



Integration through Education?
A Study of University Programs in Austria and Italy

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“This Project means a lot, it is not only about education: it has given us hope. [...] I only wanted to mention this: it is beyond education, it is beyond self-reliance, it is basically what I used to call a ‘life-saving’ project because they are saving us from making bad decisions and taking bad routes. So it is a big project.”

B., about the *UNICORE Project*
15.04.2021

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INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), at the end of 2020 82.4 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide due to persecution, conflict, violence, human rights violations, or events that seriously disrupted public order (UNHCR, 2021). Among them, over 26 million are refugees, around half of whom are minors. Developing countries host 86% of the world's refugees, meaning that developed countries host only 14% of internationally displaced persons. These data are critical because developing countries may not be able to provide refugees with a safe and dignified life in urban resettlement solutions nor refugee camps, although usually run by UNHCR. Therefore, sustainable solutions need to be identified. The international community has thus been increasingly calling for collective action to provide innovative approaches to increasing access to protection and solutions for refugees and asylum seekers. This call led, in 2016, to the UN General Assembly's adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, from which the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) were derived in 2018. The GCR's primary goals are to expand legal access to third countries, focusing on providing admission pathways that supplement resettlement. These are known as complementary pathways.

Complementary pathways include pre-existing alternatives to resettlement that refugees may apply to, which may require some modification to facilitate access, in addition to any arrangements that differ from resettlement. The distinctive characteristic of alternative pathways is that these options empower refugees with a choice. Information about alternative pathways is publicly available online, through official information providers (e.g. UNHCR personnel in refugee camps) or word of mouth. Thus, refugees can freely decide to apply to a determinate opportunity, such as programs providing access to higher education. Higher education pathways in third countries can broaden the range of options available to refugees while also contributing to more predictable responsibility-sharing and promoting self-sufficiency in ways that benefit host communities and higher education institutions. However, while there has been a focus on providing primary education to refugee children, a gap has been identified in data regarding refugees benefiting from higher education programs. Hence why this study investigates whether university Programs aimed at refugees and asylum seekers can build a path towards inclusion in society. To identify best practices across different countries and education systems, four Projects, all different, were selected to serve as case studies. The first two case studies, namely the *MORE Initiative* and the *Uni-Freunde Mentoring Program*, are run in Austria, respectively, at the national and local levels. The second two, namely the *UNICORE Project* and the *Progetto Mediterraneo*, are run in Italy, also at the national and local level. An in-depth analysis of the Projects themselves and data collected through surveys will be presented to provide compelling evidence for the critical role played by education in the social integration process.

Part 1 will, thus, provide a review of the existing literature on the pivotal role played by education in the social integration of refugees and asylum seekers, concluding that a holistic

approach to integration is required. This would imply new policies and laws to assist refugees and asylum seekers from the time they arrive in third countries until they complete the chosen educational cycle. On the other hand, educational institutions require assistance and direction in learning how to deal with trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder caused by the experience of becoming a refugee. Continuous data collection and analysis are also critical to determine the success of integration policies.

Although the topic of integration through education has been explored before, the centre of attention has mainly been on refugee children and adolescents in primary education. While this focus is tremendously important, especially given the rising number of minors travelling unaccompanied, little attention has been given to those refugees and asylum seekers who wish to undertake a university path. Part 2 will, therefore, provide a detailed description of the four university programs selected as case studies. Third-country higher education pathways can broaden the range of options available to refugees while also promoting self-sufficiency and more predictable responsibility-sharing in ways that benefit host communities and higher education institutions.

Finally, Part 3 will provide a detailed quantitative and qualitative analysis of data collected for three out of the four case studies selected. Unfortunately, no statistical data is available for the *Progetto Mediterraneo*. The case studies chosen are diverse in order to provide a broader range of good practices and lessons learnt that could be applied to different countries.

While this study provides an in-depth analysis of data quality and identifies any gaps or data limitations that must be addressed, the ultimate scope is for this thesis to be considered a baseline to aid the international community in developing new policies and improving development programming. The findings of this thesis will also help to evaluate the selected Projects to increase their availability and predictability. More broadly, this work will help ensure a more timely, equitable, and predictable distribution of responsibility for refugee protection and solutions.

Part 1: Integration Through Education

1.1. Background

Proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly (General Assembly resolution 217 A) in Paris, on the 10th of December 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) is the crucial document setting common standards for all nations and people. The UDHR is widely credited for inspiring and paving the way for the approval of more than seventy human rights treaties, which are now in force permanently at global and regional levels. Translated in over five hundred languages, the Declaration lays forth universally recognised fundamental human rights. One of these fundamental human rights is the right to education. Accordingly, Article 26 of the UDHR states that: "Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. [...] And higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948).

Additionally, "Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace" (Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948). Therefore, education is not a privilege, and as a universally recognised human right, it should be available to all with no distinction of origin, background, religion, sexual orientation, or status. Besides, the right to education benefits both individuals and society as a whole. It is essential for human, social, and economic growth, and a critical component of long-term peace and progress. It is an effective instrument for maximizing everyone's potential, preserving human dignity, and fostering individual and societal well-being (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1999). To do so, however, all signatory states are obliged to meet the minimum requirements of the right to education, to take reasonable action to ensure that the right to education is fully realised, utilising all available resources, and not pass legislation that would nullify existing safeguards of the right to education (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 1999).

It could thus be stated that education is essential for the development of any civilised society. Hence, for this thesis, *Education* will be defined not only as the "field dealing mainly with teaching and learning methods in schools" (Merriam-Webster, 2021) but also as the process enabling the assimilation and appreciation of the surrounding cultural environment. Particular attention will be given to the role played by education for integration, as educational institutions somewhat force individuals to learn and adapt to the society they find themselves in. Through attending years of schooling in a determinate country, cultural norms will be learnt and assimilated almost unconsciously, and this raises the question of whether passive assimilation can be enough for social integration. It could also be argued that cultural values are passed on to the next generation through educational institutions during teaching, as teachers themselves also acquire socio-cultural norms through their education. This knowledge is integrated with personal experiences and potentially influenced by the context in which a teacher lives. Therefore the process of teaching is hopefully constantly up-to-date and can bring social change. Educational institutions also help society become more organised by harmonising

people's attitudes, ideas, habits, customs, emotions, and sentiments. They achieve uniformity by establishing general social codes. As a result, they have the potential to facilitate social integration.

Furthermore, the interactions and gatherings established in educational institutions might aid in the development of individuals' personalities. Students can gain a lot of knowledge and understanding by interacting with people from various origins, natures, and educational experiences. This knowledge and understanding may then be applied to their personal development. The same experiences can help individuals live a happy life in various settings, such as family and society.

This first Part will thus present an overview of the available literature on the integration of refugees and asylum seekers through education. Although the critical role played by education to achieve integration has thoroughly been discussed by researchers and experts, the focus has been on refugee children and young people in primary schooling. While this perspective is critical, especially given the growing number of unaccompanied minors and children travelling alone, those refugees and asylum seekers who aspire to pursue a university education have received less attention. As a result, the goal of the following chapters is to fill the gap in the literature.

1.2. Intercultural Education: the Way Forward?

The large influx of refugees into Europe in recent years has made education policy modifications and the quick adoption of education in crisis solutions necessary and imperative (Vitsou and Kamaretsou, 2020). The GCR, endorsed by the UN General Assembly on 17 December 2018, and the 2016 New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants acted as catalysts for states'¹ commitment to expanding access to third countries with solutions such as resettlement and supplementary paths for safe admission of refugees and asylum seekers (OECD and UNHCR, 2019). As a result, different stakeholders agreed to provide a wide range of alternatives available to refugees, in addition to the long-established methods to third-country solutions. The GCR's Three-Year Strategy on Resettlement and Complementary Paths, released in July 2019, guides a multi-stakeholder/multi-sectoral approach to expanding complimentary admission pathways, strengthening existing ones, and making them more "accessible, dependable, and predictable" (OECD and UNHCR, 2019, p. 3). The first attempt to collect and evaluate data regarding the use of complementary pathways for refugees' admission to third countries was a joint report published in December 2018 by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the UNHCR, which covered the period 2010-2017 (OECD and UNHCR, 2019). The report and subsequent update (published in 2019) focused on Syrian, Eritrean, Iraqi, Afghan, and Somali citizens who entered OECD countries with permits tied to supplementary pathways to third-country admission. In each of the years covered by this data collection (2010-2017), these nationality groups accounted for more than half of the world's refugees under the UNHCR's mission. The 2019 update found, for example,

¹ In collaboration with civil society, international and national NGOs, the private sector, and others.

that the number of granted permits for work reasons increased by 10% in 2018 compared to 2017, while the number of education permits granted remained stable (OECD and UNHCR, 2019). In these reports, "data on students refers to permits granted for study reasons and visas for academic scholarships, including secondary and tertiary education" (OECD and UNHCR, 2019, p.5). Data collection and analysis on refugees' choices regarding regulated and safe complementary non-humanitarian (such as education, employment, and family reunification) pathways will provide ground for further research.

It should be acknowledged that the issue of educating refugees and asylum seekers has recently surfaced due to the advent of prolonged wars, such as the Syrian crisis, the exponential increase in refugee flow, and the consequent growing presence of refugee students in educational facilities at all levels. However, as argued by Magos and Margaroni in their article meaningfully titled *The importance of educating refugees* (2018), many issues relating to refugee education are still unresolved. The search for better policies and strategies for successful refugee education, approaches to create equal chances and social justice, and reducing the educational and social exclusion of persons with refugee identity are among them. Magos and Margaroni (2018) argue that one step in the right direction towards shaping education to become a tool for integrating refugees and asylum seekers would be taking a 'multicultural or intercultural education' approach. 'Multicultural or intercultural education' refers to any style of education or teaching that combines the histories, texts, values, beliefs, and viewpoints of persons from many cultural origins (Zilliacus and Holm, 2009). According to the literature on the topic, 'multicultural education' is more prevalent in North America, Australia, and Asia (Hill, 2007; Leeman and Reid, 2006; Zilliacus and Holm, 2009). Therefore, this chapter will refer to 'intercultural education' instead, as the focus of this thesis will be on the European continent. Besides, according to Hill (2007), in a culturally varied setting, 'interculturalism' refers to the contact and relationship between different cultural groups, while 'multiculturalism' is considered more of a static process that allows for the coexistence of diverse cultures which do not necessarily need to interact with each other.

Similarly, Gundara (2000, p.233) considers an intercultural relationship as made of "interactions, negotiations, and processes," thus describing a more dynamic process than multiculturalism, which they consider a descriptive term used to characterise the nature of society. For instance, while a multicultural society could be made of individuals from different nationalities working side by side daily, an intercultural society would see those same people collaborate and exchange ideas and perspectives to produce a final result that will be a product of those interactions. It could, therefore, be argued that an intercultural society can better promote integration as a person's background and nationality do not define their value, but rather are to be considered a starting point to explore different perspectives.

The term 'intercultural education' has also been promoted by official international institutions such as the Council of Europe and the European Commission, which produced policies promoting this concept (Council of Europe, 2017; Faas et al., 2014; Oprescu and Lungoci, 2017). The support for the intercultural perspective is also evident thanks to projects such as the *EuROpean Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students*

(Erasmus), which, since 1987, encourages university students to experience educational systems in other countries while validating their studies as if they had been completed in their home university. This way, international students become part of the conversations and processes that shape education, both their own and that of the local students, while offering their unique perspectives and notions learnt at home (European Commission, 2017). This constant exchange and assimilation of new information from different cultures is the definition of intercultural education. Additionally, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) defines *Intercultural Education* as "a dynamic concept and refers to evolving relations between 2 cultural groups. [...] Interculturality presupposes multiculturalism and results from 'intercultural' exchange and dialogue on the local, regional, national or international level" (UNESCO, 2006, 17). It is, therefore, evident that multicultural education is perceived as a perhaps passive attempt to accept other cultures without making any actual steps towards integration.

Intercultural education also provides local students with the tools to both understand and appreciate different cultures and backgrounds, and at the same time, it offers the so-called 'foreigners' the necessary tools to integrate into the society that welcomes them. More importantly, abandoning older approaches to education, like portraying colonialism and slavery as a reason of pride for western countries, to move to more intercultural education, for instance by teaching the history of indigenous peoples, could be seen as an instrument to fight inherent racism and populism. The perception of superior races would not be taught nor internalised. On one side, that of the countries hosting refugees, this would hopefully lead to a more accepting society, as diversity would be celebrated and inclusion would become a most welcome consequence. On the other, intercultural education would allow refugees and asylum seekers to receive an education that would empower them to become valuable members of society, and perhaps assist them to, one day, return to their country of origin to apply the knowledge and competencies they acquired. Thus, intercultural education is critical when considering educating refugees and asylum seekers as the status of 'refugee' would not hamper people's future opportunities to, for example, join the labour force.

1.3. The Importance of Secondary Education for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

A compelling example of intercultural education is the decision recently taken by the Government of Bangladesh to teach the Myanmar curriculum to Rohingya children and youth residing in refugee camps in the Cox's Bazar District. At the start of 2020, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in collaboration with other humanitarian actors, launched a significant new phase of education for Rohingya refugee children, expanding access to education by introducing the Myanmar curriculum on a trial basis in the first half of the year (Reidy, 2020). The pilot phase of the project, which targeted about 10,000 Rohingya students aged 11-14 years old, was developed following "wishes of the Rohingya refugees and [it] builds hope for their future by giving them access to education based on the Myanmar curriculum" (Reidy, 2020). Until the launch of the pilot phase of the project, Rohingya refugee children and youth were receiving an education following the Bangladeshi curriculum (Kamal

Zafari, 2020), which, of course, was not preparing them for an eventual return to Myanmar should the conditions allow for a voluntary, safe and dignified repatriation. Thus, this decision to allow the Rohingya refugees to follow the Myanmar curriculum is a pivotal step for many different reasons. Firstly, it allows the children and youth to build a connection with a country some of them might not even remember, given that Rohingya have been fleeing into neighbouring Bangladesh since the 1990s (UNHCR, 2018), and in 2020 alone, a worrying number of over 850,000 Rohingyas were residing in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar District, half of whom were children (ISCG, 2020; World Vision International, 2020). Secondly, the Rohingya refugees have been consistent in their wish to return home, but only with assurance of safety, access to essential benefits and services, and the right to citizenship in Myanmar (ISCG, 2020), and having received an education following the Myanmar curriculum could mean that the Rohingya youth could be ready to join the Myanmar job market upon their return. Thirdly, as the Government of Myanmar considers Rohingyas as immigrants from Bangladesh rather than citizens in exile, having returnees who followed the same education as the considered local population could help span the divide. Consequently, the intercultural education the Rohingya refugee children and youth receive in Bangladesh prepares them to become valuable members of both societies, namely the Bangladeshi and Myanmar, should they both have to stay in Cox's Bazar or the eventuality of repatriation.

This decision taken by the Government of Bangladesh should pave the way for other countries, especially those hosting large numbers of refugees, to follow their example. However, this is not yet the case. Refugee education is an established right in official political discourse, both in international and national contexts, and opportunities are meant to be provided to those who wish to be educated. However, Magos and Margaroni (2018, p.1) argue that the high dropout rates of refugee students and their poor academic performance in school in comparison to other students, as well as their significantly limited access to higher levels of education, particularly tertiary education, are a symptom of significant deficiencies in practice. Of course, one should consider that refugees carry significant barriers that can make it more difficult to follow and complete a cycle of studies, most of which are direct consequences of refugee experiences. For example, completing a degree course can become much more complicated when in need to relocate halfway through the program, especially when moving to a country that might not offer the same course or where the spoken language is unknown, or even when the modules one has already completed do not get recognised in a third country. At the same time, educational institutions do not always offer the right and needed tools for the refugee students' educational and social inclusion in society. To empower educational institutions to bring actual change in the matter, however, what is truly needed is a reform of the educational system. For instance, educational policies should cover issues such as the lack of training for teachers who might not know how to deal with some of the problematic situations their students had to face. Psychological support for the students themselves, who might find it hard to integrate with the new school system; language classes for the refugee students to join in conversation with their peers are also needed. Of course, these policies should apply equally to all levels of education, bearing in mind that different age groups have different needs, which should be reflected in the

support provided. To do so, a collaborative approach between governments, international organisations, NGOs, and refugee-related national and local bodies could provide diverse solutions to a broader range of issues (Magos and Margaroni, 2018).

A collaboration among actors of a different nature could help face issues considered most basic, such as, for example, the unavailability of the fundamental necessities of a dignified life, the lack of time or spaces where to study, or complicated working conditions (Magos and Margaroni, 2018). Besides, educational institutions should account for the refugees' carried stress and trauma (Margaroni, 2014), which often derive from the experience of becoming an asylum seeker and later a refugee, from the reasons why they had to flee their homes, as well as from the process of acculturation (Gibson, 2001; Magos and Margaroni, 2018; Mosselson, 2009). Therefore, the education of refugees and asylum seekers should include psychological support from the very beginning, as trauma cannot be ignored and needs to be overcome in order to achieve integration. In terms of actual teaching, scholars have argued that it is of the utmost importance for education systems to keep the connection to the countries of origin by offering mother-tongue courses and more culture-based ones. As previously mentioned, an intercultural education could prove to be the key to integration, as refugee students would assimilate the cultural values of the hosting country. At the same time, the hosting communities would learn to consider the 'new' and 'unknown' cultures as an added value to society. This might derive from the fact that "[...] while migrants generally consciously prepare for integration, refugees do not usually leave their country of origin voluntarily and are accordingly unprepared" (Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia et al., 2018, p.173). At the same time, the conditions in which refugees find themselves can vary greatly, and this will also have an impact on their academic performance (Zlatkin-Troitschanskaia et al., 2018), hence why the proper training of teachers and academic staff is as pivotal as the process of educating refugees itself. It could thus be argued that new education policies regarding refugees need to be holistic and include socio-economic and political integration. A comprehensive response to the crisis must address two issues: the urgent need for organised reception and assistance for traumatised people fleeing their homes, as well as the long-term solution to increasing inequalities, segregation, and social exclusion (Maletic, 2016, p.1).

Data from Eurostat, the OECD, and the European Commission show that both foreign-born and second-generation children and youth are more likely to live in poverty, drop out of school and be out of work, education, or training, and are less likely to have acquired basic skills (literacy, math, and science) by the age of fifteen (Maletic, 2016). According to the Council of Europe: "Young women and men with a migrant background continue to face major disadvantages in education, on the labour market and in transition from education to the labour market" (Council of the European Union, 2012, p.6). Despite all of this, immigrant students are driven to succeed. Studies have shown that immigrant students in fourteen countries were more likely than non-immigrant students to aspire to work as professionals or managers by the age of 30. Similarities in the two groups' expectations were found in twenty-six other countries, indicating that the potential is at least equal (OECD, 2015). The 'new generation' of newcomers and hosts are thus becoming increasingly similar. They frequently share a cultural climate and,

for example, are referred to as 'digital natives.' However, there are numerous differences in living conditions, linguistic pluralism, religions, expectations, motivations, etcetera (Maletic, 2016, p.4). To deal with these differences, both immigrants and non-immigrants need strong intercultural competencies that allow them to engage in appropriate, effective, and respectful intercultural interaction and dialogue with people from other cultural backgrounds (Maletic, 2016, p.4). These skills and competencies could be developed through different school hours, such as organising civic education classes and after-school projects, including volunteering opportunities, languages and cultures clubs, sports courses, etcetera. Besides, from the perspective of the hosting communities, individuals who have developed more vital intercultural awareness, such as, for example, university students studying foreign languages, tend to be more emphatic and curious towards the 'new' and the 'unknown'. This also applies to teachers and educators, hence why it is crucial to provide adequate training to deal with the difficult situations they might have to face. Moreover, teachers and educators could push for the formation of a new 'European' identity that could incorporate both the non-immigrant students and their refugee counterparts to create a 'neutral' environment where nationalities and cultural backgrounds will not represent an issue. This movement, however, should be supported by Member States (MS) of the European Union (EU), which should put more emphasis on policies highlighting the need for intercultural education and, more importantly, a somewhat standardised curriculum across the EU to allow for easier migration and resettlement.

However, despite having been faced with the most dramatic migration crisis² since the end of WWII, on top of providing primary education to refugee children,³ European countries did little to support refugees' transition to higher education. Specific national approaches among European countries still lack, with a few exceptions, and only ten EU MS⁴ explicitly mention the right to education in their legal systems (Maletic, 2016). According to the UNHCR, over 80 million people worldwide were forcibly displaced in mid-2020 (UNHCR, 2020), about half of those are children and youth aged 35 or younger, and "[...] only one per cent of refugee youth can access and continue higher education" (Yildiz et al., 2019). When it comes to emergency response, universities and other higher education facilities are often left to independently choose how to face the issue, as humanitarian aid tends to provide a limited number of scholarships or other forms of monetary support. "However, large-scale, sustainable broad-based internationalisation policies and frameworks are utterly lacking" (Yildiz et al., 2019). What needs to be highlighted is the need for sustainable policies at the national and international

² See: Migration data portal, 2020. *Migration data in Europe*. [online] migrationdataportal.org. Available at: <<https://migrationdataportal.org/regional-data-overview/europe>>; OECD, 2015. Is this humanitarian migration crisis different?. *Migration Policy Debates*, [online] (7). Available at: <<https://www.oecd.org/migration/Is-this-refugee-crisis-different.pdf>>.

³ See: UNHCR, UNICEF and IOM, 2019. *Access to Education for Refugee and Migrant Children in Europe*. Available at: <https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press_release/file/access-to-education-for-refugee-children.pdf>; OECD, 2019. *Refugee Education: Integration Models and Practices in OECD Countries*. Available at: <[https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=EDU/WKP\(2019\)11&docLanguage=En](https://www.oecd.org/officialdocuments/publicdisplaydocumentpdf/?cote=EDU/WKP(2019)11&docLanguage=En)>.

⁴ BE, CS, EL, ES, FR, HR, IT, NL, RO, SE.

levels that would put universities at the centre of the response. Education facilities should play a vital role in the integration process for refugees, and even before that, they should wish to develop programs that would fit within the alternative pathways framework. Attempts have been made, such as the projects that will be analysed in Part 2. However, the programs currently existing have been posing some insurmountable limitations for refugees. For example, in Italy, students cannot enrol in a degree course unless they own a valid national identity card, and the process of obtaining such a document can take up to a year. It could, of course, be argued that, in the big picture, a year is not much. When looking at specific cases, however, some refugees might already be in their thirties when they arrive in third countries and having to wait an additional year to enrol in a program they might have already completed in their home country could be a massive set back in one's career. This then leads to a further conversation regarding the recognition, or lack thereof, of university degrees. Again taking Italy as an example, foreign degrees have to be validated by the Italian State through a lengthy and expensive legal process that refugees might not know how to navigate nor have the monetary means to. In order to facilitate integration, both into further education and in the workforce, university degrees would benefit from being internationally recognised and accepted as they are.

Prior learning and qualifications obtained abroad must be recognised to build inclusive societies and reduce the risk of social alienation. Thus, one of the GCR's twenty-three objectives is to facilitate mutual recognition of skills, qualifications, and competencies (Yildiz et al., 2019). The Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications for Higher Education in the European Region establishes a legal framework for recognising qualifications held by persons of concern. It has been ratified by fifty-four countries,⁵ including ten from outside of Europe (namely Australia, Belarus, Canada, Holy See, Israel, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, New Zealand, Tajikistan, the US), and the EU (Council of Europe, 2021; Yildiz et al., 2019). Section VII⁶ of the Lisbon Treaty states that within the framework of its education system, all signatories shall take all feasible and reasonable steps to develop procedures designed to assess whether refugees and other persons of concern meet the relevant requirements for access to higher education, to continue higher education programs or to engage in employment activities. Even if the qualifications obtained in one of the Parties cannot be proven through documentary evidence (See Annex I) (Council of Europe, 1997). However, the European Commission has reported that this has not always been the case, and some signatories have not implemented the convention, which resulted in non-existent appropriate recognition procedures (European Commission, 2019).

⁵ Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, European Union.

⁶ "Recognition of qualifications held by refugees, displaced persons, and persons in a refugee-like situation."

Additionally, with the *Global education monitoring report*, UNESCO has reached two worrying conclusions. First, the mechanisms in place to recognise refugees' titles and diplomas are seldom easy nor straightforward, resulting in refugees being employed at levels way below their competencies or even unemployed and out of education. Second, effective policy responses cannot be developed since systematic data collection and analysis regarding the education status of refugees, displaced persons, and individuals in refugee-like situations are substantially lacking (UNESCO, 2018). Lack of monitoring can be disastrous for those projects already in place to provide asylum seekers and refugees with higher education, as, first of all, no feedback means no way to know whether the programs work or how they can be improved. These programs are usually run using external funds, so the lack of data could also result in cutting those funds, meaning that the programs cannot be implemented in the future. Some universities support refugee students by covering enrollment fees through fundraising of sorts, but donors wish to be kept up-to-date with how their money is being spent, and not providing answers could hamper the whole process.

In conclusion, this part provided a review of the existing literature on the pivotal role of education in the social integration of refugees and asylum seekers. What has emerged is that social integration, intended as "an inclusionary goal, implying equal opportunities and rights for all human beings" (UNRISD, 1994, p.3), is a complicated and multi-layered process happening in different areas at different times. Undeniably, education plays a vital role in this process due to all members of society being somehow involved in education: refugee children and youth have access to it, family members can, and should, be kept up-to-date with their children's progress, adults can either work in education or receive language classes to better integrate into third-country societies. Therefore, it is hard to overestimate the impact education has on integration as an overall process. Different scholars and numerous studies have provided compelling evidence that education is the most suitable and hopefully sustainable condition for refugees to join the societies that welcome them, both in terms of culture and economics (Orechova, 2018). Educational institutions at all levels, on top of teaching a wide range of skills ranging from languages and maths to sciences and appreciation of various forms of art, support creating a person's identity within the society that hosts them. This applies to both the local population as much as refugees and asylum seekers. Especially in the latter case, educational institutions are the perfect platform for immigrant individuals to learn and acquire the social and cultural norms of third countries, both in an active way, by attending lessons, and somewhat unconsciously, by interacting with their non-immigrant peers. It is also necessary to highlight that interaction with pupils with a migrant background can be a decisive step in the fight against racism, fear, and lack of trust towards immigrants. Education opposes ignorance, and thus some news reported by the media will automatically lose their power when confronted with reality. However, education alone cannot provide the rapid shift in mentality that European societies so desperately need. As a result, a holistic approach to integration is required. This would mean new policies and laws supporting, on the one hand, refugees and asylum seekers from the moment of arrival to third countries to the completion of the chosen education cycle. On the other hand, educational institutions need support and guidance in learning how to deal

with trauma and post-traumatic stress caused by the experience of becoming a refugee. Finally, continuous data collection and analysis are critical for the success of integration policies, as improvements can be made only by collecting feedback and learning from mistakes and best practices.

Part 2: Integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers into Universities

2.1. Building safe, alternative pathways for Refugees and Asylum Seekers

Given the significant rates of global forced displacement discussed in previous chapters, it should not be surprising that the international community's call for collective action to provide innovative approaches to increase access to protection and solutions for refugees and asylum seekers has intensified over the past few years (OECD and UNHCR, 2018). A year after the '2015 Migration Crisis', the United Nations General Assembly unanimously adopted the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants on the 19th of September 2016. The New York Declaration reaffirms the importance of the international refugee regime and includes a slew of commitments from the Member States to strengthen and improve mechanisms for protecting people on the move (UNHCR, 2016). The Declaration also led to the adoption, in 2018, of two new global compacts: a GCR and a Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration. In addition, by adopting the New York Declaration, Member States have "expressed profound solidarity with those forced to flee; reaffirmed their obligations to fully respect the human rights of refugees and migrants; agreed that protecting refugees and supporting countries that shelter them are shared international responsibilities that must be carried out more equitably and predictably; pledged strong support to countries affected by large refugee and migrant movements; and agreed on the core elements of a Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (CRRF)" (UNHCR, 2016). The CRRF emphasises the importance of assisting countries and communities that host many refugees, promoting refugee inclusion in host communities, ensuring early involvement of development actors, and developing a 'whole-of-society approach to refugee response (UNHCR, 2016). However, the GCR's core objectives are to realise the expansion of legal access to third countries, emphasising making available pathways for admission that complement resettlement (OECD and UNHCR, 2018).

These pathways for admission are known as 'complementary pathways', and they are defined as "safe and regulated avenues for refugees that complement resettlement by providing lawful stay in a third country where their international protection needs are met" (WUSC, UNHCR, and UNESCO, 2020). Complementary pathways include those already existing alternatives that refugees may apply to, which may require modification to facilitate access, on top of additional arrangements that differ from resettlement. These include, for example, private sponsorships for individual refugees (WUSC, UNHCR, and UNESCO, 2020). However, what makes complementary pathways stand out, on top of the chance to provide refugees with additional alternatives, is that the refugees themselves are empowered with the opportunity of accessing the complementary pathways of their choosing through independent research and information that is publicly available (WUSC, UNHCR, and UNESCO, 2020). However, in other cases, legal, administrative, and practical barriers can prevent refugees from accessing complementary pathways, hence why careful consideration and necessary protection safeguards are necessary. As a result, detailed quantitative information on the types of permits issued to refugee populations is critical for understanding the difficulties refugees may face in gaining access to alternative pathways for admission to third countries (OECD and UNHCR,

2018). Some of the most popular issued permits are for family reunification, labour mobility schemes, scholarships and education programs, which are examples of safe and regulated non-humanitarian pathways. It could be argued that non-humanitarian, complementary pathways can only temporarily provide refugees with a solution. However, they can improve refugees' self-reliance by assisting them in achieving a long-term solution in the future. That is to say that, for instance, providing refugees and asylum seekers with new skills and competencies through secondary education can have a positive impact on their future, as refugees could apply that newly acquired expertise in the job market of the country that hosted them, or safely return to their place of origin and support the development of their country. "Furthermore, skilled diaspora members can contribute to post-conflict stabilisation efforts and help strengthen the development of fragile states by assisting with the reconstruction of government structures and communities, promoting the rule of law, peace, and coexistence, and taking on management, technical, and administrative jobs in key sectors" (OECD and UNHCR, 2018, p. 23). Therefore, complementary pathways, even those of a non-humanitarian nature, can also alleviate the pressure on host countries by serving as an alternative to the traditional long-term solutions, namely voluntary repatriation, local integration, and resettlement.

In 2018, the OECD in collaboration with the UNHCR, published a report titled *Safe Pathways for Refugees*,⁷ which found that in the period between 2010 and 2017, the total number of asylum applications submitted to OECD countries from Afghani, Eritrean, Iraqi, Somalian and Syrian (Syrian Arab Republic) nationals exceeded 2.5 million, with 13% on appeal following an unfavourable decision at the first-instance asylum body. The researchers found a three-to-one ratio of asylum-related entry-and-stay visas versus non-humanitarian complementary pathways for refugees, demonstrating the critical importance of a fair and efficient asylum system (OECD and UNHCR, 2018, p. 13). Between 2010 and 2017, almost 490,000 permits were granted to the populations mentioned above for family reasons, and family permits accounted for little over 85% of all family, work and study permits granted (OECD and UNHCR, 2018, p. 13). In 2016, Afghani, Eritrean, Iraqi, Somalian and Syrian nationals received only the 0.4% of all permits issued by OECD countries for study purposes to students of all nationalities. The OECD and UNHCR report (2018, p. 15) found that overall, only 10% of the permits issued to the five populations over the seven-years analysed span were study permits. This number is significant because, since 2015, a considerable number of projects to grant access to higher education to refugees and asylum seekers has been developed. However, the lack of students can hamper the impact of such projects. Indeed, if there are no students to attend university programs, there is no data to be collected and analysed to determine whether those programs can be successful or modified for further implementation. Additionally, as stated by a refugee currently attending university in Rome, Italy, these projects "mean a lot, and not only in terms of education. [...] It is beyond education, it is beyond self-reliance, it is basically what I used to call a 'life-saving' Project because they are saving us from

⁷ *Safe Pathways for Refugees. OECD-UNHCR Study on third country solutions for refugees: family reunification, study programmes and labour mobility (2018).*

making bad decisions and taking bad routes” (B., LUISS Student, 2021) (See Annex III for the complete interview).

Refugees frequently face barriers to accessing higher education, mainly when opportunities are located in third-world countries. These include difficulties with academic admissions, immigration and visa processes, post-arrival assistance, and opportunities for protection and long-term solutions such as resettlement or local integration (WUSC, UNHCR, and UNESCO, 2020). The global higher education community is well-positioned to respond to the refugee crisis in a meaningful way and demonstrate significant leadership. However, significant investments are required in the systems and infrastructure supporting third-country education opportunities for refugees worldwide. Higher education networks, including students, can play a crucial role in realising this potential and breaking down existing barriers (WUSC, UNHCR, and UNESCO, 2020). In November 2019, UNHCR, UNESCO, and WUSC held an international conference⁸ known as the Paris Meeting, where country- and region-specific needs and barriers to third-country education pathways for refugees were investigated. Emerging good practices to address barriers and expand opportunities were identified by stakeholders. The outcome of the Paris Meeting was a report titled *Doubling Our Impact*⁹ (2020), which draws a ‘journey map’ to understand the numerous systemic barriers to accessing available options faced by refugees. According to the three institutions, the countries of the first asylum offer very few high-quality opportunities for refugees to further their education. More specifically, the report noted a scarcity of long-term scholarship opportunities; a failure to give refugees special consideration; limited access to high-quality, dependable information; and a scarcity of financial resources.

Additionally, refugees can face rigid academic admission processes, which get complicated by the potential unavailability of documentation, the non-recognition or non-completion of previous studies; the limited access to language tests; high application fees, and time-consuming application procedures as additional costs not covered by partial scholarships. In terms of immigration, difficulties include restricted access to travel documents, long-term solutions, and safe passage and transit visas. Finally, refugees can also face post-arrival difficulties, including limited opportunities for social integration; potentially hostile, xenophobic, or racist environments; insufficient support for academic success; and limited access to local economic opportunities (WUSC, UNHCR and UNESCO, 2020).

⁸ *Education Opportunities as Complementary Pathways for Admission.*

⁹ *Doubling our Impact. Third Country Higher Education Pathways for Refugees.*

2.2. Analysis of case studies

Third-country higher education pathways can broaden the range of options available to refugees while also contributing to more predictable responsibility-sharing and promoting self-sufficiency in ways that benefit host communities and higher education institutions. The following section will thus discuss four university Projects aimed at refugees and asylum seekers to understand whether they promote integration into society. The first two case studies, namely *MORE* and *Uni-Freunde*, are run in Austria, respectively, at the national and local levels. The second two, namely *UNICORE* and *Progetto Mediterraneo*, are run in Italy, also at the national and local levels. For this thesis, the term ‘national level’ refers to Projects run at different institutions across the country, while the term ‘local level’ refers to Projects run within one city only.

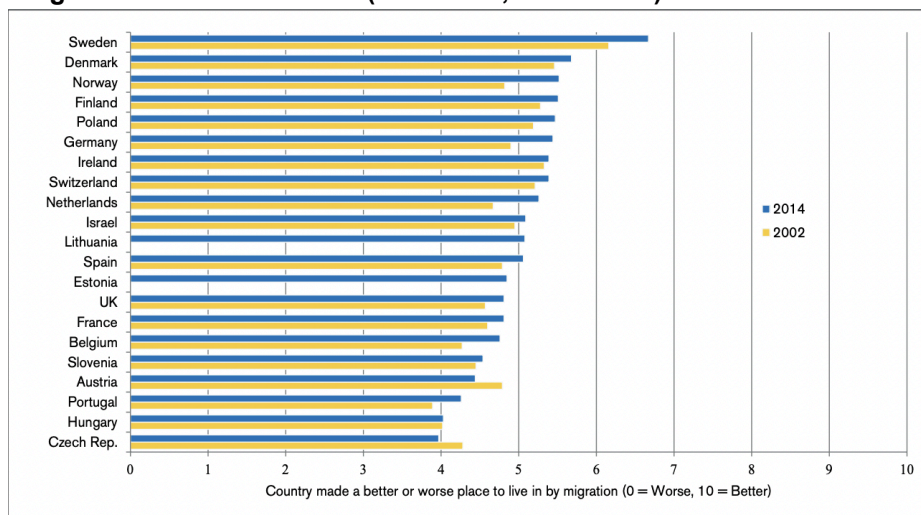
Luckily, these are not the only Projects available throughout Europe. For a brief overview of some of the “good practices” at other European Higher Education Institutions, see Annex XV.

2.2.1. Austria

The considerable influx of refugees (see Annex VI) that arrived in Austria in the summer of 2015 had a profound impact on the relatively small country, which had previously been regarded as a “foreign sceptic” (Bacher et al., 2019). In the early 1990s, for example, the *Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs* (FPÖ - the Austrian Freedom Party) launched *Austria First!* initiative: a far-right anti-immigration petition which asked the Government “to think finally of the Austrians and consider their problems” (Mitten, 1994, p.27). The petition called for a referendum to vote on harsher immigration policies, and despite strong opposition, more than 400,000 people signed in favour of the referendum, which, in the end, never took place. They constituted almost 8% of the electorate (Bacher et al., 2019). Data collected through different surveys provided compelling evidence for existent xenophobic attitudes (Bacher et al., 2019). According to Heath and Richards (2016), in the 2002 European Social Survey (ESS) the balance of opinion regarding whether migration makes a country a better or worse place to live was negative for Austria. Overall, the balance of opinion for European publics was slightly negative in 2002, with thirteen countries having an average score of fewer than 5 points—the midpoint of the scale (Heath and Richards, 2016). However, four of these countries moved into positive territory in the ESS 2014, with mean scores just above 5, while only two – Austria and the Czech Republic – became less welcoming of immigrants (See Figure 1). Thus, the balance became even less favourable to foreigners (Heath and Richards, 2016; Bacher et al., 2019). This data is critical considering that it was collected in 2014 and thus just a year before the rising waves of immigration in Austria. However, while it is unclear whether the events of 2015 contributed to an increase in right-wing populism and xenophobia, the arrival of refugees demonstrated that large segments of Austrian civil society were eager to assist in any way they could. Temporary shelters were quickly established, and Austrian citizens collected clothing and food, provided shelter for refugees, or participated in volunteer work (Meyer and Simsa, 2018; Bacher et al., 2019). In addition, during the summer of 2015, Uniko—a non-executive umbrella organisation comprising all 22 Austrian public universities—worked on a program to integrate

refugees and asylum seekers into university. The *MORE Initiative* was officially launched in September 2015, and by the end of the year, all members had joined (Uniko, 2019).

Figure 1 - Evaluation of whether a country is made a better or worse place to live in as a result of migration in 2002 and 2014 (0 = Worse, 10 = Better)



Source: *European Social Survey Round 1, 2002 and Round 7, 2014*

2.2.2. MORE Initiative

The *MORE Initiative* is aimed at individuals who have been forced to flee their home countries, regardless of whether they are still waiting for asylum decisions or have already been recognised as refugees. The program grants the opportunity to experience life at university and thus access tertiary education in Austria by providing refugees and asylum seekers with orientation regarding degree courses and support with academic integration. Therefore, *MORE* offers its students 'more' than the fundamental necessities of life such as medical help, accommodation, and board: it aims at providing a space for reflection where asylum seekers and refugees can independently consider whether university education is an option for their future. It empowers persons of concern with a choice, arguably the same choice every other student can make: that of continuing an education path or rather deciding to look for a job instead. This consideration, of course, does not take into account practical concerns such as the cost of university fees, rent, bills, food, etcetera, which can constitute a barrier for most students without a migration background too. However, in an ideal world where none of these charges mattered, the *MORE Initiative* could put asylum seekers and refugees and Austrian nationals on the same level and provide them with equal opportunities. The Project aims at serving as a measure for refugee integration in the university sector, allowing refugees to maximise their potential while also minimising any follow-up costs due to unsuccessful integration. It should make it easier for refugees and asylum seekers to begin or continue their academic careers.

Furthermore, the Project also has the critical goal of assisting asylum seekers in resuming some aspects of stability in their daily lives during the asylum procedure's often unpredictable duration. According to this approach, contrary to the refugee camp, "the university is a place of normality in which people do not have to define themselves by their 'refugee' status. With your student ID, you are accepted into the already international, multilingual, and diverse body of professors and students. Their knowledge, skills, and competencies are in the foreground, not their origins or their fate as a refugee" (Fiorioli, 2017, p.215).

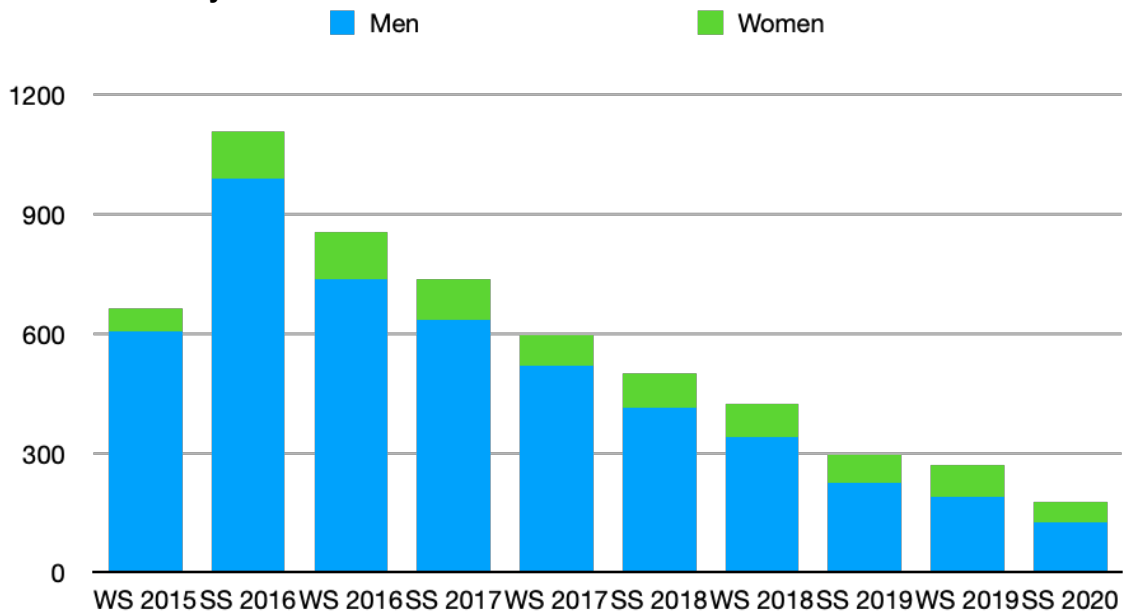
As previously mentioned, *MORE* began as a pilot phase in the winter semester 2015/16 and has since expanded to include all universities in Graz, Innsbruck, Klagenfurt, Leoben, Linz, Salzburg, and Vienna (See Annex IV for the complete list). Universities make a limited number of seats available in specific lectures and courses, and in the period from the winter semester 2015/16 through winter semester 2019/20 included, over 5,600 *MORE* students overall took advantage of the opportunities offered. Overall, universities accept *MORE* students in specific courses or allow them to participate in university-sponsored courses and events specifically targeted at *MORE* students, and all *MORE* universities offer the same basic package of benefits. Becoming a *MORE* student entails admission as *außerordentlich* (non-degree students); access to a non-bureaucratic procedure to determine the qualification for the respective course; tuition fee waiver or free participation to the selected course; waiver of the *ÖH Beitrag* (student union membership fee); access to the library; the possibility to sit an exam which, although not legally binding for the university, can help to facilitate access to the university area; a certificate of participation in case no exam can be taken; and, where possible,

support for travel costs and teaching material. Additionally, through the Buddy System, committed students and volunteers on-site support the MORE students with tailor-made language acquisition in small groups and with orientation in everyday university life.

Moreover, the universities offer numerous other formats that promote intercultural communication and integration through joint sporting, cultural or artistic activities. These *MORE Activities* represent a low-threshold offer beyond the range of courses and for which no certificates or confirmations of participation can be issued. In order to still make participation in these activities visible, this is documented in an activity pass. The universities individually define the specific offer of *MORE Activities*, and it includes city explorations, visiting exhibitions and concerts, participating in lectures, panel discussions, sports teams, etcetera. To participate in the *MORE Initiative*, individualised admission procedures have been developed by universities, the first of which is the proof of the right of residence in Austria (Uniko, 2020). In addition, proof of general qualification to study is required at five universities. Admission interviews (8 universities), language tests (1), and the personal consent of instructors (1) or refugee accommodation supervisors (1) are also used to determine eligibility. Several of these procedures are combined at some universities (Uniko, 2020).

As shown in Figure 2, the *MORE Initiative* started in 2015 with 603 students (91,3% of whom were males), it saw an exponential increase in the summer semester of 2016 with 1106 students (89,3% male), but then it experienced a slow but constant decrease in the number of admitted students: the summer semester of 2020 only registered a total of 177 students (71,2% male) (see Annex IV). While this decrease in enrollment in the *MORE Initiative* may be due to the program itself, it should also be noted that between 2015 and 2019, Austria has seen a sharp decrease in international arrival rates and the number of asylum applications (see Figure 3 and Figure 4). As a result, it could be argued that one of the reasons why *MORE* experienced a decrease in enrollment rates may also depend on lower rates of arrival. Indeed, the “average MORE student is 26 years old, male, and originates from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, or Iran” (Uniko, 2020, p.4), and thus lower arrival rates might result in a lack of potential students to enrol in the program.

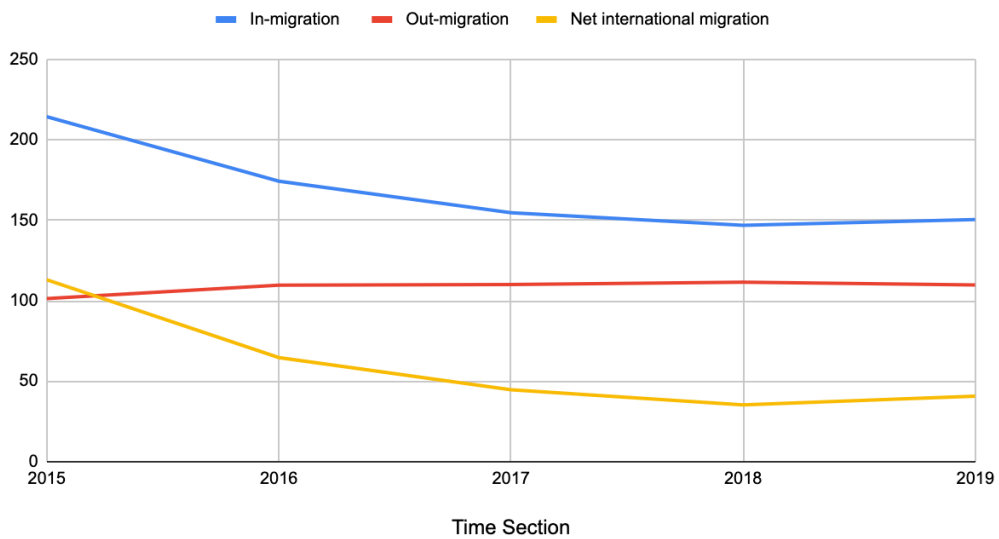
Figure 2 - MORE students at Public Universities, Winter Semester 2015-Summer Semester 2020 by Gender



Source: Uniko, 2020. Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities

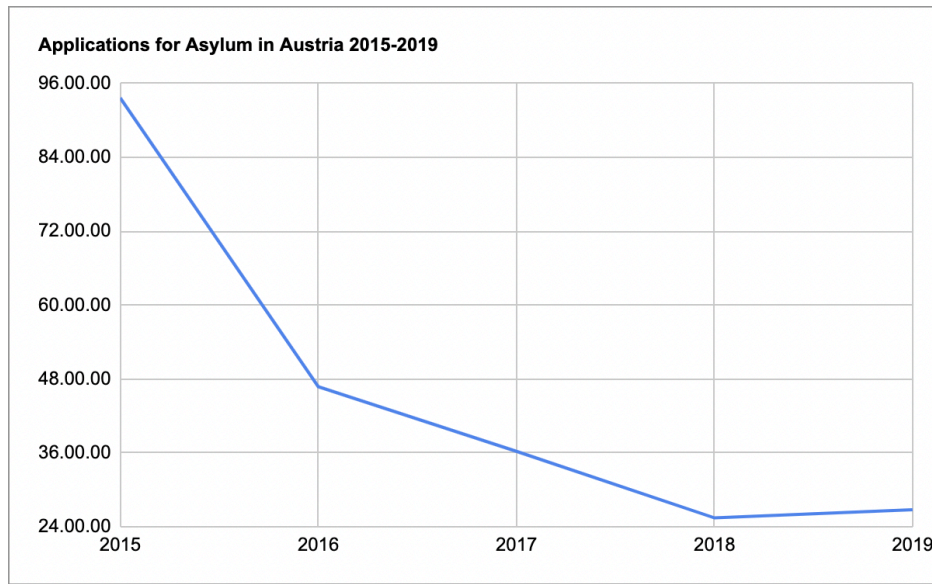
Figure 3 - International migration flows, Austria 2015-2019

International migration flows, Austria 2015-2019



Source: Statistics Austria, International Migration. Last Changed 27.05.2021

Figure 4 - Applications for Asylum in Austria 2015-2019



Source: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Federal Ministry of the Interior, Asylum Statistics. Compiled on 17 May 2021.

Nonetheless, the program also presents some structural weaknesses that should be reviewed to reach higher enrollment rates in future editions. It could be argued that the first weakness presented by the program is the limited availability of places for *MORE* students at the partner universities: since the program has now been running for over five years, the universities should consider accepting a higher number of applications. Secondly, application procedures, such as a language test, negatively affect the number of refugee and asylum-seeking students who can apply to that specific university, as they might not speak German at an acceptable level or at all. Thirdly, the meagre numbers of women enrolled in the *MORE* program does raise two issues: the first is the potential low rate of literacy achieved by refugee women who will, therefore, not be able to follow an academic course;¹⁰ the second is the need to account for mothers who may need support for their children, and who might thus decide to not pursue a degree in order to stay at home and look after the family. To face this issue, Uniko should consider creating additional courses targeted especially at women, perhaps held during the evening, which would space from primary school curriculum to more practical courses such as accounting or computing. Fourthly, the program is also aimed at students whose asylum status has not yet been confirmed, translating to uncertainty in the future for the interested students. Not being able to make plans for the future might seriously hamper the students' willingness to, for example, enrol in any educational program if they fear they might not be able to complete it due to the need to relocate. A final weakness of this program is that of economic sustainability. While *MORE* students do not have to pay any tuition fees and live in housing provided by the State or other welfare organizations, Uniko raised donations to offer sponsorships for university courses. Each year they allocate €2500 to a university that offers special courses (e.g. language tutoring) for refugees—and additionally, they offer mini-sponsorships (€50 per month) to students directly. This system cannot be considered sustainable in the long run, as donations are not a stable source of income. In this regard, the State should consider supporting the *MORE Initiative*, perhaps by developing a fund to be allocated to any institutions that wish to offer their courses to refugees and asylum seekers. This way, the universities could count on stable support, the organisation could expand its memberships, and with more courses being offered, more students could decide to enrol in the program. Ultimately, a higher number of *MORE* students would mean higher integration rates too.

¹⁰ With an adult male literacy rate of 79% and an adult female literacy rate of 62%, South Asia has the largest gender gap (17 percentage points). With a gender gap of 15 percentage points and 14 percentage points, respectively, Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Middle East and North Africa lag only marginally behind. Sub-Saharan Africa, on the other hand, has the lowest level of adult female literacy at 57%.
See Wadhwa, D., 2019. *More men than women are literate*. [online] World Bank Blogs. Available at: <<https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/more-men-women-are-literate>>.

2.2.3. Uni-Freunde Mentoring Program

The *Uni-Freunde Mentoring Program* aims to accompany asylum seekers who are just beginning their studies while encouraging exchange between students with and without a refugee background. The Project was launched by the *Foreign Become Friends* initiative in collaboration with the preparatory courses in Vienna in 2019, and it is supported by the *Fonds Soziales Wien* (Vienna Social Fund), which, together with around 170 partner organisations, creates a dense social network and ensures that all Vienna citizens can feel socially safe and well cared for in their city (Freunde, 2021). As the name suggests, the *Uni-Freunde Mentoring Program* creates a relationship between mentors and their mentees of migration background. Therefore, it differs from the *MORE Initiative* because *Uni-Freunde* invests more in the social integration of refugees and asylum seekers within the academic context. For *Uni-Freunde*, mentors and mentees are brought together in pairs after one-on-one interviews and work together throughout the semester. They meet about once a week (online or offline) to exchange ideas in the first semesters of the degree, and students from previous semesters provide additional support and personal experiences. In addition, four workshops for mentees are offered as well as individual consultation appointments for both mentors and mentees. These workshops cover topics such as “Notes - How do I create notes so that I can learn well with them”, organized in cooperation with the Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) in Vienna and optimally tailored to the needs of first-year students with German as a second language, or “Time management - tips & methods to manage your time around learning and studying well and to keep it going.”

Moreover, *Uni-Freunde* offers course scholarships to access preparatory courses at the *Wirtschafts Universität Wien* (VWU - Vienna University of Economics and Business) in collaboration with other universities in Vienna.¹¹ The VWU can be considered a preparatory institution for international students that offers foreign applicants intensive courses to prepare for supplementary exams prescribed by the universities. The courses offered include German as a foreign language, English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography (all taught in German). In addition to the VWU itself, two cooperation partners also offer German courses as part of the pre-study course.

Uni-Freunde wishes to target the initial phase of an asylum seeker's study path as it is believed to be often confusing and more complex than initially expected, hence why it is beneficial to have a peer to count on to be accompanied through the first few months. In fact, for asylum seekers, this first crucial phase at the beginning of their studies often becomes a hurdle. Because in addition to the usual difficulties when starting everyday university life, asylum seekers often struggle with additional problems, such as language and their insecure residence situation. Therefore, from the winter semester 2019/2020, interested asylum seekers have had the opportunity for personal and individual support for integration into university operations. The peer companions (buddies, mentors) are students from semesters above with their own study

¹¹ VWU: University of Vienna; Vienna University of Economics and Business; Technical University of Vienna, Medical University of Vienna, University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences Vienna, University of Veterinary Medicine Vienna.

experience, who personally support and advise the new students (mentees) in regular one-on-one meetings and are available for questions during the introductory study phase. Asylum seekers qualify as mentees if they start a regular course of study at a Viennese university or have not yet completed the introductory study phase. The mentors qualify as such if they are students at a Viennese university who have completed the introductory study phase and thus want to share their experience and know-how with new students. Besides, this Project is an excellent opportunity for both categories to expand their social skills. It should also be highlighted that *Uni-Freunde* is a unique program as it targets asylum seekers specifically, and it provides them with a support network, of course, at the beginning of their academic career, and the beginning of their new life in Vienna. *Uni-Freunde* can thus be considered a new beginning in both senses.

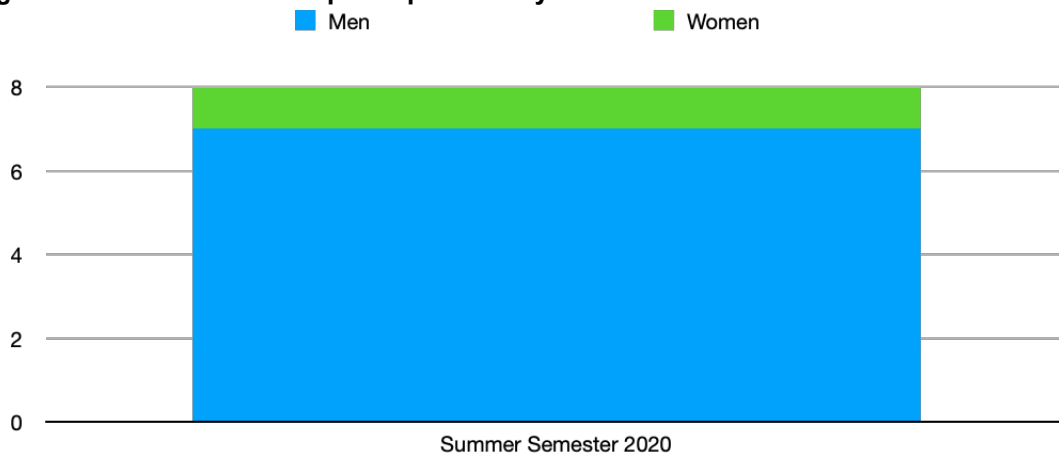
On the one hand, it offers asylum seekers the possibility to start (or complete) a higher education path in a subject of their choosing. On the other hand, it supports the social integration of asylum seekers as the mentors are also students in Vienna and can therefore introduce their mentees to their circle of friends. This program helps build a community of students where the asylum seekers learn from their mentors about life in Vienna, university culture in Austria and Europe, but at the same time, the Austrian students learn from their mentees about life in refugee camps, foreign countries, etcetera. It could, therefore, be argued that programs like these broaden the students' horizons, and they constitute a crucial first step towards building an integrated, accepting and civilised society.

Uni-Freunde has now been active for four semesters, and so far, it counts about 60 students. Nevertheless, despite the COVID-19 pandemic risking to hamper the program's popularity, which saw all meetings being transferred to the online form, the program's Secretariat has already received over 50 applications to become a mentor for the winter semester of 2021. This is, of course, a massive step forward for such a new program targeting a niche size of the student population living in Austria. Besides, having a rising number of students who wish to serve as mentors is particularly positive given the current political situation in Austria. In January 2020, a new coalition between the centre-right Austrian People's Party (ÖVP) and the Greens was formed to govern the country, and the coalition has agreed on somewhat restrictive immigration policies (Weisskircher, 2020).

Additionally, the Greens agree to policies that they previously condemned, such as, for example, expanding the ban of headscarves in schools for all girls up to age 14. The coalition government declared that it would implement preventive detention, which is only mentioned in the coalition agreement's section on asylum seekers (Weisskircher, 2020). Therefore, seeing the younger generations taking part in programs such as *Uni-Freunde* could be seen as a symbol of a different future for the country. Indeed, while the government plans on passing more restrictive bills towards immigration and asylum applications, many young people are collaborating in Projects aiming at the integration of asylum seekers and refugees, almost defying the governments' plans. However, the limited number of students enrolled in this program raises two issues. Firstly, in terms of data analysis, no accurate comparison can be made with more widespread programs such as the *MORE Initiative*, which has been running for

over five years. Secondly, the sample population is too small for the results to apply to the overall population. Regardless, the *Uni-Freunde* Secretariat has proposed an evaluation of the program to their students, receiving very little feedback: for the summer semester 2020, only 8 students completed the survey, and for the winter semester 2020/21, only 6 students responded. No data is available for the other semesters. Still, these students will serve as a sample population for data analysis. Figure 5 thus shows the differences in gender composition between the two sample populations over the two analysed semesters.

Figure 5 - Uni-Freunde Sample Population by Gender



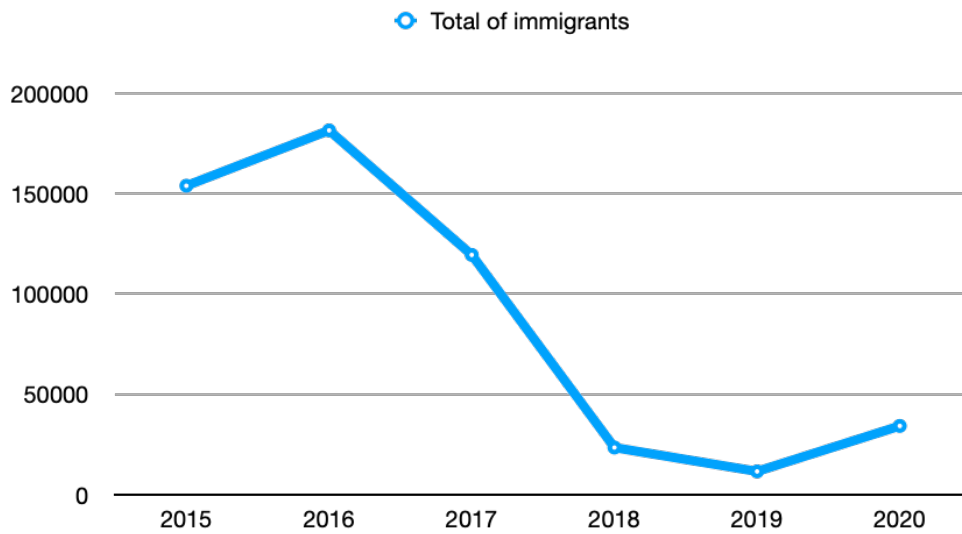
In conclusion, the *Uni-Freunde* program could be argued to be almost revolutionary, as it is the first education program aimed at asylum seekers that puts the focus on the local students to be the key for integration. This Project takes a very different approach because, rather than solely offering administrative or monetary subsidies, it provides asylum seekers with a support network, which most migrants lack. These students will not have to go through the beginning of a new academic path alone. Instead, they can count on a community of fellow students who went through similar experiences. This could also be considered a strength of the program: it creates an environment of students only, from the one-to-one meetings to the game nights, which would hopefully put the asylum-seeking students at ease as they would be dealing with their peers. On the other hand, the program is offered in German only, although some smaller English-speaking groups are beginning to form, which constitutes a severe weakness to the widespread of the program, as asylum seekers who do not speak German may be left out. In terms of finances, while the program is State-funded and, thus, theoretically sustainable, the new anti-immigration policies promoted by the current governing coalition could constitute a risk for the program, as the fundings may get cut for political reasons. Therefore, the program's secretariat could, therefore, consider partnering with some private sector allies that could, for instance, provide the students with laptops, smartphones, and academic material needed throughout their studies. The little availability of accommodation constitutes a second weakness of the program. As most of the students live in a house for asylum seekers, this could hamper the integration process as they may find it harder to socialize with students who are not asylum seekers. In addition, this accommodation solution does not offer much private space for studying. The students are thus allowed to look for their accommodation, but the small monetary support provided by the State is often not enough for decent living standards.

2.2.4. Italy

For most of its history, from unity onwards, Italy was a country of emigration, and it is estimated that between 1876 and 1976, over 24 million people left the country (Rosoli, 1978). Since the 1990s, however, this trend has reversed.¹² The increasing waves of immigration into the country provided support, in 2018, for the formation of a coalition between two centre- and far-right parties, the *MoVimento 5 Stelle* (Five Star Movement or M5S) and the *Lega*, whose motto was to put *prima gli italiani* (Italians first). The two populist parties were harshly critical of the previous government's handling of migration issues, attempting to capitalise on public angst (Dixon et al., 2018). Besides, the *Lega* had prioritised anti-immigrant and anti-Roma policies in its efforts to broaden national support beyond its core base in northern Italy, where it campaigned for *Padania's* independence under the name 'Lega Nord'. M5S, despite campaigning on migration issues, has been less strident than *Lega*, reflecting the fact that its supporters tend to have more moderate views on migration, in line with the general Italian population (Dixon et al., 2018). Still, both parties, also supported by extremist-right-wing *Fratelli d'Italia*, campaigned to create a sharp distinction between the "us", Italians, and "them", the migrants. To do so, populist parties built upon the already existent fear of the unknown by using the migrants as scapegoats for the issues the country had to face, especially the rising wave of unemployment. One of the most recurrent claims was that migrants were seeking help in Italy to steal jobs from the honest Italian workers, which was why the number of arrivals kept rising. In reality, however, data shows that the number of arrivals has been decreasing over the past five years (see Figure 7), and so has the number of asylum requests (see Figure 8). It could be argued that it was due to the political turmoil and misinformation that Italy decided to implement different Projects to integrate refugees and asylum seekers through higher education. Indeed, Italy did create numerous different Projects aimed at the social integration of asylum seekers and refugees, and in the following sections, two Projects will serve as case studies. The first one, called *University Corridors for Refugees (UNICORE) Program*, is run at the national level. The second one, called *Progetto Mediterraneo*, is run at the local level by LUISS University, in Rome, in collaboration with the University of Petra, in Jordan.

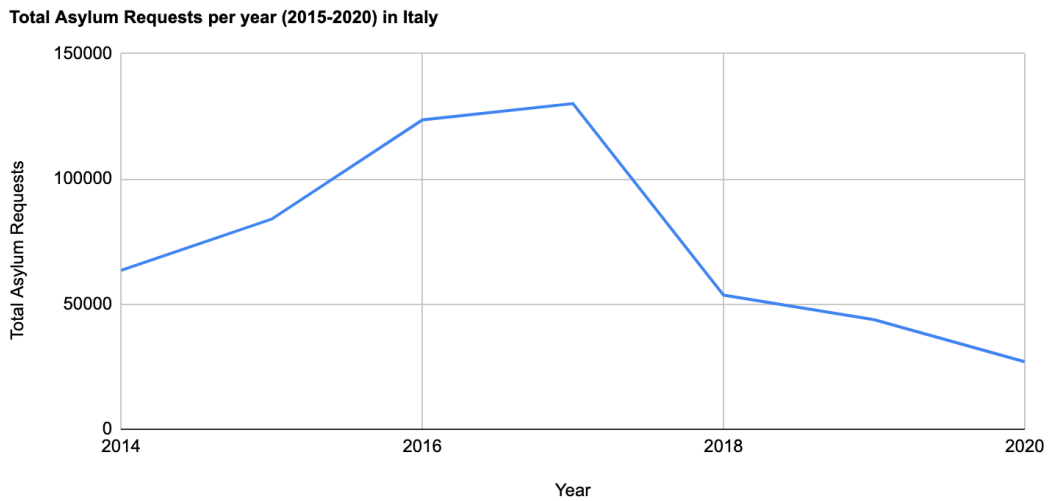
¹² In 2020 Italy received 34.133 immigrants (Dipartimento Libertà Civili e Immigrazione, Ministero degli Interni, 2021a) and 26.963 first-time asylum requests (Dipartimento Libertà Civili e Immigrazione, 2021b).

Figure 6 - Number of people who landed in Italy (2015-2020)



Source: Dipartimento Libert  Civili e Immigrazione, Ministero dell'Interno, 2021a. Cruscotto statistico giornaliero.

Figure 7 - Asylum requests in Italy per year (2015-2020)



Source: Dipartimento Libert  Civili e Immigrazione, 2021b. I numeri dell'asilo.

2.2.5. UNICORE Program

In 2019, thanks to an agreement between the University of Bologna and the UNHCR, which was later joined by the *Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali* (LUISS), the first variant by category of the non-humanitarian pathways was born in Italy. The University Corridors for Refugees (*UNICORE*) aim to create regular and safe paths for young people who want to study and take a university degree at universities willing to open up to this experience (UNHCR, 2020a). This Project is a matter of associating the case of non-humanitarian pathways with a specific category of people, namely students, to be sent safely to the countries of destination. However, in this specific case, the variant arises from the collaboration between the universities on one side and the UNHCR, on the other. This brings two other substantial innovations: first, the corridor is valid for refugee students, and second, these refugee students are from Ethiopia and are mostly Eritrean refugees. This way, the pilot *UNICORE* project launched in 2019 brought to Bologna five refugee students enrolled in a *Laurea Magistrale* (the final two years completing an Italian university degree) taught in English, and one refugee student enrolled in a *Laurea Magistrale* in finance at LUISS in Rome. However, the *UNICORE* Project is not an exclusive three-way relationship among universities, UNHCR, and refugee students; it is much more, as are the non-humanitarian pathways. These are practices that, to be successful, require an interpenetration and enduring bond with the territory, both at the national and local level. Humanitarian and non-humanitarian pathways, without engagement with the competent government authorities, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, cannot be concretely realised, just as they cannot be realised without the commitment of local actors. To ensure that the university corridors are successful in providing the maximum level of social inclusion, and that the investment made in refugees can be returned to society in the form of profit, there is a need to establish a network of links with the territory. After all, welcoming refugees also means including them in the social system in which they are admitted. Thus, involved in the project with different tasks including providing accommodation, assistance and hospitality structures, are, on top of the universities and UNHCR: *Caritas Italiana*;¹³ *Diaconia Valdese*;¹⁴ the Italian Ministry for foreign affairs and international cooperation (MAECI); *Centro Astalli* - Jesuit Service for Refugees (JSR) in Italy; and the Gandhi Charity (UNHCR 2020b; *Università degli Studi di Brescia*, 2021). Additionally, in the case of the University of Bologna, local families support the students' integration in the new city by hosting them for Sunday lunch or over the weekend (University of Bologna, 2019).

Since 2019, the *UNICORE Project* has seen its university partners grow from two to twenty-four (see Annex XI), with four other institutions not offering scholarships for the third edition of the project while still supporting refugee education (UNHCR, 2020b). The Project has also been growing in numbers of students, as shown in Figure 8, and countries granting refugee status, as shown in Figure 10. It could thus be said that despite being a very new program, also targeting a very niche portion of the refugee population, namely refugee students who have

¹³ The charitable arm of the Italian Bishops Conference.

¹⁴ Non-profit ecclesiastical body that manages assistance and hospitality structures.

already completed the first three years of a bachelor's degree, the rise in numbers foresees a potential for more significant expansion in future editions, both in numbers and in countries of asylum. Additionally, greater attention should be posed to gender balance, as, so far, only one woman has been selected to become a *UNICORE* student. However, this could be because *UNICORE* targets graduates specifically, and it is traditionally harder for refugee women to have obtained a bachelor's degree, both because of cultural background or, perhaps, for gender-related commitments (for example, maternity). This focus on graduates can also be considered a weakness of the program, as it severely limits the number of students available to be enrolled. In addition, with the risks of previous studies not being officially recognised in Italy, students who have already received their diplomas may still not count as eligible for administrative reasons.

Nevertheless, the students who can benefit from this program are offered top-quality education at some of the country's best universities and a solid chance at social integration as they attend regular classes with the other students. Thus no distinction is made between local students and refugees. Besides, as highlighted by Mr Michele Gradoli, Skill Development & Tutoring Officer at LUISS: "[...] the selection and the admission [process, for refugees] have been standard, as the refugee status does not change the status of the student. This is due to an equality policy because diversity is a value, but distinctions are not. [...] B.¹⁵ followed the standard procedure for international admission and international inclusion. So, he could've been from Belgium, and it would've been the same" (see Annex III for the complete interview). Therefore, *UNICORE* is a fantastic program for social integration, as to some extent, it strips students with a migrant background of their refugee status during classes and treats them exactly like any other student, giving them equal attention and opportunities. This is undoubtedly a decisive step towards an inclusive, intercultural society.

However, this program also has some structural weaknesses which should be considered for improvement for future editions. As already mentioned, the first weakness of the program is presented by the nature of the course offered, as *Laurea Magistrale* entails that the students must have already completed a bachelor's degree. To bypass this issue, the universities may consider offering both the opportunity to complete a *Laurea Triennale* (bachelor's degree) and *Laurea Magistrale*. However, the first option would entail allocating scholarships for a more significant number of years, which could turn into a financial issue. A second weakness is that no psychological support is offered to the students who travel to Italy strictly for the program. While some introductory language and culture classes are held before the official start of the courses, psychological support could help the students not to feel overwhelmed in front of yet another move, although voluntary.

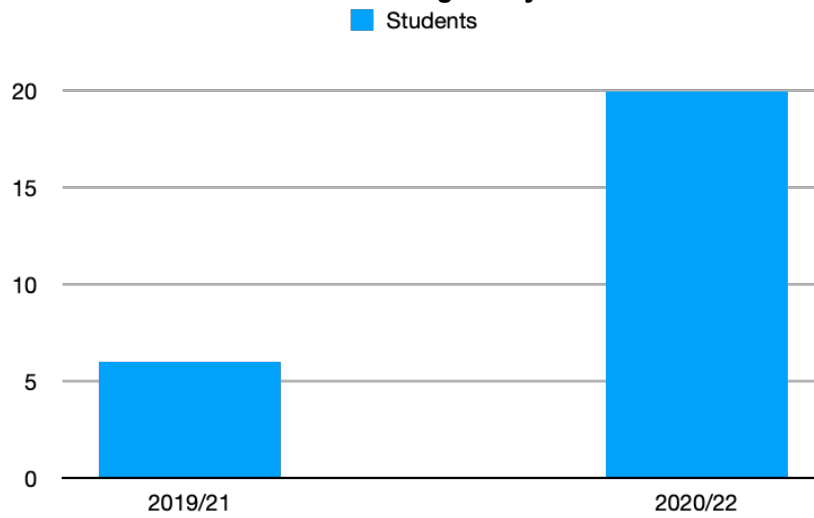
Additionally, before receiving the students, the universities should make sure they have everything they need to succeed in their studies. This includes academic material, stationery and functioning laptops, and clothes, shoes, toiletries, etcetera. One of the *UNICORE* students reported that: "Most of the refugee scholars who arrived in September 2020 are not clothed since they arrived in Italy. There was no settling allowance provided upon arrival, so one should

¹⁵ The name of the interviewee is contracted to B. for reasons of anonymity.

be able to change, adapt and adjust to a new environment. Moreover, the fact is that some scholars could even attend class with clothes they brought from the refugee lifestyle.” This is a very pressing issue that needs resolving, as refugees should not go through such humiliation. Another weakness that the UNICORE students have reported has been that of the language barrier. While many of the refugees speak excellent English, almost none could speak Italian before arriving in Italy. Thus it became tough for them to follow classes in the local language. While most universities offer Italian language courses and degrees taught in English, they should offer intensive Italian language courses before the start of the academic year.

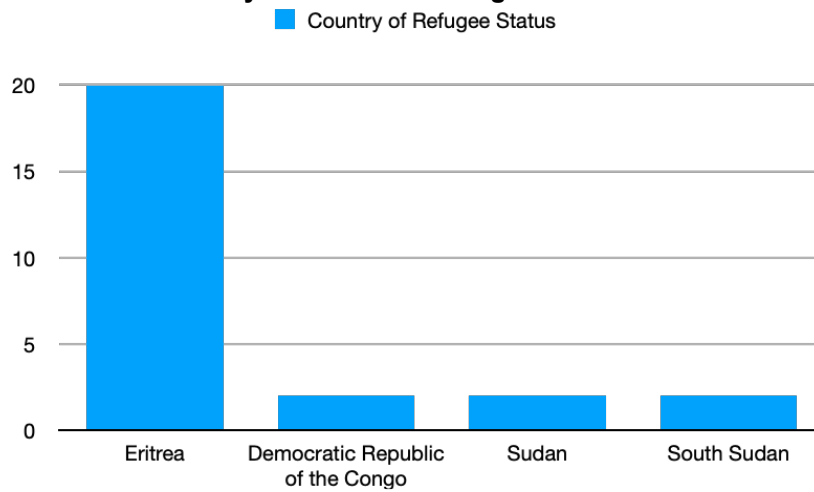
In addition, universities should strongly consider encouraging the refugees to only follow courses in English. While this could reduce the number of courses offered to the *UNICORE* students, it would make their education more effective. A final weakness also reported by some refugee students is the lack of a dedicated person within the university staff that would look after the *UNICORE* students only. Although the universities’ administrations do work very hard to support the students in every need, most times the role of *UNICORE* Officer falls upon someone working within the international or outreach office, who is already very busy providing help and support to the other students at the university. Therefore, a great effort should be made to have a specific person working on *UNICORE* only, who could act as a focal point between the university and UNHCR, the university and the students themselves, and also for contacts with other universities participating in the program, to share experiences, best practices and lessons learnt.

Figure 8 - Number of UNICORE students through the years



Source: UNHCR Italy

Figure 9 - UNICORE students by Countries of Refugee Status



Source: UNHCR Italy

2.2.6. Progetto Mediterraneo

In 2017, LUISS and *Fondazione Terzo Pilastro - Internazionale*¹⁶ launched the *Progetto Mediterraneo* (Mediterranean Project). The Project originated from a meeting between Prof. Avv. Emmanuele F. M. Emanuele, President of the *Fondazione Terzo Pilastro - Internazionale*, and Luigi Serra, Vice President of LUISS (LUISS, 2018). The *Fondazione Terzo Pilastro - Internazionale* focuses on the centrality of the Mediterranean area as the driving force of a new season of creativity to influence the world. This idea from the *Fondazione Terzo Pilastro - Internazionale* and LUISS was welcomed by LUISS President Emma Marcegaglia, and by Dr. Giovanni Lo Storto, Director General of LUISS, who played a pivotal role in making the Project a reality. This Project aims to ensure that the students coming to study in Italy receive a high-level education through a bachelor's and *Laurea Magistrale* and then be able to return to their countries of origin. This Project created a partnership between LUISS and the University of Petra, in Jordan, for which LUISS Professors would travel to Petra and lecture a group of seventeen selected students. Seven of these students are Syrian and Palestinian refugees, while the remaining ten are Jordanians who, in September 2017, started a Double Degree Program at LUISS (LUISS, 2018). Thus, this program created a very direct link between the two universities, and ultimately the two countries, as the Italian institution sent their professors to Jordan, and the Jordanian university sent their students to Italy.

This Project can be considered an opportunity for the selected students to broaden their horizons, experience different cultures, challenge their perspectives and grow as international students. This is extremely valuable, especially considering that millions of refugee high school students and graduates struggle to access higher education in Jordan as they have to face different logistical, language, and financial barriers. To that end, *Progetto Mediterraneo* can be a chance for refugee students to access secondary education in a safe, protected, and dignified way. This Project can be the opportunity they did not think they could have once forced to flee their homeland and seek protection in Jordan at such a young age. Thanks to this Project, the seven Syrian and Palestinian refugees can follow courses in Statistics, Microeconomics, and Financial Mathematics from the classrooms of the University of Petra, with LUISS professors teaching directly on campus, thanks to an agreement with the Faculty of Administrative & Financial Sciences of the Jordanian University (LUISS, 2018). Indeed, as a first-year student of the Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration commented on her participation in the university training program: "Thanks to the *Progetto Mediterraneo*, I will be able to realise my dream of studying Economics and, perhaps, one day to open a company" (LUISS, 2018).

On the other hand, the Jordanian colleagues had the opportunity to travel to Italy to attend one year of the bachelor's degree in Economics and Business offered by LUISS in Rome. While in Rome, they were also offered Italian language courses on top of attending classes together with their Italian peers. Thus, *Progetto Mediterraneo* is yet another way to promote social integration and build strong bonds between two countries through the youth. Therefore, it could be said that these Projects are essential because of the educational aspect

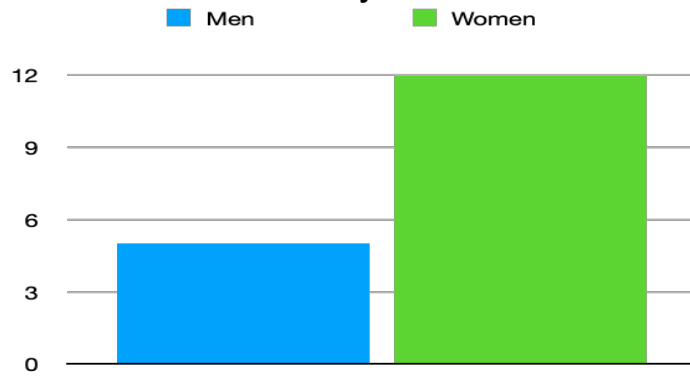
¹⁶ A non-profit organisation operating in Healthcare, Scientific Research, Assistance to the weaker social categories, Education and Training, Art and Culture.

and because they teach students about tolerance and acceptance and expose them to different cultures, which is always a learning opportunity. Besides, these sorts of Projects build opportunities for both countries' foreign policies, as the students and professors become indirect ambassadors of their states, societies, and communities. Projects like this undoubtedly contribute to the growth of both nations, despite still experiencing situations of instability.

Different from other case studies previously evaluated, *Progetto Mediterraneo* is now in terms of gender equality. Indeed, Figure 11 shows the composition of the student body (aged 22-29), which sees a vast majority of girls enrolled in the program. Additionally, while the program started as offering a single degree course, namely *Business and Economics*, students could choose among various courses including *Management, Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, and *International Management*. This was also thanks to their background in Business, Management, Finance, and Accounting. Nonetheless, *Progetto Mediterraneo* also presents some weaknesses which should be addressed in future academic years. Firstly, the Project is open to a minimal number of students, although this may be due to the availability of funds and scholarships. Besides, while the Project is advertised as an excellent opportunity for refugees, these only make up 41% of the *Mediterraneo* students. Therefore, future editions should consider enrolling more refugees, who arguably receive fewer opportunities to complete their higher education.

On the other hand, it is essential to highlight that while the Jordanian students can travel to Italy, the refugee students have the opportunity to follow the same classes as the LUISS professors travel to Petra to lecture. Thus, no distinction is made for teaching or academic quality: the possibility (or lack thereof) of travelling to another country entirely depends on the students' status as a refugee. It could, of course, be argued that this is a weakness of the Project as it risks creating a social gap between the Jordanian and refugee students. Nevertheless, the latter still attend university in Petra and thus get the chance to socialise with their peers from other courses. In that sense, this Project can be seen as strengthening integration opportunities for refugees within the Jordanian society, rather than the Italian one. For the analysis and evaluation, the biggest weakness of this Project is the lack of data to be analysed and thus evaluate the success of *Mediterraneo*. Unfortunately, no data is available to understand whether this Project promotes integration, neither quantitative, to see, for example, whether students found a job or decided to continue with further studies in either country or qualitative, in the form of a survey. Therefore, it is tough to evaluate this Project as all sources regarding its success come from the involved universities only, which carries a strong bias towards reporting positive outcomes only.

Figure 10 - Progetto Mediterraneo Students by Gender



Source: LUISS University

Part 3: Can University Programs Aimed at the Integration of Refugees and Asylum Seekers Build a Path Towards Integration into Society?

3.1. Scope and Methodology

Part 2 has discussed the importance of non-humanitarian complementary pathways, with a focus on higher education. Four Projects run at the university level in two countries were selected as case studies, and while a general description could provide compelling evidence for the efficacy of said studies, a detailed quantitative and qualitative data analysis is needed. For example, detailed quantitative information on the types of difficulties refugees have to overcome when applying for a university course is critical to understand how access to such complementary pathways for admission to third countries can be simplified. The availability of data on the use of alternative pathways by refugees is also critical to increase their predictability. Against this background, this mapping exercise examines whether university Programs to integrate refugees and asylum seekers can build a path towards integration in society. The case studies selected are all different to provide a broader range of good practices and lessons learnt that could be applied to various countries. This study aims to fill the current gap in data on the use of education pathways for refugees. It provides an in-depth analysis of data quality and identifies any gaps or data limitations that must be addressed. However, the ultimate scope is for this thesis to be considered a baseline dataset that will aid the international community in developing new policies and improving development programming. Additionally, an evidence base could help to support increased programs and fundings for refugee protection and solutions by European countries. An evidence base could also influence the establishment of predictable, sustainable, and protection-sensitive systems required to expand access to such opportunities for refugees over time. The findings of this thesis will be of relevance for the evaluation of the selected Projects to expand their availability and predictability. More broadly, this body of work will contribute to a more timely, equitable, and predictable sharing of responsibility for refugee protection and solutions.

Data collected for this study focused on Programs run between 2015 and 2021 in Austria and Italy for student refugees who wish to complete or further their studies to a degree level. The two countries and four selected Projects were identified based on several indicators and factors. Firstly, Austria and Italy offer higher education Programs aimed at refugees and asylum seekers at the national and local level. However, since the *MORE Initiative* was first started in 2015 and the other three case studies were all initiated in 2019, numerical data will be compared in percentage—rather than whole numbers—to allow for a fairer comparison. The programs were evaluated via anonymous online survey submitted to the students to fill on a voluntary basis. One, important, question students are asked is whether they have anything to add, in case the survey did not cover some pivotal aspects of the Program. While the majority simply expressed their gratitude for the interest showed in the Program, a couple of students made some very interesting additions. One student wishes to see *UNICORE* being expanded to other universities, so that “a lot of refugee students are helped to be out of the limbo they are in.” The use of the word ‘limbo’ resonates with what B., the LUISS student, said about this Project being life-changing, as there are “students [...] in Ethiopia who cannot find a job, they

were hopeless, they gave up, and once they had given up they had started to come to Europe through the Sahara desert, through unsafe migration.” Thus, alternative pathways such as the University corridors can really play a key role in future migration trends, to grant safe, orderly, and dignified migration. Another student reiterated the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and wished to have been asked more questions regarding the pressure they found themselves under this past year. In this perspective, although *UNICORE* constitutes a perfect opportunity of education, the student “(would have) achieved so much more in terms of language and integration [...] if the situation was normal.” Finally, another respondent raised the issue of future plans beyond *UNICORE*. The student claims that, based on the Project and the information provided to them, refugees can decide whether to return to their country of asylum or remain in Europe after graduation. However, it is unclear whether those who choose to return to Ethiopia will be provided with incentives to settle there or will return empty-handed with only academic papers. This is a question that all students would like to see answered as part of useful information. This is a crucial point to be raised, especially since graduation is fast approaching for the 6 students who participated in the first round of the Program. Projects like *UNICORE* ultimately also aim at making sure that the title of ‘refugee’ is something that explains how a person arrived in a third country, not a label that will hamper their chances to build a better future. These Programs want refugees to become empowered to make their own choices as much as any other student, regardless of the provider of their passports or identity cards. Therefore, the *UNICORE* students should not feel insecure about their future. Refugee students need clear answers and support in whichever road they decide to take, this being remaining in Italy or returning to the country of asylum.

After all, remaining in Italy is an option that *UNICORE* students are considering. When asked whether they would see themselves living in Italy in 5 years, 8 students said they do not know, while 6 said yes. Not a single student said they would not see themselves remaining, which is a very reassuring statistic that can lead to positive conclusions about whether the Program does build a path towards integration in society. Additionally, when students were asked whether they were considering continuing their studies in Italy, 8 students said that they would like to follow a similar course to the *Laurea Magistrale* they are completing. The remaining 6 equally split between the desire to follow a different course (e.g. Level II Master Degree) and the wish to find a job. Again, no student selected “No, I would rather continue my studies somewhere else.” Of course, these answers do not mean that, if presented with the opportunity, the *UNICORE* students would not leave the country for a job or any other reason. These statistics simply highlight that, all in all, the *UNICORE* students had a pleasant time in the country and they would like to stay. It could, therefore, be concluded that the *UNICORE Project* has the potential to achieve its integration goals as it creates different opportunities for the refugee students to get in touch with the local community. The majority of the students saw their circle of friends expand through *UNICORE*, they appreciated how the Program helps and encourages refugee students to develop their careers, and they particularly cherished the help and support received by the universities and other students. Overall, both the *UNICORE* students' and universities' experiences have been extremely positive, highlighting the Program's

purpose in terms of both promotion of integration and more specific academic objectives (providing the students with a *Laurea Magistrale*). Additionally, the hosting universities also benefit from *UNICORE*, as both the faculty and student community get to interact with people from different backgrounds and cultures. Programs like *UNICORE* also help the local communities to broaden their horizons, and thus promote an intercultural society which is not only accepting of differences, but also understands that diversity is an added value. Overall, *UNICORE* is a really positive Program, the only big weakness is presented by the lack of women enrolled in the Program. For future editions, universities should consider implementing solutions such as dedicating a determined amount of places to female students only, in order to increase participation of women. They could also consider implementing partnerships with kindergartens and nurseries to accommodate women with children, for motherhood not to represent a barrier to studying.

3.2. Data limitations

During data collection, a number of limitations became apparent, as outlined below. Data is only available for three out of the four case studies, hence why the *Progetto Mediterraneo* will not be considered for the statistical analysis. Additionally, statistics do not enable the identification of refugees, so it is impossible to determine whether variables such as selected course or city of residence influence decision-making.

The Austrian Projects, namely the *MORE Initiative* and *Uni-Freunde*, target refugees and asylum seekers already residing in Austria. On the Italian side, *UNICORE Project* selects students in refugee camps to travel to Italy for their degree. For the *Progetto Mediterraneo*, the LUISS Professors are travelling to Petra to lecture the refugees. An analysis of such different initiatives will allow for a deeper understanding of which activities can be considered more successful and thus, in the future, be applied in a growing number of countries and contexts. Data was collected directly from the Projects' managements in the cases of the *MORE Initiative* and *Uni-Freunde*. In the case of the *UNICORE Project*, data related to the number of students and chosen career path is collected by individual universities. However, neither the universities nor the UNHCR systematically collect data related to the overall appreciation rate of the Program. Therefore, an anonymous online survey was submitted to the students to fill in voluntarily. Out of the twenty-six *UNICORE* students, only fourteen answered the survey, and they will thus act as a sample population for data analysis. The only available data regarding the *Progetto Mediterraneo* refers to the number of students and their ages, so interviews and videos created for external communications will constitute the basis for the analysis of the Project.

3.2.1. Limited availability of data

Data related to the number of students attending different courses at partner universities and qualitative data regarding the Projects themselves were considered for this exercise. However, as previously discussed, while the *MORE Initiative* is now at its sixth edition, both *Uni-Freunde* and *UNICORE* have only been active since 2019, so there is a considerable

difference in terms of the numbers of students. It is also important to highlight that, although data has been collected via surveys for all three cases, the Austrian Programs administered their own, while the *UNICORE* students were surveyed by the author. For *UNICORE*, the hosting universities' offices responsible for the Program were contacted asking to share the survey among the students, which resulted in two outcomes. In some cases, the university officers were not comfortable with sharing a survey from an external source. In other cases, the students decided not to take part in the survey. These difficulties led to an even smaller number of respondents (yet, a 54% response rate was reached). The same issue of limited responses has occurred with *Uni-Freunde*, too, as only eight students participated in the evaluation survey for the 'summer semester 2020' and only six answered the 'winter 2020/21' edition.

3.2.2. Language Barrier

Data collected from the Austrian Projects was in German, so online translators were required to interpret the data. Indeed, online translators have recently become a relatively reliable resource, but it is still important to highlight that there may be some misunderstanding or partially incorrect translation when looking at open answers. Although this should not hamper the overall validity of such answers nor significantly impact the evaluation, it is possible that the wording of the original sentence in German may not be entirely reflected in the English translation.

The same considerations apply to the *UNICORE Project*. To survey participants and provide a somewhat similar evaluation, the *UNICORE* students were asked the same (where possible) questions as the *MORE* students, only in English. Therefore, the questions may result slightly differently from the original due to potential translation errors. Additionally, the *UNICORE* students were asked to fill in the survey in English, which is not the mother tongue of any of the refugees. Thus, albeit all *UNICORE* students have received English language classes and none of them has reported any difficulties in completing the survey, the analysis of the open-ended questions will have to account for some potential misunderstanding and losses in translation.

3.2.3. COVID-19

This research is being carried out at a time when interactions can be complicated, and social integration strongly depends on them. It is, therefore, not surprising that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the Projects as well. For example, the *UNICORE* students attending the University of Bologna had to stop visiting the local families that would host them over lunch on Sundays. 'Sunday lunch' was a brilliant initiative that allowed the refugees to integrate even more within the local community and, perhaps, find a home away from home. The pandemic made it so that they could only socialise among themselves in the housing provided by the Project.

Of course, COVID had an impact on learning too. On the one hand, classes had to be moved online, which carries a series of challenges, including the availability of a functioning laptop, internet connection, and a quiet space to follow classes and study. On the other hand, due to

not being able to socialise with the locals anymore, some students reported a sharp decline in their local language skills, as they would not use German or Italian to communicate with their refugee peers. For Projects such as *Uni-Freunde*, the pandemic was especially dangerous as the program rotates around mentor and mentee meetings regularly. Due to the pandemic, these meetings had to be done online as well, which also meant no activities such as going to visit museums or to the cinema could be performed together. Nevertheless, *Uni-Freunde* received an auspicious number of applications to become mentors for the winter semester of 2021/22, meaning that, overall, COVID did not negatively impact the Program.

Within this context, one final limitation of the data is that the students were not directly asked whether nor how the COVID pandemic impacted their studies and experience with the Projects. Both *MORE* and *Uni-Freunde* students received the same survey submitted to their colleagues from previous semesters, thus pre-COVID. The *UNICORE* students received a translation of the *MORE* questionnaire. Therefore, a 'COVID' section was not included in the set of questions, while it could have been interesting to see how the students responded.

3.2.4. Bias

This research will have to account for two kinds of biases: the first is the students' bias; the second is the researcher's. In the first case, it is essential to account for the students' bias, especially when looking at those questions asking to rate how much they enjoyed the Program hosting them. This is because the students may not answer those questions honestly in the hope to please the programs' management. After all, these Projects can constitute a massive opportunity in a refugee's life, and one might fear repercussions should they give harsher feedback. Besides, in the case of the *UNICORE* students, they are yet to graduate, so they were asked to evaluate an institution where they are still studying. This could affect the evaluation as the students might not see any negative aspects of their experience as they are still living it. Also, for many students, these Projects are the first time they experience education in Europe, and thus they have little to no terms of comparison.

In the case of the researcher's bias, the considerations to be made are slightly different, as it could impact how questions are posed rather than the analysis of the answers. For instance, the surveys asked the refugee students whether they had everything they needed to study, meaning academic materials. Basic everyday necessities such as clothing items or toiletries are taken for granted, while they should not be. Additionally, this evaluation may be lacking some details over the logistics or legal processes the refugees had to face to begin their studies. This could result in some issues being overlooked due to not knowing they even exist.

3.2.5. Impossibility to assess whether the students decided to remain in third-countries

This study was initially based on whether university Programs aimed at integrating refugees and asylum seekers can build a path towards inclusion in society. However, none of the selected case studies offers data on the students' future after their Program. In the case of the *MORE Initiative*, Uniko¹⁷ should consider submitting a follow-up survey to their alumni to understand how many of them did end up enrolling in a university course. For *Uni-Freunde*, the question could be slightly different, as the asylum seekers involved are already enrolled in a university degree, but they could be asked whether they see themselves living in Austria in the future. For *UNICORE*, things are more complex, as, at the end of their degree course, the students' refugee status expires, and they are left with four options. The first is returning to their country of origin, should safe and dignified repatriation be possible. The second is returning to the country of asylum; the third is applying for an extension of their refugee status for further studies; the fourth is applying to extend their visa to look for a job. Therefore, asking the *UNICORE* students whether they see themselves living in Italy in five years has to be hypothetical, as if they did not have to apply for an extension of their visa but could just decide to stay.

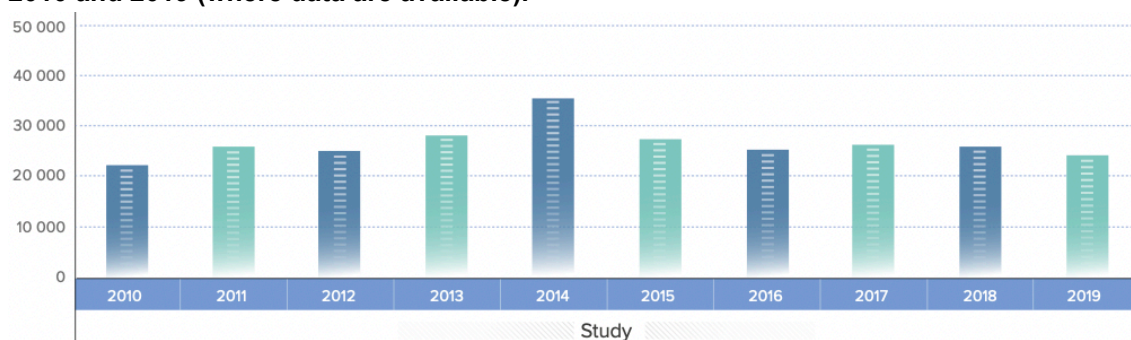
As a result, these four case studies can prove whether higher education Programs can be the key for integration when they are being followed. Any forecast about the students' future choices can be based on predictions and speculations, but no answer can be definitive until data is collected.

¹⁷ Association of Austrian public universities, see Part 2.

3.3. Data Analysis by Program

In the decade between 2010 and 2019, 1.5 million people arrived in OECD countries and Brazil for family, work and study purposes (UNHCR and OECD, 2021). The *Safe Pathways for Refugees II* report, published in 2021 by the UNHCR and the OECD, builds upon the findings of the homonymous document published in 2019 and thus focuses on refugees from the same nationalities.¹⁸ While data on 2020 are yet to be compiled, the organisations found a 2.5:1 ratio of first-time residency permits granted for family, work, and education purposes for refugees of the selected nationalities to the total number of those resettled from the same countries. First-time permits granted by OECD countries and Brazil to nationals of Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Syria and Venezuela for study purposes between 2010 and 2019 are shown in Figure 11. This provides an estimated total of 164,000 refugees who qualified as students. The sections below provide a brief overview of the data by Program (*MORE Initiative*, *Uni-Freunde*, and *UNICORE Program*). Graphs have been added to the text for easier reference.

Figure 11 - First-time permits granted by OECD countries and Brazil to nationals of Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Syria and Venezuela for study purposes between 2010 and 2019 (where data are available).¹⁹



Source: UNHCR and OECD, 2021. *Safe Pathways for Refugees II*

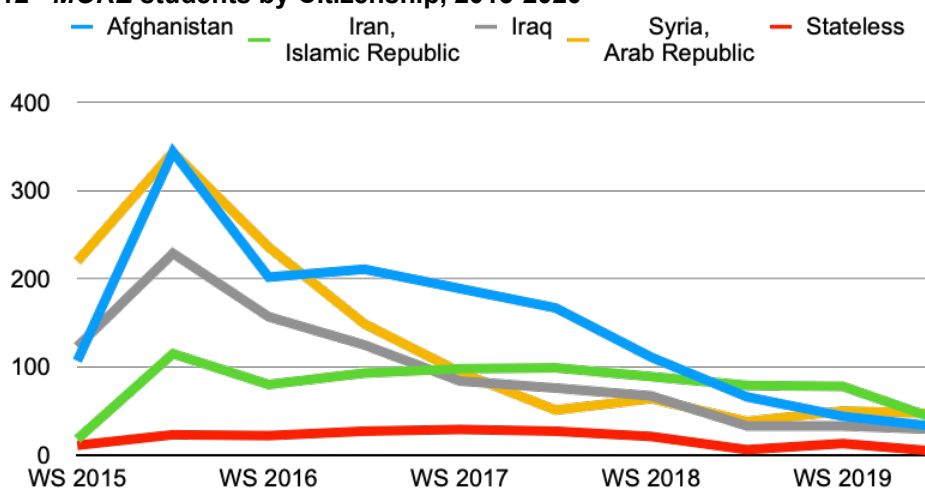
¹⁸ Refugees of Afghani, Eritrean, Irani, Iraqi, Somalian, Syrian and Venezuelan background.

¹⁹ No information is available for permits delivered by Brazil for study or family purposes for the year 2016; permits delivered by Chile over the 2010–2011 period; permits delivered by Colombia over the 2010–2013 period; permits delivered by Finland to Iranian or Venezuelan nationals for the year 2010.

3.3.1. MORE Initiative

From the winter semester of 2015 until the summer semester of 2020, over four thousand students have benefitted from the *MORE Initiative*. In terms of demographics, most MORE students are men, although the number of women enrolled has been slowly, constantly, increasing (see Part 2 - Annex IV). The vast majority of MORE students originate from Syria (Syrian Arab Republic), Afghanistan and Iraq. As shown in Figure 2, the number of Iranian nationals has been stable following a spike in the Summer Semester 2016. The number of Syrian students consistently fell from about 1/3 of the total to 1/6, whereas Afghani nationals rose roughly the same proportion. In the Summer Semester of 2016, the same number (344) of Syrian and Afghani refugees were registered (see Annex XVI).

Figure 12 - MORE students by Citizenship, 2015-2020



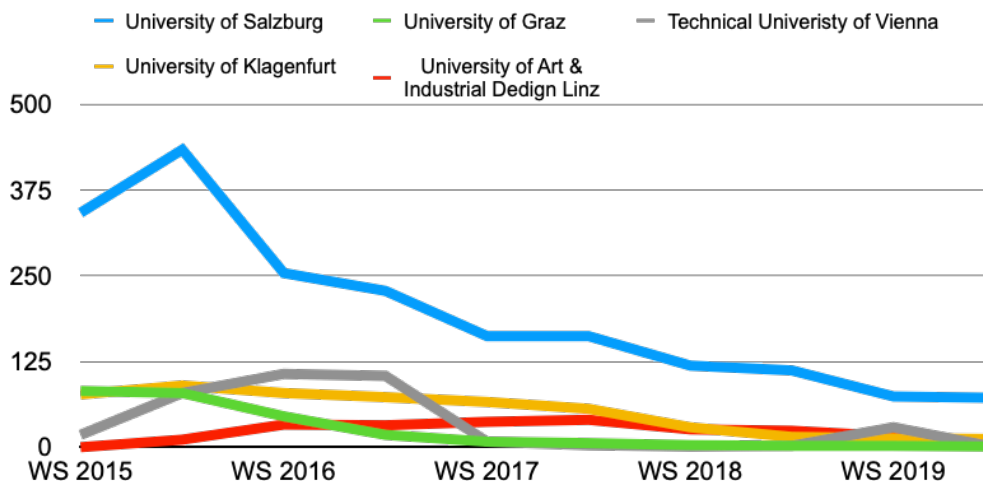
Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities."

In terms of University choice, Figure 13 shows that the University of Salzburg (Paris Lodron University of Salzburg) has consistently been the favoured choice among the refugee students enrolled in the *MORE Initiative*. This may be for a variety of reasons. Overall, the University of Salzburg is the most popular university among the three offered by the city, and it thus hosts a vibrant community of students. The University is divided into four main faculties: Catholic Theology, Law, Cultural and Social Sciences, and Natural Sciences. On top of Bachelor and Master's degree courses, exchange Programs and numerous international partnerships connecting the university with all continents are offered, therefore, providing essential networking opportunities.

Additionally, the University of Salzburg also offers a very flexible policy for students with children, including the right to two months leave of absence and waiver/reimbursement of tuition fees in case of pregnancy (University of Salzburg, 2021). The University of Klagenfurt, a federal Austrian research university and the state's most extensive research and higher education institution, has also seen a stable number of enrollments. Its focus is on Artificial Intelligence

(AI), Cybersecurity, Engineering and Mathematics, and it offers numerous Bachelor, and Master’s degrees taught in English. The University also offers a wide range of scholarships for research (University Klagenfurt, 2021).

Figure 13 - MORE students by University



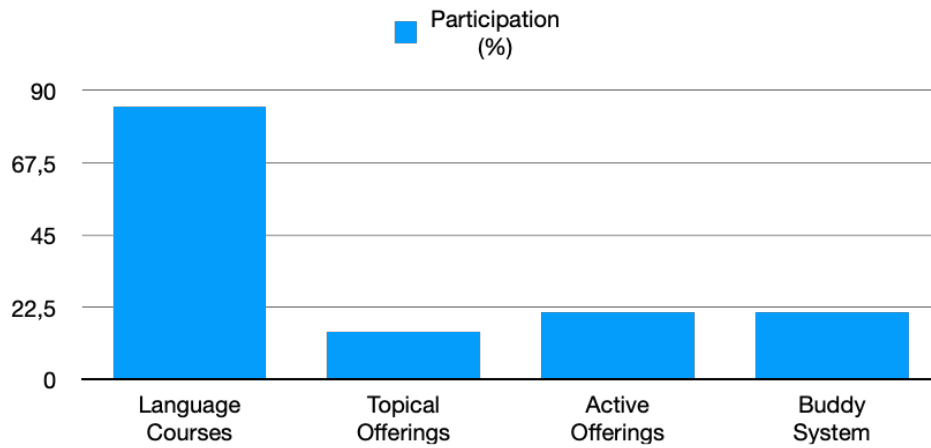
Source: Uniko, 2020. “Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities.”

At the end of each semester, the *MORE* students are asked to fill in a Program evaluation. The survey is used both for general statistics (e.g. to record nationalities, ages, educational backgrounds, etcetera) and to take stock of students’ feedback on the proposed courses and activities to improve the Initiative in future semesters. Unfortunately, the latest set of responses was recorded in 2017/18 as part of a sociological course at the Johannes Kepler University in Linz. 124 *MORE* students took part in the survey. Due to the methodological approach, participants in German courses are overrepresented, as a follow-up survey was carried out in German courses to increase the response rate.

The average respondent was found to be a 28-year-old male; only 25% of participants were females, who had learnt about the *Initiative* from friends (approximately 2/3 of the valid answers). In addition, employees of support and advisory organisations served as relevant information providers.

The 2018 analysis found that over 85% of the respondents had enrolled in the language courses offered by *MORE*, while the topical offerings—courses/presentations/events in arts and sciences—were chosen by 15% of the participants. The *MORE Activities* opportunities, such as sports classes, panel discussions, exhibitions, etcetera, were chosen by 21% of the surveyed students, and 21% is also the percentage of participants in the “Buddy System” (see Figure 3). The Buddy System is a Project where the refugee students get paired up with a local student—the buddy—who will actively introduce their refugee peer into their circle of friends, offer support in navigating the Austrian university system, organise extracurricular activities, etcetera.

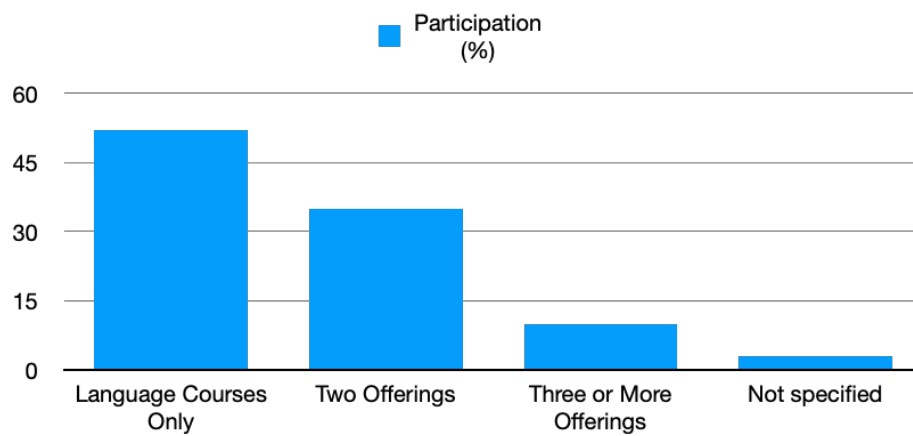
Figure 14 - Participation in MORE offerings²⁰



Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities."

Participants could choose to benefit from more than one type of offering, and Figure 4 shows the parallel participation in MORE offerings.

Figure 15 - Parallel participation in MORE offerings²¹



Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities."

²⁰ Rounded up to entire percentages. Total number of responses: 124.

²¹ Ibid.

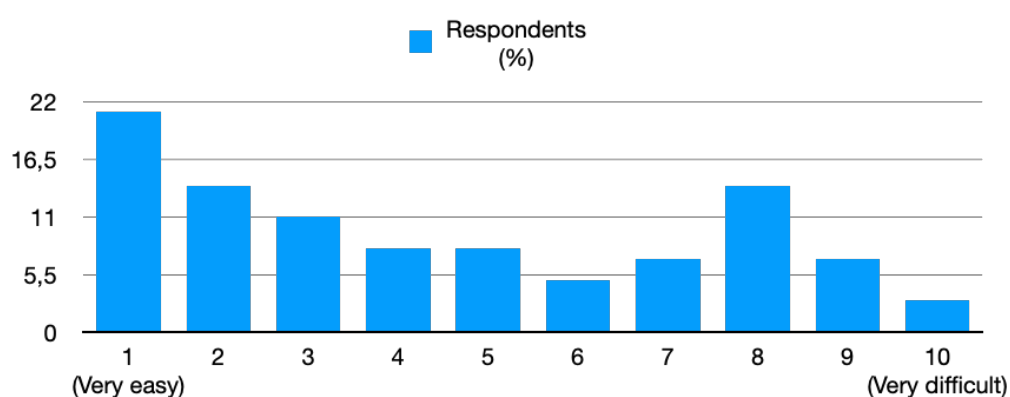
Overall, 45% of students decided to participate in two or more offers. Thus, the data shows that students prefer to focus on language courses only. Therefore, the universities may consider offering language courses only in the first semester of the *MORE Initiative*, allowing students to enrol in the other offerings from the second semester onward. Nonetheless, a little over 50% of the respondents reported having completed between one and three courses, although it is not clear whether these were completed in parallel. By contrast, only 1,6% reported having failed to complete a single course (see Table 1). This is an extremely promising statistics highlighting that the courses offered are right on target with the interests and the education level achieved by the refugees before coming to Austria. Besides, when asked to rate how difficult it was to participate in *MORE*, only 24% of participants declared it was difficult (see figure 16 and 17).

Table 1 - Number of completed courses between 2015 and 2017²²

Number of Completed Courses	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
None	2	1,6%	1,6%
One	20	16,1%	17,7%
Two	31	25,0%	42,7%
Three	17	13,7%	56,4%
More than three (4 to 11)	21	16,9%	75,3%
Not specified	33	26,6%	100%

Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the *MORE Initiative* of Austrian Universities."

Figure 16 - Assessment of difficulties to participate in *MORE*²³



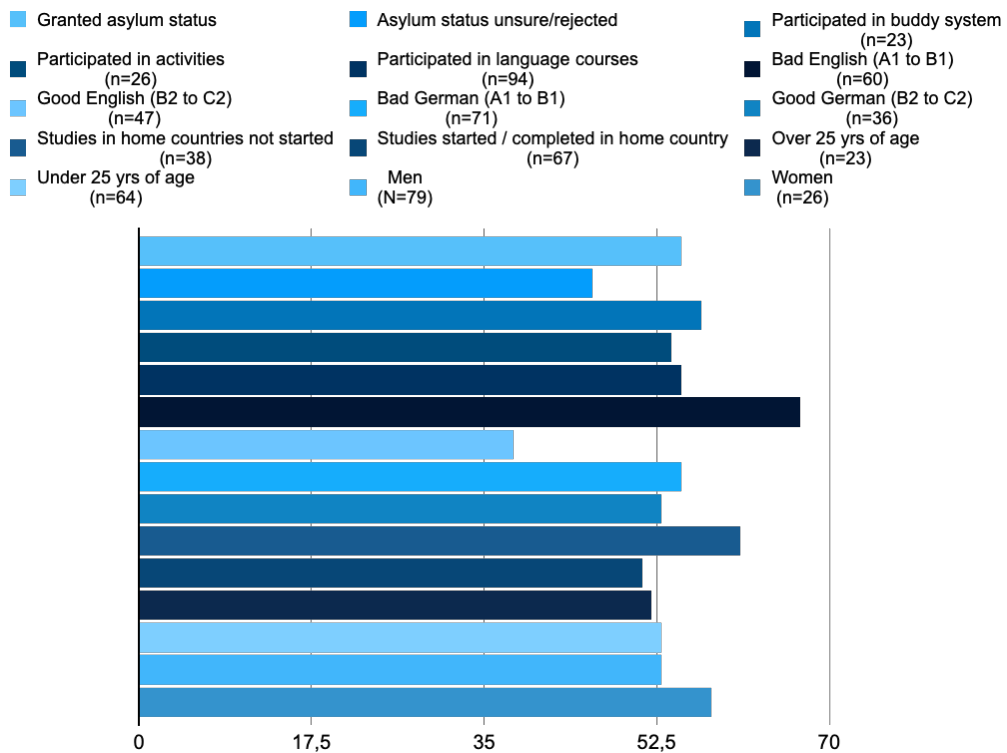
Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the *MORE Initiative* of Austrian Universities."

²² Number of participants: 124.

²³ Difficulties include: registration for course, travel expenses, etcetera. The question was: "On a scale from 1 (Very easy) to 10 (Very difficult), do you find that attending *MORE* is difficult" Number of responses: 107.

Figure 17 shows similarities among those who do not find it easy to participate in MORE (scale values 8-10). While there are few differences in the perceived challenges of participation based on the types of courses taken, a low level of fluency in English negatively impacted the perception of participation. Furthermore, the number of completed courses was unrelated to the perceived difficulty of participating in the MORE Program. English skills should be regarded as a critical key competence in this context. Because the issue of the perceived complication of participation involved, among other things, the organisation of travels and registration processes, the influence of English skills on the perceived difficulty of participation is understandable. In the university context, these issues are frequently already taken into consideration, and assistance and documentation in English are available.

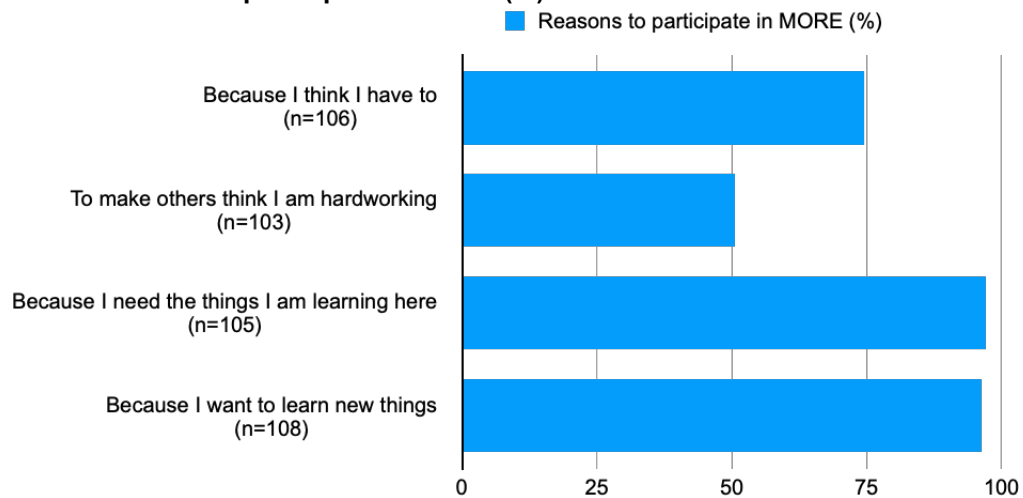
Figure 17 - Participation in MORE is not considered easy (%)



Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities."

When it comes to the motivations for participating in MORE, the component of motivation²⁴ outweighs the component of regulation.²⁵ In terms of regulation, 3/4 of those polled believed they had to participate in MORE, and at least half wished that others assumed they were hardworking. However, the desire to learn (useful) new things motivated more than 95% of those who took part (see Figure 18).

Figure 18 - Reasons to participate in MORE (%)²⁶



Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities."

The survey asked the *MORE* students to evaluate the Program on a scale from 1 (Very much) to 10 (Not at all). Figure 19 shows a generally high level of satisfaction with the Program, with "Very much" being the most popular answer. Additionally, there were 125 responses from 75 people to the open question of what people like best about *MORE* (see Annex XVIII). The most frequently mentioned feature is the chance to learn German. Particular appreciation is also placed on the teachers' qualifications and didactic skills. The opportunity to interact with other students is also rated positively, as is the university environment and the experience of not being perceived primarily as a refugee. Positive connotations are also associated with aspects of the content of the offers (considered as a stepping stone for further studies), existing support, and opportunities linked to participation in *MORE*. The few respondents who chose ratings of 4 or lower, while appreciating the *Initiative* reported some difficult social experiences with their peers. Notably, no participant stated they did not like the Program at all.

When asked what could be improved (see Annex XIX), the respondents (62) see room for improvement, primarily in terms of the scope of current offers (e.g. more units in the context of German courses). There is also a desire for more offers and additional content and more

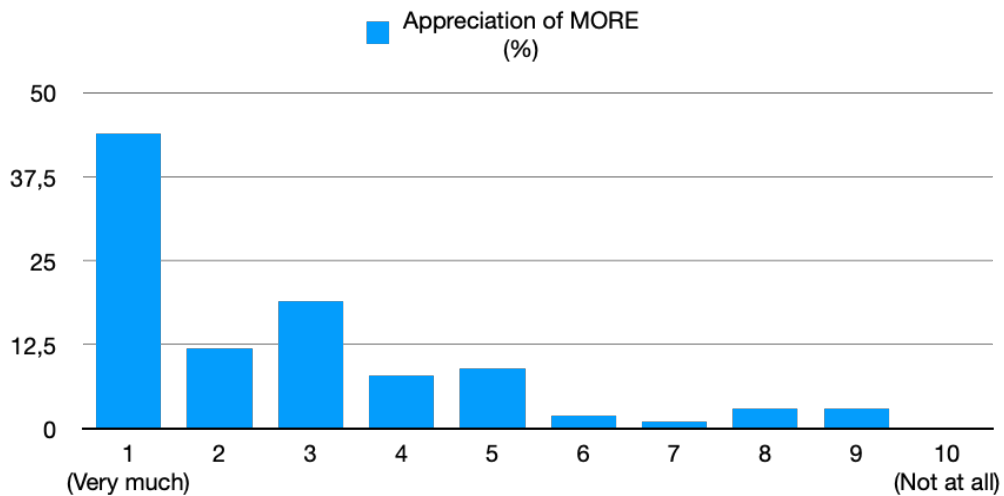
²⁴ "Because I can use the things I am learning here"; "Because I want to learn new things."

²⁵ "Because I think I have to"; "To make others think that I am hardworking."

²⁶ Participants could choose more than one option.

support and information. Improved equipment (e.g., Internet access) and more opportunities to socialise are mentioned on occasion. *MORE's* overall benefit was questioned four times, and five statements indicated that respondents felt overwhelmed by the *Initiative*. In summary, when asked what could be improved about *MORE*, participants primarily desired a broader range of courses, sometimes explicitly referring to previous studies or training. This demonstrates the area of tension in which the *MORE* Project can be found. *MORE* aims to prepare for (re)entry into a course of study and convey basic skills. The *Initiative* is not to be understood as a replacement for a degree or professional training Program.

Figure 19 - Overall appreciation of the *MORE Initiative*

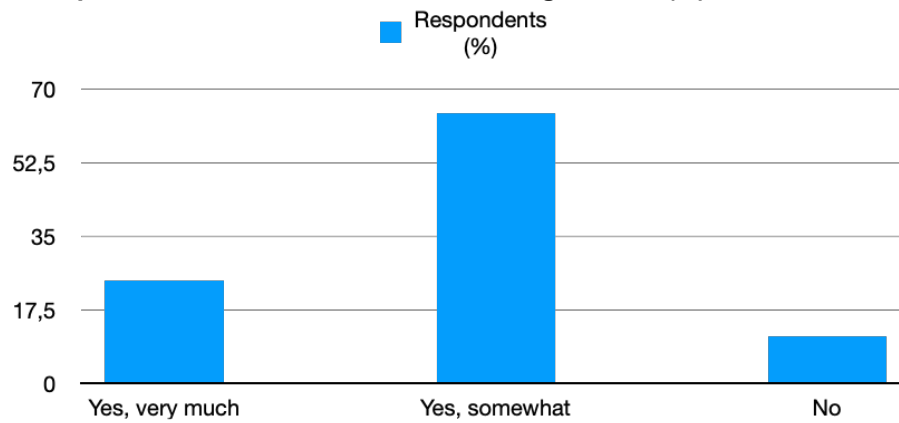


Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the *MORE Initiative* of Austrian Universities."

Participants were also asked to evaluate whether their circle of friends expanded thanks to the *MORE Initiative* (see Figure 20). About 90% of respondents reported that their group of friends expanded due to the *Initiative*, as the refugee students had the opportunity to socialise with the local community. Indeed, 46% of respondents declared that their friendship circle had expanded to include other refugees and Austrian citizens. 17% reported socialising with mostly Austrians, while 24% interacted mostly with refugees having similar backgrounds and experiences. Unfortunately, about 13% of the interviewed participants did not manage to expand their circle of friends at all (Figure 21).

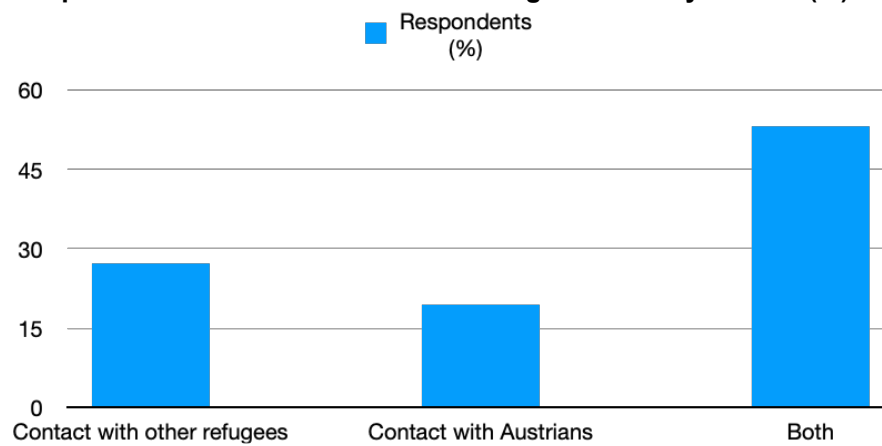
In addition to these social aspects of integration, further information about university integration and placement can be provided (see Figure 22). When looking at those who are primarily located at universities, 24,2% of respondents have transitioned to another university education. Half of them were enrolled in regular classes. Another 24,2% was in a different, non-university education (for example, apprenticeship) and is thus integrated into the Austrian education system somehow. Although it should be noted that those whose asylum request is yet to be approved have minimal access to the labour market, 27 people reported employment, with 14.4% working regularly.

Figure 20 - Expansion of the circle of friends through MORE (%)



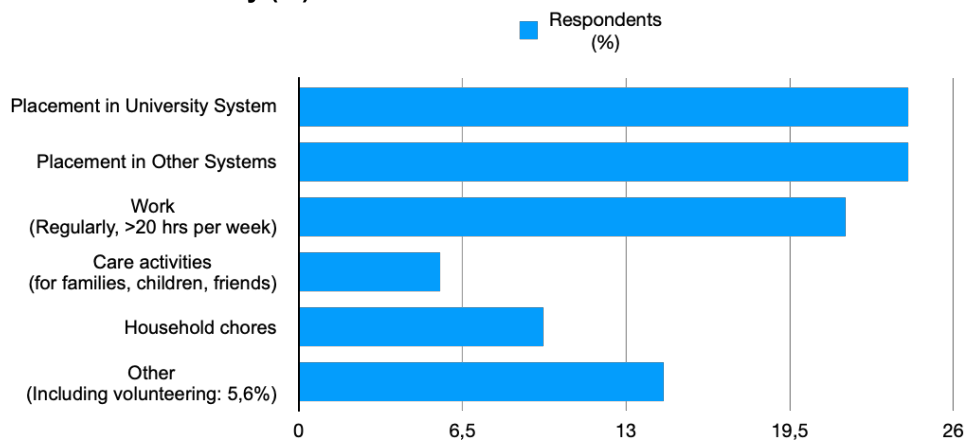
Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities."

Figure 21 - Expansion of the circle of friends through MORE - by whom? (%)



Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities."

Figure 22 - Current Activity (%)²⁷



Source: Uniko, 2020. "Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities."

²⁷ Number of respondents: 124.

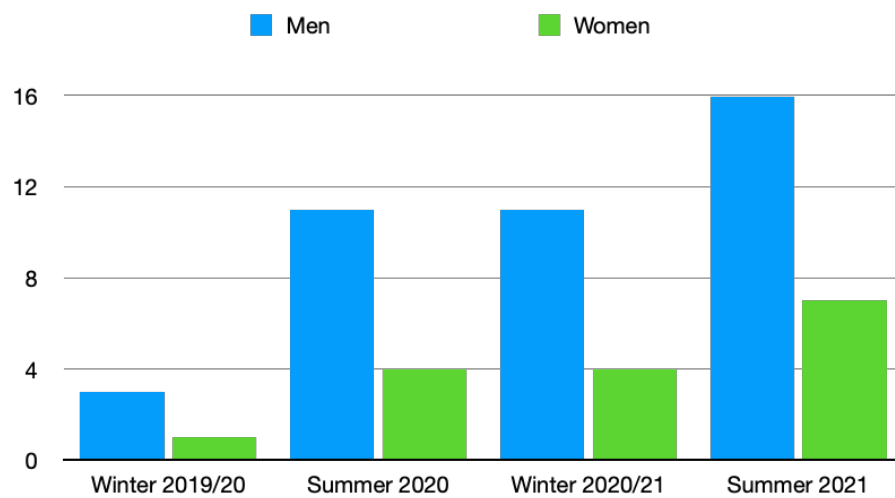
In conclusion, data show that the *MORE Initiative* can achieve its inherent integration goals insofar as the university community, both personnel and students, is open to the process. The *Initiative* does create several chances for refugee students to interact with the local community. However, the latter has to be ready to embrace these opportunities. The majority of respondents stated that their circle of friends had grown due to their participation in *MORE*. The majority of new friends were not only other asylum seekers and refugees but also Austrians. Participants generally have a positive outlook on their futures, believe in their abilities, and almost unanimously express a desire to remain in Austria.

Furthermore, respondents perceive *MORE* as a "springboard" or "stepping stone" to further studies, whether university degree, non-degree, or other studies. Therefore, Austrian public universities quickly established access for asylum seekers and refugees in Austria through the *MORE* Program. According to socio-demographic data, the Program met the universities' intentions, namely to allow asylum seekers and refugees quick access to higher education with a minimum of bureaucratic hurdles. Since its creation in 2015, the Program has evolved into various forms based on the needs of the respective universities. Overall, the experiences of both *MORE* students and universities have been highly positive, highlighting the Program's purpose (in terms of both its general orientation and promotion of integration) and specific objectives (language acquisition and preparation for further studies). *MORE* students benefit from the Program academically (achieving very high levels of German language skills, access to other university programs and studies), and personally, through successful integration, which includes socialising with Austrian and international students. In addition, thanks to the *MORE Initiative*, they frequently gain first-hand experience in the Austrian labour market. Additionally, *MORE* students are seen as enrichment by Austrian universities: as people whose potential is developed to benefit both academia and the Austrian economy in general. Finally, given the low participation rates, measures to promote the advancement of women and asylum seekers/refugees' transitions to degree studies are recommended for the *MORE* Program's sustainability and further development.

3.3.2. Uni-Freunde

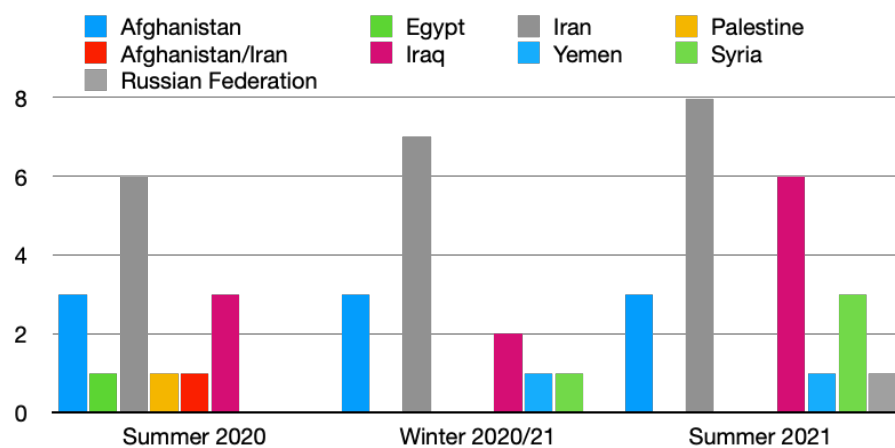
From the Winter Semester (WS) of 2019/20 to the Summer Semester (SS) of 2021, a total of 57 student asylum seekers have benefitted from the *Uni-Freunde* Program. In terms of demographics, most *Uni-Freunde* students are men (71,9%), although the number of women enrolled has been growing (see Figure 23). The vast majority of *Uni-Freunde* students originate from Iran, followed by Iraqi and Afghani nationals. As shown in Figure 24, the number of Syrian students is meagre compared to what could be expected compared to the *MORE Initiative*.

Figure 23 - Uni-Freunde Students by Gender and Semester



Source: *Fremde werden Freunde (2021)*, unpublished raw data.

Figure 24 - Uni-Freunde Students by Nationality and Semester²⁸

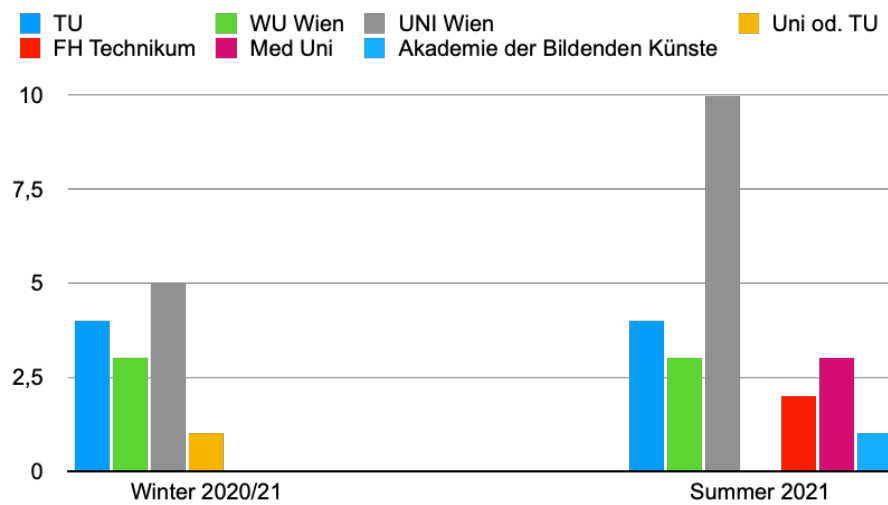


Source: *Fremde werden Freunde (2021)*, unpublished raw data.

²⁸ Data not available for Winter Semester 2019/20 and 1 respondent for Summer 2021; n=57.

Being a Program run at the local level, meaning in Vienna only, all the asylum seekers involved in this Program reside in Vienna and have begun their studies at a local university. Figure 25 shows the *University of Wien* (University of Vienna) as the most popular choice among the *Uni-Freunde* students. The University of Vienna is a public research university, and it is also the oldest university in the German-speaking world. It offers numerous Bachelor and Master's Degrees, courses in English, and it has signed a 'Strategic Partnerships Agreement' through which it uses the targeted deployment of additional resources to promote existing close academic collaborations with selected international, renowned partner universities, thus setting the course for sustainable, bilateral top-level research" (University of Vienna, 2018). Less popular is the *Wirtschaftsuniversität Wien* (VWU - Vienna University of Economics and Business), which collaborates with *Uni-Freunde* by offering intensive courses, as discussed in Part 2.²⁹ This may be related to the fact that the VWU specifically focuses on business and economics, with a smaller range of courses. For example, the only Bachelor Degree courses offered are in Business, Economics and Social Sciences; Business Law; and Business and Economics (VWU, 2017). Instead, the *Uni-Freunde* students have decided to follow various courses ranging from Civil Engineering to History and Computer science (see Figure 26).

Figure 25 - Uni-Freunde Students by University and Semester³⁰

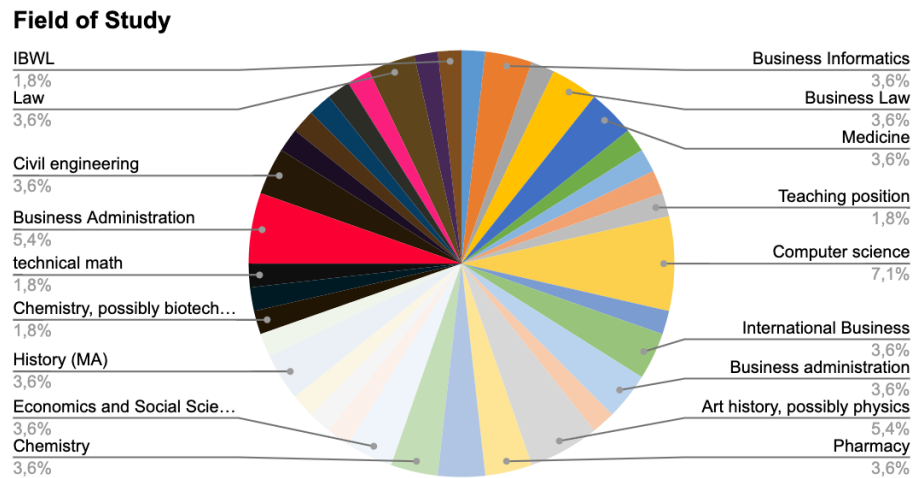


Source: *Fremde werden Freunde (2021)*, unpublished raw data.

²⁹ The courses offered include German as a foreign language, English, mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, history, geography (all taught in German). In addition to the VWU itself, two cooperation partners also offer German courses as part of the pre-study course.

³⁰ Data not available for Winter Semester 2019/20 and Summer 2020; n=38.

Figure 26 - Uni-Freunde Students by Field of Study³¹



Source: Fremde werden Freunde (2021), unpublished raw data.

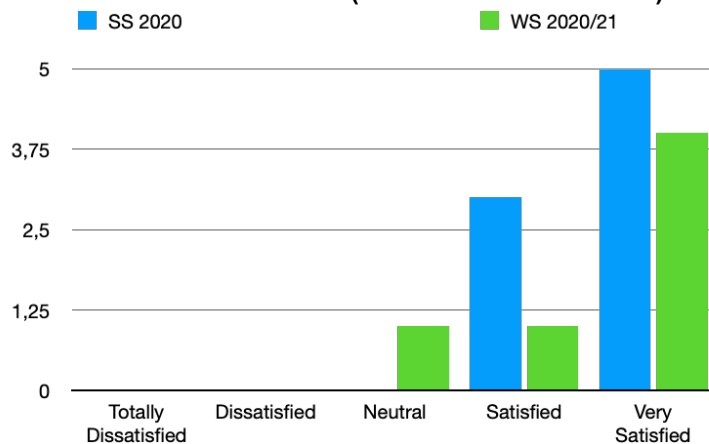
Since the Summer Semester of 2020, the *Uni-Freunde* students are also asked to fill in a survey evaluating the Program. The survey is used both for general statistics (e.g. to record places of residence at the end of the Program and gender) and to take stock of students' feedback on the proposed courses and activities to improve the Program in future semesters. Unfortunately, data is only available for the Summer Semester 2020 and Winter Semester 2020/21. In addition, only 14 out of 30 students completed the survey, so their responses will be evaluated as a sample population. Of course, the limited availability of data will make the analysis not statistically valid. However, for this thesis, the answers given will serve as a starting point to evaluate whether this Program promotes social integration. Therefore, the Uni-Freunde management should consider submitting a follow-up survey to mentors and mentees, perhaps to be filled in during one of their meetings, to build a more consistent database. This exercise should be repeated each semester to provide a wholesome evaluation of the Program in the future. Besides, being *Uni-Freunde* still a relatively new project, having feedback from current students could help improve the activities offered and reach a wider audience. This would, hopefully, also mean receiving answers in 'equal' numbers from both men and women, which has not been the case this time. In fact, out of the 14 respondents, only 3 are women, making the average respondent a 30 years old man residing in Austria.

The first question *Uni-Freunde* students are asked is how satisfied they are with their mentors on a scale from "Totally dissatisfied" to "Very satisfied." Figure 27 compares the answers received in the Summer Semester 2020 and Winter Semester 2020/21. Later on in the survey, students are asked how satisfactory the workshops were. Results are displayed in Figure 28. Finally, the survey questioned whether *Uni-Freunde* helped the students with their studies (see Figure 29). Overall, the data clearly shows that students were satisfied with the Program, although those enrolled in the Winter Semester of 2020/21 did rate it more critically

³¹ Data missing for 1 person in Summer 2021; n=56.

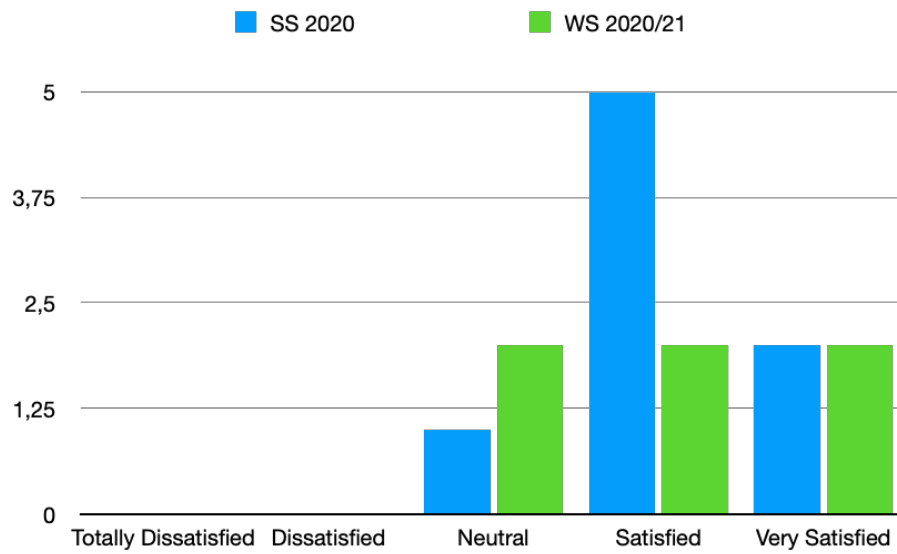
than their peers in the Summer Semester 2020. It should, of course, be acknowledged that the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic hit in Autumn 2020. Unfortunately, the students who enrolled in the Program in the Winter Semester of 2020/21 had a very different experience from their colleagues. Indeed, when asked what they did not like about the Program, one student from the WS2020/21 stated: “That it was online, but it is understandable given the circumstances.” All meetings and workshops had to be done online, and this is a Program that promotes social interaction through regular meetings. Mentors and mentees had to be introduced online, game nights had to be done online, so the asylum seekers who enrolled in the Program might have missed that feeling of community this Program wishes to achieve. Therefore, while the data collected in the Winter Semester of 2020 is still relevant for this analysis, it would be interesting to survey the same students again following a semester where activities could be done in presence. While they might give the same answers regarding whether this Program helped with their studies, they might give a more favourable score to both their mentors and the workshops.

Figure 27 - Rates of Satisfaction for Mentors (SS2020 and WS2020/21)



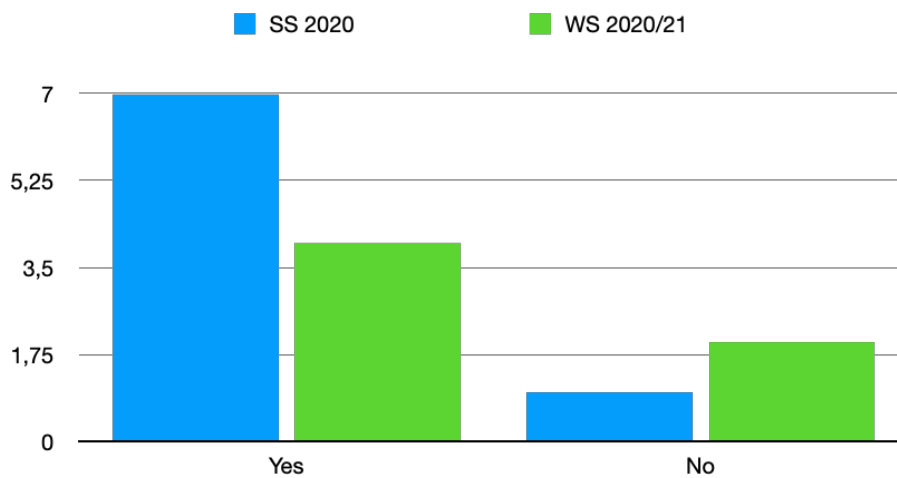
Source: *Fremde werden Freunde (2021)*, unpublished raw data.

Figure 28 - Rates of Satisfaction for Workshops (SS2020 and WS2020/21)



Source: *Fremde werden Freunde (2021)*, unpublished raw data.

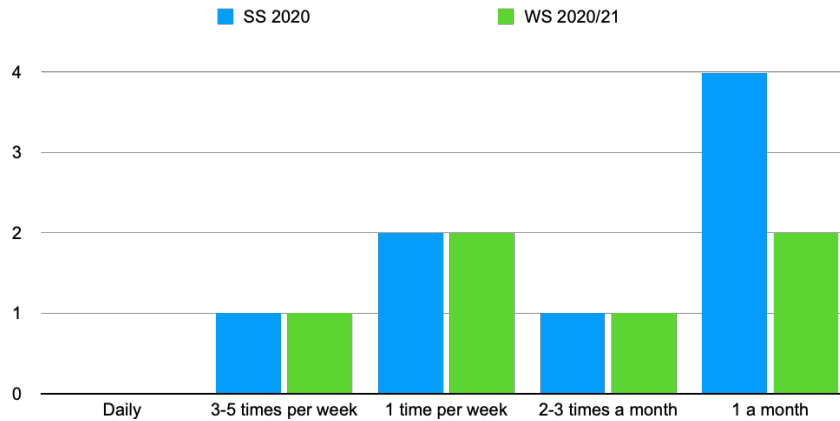
Figure 29 - “Did participating in *Uni-Freunde* help with your studies?” (SS2020 and WS2020/21)



Source: *Fremde werden Freunde (2021)*, unpublished raw data.

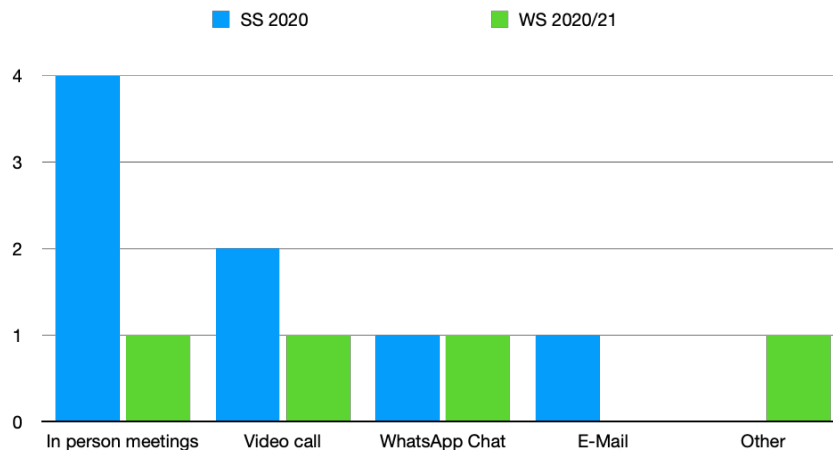
Looking at social interactions, the majority of mentees were in touch with their mentors either weekly or once per month (Figure 30). The interactions mainly happened in person in the SS 2020 while split equally between in-person and social media in the WS 2020/21 (Figure 20). Interestingly, when asked whether they planned to keep in touch with their mentors, the majority of students participating in the SS 2020 responded: “Maybe”, while the majority of students in the WS 2020/21 responded: “Yes” (Figure 32). Of course, this could be due to entirely subjective reasons such as personal compatibility or common interests (or lack thereof). However, this could also be because the COVID-induced lockdown somehow put all students at the same level. All students everywhere had, at some point, to attend classes online. They could not see their friends nor engage in social activities, which entailed in-person meetings. Therefore, the asylum seekers and their Austrian peers had something in common that they both could share entirely, primarily since both groups resided in Vienna and were thus experiencing the same rules and regulations. As much as the pandemic was, and unfortunately still is, an unprecedented health and economic crisis, it might have also been the reason why the *Uni-Freunde* students felt more willing to keep in touch with their mentors. Especially since only one pair of students managed to meet in person during the WS 2020/21, their wish to keep in touch with their mentor could also derive from a curiosity to meet this person for the first time. The students from the SS 2019, on the other hand, had the opportunity to get together more often, so it could simply be that while they enjoyed the Program and appreciated their mentors, they felt like they had learnt everything they needed. Thus, they may keep in touch with their mentors the same way they would with any schoolmate, regardless of whether they met in class or through a Program aimed at the social integration of asylum seekers in society.

Figure 30 - Frequency of interactions between mentors and mentees (SS2020 and WS2020/21)



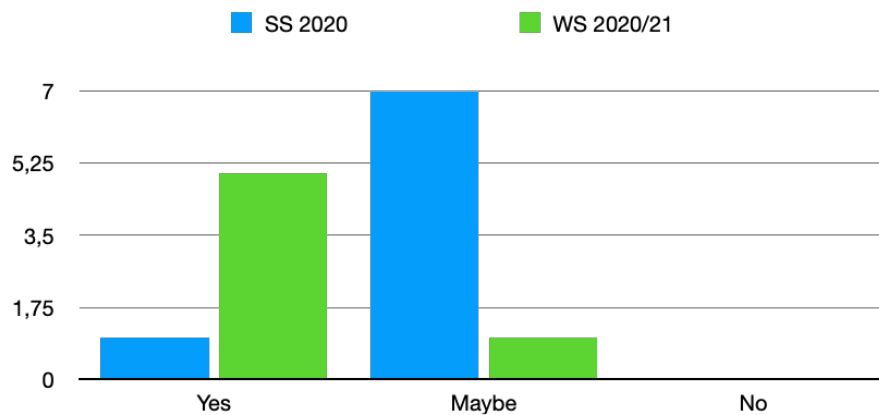
Source: Fremde werden Freunde (2021), unpublished raw data.

Figure 31 - Type of interactions between mentors and mentees (SS2020 and WS2020/21)



Source: Fremde werden Freunde (2021), unpublished raw data.

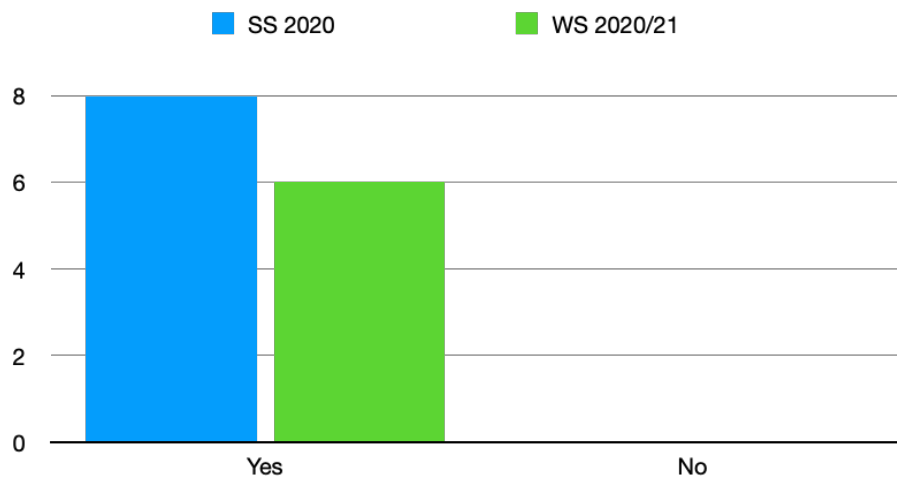
Figure 32 - "Do you plan to keep in touch with your mentor?" (SS 2020 and WS 2020/21)



Source: Fremde werden Freunde (2021), unpublished raw data.

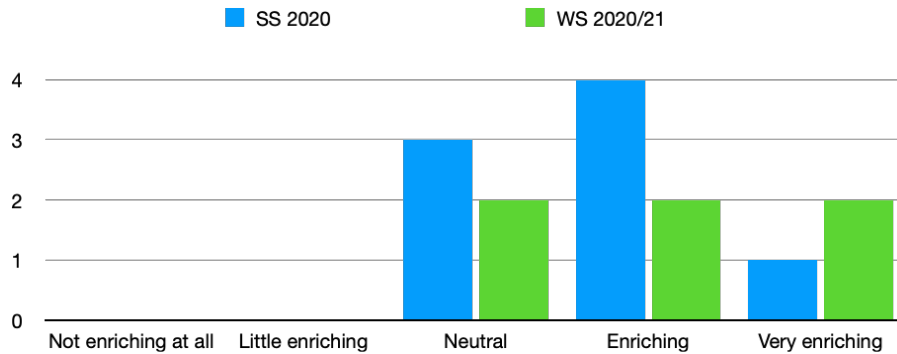
Therefore, the data collected on the *Uni-Freunde* is, unfortunately, not enough to determine whether this Project can be successful in providing asylum seekers with a path for integration into society. However, the students' responses to the survey suggest that the Program is a positive step in that direction. Additionally, on top of the data analysed above, 100% of students from both semesters stated that they would recommend this Project to their friends (Figure 33). The majority of them also felt somewhat enriched by their meetings with Austrian students, as shown in Figure 34. Thus, the Uni-Freunde Program gives asylum seekers students the chance to interact with the local student community, and the latter has been open to the process given the rising number of applications received to be mentors in 2021/22. However, the Program still operates on a relatively small scale, and consideration should perhaps be given to opening branches in other Austrian cities. In addition, the *Uni-Freunde* management could think about organising more 'social evenings' to bring the whole group together more often and, hopefully, foster friendships that go beyond the mentor-mentee relationship. Of course, these considerations apply more quickly to a post-COVID world, where in-person meetings will be allowed again with no limitations such as the maximum number of people allowed in a room, the obligation to wear face masks, etcetera. Finally, solutions need to be found to gather more data and thus provide a better evaluation of the Program as a whole. Although it is good to leave surveys complete voluntarily, hearing all students' opinions is essential and can help make valuable changes if needed. Incentives should be considered, such as, for example, the possibility to win a 'coffee for two' at a local coffee shop when completing the survey. Small things like these would increase the response rates and encourage mentors and mentees to meet again after the end of the semester and perhaps foster their friendship beyond the Program. It would, therefore, be another step towards integration.

Figure 33 - “Would you recommend this Project to your friends?” (SS 2020 and WS 2020/21)



Source: Fremde werden Freunde (2021), unpublished raw data.

Figure 34 - “Was it personally enriching for you to be brought together with a new person?” (SS 2020 and WS 2020/21)

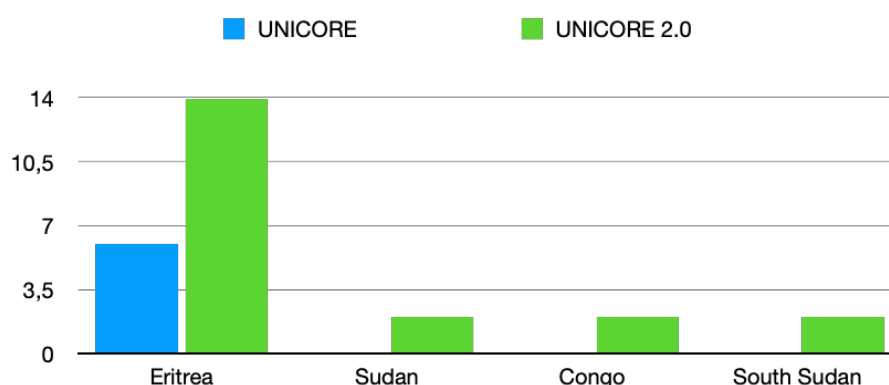


Source: Fremde werden Freunde (2021), unpublished raw data.

3.3.3. UNICORE Project

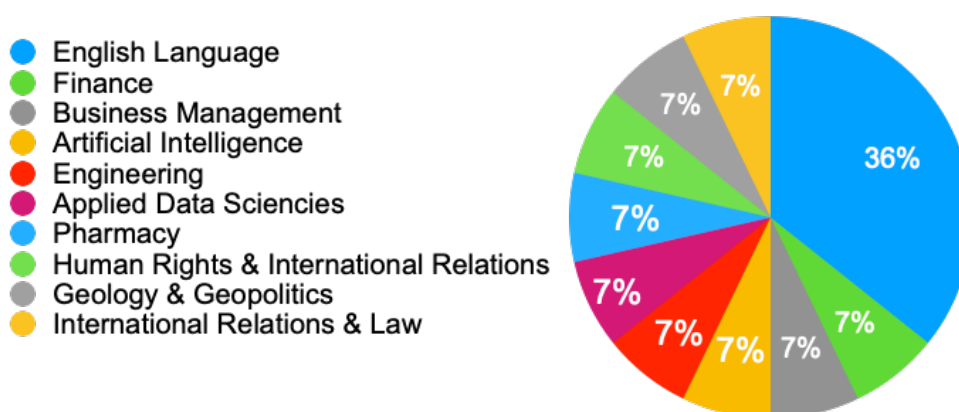
From the start of the UNICORE Project in 2019, 26 students (25 men, 1 woman) have travelled to Italy to complete a Laurea Magistrale in over ten³² universities across the country. The Project is currently at its second edition—UNICORE 2.0—and the 6 students from the first round, all of whom arrived from Eritrea, will be graduating in the summer of 2021. In the second edition, the 20 students were Eritrean, Sudanese, Congolese and South Sudanese nationals starting their final year this coming September (see Annex XXI for details). Figure 36 displays the range of degrees the students have decided to enrol in over the two editions.

Figure 35 - UNICORE Students by Nationality and Edition



Source: UNICORE, retrieved via UNHCR Officials

Figure 36 - UNICORE Students by Field of Study



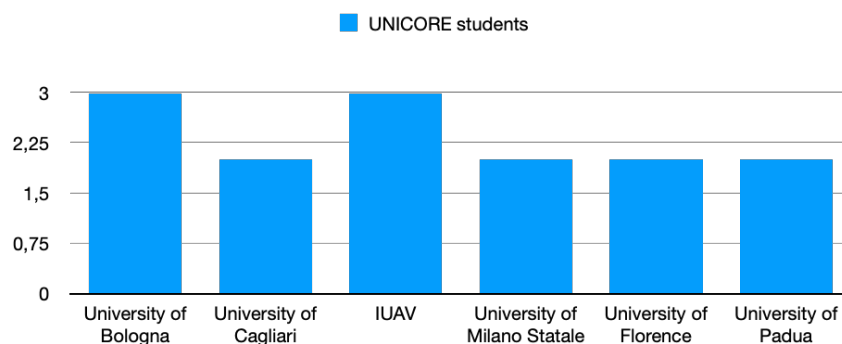
Source: UNICORE, retrieved via UNHCR Officials

³² UNICORE 3.0, starting in September 2021, will welcome 43 new students divided among 24 partner universities throughout Italy.

For the first edition of *UNICORE*, the UNHCR was meant to partner with the University of Bologna only. However, also LUISS University in Rome decided to become a pioneer in this Project and offered a scholarship for one student. Therefore, the 6 selected students could choose between the two institutions: while 5 decided to study English at Bologna, 1 student opted for a degree in Finance from LUISS. These students will be graduating in the summer of 2021, having completed their courses. *UNICORE 2.0* was opened to 20 students who, on top of the two pioneer universities, could choose to attend the following academic institutions: the IUAV - University of Venice; the University of Cagliari; the University of Padua; the University of Florence; the University of *Milano Statale*; the University of Pisa; and the University of Aquila. The third edition of the Project, *UNICORE 3.0*, will start in September 2021, and the University partners have more than doubled (see Annex XI for the complete list). Therefore, there are currently 26 *UNICORE* students completing their *Laurea Magistrale* in Italy, and, in order to better evaluate the Project, these students were asked to complete the same survey submitted to the *MORE* students, only in English. Unfortunately, only 14 students decided to participate in the survey, so they will serve as the sample population for this research and evaluation.

The respondents are 13 males and 1 female, 3 of whom participated in the first edition of the Program, while the remaining 11 took part in *UNICORE 2.0*. Although being a relatively small sample, the respondents are studying at a rather wide range of universities (see Figure 37). This will allow for a broader range of perspectives, as the surveyed students have provided experiences from over half of the universities involved in the Program. Therefore, the analysis could be said to be acquiring significance thanks to the widespread of the results.

Figure 37 - *UNICORE* Students by University



Source: Rizzi, F. (2021). *Integration through Education? Unpublished raw data.*

With regard to the evaluation of the Program, results were rather interesting. Respondents rated how much they liked the Program on a scale from 1 (A lot) to 10 (A little). This was done to keep the survey as similar as possible to the original German version. However, it is essential to highlight that in German scoring scales, 1 equals the highest score, while in Italy, 1 is the lowest. This may be the reason why 46% of the *UNICORE* students stated that they liked the Program “1 (A lot)”, while the other 54% selected scores between 9 and “10 (A little).”³³ It could, of course, be that the *UNICORE* students did not appreciate the Program at all, but that would be inconsistent with the opinions they left later on in the survey. Indeed, when asked what they liked about the Program, a student stated that it “...provides skills and knowledge that are relevant to help bring new change into my life, family, community, country, and the international community at large.” Another student defined *UNICORE* as a “golden opportunity and life-saving Program”, and another one added that they liked the Program “because it keeps us safe and provides us with a good education platform, which is life-changing.” Students did also leave some negative reviews about the Project. For instance, many reported having difficulties with the language barrier in Italy, suggesting that Italian language courses should be given to selected candidates before they arrive in the country. This would immensely facilitate the integration process as Italy ranks very low³⁴ in the EF English Proficiency Index (EF EPI).³⁵ Therefore, giving students the language skills to communicate with the hosting community could help eliminate one of the barriers they have to face upon arrival. Additionally, a couple of students pointed out that a ‘buddy system’ similar to that offered by the *MORE Initiative* could be helpful in the social integration process. So far, only LUISS offers a ‘buddy system’, but more universities should consider implementing it as it creates the first point of contact between the refugee students and the local students’ community. It allows refugees to get in touch with someone who can become their friend, rather than an officer whose job is to look after students in general.

When it comes to the motivations for participating in *MORE*, the component of motivation³⁶ outweighs the component of regulation.³⁷ Indeed, 64.3% of those polled wanted to participate in *UNICORE* because they wanted to learn new things. The remaining 35.7% stated they took part in the Project because they can use the things they are learning through the Program (see Figure 38).

³³ n=13.

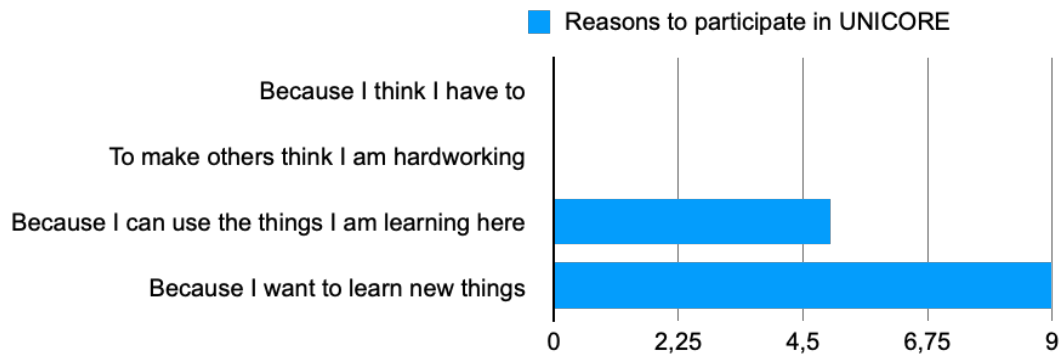
³⁴ In 2020, Italy was the 25th country for English proficiency in Europe (n=34).

³⁵ The EF EPI, created by “Education First (EF)” tries to rank countries based on the penal equity of English language skills among adults who took the EF test online. The index originates from a 2011 online survey based on test data from 1.7 million test-takers. The tenth edition was published in November 2020.

³⁶ “Because I can use the things I am learning here”; “Because I want to learn new things”.

³⁷ “Because I think I have to”; “To make others think that I am hardworking”.

Figure 38 - Reasons to Participate in UNICORE

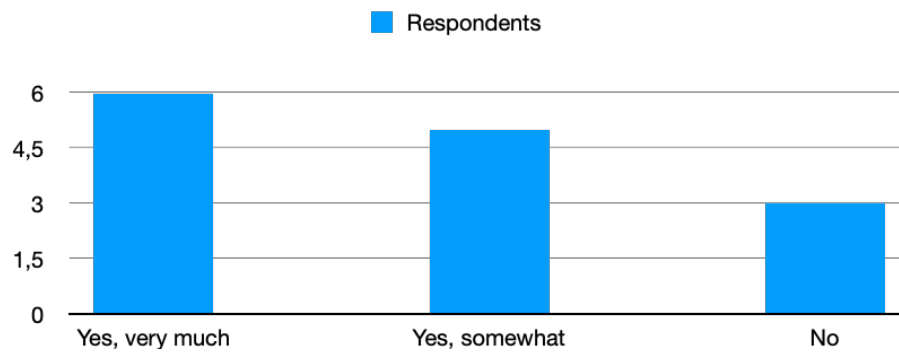


Source: Rizzi, F. (2021). *Integration through Education? Unpublished raw data.*

Like their counterparts in Austria, the UNICORE students were asked if their circle of friends had expanded through the Project. While almost 79% of those polled reported they made either a little or a lot of new friends, about 21% answered that their circle of friends had not expanded at all (see Figure 39). Once again, the COVID-19 pandemic might have had something to do with this answer, as the multiple lockdowns and social distancing regulations made it difficult to create new relationships. The pandemic could also explain why the UNICORE students reported that their newly developed circles of friends also included Italian students, but not mostly (see Figure 40). The respondents live in housing accommodations administered by partners such as *Caritas Italiana*, which provides them with room and board through the Project. This is not to imply that the accommodations provided by partners are not fit for purpose, of course, especially since, when the Project first started, none of the COVID-related issues existed. However, this solution separates the refugee students from the rest of the student community, particularly when people were required to quarantine and avoid all social gatherings. Unfortunately, the pandemic made it so that the refugee students could not attend lectures in person, and so it became even more complex, although not impossible, to socialise with colleagues and peers met via online classes.

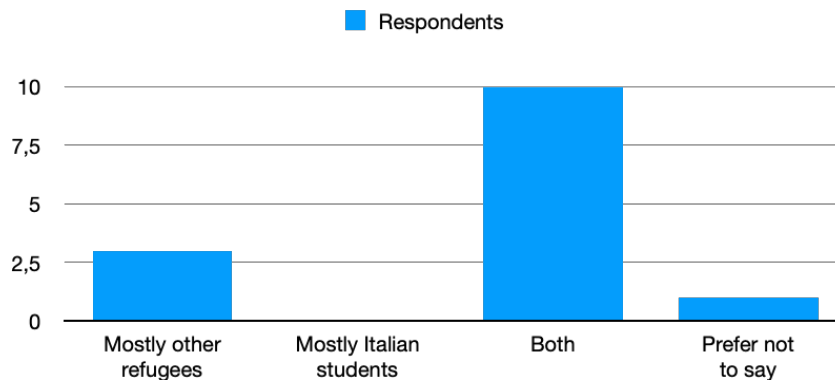
For this reason, initiatives such as the 'buddy system' could really make a difference because those relationships were created before the second Italian lockdown. And could thus be cultivated more easily as an in-person meeting had already happened. For example, the LUISS student who agreed to be interviewed about their experience with UNICORE stated that, with his assigned 'buddy' they "planned many activities despite the restrictions, and for example my buddy from Rome took me to different places and explained the history of different parts of the cities etcetera. Even with the restrictions, if we didn't have the chance to go out, he was still there for me, and it was really good" (see Annex III for the full interview).

Figure 39 - Expansion of the circle of friends through UNICORE



Source: Rizzi, F. (2021). *Integration through Education? Unpublished raw data.*

Figure 40 - Expansion of the circle of friends through UNICORE - by whom?



Source: Rizzi, F. (2021). *Integration through Education? Unpublished raw data.*

One important question students are asked is whether they have anything to add, in case the survey did not cover some pivotal aspects of the Program. While the majority simply expressed their gratitude for the interest shown in the Program, a couple of students made some very interesting additions. One student wishes to see *UNICORE* being expanded to other universities so that “a lot of refugee students are helped to be out of the limbo they are in.” The use of the word ‘limbo’ resonates with what B., the LUISS student, said about this Project being life-changing, as there are “students [...] in Ethiopia who cannot find a job, they were hopeless, they gave up, and once they had given up, they had started to come to Europe through the Sahara desert, through unsafe migration.” Thus, alternative pathways such as the University corridors can play a crucial role in future migration trends to grant safe, orderly, and dignified migration. Another student reiterated the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and wished to have been asked more questions regarding the pressure they found themselves under this past year. They concluded that, although *UNICORE* constitutes a perfect opportunity for education, they believe they would have “achieved so much more in terms of language and integration [...] if the situation was normal.” Finally, one student raised the issue of plans beyond *UNICORE*. The Project claims that students can decide whether to return to their country of asylum or remain in Europe after graduation. However, it is unclear whether those who choose to return to Ethiopia will be provided with incentives to settle there or return empty-handed with only academic papers. This is a question that all students would like to see answered as part of helpful information. This is a crucial point to be raised, especially since graduation is fast approaching for the 6 students who participated in the first round of the Program. Projects like *UNICORE* ultimately also aim to make sure that the title of ‘refugee’ explains how a person arrived in a third country, not a label that will hamper their chances to build a better future. These Programs want refugees to become empowered to make their own choices as much as any other student, regardless of the provider of their passports or identity cards. Therefore, the *UNICORE* students feel insecure about their future. They need clear answers and support in whichever road they decide to take, whether remaining in Italy or returning to the country of asylum.

After all, remaining in Italy is an option that *UNICORE* students are considering. When asked whether they would see themselves living in Italy in 5 years, 8 students said they do not know, while 6 said yes. Not a single student said they would not see themselves remaining, which is a very reassuring statistic that can lead to positive conclusions about whether the Program builds a path towards integration in society. Additionally, when students were asked whether they were considering continuing their studies in Italy, 8 of them said that they would like to follow a similar course to the *Laurea Magistrale* they are completing. The remaining 6 are equally split between the desire to follow a different course (e.g. Level II Master Degree) and the wish to find a job. Again, no student selected “No, I would rather continue my studies somewhere else.” Of course, these answers do not mean that the *UNICORE* students would not leave the country for a job or any other reason if presented with the opportunity. These statistics highlight that, all in all, the *UNICORE* students had a pleasant time in the country, and they would like to stay. Therefore, it could be concluded that the *UNICORE* Project can achieve its

integration goals as it creates different opportunities for refugee students to get in touch with the local community. The majority of the students saw their circle of friends expand through *UNICORE*; they appreciated how the Program helps and encourages refugee students to develop their careers. They particularly cherished the help and support received by the universities and other students. Overall, both the *UNICORE* students' and universities' experiences have been extremely positive, highlighting the Program's purpose in promoting integration and more specific academic objectives (providing the students with a *Laurea Magistrale*).

Additionally, the hosting universities also benefit from *UNICORE*, as both the faculty and student community interact with people from different backgrounds and cultures. Programs like *UNICORE* also help the local communities broaden their horizons and thus promote an intercultural society that is accepting of differences and understands that diversity is an added value. In conclusion, while *UNICORE* is a positive Program overall, the only significant weakness is the lack of women enrolled in the Program. For future editions, universities should consider implementing solutions such as dedicating a determined amount of places to female students only to increase the participation of women. They could also consider implementing partnerships with kindergartens and nurseries to accommodate women with children for motherhood not to represent a barrier to studying.

3.4. Comparative Data Analysis

Despite the data limitations observed, the data collected through this exercise has revealed a number of critical findings which can be helpful to fill a data gap on the use of higher education pathways and increase their availability and predictability. Four main observations have been drawn.

The first observation is that the enrolled students appreciated all analysed Programs. On the one hand, when asked how much they liked their programs on a scale from 1 (Very much) and 10 (Not at all), 75% of the *MORE* students gave an answer between 1 and 3, compared to the 46% of the *UNICORE* students. However, it should be highlighted that while the *MORE* students are used to evaluating things with a German rating scale (1 being the highest point of the scale), the *UNICORE* students got used to the Italian system, where 1 is the lowest. On the other hand, the *Uni-Freunde* students were asked whether they were satisfied with their mentors and workshops offered through the Program. In both cases, the majority of students were either satisfied or very satisfied. Additionally, 100% of the *Uni-Freunde* students would recommend the Project to a friend. Therefore, although all programs present some structural weaknesses, as highlighted in Part 2 of this study, they should be regarded as 'best practices' in higher education pathways to third countries.

The second observation is that these programs also promote self-reliance. Through the surveys used to evaluate the Projects, both *MORE* and *UNICORE* students were asked to assess whether different statements applied to them. For example, when asked whether the statement "I can solve problems well by myself", 79% of the *MORE* students agreed that this statement resonated with them, compared to the 78.6% of the *UNICORE* students. Respondents were also asked whether they felt that deciding for themselves is essential because they are free and independent individuals. 76.3% of the *MORE* students agreed compared to 86% of the *UNICORE* students. Finally, students were asked if they felt like their lives—both private and professional—are primarily determined by others. 36.7% of the *MORE* students disagreed with this statement than 86% of the *UNICORE* students. Students in Austria feel more dependent on others, controlled perhaps, while only one student in Italy agreed with the statement. This difference may be due to the differences in Programs, as well. For instance, the *MORE Initiative* offers determinate courses that are preparatory to a degree and thus are more standardised and, to some extent, they are the same for everyone. On the contrary, the *UNICORE Project* leaves the refugees free to pick their preferred degree course across all faculties, with no restriction. This choice might feel the students more empowered and, therefore, less dependent on others.

The third observation that emerged is that both the *MORE* and *UNICORE* students would like to remain in the hosting country, namely, Austria and Italy, if given the opportunity. Here, one crucial difference has to be reiterated. Students enrolled in the *MORE Initiative* are already residing in the country, and they decide to participate in the Program in order to either finish/further their studies or gain access to the Austrian labour market. On the other hand, the *UNICORE* students arrive in Italy purposely to complete a *Laurea Magistrale*, and their refugee status expires upon graduation. Thus, after completing their studies, the students have four

options: returning to their home country, if possible; returning to the country of asylum; applying for an extension of their visa to further their studies; or applying for an extension of their visa to look for a job. Therefore, when asked whether they see themselves living in the host country, while the *MORE* students can respond having lived there for some time and with no rush to leave, the *UNICORE* students do not know whether they will, in fact, be allowed to remain. This might explain why 93.3% of the *MORE* students responded that they see themselves living in Austria in 5 years. The *UNICORE* students, on the other hand, split between “Yes” (43%) and “I don’t know” (57%). It is particularly positive to note, however, that no student across the two Projects responded that they do not see themselves living in their hosting countries. This is highly positive, as it suggests that the students appreciated the academic environment and the society around them, making them feel welcome enough to consider settling down.

This is also evident as the students were asked whether their circles of friends had expanded through the Programs and whether these new friends included local students as well. 89% of the *MORE* students responded that their circle of friends had expanded either “Very much” or “Somewhat”, and 53% of them made friends with both other refugees and Austrian students. About 20% stated that their new friends were Austrian nationals only. By comparison, 79% of the *MORE* students responded that their circle of friends expanded either “Very much” or “Somewhat”, and 71% of them made friends with both other refugees and Italian students. No *MORE* students stated that they made friends with Italian students only. This statistic does not necessarily indicate that the *UNICORE* students found it harder to integrate into the hosting society, especially when considering that, to this day, there have only been two editions of the Program and the COVID-19 Pandemic has negatively impacted both. Therefore, it could be said that while *UNICORE* provides several opportunities for social integration, this is very difficult to achieve through online means. Hopefully, once students can attend classes in person again, this score will change. Similar considerations have to be made for *Uni-Freunde*, a Project promoting integration through regular meetings between mentors and mentees. Of course, having all meetings online, including the first one, can make it more challenging to create a bond between people and thus consider each other friends. However, 43% of the *Uni-Freunde* students, across the two editions, stated that they would keep in touch with their mentors, compared to the 57% of students who responded “Maybe.” The fact that the majority of students, across the three Projects, stated that they either made new friends or they will maintain a relationship with their mentors corroborates the theory that University programs aimed at integrating refugees and asylum seekers into society can, in fact, build a path towards inclusion in society.

CONCLUSION

This research aimed to provide compelling evidence for the critical role played by education in the integration process of refugees and asylum seekers. Throughout the analysis, education programs, specifically at university level, were considered as complementary pathways to third country solutions. Complementary pathways include existing alternatives to resettlement to which refugees may apply, thus empowering the persons of concern with a choice. In the specific case of university programs, this choice may regard both the location of the university as well as the degree course to follow. Besides, while broadening the range of options available to refugees, higher education pathways also promote self-sufficiency and more predictable responsibility-sharing in ways that benefit host communities and higher education institutions. Therefore, this research selected four university programs, run in Austria and Italy, as case studies. The four selected Projects, namely the *MORE Initiative* and *Uni-Freunde Mentoring Project* in Austria and the *UNICORE Project* and *Progetto Mediterraneo* in Italy, were selected because of their different nature in order to provide a broader range of good practices and lessons learnt that could also be applied to different countries and contexts.

Part 1 provided an in-depth analysis of the existing literature on the correlation between education and integration, highlighting that although the topic has been thoroughly discussed before, the focus has primarily been on refugee children and adolescents in primary education. Still, what emerged is that on top of teaching a wide range of academic skills, educational institutions at all levels support the creation of a person's identity within the society that hosts them. This is true for both the local population and refugees and asylum seekers. Therefore, it is difficult to overestimate the impact of education on the overall process of integration. Educational institutions provide the ideal environment for immigrant individuals to learn and acquire third-country social and cultural norms. Additionally, the interaction with students from migrant backgrounds can be a game changer in the fight against racism, fear, and mistrust of immigrants. However, for education to be the most suitable and sustainable condition for refugees to integrate in the societies that welcome them, both in terms of culture and economics, an intercultural education approach is required. Intercultural education allows local students to understand and appreciate different cultures and backgrounds, while also giving foreigners the tools needed to integrate into the society that welcomes them. Finally, intercultural education enables refugees and asylum seekers to become valuable members of the hosting society, while also preparing them to return to their country of origin to apply the knowledge and competencies acquired. Thus, intercultural education is critical when it comes to educating refugees and asylum seekers because the status of 'refugee' does not limit people's future opportunities.

Part 2 focused on the need to build safe, alternative pathways for refugees and asylum seekers, especially given the rising rates of global forced displacement. Since 2015, alternative pathways also include university programs, and research has demonstrated that the global higher education community is well-positioned to respond to the refugee crisis. However, significant investments are required in the systems and infrastructures that support third-country education around the world in order to identify emerging best practices and expand education

opportunities for refugees. To understand whether university programs can promote integration into society, four university Projects were identified and analysed as case studies. A general description and overall evaluation of these four Projects was, thus, provided.

Part 3 presented a detailed quantitative and qualitative data analysis to evaluate whether these university Programs to integrate refugees and asylum seekers can build a path towards integration in society. Data for this study was collected via anonymous surveys submitted to the students to fill on a voluntary basis to evaluate the *MORE Initiative*, the *Uni-Freunde Mentoring Program* and the *UNICORE Project*. Unfortunately, no statistical data is available for the *Progetto Mediterraneo*. The chosen methodology for evaluation resulted in a minority of students completing the surveys, therefore, the results may lack statistical validity. However, for the purpose of the analysis, the respondents have been considered as the sample population for each study, meaning that the collected results could apply to the rest of the students as well. Against this background, the data collected led to four main observations. First, university programs can be considered an appreciated alternative pathway to third countries. Second, higher education programs also promote the students' self-reliance. Third, the students enrolled in university programs would like to settle in the hosting countries, namely Austria and Italy, if given the opportunity, both for work or further study reasons. Fourth, these programs promote social integration, as the majority of the respondents declared that their circle of friends had expanded as a result of participation in their program.

This analysis also highlighted two significant weaknesses across all Projects. The first weakness is the lack of psychological support both for refugee students and personnel at hosting institutions. On the one hand, refugees and asylum seekers may carry unresolved trauma generated from the experience of fleeing their country, thus psychological support in the hosting country could be pivotal in supporting the resettlement process. On the other hand, teachers and educators might not be ready to deal with the difficult events their students had to face before reaching the hosting country, therefore, they should be trained to offer the support needed. The second weakness is the access—or lack thereof—to education for women and girls. For example, across the four Projects proposed as case studies, the participation rate for women is worryingly low. Therefore, the universities should consider implementing policies with a strong gender focus, these being dedicating several places to female students only or creating partnerships with child-care facilities to include mothers in the target audience for these Projects. Besides, creating more opportunities for women in higher education would align with Sustainable Development Goal 5, *Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls*, primarily targets 5.5³⁸ and 5.a.³⁹ Therefore, follow-up mapping and analysis of higher education projects should be carried out regularly in order to to expand their availability and predictability.

³⁸ Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

³⁹ Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws.

To conclude, the selected Projects were identified to act as case studies for the crucial role of education in the integration of refugees and asylum seekers. The data collected showed that refugees and asylum seekers who enrol in third countries university programs not only receive an education which empowers them to become valuable members of the hosting society, but also learn skills that could be applied in the country of origin in the event of a safe and dignified repatriation. Additionally, the surveyed students expressed the will to remain in the hosting country upon completion of their program, both to further their academic studies or join the labour force, meaning that their studies supported their integration into society. This can also be due to the new friendships formed through education, which are pivotal to social integration. However, in order to provide a definite answer to whether university programs aimed at refugees and asylum seekers do provide a path towards integration into society more research and data analysis is needed. The ultimate goal of this thesis is, thus, to be recognised as a baseline dataset to aid the international community in the development of new policies and improvement of development programming. A research foundation could assist European countries in expanding their programs and funding for refugee protection and solutions. An evidence base may also influence the development of predictable, long-term, and protection-sensitive systems required to gradually increase access to such opportunities for refugees. This thesis' findings will be useful in evaluating not only the selected Projects, but also other higher education programs, in order to increase their availability and predictability. In general, this body of work wishes to contribute to a more timely, equitable, and predictable distribution of responsibility for refugee protection and solutions.

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A	
AI	Artificial Intelligence
C	
CRRF	Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework
CTL	Centre for Teaching and Learning
E	
EC	European Commission
Erasmus	European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students
ESS	European Social Survey
EU	European Union
F	
FPÖ	<i>Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs</i> (- the Austrian Freedom Party)
Frontex	European Border and Coast Guard Agency
G	
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
I	
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
J	
JSR	Jesuit Service for Refugee
L	
LUISS	<i>Libera Università degli Studi Sociali</i>
M	
M5S	<i>Movimento 5 Stelle</i> (Five Stars Movement)
MAECI	<i>Ministero degli affari esteri e della cooperazione internazionale</i> (Italian Ministry for foreign affairs and international collaboration)
MS	Member States
N	
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
O	
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ÖVP	Austrian People's Party
U	
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNICORE	University Corridors for Refugees
W	
WUSC	World University Service of Canada

VWU

Wirtschafts Universität Wien (Vienna University of
Economics and Business)

WWII

World War II

ANNEXES

Annex I - SECTION VII of the LISBON TREATY - RECOGNITION OF QUALIFICATIONS HELD BY REFUGEES, DISPLACED PERSONS AND PERSONS IN A REFUGEE - LIKE SITUATION

Article VII

Each Party shall take all feasible and reasonable steps within the framework of its education system and in conformity with its constitutional, legal, and regulatory provisions to develop procedures designed to assess fairly and expeditiously whether refugees, displaced persons and persons in a refugee-like situation fulfill the relevant requirements for access to higher education, to further higher education programmes or to employment activities, even in cases in which the qualifications obtained in one of the Parties cannot be proven through documentary evidence.

Annex II - Complementary pathways in the New York Declaration and the Global Compact on Refugees (OECD and UNHCR, 2018, p.7).

New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (§77, 79)

77. We intend to expand the number and range of legal pathways available for refugees to be admitted to or resettled in third countries. In addition to easing the plight of refugees, this has benefits for countries that host large refugee populations and for third countries that receive refugees.

79. We will consider the expansion of existing humanitarian admission programmes, possible temporary evacuation programmes, including evacuation for medical reasons, flexible arrangements to assist family reunification, private sponsorship for individual refugees and opportunities for labour mobility for refugees, including through private sector partnerships, and for education, such as scholarships and student visas.

Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework (§14)

Third countries would: a) Consider making available or expanding, including by encouraging private sector engagement and action as a supplementary measure, resettlement opportunities and complementary pathways for admission of refugees through such means as medical evacuation and humanitarian admission programmes, family reunification and opportunities for skilled migration, labour mobility and education.

Global Compact on Refugees (§47, 94-96)

47. Improving data and evidence will also support efforts to achieve solutions. Data and evidence will assist in the development of policies, investments and programmes in support of the voluntary repatriation to and reintegration of returnees in countries of origin. In addition, States, UNHCR, and other relevant stakeholders will work to enable the systematic collection, sharing, and analysis of disaggregated data related to the availability and use of resettlement and complementary pathways for admission of those with international protection needs; and share good practices and lessons learned in this area.

94. As a complement to resettlement, other pathways for the admission of persons with international protection needs can facilitate access to protection and/or solutions. There is a need to ensure that such pathways are made available on a more systematic, organized, sustainable and gender-responsive basis, that they contain appropriate protection safeguards, and that the number of countries offering these opportunities is expanded overall.

95. The three-year strategy on resettlement will also include complementary pathways for admission, with a view to increasing significantly their availability and predictability. Contributions will be sought from States, with the support of relevant stakeholders to facilitate effective procedures and clear referral pathways for family reunification, or to establish private or community sponsorship programmes that are additional to regular resettlement, including community-based programmes promoted through the Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative (GRSI). Other contributions in terms of complementary pathways could include humanitarian visas, humanitarian corridors and other humanitarian admission programmes; educational opportunities for refugees (including women and girls) through grant of scholarships and student visas, including through partnerships between governments and academic institutions; and labour mobility opportunities for refugees, including through the identification of refugees with skills that are needed in third countries.

96. Contributions will be sought to support the sharing of good practices, lessons learned and capacity development for new States considering such schemes.

Annex III - Transcription of discussion with B.; Wednesday, April 14th 2021

Interviewer: Federica Rizzi (FR)

Interviewee: B. (B)

Supervised by: Michele Gradoli (MG), Skill Development & Tutoring Services, Libera Università Internazionale degli Studi Sociali Guido Carli (LUISS)

[2:27]

FR: First things first, thank you very much for being here, I really appreciate it. I am a Master student within LUISS' School of Government. I am currently not in Rome at the minute, as I was meant to be in Berlin for my master but that was not possible due to COVID. Anyway, I'm doing my Master's Thesis on the topic of integration of refugees and asylum seekers in society and the aim of my thesis is to demonstrate that education is key for two reasons: two provide refugees and asylum seekers with a degree, whether it is a Laurea Magistrale or a Master Degree, and to also educate the welcoming community, which I think is very much needed. So, I found out about UNICORE through my research and I also found out that LUISS is part of the Project which is both amazing and lucky!

Before we officially start, two things: obviously if I were to use any of the things that you tell me today, it will be anonymous to protect your privacy, and second, would it be okay for me to take notes?

B: Yes, of course, you can take any notes.

MG: Sorry, I forgot to mention a general rule because I already spoke with Federica and really felt like she was one of my students and I am really glad to have you two together here. Of course, this is not a mandatory activity as part of the UNICORE Project, so Bereket if there is anything you don't feel comfortable sharing with Federica, of course, she understands it. This is not an investigation, it is just part of her research, and it should feel like a conversation.

FR: Of course, thank you very much for highlighting that Michele. So, if there is any question that I ask and you'd rather not say, just tell me and we will move on.

B: Okay, thank you.

FR: Perfect! Let me explain my Project quickly. As I was saying, the aim of my thesis is to stress the key role played by education, and I decided to investigate these Projects because last year I was interning with the UNHCR and I had the opportunity to learn about the different Projects they were implementing in refugee camps. So, for example, I was looking at art Projects that help refugees to tell their stories and express their feelings through paintings, and then they actually showcase their work within and outside the camps. Then the pandemic happened, I wished to go into further studies and my master gave me the opportunity to investigate the programs UNHCR runs outside of refugee camps, and I was amazed by the UNICORE program because it provides a proverbial "corridor" for students to come to Italy and further their education.

So, my first question is: how did you find out about the Project? Did you look through the UNHCR's website or someone recommended it to you?

B: First of all, thank you very much for deciding to write your thesis on this Project that is very important, not only for me but for all the refugees. To answer your question, I heard about it from the UNHCR actually, because if there's any notice, they will report it through the Telegram group we refugees have. So, I was in school at the time, which is a little bit far from Massaua, but fortunately, I got the message on time.

FR: All right, thanks, and you said you use a Telegram group to communicate?

B: Yes, the telegram group we are all part of and we use it to receive the information in real-time. Anyone who has any news, they post it there, and it is a free Telegram group for refugees that anyone can join.

FR: Okay perfect, thank you. So, in terms of location: did you choose to come to LUISS? Of course, the first round was a limited amount of universities, but did you choose a particular course they did here or could you choose just about any? How did it work?

B: The program was first developed for five students. In the first round, I was in the Top10 selected students, but not in the Top5. These five students were selected to attend the University of Bologna, so I could not get within the five students, but later on, I received a communication from LUISS to join because I was in the Top10, so they contacted me. There was no other option, and I didn't even know what LUISS was or where it was located. However, I did have the choice of courses, and they consulted with me in the sense that I told them that I studied accounting and financing in my Bachelor Degree, so which course should I continue with, what are the pros and cons and they gave me some advice. I chose Corporate Finance which is very related to my Bachelor Degree.

FR: I see, thank you. In terms of your communications with LUISS: they contacted you, and was Michele your first point of contact in that sense? Or did you go through the standard application process?

B: The first person who contacted me was actually someone from Bologna, her name is Stefania, and she told me about LUISS being interested in the UNICORE program and she asked me if it was okay to share my contact with them. I said it was fine with me and that is how LUISS got in contact with me.

MG: If I may add something, the selection and the admission has been standard, as the refugee status does not change the status of the student. This is due to an equality policy because diversity is a value but distinctions are not. What I want to say is that I have not been the first person that Bereket met at the airport, actually, because I don't work in the international office, I'm in the student's office, so Bereket followed the standard procedure for international admission and international inclusion. So, he could've been from Belgium and it would've been the same.

FR: Thank you very much for specifying Michele! So, you arrived at LUISS and discovered the University. How did you find yourself with the classmates, was it hard to adapt to the Italian style of teaching? Was it a cultural shock or did you receive instructions before coming? How were the first few weeks?

B: Yes, it was a shock, and not only for the first few weeks, even for the first few months I couldn't adapt to everything. I mean, it was really good in terms of everything, the educational system, the people, the food, everything was really good, but given the fact that I came from a totally different environment, totally different social interactions, it was not easy at first. But I have to mention also, of course, he is here now, but Michele really was by my side the whole time. If I had any issues, he is like my friend, and I ask him what I should do, so he was always there to support me in any case. But yes it was very challenging at first, I wasn't interacting with many of my classmates at the beginning, but that was just the beginning. Later on, it was easier. But yes, it was, true, it was quite hard at first.

FR: So my next question was going to be: how about your classmates? Were they welcoming? Curious about where you came from perhaps?

B: Yes, yes. I mean, the class, we had about eighty something students in a class, so those students who I met are really curious about where I came from, how I came here, and we became friends quickly. I have a big group of friends from my class. They were super friendly actually, so no, I have no complaints about my classmates, they are really friendly people. The Italians have all been very friendly.

FR: That is really good to hear, especially since as I was mentioning, part of my thesis is also to see how these sorts of Projects like UNICORE can educate the welcoming community as well, and of course I am very aware that within the student community, the international community, acceptance might be easier than it is outside. So my next question, if you feel like answering, of course, is how about outside of LUISS? So, in your everyday life, do you feel as welcome, accepted, or happy as you are in the University? Of course, that also includes the language barrier, because I am aware that unfortunately, not many Italians speak English as well as they could.

B: It is true that the language, still now I am not so good either, so there is a problem on that, but other than that in terms of social interactions wherever I go I haven't seen anything in terms of criticism or anything. In my residence, we are so close with one another, also due to COVID as we spent most of the time in the residence, but whether I am outside, or in my residence or at school, nothing ever happened for me. I am speaking freely here, openly, because some might say "you are from a different country so you might feel something different", I don't know, but I have heard some comments like this, but in my case, everyone is nice to me, the people are really nice.

FR: This is amazing, really good to hear! So, I don't know if Michele told you, I interviewed another student, who is not part of the UNICORE program but his university is. He was here before UNICORE was launched, and that's why he's not part of the program. He was telling me he is living in a Caritas residence, as he gets the same benefits as the UNICORE students for the not academic perspectives, but he is enrolled in a bachelor degree which is not part of the program. So, with the living conditions, are your living conditions "up to standards"? In terms of internet connection, do you have your own space, does it feel like home?

B: Yeah, I mean, I don't know if this is the same to everyone, but for someone who comes from the place where we were before, this is too much. In some ways, it is too much. What I am saying is that in terms of everything, it is full: service, internet, accommodation, meals. We receive every service in LUISS, but not just me, all the students in LUISS. So, in my experience, my room, I'm in my room now, this is my first room: in my entire life I never had my own room, so it is beyond what I could ask for. So really no complaints.

MG: I am sorry, I was just smiling because the residents are different ones, and whenever something is not working in the residence I am like a beast with my colleagues. I get in touch with the residence and make sure that my students can get everything working right away. Of course, we provide accommodation and the opinion of the students is fundamental.

FR: Yes, this is actually why I wanted to ask, because many of the universities I have been in touch with have actually expressed interest in my thesis because, since the Project is so new, not all of them have received enough feedback from their students, so some of them have asked to read my thesis to look at the feedback I collected. This is also part of the reason why I am asking questions that are not strictly related to the education side of the Project. Things like the room being up to standard or maybe is it different from what you were expecting?

B: No, well, in terms of details, I have my own single room. I have everything, even my own TV. In the building we have fifteen students, all the rooms are single rooms, and we have good interaction with one another. We are like a family, thanks to COVID we have become very close. I cannot say what the European standard would be because I don't know, I just came from Africa, but for me it is perfect. I even have my own bathroom.

FR: Very nice! So, back to the academic part. So, you are doing a Laurea Magistrale, and just out of personal curiosity (I have to be very honest here), did you know what a Laurea Magistrale was before coming to Italy

B: No, I also have to speak honestly, I was asking my friend now, before this meeting: what is the difference between a Laurea Magistrale and a Master? And he explained I am in the Laurea Magistrale.

FR: Exactly. So, Michele explained to me the different choices you will have after you complete your Laurea Magistrale, but in a hypothetical world where no documents such as VISAs exist, where you are completely free to do as you wish: would you like to stay in Italy and continue to study or work, or just live here. Or, if you had the chance and found a job in let's say Germany or Spain, would you go or would you stay?

B: I mean, I would go anywhere I could find a job. I am now 33 years old and although I would like to take up additional studies, honestly I want to work at this moment once I graduate. Any place is good, Italy I know some people already, but if I could find a job also in Germany or any other country, if it's possible to go there as a refugee, I would love to go, as long as I find a good job.

FR: The reason why I am asking you this is that the actual title of my thesis is whether university programs aimed at the integration of refugees and asylum seekers, such as UNICORE, can actually build a path towards inclusion in society beyond the actual education part of it. Obviously, the slight issue with UNICORE is that the first round started in 2019 so you haven't finished yet, so I can't ask any student if they ended up remaining in Italy because you are still within the program, so I'm asking everyone because I have to base my answer on what you would like to do, regardless of what you will actually end up doing. Obviously, I will be very curious to ask you what you ended up doing next year, but I don't know if you have seen the survey already, but one of the questions is whether you see yourself living in Italy in 5 years time?

B: Yes, I have seen it, but I actually wanted to do the interview with you before I answered the questions because I want you to have the most comprehensive and complete information. So, in five years? Yes, if I find a permanent job, I would like to be here in 5 years. What I want from this Project... This Project gave me this opportunity and opened doors for me now, so what I need is now, after I graduate, a permanent and settled work, in any country, Italy or any other, so it doesn't matter the location or what sort of company I am in: I just need to be self-reliant.

FR: You pretty much answered my research question! Because I was talking to an ex-colleague from the UNHCR and she was telling me about the importance of this Project to sort of taking refugees and "strip" them of their status, in the sense that you offer refugees the opportunity to come to Italy to further their education and make the most out of this education because you are a person who can make it. And then in five years time, "refugee" is part of how you came to the country, but then you built your own future. So this is what I hope to see this program achieve, that you get the same opportunities as myself, for example, like I chose to go to the UK for my bachelor degree and then come back to Italy for the Masters. So this is what I hope UNICORE

can do for the refugees. give you the exact same opportunities as anyone else, but of course, substantial results can only be seen in like 5 years time because it is such a new program. This is because, as Michele was saying, diversity is an added value, but it shouldn't take any opportunity away from you. So this is the core of my work, and what I hope will be highlighted at the end of my thesis.

So, in terms of language: do you get language courses in language or Italian? I remember Michele mentioning Italian class...

B: Yes, I do receive an Italian course, they also offered me to continue it but I didn't because I actually didn't finish the first round as I wanted to focus on my studies, because it was really difficult for me at the beginning. I am still doing the A1 level in Italian.

FR: Italian is a very difficult language to learn, let's be honest! For English, was your level of English this good already before you came to LUISS?

B: Actually, I don't have any certificate attesting my level of English, I haven't taken the IELTS or anything, but I would also like to improve my English too.

FR: It is very good already, but I was also asking because you know it is also important for my thesis. As you know the survey is in English as the respondents' level of Italian varies, but also my whole program and my thesis are in English, so I chose English to make the work slightly easier for myself as well. What is really important, however, is that the questions are actually easy to understand for you who are answering, especially the open ones.

B: No, it is very easy to understand.

FR: Right, thank you! So, let's talk about the big thing: COVID. So, obviously, COVID came and impacted everyone's lives, and while I know how the University dealt with it because I myself came to LUISS while restrictions were still up, but how about in terms of social interactions or any extracurricular activities you might have taken up before the pandemic?

B: Yeah, okay, I mean, obviously COVID had huge impacts on everyone in every way, but in terms of the learning system, we started the next day with the lockdown. We had no interruptions, LUISS was very good in that sense. In terms of interactions, I would have maybe improved my Italian, because as I told you in the residence we are all really close, we became like family, but we all came from different countries and with each other, we speak English, so if I were going to the University I would have interacted with more Italians that could've helped with my knowledge of the language. Other than that, yeah, I mean, it's good in a way because I do get to interact with my residence students, like last year during the first three months it was only 7 of us so we would eat together, so it was a hard time but it also had some positives.

FR: So that was the best part because it brought out the sense of community during the pandemic. Now, how about, of course, Michele is here, but if there is anything that the school or the program could do better, what would it be?

MG: Bereket, feel free because I want to take notes so that we will do it. Anything you will say will be helpful for my job.

B: Okay, so the Project has been improving now, and when I say improving I mean that it started with 6 students in the first round, last year they had 20 and next year it will be 43 students, so in a way, it is improving and I wish it could continue like that and include other countries as well. But in LUISS, okay, I have to be honest because everyone asks me this question and I always say everything is perfect because it is, I am not just saying it is, for me it

is. I know where I came from and everything here is beyond any expectation. But, in a way, what could be improved... maybe, in Bologna they say that have this "family group", so they "belong" to a family in the city? So they tell me from Bologna that during the weekend they go to their house, spend the weekend, so it is good to interact with the outside society, and that will be really great. Here, it doesn't mean I don't have that because I have Michele and anything I ask, he's there, we have become very close, I call him a friend, but that would be great I think because I know the students from Bologna and they become family with the family from Bologna, so I think that would be really good to socialise more.

FR: Yes, when I spoke to the colleague from UNHCR they were telling me about this side of the Project that is very interesting. Obviously, it got a bit harder with COVID, but the idea is to "assign" a student to a family of Bologna who would "adopt" a student, take them out on Sundays and so on, so that's something really good that the University of Bologna offers. Also, and I think Michele told me already but I am working on four different Projects with different universities and I wouldn't want to mix the information up: in Austria, they have a program that is called the "buddy system", where they match up an Austrian student with a refugee and ask the buddy to introduce the refugee to their circle of friends, take them out and so on. You also have that, right? And how does it work?

B: Yes, so this program was not available in the first round, and it would've been great to have it when I first arrived and was new to the city. But I do get a buddy program last semester and I was assigned to another buddy this semester. We planned many activities despite the restrictions, and for example the last guy, he's from Rome, so he took me to different places and explained the history of different parts of the cities etcetera. Even with the restrictions, if we didn't have the chance to go out, he was still there for me and it was really good.

FR: And how did you get matched? Was it similar interests or something like that?

B: No, not like that, LUISS asked me if I wanted a buddy and I said yes and then they assignment the person.

MG: Please allow me to add something. The buddy program started this year, that's why we didn't involve Bereket before: it was not existing. We launched the buddy program in September 2020 and Bereket was part of the pilot round. The buddy program is offered for one semester, but of course, if you wish to be part of it for a second semester you can do that too. The matches are not done by the students, but I do the matches with the help of my colleagues from my team. We contact the students asking if they actually want to have a buddy and once we receive their consent we share their information with the buddies, and then they get together and do the two steps behind this match.

B: So Michele definitely made the best choice for me!

MG: I know some of the students who apply to become buddies, so I know their interests, their personalities etcetera. So the buddies are entitled to credits in the LUISS system, like an intern, so they get credits from this activity, so we monitor this activity because of course they are selected and we are responsible for our students and don't leave them just with "anyone." But it's fair because of course my responsibility is to all LUISS students and I want to give them a quality service. So there is a selection of buddies and of course, if I know the person then the match is easier for me.

FR: Fair enough, thank you very much for explaining that. Right, okay, so I have actually gone through all the questions I had prepared, but is there anything you would like to add, anything in general.

B: First, I would let you know, if you have any additional question at any time you can get my email from Michele and I can help you build a more complete picture of the UNICORE Project. But I wanted you to know since you are very interested in the Project: the Project is, yes, is about education, to give us an opportunity to study and become self-reliant, but you have to know that this Project means more than that to us. Because every time I mention this... in Ethiopia I was lucky because I graduated in 2019, and I received the scholarship to continue my studies so for me it was really good, I was lucky. But there are students who graduated 5, 6 years ago in Ethiopia and they cannot find a job, they were hopeless, they gave up, and once they had given up they had started to come to Europe through the Sahara desert, through unsafe migration. So, this Project means a lot, not only just about education or something: it has given us hope, because as I told you many people give up and once you give up you take bad decisions and try to come to Europe through other means. So, it's about hope, the Project is about hope and inspiration. At this time, if you go to Ethiopia and ask the students, they are really working hard because they know that this Project exists and they are really concentrating on their studies. All the time they are asking us what should we do to get into the Project, how the program works, so it has really inspired many refugee students in Ethiopia. So, I hope this program will continue to improve, also to involve other countries. So I only wanted to mention this: it is beyond the education, it is beyond the self-reliance thing, it is basically what I used to call a "life-saving" Project because they are saving us from making bad decisions and take bad routes. So it is a big Project.

FR: Thank you, and just so that you know this last part will definitely go on the thesis! This you just said is very beautiful, but it is also very important: this is what makes this program so unique and important. Oh and actually, I have one more question I forgot! Do you have any contact with the UNHCR?

B: Here in Rome?

FR: Yes, like I spoke to Andrea from the UNHCR office?

B: Oh yes, we have contact, also Michele knows this. Like, if I have any question I contact Michele, and we contact them and have a meeting.

FR: Oh right so you are in continuous conversation with them as well.

B: Yes, yes, absolutely.

FR: Right okay, thanks, that is more to understand the logistics behind the Project itself. Because of course the universities play a massive role, but I wanted to understand how much coordination goes into it from the UNCHR.

B: Yes, so Michele might know more about that, but my documents, my status is refugee, and I got it from the UNHCR. So they are responsible for me in that sense.

MG: I want to add something actually. So, actually, the contribution of UNHCR is amazing and brilliant and it's long-term, it doesn't focus only on the documents. Of course, without the documents, we cannot reach the camps and have the students come here. Their contribution is long-lasting conversation, dialogue, for me it's a daily dialogue with them because we need to train ourselves and other partners of the universities, we have regular meetings because if some university wants to join, we have to prepare them because we are pioneers for the program. So their contribution is much more than meets the eye, and it's very important for you

to know it, and their contribution lasts for the whole academic year, preparation for the next year, the staff etc.

FR: Thank you for specifying that Michele. It's very interesting and good to observe this interaction because you are telling me about the key role played by the UNHCR, but they talk about the universities as being the heart and soul of the Project. Of course, having worked at the UNHCR myself, I know about the amount of work they put into any Project they run, but it is also very good to see how much they highlight the work and effort of their partner universities. On top of all that, it is also amazing to hear that you guys have a point of reference, someone like Michele here, who truly cares about your wellbeing and is there for all things, not just academic.

MG: The very important thing is that we must be proud of being part of this community because, of course, everything is possible and I always say that if Bereket were a bad student, the UNICORE Project wouldn't have evolved the way it had because he had a massive responsibility on his shoulders with everyone looking at him and saying "Okay let's see with these crazy Italians in LUISS saying that refugees are talented, that refugees are important for our society and for the development of our country, but let's see if they will be able to do it." And Bereket and his colleagues have been heroes, because actually, they accepted the most difficult challenge, because, for me, it was a difficult job to organise their arrival, but the biggest effort was made by Bereket and his peers, and thanks to their effort we can talk about UNICORE. So I think that everybody has to be proud of our community which allows this Project to exist, and I want to take this chance to thank Bereket once again because he is a pioneer and his voice is important for all the other refugees and it has already been important.

FR: Yes, and actually I once again want to say thank you very much to both of you, but Bereket especially, because Michele knows already. I am really really grateful for your personal experience and your opinion, this will help immensely with my thesis, but also me as a person because after LUISS I want to go back to either the UNHCR or any way helping refugees in any way I can and so having the opportunity to talk to refugees and hear about their experiences is what will shape me as a person, so thank you again, I am really really grateful. And if there's anything I can do with my thesis to speak out and use my thesis as a platform please let me know: I'd be happy to showcase how successful the program is, but also raise any issues.

B: If anything comes to mind I will do and email you.

FR: Perfect! Thank you very much once again and have a lovely evening.

MG: Thank you, thank you Federica for the work you do.

B: Thank you, bye!

Annex IV - Full list of Austrian universities participating in the *MORE Initiative*

- **Vienna**
 - University of Vienna
 - Medical University of Vienna
 - Vienna University of Technology
 - University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna
 - Vienna University of Economics and Business
 - University of Applied Arts Vienna
 - Academy of Fine Arts Vienna
 - University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna
 - University of Veterinary Medicine, Vienna

- **Graz**
 - University of Graz
 - Medical University of Graz
 - Grad University of Technology
 - University of Music and Performing Arts Graz

- **Leoben**
 - Montanuniversität Leoben

- **Salzburg**
 - University of Salzburg
 - Mozarteum University Salzburg

- **Innsbruck**
 - University of Innsbruck
 - Medical University Innsbruck

- **Klagenfurt**
 - University of Klagenfurt

- **Linz**
 - University of Linz
 - University of Art and Industrial Design Linz

Annex V - MORE students at Public Universities, Winter Semester 2015-Summer Semester 2020 by Gender

WS = Winter Semester

SS = Summer Semester

Semester	Gender					
	Men		Women		Total	
WS 2015	605	91,3%	58	8,7%	663	100,0%
SS 2016	988	89,3%	118	10,7%	1.106	100,0%
WS 2016	736	86,1%	119	13,9%	855	100,0%
SS 2017	635	86,2%	102	13,8%	737	100,0%
WS 2017	520	87,4%	75	12,6%	595	100,0%
SS 2018	414	82,8%	86	17,2%	500	100,0%
WS 2018	340	80,2%	84	19,8%	424	100,0%
SS 2019	225	75,8%	72	24,2%	297	100,0%
WS 2019	191	70,5%	80	29,5%	271	100,0%
SS 2020	126	71,2%	51	28,8%	177	100,0%

Source: Uniko, 2020. Evaluation of the MORE Initiative of Austrian Universities

Annex VI - International Migration Flows, Austria 2015 - 2019

Time Section	In-migration from foreign country	Out-migration to foreign country	Net international migration
2015	214,41	101,343	113,067
2016	174,31	109,634	64,676
2017	154,749	110,119	44,63
2018	146,856	111,555	35,301
2019	150,419	109,806	40,613

Source: Statistics Austria, International Migration. Last Changed 27.05.2021

Annex VII - Applications for Asylum in Austria 2015 - 2020

Applications for Asylum in Austria 2000-2020 by citizenship						
Citizenship	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total	93.40.00	46.45.00	36.15.00	25.26.00	26.46.00	26.55.00
Afghanistan	34.23.00	24.14.00	16.01	4.00	18.19	5.17
Albania	140	82	49	63	56	26
Algeria	945	1.32	369	170	172	388
Andorra	1	-	-	-	-	-
Angola	5	11	17	10	7	4
Argentina	-	2	-	-	-	-
Armenia	304	332	228	104	76	39
Australia	-	2	1	-	1	-
Azerbaijan	57	71	104	69	42	15
Bahrain	-	-	-	3	-	-
Bangladesch	718	305	144	129	240	228
Belarus	31	21	36	25	22	24
Belgium	-	1	-	-	-	-
Benin	27	13	22	6	3	4
Bhutan	1	-	-	-	-	-
B o s n i a & Herzegovina	44	49	46	21	18	11
Brazil	2	-	1	3	1	2
Bulgaria	-	1	-	-	1	1
Burkina Faso	11	3	3	2	3	2
Burundi	2	2	6	-	-	1
Cabo Verde	-	-	1	-	-	-
Cameroon	79	54	66	33	33	23
Canada	-	2	1	1	-	-
Central African Rep.	-	-	2	-	-	-

Chad	8	4	2	-	3	-
Chile	2	2	-	-	1	-
China Peoples Rep.	309	266	218	189	203	96
China Rep. (Taiwan)	2	1	1	4	-	-
Colombia	1	3	14	2	14	16
Comores	1	3	-	-	-	2
Congo	25	11	17	11	2	7
Congo Dem. Rep.	110	67	45	26	35	41
Cote d'Ivoire	39	28	20	15	5	4
Croatia	4	1	3	8	2	1
Cuba	24	15	17	5	16	5
Cyprus	-	-	-	1	-	-
Czech Rep.	1	2	-	2	1	2
Dominican Rep.	2	3	-	1	2	-
Ecuador	-	-	-	-	2	-
Egypt	188	213	146	107	63	183
El Salvador	-	-	1	-	1	-
Equatorial Guinea	2	-	-	-	1	-
Eritrea	82	96	65	48	38	48
Ethiopia	69	92	42	27	27	26
France	-	-	-	1	1	-
Gabon	2	2	1	-	-	-
Gambia	222	253	153	98	64	31
Georgia	406	350	454	457	339	120
Germany	2	2	2	4	3	1
Ghana	75	79	42	26	13	16
Greece	-	1	-	-	-	-
Guatemala	2	1	-	-	2	-
Guinea	38	60	64	23	16	13

Guinea-Bissau	11	12	6	4	5	3
Haiti	1	-	-	-	-	-
Hungary	3	5	2	11	2	3
India	448	515	415	272	371	189
Indonesia	1	-	1	-	-	-
Iran	10.06	9.40	994	2.47	727	381
Iraq	23.33	16.22	7.43	762	729	724
Ireland	-	-	1	-	-	-
Israel	4	2	3	4	1	1
Italy	1	3	2	1	1	1
Jamaica	1	-	-	-	-	2
Japan	-	1	-	-	1	1
Jordan	29	25	20	21	23	5
Kazakhstan	40	52	42	30	31	7
Kenya	10	11	7	5	6	2
Kosovo1)	10.07	217	147	80	61	36
Kuwait	13	7	1	-	8	16
Kyrgyzstan	39	37	24	14	20	8
Laos	4	-	-	-	-	-
Latvia	2	-	-	-	-	-
Lebanon	182	95	38	34	38	27
Liberia	21	10	4	7	1	1
Libya	125	222	175	58	45	96
Lithuania	-	-	-	1	1	1
Madagascar	-	1	-	-	-	-
Malawi	3	1	-	1	1	-
Mali	44	34	16	15	3	9
Mauritania	6	5	3	2	1	1
Mauritius	1	-	-	-	-	-
Mexico	-	1	2	-	1	-

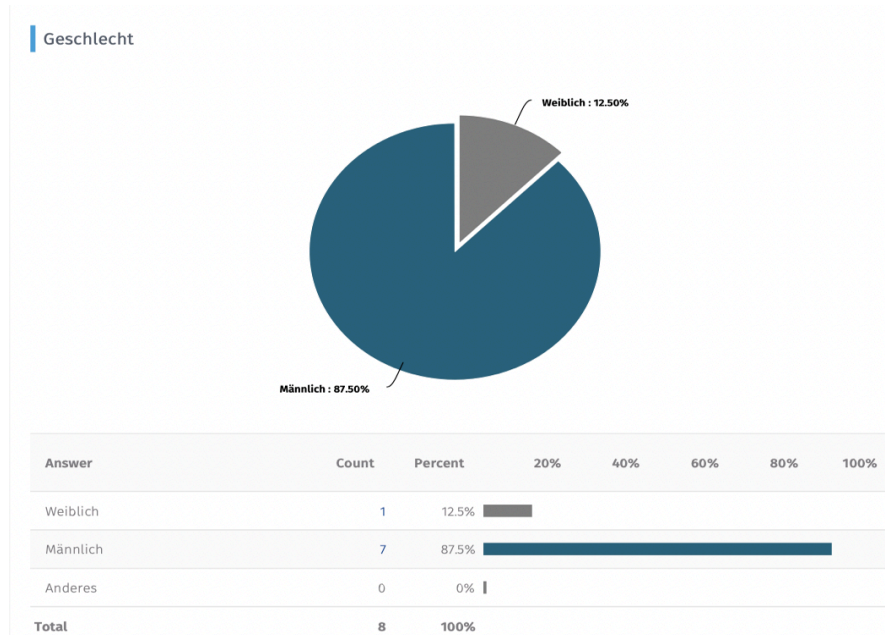
Moldova - Republic of	25	13	29	42	13	18
Monaco	1	-	-	-	-	-
Mongolia	188	69	81	51	44	32
Montenegro2)	13	5	-	1	1	1
Morocco	731	1.52	352	193	164	745
Myanmar	23	4	8	4	3	1
Namibia	-	-	-	-	-	1
Nepal	46	60	24	11	6	2
Netherlands	-	-	-	-	1	-
New Zealand	-	-	3	-	-	-
Nicaragua	-	-	-	4	1	1
Niger	9	6	6	3	2	2
Nigeria	7.25	15.15	7.45	679	336	193
N o r t h Macedonia	297	116	118	47	2	13
Norway	-	-	-	-	49	-
Pakistan	3.21	10.16	10.34	264	331	187
Peru	1	-	-	1	1	2
Philippines	4	8	14	13	6	9
Poland	1	-	1	1	1	1
Portugal	-	-	1	-	-	-
Romania	4	6	3	3	5	3
R u s s i a n Federation	12.38	11.33	7.36	969	723	493
Rwanda	7	7	2	8	3	1
Saudi Arabia	4	5	3	2	-	-
Senegal	83	33	19	21	13	8
Serbia3)	317	197	157	147	61	53
Sierra Leone	26	29	38	12	6	1
Singapore	1	-	-	-	-	-
Slovakia	3	6	3	-	3	2

Slovenia	-	1	-	-	1	1
Somalia	3.13	9.57	697	523	740	705
South Africa	4	5	1	-	-	-
South Sudan	5	8	6	-	4	-
Spain	1	-	-	-	2	-
Sri Lanka	37	86	34	17	18	23
St. Lucia	-	-	1	-	-	-
Sudan	131	55	40	40	17	12
Sweden	-	-	-	2	1	-
Switzerland	1	2	-	1	-	-
Syria	33.07. 00	20.53	12.56	8.29	13.48	7.01
Tajikistan	103	121	56	34	28	25
Tanzania	4	1	-	-	-	-
Thailand	-	1	-	-	-	-
Togo	9	9	6	3	2	2
Trinidad and Tobago	-	1	-	-	-	-
Tunisia	169	137	102	59	78	161
Turkey	221	346	299	201	298	313
Turkmenistan	1	2	2	-	1	1
Uganda	20	14	15	7	7	8
Ukraine	508	374	490	261	221	95
United Arab Emirates	-	1	-	-	-	-
United Kingdom	-	1	-	-	2	1
United States	4	1	1	1	2	4
Usbekistan	39	45	33	55	30	32
Venezuela	3	12	17	9	25	34
Vietnam	28	28	12	12	9	1
Western Sahara	7	14	2	-	-	1
Yemen	128	51	33	34	47	57

Zambia	-	-	1	-	-	-
Zimbabwe	-	-	2	1	2	-
stateless	5.55	3.29	773	402	256	361
u n k o w n / unsettled	93	-	27	36	27	17

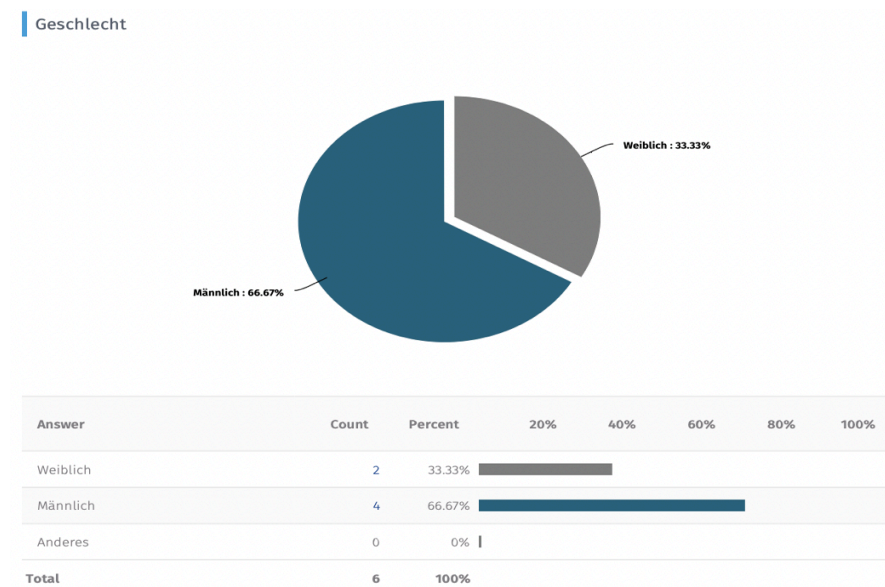
Source: STATISTICS AUSTRIA, Federal Ministry of the Interior, Asylum Statistics. Compiled on 17 May 2021. 1) included in Serbia prior to 2009. - 2) included in Serbia prior to 2006. - 3) incl. Montenegro until 2005, incl. Kosovo until 2008.

Annex VIII - Uni-Freunde Sample Population by Gender Summer Semester 2020



Source: Uni-Freunde Secretariat. Retrieved 26.04.2021

Winter Semester 2020/21



Source: Uni-Freunde Secretariat. Retrieved 26.04.2021

Annex IX - Number of people who landed in Italy (2015-2020)

Number of people landed in Italy per year (2015-2021)							
Month	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
January	3528	5273	4468	4182	202	1342	1039
February	4354	3828	8971	1065	60	1211	3895
March	2283	9676	10853	1049	262	241	2396
April	16056	9149	12943	3171	255	671	1585
May	21232	19957	22993	3963	782	1654	
June	23241	22339	23526	3147	1218	1831	
July	22846	23552	11461	1969	1088	7067	
August	22610	21294	3920	1531	1268	5322	
September	15922	16975	6282	947	2498	4386	
October	8915	27384	5984	1007	2017	3477	
November	3219	13581	5641	980	1232	5360	
December	9636	8428	2327	359	589	1571	
TOTAL	153842	181436	119369	23370	11471	34133	

Source: Dipartimento Libertà Civili e Immigrazione, 2021a. Cruscotto statistico giornaliero.

Annex X - Asylum requests in Italy per year (2015-2020)

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total Asylum Requests	63456	83970	123600	130119	53596	43783	26963

Source: Dipartimento Libertà Civili e Immigrazione, 2021b. I numeri dell'asilo.

Annex XI - List of Universities Partners of the *UNICORE Project*

***UNICORE Project* partners through the years**

- European University Institute Badia Fiesolana, San Domenico di Fiesole (FI)
- Luav - University of Venice Santa Croce, Venezia
- LUISS University Rome
- Sapienza University of Rome
- Università Bocconi Milan
- Università degli Studi del Piemonte Orientale "Amedeo Avogadro"
- Università degli Studi della Campania Luigi Vanvitelli
- Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro
- Università degli Studi di Bergamo
- Università degli Studi di Brescia
- Università degli Studi di Cagliari
- Università degli Studi Milano-Bicocca
- Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio-Emilia
- Università degli Studi di Padova
- Università degli Studi di Palermo
- Università degli Studi di Perugia
- Università degli Studi di Verona
- Università degli Studi "G. d'Annunzio" Chieti-Pescara
- Università del Salento
- Università degli Studi della Tuscia (Viterbo)
- Università di Bologna
- Università dell'Aquila
- Università di Firenze
- Università di Messina
- Università di Milano Statale
- Università di Pisa
- Università di Sassari
- Università per Stranieri di Siena

*in blue, partner universities for the academic year 2021/23

Annex XII - UNICORE students through the years

UNICORE (Academic year 2019/21)

UNICORE			
Men	Women	Nationality	Degree Course
6	0	Eritrea	English Language (5) Finance (1)

UNICORE 2.0 (Academic year 2020/21)

UNICORE 2.0						
Men	Women	Nationality				Degree Course
		Eritrea	Sudan	Congo	South Sudan	
19	1	14	2	2	2	Business Management Artificial Intelligence Engineering (Automatic, Electronic, Chemical) Applied data sciences Pharmacy Human Rights & International Relations Geology & Geopolitics International Relations & Law

UNICORE 3.0 (Academic year 2021/23)

- Call open for 43 students

UNICORE Students by Country of Refugee Status

Eritrea	Sudan	Congo	South Sudan
20	2	2	2

Annex XIII - Progetto Mediterraneo Data

University	Luiss Guido Carli
Gender of Participants	M (5) e F (12)
Degree courses	Management. Major in Innovation and Entrepreneurship e major in International Management
Citizenships	Giordana (non rifugiati ma bisognosi) + rifugiati palestinese e siriani
Ages	22-29 anni
Educational Backgrounds	Business, Management, Finance, Business, Accounting

Annex XIV - Signatories of the *Manifesto dell'Università Inclusiva*

- Università Politecnica delle Marche - Ancona
- Università della Valle d'Aosta
- Università degli Studi di Bari Aldo Moro
- Politecnico di Bari
- Alma Mater Studiorum - Università di Bologna
- Università degli Studi di Brescia
- Università degli Studi di Cagliari
- Università degli Studi di Cassino e del Lazio Meridionale
- Università degli Studi di Catania
- Università degli Studi della Calabria - Cosenza
- Università degli Studi di Ferrara
- European University Institute - Firenze
- Università degli Studi di Firenze
- Università degli Studi di Genova
- Università degli Studi dell'Aquila
- Università del Salento - Lecce
- Università di Macerata
- Università degli Studi di Messina
- Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore - Milano
- Università degli Studi di Milano
- Università degli Studi di Milano - Bicocca
- Università degli Studi di Modena e Reggio Emilia
- Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"
- Università degli Studi di Padova
- Università degli Studi di Parma
- Università degli Studi di Pavia
- Università degli Studi di Perugia
- Università per Stranieri di Perugia
- Università di Pisa
- Scuola Normale Superiore - Pisa
- Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna - Pisa
- Università degli Studi di Scienze Gastronomiche di Pollenza
- Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza"
- Università degli Studi di Roma Tre
- LUISS University
- Università degli Studi di Sassari
- Università degli Studi di Siena
- Università per Stranieri di Siena
- Politecnico di Torino
- Università degli Studi di Torino
- Università degli Studi di Trento
- Università degli Studi di Trieste
- Università degli Studi di Udine
- Università degli Studi di Urbino Carlo Bo
- Università luav di Venezia
- Università degli Studi del Piemonte Orientale "Amedeo Avogadro"
- Università degli Studi di Verona
- Università degli Studi della Tuscia - Viterbo

Annex XV - Additional “Good Practices” at other European Higher Education Institutions

inHere Project:

inHERE promoted knowledge sharing, peer support, and academic collaboration in order to facilitate refugee integration and access to European Higher Education Institutions (inHere, 2016). Coordinated by the *Unione delle Università del Mediterraneo* (Uni-Med, Universities of the Mediterranean Union), *inHERE* partners included the Sapienza University of Rome, the University of Barcelona, the Campus France, and the European University Association. The UNHCR acted as an associate partner. The Project, which lasted two years and proposed different workshops and meetings to highlight the role of universities in the integration of refugees, aimed at collecting and analysing good practice examples of higher education approaches and initiatives in a wide range of emergency situations to aid in the identification of successful patterns of integration that can be easily scaled up; sensitising higher education governance by facilitating communication and institutional support both within and outside the university; providing relevant orientation and training to university staff in order to empower universities to take an active stand and replicate successful approaches and practices; and integrating results, achievements, and recommendations to HE institutions, networks, and policymakers on strategies for integrating refugees into higher education, thereby increasing the social dimension of the European Higher Education Area (inHere, 2016).

Asylum Seekers to University Project:

The University of Trento (Italy) launched this initiative in collaboration with the Autonomous Province of Trento, Cinformi, and Opera Universitaria, which drafted a memorandum of understanding for the academic year 2016/2017 and beyond, in which 5 students will receive a scholarship and proper housing for a duration TBD, but at least for the three years required to complete a degree course. The University, the Department of Health and Social Policies, and the Department of University, Research, Youth Policies, Equal Opportunities, and Development Cooperation are the parties to the agreement. The Project was coordinated on behalf of the Protector for Equality and Diversity Policies in collaboration with several offices of the Student and Academic Services Division, including the University's orientation service; the teaching support division; the University's language centre (CLA) as regards Italian language courses; and the international relations division. The University began the pilot phase with 5 students in the second semester of 2015-2016, aiming to provide academic guidance; assess students' foreign qualifications so that they can attend single courses and later enroll in degree courses beginning the following academic year; provide assistance in the enrollment process for the following academic year and assist students in applying for scholarships and housing at Opera Universitaria (University of Trento, 2016).

Manifesto dell'Università Inclusiva:

Strengthened by the sensitivity and commitment shown by Italian Universities on the front of providing refugees with access to higher education, UNHCR has proposed to them a *Manifesto dell'Università Inclusiva* (Manifesto of the Inclusive University), to facilitate the access of refugees to university education and promote social integration and active participation in academic life (UNHCR, 2020c). The Manifesto focuses on the condition of young people entitled to international protection who intend to continue their studies and research in the country of asylum and is born from the awareness that the cultural, technical, and intellectual experiences matured by the refugees in various parts of the world, can be a great resource for Italy. By joining the Manifesto, the universities contribute to the realization of the so-called "Third mission", favoring the enhancement and use of knowledge to contribute to social and cultural development and economic development of society. See Annex XIII for a complete list of signatory universities.

Compass Project:

For people seeking asylum in the UK, the Compass Project provides several routes into university education at Birkbeck, University of London. A series of workshops and events are held to equip people with forced migration backgrounds with the knowledge and skills needed to begin their academic journey. They seek to provide clear guidance on the best study options based on the level of skill and preparation required to apply to and study at university (Birkbeck, University of London, 2020).

European Qualification Passport for Refugees:

The European Qualifications Passport for Refugees is a document that assesses higher education qualifications based on documentation and a structured interview. It includes information about the applicant's work experience and language skills. The document provides trustworthy information for integration, advancement toward employment, and admission to further education. It is a specially designed assessment scheme for refugees, even those who do not have complete documentation of their qualifications (Council of Europe, 2020).

ARENA - Refugees and Recognition (Toolkit 3) - An Erasmus + Project:

The overall goal of the Refugees and Recognition – Toolkit 3 (ARENA) Project is to improve mobility, employability, and access to further education for refugees, displaced people, and people in a refugee-like situation, including those who lack official documentation of their educational background. The Project builds on the previously completed Refugees and Recognition – Toolkit Project, which developed a common methodological approach to the recognition of refugee qualifications with the Toolkit for Recognition of Refugee Qualifications. The methodology was successfully tested as a supplement to standard admission procedures in the follow-up Project Refugees and Recognition – Toolkit 2 (REACT) in collaboration with Oslo Metropolitan University (NO), University of Bremen (DE), University of Utrecht (NL), LUISS University (IT), and the University of Limerick (IE). The main Project outcome is the REACT Q-Card for Admission Officers, which provides recommendations for action at higher education institutions working to enable access to further studies for refugees, displaced people, and people in a refugee-like situation (ARENA, 2020).

Annex XVI - MORE Students by Nationality and Gender

Winter Semester 2015

	Winter Semester 2015			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	92	15	107	16,14
Algeria	3	0	3	0,45
Armenia	0	1	1	0,15
Austria	2	0	2	0,3
Bangladesh	4	0	4	0,6
Burkina Faso	1	0	1	0,15
Cameroon	3	0	3	0,45
Cote d Ivoire	1	0	1	0,15
DRC	4	0	4	0,6
Egypt	3	0	3	0,45
Eritrea	1	0	1	0,15
Ethiopia	1	0	1	0,15
Gambia	4	0	4	0,6
Ghana	3	1	4	0,6
India	0	1	1	0,15
Iran, Islamic Republic	18	4	22	3,32
Iraq	123	3	126	19
Kazakhstan	0	1	1	0,3
Kosovo	1	0	1	0,15
Kuwait	1	0	1	0,15
Lebanon	1	1	2	0,3
Lybia	2	0	2	0,3
Morocco	1	0	1	0,15
Nigeria	20	0	20	3,02
Pakistan	12	0	12	1,81
Sierra Leone	2	0	2	0,3
Somalia	46	1	47	7,09
Sudan	5	0	5	0,75
Syria, Arab Rep.	220	23	243	36,71

Tajikistan	1	1	2	0,3
Tunisia	4	0	4	0,6
Turkey	1	0	1	0,15
Ukraine	6	1	7	1,06
Uzbekistan	1	0	1	0,15
West Bank / Gaza Strip	1	1	2	0,3
Stateless	11	3	14	2,11
Unexplained	5	0	5	0,75
TOT	605	58	663	100%

Summer Semester 2016

	Summer Semester 2016			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	223	32	344	31,1
Algeria	6	0	6	0,54
Armenia	0	1	1	0,09
Austria	2	0	2	0,18
Azerbaijan	1	0	1	0,09
Bangladesh	2	0	2	0,18
Cameroon	1	0	1	0,09
Cote d Ivoire	2	0	0	0,18
Egypt	8	2	10	0,9
Ethiopia	4	0	4	0,36
Gambia	4	0	4	0,36
Georgia	1	1	2	0,18
Iran, Islamic Republic	90	25	115	10,4
Iraq	217	12	229	20,71
Jordan	2	0	2	0,18
Kosovo	1	0	0	0,09
Lebanon	1	0	0	0,09
Lybia	2	0	2	0,18
Mongolia	0	1	1	0,09
Morocco	3	0	3	0,27

Myanmar	1	0	0	0,09
Nepal	1	0	0	0,09
Nigeria	5	0	5	0,45
Pakistan	20	0	20	1,81
Russian Federation	3	1	4	0,36
Senegal	1	0	1	0,09
Sierra Leone	2	0	2	0,18
Somalia	34	2	36	3,25
Sudan	1	0	1	0,09
Syria, Arab Rep.	310	34	344	31,1
Tajikistan	2	1	3	0,27
Tunisia	2	0	2	0,18
Ukraine	7	0	7	0,63
Uzbekistan	1	0	1	0,09
West Bank / Gaza Strip	1	2	3	0,27
Yemen	1	0	0	0,06
Stateless	20	3	23	2,08
Unexplained	4	0	4	0,36
TOT	988	118	1106	100%

Winter Semester 2016

	Winter Semester 2016			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	182	20	202	23,63
Algeria	2	0	2	0,23
Armenia	0	1	1	0,12
Austria	3	1	4	0,47
Bangladesh	4	0	0	0,47
Cameroon	1	0	1	0,12
Cote d Ivoire	3	0	3	0,35
DRC	2	1	3	0,35
Egypt	5	4	9	1,05
Eritrea	0	1	1	0,12

Ethiopia	2	0	2	0,23
Gambia	5	0	5	0,58
Georgia	1	0	1	0,12
Guinea	1	0	1	0,12
Iran, Islamic Republic	65	25	80	9,36
Iraq	147	10	157	18,36
Israel	1	1	2	0,23
Lebanon	2	0	2	0,23
Lybia	1	1	2	0,23
Moldova	1	0	1	0,12
Mongolia	0	1	1	0,12
Nigeria	9	1	10	1,17
Pakistan	28	0	28	3,27
Russian Federation	1	2	3	0,35
Senegal	1	0	1	0,12
Somalia	34	1	35	4,09
Sudan	1	0	1	0,12
Syria, Arab Rep.	200	36	236	27,6
Tajikistan	1	1	2	0,23
Tunisia	3	0	3	0,35
Turkey	5	1	6	0,7
Uganda	1	0	1	0,12
Ukraine	7	3	10	1,17
Uzbekistan	1	0	1	0,12
West Bank / Gaza Strip	0	1	1	0,12
Yemen	3	0	3	0,35
Stateless	17	5	22	2,57
Unexplained	1	0	1	0,12
TOT	736	119	855	100%

Summer Semester 2017

	Summer Semester 2017			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	194	17	211	28,63
Algeria	1	0	1	0,14
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1	0	1	0,14
Cameroon	2	2	4	0,54
China	2	0	2	0,27
Cote d Ivoire	2	0	2	0,27
Egypt	6	1	7	0,95
Ethiopia	6	1	7	0,95
Gambia	7	0	7	0,95
Georgia	0	1	1	0,14
Guinea	2	0	2	0,27
Iran, Islamic Republic	65	28	93	12,62
Iraq	116	9	125	19,96
Israel	1	1	2	0,27
Jordan	1	1	2	0,27
Lebanon	2	0	2	0,27
Lybia	2	1	3	0,41
Mongolia	1	0	1	0,14
Morocco	3	0	3	0,41
Nepal	1	0	1	0,14
Nigeria	10	0	10	1,36
Pakistan	10	0	10	1,36
Philippines	0	1	1	0,14
Russian Federation	2	0	2	0,27
Senegal	1	0	1	0,14
Somalia	27	1	28	3,8
Sudan	5	0	5	0,68
Syria, Arab Rep.	123	26	149	20,22
Tajikistan	2	0	2	0,27
Tunisia	2	0	2	0,27

Turkey	1	0	1	0,14
Uganda	1	2	3	0,41
Ukraine	8	3	11	1,49
West Bank / Gaza Strip	1	1	2	0,27
Yemen	1	0	1	0,14
Stateless	23	4	27	3,66
Unexplained	2	0	2	0,27
TOT	635	102	737	100%

Winter Semester 2017

	Winter Semester 2017			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	176	13	189	31,76
Armenia	0	1	1	0,17
Austria	0	1	1	0,17
Azerbaijan	0	1	1	0,17
Cameroon	3	2	5	0,84
Cote d Ivoire	1	0	1	0,17
DRC	2	0	2	0,34
Egypt	5	0	5	0,84
Eritrea	0	1	1	0,15
Ethiopia	4	1	5	0,84
Gambia	2	0	2	0,34
Guinea	2	0	2	0,34
Iran, Islamic Republic	80	18	98	14,96
Iraq	76	8	84	14,12
Jordan	0	1	1	0,17
Kuwait	1	0	1	0,17
Lebanon	1	0	1	0,17
Lybia	1	1	2	0,34
Mongolia	1	0	1	0,17
Morocco	2	0	2	0,34
Nigeria	6	0	6	1,01

Pakistan	13	0	13	2,18
Philippines	0	1	1	0,17
Russian Federation	2	0	2	0,34
Senegal	1	0	1	0,17
Somalia	23	0	23	3,87
Sudan	4	0	4	0,67
Swaziland	1	0	1	0,17
Syria, Arab Rep.	77	17	94	15,8
Tajikistan	1	0	1	0,17
Tunisia	1	0	1	0,17
Turkey	2	0	2	0,34
Uganda	1	1	2	0,34
Ukraine	3	4	7	1,18
Yemen	1	0	1	0,17
Stateless	25	4	29	4,87
Unexplained	2	0	2	0,34
TOT	520	75	595	100%

Summer Semester 2018

	Summer Semester 2018			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	153	14	167	33,4
Albania	1	0	1	0,2
Armenia	2	4	6	1,2
Azerbaijan	0	1	1	0,2
Bangladesh	3	0	3	0,6
Benin	1	0	1	0,2
Cameroon	0	2	2	0,4
Cote d Ivoire	1	0	1	0,2
DRC	1	0	1	0,2
Egypt	5	1	6	1,2
Eritrea	1	0	1	0,2
Ethiopia	2	1	3	0,6

Georgia	0	1	1	0,2
Guinea	2	0	2	0,4
Iran, Islamic Republic	77	22	99	19,8
Iraq	64	12	76	15,2
Israel				
Jordan	0	1	1	0,2
Lebanon	1	0	1	0,2
Lybia	1	1	2	0,4
Malaysia	1	0	1	0,2
Mongolia	1	2	3	0,6
Nigeria	3	0	3	0,6
Pakistan	7	0	7	1,4
Philippines	0	1	1	0,2
Russian Federation	1	0	1	0,2
Somalia	10	0	10	2
Sri Lanka	1	0	1	0,2
Sudan	2	0	2	0,4
Syria, Arab Rep.	39	12	51	10,2
Tajikistan	1	0	1	0,2
Togo	1	0	1	0,2
Turkey	3	0	3	0,6
Ukraine	4	3	7	1,4
Uzbekistan	1	0	1	0,2
Yemen	1	0	1	0,2
Stateless	20	7	27	5,4
Unexplained	3	0	3	0,6
TOT	414	86	500	100%

Winter Semester 2018

	Winter Semester 2018			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	94	17	111	26,18
Armenia	0	1	1	0,24

Austria	2	2	4	0,94
Azerbaijan	0	1	1	0,24
Bangladesh	0	1	1	0,24
Cameroon	0	2	2	0,47
DRC	2	0	2	0,47
Egypt	4	0	4	0,94
Ethiopia	2	0	2	0,47
Georgia	0	2	2	0,47
Guinea	2	0	2	0,47
Iran, Islamic Republic	63	26	89	21
Iraq	62	5	67	15,8
Israel	1	0	1	0,24
Lybia	0	1	1	0,24
Nigeria	3	1	4	0,94
Pakistan	8	0	8	1,89
Russian Federation	1	0	1	0,24
Rwanda	1	0	1	0,24
Saudi Arabia	0	1	1	0,24
Senegal	1	0	1	0,24
Somalia	6	0	6	1,42
Sudan	3	0	3	0,71
Syria, Arab Rep.	54	10	64	15,09
Tajikistan	1	0	1	0,24
Turkey	2	0	2	0,47
Ukraine	4	2	6	1,42
United States of America	0	1	1	0,24
Uzbekistan	4	1	5	1,18
Venezuela	0	2	2	0,47
Yemen	3	0	3	0,71
Stateless	13	8	21	4,95
Unexplained	1	0	1	0,24
TOT	340	84	424	100%

Summer Semester 2019

	Summer Semester 2019			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	58	8	66	22,22
Armenia	0	1	1	0,34
Austria	2	2	4	1,35
Azerbaijan	1	0	1	0,34
Bangladesh	2	1	3	1,01
Cameroon	1	0	1	0,34
Ethiopia	3	0	3	1,35
Georgia	0	2	2	0,67
Iran, Islamic Republic	49	30	79	26,6
Iraq	29	4	33	11,11
Kyrgyzstan	1	1	2	0,67
Lebanon	0	1	1	0,34
Lybia	0	1	1	0,34
Morocco	0	1	1	0,34
Nigeria	6	0	6	2,02
Pakistan	6	0	6	2,02
Russian Federation	2	3	5	1,68
Rwanda	1	0	1	0,34
Senegal	1	0	1	0,34
Somalia	6	1	7	2,36
Sudan	1	0	1	0,34
Swaziland	1	0	1	0,34
Syria, Arab Rep.	31	7	38	19,29
Tajikistan	1	0	1	0,34
Togo	1	0	1	0,34
Turkey	4	0	4	1,35
Ukraine	1	0	1	0,34
Uzbekistan	1	1	2	0,67
Venezuela	0	2	2	0,67
West Bank / Gaza Strip	1	0	1	0,34

Yemen	3	0	3	1,01
Stateless	4	2	6	2,02
Unexplained	8	3	11	3,7
TOT	225	72	297	100%

Winter Semester 2019

Countries	Winter Semester 2019			
	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	36	8	44	16,24
Bangladesh	1	1	2	0,74
Egypt	1	1	2	0,74
Ethiopia	2	0	2	0,74
Georgia	0	2	2	0,74
Iran, Islamic Republic	50	28	78	28,78
Iraq	27	6	33	12,18
Jordan	1	0	1	0,37
Kenya	1	0	1	0,37
Nigeria	1	0	1	0,37
Pakistan	4	1	5	1,85
Russian Federation	3	3	6	2,21
Rwanda	1	0	1	0,37
Somalia	7	2	9	3,32
Syria, Arab Rep.	35	15	50	18,45
Togo	1	0	1	0,37
Turkey	2	1	3	1,11
Ukraine	1	1	2	0,74
Uzbekistan	2	1	3	0,37
Venezuela	1	2	3	0,37
Yemen	1	0	1	0,37
Stateless	9	4	13	4,8
Unexplained	4	4	8	2,95
TOT	191	80	271	100%

Summer Semester 2020

	Summer Semester 2020			
Countries	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
Afghanistan	27	5	32	18,08
Albania	0	1	1	0,56
Algeria	0	1	1	0,56
Egypt	1	2	3	1,69
Georgia	0	1	1	0,56
India	1	0	1	0,56
Iran, Islamic Republic	29	11	40	22,6
Iraq	18	3	29	16,38
Jordan	1	0	1	0,56
Kenya	1	0	1	0,56
Russian Federation	0	1	1	0,56
Rwanda	1	0	1	0,56
Somalia	1	0	1	0,56
Syria, Arab Rep.	30	17	47	26,55
Tajikistan	1	0	1	0,56
Turkey	2	0	2	1,13
Ukraine	1	1	2	1,13
Uzbekistan	2	1	3	1,69
Venezuela	1	2	3	1,69
Stateless	3	1	4	2,26
Unexplained	2	2	4	2,26
TOT	126	51	177	100%

Annex XVII - MORE students by University and Gender

Winter Semester 2015

	Winter Semester 2015			
University	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Vienna	5	1	6	0,9
University of Graz	74	8	82	12,37
Medical University Vienna	3	1	4	0,6
University of Salzburg	334	8	342	51,58
Technical University of Vienna	18	0	18	2,71
Technical University of Graz	11	4	15	2,26
University of Economics Vienna	17	9	26	3,92
University of Linz	49	4	54	7,84
University of Klagenfurt	70	7	77	11,61
University of Applied Arts Vienna	9	2	11	1,66
Academy of visual art	13	14	27	4,07
TOT	605	58	663	100%

Summer Semester 2016

	Summer Semester 2016			
University	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Vienna	8	0	8	0,72
University of Graz	64	15	79	7,14
University of Innsbruck	39	3	42	3,8
Medical University Vienna	9	2	11	0,99
University of Salzburg	406	28	434	39,24
Technical University of Vienna	72	7	79	7,14
Technical University of Graz	22	4	26	2,35
Montan University Leoben	13	0	13	1,18

University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	4	1	5	0,45
University of Economics Vienna	32	3	35	3,16
University of Linz	53	6	59	5,33
University of Klagenfurt	83	7	90	8,14
University of Applied Arts Vienna	134	13	147	13,29
University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	3	1	4	0,36
University of Music and Performing Arts Graz	1	0	1	0,09
University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	8	3	11	0,99
Academy of visual art	37	25	62	5,61
TOT	988	118	1.106	100%

Winter Semester 2016

University	Winter Semester 2016			
	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Vienna	5	0	5	0,58
University of Graz	34	11	45	5,26
University of Innsbruck	86	5	91	10,64
Medical University Vienna	12	9	21	2,46
University of Salzburg	238	16	254	29,71
Technical University of Vienna	96	11	107	12,51
Technical University of Graz	19	7	26	3,04
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	0	1	1	0,12
University of Economics Vienna	43	11	54	6,32
University of Linz	60	12	72	8,42
University of Klagenfurt	72	7	79	9,24

University of Applied Arts Vienna	18	4	22	2,57
University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	7	1	8	0,94
University of Music and Performing Arts Graz	2	0	2	0,23
University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	24	9	33	3,86
Academy of visual art	20	15	35	4,09
TOT	736	119	855	100%

Summer Semester 2017

University	Summer Semester 2017			
	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Vienna	2	0	2	0,27
University of Graz	14	4	18	2,44
University of Innsbruck	67	3	70	0,9
Medical University Vienna	1	2	3	0,4
University of Salzburg	212	16	228	30,94
Technical University of Vienna	93	11	104	14,11
Technical University of Graz	13	2	15	2,04
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	1	1	2	0,27
University of Economics Vienna	25	13	38	5,16
University of Linz	83	17	100	13,57
University of Klagenfurt	65	8	73	9,91
University of Applied Arts Vienna	9	3	12	1,63
University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	5	1	6	0,81
University of Music and Performing Arts Graz	2	0	2	0,27

University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	22	10	32	4,21
Academy of visual art	21	11	32	4,21
TOT	635	102	737	100%

Winter Semester 2017

University	Winter Semester 2017			
	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Graz	8	0	8	1,34
University of Innsbruck	109	6	115	19,33
Medical University Vienna	0	1	1	0,17
University of Salzburg	145	17	162	27,23
Technical University of Vienna	7	1	8	1,34
Technical University of Graz	8	1	9	1,51
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	2	0	2	0,34
University of Economics Vienna	28	9	37	6,22
University of Linz	90	15	105	17,65
University of Klagenfurt	59	7	66	11,09
University of Applied Arts Vienna	10	4	14	2,35
University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	4	1	5	0,84
University of Music and Performing Arts Graz	1	0	1	0,17
University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	31	6	37	6,22
Academy of visual art	18	7	25	4,2
TOT	520	75	595	100%

Summer Semester 2018

	Summer Semester 2018			
University	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Graz	4	2	6	1,2
University of Innsbruck	59	13	72	14,4
University of Salzburg	138	24	162	32,4
Technical University of Vienna	3	0	3	0,6
Technical University of Graz	6	2	8	1,2
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	1	1	2	0,4
University of Economics Vienna	23	7	30	6
University of Linz	67	9	76	15,2
University of Klagenfurt	51	5	56	11,2
University of Applied Arts Vienna	6	5	11	2,3
University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	7	0	7	1,4
University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	31	9	40	8
Academy of visual art	18	9	27	5,4
TOT	414	86	500	100%

Winter Semester 2018

	Winter Semester 2018			
University	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Graz	3	0	3	0,71
University of Innsbruck	57	16	73	17,22
University of Salzburg	98	21	119	28,06
Technical University of Vienna	1	0	1	0,24

Technical University of Graz	14	2	16	3,77
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	4	0	4	0,94
University of Economics Vienna	31	9	40	9,43
University of Linz	70	12	82	19,1
University of Klagenfurt	24	5	29	6,84
University of Applied Arts Vienna	8	4	12	2,83
University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	3	1	4	0,94
University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	17	9	26	6,13
Academy of visual art	10	5	15	3,54
TOT	340	84	424	100%

Summer Semester 2019

University	Summer Semester 2019			
	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Graz	1	1	2	0,67
University of Innsbruck	29	5	34	17,26
University of Salzburg	85	27	112	37,71
Technical University of Vienna	1	1	2	0,67
Technical University of Graz	2	0	2	0,67
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	5	1	6	3,05
University of Economics Vienna	32	16	48	16,16
University of Linz	28	4	32	10,77
University of Klagenfurt	10	5	15	5,05
University of Applied Arts Vienna	5	3	8	0,27

University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	2	0	2	0,67
University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	17	7	24	8,08
Academy of visual art	8	2	10	3,37
TOT	225	72	297	100%

Winter Semester 2019

	Winter Semester 2019			
University	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Graz	2	0	2	0,74
University of Innsbruck	23	4	27	9,96
University of Salzburg	52	22	74	27,31
Technical University of Vienna	24	5	29	10,7
Technical University of Graz	1	0	1	0,37
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	6	4	10	3,69
University of Economics Vienna	33	29	62	22,88
University of Linz	14	3	17	6,27
University of Klagenfurt	10	3	13	4,8
University of Applied Arts Vienna	3	0	3	0,74
University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	3	0	3	0,74
University of Music and Performing Arts Graz	1	0	1	0,37
University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	11	5	16	5,9
Academy of visual art	8	5	13	4,8
TOT	191	80	271	100%

Summer Semester 2020

	Summer Semester 2020			
University	Gender		Total	
	Men	Women	Sum Total	Percentage
University of Graz	1	0	1	0,56
University of Innsbruck	8	2	10	5,65
University of Salzburg	56	16	72	40,68
University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna	2	0	2	1,13
University of Economics Vienna	32	25	57	32,2
University of Linz	4	0	4	2,26
University of Klagenfurt	8	4	12	6,78
University of Applied Arts Vienna	2	0	2	1,13
University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna	3	0	3	1,69
University of Art. and industrial. Design Linz	4	1	5	2,82
Academy of visual art	6	3	9	5,08
TOT	126	51	177	100%

Annex XVIII - All in all: What do you particularly like about MORE? (open question)⁴⁰



⁴⁰ Alles in allem: Was gefällt dir an MORE besonders? (offene Frage)

Annex XIX - What could be improved about MORE? (open question)⁴¹



⁴¹ Was könnte man an MORE verbessern? (offene Frage).

Annex XX - Uni-Freunde Students (Winter 2019/20 to Summer 2021)

Semester	Gender	Nationality	Field of study	Uni	Date of Birth
summer 2021	M	Iraq	Geography (Teaching Office)	Uni Wien	1995
summer 2021	M		Business Informatics	TU	1989
summer 2021	W	Yemen	Dentistry	MedUni	2000
summer 2021	M	Iraq	Business Law	WU	1999
summer 2021	W	Syria	Medicine	MedUni	2002
summer 2021	M	Iraq	Mechatronics	TU	1997
summer 2021	M	Afghanistan	Painting	Akademie der Bildenden Künste	1999
summer 2021	M	Iran	Medicine	MedUni	1966
summer 2021	M	Syria	Renewable energy technology	FH technikum	1992
summer 2021	M	Iran	Teaching position	Uni Wien	1990
summer 2021	W	Iran	Computer science	UNI	1987
summer 2021	W	Iran	Business Informatics	UNI	1985
summer 2021	W	Russian Federation	Linguistics	UNI	1987
summer 2021	M	Iraq	Computer science	TU	1993
summer 2021	M	Iraq	International Business	Uni Wien	1997
summer 2021	M	Iraq	Business administration	WU Wien	1992
summer 2021	M	Iran	Process technology	TU	1990
summer 2021	M	Iran	Art history, possibly physics	Uni	1979
summer 2021	W	Syria	Pharmacy	UNI	1999
summer 2021	W	Iran		FH Technikum	

summer 2021	M	Afghanistan	Transculture; Communications	Uni Wien	1996
summer 2021	M	Iran	Chemistry	Uni Wien	1981
summer 2021	M	Afghanistan	Economics and Social Sciences	WU Wien	1994
winter 2020/21	M	Iraq	International Business	Uni Wien	1997
winter 2020/21	M	Iraq	Business administration	WU Wien	1992
winter 2020/21	M	Iran	Chemistry, possibly process engineering	Uni od. TU	1990
winter 2020/21	M	Iran	Art history, possibly physics	Uni	1979
winter 2020/21	W	Syria	Pharmacy	UNI	1999
winter 2020/21	W	Iran	Architecture (MA)	TU	
winter 2020/21	M	Yemen	Civil engineering (MA)	TU	1992
winter 2020/21	M	Iran	History (MA)	Uni Wien	
winter 2020/21	W	Iran	Computer science	WU MORE	
winter 2020/21	W	Iran	Educational science	Uni Wien	
winter 2020/21	M	Afghanistan	Transculture; Communications	Uni Wien	1996
winter 2020/21	M	Iran	Chemistry, possibly biotechnology (MS)	Uni Wien	1981
winter 2020/21	M	Afghanistan	Financial Mathematics (MA)	TU	
winter 2020/21	M	Afghanistan	Economics and Social Sciences	WU Wien	
winter 2020/21	M		technical math	TU	
summer 2020	M	Iraq	Business Administration		1993
summer 2020	M	Iraq	Civil engineering		1993
summer 2020	M	Iran	Art history, possibly physics		1979

summer 2020	M	Afghanistan	Political science		1986
summer 2020	W	Palestine	Business Administration		1998
summer 2020	W	Iran	Computer science		1987
summer 2020	M	Afghanistan /Iran	Dentistry, possibly Chemistry		1996
summer 2020	W	Iran	Philosophy Diss.		1980
summer 2020	M	Iran	History master		1971
summer 2020	M	Iran	Chemistry		1981
summer 2020	W	Iran	MA		1983
summer 2020	M	Iraq	Business Administration		1992
summer 2020	M	Egypt	mechanical engineering		1994
summer 2020	M	Afghanistan	Law		1988
summer 2020	M	Afghanistan	Maths (MS)		
winter 2019/20	M		IBWL		1989
winter 2019/20	W		Business Law		1976
winter 2019/20	M		Civil engineering		1996
winter 2019/20	M		Law		1979

ANNEX XXI - UNICORE Students (UNICORE and UNICORE 2.0)

UNICORE			
Men	Women	Nationality	Degree Course
6	0	Eritrea	English Language (5) Finance (1)

UNICORE 2.0						
Men	Women	Nationality				Degree Course
		Eritrea	Sudan	Congo	South Sudan	
19	1	14	2	2	2	Business Management Artificial Intelligence Engineering (Automatic, Electronic, Chemical) Applied data sciences Pharmacy Human Rights & International Relations Geology & Geopolitics International Relations & Law