

Integration and inclusion of migrants

Factsheet



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**Secretariat of ECRI
European Commission
against Racism and Intolerance**

Council of Europe

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The present factsheet has been prepared by the Secretariat of ECRI. It aims to present ECRI's key recommendations on integration and inclusion of migrants¹, as reflected in particular in ECRI's country reports adopted and made public in the context of the fifth and sixth monitoring cycles during the period ranging from January 2012 to March 2024.

1 For the purpose of the present factsheet, unless otherwise indicated, ECRI uses the term "migrants" to cover not only migrants proper, but also other categories of foreign nationals, including refugees and other persons in need of international protection.

Introduction

ECRI has regularly stressed a vital role of integration and inclusion of migrants as a cornerstone for building equal, diverse and inclusive societies.² In this context, it has looked into the situation of this specific group of concern to ECRI. It has consequently called on governments not only to prevent and combat discrimination against migrants, but also to take meaningful action to ensure their integration and inclusion within the society.³ It is also of the opinion that narratives around migration should be more balanced and that political and other public discourse should underline the opportunities and resources migrants may bring, including in times of crisis.⁴

In several exceptional statements, ECRI underlined the specific challenges faced by migrants in the context of the 2015 migration-management crisis in the Mediterranean,⁵ the Covid-19 pandemic and related restrictions⁶ and the unprecedented number of people displaced by war and seeking protection as a result of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine since February 2022.⁷ It also looked into the matter when analysing main trends in recent annual reports.⁸

The present factsheet is meant to be a tool supplementing relevant texts of a general nature adopted by ECRI. It should also be seen as work in progress and not considered as exhaustive. New issues may emerge in the coming years, notably from new technology and other developments, which will require new responses. Furthermore, ECRI's recommendations should not be taken in isolation from relevant Council of Europe and other international standards, including the case law of the European Court of Human Rights interpreting the European Convention on Human Rights⁹ and the work of the European Committee of Social Rights.¹⁰

2 The present factsheet does not cover the situation of migrants irregularly present on the territories of Council of Europe member States. As regards action against discrimination against such migrants, reference is made to the ECRI **General Policy Recommendation No. 16 on safeguarding irregularly present migrants from discrimination**, adopted on 16 March 2016.

3 ECRI **Roadmap to effective equality**, published in connection with ECRI's 25th anniversary on 27 September 2019, para. 6.

4 **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017**, § 9; **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2021**, § 10.

5 ECRI **Statement on the current humanitarian crisis in the Mediterranean** adopted on 19 June 2015.

6 ECRI Bureau, **Statement on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and related government responses on groups of concern to ECRI** adopted on 19 May 2020.

7 ECRI **Statement on the consequences of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine** adopted at its 88th plenary meeting, 29 March-1 April 2022.

8 See **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2015**, §§ 3-10; **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2016**, §§ 3-5; **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2017**, §§ 9-10; **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2018**, §§ 20-21; **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020**, §§ 12-14; **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2021**, §§ 3-10; **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2022**, §§ 3-9.

9 As regards the Court's case law on immigration, see for instance **Guide on the case-law of the European Convention on Human Rights. Immigration**, published by the Court's Registry and several factsheets available on the **Court's Knowledge Sharing Platform**.

10 For more on the case-law of this body, see **Digest of the Case Law of the European Committee of Social Rights**.

Reference should also be made to other Council of Europe instruments and bodies such as the Recommendation CM/Rec(2022)10 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on multilevel policies and governance for intercultural integration,¹¹ the Model Framework for an Intercultural Integration Strategy at the National Level,¹² as adopted by the Council of Europe's intergovernmental Steering Committee on Antidiscrimination, Diversity, and Inclusion (CDADI) in 2021, and on the ongoing work of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe on Migration and Refugees.¹³

It should also be borne in mind that the precise nature and legal contexts and policy areas in which ECRI's recommendations have been made may vary significantly, depending on the circumstances observed in the countries in question and the segment of the migrant communities involved.

11 This instrument was adopted on 6 April 2022 and is available on the Committee of Ministers' website [here](#).

12 Available [here](#).

13 For more details, see [here](#).

Establishing an appropriate data collection system

1. The authorities should set up a system for collecting disaggregated equality data to monitor the situation of migrants. The data should be gathered in various areas of public policy with the authorities ensuring strict compliance with the principles of confidentiality, informed consent and voluntary self-identification of persons. The data-collection system should also take account of the possible existence of multiple or intersectional discrimination.¹⁴
2. The authorities should ensure that such data is used by the relevant bodies to conduct an assessment of the needs of migrants, including persons benefitting from international protection, and design suitable integration and inclusion policy responses.¹⁵

Developing suitable policies for intercultural integration and inclusion

3. The authorities should develop a comprehensive national integration/inclusion strategy and/or action plan for non-nationals, including refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and other migrants.¹⁶ Such strategy or action plan should be prepared in consultation with representatives of the groups concerned, the relevant civil society organisations and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR),¹⁷ and in close cooperation with the local authorities.¹⁸
4. Policies for intercultural integration/inclusion should send a clear message that integration and inclusion is about a two-way process for both migrants and the majority population and contain measures to mobilise the entire society to facilitate, support and promote integration and inclusion.¹⁹ The aim of such policies should help the majority population to open up and embrace the richness of cultural diversity.²⁰
5. The relevant strategy and/or action plan should establish clear co-ordination mechanisms between all relevant ministries, implementing agencies and potential donors.²¹ An institutionalised approach to co-operation between central and local authorities should also be ensured.²²

14 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Belgium, § 122; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Slovenia, § 53; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Sweden, § 58; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Finland, § 68; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Türkiye, § 65 (before 2022, the official name of Türkiye in English was Turkey); ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Luxembourg, § 74.

15 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Iceland, § 74.

16 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Azerbaijan, § 51; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Cyprus, § 87; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Spain, § 83; see also ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Poland, § 72.

17 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Armenia, § 78; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Cyprus, § 87; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Ukraine, § 89.

18 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Azerbaijan, § 82; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Estonia, § 98.

19 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Malta, § 72; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on the Netherlands, § 70.

20 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Norway, § 76.

21 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Armenia, § 78.

22 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Estonia, § 98.

6. The strategy and/or action plan should have well-defined goals and targets.²³ It should specify the actual measures to be implemented to achieve the goals set. Each goal and measure should be accompanied by indicators, baseline figures, target figures, a timetable for achievement and the institutions and senior officials responsible for achieving these goals and implementing these measures. The implementation of the strategy or action plan should be the subject of a regular evaluation.²⁴
7. Suitable budgetary resources should be allocated to the implementation of national integration/inclusion policies.²⁵ Where appropriate, the relevant national strategy or action plan should contain a clear financial plan, identifying actions to be funded by the State budget and actions for which financing has to be sought from external donors.²⁶
8. Where relevant, programmes for the local authorities on the implementation of integration/inclusion measures for beneficiaries of international protection should be developed/strengthened.²⁷
9. The authorities should facilitate the exchange of good practices in the approaches taken to integration and inclusion in order to harmonise local and regional policies and maximise equality of opportunity for all migrants.²⁸

Setting the principle of solidarity with people fleeing humanitarian crises in need of support and protection as the norm

10. The authorities should ensure that solidarity with people in need remains the norm in the management of humanitarian crises. All people fleeing war and other emergencies, irrespective of their national or ethnic origin, citizenship, skin colour, religion, language, sexual orientation or gender identity, should be promptly offered adequate protection.²⁹ Where appropriate, the authorities should review their legal and policy framework and law enforcement practices with a view to ensuring equal and effective access to support and protection.³⁰
11. The authorities should run/support awareness-raising campaigns to promote a positive image of refugees and asylum seekers by ensuring that the need for international protection is understood by the society at large.³¹

23 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Croatia, § 93; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Azerbaijan, § 82; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Hungary, § 99.

24 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Liechtenstein, § 40; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Luxembourg, § 68; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Portugal, § 73; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Slovakia, § 71; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Germany, § 77. See also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on France, § 62 and ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on the United Kingdom, § 116.

25 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on France, § 60; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Luxembourg, § 66; see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Ukraine, § 95.

26 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Armenia, § 79, see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Ireland, § 103.

27 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Slovenia, § 63, see also ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Iceland, § 75.

28 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Switzerland, § 94.

29 ECRI **Statement on the consequences of the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine** adopted at its 88th plenary meeting, 29 March-1 April 2022.

30 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Poland, § 107, see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Armenia, § 71.

31 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Hungary, § 102; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Malta, § 84.

Strengthening partnerships with relevant civil society organisations

12. The authorities should ensure that, where necessary, relevant civil society organisations are in a position to provide suitable support services to persons of concern to ECRI, including refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants.³²

Securing effective access to relevant information

13. Relevant information related notably to education, health, housing and employment should be made available to migrants in a number of relevant languages and through different channels.³³

Supporting migrant children in schools³⁴

14. The authorities should systematically collect data on the educational outcomes, including drop-out rates, of migrant children.³⁵
15. The authorities should develop a coherent system of objectives and activities that help migrant children to complete compulsory schooling successfully.³⁶
16. The authorities should take any necessary action to increase the school attendance rate for migrant children in pre-school education³⁷ and ensure high standard of training and the educational and intercultural competences of child care workers and pre-school teachers.³⁸ The authorities should introduce a method of mapping the language level of migrant children at an early age and provide targeted support for the acquisition of language and other skills in pre-school education in order to ensure that migrant children acquire the language level required for lasting success at school.³⁹
17. Children of refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, as well as unaccompanied children, should be entitled to benefit from financial support to enable them to complete secondary schooling. The authorities should also align university-related fees and access to grants for those children with those available to citizens.⁴⁰

32 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Cyprus, § 115; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Greece, § 64; see also **Annual Report on ECRI's activities covering the period from 1 January to 31 December 2022**, § 32.

33 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Cyprus, § 76, see also ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Denmark, § 109 and ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Iceland, § 53 and ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Liechtenstein, § 65.

34 On this subject see also **ECRI General Policy Recommendation no. 10 on combating racism and racial discrimination in and through school education** adopted on 12 December 2006.

35 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on the Czech Republic, § 64; see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Liechtenstein, § 46; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on the Netherlands, § 73; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Switzerland, § 83.

36 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Spain, § 74.

37 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Norway, § 82; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Portugal, § 79; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Germany, § 81; see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Switzerland, § 54.

38 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Germany, § 86.

39 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Norway, § 82; see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Luxembourg, § 74; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Liechtenstein, § 46.

40 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Lithuania, § 79.

18. The authorities should promote the involvement of parents of migrant children into school life and the education of their children.⁴¹

Developing appropriate support programmes for migrant adults

19. The authorities should set up a comprehensive integration/inclusion support programme for beneficiaries of international protection, and in particular introduce regular language classes for these groups.⁴² The content of such courses should be adapted in such a way to facilitate access to employment.⁴³ When necessary, language classes should also be provided to migrant workers and job seekers.⁴⁴
20. The authorities should ensure equal access of migrants to, and the quality of, integration/inclusion courses.⁴⁵
21. The authorities should regularly review the skills-building and training programmes for refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and other migrants, with the aim of assessing their outcomes in terms of effectiveness as regards language and skills acquisition,⁴⁶ strengthening them and achieving high success rates in labour market participation, paying particular attention to addressing the specific needs of women.⁴⁷ They should also aim to achieve high completion rate of such courses.⁴⁸
22. The authorities should ensure that adult migrants have access to learning programmes and possibilities to continue their education.⁴⁹
23. The authorities, in cooperation with employers and employee organisations, should conduct a needs analysis in sectors with a high workforce shortage and develop tailored apprenticeship programmes in these areas for all migrants.⁵⁰

Easing the recognition of foreign diplomas and other qualifications

24. The authorities should take measures to facilitate and accelerate the process of recognising foreign diplomas and other qualifications to improve the employability of recognised refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection⁵¹ and other third country nationals.⁵² Such measures could build on the “European Qualifications Passport for Refugees” project, which has been carried out

41 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Norway, § 62.

42 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Georgia, § 90.

43 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Luxembourg, § 71.

44 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Iceland, § 80.

45 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Finland, § 73; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on the Czech Republic, § 59.

46 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Denmark, § 66.

47 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Finland, § 73; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Luxembourg, § 71.

48 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Georgia, § 77.

49 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Switzerland, § 83, see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Norway, § 64 and § 7a of ECRI **General Policy Recommendation No. 14 on combating racism and racial discrimination in employment**.

50 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Austria, § 89.

51 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Slovakia, § 106; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Greece, § 78;

52 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Poland, § 99.

by the Council of Europe and partners.⁵³

Ensuring effective access to employment⁵⁴

25. The authorities should identify the groups of migrants facing the greatest difficulties in the labour market and develop a coherent set of objectives and measures for increasing their employment rate and their working conditions.⁵⁵
26. The authorities should develop co-operation with employers in order to increase employment opportunities for beneficiaries of international protection and other migrants.⁵⁶
27. In order to prevent labour exploitation, the authorities should systematically provide refugees and other foreigners with information on their rights in employment and on how to report abuses.⁵⁷ In this connection, the labour inspection authorities should pay special attention to the working conditions of migrants.⁵⁸

Ensuring effective access to housing

28. The authorities should develop national policies on housing that set out measures to generate supply of affordable housing and combat discrimination, with particular emphasis being placed on the needs of migrants and other groups in situations of vulnerability.⁵⁹
29. The authorities should ensure that any self-settlement of persons granted refugee or subsidiary protection status in municipalities of their choice is accompanied by a process of verification of the suitability of the registered housing, in particular when children are involved.⁶⁰
30. The authorities should ensure that there are no cases of illegal forced evictions of migrants and that anyone at risk of being forcibly evicted from their home is afforded the full range of guarantees in accordance with international and national standards: they should be given sufficient advance notification of any decision to forcibly evict them, they should be entitled to appropriate legal protection and should not be evicted without the possibility of being rehoused in decent accommodation.⁶¹

⁵³ ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Poland, § 99; see also **European Qualifications Passport for Refugees**.

⁵⁴ On this subject, see also ECRI **General Policy Recommendation No. 14 on combating racism and racial discrimination in employment**, adopted on 22 June 2012.

⁵⁵ ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Spain, § 77.

⁵⁶ ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Slovenia, § 65; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Belgium, § 75.

⁵⁷ ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Malta, § 77.

⁵⁸ ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Greece, § 93.

⁵⁹ ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Ireland, § 101; see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Monaco, § 55.

⁶⁰ ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Sweden, § 66.

⁶¹ ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Portugal, § 83.

Ensuring effective access to health care

31. The authorities should ensure access to adequate health care cover for all foreigners residing regularly in the country.⁶²
32. When appropriate, a strategic plan for the sustained support of persons fleeing war and other emergencies should be developed. A particular emphasis should be placed on addressing the needs in the area of psycho-social counselling.⁶³

Ensuring effective access to relevant social benefits

33. The authorities should grant an entitlement to social welfare payments to refugees and beneficiaries of other forms of protection who are unemployed and without sufficient financial means.⁶⁴

Participation in public life

34. Member States should sign and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level.⁶⁵ Non-nationals residing in the country should be granted voting and eligibility rights in local elections, in accordance with the principles laid down in that Convention.⁶⁶

Family reunification

35. The authorities should ensure that rules on family reunification do not contain elements that amount to direct or indirect discrimination and/or are disproportionate to their stated aims.⁶⁷
36. The authorities should consider providing for the possibility of family reunification also for those granted subsidiary protection status.⁶⁸
37. The authorities should ensure that the income requirements and waiting time for the family integration for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are not excessive, bearing in mind the right to respect for family life, and in order to enhance integration.⁶⁹

62 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on the Czech Republic, § 72; see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Croatia, § 98 and ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Spain, § 80.

63 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Georgia, § 82.

64 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on the Russian Federation, § 82.

65 **Convention on the Participation of Foreigners in Public Life at Local Level** (ETS No. 144) adopted on 5 February 1992.

66 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on San Marino, §§ 61 and 62.

67 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Denmark, § 75.

68 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Cyprus, § 84; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Malta, § 79; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Sweden, § 64; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Cyprus, § 104.

69 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Finland, § 76; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Austria, § 76; ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Switzerland, § 78; see also ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Denmark, § 79.

Improving the legal framework on naturalisation in cases of long-term residence

38. The authorities should sign and ratify the European Convention on Nationality⁷⁰ and ensure that the legal framework on naturalisation is in compliance with this Council of Europe's legal instrument.⁷¹ In particular, they should ensure that the period of residence required to obtain citizenship is not higher than 10 years.⁷²

70 **The European Convention on Nationality** (ETS No. 166) adopted on 6 November 1997.

71 ECRI sixth-cycle **report** on Cyprus, § 102; ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Italy, § 70.

72 ECRI fifth-cycle **report** on Andorra, § 53.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) is a unique human rights monitoring body which specialises in questions relating to the fight against racism, discrimination (on grounds of "race", ethnic/national origin, colour, citizenship, religion, language, sexual orientation and gender identity), xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance in Europe.

ECRI was set up by the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of the member states of the Council of Europe in 1993 and became operational in 1994. As ECRI marks 30 years of combating racism and intolerance, current trends show that these are still persistent problems in European societies that require renewed efforts to be overcome.

ECRI is composed of 46 members appointed on the basis of their independence, impartiality, moral authority and expertise in dealing with issues of racism, discrimination, xenophobia, antisemitism and intolerance. Each Council of Europe member state appoints one person to serve as a member of ECRI.

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The Council of Europe is the continent's leading human rights organisation. It comprises 46 member states, including all members of the European Union. All Council of Europe member states have signed up to the European Convention on Human Rights, a treaty designed to protect human rights, democracy and the rule of law. The European Court of Human Rights oversees the implementation of the Convention in the member states.