

# Hand in hand to support refugees' integration – Education, training and recognition of qualifications

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## Integration of refugees in higher education institutions: EQPR Project

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UNIVERSITÀ  
DEGLI STUDI  
DI CAGLIARI



# The University of Cagliari (UniCa) was established in 1620 and is a multidisciplinary university





## Since four years ago the University of Cagliari (UniCa) promoted the project UniCa4Refugees

- Cultural-linguistic mediation service;
- Make easier the procedures to recognize access qualifications to university studies;
- Italian language courses (with also linguistic tandems);
- Assigning the Erasmus+ Online Linguistic Support – OLS licences, also for other European languages;
- Tuition fees waiving;
- Support for text books acquisition;
- Possibility di register for single courses/modules with fee waiving;
- Possibility to carry out vocational traineeships at the university facilities.



## European Qualifications Passport for Refugees EQPR

**In July 2018 the University of Cagliari hosted the first assessment session in Italy for the implementation of the EQPR:**

- ❖ we were contacted by the Italian ENIC/NARIC centre CIMEA (the Academic Recognition Information Centre);
- ❖ in Italy the EQPR project is also supported by the Italian Ministry of Education and Research MIUR;
- ❖ direct involvement of universities in the implementation;
- ❖ involvement of more centres of the ENIC-NARIC network.



## European Qualifications Passport for Refugees - *EQPR*

- University of Cagliari contacted the different reception centres for asylum-seekers and refugees as well as the centres for adult education in the territory to identify potential refugee candidates who declared to have completed their upper secondary education or university studies, and were willing to enter the EQPR procedure;
- We also had the support of the regional government office which is in charge of migrants issues;
- The questionnaires were sent to the 16 candidates identified, about two weeks before the interview. They were then sent to the evaluators together with the documentation they possessed, for a preliminary evaluation.



## European Qualifications Passport for Refugees - *EQPR*

- The candidates were then called for the 45-60 minute interview, and a decision on whether or not to issue the document was made by the international evaluators.
- In the assessment session at UniCA credential evaluators from Norway, Canada, Germany, France, Armenia, besides the Italians, were involved assisted by representatives of the University of Cagliari.





# European Qualifications Passport for Refugees - EQPR

12 candidates could receive the Passport, coming from *Guinea, Mali, Marocco, Algeria, Camerun, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ivory Coast and Senegal*, including asylum-seekers, refugees or with humanitarian protection.

They mostly possessed the high school diploma, two had a university degree and some had started but not completed the higher education.

Our Rector decided to make an official ceremony for the award of the EQPRs.





# EQPR award ceremony at the University of Cagliari – 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018







## European Qualifications Passport for Refugees - EQPR

All the 12 candidates who received the EQPR could enroll at the University of Cagliari without paying fees:

- either as regular students (if holding a protection);
- or to single modules, in case they were still asylum-seekers waiting for a decision on their status.

Since then 2 of the latter have received the protection and could move to a regular enrollment.

They are enrolled in study Programmes in: Languages, Engineering, Economics, Environmental Sciences, Political Sciences.

# Outcomes of EQPR project

University of Cagliari



- ❖ Giving refugees an evaluation of their qualification not supported by adequate documentation
- ❖ The evaluation should be accepted and easily interpreted in any European country
- ❖ The assessment procedure can be adopted by other universities and other countries
- ❖ Benefits deriving from a better integration both for the refugees and for the hosting society.

In these months we were contacted by other possible candidates and by other interested universities.

The possibility to have the assessment carried out by video-interview can be a good way to spread the procedure.



# **“SARDEGNA FORMED” Project**

## **(Sardinia for the Mediterranean)**

Project to promote international cooperation among Universities of Southern Mediterranean Countries and Sardinia.

**Fondazione di Sardegna** is funding scholarships for students coming from Tunisia, Marocco e Algeria, to allow them to get a 1° or 2° cycle Degree at the Sardinian Universities.

### **General objective**

Training young people to a high qualification, who will be able to work in the present globalized society.

In the 4 years of the project till now we had more than 100 students enrolled at the University of Cagliari from the three Maghreb Countries.