



European
Network on
Statelessness



The Open
University



Middle East
Centre



WHY CITIZENSHIP IS RELEVANT TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SDG 8 Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

When someone does not have citizenship of any country it can create barriers to decent, legal work anywhere and lead to low-wage and precarious informal employment, impeding self-reliance.¹

This puts people at risk of human trafficking, which disproportionately affects women and girls, particularly those without documents, who may also be forced into prostitution.²

Those without access to citizenship anywhere need the right to work in the place where they live and support to access employment in the formal labour market, education and training.

Lack of citizenship can make it difficult to access banking, to make contracts, or to own property, thus making banking and financial institutions neither accessible nor sustainable.³

WHAT TO CONSIDER:

- (a) Do States make efforts to provide access to citizenship for those that currently have no citizenship and have long-established ties to the country?
- (b) Does a 'statelessness determination procedure' exist? That is, is there a mechanism for officially identifying that someone lacks access to any citizenship?
- (c) Is there a special 'protection status' for migrants without access to any citizenship, granting rights including a residency permit and the right to work?
- (d) Does existing reporting on levels of unemployment and access to education and training count those without citizenship or with civil registration difficulties?
- (e) How do barriers to citizenship and civil registration intersect with other dimensions of discrimination (e.g. gender, race, ethnicity, disability) regarding access to regular and safe work?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Article 17 of the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons⁴ acknowledges the right of stateless individuals to wage-earning employment.

EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE:

France's statelessness determination procedure grants people without access to any citizenship a renewable residence permit which allows employment and self-employment in line with the 1954 Convention⁵. In 2018, France increased the length of the residence permit from one year to up to four.

LINKS TO OTHER SDGS:

Access to productive employment and decent work for those without any citizenship can ensure safer working environments for both men and women (**SDG 5**), reduce inequality within countries (**SDG 10**) and increase the proportion of young people and adults in training and non-formal education (**SDG 4**).

¹ Relevant Targets: 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8

² Relevant Target: 8.8

³ Relevant Target: 8.10

⁴ https://www.unhcr.org/ibelong/wp-content/uploads/1954-Convention-relating-to-the-Status-of-Stateless-Persons_ENG.pdf

⁵ <https://index.statelessness.eu/country/italy>