SEM announced initiative to improve access to education for refugees

The Swiss State Secretariat for Migration and swissuniversities, the association of Swiss higher education institutions, announced a joint initiative to improve access to higher education for refugees with the necessary potential, helping to alleviate Switzerland's shortage of skilled labor. Five projects proposed by the Universities of Basel, Lausanne, and Lucerne, the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland (FHNW) and the Lucerne University of Teacher Education (HSLU) were selected for the pilot phase. This initiative aligns with the Swiss Integration Agenda (AIS), which aims to enhance refugees' access to recognized education and training. Over the next four years (2025–2028), the program will provide targeted support, such as intensive language courses and information sessions on Swiss higher education, to prepare refugees for university studies. The SEM will contribute 1.5 million Swiss francs in initial funding. For refugees aiming for vocational education and training (VET) instead of university studies, Switzerland has offered a pre-apprenticeship integration program since 2018. Around 3,900 participants have completed it so far, with about two-thirds successfully securing an apprenticeship position.

Source(s)

- State Secretariat for Migration | Staatssekretariat für Migration | Secrétariat d'État aux migrations | Segreteria di Stato della migrazione (28 March, 2025), Faire accéder les réfugiés à l'enseignement supérieur pour lutter contre la pénurie de main-d'œuvre qualifiée [Bringing refugees to higher education to tackle skills shortages], https://www.news.admin.ch/fr/nsb?id=104660

Date of development
28.03.2025
Country
Switzerland
Thematic area(s)
Content of protection, Integration
Development type
Policy

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