

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION STUDIES OF BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN HUNGARY

SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF BENEFICIARIES
OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN HUNGARY
– NIEM POLICY BRIEFS

JULIANNA FALUDI
– ZSOMBOR LAKATOS

HIGHER EDUCATION

8

JULIANNA FALUDI – ZSOMBOR LAKATOS

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION STUDIES OF
BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN HUNGARY

**Social Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection in Hungary
– NIEM Policy Briefs**

Published by: **Institute of Public Affairs (Poland) and Menedék – Hungarian Association for Migrants.**

Responsible for the publication: Institute of Public Affairs (Poland) and Menedék
– Hungarian Association for Migrants.

The analysis is part of the series “Social Integration of Beneficiaries of International Protection in Hungary – NIEM Policy Briefs”, prepared in the framework of the international research and strategic project NIEM – National Integration Evaluation Mechanism, identification number PL / 2015 / AMIF / SA, supported by the European Union’s Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund.

The series is edited by: **ANDRÁS KOVÁTS – BÉLA SOLTÉSZ**

Copy editing: **PÉTER BORBÁTH**

ISBN: 978-83-7689-379-2

The analysis can be downloaded from the websites www.forintegration.eu and www.menedek.hu.

The opinions contained in the analysis reflects the views only of the authors. Neither the European Commission nor the Polish Ministry of the Interior and Administration can be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

© Menedék – Hungarian Association for Migrants, Julianna Faludi – Zsombor Lakatos, 2021.

All rights reserved. The policy briefs and the included illustrations are protected by copyright. Their use is permitted only with reference to the author(s) and publisher.

Institute of Public Affairs

00-031 Warszawa, ul. Szpitalna 5 lok. 22

www.isp.org.pl

Menedék – Hungarian Association for Migrants

1081 Budapest, Népszínház street 16. III/3.

www.menedek.hu



**OPPORTUNITIES FOR
SUPPORTING HIGHER EDUCATION
STUDIES OF BENEFICIARIES
OF INTERNATIONAL
PROTECTION IN HUNGARY**

SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF BENEFICIARIES
OF INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION IN HUNGARY
– NIEM POLICY BRIEFS

JULIANNA FALUDI
– ZSOMBOR LAKATOS

8

**HIGHER
EDUCATION**

Executive summary

Signatories to the Lisbon Convention¹ agreed on the minimum requirements of support and services provided for refugees to ease their higher education integration. One of the priorities of the Convention is the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, establishing the necessary conditions and supporting access to higher education. In Hungary, access to higher education of beneficiaries of international protection is guaranteed by effective legislation, on the same footing as that of Hungarian citizens. However, there are no publicly-financed programmes for the integration, language training and support for the entry into higher education of beneficiaries of international protection. The only such programme in Hungary is the OLIVE programme, offered by the Central European University. Recently, the number of state-funded scholarship programmes supporting entry to and participating in higher education, aimed at non-Hungarian citizens, has increased; however, refugees are not eligible for them. Based on the procedures applied by states which have ratified the Lisbon Convention and on the findings of the analysis of the Hungarian situation, this paper makes recommendations for Hungarian institutions on the integration of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and applicants for international protection.

1. Introduction

Acquiring the language competences of the host country and participation in the labour market are essential for smooth social and economic integration. Higher education qualification improves both the acquisition of advanced linguistic competence and access to highly skilled jobs.

Support and services for the higher education integration of refugees are not uniform across the signatories to the Lisbon Convention. Although they agreed on the minimum legal and institutional regulations, their implementation differs greatly. One of the priorities of the Convention is the recognition of qualifications held by refugees, establishing the necessary conditions and supporting access to higher education. In addition to that, support is provided by international umbrella organisations or small foundations. Considering that since 2016, at least half of those applying for international

¹ "The Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region" signed in April 1997 in Lisbon took effect in Hungary on 1 April 2000 (Act XCIX of 2001)

protection in the EU for the first time have been aged 18-35², that is potential higher education students. Therefore, the integration of refugees and applicants for international protection in the higher education system has become a strategic issue in several European member states. In Hungary, the number of those applying for international protection for the first time has been low in general and one-third of applicants for international protection were of “higher education age”, that is aged 18-35. However, half of the applicants for international protection were aged below 18 (in 2019³) including 10% aged 14-17 (of upper secondary school age) for whom access to higher education in Hungary may be a long-term strategy. Only a fraction of applications for international protection are assessed positively. In 2019, a total of 38% received subsidiary protection, refugee status or residence for humanitarian purposes in the EU, whereas in Hungary this proportion was below 10%.⁴ Furthermore, the procedure involves decision-making in several instances lasting for several years. Nevertheless, the temporary or long-term integration of those who could potentially be granted refugee status or whose application is pending, through participation in education, may be appropriate. In some EU member states, the relevant programmes cover both refugees and applicants for international protection.

Based on international and Hungarian practice, this analysis aims at making institution-level recommendations on the inclusion and retention of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and applicants for international protection in Hungarian higher education. To this end, we have developed a systematic typology in accordance with the indicators of the project National Integration Evaluation Mechanism (NIEM), also considering the practices and institutional procedures applied in states which have ratified the Lisbon Convention. Additionally, this study presents a comprehensive assessment by applying the framework of the typology to legislative and institution-level procedures and protocols.

During the analysis of the Hungarian situation, the opportunities of beneficiaries of international protection to access higher education under Hungarian legislation have been analysed in detail. We have researched the relevant publications of the Educational Authority, informational material of the Hungarian Equivalence and Information Centre as well as the publications and research of the Tempus Foundation. We have analysed the rules of operation of scholar-

² European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2019. Integrating Asylum Seekers and Refugees into Higher Education in Europe: National Policies and Measures. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

³ www.tinyurl.hu/8e8h

⁴ www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics (see above).

ship programmes for foreigners, especially of the government-funded Stipendium Hungaricum and Scholarship for Christian Young People as well as the OLIVE programme of the Central European University. Moreover, the analysis draws on the insights and experience of decision-makers and coordinators of five higher education institutions operating in Hungary and relied on the relevant experience of the social workers and the lawyer of Menedék Association for Migrants.

2. Support systems

The support systems are described based on our typology (see **Table 1**). For more details about these systems, see the studies on the various practices, the background paper Higher Education for Refugees by the UN⁵ (2019) or the relevant Eurydice report⁶.

The aim of support measures facilitating the higher education studies of refugees vary widely across European Union member states. Solutions following the logic of social transfers provide general support and social benefits to improve the financial situation of refugees, within the system aimed at the citizens of the host country⁷. Some of them are subject to certain requirements such as a training course accomplished in the host country or passing a language examination. In Croatia, social assistance and scholarships are subject to language learning but they are means-tested in the same way as for Croatian citizens. Refugees have to compete with nationals for social assistance, regardless of the challenges and needs resulting from the difference between the situations of various societal groups. This kind of support may be supplemented by targeted language courses⁸ and labour market integration programmes, promising fast integration but involving the risk of being excluded from the system and creating an enclave within the economy. Quota-like affirmative support systems⁹ (coined by JF) may be effective in the long run if supplemented by competence-development bridging programmes (see **Table 1**).

⁵ www.tinyurl.hu/3EFJ

⁶ www.esu-online.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/232_en_migrants_he-1.pdf

⁷ For example, in Hungary.

⁸ Erasmus+ offers online language courses (OLS) for refugees.

⁹ For example, in Italy, there are 100 scholarships for the higher education studies of refugees, which are allocated jointly by the Ministry of Interior and the Rectors' Council.

Higher education support may include refugees in higher education with the aim of talent management¹⁰ based on targeted scholarship schemes. This may be decentralised, similarly to the case of Cardiff Metropolitan University Wales. Scholarship programmes offered by international umbrella organisations¹¹ aim at improving life chances and long-term socio-economic integration. There are also so-called hybrid programmes, which start supporting refugees, as potential higher education students, already before they enter the host country.

Table 1. The synopsis of support systems

Type of assistance	Focus of assistance
Quota-like affirmative	Entry
Supporting talent management	Preparation Entry Retention
Social transfer based	Preparation Entry Retention

Source: authors' typology

The solutions applied also vary according to the phase of integration in higher education. There are measures improving the higher education chances and accelerating the integration of refugees. These are the following, broken down by phases: assistance facilitating the entry procedure, measures accelerating integration (skill development, mentoring etc.) and instruments to retain refugees in higher education (scholarships, grants, language courses, exam preparation courses, legal assistance etc.).

Courses preparing individuals for the entry procedure¹², facilitated entrance examination and providing information online may target refugees enrolled in upper-secondary school in the host country and vulnerable individuals in the country of origin, who prepare for arrival in the host country and apply for

¹⁰ www.challenges.openideo.com/challenge/refugee-education/research/available-scholarships-for-refugees

¹¹ For example, DAFI (Albert Einstein Deutsche Akademische Flüchtlingsinitiative programme), which offers scholarships for refugees from the global south, based on strong selection. The scholarship supports higher education studies, accommodation, food etc. in addition to providing language and psychosocial support.

¹² For example the language and competence development courses of Université de Grenoble provided within the programme "Passarelle Solidarité".

international protection with the help of support organisations. The transition between upper-secondary school and higher education is especially problematic, and some organisations provide targeted support to bridge this gap.

Skills development, bridging programmes, which facilitate integration into the higher education of host countries, are often identical to or based on programmes and courses developed for foreign students in general, in line with the needs of refugees. Measures for retention in higher education are usually means-tested and are funded from the university's budget. Talent management programmes tend to offer scholarships through external organisations¹³, while some universities retain refugees in priority programmes. For more details on the typology of support systems, which is compiled based on the analysis of European practice and includes Hungarian examples see **Table 2.** below.

Systems designed to support the higher education studies of refugees may be centralised or decentralised and, considering their scope, of national or institutional level. An example of the former is Germany, where DAAD¹⁴ is in charge of all measures supporting the higher education studies of refugees. Italy has a quota system of 100 persons, with centralised applications for refugees wishing to study in higher education. France is a decentralised system, where universities are able to apply for implementing a total of 150 refugee integration projects annually, with additional scholarship and social assistance. In Malta, publicly funded organisations provide such support for refugees. In the United Kingdom, only Wales has developed targeted, regionally organised support led by Cardiff University, while there is no relevant national level strategy.

The most common integration measure is language training, open to those wishing to study in higher education, and scholarship schemes are often based on these. Other important measures include fee exemption (provided by six countries), the possibility of taking a special entrance examination, the recognition of other studies and complete exemption from entrance examinations. One of the solutions is to recognise prior higher education studies and support these with bridging programmes and courses facilitating the integration into studies.

¹³ In Malta, these are offered by NGOs.

¹⁴ [Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst](#), an organisation offering international grants

3. Access of beneficiaries of international protection to Hungarian higher education

3.1. Data gaps

Higher education statistics do not contain data on beneficiaries of international protection because the higher education information system only collects data on citizenship.

The number of foreign citizens studying in Hungarian higher education doubled between 2008 and 2019, from 16,916 students to 38,422). Their share within the total number of higher education students was 4.4% in 2008, increasing to 12.6% in 2018.¹⁵ The continuous expansion of targeted programmes (e.g. Stipendium Hungaricum¹⁶), may have had a positive impact on the number of foreign students, nevertheless, the change in their proportion in relation to the number of Hungarian students is partly due to demographic and structural reasons. There has been a tendency of a continuous decline in the proportion of students arriving from neighbouring countries (51% in 2007, 21% in 2017) and a gradual increase in the number of third-country students. In the 2018-19 academic year, 54% of foreign students arrived from outside Europe.¹⁷ As a result, due to the internationalisation of tertiary education, higher education institutions need to have a strategy for the integration of students coming from differing education systems.

3.2. Legislative framework

In Hungary, pursuant to 39. § (1) b) of Act CCIV of 2011 on Higher Education, the rights of beneficiaries of international protection (refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and those whose removal has been postponed) to access to education are identical to those of Hungarian citizens: they can enter

¹⁵ TF annual report, 2019., The situation, opinions and expectations of Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship holders, Hangyál-Kasza, 2018.

¹⁶ The education policy aim of the government-funded programme is to facilitate the internationalisation of Hungarian higher education, enhance the cultural diversity of higher education institutions and in this way support the quality development of Hungarian higher education. The programme was launched in 2013 with 68 students, and in September 2019 9,140 SH Scholarship holders commenced their studies. This academic year, students from 66 countries were able to apply for 521 programmes of 28 institutions. The dominance of some, primarily classical, universities in [the programme was seen in previous years and also in 2019](#). Institutions with a large number of programmes offered or students admitted are DE, BME, BCE, BGE, ELTE, ME, PTE, SZIE, SZTE.

¹⁷ www.oktatas.hu/felsooktatasi/kozerdeku_adatok/felsooktatasi_adatok_kozzetetele/felsooktatasi_statistikak

higher education on the same terms and are entitled to state-funded and fee-paying education.

However, there are shortcomings in terms of law enforcement and overall, they have significantly more limited chances.

- ▶ There is an important opportunity provided by the law in the entrance procedure: if the beneficiary of international protection has no reliable documents of qualification, the head of the educational institution may recognise upper-secondary qualification on the grounds of continuing their studies, in accordance with 4. § (2) of Act C of 2001.¹⁸ Therefore it is legally possible to enter higher education without a document certifying upper-secondary qualification. However, there is a lack of protocols defining the methods and requirements of the admission in the case of an equitable procedure. It is the decision of the head of the institution concerned whether to grant an opportunity for the applicant or not.
- ▶ The recognition of qualifications obtained abroad is performed by the Hungarian Equivalence Information Centre of the Educational Authority. In the case of periods of study abroad (without obtaining a diploma), the recipient Hungarian higher education institution has the right to decide about crediting it. Similarly, when someone wishes to use their diploma obtained abroad to continue their studies in Hungary, the recognition procedure falls within the competence of the education institution where they wish to continue their studies.¹⁹

Beneficiaries of international protection are granted asylum on the grounds of suffering persecution in their home country. Therefore, establishing any official contact with the country of origin questions the reality of persecution and jeopardises losing the status. As a result, refugees, when applying for higher education studies, cannot officially contact their home countries, which is a serious hindrance in participating in administrative procedures. This calls for increased flexibility and the development of special procedures by the host institution. Many times, neither applicants nor institutions are aware of opportunities granted by the law. Protocols of several procedures enabled by the law are missing even though the Lisbon Recognition Convention ratified by the Hungarian State requires them.²⁰

¹⁸ www.oktatas.hu/kepesitesek_elismertese/kulfoldon_szerzett_oklevelek/felfofoku_oklevel

¹⁹ https://www.felvi.hu/for_foreigners/useful_cues/in_hungary_with_foreign_certificate

²⁰ [2001. évi XCIX. törvény](#) on the publication of the Convention signed in Lisbon on 11 April 1997 on the recognition of higher education qualifications in Europe ([Chapter VII, Article VII](#))

3.3. Entry into the Hungarian system as a non-native speaker of Hungarian

Beneficiaries of international protection in Hungary can apply for available higher education programmes on the same terms as Hungarian citizens if possessing appropriate documents certifying upper-secondary qualification:

- ▶ Upper-secondary qualification and a school-leaving examination (Matura) obtained in the Hungarian education system.
- ▶ Documents certifying upper-secondary qualification obtained in the system of another country. (The documents must attest to the accomplishment of a minimum of 12 grades and passing a school-leaving examination in four subjects.)²¹ It falls within the competence of the higher education institution chosen in the application to recognise and credit documents issued abroad.
- ▶ In the absence of documents certifying the necessary qualification, students must contact the selected higher education institution directly and it is within the competence of the higher education institution to decide whether to enrol the person in the programme concerned or not.

Applicants apply for Hungarian language programmes through the centralised admission system and they are subject to the same scoring system. On the other hand, the admission procedure for programmes held in English is developed by the higher education institutions themselves.

Our interviewees confirmed that for beneficiaries of international protection the greatest barrier is the lack of language skills. The exclusively Hungarian-language website of the Educational Authority and the centralised admission system makes it difficult to navigate the admission system. For those who are not comfortable with their Hungarian language skills for higher education studies, opportunities are scarce: the proportion of state-funded programmes available in English is 4% of all the state-funded programmes, thus there is strong competition for admission.

3.4. Financial support unavailable in higher education

Admitted refugees are legally entitled to the same grants during their higher education studies as Hungarian students. However, there are difficulties in enforcing the law. A beneficiary of international protection is not only entitled to state-funded studies but also merit-based grants. Nevertheless, there was

²¹ www.oktatas.hu/kepesitesek_elismertetese/kulfoldon_szerzett_oklevelek/kozepiskolai_bizonyitvany

a case when the institution did not want to provide a merit-based grant for a refugee studying in a state-funded programme, saying that refugees are not entitled to it. They only acknowledged the entitlement when Menedék Association for Migrants intervened in the interest of the student.

Requesting social benefits available for students is challenging for beneficiaries of international protection. Insufficient means is often proved with documents impossible to obtain by a refugee who cannot contact the authorities of his or her home country. Since beneficiaries of international protection are classified as Hungarian students, they receive all information in Hungarian and have to deal with bureaucracy in Hungarian even if they pursue their studies in English.

Refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are excluded from state-funded scholarship programmes available for foreign students, which provide a wide range of financial, intercultural and language support. This is, on the one hand, due to the fact that the majority of international scholarships are based on bilateral agreements, with applicants having to submit their applications in their home countries. This is not an option for refugees. On the other hand, there are international but not bilateral scholarships, whose rules of operation denies access for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection living in Hungary.²²

The number of state-funded places has decreased by more than 30% in the past ten years in Hungary but the number of scholarships available for foreign students has been increasing strongly. Beneficiaries of international protection have to cope in a shrinking higher education scene and at the same time, they are excluded from the integration support available for non-Hungarian higher education students.

The table below presents the above-mentioned model of support systems in more detail, based on the typical forms of support available for the preparation for higher education studies, admission and during studying in higher education (The categories of the typology also includes the support forms available in the Hungarian system).

²² www.tka.hu/docs/palyazatok/20200201_okf_hu-honlapra.pdf

Table 1. Support systems – typology

	Social transfer based Provides assistance to improve the situation of refugees within the system granted to the citizens of the host country.	Supporting talent management It provides group-specific, targeted support through preparation courses and programmes facilitating retention.	Quota-like - affirmative Granting exemption or lower requirements for the target group during the admission procedure.
Preparation	There is no group-specific preparation. There is a lack of state-funded language courses for refugees in the Hungarian system.	State scholarship programmes: - Language immersion year for scholarship holding foreign students. - Preparation for advanced level Matura for Hungarians from neighbouring countries. - OLIVE preparation programme for refugees: language competence and writing skills development, as well as getting to know the relevant field of science.	
Admission	The admission procedure is based on uniform conditions and a centralised system. It is a relief that, under certain conditions, foreigners can take Hungarian as a foreign language as a subject for the Matura.	During admission to higher education programmes held in English universities assess the skills and knowledge needed for future university studies according to their own procedures.	Granting exemption, when applicants do not have to take an entrance exam or take it with lower requirements.
Retention	Grants for students (administrative hurdles): - Merit-based grant - Using the university infrastructure - Need-based grant	Support based on the needs of the group in state-funded scholarships for foreigners: - Need-based - Mental health - Merit-based - Community	

Source: authors' compilation

In view of the above-mentioned typology of support systems, the Hungarian higher education system provides transfer type support for beneficiaries of international protection in Hungary. It does not offer centralised state-funded preparation courses for higher education or group-specific support facilitating retention. Since July 2018, the Hungarian State has not provided free-of-charge language training, outside the school education system, for beneficiaries of protection.

Talent management preparatory courses have only been offered by the Central European University at institution level for beneficiaries of international protection.²³ The programme was launched in 2016, for integrating refugees into higher education and organised jointly by CEU and MigSzol (Migrant Solidarity Group for Hungary), funded by an Erasmus+ programme. A prerequisite for enrolment in the programme was to receive international protection in a European country or be an applicant for it.²⁴ OLlive-up programme was a full-time programme facilitating preparation for the admission procedure, similarly to the “Roma Graduate Preparation” of the CEU. They used to provide university courses and individual tutoring in Academic English and in a discipline according to participants’ interest. Classes held at the CEU were also open to programme participants (but they did not receive grades). Since the programme was full-time, participants were provided a study grant for subsistence and student hostel accommodation. Separate group supervision also supported students and teachers.

Nevertheless, there is an increasing number of centralised talent management programmes for foreign students, whose experience may be useful for the present analysis.

An example of preparation for studies held in Hungarian is the scholarship for a preparatory course for higher education offered by the Balassi Institute of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade for Hungarian nationality students from neighbouring countries, who wish to study in Hungarian higher education. The aim of the scholarship is to prepare for an advanced level Matura in several subjects.²⁵ The preparatory scholarship includes free-of-charge subject-related and Hungarian language training, free textbooks and free student hostel accommodation.

²³ www.olive.ceu.edu/about-olive

²⁴ Although most programme participants were granted refugee status from the Hungarian State, there were also participants from other EEA countries (Germany, Norway and Serbia).

²⁵ [HERA Association of Education Researchers: A felsőoktatás szociális dimenziója](#) (The Social Dimension of Higher Education), 81. p. Tempus Foundation, 2016.

The above two examples prove that there are already programmes offering preparation in school subjects and basic specialised language in addition to language (English in one case and Hungarian in the other) training.

Stipendium Hungaricum²⁶, which supports the studies of third-country students in Hungary, and the state scholarship for young Christians²⁷ could be good practices for group-specific, system-wide support type for beneficiaries of protection. The two programmes are similarly structured, considering the types of support and according to the main aspects relevant to our assessment. In addition to language preparation, both programmes assist the integration of students within the institution in several ways. For all foreign scholarship students it pays for the study fees, accommodation and a study grant. The Stipendium Hungaricum programme has a tradition of organising an Integration Camp prior to the start of studies, with the aim of building trust and community, raising awareness and providing experiences. Scholarship holders are supported by mentors in both programmes who give advice in study and educational cases, help with navigating student life, bureaucracy in and outside the university, finding accommodation to rent as well as organising programmes for foreigners.²⁸ The quotas for participants for the above two programmes are determined by the government.

Obviously, there are higher education programmes in Hungary, based on which, it would be possible to efficiently support the entry into higher education and the studies of beneficiaries of international protection in Hungary. Based on the above models, they should be offered scholarships with similar support. Furthermore, the issue is especially timely because of the action plan “Scaling up in higher education – mid-term policy strategy for 2016-2020” published by the Ministry of Human Resources²⁹, which contains the following: “The population of potential higher education students shrinking due to negative demographics, may be counterbalanced by improving internationalisation and attracting an increasing number of foreign students to Hungary.” The measures of this action plan do not include the target group of foreigners

²⁶ www.studyinhungary.hu/study-in-hungary/menu/stipendium-hungaricum-scholarship-programme

²⁷ The objective of the latter [Scholarship Programme](#) is “to provide higher education study opportunities at Hungarian study sites for young Christians living in crisis regions, where Christians face persecution or threats because of their religion or are restricted in exercising their religion. In this way, it aims to contribute to improving the societal reputation of professionals returning to their home country.” Scholarship participants are defined as facing persecution, but it is not an objective to grant international protection for them in Hungary. Additionally, beneficiaries of protection are excluded from participation.

²⁸ www.tka.hu/kiadvany/8345/mentorprogram-nemzetkozi-hallgatok-tamogatasara

²⁹ www.2015-2019.kormany.hu/download/c/gc/e0000/Fokozatvaltas_Felsooktatásban_HONLAPRA_PDF#IDocumentBrowse

granted international protection by the Hungarian State, even though the human resource development of this group is in line with the objectives of the strategy in terms of the Hungarian economy. On the other hand, this would support the integration of refugees living in Hungary in several respects.

4. Policy recommendations

Preparing statistics on the proportion of beneficiaries of international protection in applicants and admitted students. This would significantly help both the analysis of the Hungarian higher education system and the planning of targeted programmes, especially if it were possible to compare with data on refugees entering the school education system on the input side and the results of follow-up studies on the output side.

In the case of insufficient documentation of qualification:

- ▶ A unified procedure to address the issue;
- ▶ A protocol is needed for replacing the missing documents, which institutions can assist with obtaining information from institutions in the home country of refugees;
- ▶ Developing a course and a system of examinations to assess competences so that refugees are able to verify their competences;
- ▶ Recognition of existing competences and supplementary courses.

Providing English language information and face-to-face consultation.

Face-to-face consultation and direct assistance can be offered at regularly-organised information days, which may be held by organisations specialising in scholarships for students or universities with a large number of foreign students and international programmes. These may include Tempus Foundation, the University of Szeged or the University of Debrecen whose competence would be granted by legal regulations.

Targeted programmes for refugees wishing to study, who are looking for opportunities, and also for those who are hesitant. This requires the centralised and efficient management of available information channels.

Intercultural competence development should be the basis of refugee integration programmes for foreign students, academic staff and administrative staff.

Mental health support. The risk of traumatisation is of special importance due to the refugee background in the case of students receiving interna-

tional protection. Post-traumatic stress may develop as a result of experiencing traumas, which may have a negative impact on integration into a community or the effectiveness of studying. Therefore, a support system specific to this group should include mental health support and, if needed, psychological support.

Volunteer programmes for students preparing and handing out information material, giving advice, interpreting, mentor-ing and specific **legal consultancy**: legal help and advice and referring refugees to adequate organisations. At present, there are volunteer programmes for mentoring foreign students on Erasmus scholarship or other foreigners. If the mentoring to be provided for refugees did not differ significantly from these, they should be managed in a coordinated way.

Entry to higher education and retention could be separate objectives in the design of various programmes. The former may aim at admission relief, supplementary courses, targeted and general personal consultation, while the latter would be typically linked to grants, legal assistance, mentoring, supplementary courses and face-to-face consultations. The recommendations are classified in **Table 3.** below.

Table 3. Recommendations on measures supporting entry into higher education and retention

Measures supporting	Entry into higher education	Retention in higher education
Replacing missing documents of qualification	A unified procedure Obtaining information from the country of origin System of competence exams	System of competence exams Supplementary courses
Targeted programmes for refugees wishing to study	Measures supporting transition between upper-secondary and higher education Providing information (information days, targeted events, online information)	For students who had already started their higher education studies
Mental health support	For potential students	For admitted students
Volunteer programmes for students	For potential students (e.g. preparation)	For admitted students (e.g. mentoring, skill development)
Legal consultancy		For students of the institution

Source: authors' compilation

The Table does not contain intercultural training for academic staff and the development of a system of institutions managing the entry into and retention in higher education of refugees in a coordinated manner.