

Forum: ECOSOC

Issue: The Role of Education in Social and Cultural Integration of Migrant Children

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Introduction

Education plays a fundamental role in life of every single human being, social and economic development and is essential to a healthy and self-determined life. In 1948 education was set as a basic human right for every person and enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This enforced the fact that every single person deserves the right to receive an education.

With increasing migration into and within already culturally diverse countries of North America and the EU, where the countries face mass migration caused by instability in the Middle East, there is an urgent need for more knowledge about social and cultural integration processes among immigrants and determined actions towards achieving success in this field because nowadays it has become one of the main issues in a modern world.

Definition of key terms

Mass Migration

Mass Migration can be defined as the movement of large groups of people from one geographical area to another, which is often caused by severe reasons like political instability, civil war, or economic depression.

Social Integration

Social Integration can be seen as a dynamic and principled process, where all members participate in dialogue to achieve and maintain peaceful social relations, and is focused on the need to move toward a safe, stable society and peaceful social relations of coexistence, collaboration, and cohesion.

Cultural Integration

Cultural Integration is a form of cultural exchange in which one group assumes the beliefs, practices, and rituals of another group without sacrificing the characteristics of its own culture.

The current situation in the Middle East

The current situation in the Middle East is a process of political instability substantially caused by a revolutionary wave called '*Arab Spring*', which was the main reason of regimes' overflows in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen, civil uprisings in Bahrain and civil wars in Lybia and Syria.

Major countries and organizations involved

Almost all members of UN are more or less involved in the process of social and cultural integration of migrant children. There are some countries such as but not limited to: the USA, the UK, Canada, France, Germany, Sweden, and Australia, which are more influenced by this issue because of their international and internal policy towards immigrants.

International organizations like UNICEF, Save the Children campaign, CARE International can be involved into solving this issue.

Possible solutions

Solving the problem of social and cultural integration of migrant children is a very complicated task. However, nowadays there are countries that have some experience in solving this problem: the USA, the UK, Germany, France, etc., but they weren't completely successful because immigrants have slimmer prospects of obtaining an apprenticeship and limited career prospects; people with an immigrant background are likewise insufficiently accepted at universities (for example, in Germany).

The possible solutions are: introducing summer camps for language learning and pre-school language courses in order to generally improve integration processes of migrant children in a society, eliminating school fees for migrant families to make education more available, taking already existing programs (German National Integration Plan, Head Start program, in USA, "Start" by the Hertie Foundation, etc.) for a model. Pre-teachers, teachers and volunteers need to be trained and effectively retrained in order to be qualified enough for the new role of second language teacher. In addition, anti-discrimination laws and diversity policies will play a very significant role in the process of working out the best solution for this significant issue. It is also important to remember that absence of integration can lead to the rise of ethnic tension, mass riots, and involvement into extremist organizations.