 44% of EU citizens lack digital key competences. Unfortunately, this low level extends to the education sector. In Germany, teachers have a lower proficiency level in problem solving in a technology environment than other tertiary-educated workers. Studies have shown that German teachers are more sceptical about using digital resources in their classrooms than in other countries. The international average of teachers using digital tools in their classrooms is 78.2% while German teachers average at 60.2%.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, this has proven to present difficulties for German teachers to integrate digital media into their remote learning and blended learning methods.

The realisation and success of e-learning measures for people with disabilities depends on three central framework conditions: A sufficiently large target group, possibilities for financing the offer and individuals who drive this project forward with idealism.

One important advantage of e-learning methods is that learners have the greatest possible freedom of action because they can determine the time, place and content of learning themselves. They learn on



their own and in a self-organised way, therefore this type of training can allow people who cannot attend training centres due to their special needs, either because the centre is not adapted to disabilities, people who are in hospital for treatment, women with dependants, to take the courses in a freer way but with a tutor who encourages their motivation and learning.

In relation to digital tools that can be useful for this type of training, they can be:

- short video films, for example on the YouTube platform
- Wikis: In addition to public wikis such as "Wikipedia", there is also the (inexpensive) possibility of creating an organisation's own wiki. The lexicon thus serves as a tool for the conserving internal knowledge and making it accessible to all. Every participant has the possibility to create his or her own encyclopaedia entries and to change the entries of others. With the help of augmented reality, such information can also be integrated into real images, which can be seen through special glasses, for example.
- Podcasts: are downloadable audio files from the internet (also available as a subscription) on a specific subject area that appears regularly and can also be used for learning purposes. Podcasts can be listened to at work, but also on the move on the way home or while doing sport.
- Weblogs, microblogging, TwitterDiary-like entries can also be used as learning diaries for an individual learner or in a learning group.
- Simulations: a simulation enables the learner to reproduce a process or a simulated environment on the computer by his own experience and also to change it. Simulations can also be used online or on the learner's own computer.
- Virtual Classroom: In some longer-term course offerings, teaching is organised almost entirely via a virtual classroom.

It is very important for this kind of training with disabled people to be successful that the teachers are also well trained and able to adapt the different tools to each type of need. Another very important factor to take into account is that the characteristics of the courses and classes cannot be the same. With them we mean that they have to be adapted depending on the special need we want to cover, in this way:

1. *People with physical disabilities:* For examples for people with physical disabilities it would be better eliminating fixed learning times because this provides the opportunity for time-independent learning, so the classes can be adapted to their lives and rhythms.
2. *People with sensory impairments:* Blended learning as a central form of learning: It is advisable to set up blended learning seminars, which enable people to get to know each other in person, but allow learning to take place mainly at the workplace, at home or, if necessary, in the hospital. Promote virtual forms of communication: Forums and communities (with emphasis on the auditory or visual channel, depending on the disability) should be promoted and advertised to the target groups.
3. *People with learning disabilities:* Programmes aimed at people with learning disabilities should place great emphasis on a motivational component. It is important to get the learners excited about the content and tasks. Members of this target group particularly appreciate learning together with non-disabled people. In addition to face-to-face events at the beginning of a learning measure, this can



also be through Web 2.0 functions such as forums or virtual classrooms.

Use of virtual classrooms: When designing "virtual classrooms" for people with a learning disability, the user interface should be deliberately kept simple and clear. Too many extra functions only do harm here. A good model for this is the voice-over-IP service "Skype". Use games and films: It is also advisable to use moving images that create a high level of emotional involvement and facilitate learning through their vividness. These include serious games, but also entertainment games and video films (including the rich offer on the YouTube platform).

4. *People with intellectual disabilities*: The recommendations that have already been formulated for people with learning disabilities can also be transferred to the requirements for people with intellectual disabilities. It should be tested to what extent the same learning opportunities can be used for both groups.
5. *People with mental disabilities*: it is first necessary to research whether and for which types of mental illnesses specific didactics are necessary.

8.3. Greece

Digital tools training and education seem to be necessary for the era for 21st century according to the present research done. From the questionnaires we gathered, it is concluded that there is a great need for advisers and trainers to be trained in the use of digital tools. Most of the interviewed people tend to make usage of digital tools in their work, but they need to receive special and focused training to be more efficient and computer literate since the majority of them declared that they are simple users with no extra specific computer or digital tools knowledge. For instance, they are capable of searching, selecting, and use digital resources, creating their elemental digital material through Word, Excel, PowerPoint Microsoft Office, Google Docs/ Sheets, etc. Participants also admitted that they can search for free images/elements to be included in the digital material they create on their own and that they are efficient to make use of simple and necessary digital tools, such as Whiteboards.

8.4. Italy

Within the framework of the Digital Practices for Inclusive Programs project, 5 interviews and 18 questionnaires have been delivered to the first target group of the project, namely educators, language teachers, counsellors and advisors for migrants, as well as trainers and professionals working with migrants and/or with people with special needs. 20 out of 23 are not aware of **language acquisition activities and/or counselling services available that are tailored to the needs of participants with special needs in Italy** or in the region/city they live in.

In relation to their knowledge about the existence of **language acquisition activities and/or counselling services available that are tailored to the needs of migrants with special needs**, the number of respondents who knows something about it raised a bit, with 7 persons answering positively. None of the respondent is aware of legal and/or institutional support available for migrants with disabilities in Italy.

The 18 respondents define their own digital competences as follow:

- 8 persons (44,4%) as "integrator" – B1 level
- 7 persons (38,9%) as "expert" – B2 level
- 2 persons (11,1%) as "leader" – C1 level



- 1 person (5,6%) as “pioneer” – C2 level

Following the previous analysis and combining together the inputs collected through both interviews and questionnaires, it is clear that, despite the majority of the respondents define their own digital competences at a medium-high level, one of the main challenges for the educators, trainers and counsellors is the **lack of training in digital literacy and therefore a lack of knowledge on the already existing digital tools, means and platforms that can help and support their work with learners with special needs**; on the other hand, also for learners this represent a challenge but, for them, the situation is complicated by the fact that many learners, especially migrants with special needs, can’t often afford the purchase of digital devices or even of an internet connection; moreover, for learners with special needs, given the lack of digital competences and knowledge of both learners and trainers, there is the additional problem of not being able to provide them the needed support through digital means.

Key challenges and proposed solutions

Following these emerged needs and challenges, the most mentioned solution to these problems is the provision of trainings for both learners and trainers on basic digital competences and knowledge, including existing digital tools and platforms that can support their work, especially with learners with special needs. In fact, emerged that there is little knowledge and little provision of language courses, integration activities and of counselling activities that are adapted to the needs of the learners. For this reason, another potential solution emerged from the respondents is the adoption of different approaches, that involve 1-1 relationships between learner and trainer, or more mentoring and peer-mentoring approaches, so as to ensure a personalized path; anyway, the main need/challenge and therefore the best solution is to create integration programs, counselling activities, language acquisition trainings not standardized but designed and adapted to the specific needs of the learners.

A general need of more knowledge and/or more provision of language courses, integration programs, counselling activities, legal support services that are available for migrants/learners with special needs and/or disabilities and that are adapted to their needs emerged from the research.

When the goal is to create a course that is accessible to the broadest group of learners, there are many tools and methodologies that will help learners with special needs to improve. The use of these tools is part of inclusive teaching strategies and can play an even more decisive role in the case of students with Special Educational Needs (BES) and Specific Learning Disorders (DSA):

- **Include both audio and visual formats:** content should be accessible in multiple forms and by providing both formats, learners will have different options (learners don’t need to be blind or deaf to have difficulty seeing or hearing different media forms).
- **Use speech recognition programs:** the user “dictates” into a microphone, and his spoken words appear on the computer screen as text (it works in conjunction with a word processor). This can help a student whose oral language ability is better than his writing skills.
(e.g. ILISTEN and WORDQ)
- **Proofreading Software Programs:** Students who struggle with writing (e.g., spelling, grammar, punctuation, word usage, and sentence structure) may benefit from software programs that scan words and alert the user to possible errors.
(e.g. GINGER)



- **Electronic math worksheets:** software programs that can help students organize, align, and work through math problems on a computer screen. Numbers that appear onscreen can also be read via a speech synthesizer.
(e.g. MATHTALK)
- **Audio books or contents:** allow users to listen to text and are available in a variety of formats, such as audiocassettes, CDs, and MP3 downloads. Special playback units allow users to and search and bookmark pages and chapters.
(e.g. AUDIBLE and BOOKSHARE)
- **Enable options for special keyboards and tab navigation:** learners with motor control difficulties rely on special navigational tools, such as alternative keyboards, to move through your site (ENFOR, 2016).
(e.g. INTELLIKEYS)

8.5. Sweden

Through research carried out via interviews and survey questionnaires, digital skills from 26 trainers and advisers in Sweden were gathered. 42% (n=11) were language teachers, 23% (n=6) were advisors, 19% (n=5) were counsellors in integration programs, 11% (n=3) were professionals working specifically with those with special needs and one person was working in social sustainability.

With regard to their self-assigned level of digital competence, there is an even distribution between those with lower digital competence (up to B1) and those with higher digital competence (B2 and above).

Research participants' knowledge of the current situation showed that exactly half knew of language acquisition or counselling services available specifically tailored to those with special needs, whereas the other half did not. When the question was whether they knew of any services specifically tailored for MIGRANTS with special needs, only 27% answered "yes". Even fewer participants (23%) were aware of legal/institutional support available for migrants with special needs.

Key challenges faced by migrants with special needs regarding digital tools and proposed solutions

According to the respondents, key challenges faced by migrants with special needs when using digital tools were:

- Accessing online resources, e.g., lack of appropriate support, financial, technical and housing difficulties
- Some lack basic reading and writing skills which makes the whole process harder
- Lack of confidence
- Poor support and follow-up from schools
- Safeguarding identity harder with digital tools
- Difficulty navigating Sweden's institutional websites

Solutions proposed by respondents included:

- Making resources aimed at those with special needs to aid teachers in lesson planning
- Increasing understanding of different disabilities that require special needs
- More supportive people encouraging confidence



- Addition of less “academic” courses in learning, e.g., cooking.
- Clear instructions for every online resource in all different modalities (videos, pictures, subtitles)
- Integrated book and online counterpart

Key challenges faced by trainers when working with digital tools and proposed solutions

Common themes from respondents regarding the key challenges they face in terms of working with digital tools include:

- Lack of time to work on tool integration
- Generational technological gap with lack of extra training
- Technical issues
- Expressing instructions when the trainer is also unsure about the tool
- Generating motivation in students

Proposed solutions to help inclusion opportunities included:

- Social networks where likeminded people can share ideas
- Using videos to explain how things work
- Mentor system so students can help each other out
- Computer program training for trainers
- Mobile friendly tools

Good practice currently used by respondents

Digital classrooms accessible to all individuals even outside the country has been useful to users. The use of WhatsApp and Skype were highlighted to also be useful with migrants with special needs. SVTplay and podcasts were also recommended for those with special needs due to the visual and auditory nature of the learning style as well as the ease of accessibility.

Websites such as AgendaWeb and Adele’s Corner were highlighted as useful for students of all abilities. Specific apps are also reported to be used with this population such as “ritprat” where a combination of pictures and drawings can aid communication.

Overall, there appears to be a lot of individual resources available, where trainers and counsellors have worked hard on implementing and adapting to their students. However, the challenges that are faced pose serious limitations to the amount that they can do with the resources. For example, higher awareness of the available resources, clearer instructions in implementing and using them and basic digital skills all need to be improved still in Sweden.

A note on asylum seekers with special needs

Within the interviews it has been highlighted that asylum seekers in Sweden do not have the right to access any formal education, state language courses or any digital tool for educational purposes. These individuals usually have to wait a very long time before they are granted this access and the importance of their special needs tends to get lost in the waiting process.



9. Digital tools training and education for trainers and advisers

9.1. Denmark

Based on our knowledge and research there are no courses or training provisions directly addressed with DigCompEdu, but there are workshops and courses based on the same content and knowledge with DigCompEdu. At Digitaliseringsinstituttet (Digitization Institute) in Aalborg they invite you to “get a digital mindset and strengthen your digital skills” at their website. They have a host of various continuing educations, courses and workshops that deal with digital learning. (<https://digst.dk/styring/statens-digitaliseringsakademi/>)

In Denmark it is a requirement that all adult teachers must use IT/technology in an educational way. The problem is that it's not a requirement to teach the adult teachers in their continuing education, so they're not taught how to use IT/technology. Despite this situation, Uddannelses- og forskningsministeriet (The ministry of education and research) have chosen to donate DKK 3 million to a new digital teaching at Roskilde University, Zealand Business college and Absalon University College. The project is being built on two learning communities. One is linked to the teachers' daily practices at their own educational institution, and the other is connected to a common online cooperation platform that crosses the three institutions. This is done as part of an effort where Uddannelses- og forskningsministeriet (The ministry of education and research) focuses on strengthening digital competencies among the adult teachers in higher education. (<https://ufm.dk/publikationer/2019/filer/digitale-kompetencer-og-digital-laering.pdf>)

9.2. Germany

Following the increase in the number of refugees arriving in Germany since 2015, numerous applications to facilitate the integration and inclusion of migrants and refugees have flourished. These apps provide clear and concise information about the legal process to formalise their status in Germany, language courses and health issues. These are just a few examples of the integration-oriented apps currently available in Germany:

- ["Welcome to Germany"](#) website of the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) provides detailed information on every aspect of life in Germany, from initial orientation and [learning German](#) to education and cultural facilities.
- ["Integreat"](#) is a multilingual online and app-based information portal that bundles communal information on topics like health, living, education and work. The repeatedly awarded app also works offline.
- [Ankommen](#) (“arrival”) app provides orientation during the first weeks in Germany. Focus areas are “Living in Germany,” “Asylum, apprenticeship, job” and “Learn German.” Available in English, Arabic, Farsi, French and German.
- [Guide for refugees](#) website by public broadcaster ARD in English, Arabic and German with links to [Refugee Radio](#) and other news for migrants, first steps, language training, services for children and more.
- Interactive map with [more than 700 volunteer aid projects](#) and additional information, also in alphabetical order sorted by location.



- [Migration Advice Service for Adult Immigrants](#) (MBE) "advises and assists on many day-to-day issues" like learning German, school and work, housing, health and family matters. The more than 700 regional MBE [Advice Centres](#) across Germany as well as more than 550 mobile counselling teams are run by the big "Wohlfahrtsverbände."
- [mbeon app](#), currently available in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria and North Rhine-Westphalia, complements MBE by providing information on learning German, work and careers, health, housing, family and residence. The app is supposed to be extended to all of Germany this year. Languages: German, English, Arabic and Russian.
- Website [kommgutun.info](#) ("arrive safely"), a "companion for unaccompanied minors" available in English, Arabic, French, Dari and German
- [handbookGermany](#), a multilingual website with practical information and advice on [everyday life](#), including health insurance, divorce and child care; [education and training](#), such as language courses and vocational training; [rights and regulations](#) like asylum procedure and domestic violence; and [how to find a job](#). Also offers [explainer videos](#).

However, when it comes to training for migrants with special needs, the offer is limited and does not cater in detail to the exceptional situations of each individual. Thus, within this framework we can find the following applications:

- [Rainbow Refugees](#), a "SOS" contact form for LGBT people "being discriminated against" or who are "victims of violence because of their sexual orientation or gender identity."
- [Youth Migration Services](#) assist young people aged between 12 and 27 with their integration process at more than 450 centres across Germany.

Regarding Health services resources:

- [Refugee Toolbox](#) — open-access online library in 16 languages providing, among other things, clinical treatment guidelines and info material on preventive health topics.
- [German AIDS-help](#), an internet portal with practical information on sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), sexual orientation and drug use, among other things, offers counseling via email and chat in English, French, Dutch and German.
- [Website on female genital cutting](#) (FGC), run by Caritas Switzerland and other organizations, provides information on the practice including health consequences, how to get help and more. Languages: English, Italian, Somali, Tigrinya and German.
- [Queer-refugees](#), a website for sexual health in nine languages, shares knowledge about the topic of sexual identity and diversity and shows contact points.
- [Zanzu.de](#), a multilingual web platform with information on sexual health, including a [dictionary with important terms and explanations](#).
- Pregnancy and birth: Websites [Pregnant? Zero Alcohol](#), an information portal for mothers-to-be available in eight languages, and "[Pregnant and your world's upside down?](#)" which offers a support hotline and a regional counseling centers finder.



- Psychological self-help health portals: [Refugeeum](#), for refugees with mental health problems in seven languages, and [Refugee Trauma Help](#), which offers material to help cope with mental stress that's available in English, Arabic, Farsi, Tigrinya and German.
- Android app [ALMHAR](#) (Application for Mental Health Aid for Refugees) and iOS app [SMILERS](#) (Smartphone Mediated Intervention for Learning Emotional Regulation of Sadness) offer [online self-help therapy to cope with psychological symptoms of stress](#). The psychoeducation tools are available in Farsi, English and Arabic.
- [Peer counseling service IPSO](#) — face-to-face and online support in 14 languages. Also offers people with a migrant background a free 12-month training course to become a psychosocial counselor.
- [Online addiction counseling](#) by Caritas in ten languages, including English, Arabic, Russian, Turkish and German.
- [Guidance app](#) informs refugees about alcohol, drugs and addiction, available in Arabic, English, Farsi, Turkish, Russian, French and German.
- "[Mind Your Trip](#)" app aims at educating young people about the risks of new psychoactive substances (NPS). Available on Android.
- Information on "[Health and preventive healthcare](#)" on BAMF website

In terms of digital tools for migrants with special needs, the websites and applications we have outlined above are basically what exists at present. These existing apps mainly provide information about where they can go to find counselling, support groups or a network of contacts, but they are not digital tools per se to meet these needs.

On the other hand, from the interviews and questionnaires it is worth noting that practically none of the interviewees use specific digital tools, apart from videoconferencing and the general platforms offered by their school or workplace.

9.3. Greece

Regarding the training and education there are various alternatives for people in need of them. For instance, the HELIOS project offers an array of "language and cultural orientation courses in sixteen Integration Learning Centres" in the largest Greek cities ([greece.iom.int](#)).

On the other hand, National Confederation of Disabled People offers an educational program with digital resources included. However, program's goal is to raise awareness as for the health conditions in Europe, specifically it supports "the digital transformation of health and care of the Digital Single Market" ([eu-patient.eu](#)). Participants are informed about the standards of the health system at the technical and policy level through special designed online platforms.

The IOM office in Greece offered as well as an online training seminar for professionals in the field of language education which was held on 4th January 2021. Through this seminar, participants had the opportunity to be educated about the social aspect of language education and how people can express themselves through technology ([greece.iom.int](#)).

An other Greek organization, Study in Greece Refugees, gives the opportunity to learners, especially children, to empower their computer skills and literacy ([refugees.studyingreece.edu.gr](#)). The organization



Metadrasi rapidly adapted to the new pandemic circumstances by offering online language courses, such as German, Greek, and English, at its members making use of digital media and platforms, where the participants first taught for their appropriate usage through live streaming (metadrasi.org). Last, but not least, Athens Migrant Integration Centre, is an organization that also provides complementary computer courses to refugees and migrants (unhcr.gr).

9.4. Italy

Below is a general overview of training and education available in Italy for trainers and advisers, to learn how to utilize digital technologies and tools in their work. Bodies and trainings mentioned below are accredited by the Ministry of Education, University and Research (MIUR) according to Directive 170/2016, so it is not just training for trainers but also trainings for teachers.¹²

- **ACIF** (Italian Cultural Association for Training/Associazione Culturale Italiana per la Formazione) Training Course “Teaching with the Tablet”: <https://www.aciformazione.it/corsi/corso-tablet/>
- **AIF** (Italian Association of Trainers):
AIF Basic Digital Trainers Training Path: <https://associazioneitalianaformatori.it/aif-academy/>
- **EIPASS** (European Informatic Passport)
INTEGRATED DIGITAL EDUCATION: <https://it.eipass.com/certificazioni-informatiche/eipass-didattica-digitale-integrata/>
- **Eurosofia**
Integrated Digital Teaching (DDI): methodologies, tools and inclusion of pupils with special educational needs: <https://www.eurosofia.it/lista-corsi/corso.html?id=870>
Google Suite for education. Digital innovation at school: <https://www.eurosofia.it/lista-corsi/corso.html?id=816>
Digital education: responsible and critical use of new technologies: <https://www.eurosofia.it/lista-corsi/corso.html?id=819>
Linguistic literacy of Italian for foreigners: teaching and methodologies: <https://www.eurosofia.it/lista-corsi/corso.html?id=824>
- **ImparaDigitale**
The web apps for teaching: <https://www.imparadigitale.it/corsi-in-presenza/le-web-app-per-la-didattica/>
The world of G-Suite: <https://www.imparadigitale.it/corsi-in-presenza/il-mondo-gsuite/>
Google Drive as a learning environment: <https://www.imparadigitale.it/shop/corsi-on-line/metodologie-e-ambienti/ml01-google-drive-come-ambiente-di-apprendimento/>
G-Suite for Education: <https://www.imparadigitale.it/shop/corsi-on-line/metodologie-e-ambienti/g-suite-for-education-nella-didattica-completo/>
- **OPPI** (Organization for the Professional Preparation of Teachers/Organizzazione per la Preparazione Professionale degli Insegnanti):
Didactic Technologies 2021: <https://oppi.it/corsi/tecnologie-didattiche/>
Training for Trainers: <https://oppi.it/corsi/formazione-formatori/>
- **Programma Integra:** <http://www.programmaintegra.it/wp/>

¹² To get a broader overview of all the courses offered, here a complete list of accredited bodies: <https://www.scuolainforma.it/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Elenco-enti-accreditati-qualificati-per-lanno-scolastico-2019-2020.pdf>



Programma Integra is a social enterprise whose purpose is to contribute to the development of an inclusive community through the activation of social, educational and psychological interventions and services. The program operates in favor of people in conditions of social vulnerability such as migrants, applicants and holders of international protection, by offering reception services, socio-legal assistance, job orientation, counselling and psychological support, and Italian language courses. Programma Integra offers professionals trainings on the topics of hospitality, social inclusion, diversity management, the methodology and tools for taking charge in the social and educational field.

- **SoloFormazione**
ICT For Inclusion - Continuing Training Course: <https://www.soloformazione.it/le-ict-per-l-inclusione?source=blog>
Online Course and Google Suite For Education Certification: <https://www.soloformazione.it/corso-google-suite-for-education>
Online Course on The Educational Use Of Tablets: <https://www.soloformazione.it/tablet>
- **ScuoleMigranti** (CSV Lazio) Network for linguistic and social integration
Distance teaching training for teachers on a voluntary basis at: <http://www.scuolemigranti.org/formazione-2021/>
Online laboratories for teaching Italian L2
Distance teaching in teaching the Italian language to pupils and adults of migratory origins

9.5. Sweden

There are several free of cost opportunities for trainers and advisers to get further training to learn how to work with individuals with disabilities, as well as with digital tools in the learning environment in Sweden. Common platforms to look for these opportunities include courses-database websites such as “Alla Studier”, “Yhuthbildningar.se”, “Hermods”, “studentum.se” and websites of educational institutions such as Swedish universities, Folkuniversitetet or Komvux. Some of these options are listed below:

Digital tools training and education

The specialist pedagogical school organisation (Specialpedagogiska Skolmyndigheten) provides a lot of information for teachers and individuals working at a distance with students with disabilities. Links and information about specific disabilities are:

- **Deaf and Blind students** (<https://www.spsm.se/funktionsnedsattningar/syn--och-horselnedsattning-eller-dovblindhet/dovblindhet-och-undervisning-pa-distans/>)
- **Hearing impaired students** (<https://www.spsm.se/funktionsnedsattningar/dov-eller-nedsatt-horsel/undervisning-pa-distans-for-den-som-ar-dov-eller-nedsatt-horsel/>)
- **Swedish sign language students** (<https://www.spsm.se/funktionsnedsattningar/dov-eller-nedsatt-horsel/undervisning-pa-distans-for-elever-och-vuxenstuderande-som-kommunicerar-pa-svenskt-teckensprak/>)
- **Students with intellectual difficulties** (<https://www.spsm.se/funktionsnedsattningar/utvecklingsstornig/undervisning-pa-distans-for-elever-med-intellektuell-funktionsnedsattning/>)
- **Students with speech impairments** (<https://www.spsm.se/funktionsnedsattningar/sprakstornig/undervisning-pa-distans-vid-sprakstornig/>)



- **Visually impaired students**
(<https://www.spsm.se/funktionsnedsattningar/synnedsattning/synnedsattning-vid-undervisning-pa-distans/>)

Other training resources:

- **Framerspace – The Digital Teacher course** (<https://framerspace.com/course/SnPgFONLA-digital-pedagogy>) - A course for teachers interested in using digital technologies to create relevant, authentic and engaging learning experiences. It enhances your knowledge of digital tools and the ways to use them meaningfully in teaching. Designed for both novice and an expert user of technology to extend and supplement their practice.
- **The Digital Teacher website** (<https://thedigitalteacher.com/training/>) - Offers training videos, practical tips and lesson plans teachers, trainers and advisers can use to utilise technology and transform their teaching.

Learning how to support the learning journey of individuals with special needs:

- **LSS och funktionsnedsättning (LSS and disability)** (<https://www.kui.se/foretagsutbildningar/lss/>) - Contains information on further education for those who are interested in working with persons with disabilities. Options include web-education, open education, training, and conferences.
- **Personal inom funktionsnedsättningsområdet (Personnel in the disability area)** (<https://www.hermods.se/utbildningar-tjanster/gymnasial-yrkesutbildning/personal-inom-funktionsnedsattningsområdet/>) - Information on a training course that provides in-depth knowledge of various disabilities and how to adapt different situations to different people's needs and interests.
- **Stöd och utbildning inom hjälpmedel för personer med funktionsnedsättning (Support and training in assistive technology for people with disabilities)** (<https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/stod-i-arbetet/funktionshinder/hjalpmedel/stod-och-utbildning/>) - Provides informational material and information about training options for individuals to be further educated on well-functioning aids to support the active participation of people with disabilities in society.

10. Conclusion

The combined results show that among 126 participants in five countries, less than half know of language or counselling services available for individuals with special needs and even fewer know of these services for migrants with special needs. Most shocking is the low percentage of advisers and educators in the partner countries who know of legal or institutional support for migrants with special needs. In general, advisers and educators consider their digital competencies to be relatively good, with the majority saying that they are level B1 or higher (90.6%). The DigCompEdu results, however, show that most individuals use digital resources at the A2-B1 level. This indicates that most are relatively comfortable with using digital technology, however there are most cannot adapt and innovate the digital technology, which is likely what is needed for helping with migrants with special needs in the best way. **These results highlight the need for improvement in two areas:**

- Information about services, legal and institutional support needs to be more accessible.



- Training in digital competencies do not need to work on the most basic levels, instead focus on adaptation and innovation of digital resources to meet the specific needs of this population.

Due to the lack of robust data regarding the number of migrants with special needs in Europe, it is understandable that there is reduced ability to respond to their special needs (Dowling, 2016). Research however also shows that those working with migrants with special needs are interested in gaining more information about the legal framework, available services and understanding more about different types of special needs (Access to services for Migrants with Disabilities, 2018). Our results also reflect the results from the European Commissions public consultation which showed that over 60% of those interviewed felt they had improved their digital skills during the Covid-19 crisis and more than 50% want to improve even more (Karpiński, Di Pietro, Castaño Muñoz, & Biagi, 2020).

Key insights into what advisers and educators should know how to use:

- Special features: audio and visual formats to online material.
- Special software: Speech recognition, proofreading and tab navigation tools.
- Online resources: audiobooks, podcasts, special playback and electronic worksheets.
- Virtual classroom with clear instructions for helping students with special needs.
- Video and game integration into the classroom.
- Communication channels that suit the individual with special needs and the teacher.

Regarding all interviews and free-text answers combined, the most suggested solutions for improvement were:

- Creating hybrid online and physical materials specifically for this population.
- Adopting and modifying digital technology designed for this population.
- Games, visual and auditory stimuli can be useful for migrants with special needs.
- There is need for more institutional support (from municipalities, schools etc.)
- Increase the number of digital resources available for this population to use.

All five countries show a general lack of training for advisers and educators when working in particular with migrants with special needs to adequately integrate digital tools into their programs. This consequently leads to issues with accessibility and inclusion for migrants with special needs and demonstrates that more is needed to reach the level that the UN Convention on the Right of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) demands (UN, 2021). Although online learning exists, they are not designed for people with special needs who thereby find integration even harder than their typically abled counterparts.

Learning how to use these digital tools and adapt them take up vital resources from advisers and educators, who are time restricted in their job as is it. The common finding that these professionals must often use their non-working hours to learn these resources, mean that the implementation is less likely to happen, and more institutional changes need to take place in each country.

Although there are currently significant drawbacks, it is clear from this research that students and professionals are motivated to find solutions, making the introduction of more specialized materials and training effective at improving the situation.



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- Dansk Flygtningehjælp/ Danish Refugee Council: <https://drc.ngo/da/>
- Ny i Danmark (New i Denmark): <https://www.nyidanmark.dk/> everything about staying in Denmark for both EU citizens and third-country nationals, including work permits. Operated by the Danish Immigration Service and the Danish Agency for International Recruitment and Integration.
- Workindenmark.dk - everything about job search and the Danish labor market, including a job database. Operated by the Danish Agency for Labor Market and Recruitment.
- Studyindenmark.dk - all about studying at higher education in Denmark. Operated by the Ministry of Education and Research.
- Gallo: <https://www.gallohuset.dk/>
- Ligeværd (Equality): Equality is a community consisting of 3 organizations, each in their own way, working to create better educational, employment, housing and social conditions for people with special needs. <https://www.ligevaerd.dk/om-ligevaerd/organisation/>
- Lifeindenmark.dk - the English version of borger.dk. Overview page with access to information and self-service solutions from the public sector in Denmark. Operated by the Danish Digitization Agency.
- <https://menneskeret.dk/emner/handicap> Department of Human Rights has been appointed by the Folketing to promote and monitor the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in Denmark. We do this, among other things, by conducting investigations, legal assessments, consultation responses or by taking up cases at the Equal Treatment Board. We work independently and are in constant dialogue with both public authorities and disability organizations.



11.2. Germany

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