

Committee: The Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Issues Committee (SOCHUM).

Topic: Ensuring Access to Education for Refugee Children.

Country: Iceland.

Honorable chair and the fellow delegates,

The delegation of Iceland firmly believes that every child regardless of background, nationality, or refugee status has the right to equal access to education. In Iceland, refugee children are welcomed into the school system without discrimination and are granted the same educational rights and opportunities as all other children. Our many schools offer to help refugee children. They support them and make extra classes to learn Icelandic. There're some programs to help them join regular classes with the other children as soon as they are ready. The government gives money to local communities too. So they can provide language teachers, counselors and material for refugee students. Refugee children are encouraged to become a part of the community. They're encouraged to make new friends and join regular schools. So they won't be shy or scared.

Iceland believes that refugee children should have the same right as the other children in the country. They've really tried and worked hard to do this. We've welcomed refugee children through the UN programs to help them to start school quickly. We give extra classes to make refugee children learn Icelandic language. Iceland works with groups like the Icelandic Red Cross. The Icelandic Red Cross helps the refugee children by offering language help and helps them stay in contact with the local schools. They also provide some support teachers and arrange some intro classes. Refugee children's heads are also full of really bad moments. Iceland helps them to clear their head by supporting the access to sport activities like leisure programs.

Of course there are some things that Iceland couldn't do. First, Icelandic is a hard language to learn and there aren't enough teachers to teach the refugee children Icelandic. Second, you know that the refugee children have been through some difficult times. Also they have some traumatic events in their pasts. So they need psychological support. And because Iceland is a small country they don't have enough staff to help refugee children. Third, Iceland's curriculum is created for the children who have grown up in Iceland. Refugee children usually have different educational backgrounds. To make them learn how the education is done in Iceland they need to adapt some lessons.

Despite these challenges, Iceland remains committed to finding sustainable solutions and believes we need to do things differently for refugee children. Iceland has started a project called the Education, Reception, and Culture (MEMM) program to accept children from other cultures for education. Also Icelandic law guarantees equal access to compulsory education for all children aged 6–16 and makes it necessary for schools to support the students by offering language support programs for children who don't speak Icelandic.

In conclusion, Iceland reaffirms its dedication to ensuring that all refugee children receive high quality, inclusive, and supportive education, empowering them to build bright and secure futures.

We yield the floor to the chair. Thank you.