



European  
Network on  
Statelessness



The Open  
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Centre



## **ACCESS TO CITIZENSHIP AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

### **SDG 4 Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all**

Lack of citizenship documents still creates barriers in access to education, scholarships, technical training and recognition of educational achievements.<sup>1</sup>

When progress is made and recorded on the proportion of children and young people in education, it is crucial to ensure that all children are counted, including children without citizenship or civil documentation.<sup>2</sup>

When children without citizenship are omitted from census data, development measures and school registers they may not be included in monitoring of SDG4.

#### **WHAT TO CONSIDER:**

- (a) Whether lack of citizenship creates barriers to realising children's right to education. For example, are children denied access to school or prevented from taking exams?
- (b) Whether existing reporting on access to education takes children without citizenship into account
- (c) Whether problems proving or accessing citizenship exacerbates barriers to education for girls

#### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:**

The right to education for all children appears in the almost unanimously adopted Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 28. The 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons<sup>3</sup> also requires States to provide access to education for stateless people.

#### **EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE:**

A 2011 law in Moldova established a dedicated statelessness determination procedure. People recognised as stateless are granted permanent residence and rights in line with nationals, including unrestricted access to all levels of education and access to State-funded higher education and scholarships. Those with recognised stateless status are also offered language classes provided by the Ministry of Education<sup>4</sup>.

#### **LINKS TO OTHER SDGS:**

Access to education provides the tools needed for contribution to sustainable economic growth (**SDG 8**).

Entry into primary education provides a key moment when children who have not previously been registered can receive the documentation they require (**SDG 16**).

Addressing documentation and citizenship issues to ensure *all* children including girls can access a quality education will help to reduce gendered barriers to education and promote gender equality (**SDG5**).

<sup>1</sup> Relevant targets: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5.

<sup>2</sup> Relevant indicators: 4.1.1, 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.3.1, 4.4.1, 4.5.1, 5.6.1.

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons\\_ENG.pdf](https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons_ENG.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://index.statelessness.eu/country/moldova>