APPENDIX 1. METHODOLOGICAL GUIDELINES FOR BEST PRACTICES IDENTIFICATION AND PREPARATION OF COUNTRY REPORTS

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1. BACKGROUND

1.1. Project context


The main objective of the INTEGRACE project is to promote the educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children (RASC) in the EU by developing common standards and sharing best practices in policies and programmes development and evaluation, with a specific focus on the needs of vulnerable groups (e.g. unaccompanied children, children who have been victims of crime). The project aims to contribute to the development of a common approach to addressing the educational needs of refugees and asylum seekers by identifying best/good practices\(^1\) in the integration of RASC in education, designing a common European methodology for program evaluation and impact assessment and establishing a network of NGOs and universities promoting the integration of refugee children in the educational systems of EU Member States.

The project will identify and describe best good practices in the integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children in schools and conduct program evaluations of selected initiatives in three Western European EU Member States (Italy, Sweden and Austria) and impact assessments for their implementation in two Eastern European countries (Bulgaria and Slovenia). Project partners and individual experts will prepare country reports describing best practices/offer situation analysis in the field of educational integration of RASC. Best practices identified will be catalogued in the “Inventory of best practices in the field of educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children.”

Country reports will contain comprehensive reviews of best practices in the integration of RASC, situation reports where best practices are scarce, and examples of the design of preparedness initiatives (“stress tests”) where the target group is small. All of these, as well as the summaries of the program evaluations and impact assessments will be integrated into a “Handbook on the Integration of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Children in the Educational Systems of EU Member States.”

EU Member States (MSs) have varying levels of experience of accepting and integrating refugees in their societies. Old MSs are traditional destinations for refugees and host the largest share of such populations in Europe, while the new MSs are now facing the challenge of intensified flows of refugees and asylum seekers. According to UNHCR, 20,000 refugees enter the EU via CEE each year.\(^2\) While old MSs have experience with various integration programmes in the field of education, housing and employment, new MSs have to develop effective policy responses to the rising number of refugees and asylum seekers.

The project team will provide a comprehensive overview of the features of the most successful types of initiatives, and will draw conclusions

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\(^1\) The concept of “best practice”, as explained later in paragraph 2.1, will be interpreted in a broad sense, so the term “good practice” will also be equivalently used.

\(^2\) UNHCR. Protecting Refugees in Central Europe, UNHCR 2008.
regarding the types of policies and educational programmes that may work under specific conditions. At the same time, the significant number of MSs to be covered presumes great diversity of country-specific social, economic and political backgrounds, of migration situations and refugee population make-ups, of national educational systems, etc. The methodological guidelines aim to develop a common approach to identifying and reporting good practices in the integration of RASC in education in a variety of national contexts. They would also give maximum freedom to the experts in identifying relevant national good practices in the field and in providing new insights which may be acquired during the course of the work.

The present methodological guidelines have several main goals determining their content and structure:

- to define the key concepts and terms to be used;
- to outline the scope of work in terms of geographical coverage and target groups;
- to specify criteria for the identification of best/good practices in the integration of RASC at schools;
- to suggest data sources and methods for best practices identification;
- to propose the content of country reports/situation analysis, summarising the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the research process.

1.2. Policy and legal context

The contextual background for the INTEGRACE project is presented below through a summarised review of the main international and European legal instruments and policy documents related to the educational integration of RASC. This will be further elaborated for each individual country to include the specific national, regional and local frameworks in place with regard to educational support for RASC.

The documents discussed below set out the background against which the project is implemented and also the framework within which the results of the project will be used, in particular with regard to EU instruments and policies on integration. The following list is by no means exclusive and will be updated where further relevant information becomes available.

International human rights documents

Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) of 1948

Although the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a declaration and therefore not binding on states, it is considered to be part of customary international law and as such binding for all states. As education is vital to the development of children, it is recognised as a universal human right. Article 26 of this declaration formulates the right to free and compulsory education at the elementary level. The declaration further states that education should work to strengthen respect for human rights and promote peace.

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) of 1965

This UN convention obliges all countries to condemn every form of racial discrimination as well as to pursue policies to eliminate racial discrimination in all of its forms. Article 5 of the ICERD states that “in compliance with the fundamental obligation laid down in Article 2 of this convention, States Parties undertake to prohibit and to eliminate racial discrimination in all its forms and to guarantee the right of everyone, without distinction as to race, colour, or national or ethnic origin, to equality before the law, notably in the enjoyment of the following rights... the right to education and training.”

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) of 1966

This UN treaty contains some of the most important international legal provisions establishing economic, social and cultural rights. The right to free and compulsory education at the primary level and accessible secondary-level education is articulated in Article 13 of the Covenant. The Covenant calls for basic education to be made available to those who have not received or completed primary education. Emphasis is put on improving conditions and teaching standards.
The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is another fundamental instrument in the protection of the rights of children. It sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children. With regard to education, Article 28 calls for states to make primary education compulsory and free for all, and to stimulate the development of accessible secondary education, including vocational training. The need for quality and relevance in education is laid out in Article 29, which mandates an education that builds on a child’s potential and supports his or her cultural identity. This article stresses upon psychosocial support and curriculum elements covering human rights, peace, tolerance, gender equality and respect for the environment are stressed in this article. In addition, Article 31 protects a child’s right to culture and recreation.

The CRC also addresses the issue of non-discrimination. Article 2 outlines the non-discrimination principle, including access to education for children with disabilities, gender equality, and the protection of linguistic and cultural rights of ethnic minority communities. Article 22 of the CRC obliges States Parties to take “all appropriate measures to ensure that a child who is seeking refugee status (...) whether unaccompanied or accompanied by his or her parents or by any other person, receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights” in the CRC and other treaties on international human rights.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child has issued a General Comment (no. 6) that gives special attention to the obligations of States Parties towards unaccompanied and separated children outside the country of origin. The General Comment points to the particularly vulnerable position of these child migrants and sets out the “multifaceted challenges faced by States and other actors in ensuring that such children are able to access and enjoy their rights, irrespective of their nationality, immigration status or statelessness.”

**UNHCR Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child, May 2008**

In order to ensure the optimal implementation of the best interests’ principle in actions affecting individual children, this UNHCR document elaborates the following procedures: 1) the best interests’ assessment and 2) the best interests’ determination (BID).

**Refugees and asylum seekers related international documents**


The Refugee Convention of 1951 together with the Protocol of 1967 form the basic foundation in international law relating to the education of refugee children. The Convention guarantees the rights to elementary education for refugee children and affirms that they are entitled to the same opportunities as nationals from the host country. Article 22 of the Convention reafirms the responsibility of the government of the country of asylum to provide education for refugees.

**International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICRMW) of 1990**

The third section of this UN Convention addresses the right to education of all migrant workers and the members of their family, irrespective of their migratory status. Article 30 states that “each child of a migrant worker shall have the basic right of access to education on the basis of equality of treatment with nationals of the State concerned.” It should be noted, however, that since 2003 when the ICRMW entered into force, no EU Member State or any other major migrant ‘receiving’ country such as the United States, Canada or Australia, has ratified the convention.

**UNHCR, Guidelines on Policies and Procedures in Dealing with Unaccompanied Children Seeking Asylum, February 1997**

This UNHCR document provides important definitions regarding unaccompanied children seeking asylum. Education is one of the issues addressed in the context of interim care and the protection of children seeking asylum.
EU legal instruments

In the European Union, integration has been brought to the forefront of political attention with a number of Council Conclusions with a special focus on the Brussels European Council Conclusions of 4/5 November 2004 on The Hague Programme and the Thessaloniki European Council conclusions of June 2003 which highlighted the importance of establishing common basic principles (conclusion 31), and existing developments on integration within the European context.

Council Conclusions, Immigrant Integration Policy in the European Union, 14615/04 of 19 November 2004 and the Communication from the European Commission on A Common Agenda for Integration – Framework for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals in the European Union, September 2005, COM (2005) 389 set out a number of Common Basic Principles (CBP) to provide guidance for EU and Member State integration policies. They also call for the development of a common approach at the European Union level. The CBP list is indicative and not exhaustive and it leaves it to the Member States to set priorities and select the actions as well as the way in which they are to be carried out within the context of their own national situations and traditions. They should be seen as main elements of all national and EU integration policies. A gender perspective should be incorporated into all relevant actions, and specific attention should be paid to the situation of migrant youth and children. Of particular relevance to this project is CBP 5, which recognises the education of immigrants and in particular of their descendants as critical in the process of successfully integrating migrants and encouraging their more active participation in society.


This Directive lays down minimum standards for the reception of asylum-seekers. The EU’s reception directive outlines a number of provisions concerning the education of asylum seekers and stresses the need to provide minors with special attention, including access to psychological assistance. It obliges Member States to grant children access to education “under similar conditions as nationals”; to provide language courses to enable them to attend regular schools; to avoid postponing access to the education system for more than three months from the date of filing an asylum application (or one year in exceptional circumstances); and to allow access to vocational training, irrespective of whether the asylum seekers have the right to work. According to this directive, Member States may: provide schooling in an accommodation centre; refrain from withdrawing secondary education from an asylum seeker “for the sole reason that the minor has reached the age of majority”; and provide rehabilitation services for minors who have suffered from violence or war.

Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004 on minimum standards for the qualification and status of third country nationals or stateless persons as refugees or as persons who otherwise need international protection and the content of the protection granted.

In this qualification directive of the EU, Article 27 of chapter seven (on the “Content of International Protection”) calls on Member States to grant refugees, and those with subsidiary forms of protection, full access to education (for minors) under the same conditions as nationals; access to general education (for adults) under the same conditions as other third country nationals residing legally in the country; equal treatment in recognising foreign diplomas, certificates and other evidence of formal qualifications; and access to programmes to facilitate integration.


This directive on the procedures to examine an asylum application and to withdraw the protection

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granted contains specific guarantees addressing the vulnerability of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum.


Article 17 of chapter IV on ‘detention of minors and families’ notes that “unaccompanied minors and families with minors shall only be detained as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time; minors in detention shall have the possibility to engage in leisure activities (...) and shall have, depending on their stay, access to education; and the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration in the context of the detention of minors pending removal.”

**Council of Europe documents**

An important document of European legislation related to RASC education is the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Rome, 4th of November, 1950). Article 2 of the Convention’s Protocol 1 (Enforcement of certain Rights and Freedoms not included in Section I of the Convention) states: “No person shall be denied the right to education. In the exercise of any functions which it assumes in relation to education and to teaching, the State shall respect the right of parents to ensure such education and teaching in conformity with their own religions and philosophical convictions.”

**Council of Europe Assembly, Recommendation No 1596 (2003) on the situation of Young Migrants in Europe, 31 January 2003**

This document of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe provides for important policy guidelines regarding the treatment of young migrants in Europe, including children. At its paragraph 6 the document lists specific recommendations “with a view to using education effectively as an instrument to foster equality, multiculturalism and mutual understanding.”


At the 911th meeting of the Ministers’ Deputies on 12.01.2005 the Committee of Ministers acknowledges the right of children to education irrespective of their status in compliance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and recognises the importance of education for the successful integration of refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) into society. Furthermore, The European Committee on Migration of the Council of Europe (CDMG) undertakes extensive work in the area of integration, including issues relating to ensuring adequate access to education. One of the subcommittees of the CDMG, the Committee of Experts on Integration and Diversity (MG-ID), is currently completing work on developing an effective system of integration indicators.

**Council of Europe Committee of Ministers, Recommendation CM/Rec (2007) of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors, July 2007**

This document of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe provides for important policy guidelines regarding life projects for unaccompanied migrant minors. Education is seen as an important objective regarding life projects understood as developing “the capacities of minors allowing them to acquire and strengthen the skills necessary to become independent, responsible and active in society.”

**European initiatives, programmes and documents**

**SCEP, Statement of good practices (4th edition) 2010**

The Separated Children in Europe Programme (SCEP) started as a joint initiative of some members of the International Save the Children Alliance and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It has grown and evolved and is now
comprised of many non-governmental partners throughout Europe who continue to work closely with UNHCR. The document provides inter alia a statement on good practices regarding “education, language and training” (section D.8.3.).

**European Migration Network, Reception, Return and Integration Policies for, and numbers of, UNACCOMPANIED MINORS, May 2010**

The EMN Synthesis Report summarises in a comparative study the main findings of National Reports produced by twenty-two of the EMN National Contact Points from Austria, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom. It provides information on policies on unaccompanied migrant minors in the EU, including identified best practices on education.

**Fundamental Rights Agency, Separated, asylum-seeking children in European Union Member States – Summary Report, 2010**

On 30 April 2010 the FRA published a summary report on ‘Separated, asylum-seeking children in European Union Member States’ that reveals many shortcomings and deficiencies in the care provided to asylum-seeking children in the European Union. Based on its findings, the report includes a number of recommendations as to how the needs of these children can be met, to facilitate the implementation and fulfilment of their rights (as enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights).

**Eurasylum Ltd, The protection of the rights and special needs of irregular migrant minors and asylum seeking children: A thematic discussion paper prepared for the Fundamental Rights Agency, 2008**

This paper aims to identify policy interventions, legal measures and administrative procedures at EU level to protect the rights and special needs of irregular immigrant minors and asylum-seeking children. A major theme running through the paper concerns the “best interests” of the child and the necessary changes to ensure those best interests are met. Education is one of the main issues addressed.

**Other important international initiatives and commitments**

**Millennium Development Goals**

Expanding access to good quality education is also seen as an important means to halving extreme poverty and hunger before 2015, one of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as emerged in September 2000 from the commitments made by world leaders at the UN Millennium Summit. The second MDG is to make sure that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling by 2015.

**United Nations Study on the impact of armed conflict on children (also known as the Graça Machel Report) of 1996**

This study is a seminal research on the impact of conflict on children and their need for protection and education. It is of particular relevance when addressing issue of trauma experienced by refugee children.

**Education for All (EFA)**

Most of the world’s governments have committed themselves to EFA’s goals, articulated and reaffirmed at the 1990 World Conference on Education for All in Jomtien and the 2000 Dakar World Education Forum. One of the Dakar Goals is to ensure that by 2015 all children, particularly girls, children in difficult circumstances and those belonging to ethnic minorities have access to and complete free and compulsory primary education of good quality.

**Related instruments and documents**

Many of the problems confronting RASC are the same as those confronting other child migrants and sometimes the solutions being similar. In this context some migration and integration related documents could be of interest as well.

A number of best practices have been identified in the *Handbook on integration for practitioners*...
Methodological Guidelines for Best Practices Identification

and policy makers published in 2004 and updated in 2007 and most recently in April 2010. The latest edition of the Handbook builds on the above-mentioned CBP 5 related to education and presents strategies to raise the educational attainment of immigrant pupils. These are divided in three areas: improving the school system, enhancing the capacity building of teachers and administrators and actively engaging young immigrants and their parents. Strategies are implemented through measures such as ensuring access to primary and secondary education for all (in line with the UDHR and the CRC), accurate assessment of prior learning abroad, identification of needs and ongoing support, resource allocation mechanisms, training teachers for diverse classrooms, outreach and partnership with parents from disadvantaged groups, and after school assistance.

It also sets a number of benchmarks for planning, research, analysis and implementation of the practices through which progress can be measured. The Handbook also points to the respective National Contact Points on Integration in each EU Member State.

Part of the Lisbon Agenda 2000/10 to make the EU the world’s most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy is to increase the number of young people completing upper secondary education. In this regard, providing opportunities for pursuing higher education or vocation training is also crucial for the successful integration of refugees. The Handbook notes that immigrants are underrepresented in higher education and training and have a high drop-out rate and proposes a series of outreach measures to address these issues.

In 2008, European Commission’s DG Education and Culture launched an EU debate on these issues with its Green Paper entitled “Migration and mobility: challenges and opportunities for EU education systems.” Further analysis and examples of practices can be found in the study attached to the Green Paper, Education and the Integration of Migrants. Integrating Immigrant Children into Schools in Europe prepared by DG Education and Culture’s Eurydice information network on education in Europe deals with the issue of communication with immigrant families and teaching of heritage languages in schools. In this regard, the work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) should also be mentioned. The OECD has conducted a Thematic Review on Migrant Education and A Review of Evidence and Policy Options and thus published the report Where Immigrant Students Succeed: A Comparative Review of Performance and Engagement in PISA 2003. This report analyses evidence from the OECD Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA 2003) on outcomes of schooling for immigrants in the OECD member countries (which include a majority of EU MS, as well as the European Commission as an observer). It includes analysis on how well immigrant students perform in key school subjects at the age of fifteen, as well as how they assess themselves as learners and what their general attitudes are towards school. The findings for first-generation students who were born outside the country of assessment and whose parents were also born in a different country are particularly relevant, identifying support in the language of instruction as key in enhancing pupils’ outcomes.

2. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS OF THE KEY CONCEPTS

The main task of the first project activity is to identify best practices in the field of educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children. In this context, the key concepts of “best practices” and “educational integration” have to be defined and explained.

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2.1. Defining “best practices”

The first important question is: What kind of practices will be studied? The scope of the practices to be examined in the field of educational integration of RASC will be kept as broad as possible. There will be no restrictions to specific educational areas and levels, institutional set-ups and organisational forms, educational methods and techniques, etc. Best practices are sometimes conceived as a programme, a method or a technique that could be picked out of a toolbox and applied on the spot. Sometimes a ‘good practice’ is not so much a technique or programme, but a policy or an administrative measure like the change in educational policy or the creation of expertise centres. A fixation on ‘good practices’ in the narrow sense can distract attention from the need for deeper changes of societal and/or educational systems. That is why, it is important to adopt a more systematic approach, considering how all features of the schools, country educational systems, national and local institutions and society as a whole help or hinder the integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children. In this context, some of the generally defined educational practices to be explored could be:

1. Educational policies at European, national and local level;
2. Educational programmes for refugee and asylum-seeking children;
3. Curriculums, methods and techniques relevant to RASC;
4. National and local educational projects targeted at RASC;
5. Administrative measures to solve specific problems of RASC;
6. Additional activities and opportunities for out-of-school-hours learning;
7. Services provided to refugee children and families to help with their immediate needs;
8. Measures to ensure safe and secure school environment for refugee and asylum-seeking children;
9. Involvement of key stakeholders (families, refugee and migrant groups, local receiving communities, non-governmental organisations, and others);
10. Relevant funding schemes;
11. Monitoring and evaluation methods.

The second key questions will be: On what grounds to label some specific practices as best/good ones and select them for description? The answer of that question is far from clear and straightforward.

- **Good for whom?**

Different stakeholders could have different views about certain policy, program, measure or method, based on their perspective, institutional role or specific experience.

- **Good to what extent?**

The term “best practice” in the project context will be used in a broad sense, including more modest concepts of “good” and even “promising” practices. Sometimes “best” implies that the same solution can be ideal in all countries, which is doubtful. So both terms “best” and good practices will be used equivalently.

- **Good on what ground?**

Many criteria could be used to identify best practices and much more indicators could be constructed. Criteria for the identification of best practices could be defined also on several levels of generalisation. Different lists of general criteria for identification of best/good practices have been suggested. At a very general level, Padilla et al. (2007) quote four UNESCO criteria, which apply to almost any field of intervention.

1. **Best Practices are innovative.** A Best Practice has developed new and creative solutions to common problems that are consequence of immigration, poverty and social exclusion.
2. **Best Practices make a difference.** A Best Practice demonstrates a positive and tangible impact on the living conditions, quality of life or environment of the individuals, groups or communities concerned.

3. **Best Practices have a sustainable effect.** A Best Practice contributes to sustained eradication of poverty or social exclusion, especially by the involvement of participants.

4. **Best Practices have the potential for replication.** A Best Practice serves as a model for generating policies and initiatives elsewhere.

Helmut Sax and Margit Ammer proposed several criteria, which refer to a variety of interventions:

- **Part of an overall strategy:** Is the initiative elaborated and implemented as part of an overarching strategy?
- **Impact:** Is there any evidence that the initiative has a measurable output in reaching its aims?
- **Transferability:** Does the initiative have the potential to be one that others can copy, and that can be transferred to other settings and/or Member States?
- **Sustainability:** Does the initiative have the potential to lead to enduring structural changes?
- **Innovation:** Is the initiative of a new type, does it present a new way of doing an existing task? Is there any added value?
- **Relevance for the aims:** Is the initiative an adequate means to reach the aims?
- **Stakeholders’ involvement:** Are the stakeholders effectively involved in the initiative?
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Is there a permanent review procedure established, is it conducted regularly, is an assessment made, and is the evaluation findings fed into the process on a continuous basis?

In Watters et al. (2003) the following criteria were used:

- How accessible is the intervention?
- How are the needs or wishes of users reflected in the intervention?
- To what extent have users influenced, directly or indirectly, the form of the activity?
- How much attention, and what kind, is paid to possible effects of cultural differences?
- Is the intervention original?
- Are attempts made to evaluate the success of the intervention?

Some more specific criteria to identify best practices in the field of educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children will be proposed in Section 4. Criteria for identification of best practices.

### 2.2. Defining the concepts of “integration” and “educational integration”

Defining the terms “integration” and “educational integration” is even more difficult than defining “best practice” as they mean different things to different people and may have different meanings across the EU.

There are two parallel regulating processes within the EU relevant to the integration of immigrants, including refugees and asylum seekers – EU migration law and the EU framework on integration. After 1999 there are significant changes in the way EU MSs understand integration within the boundaries of these two processes. At the meeting in Tampere, the EU outlined certain principles that would guide EU integration policy. They are known as the “EU fair and near-equality treatment paradigm.” This includes a just approach toward the legal immigrants and refugees; active integration policy that guarantees legal rights and obligations as near as possible to those of EU citizens. The Tampere (1999), Hague (2004), and Stockholm (2009) programmes define migration within the justice and home affairs framework. Under the influence of some MSs, integration has become conceived as another type of regulatory mechanism that can control the inflow of foreign citizens until they receive a legal permit to stay. Integration in this sense is interpreted as a tool to control migration and a precondition for acquiring legal rights.

In the specific project context there is a need to arrive at a working definition of integration. One

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of the options is to adopt an “official” definition concerning migrants in general. For instance, the Commission suggests the following definition of integration in its policy paper entitled “Immigration, Integration, and Employment” from 3 June 2003:

“A two-way process based on mutual rights and corresponding obligations of legally resident third country nationals and the host society which provides for full participation of the immigrant. This implies on the one hand that it is the responsibility of the host society to ensure that the formal rights of immigrants are in place in such a way that the individual has the possibility of participating in economic, social, cultural and civil life and on the other, that immigrants respect the fundamental norms and values of the host society and participate actively in the integration process, without having to relinquish their own identity.”

This definition could be a starting point but is not enough because the central concern of the project is the integration of RASC into the educational system of the receiving country. Thus, a more specific working definition of educational integration of RASC should be proposed. It can be developed along three basic aspects of “educational integration” of RASC as a two-way process:

1. RASC and those with subsidiary forms of protection should have full access to education under the same conditions as nationals and demonstrate similar educational achievements.
2. Education as a main factor for cultural integration should promote the effective acculturation perceived as internalisation by RASC of the main components of the host society’s culture.
3. Unequal treatment of RASC in the educational system and different forms of discrimination, xenophobia, racism, anti-semitism, islamophobia, etc. should be eliminated.

The first aspect of educational integration refers to the fact that RASC are typically disadvantaged, at least at the outset, in terms of level of access to education and enrolment, duration of attending school, indicators of achievement, drop-out rates, types of school diploma reached, and others. Thus, effective integration in the educational system could include policies, programmes, educational methods, measures, affirmative actions etc. to ensure educational opportunities to RASC as near as possible to nationals from the host country and to allow them to reach similar levels of school performance and attainment.

Acculturation as a second aspect of educational integration does not mean assimilation or total acceptance of the host society’s culture, but refers to the degree major elements of the receiving country’s culture (values, norms, rules of behaviour etc.) are learned and internalised by RASC, without necessarily giving up the their national and cultural background. Special attention should be given to the learning of the host country language, which is absolutely vital for effective integration of RASC children in all its aspects.

The third aspect of educational integration is related mainly to the treatment of RASC by the host society (officials, teachers, peers, parents, native citizens). Adherence to the non-discrimination principles should ensure that all forms of discrimination of RASC are prohibited and eliminated and the right to education and training is guaranteed without distinction as to race, national or ethnic origin. The EC also considers that segregation, tracking and ability grouping can have particularly negative impacts on migrant and ethnic minority children. These practices are therefore forms of “institutional discrimination” and should be critically evaluated in the light of their consequences for RASC. Stereotyping on the achievement of RASC is another problem to be solved in this perspective. RASC should also receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the context of the host country’s educational system.

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16 European Commission. Communication from the commission to the council, the European parliament, the european economic and social committee and the committee of the regions on immigration, integration and employment, http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=CELEX:52003DC0336:EN:HTML

3. SCOPe OF THE WORK

3.1 Geographical coverage

The project’s review of best practices in the integration of refugee minors at school will encompass an unprecedented number of MSs. In cataloguing best practices, the research conducted by the project team will encompass all 26 EU Member States participating in the European Refugee Fund, as well as Denmark, Norway, and four Western Balkan states at various stages on their way to EU Membership (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia). The project partners will be researching best practices in the educational integration of refugee children in their country as well as in several other European countries that are close geographically and/or linguistically. Where the target group is relatively small, best practices in the design and implementation of preparedness programmes (as in, for instance, Estonia) will be reviewed. Where best practices are lacking (Bulgaria being a notable example), preparing a situation analysis and highlighting areas needing improvement would be relevant.

3.2. Target groups

The main target group and direct beneficiaries of the action are children who have been granted refugee status or are seeking to be granted asylum in EU Member States participating in the ERF, as well as Denmark, Norway, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia. Definition of “children” is based on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – all persons below the age of eighteen. Since UNHCR estimates that over 40 per cent of all refugees and asylums seekers worldwide are children, it could be estimated that approximately 650,000 such children live in the EU.

The Refugee Convention of 1951 defines a refugee as someone who “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” An asylum seeker is someone who has made a claim that he or she is a refugee or qualifies for another form of protection, and is waiting for that claim to be accepted or rejected. The term contains no presumption either way and simply describes the fact that someone has lodged the claim. Though both refugee and asylum-seeking children are the main target groups of the project, their situation is rather different and all the distinctions relevant to their educational integration should be made clear.

Children with subsidiary protection status (which are likely to be equated with recognised refugees in the near future), temporary protection status and humanitarian residence permits will also be included as target groups. Strictly speaking they are not ‘refugee children’, but they are treated by the same system, subject to the same rights and obligations concerning education, and considered as refugee children in most projects. The distinction between these various types of asylum varies and is often influenced by political factors. It is also suggested that after a first stock-taking phase on the national level to have a review of the existing focus areas, to identify the most widespread target groups of RASC, the common and specific challenges they are facing and then to continue with best practices identification on the basis of the conclusions made.

It will be relevant to include also ‘failed’ asylum seeker children (those whose claim has been refused). The issue of children, who have a right to stay up to age of eighteen whereas their parents are supposed to leave the country, is another important case. In some countries asylum-seeking children are allowed to stay after reaching eighteen in order to complete their course of study.

A specific vulnerable group to focus upon will be that of unaccompanied and separated children (UASC). The challenge of unaccompanied minors is growing: a considerable number of third-country nationals or stateless persons below the age of eighteen arrive on EU territory unaccompanied
by a responsible adult, or are left unaccompanied after they have entered EU territory. Statistics on unaccompanied minors are most comprehensive for those unaccompanied minors who apply for asylum. In 2008, a total of 11,292 applications for asylum were lodged by unaccompanied minors in the twenty-two Member States. In 2009 Europe received 15,100 UASC claims. Their number was the highest in the UK – almost 3,000, Norway (2,500), Sweden (2,250) and Germany (1,300).

This particularly vulnerable category of children seeks asylum for different reasons: to escape from wars and conflicts, poverty, natural catastrophes, discrimination or persecution, and often they are victims of trafficking as well.

Attention will be paid also to best practices in the integration of other vulnerable groups, such as newly arrived immigrants and ethnic minority children, but only to the extent that any such practices can be feasibly and successfully applied with respect to refugee and asylum-seeking children.

4. SPECIFIC CRITERIA FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF BEST/GOOD PRACTICES

The search for adequate and more specific criteria and indicators for identification of best/good practices in the educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children could be facilitated by understanding what these practices are intended to overcome, which main problems of RASC they are supposed to solve and what goals and objectives are meant to be reached. In this respect the objectives of the “Education Strategy 2010 – 2012: Education for All Persons of Concern to UNHCR”, developed by UNHCR and published in Geneva (September 2009), could be taken into account. The strategy is trying to achieve three main complementary and mutually reinforcing education objectives:

- increased access and enrolment;
- improved quality of education;
- enhanced protection.

From a human rights perspective the “AAAQ” (availability, accessibility, adaptability, quality) criteria for protection of social and cultural rights and service provision established by UN treaty bodies should also be taken into account:

- **Availability of educational services**, including school types (primary/secondary/vocational training).
- **Accessibility** of educational services (non-discrimination in general, gender, disability, rural/urban); physical accessibility; economic accessibility/affordability; access to information).
- **Adaptability/acceptability** of educational services: e.g. cultural sensibility, child protection standards against violence/exploitation.
- **Quality of educational services** (qualification of teachers/training, monitoring/accountability).

Criteria for identification of best/good practices will also be based on the human rights and in particular child’s rights perspective, as per the UN Convention on the Rights of Child. From this perspective children should be perceived as members of society not only equal in rights but whose rights are of highest priority. This principle is confirmed in the World Fit for Children Declaration of UN General Assembly as its first objective set: “Put children first. In all actions related to children, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.” Child rights approach and its underlying principles (empowerment and accountability, non-discrimination and equality, participation, indivisibility of rights, respect for the voice of the child) will be incorporated in the relevant criteria for identification of good practices of educational integration of RASC.

On this basis of defining the priority problems of educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children, the adopted interpretation of educational integration and the rights-based approach, several specific criteria for identification of best practices could be identified. Gender and age should be considered a cross-cutting issue and all practices (policies, programmes, projects, methods etc.) should be assessed also as to their impact on girls and boys in different age groups.

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1. Access and enrolment

The problem: The right to education is a basic right endorsed by the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the Refugee Convention of 1951. At the same time, UNHCR’s Global Strategic Priorities recognise that access to free primary education remains elusive for many refugee and asylum-seeking children. In 2007, out of 2.6 million refugee children at school-age globally, only an estimated 67 per cent were enrolled in primary and secondary schools, leaving a third (around 900,000 children) without access to education.

The EU has provided the initial legal basis for granting access to education to these children under Council Directive 2004/83/EC of 29 April 2004, yet further progress is needed in identifying and disseminating practical initiatives.

Access and enrolment of female RASC, “promoting girls’ education, gender equality and sensitivity” is an important part of the process of educational integration of RASC. Reported data indicates that there is a “disparity between the percentage of girls and boys enrolled in grades 1-6, where the gender parity index (GPI) is 0.83, meaning a disparity in favour of boys. In secondary schools the GPI Index is 0.77.” Therefore, RAS girls are less often enrolled in school than RAS boys and more girls than boys drop out of secondary schools. Good practices to provide access to education to RAS girls should be accompanied by variety of measures, related to issues like early pregnancy and marriages. In this context the level of involvement in education process of the RASC parents could be also a criterion for the identification of good practices.

Some feasible criteria for good practices identification: Practices which: a) ensure that RASC have the same opportunity to access education as all other children; b) increase the share of RASC at school-age enrolled in primary and secondary schools; c) ensure that the RAS girls have the same opportunity to access education as the RAS boys; d) prevent the postponing of access to the education system for more than three months from the date of filing an asylum application; e) increase attendance and reduce drop-out rates, especially for girls; f) increase opportunities for language, vocational and skills training.

2. Quality of education

The problem: According to UNHCR policy documents, even when access to education is secured, the educational integration of children is marred by obstacles such as language barriers, lack of training for teaching personnel, etc. Data on achievement of school children show that as early as at the end of primary school education migrant children score lower compared to native children. The OECD PISA studies on standard academic skills of fifteen-year-old children also show substantial disadvantages for migrant children, though the differences vary from one country to another. Among the main identified challenges in achieving higher quality of education of RASC are: the low percentage of qualified (and certified) teachers, the use of different curricula in home and host countries, the lack of recognition for diplomas, insufficient teaching and learning materials, insufficient number of schools and classrooms, lack of catch-up classes as well as insufficient means for teacher compensation. Secondary school system still does not provide to a satisfactory degree (1) the quality education RASC need to engage in the labour markets and (2) the life skills to positively face life challenges.

Some feasible criteria for good practices identification: Practices which: a) improve the teachers’ qualifications and skills to work with RASC; b) develop relevant for RASC curricula, innovative and participative teaching methods and techniques;
c) disseminate programmes, guidelines, tools and minimum standards for education of RASC; d) provide effective language courses to RASC to attend regular schools; e) ensure that RASC have the same school performance as native children; f) conduct needs assessments and programme evaluations; g) disseminate good practices and lessons learned.

3. Enhanced protection

The problem: Education should provide physical, psychosocial and cognitive protection for RASC. Some of the main challenges to achieve the objective of enhanced protection are cultural practices such as early pregnancies and marriages; insufficient safe learning environments in urban settings, e.g. abuse by teachers and fellow students; large numbers of out of school adolescents with high protection risks; weak monitoring and response capacities, etc.

Special attention needs to be afforded to refugee children from vulnerable groups, and educational programs need to take into account their specific needs. According to UNHCR, such vulnerable groups are: children with disabilities, children with special needs, ex-child soldiers and militia workers, separated children, children victims of crime and involved in drugs, prostitution, exploitative labour or street children, etc. Health protection, psychological care, and accessibility of school environment are important to the educational integration of such children, as well as special educational practices.

Some feasible criteria for good practices identification: Practices which: a) promote, establish and expand a safe learning and favourable protection school environment for RASC with a particular focus on girls; b) promote multiculturalism and tolerance in education not only of RASC but of all children; c) increase protection interventions in all phases of displacement from the outset of an emergency, in urban and protracted settings; d) provide special health and psychological care, rehabilitation services for minors who have suffered from violence or war; e) provide civic and health education (unwanted pregnancy protection, HIV protection etc.); f) protect RASC from drug, sexual or other forms of abuse; g) protect from discrimination.

4. Empowerment and participation

The problem: Refugee and asylum-seeking children are often perceived as passive objects/recipients of care of different integrational policies, programmes, projects and measures. The framework adopted in the INTEGRACE project combines the child rights based approach with a social inclusion perspective, aimed at establishing the right educational environment for RASC, with an empowerment perspective, defined as the expansion of assets and capabilities of RASC to participate in, influence, control and hold accountable the institutions which affect their lives. The empowerment approach emphasises the RASC’s role as agents of positive change and assets for development.

Some feasible criteria for good practices identification: Practices which: a) take into account the views of RAS children; b) stimulate active participation of RASC in the design, implementation and evaluation of educational practices they are involved in; c) provide feedback from RASC on availability, acceptability, quality of different initiatives, policies, programmes etc.; d) ensure that children’s views have impact on educational services delivery; e) promote the principle of empowerment of the child as a right holder through child rights education, awareness-raising campaigns with child and youth organisations, etc; f) conduct child rights-based research and collect child rights-based data; g) develop child focused indicators and include subjective indicators for evaluation/assessment; h) set up independent child rights institutions.

5. DATA SOURCES AND METHODS OF GOOD PRACTICES IDENTIFICATION

In order to collect information regarding successful initiatives and policies for the educational integration of RASC, the project team will use the following sources of information:

- Academic research and publications;
- Reports by government institutions of EU Member States;
- Reports by EU institutions and agencies;
- Reports and studies by other international

organisations;
• Reports and studies by non-governmental organisations in EU Member States;
• Interviews with stakeholders, conducted over the phone or in person – conducted during fact-finding visits (primary data);
• On-site visits.

The data collection process will be based on several main instruments:

• **Desktop research:** to collect information on background studies and stakeholder information and to identify relevant resources to be used in the development of data collection tools. Databases such as ISI Web of Knowledge and EBSCO will also be utilised. These databases contain publications in various EU Member States languages, and searchers will be conducted in all languages spoken by the team members. Reports by governmental institutions in the EU Member States, legislation (international, EU and national) as well as project reports and academic research in this area will be used as a source of information about policy initiatives undertaken by the countries in the field of educational integration of RASC.

• **Official correspondence:** to collect information from relevant institutions and experts on existing policies, programmes and initiatives for the educational integration of RASC and specific cases. Such relevant institutions could be: governmental institutions related to refugees, refugee camps, detention centres, UNHCR offices in each country, ministries of education, municipalities or other regional structures, NGOs, schools, other institutions providing educational courses for RASC and/or their parents.

• **Interviews:** to collect data on policies, stakeholders and best practices, as well as to gain an understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses of the policies and programmes for the educational integration of RASC. Interviews with policy makers, representatives of public and private organisations running relevant programmes, NGOs and academic institutions, practitioners, teachers (especially teachers with refugee backgrounds) and parents of RASC (if possible) will be carried out.

• **Observations:** to collect first hand information on places of RASC education – schools, classrooms in refugee camps and detention centres, places where educational courses of RASC are being provided, NGO offices, etc.

Each project partner or individual expert will summarise the results and conclusions regarding the best practices identified in the respective EU countries in written form and will produce a country report (approx. 25-30 pages).

### 6. CONTENT OF THE COUNTRY REPORTS

The following section aims to introduce a common structure to be followed by all experts in the elaboration of the country reports and situation analyses. It also sets down the main methodology for describing the good practices identified throughout the research.

1. **Methodological introduction (2-3 p.)**

It should be based on the methodology presented above with emphasis on:

• country specificities that allow or prevent certain methodological tools;
• methods used for data collection and issues related to data reliability and comparability;
• main sources of information (National Statistical Offices, National Integration Focal Points, National Refugee Agencies, UNHCR, etc.).

2. **Refugees and asylum seekers: general background (3-4 p.)**

This section should outline the background regarding the situation of refugees and asylum seekers in the country. It should include statistical data on trends and flows of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers to the country; current makeup of the refugee population (incl. main countries of origin, regional distribution/pockets of high concentration, age structure etc.); numbers and types of RASC; asylum application procedures and interim status and conditions of stay, facilities available, duration of procedures; levels of overall integration of the major groups of refugees and asylum seekers (incl. limitations and barriers of entry and stay, housing and living conditions in reception centres, and issues
related to segregation, speaking the local language, social integration, etc).

3. Institutional set-up, legal and policy framework (3-4 p.)

The national authorities responsible for integration of and service provision to refugees and asylum seekers in the country should be identified:

3.1.1. National level (Ministries, State Agencies, National Commissions, NGOs, etc.);
3.1.2. Regional level (Regional authorities, NGOs, etc.);
3.1.3. Local level (local councils, schools, migrant organisations, etc.).

The international legal and policy context has been set out in the introductory chapter. This is the same for all EU Member States with only slight possible exceptions, which should be noted. The focus here should be directed to the national legal basis, and to policies and programmes promoting the educational integration of RASC. Special attention should be paid to the transposition of relevant EU directives into national legislation. Budgetary allocations for refugees and asylum seekers and their integration should also be included. The gathered information should similarly be pertinent to the national level (national regulations, policies and strategies; national budget available for integration, specific provisions for integration of children, programmes for specialised training of teachers, etc); to the regional level (programmes specific for regions with higher number of RASC, co-operation mechanisms, etc); and to the local level (degree of independence of local schools, availability of trained teachers, etc).

4. Overview of the educational system and the education status of refugees and asylum seekers in the country (4-5 p.)

Information here should include:

4.1. National specifics of the education system in the country in question (elementary, secondary and high-school education; vocational training; institutional stakeholders national government, local authorities, educational institutions, immigrant/refugee organisations).
4.2. Characteristics of RASC and their parents relevant to the educational process (if available: previous education of both children and of their parents, language abilities, social and cultural characteristics, etc).

4.3. Status of RASC in the national educational system – access, enrolment, gender ratios, quality of education, protection, discrimination, barriers to entry and stay, etc; analyses of trends, problems and perspectives of RASC in the educational system of the respective country.

4.4. Provision of education for various legal categories (refugees, asylum seekers in procedure, children with subsidiary protection status, temporary protection status and humanitarian residence permits) and vulnerable groups of RASC (children with disabilities, children with special needs, ex-child soldiers and militia workers, separated children, children victims of crime and involved with drugs, prostitution, exploitative labour or street children).

5. Good practices description and analysis (10-15 p.)

This section will focus on detailed description and analysis of identified good practices or measures that have proven successful in promoting the integration of RASC at various levels of the education system. These can be presented in the form of case studies and, in countries where this is possible, should cover different practices, based on various criteria and indicators. It should be noted again that the success of a good practice is largely defined by the context in which it is being implemented, so special attention should be paid to describing that context.

Best practices identified will be catalogued in the Inventory of best practices in the field of educational integration of refugee and asylum-seeking children (see Annex 1).

Concrete examples of policies, programmes and methods, which have contributed to the achievement of increased access and enrolment, improved quality of education, and enhanced protection of RASC, should be given:

• Policies (national and regional educational policies, educational programmes for RASC, policy initiatives to identify and solve problems
specific to RASC);

- **Programmes** (introduction of language training, after-class activities, national and local education projects targeted at RASC);

- **Methods** (special training modules implemented in schools, methods for the participation of parents, migrant and local community organisations, curriculums, methods and techniques relevant to RASC, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and policies).

This should include the main actors involved and their relationship, providing where possible, background information on organisational culture and local attitudes, substantiated by interviews with relevant stakeholders.

Attention should be paid to various examples of good practices, recognising that a good practice is not necessarily exhaustive or perfect. Rather, it can be seen as representing the best available solution to a specific problem in light of available resources and the working environment in a given context. Hence, description should focus both on the process, as well as on the outcome, of an identified practice.

Information regarding the financial resources available and their source(s) should be included if possible. Feedback by various actors should also be included in the description. The use of other available training material, the Handbook for Integration, UNHCR, etc. in developing and implementing the good practices should be noted. Special attention should be devoted to gender differences and the situation of vulnerable children or children who have experienced trauma or stress.

In the countries where good practices are scarce, situation analyses will be produced describing the measures in place with regard to education of RASC with the aim of identifying gaps in coverage and opportunities for improvement. Where relevant, some unsuccessful practices of educational integration of RASC should also be mentioned and analysed in comparison with the good ones.

6. **Areas in need of change/policy recommendations/opportunities for policy and programme improvement** (3-4 p.)

Some country-specific recommendations will be put forward on the basis of the data gathered and the practices identified. In particular, in countries where measures for the integration of RASC are scarce gaps will be identified and some recommendations will be proposed in this regard.

Recommendations should be both general (referring to the implementation of international and EU standards and guidelines) and specific (introducing specific methods, programming, consultations mechanisms, etc.).

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UNHCR, Guidelines on Determining the Best Interests of the Child, May 2008


Universal declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), 1948/217A (III)/UN, (10.12.1948)
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBP</td>
<td>Common Basic Principles</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDMG</td>
<td>European Committee on Migration of the Council of Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>CRC</td>
<td>Convention on the Rights of the Child</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRA</td>
<td>Fundamental Rights Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>MDG</td>
<td>Millennium Development Goals</td>
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<td>MSs</td>
<td>Member States</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development</td>
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<td>RASC</td>
<td>Refugee and Asylum-seeking Children</td>
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<td>UASC</td>
<td>Unaccompanied and Separated Children</td>
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</table>

ANNEX 1

**Table 55. Inventory of Best Practices in the Field of Educational Integration of Refugee and Asylum-seeking Children**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<td>2. Educational programme</td>
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<td>• educational level (primary, secondary, vocational training)</td>
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<td>3. Curriculum (syllabus, instructions)</td>
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<td>4. Teaching method</td>
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<td>5. Targeted project</td>
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<td>6. Services provided to refugee children and families</td>
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**List of Abbreviations**

- CBP – Common Basic Principles
- CDMG – European Committee on Migration of the Council of Europe
- CRC – Convention on the Rights of the Child
- FRA – Fundamental Rights Agency
- MDG – Millennium Development Goals
- MSs – Member States
- OECD – Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
- RASC – Refugee and Asylum-seeking Children
- UASC – Unaccompanied and Separated Children
Table 55. Inventory of Best Practices in the Field of Educational Integration of Refugee and Asylum-Seeking Children (continued)

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