Multilingual Stories for Immigrants and Refugees: A Language-as-Resource Approach

Espen Stranger-Johannessen and Valeria Damiani

Abstract

A major challenge for many immigrants and refugees, particularly those with little or no formal schooling, is learning the language of the host country. Open educational resources (OER), including courses and websites with multilingual stories, are ways to address this challenge. This chapter will present and analyse the OER developed in three projects funded by the Erasmus+ Programme: Advenus and Regap, which integrated language and content learning in courses, and LIDA Stories (https://lidastories.net), a collection of country-specific websites with multilingual stories for youth and adult immigrants and refugees who are learning the language of the host country. The chapter concludes by highlighting the key role of stories for the acquisition of the host country language by migrants and refugees.

A major goal for the integration of immigrants and refugees is learning the language of the host country, as language is widely seen as a key to studying, getting a job, and otherwise taking part in the society. At the same time, language learning is a major challenge for many. Immigrants and refugees with little or no formal schooling face a particular disadvantage. They are not fully familiar with print literacy in any language and must rely more heavily on oral and other means of communication and sense-making [1]. Research on adults' literacy development has mostly focused on people who are literate in their first language [2], which further underlines the importance of more research into how the education system can accommodate the group of students who are the primary topic of this chapter.

While many countries offer language courses, usually in addition to other courses and support, students without prior formal education are at a disadvantage since they are accustomed to listening rather than reading for learning—in a school system that is highly oriented towards print literacy. Language is also implicated in this conundrum, as the teachers hardly ever speak the

E. Stranger-Johannessen (✉)
Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences, Hamar, Norway
e-mail: espen.strangerjohannessen@inn.no

V. Damiani
LUMSA University, Rome, Italy
e-mail: v.damiani2@lumsa.it

languages of their students, and rarely have learning materials in their languages at their disposal. Instructional content, such as literacy, mathematics and social sciences, have to be taught *in* a language, which invariably means the language of the host country. Language and content are often taught together; even if the two are split into separate courses, they are integrated in the immigrants and refugees' learning process.

For pre-literate language learners in particular, but arguably all immigrant and refugees, drawing on their language competence and motivation to adapt to the host country, is a way to apply a resource perspective to language learning, effectively to treat their first language as a resource in the acquisition of the target language, such as Italian, Portugese or Norwegian [3]. Open educational resources (OER), such as bilingual stories with both print and audio, are a way to address this challenge, which has become possible with digital devices, in particular the ubiquitous handheld devices such as smartphones and tablets in recent years, with touch screens facilitating navigation independently of text and keyboard. OER can be used inside and outside the formal education system, which learning cities emphasize (see chapters "Introduction: The Changing World of Pedagogy in Diverse Cultural Contexts" and "Promoting Learning Inclusion Through the Global Network of Learning Cities and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)").

In this chapter we will discuss the inclusion of immigrants and refugees, particularly those with little education, from the perspective of language learning and content and language integration through the use of OER in general and bilingual stories in particular. By approaching language learning from a resource perspective, we consider immigrants and refugees' identity and investment [4], and how these theoretical principles are expressed through LIDA's precursor projects (Advenus and ReGap) and LIDA Stories (lidastories.net), which was developed as part of LIDA. All three projects include online resources for adult refugees; Advenus and ReGap offered primarily courses, while LIDA Stories is a collection of country-specific websites with stories for youth and adult immigrants and refugees who are learning the language of the host country (see Fig. 1).

Apart from the background and design principles of LIDA Stories, we present a case for the use of stories created in the Advenus and ReGap projects, which offered online courses that integrated language and content. We discuss how these different digital approaches to support immigrants and refugees' learning can complement each other and draw on stories and storytelling as fundamental modes of human expression. We conclude by pointing to the way forward, specifically how the current development of LIDA Stories builds on prior experiences and a set of design principles, can support the vision of inclusive education in the digital age.

Fig. 1 The LIDA Stories Portal with the four country-specific websites (https://lidastories.net/)

1 Language and Literacy Learning for Immigrants and Refugees

Migration and refugee crises are not a new phenomenon, but the increase Europe has seen in recent years calls for renewed attention to their education and training [5]. Many migrants and refugees are forced to leave their homes, sometimes leaving family members behind. While many value the learning of the host country's language, other concerns and priorities can jeopardise the time and focus they have for courses and training aimed at studying the language or other courses. Financial constraints can also force people to prioritise working over studying. People with limited education from their home countries are particularly vulnerable, not least since they on average require much more time to develop basic literacy and other foundational skills—even to get entry-level jobs or further studies [6].

While basic, technical literacy skills such as decoding and reading comprehension are core to literacy development, the emphasis on functional literacy, where literacy is reduced to a set of technical skills, has been criticised for not taking into account the multi-faceted and context-dependent nature of literacy (e.g., [7, 8]). People develop and use literacy for a purpose, or rather many purposes, depending on the situation, and come to the language and literacy classroom with prior experiences, wishes and understanding, which should inform the teaching that takes place [2, 9]. Two keywords in this context are *language* and *identity*, which will be discussed in the following.

Language and literacy education for adult immigrants and refugees has often implied the use of the target language only [10], even though there is consensus among researchers that the students' first language should be considered a resource and that co-current development of the first language benefits the development of the second (the one that is being taught) [11]. Although there has been an increase in the use and acknowledgement of the students' own languages, many teachers struggle with this, and are caught between competing ideologies and practical concerns (e.g., [12]). Similar tendencies can be found in primary and secondary schools as well, but these groups of students are different in crucial ways, and the wealth of scholarship on multilingualism in schools does not readily translate to the context of adult education.

Orientations towards language in multilingual contexts—language as a problem, language as a right, and language as a resource [3], along with most concepts and theories in this area, have been developed with respect to children's education, or at least primarily used in that context, but are often relevant for adult education. Re-purposing and recontextualizing concepts and theories, while potentially fruitful, require attention to nuances and shifts in meaning. While Ruiz's concepts were originally intended at the level of language planning and linguistic minorities at a national level, later use of the terms have often focused on the practices and discourses in the classroom [13].

Language as a resource captures both theoretical perspectives on the benefits of multilingualism and pedagogical implications of these [13]. Rather than seeing two or more languages as a question of competition, valorising and supporting students' linguistic repertoires benefits students' academic achievement and affirms their multilingual and multicultural identities [11, 14]. In practice this means allowing for the use of multiple languages in the classroom and encouraging students to use these as part of their learning processes. The deliberate use and facilitation of different languages in this way is known as *pedagogical translanguaging* [15].

Norlund Shaswar [16] found that a teacher expressed multiple competing language ideologies in both discourse and practice, allowing for and employing some level of translanguaging in her Swedish for adult immigrants classroom, but not sufficient to be considered pedagogical translanguaging. Rosén and Lundgren [12] similarly report contradictions and tensions opening for the use of multiple languages, including how translanguaging can create barriers between students who speak the same language (i.e., languages with many speakers, such as Arabic) or

English, which the teacher and some students speak, effectively excluding some students. Translanguaging as a pedagogy for teaching and learning, as proposed by Creese and Blackledge [17], clearly holds great potential, but "[w]hether a specific translanguaging practice is transformative in a specific context depends, to a large extent, on who has initiated it and can decide and control its purpose" ([16], p. 16). Translanguaging, and language in general, is implicated in the power relations in both the classroom and the wider society. An implication of this is that the students and teachers' perceptions, cultural and linguistic resources, desires—in short—their identities, are at the centre stage of language learning.

Identity has proved to be a powerful analytical lens for researching language and literacy teaching across different contexts, including both student (e.g., [18, 19]) and teacher identity (e.g., [20, 21]). While there are many perspectives on identity [22], it is generally described as multiple, shifting, and constructed through discourse and practice [19, 23]. Norton [19] developed a theory of identity that puts relations of power at the heart of language teaching and learning—based on Bourdieu's (language and power) and Weedon's (feminism) scholarship. Based on interviews with five immigrant women in Canada, Norton introduced the concept of investment, a sociological construct parallel to the psychological construct of motivation, in order to take into account the impact of external forces and the power imbalances that adult immigrant language learners often face. The women in her study were motivated to learn, but "all the women felt uncomfortable talking to people *in whom they had a particular symbolic or material investment*" ([19], p. 157, emphasis in original). Previous research on adult language learners had emphasised individual traits, such as motivation and their willingness to speak English. Power differentials between the students and the teacher are blurred or ignored, and lack of understanding for the value and nature of teaching methods in the host country becomes a deficit in the student, who might be labelled "unmotivated".

2   Open Educational Resources and Digital Learning

Immigrants and refugees in Europe usually have access to educational resources such as textbooks, but commercially available materials supplied by the school or institution are limited in many ways, such as curriculum specificity, and teachers routinely expand and enrich their teaching with websites, apps, and other resources. Many of these OER are available online and provided free of charge using open licences. This means that translating, adapting, and republishing are permitted. Apart from the benefit of availability, OER tend to attract a wide range of support, as the effort that goes into creating and making them available is appreciated and generates more support. OER can be both full online courses, known as massively open online courses (MOOCs), but also supplementary materials to be used in addition to courses and textbooks [24]. OER encompass both content, which Advenus and ReGap did, and software, as is the case for LIDA Stories (in addition to content).

All three initiatives are both a product of the open philosophy inherent in the OER movement, and a contribution to it. OER—and more broadly, new information and communication technology (ICT) platforms—are considered a relevant means in tackling the refugee and migrant crisis through the promotion of social inclusion [25, 26]. ICT allows migrants and refugees to learn the language of the host country, in getting health care, in finding a job, in accessing government services and in organising schooling for their children or training for themselves [27].

Research has shown that, in spite of the relevance of OER for the promotion of social inclusion, teachers, migrants, and refugees face difficulties in accessing and using these digital platforms and their content. This is mainly due to the scarcity of OER specifically targeting refugees that can be used in classrooms or independently, the lack of quality control processes for new OER, lack of evaluation mechanisms for existing OER, and the pervasive presence of English as the main language for these resources

[28]. This is the object of wide debate in non-English speaking countries [29].

In their assessment on the features that make ICT deployment successful for refugees and migrants, Bock et al. [30] stressed the importance of a two-way communication functionality of platforms, for example between tutors and refugees and migrants, in contrast with platforms characterised by one-way communication, e.g. a traditional website for information dissemination. The research highlighted three key areas for an effective implementation of a platform targeted to migrants and refugees: (1) sustainable funding (the platform is not only based on volunteering but can pay its operational costs); (2) the scale or penetration (reaching out to a high number of users); and (3) the involvement of end users at the very beginning and throughout the development of a platform in order to meet their actual needs and tailor the contents and functionality of the platform [30].

Similar findings were reported in two studies by UNESCO [28] and the EU Joint Research Centre [31] on the potential of digital learning for migrants and refugees' education. Both reports highlighted some general recommendations that are relevant in the field of OER development for migrants and refugees. These recommendations are firstly related to the need to overcome the exclusive online delivery and to provide blended learning approaches—that combine online and offline learning. This implies the inclusion of learning experiences into wider blended learning designs that incorporate mentoring and peer support and the provision of specific actions that strengthen migrants and refugees' digital literacy skills (that encompass the ability to access OER in non-formal and informal learning and also to create secure and private communication spaces). Providing certifications and degrees that recognize the learning, the adoption of multilingual approaches that increase access for those who do not speak a second language and the inclusion of language learning into formal education initiatives, are considered some of the most relevant features that can foster migrants' and refugees' motivation and investment to learn and enhance their engagement into digital learning [28, 31].

3 Bilingual and Multilingual Stories

The digital revolution and the arrival of connectivism (see "Introduction" to this book) has paved the way for new methods of distributing and displaying books, which, among many benefits, has made it easier to make and share stories and other content that do not warrant large print runs. This includes books in immigrant languages, especially smaller ones, which are not even available in large libraries. The digital format also makes it much easier to make corrections and additions, it is possible to integrate text, illustrations, and audio, and it is easy to navigate between a number of stories and languages in a few clicks, including switching between reading the same story in two different languages. Bilingual stories can then be read either consecutively or concurrently. This allows for accessing the same information through two different languages, and the reader can compare the story—either as a whole or at sentence/page level. Reading a story in a familiar language first allows for an overview and contextual understanding, while switching between languages at the sentence or page level affords contrasting of words and phrases [32].

There are a number of books and websites with stories for children, including multilingual ones. While stories and other literacy materials developed for children are sometimes used in adult education with some success, they are not always accepted or well suited for adults [33]. The illustrations and content in children's stories typically reflect children's life words; adults can feel infantilized if they are given children's books to read. At the same time, the market for storybooks and other materials for adults with low literacy levels is small. The language style, sentence length, and grammatical complexity make such designated texts preferable to newspapers, novels, and other print materials that are written for mother tongue speakers. While such children's stories may be the best on offer, and are sometimes used in adult education classes, they do not adequately meet the needs of adult language learners with initial language and literacy skills. However, virtually all research on multilingual stories and their use in initial language and liter-

acy instruction is done with children, which should be kept in mind when considering the insights from the research literature.

Bilingual stories, or dual-language books, are widely proposed as a contribution to literacy development in multilingual educational settings, particularly schools where many students have an immigrant or linguistic minority background, as well as bilingual communities (e.g., [34, 35]). Dual-language books have been found to instigate a sense of community [36], develop personal and cultural identity [37], improve literacy in students' first [38] and second [39] language. The advantages of dual-language books are linked to the benefits of developing literacy in the first language along with the language of schooling, which is extensively documented empirically and theoretically [11, 40, 41]. When students' home languages are not valued or supported, but rather ignored or silenced, students are given a strong message about their languages, and by extension who they are.

Children's stories available for free are increasingly common, with websites such as storyweaver.org.in, bloomlibrary.org, digitallibrary.io, and letsreadasia.org, which provide stories in multiple languages. However, these websites do not readily facilitate dual-language reading, such as juxtaposing the text or allowing for simple toggling between languages. These and other websites also lack audio (except some stories in major Indian languages), and even though the stories are available for free, the websites are custom made, thus not possible to adapt for other purposes. These shortcomings of related projects spurred the need for a more dynamic approach—making both a website framework and content that could be readily adapted—in keeping with the philosophy of OER, and not reducing openness to merely a question of licences.

> Openness as a foundational principle means thinking about and explicitly facilitating the future reuse and repurposing of data. In the context of an open literacy initiative, this is also embodied in an understanding and expectation that communities and organisations will want to build on, adapt, replace, and otherwise take ownership of the data and format of the stories to suit their local context, as well as in the creation from the ground up of affordances and tools that can make this as accessible as possible. [42]

With this perspective in mind, Global Storybooks started to form and unintendedly sowed the seed of LIDA Stories (see below). In addition to these roots in openly licensed children's stories, courses developed for European immigrants and refugees have also contributed to LIDA Stories. Advenus and ReGap employed stories (among other devices) to teach key skills for managing one's personal and professional life, and some of these stories have been adapted and repurposed for LIDA Stories, in keeping with the spirit of OER. In the following we present these two projects as well as LIDA Stories, before we discuss how these different approaches to supporting inclusion meet different needs and complement each other.

4   Content and Language Integration in an Online Course: Advenus and ReGap

This section presents some examples of the OER created for the Advenus and ReGap projects. Both are based on the evidence reported by the literature in the field and key recommendations [28, 30, 31]. They have involved migrants and refugees at different stages of the development of the resources to tailor OER contents and aims, they have adopted multilingual approaches and have included the learning of the host country language in formal and non-formal contexts as a central aspect of the OER, and they have guaranteed sustainability of the platforms over time across the two projects [43, 44]. Moreover, ReGap has implemented a blended learning approach, combining digital learning with face-to-face activities to be carried out in the classes. In what follows we will consider the characteristics and aims of the OER developed in both projects.

The Advenus project (Developing online resources for adult refugees, ref. 2016-1-NO01-KA204-022090), funded under the Erasmus Plus Programme of the European Union, aimed to foster adult refugees' basic skills in order to promote their integration into host European societies. The creation and the trialling of open access e-learning resources was the main output of the project.

Advenus' assumptions were based on a previous research experience, the EU funded LIBE project (*Supporting Lifelong Learning with Inquiry-Based Education*[1]), aimed at offering young adults (16–24 years old) with low levels of education a set of personalised e-learning units on key and transversal competences, namely literacy, numeracy and problem solving. These e-learning units were provided on a Virtual Learning Environment in Moodle in the four languages of the consortium partners (English, Italian, Norwegian, and Portuguese). LIBE courses, and therefore also the courses developed in Advenus, devised a specific set of activities focused on the development of students' competences through vocabulary and reading skills enhancement [45, 46].

The six Advenus courses on Moodle tackled different issues: literacy and employment issues, the development of e-skills, numeracy, problem solving in technological rich environments in relation to consumer awareness and sustainable development [43]. Each e-learning course was made up of (1) an introduction, aimed at motivating the learner and presenting the topic; (2) the presentation of prompts (e.g., a completed CV, a cover letter example); (3) an analysis section, with a specific focus on the language and on text's structure, key words and expressions adopted; (4) several activities for applying what the learner had just analysed (multiple choices questions, drag and drop, cloze tests etc.); and (5) dedicated feedback, one for each activity, aimed at explaining the most common wrong answers.

Two focus groups were carried out at the beginning of the project with the refugees in order to explore their interests and learning needs and to involve them in the development of the resources [47]. In the redesigning of the courses, great attention was paid to language and content adaptation. In particular, the language of the texts and the activities was simplified, highlighting key words that were deemed useful for the target group in relation to every topic of each course, and the length of the texts was reduced in order to lighten the reading load. Vocabulary learning was at the heart of every course, with explanatory sections focused on the meaning of key words and drag and drop activities, with visual dictionaries to improve lexical competence. The prompts were developed using real-life material concerning experiences that refugees may have encountered, e.g., an example of a CV of a worker with an immigrant background; and real job advertisements that referred to the jobs that refugees and educators had identified as the most common in Italy.

The research experience gained through Advenus was the starting point for another project, also funded under the Erasmus Plus Programme, that followed the same rationale and the structure, i.e., to develop high-quality and open access e-learning resources. The 2-year ReGap project (Reducing the Education Gap, ref. 2017-1-NO01-KA204-034182) broadened the target group of Advenus (now including adult migrants and refugees) and was focused on the improvement of their employment opportunities and the fostering of social belonging. In addition, the knowledge of the host country language was at the heart of the e-learning resources in ReGap.

In line with its main objectives, the six online courses created on Moodle for ReGap were related to those issues that were deemed crucial for migrants' and refugees' social inclusion and employability, i.e., employment, health, education, gender, social security and welfare, justice and citizenship. Each course included, in addition to the language learning activities, a dedicated section on information on the four partner countries, with the aim of supporting migrants and refugees in dealing with relevant cultural aspects or problems they may face in the host country. A feature that differentiates ReGap from Advenus was the inclusion of complementary face-to face activities, to be carried out with students by teachers, educators, or cultural facilitators.

Each course followed a common rationale and structure: (1) the need to motivate refugees' and migrants' learning through an introductory video; (2) the focus on the learning of the host country

---

[1] https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Gabriella-Agrusti/publication/294581470_LIBE_e-booklet_for_teachers_and_educators/links/56c230cb08aee5caccf9bbb6/LIBE-e-booklet-for-teachers-and-educators.pdf

language with an attention to lexical competence and reading comprehension; (3) dedicated activities on key words and on the understanding of each topic; and (4) country-specific information for every topic tackled in the courses. The ReGap course on employment, for instance, aimed at (1) presenting different kinds of job contracts, reinforcing students' lexicon related to different kinds of jobs, to a CV and to a job advertisement; and (2) job describing how to use public transportation or a car to go to work, highlighting the lexicon and communicative expression to ask for information on the street. The country-specific information of the course dealt with workers' rights at the workplace, the system of job centres/agencies, and the basic traffic laws in each partner country (Fig. 2).

The ReGap course was made up of six sections. The first section was an introduction to the course and included a video-interview with migrants and refugees talking about their experiences related to employment in the hosting country (e.g., how they found a job, what are the key elements for finding a job in the country they live in). The other sections presented the main content of the course (e.g. CV, job ads, employment contracts, losing a job) and encompassed different activities related to reading comprehension, a visual dictionary on professions, exercises on lexicon, and key words. The final section recalled the most relevant information dealt with in the course through multiple choice questions and cloze exercises. The characteristics of different kinds of employment contracts (such as permanent/fixed-term contract, self-employment) were embedded in short stories about migrants and refugees (see Fig. 3), followed by a comprehension quiz. The stories allowed users to familiarise themselves with the content of the section, introducing key words and linguistic expressions into real-life contexts.

In addition to this, the course encompassed a face-to-face (F2F) activity to be carried out in class by a teacher, educator, or cultural facilitator. The F2F activity for the Italian version of the course used a video of an immigrant at the employment centre as a prompt to learn key words for finding a job and communicating in job searching contexts (describe your own skills, understand the requested documents, etc.). Students were engaged in small-group activities on vocabulary and then performed a role-play in pairs, simulating an interview at the employment centre. All F2F activities included guidelines on their delivery. In contrast to, or rather in addition to the comprehensive Advenus and ReGap projects, with extensive online course and F2F activities, LIDA Stories is another initiative for inclusion. It is based on the same philosophy and shares the same broad aims, but has a different approach to supporting immigrants and refugees.

Fig. 2 The ReGap course on employment. (The figures are presented in the English language version to ensure consistency with the language of the chapter. Erasmus+ project with identifier Project no: 2017-1-NO01-KA204-034182 https://www.regap-edu.net/regap-courses/)

Employment

Dashboard / My courses / Employment / 2. Different kinds of employment contracts / Katja's story

Katja's story

Katja tells her story ...

My name is Katja and I come from Ukraine. I arrived in Italy two years ago. In my country I had started studying as hairdresser but here in Italy I am a carer. I take care of an elderly lady who is sick and lives alone. I work all day, I live in his house, I eat and sleep there. My free days are Thursday afternoons and Sundays when the lady's sons come to see her and take care of her. I have **a fixed-term employment contract** that lasts two years. The contract expires in six months. When the contract expires, I want to resume my studies to become a hairdresser.

Fig. 3 An example of a story in ReGap that presents the topic of the section (https://www.regap-edu.net/regap-courses/)

5   Multilingual Stories for Supplementary Language Learning: LIDA Stories

LIDA Stories provides 30 illustrated stories as text and audio in major immigrant and refugee languages, allowing for reading and listening to the same stories in the first language as well as the language of the host country. LIDA Stories is based on Global Storybooks (globalstorybooks.net), a sister project designed for children who are developing language and literacy skills in both their first and second language, such as Arabic and Italian (if they speak Arabic at home and go to school in Italy). Adapting the existing website framework to fit a new purpose, target group, and content (stories, images, and languages), allows for leveraging the versatility of digital technology in multiple ways, including successful designs and design principles, and flexible sharing and repurposing of digital content across related, but independent websites [47]. To clarify what this means in practice, in the

following we will explicate how the original Global Storybooks portal and its country-wise/regional websites work and how the repurposing and adaptation into LIDA Stories has taken place, including the transformation from targeting children to adults, resulting in a unique multilingual, multimodal language and literacy resource for adult immigrants and refugees that is—to the best of our knowledge—the only one of its kind.

Global Storybooks grew from another project to provide openly licensed stories in multiple languages, the African Storybook (africanstorybook.org), which offers a collection of more than 1000 stories in more than 100 languages spoken in Africa. With the dire lack of storybooks and textbooks in any language, and in African languages in particular, the African Storybook sought to address one of the major shortcomings of the African education system, and one that is often cited as one of the key reasons to the low literacy levels on the continent [48, 49]. By making stories available for free online, teachers, parents, NGOs and anyone else with Internet access could get hold of stories, including in languages with few or no commercially available books. The

potential for digital content development, translation, editing and distribution, opens up for access in unprecedented ways.

An unintended consequence of the openly licenced stories from the African Storybook was that a large number of high quality, illustrated children's stories were available for translation and repurposing. This happened when a selection of 40 stories were translated into several immigrant and refugee languages of Canada, and the website Storybooks Canada (storybookscanada. ca) was created in order to host these stories and their translations, and in the process challenged the dominant North–South directionality of knowledge flows [47]. The selected stories were also audio recorded in all languages, as audio support is useful for making connections between sound and printed text [50, 51], but also to support children who can speak their mother tongue, but not necessarily read it (in particular when non-Roman scripts are used, such as Persian or Chinese).

5.1 Design Principles

The LIDA Stories website has been designed to be as useful and accessible for people with little or even no literacy skills. This inclusive design includes content, layout, and navigation. The website is simple to use—a great deal of thought has gone into making it accessible and purposeful with the goal of making it a prime resource for immigrants and refugees, and anyone else who finds it useful. The key design features and principles include (1) relevance (2) accessibility, (3) device and format independence, (4) multilingualism and multimodality, (5) audio recordings, and (6) truly open, as explicated below.

5.1.1 Design Principle 1: Relevance
The majority of stories are short and simple, since the largest need for support materials is at the lowest level. However, the five levels cater for a range of students at different proficiency levels. LIDA stories' aim is to aid students' development of foundational skills to they can read texts without requiring the support of parallel texts or

audio. LIDA stories are available in each of the four languages of LIDA (including Portuguese, Italian and Norwegian, not just English), known as localisation [52]. Although the content has not been adapted to each country, the 30 stories have been written with the target group in mind to meet the need for texts that are both relevant and appealing by dealing with everyday interactions, practical issues such as ordering food at a café, but also topics like migration, workers' rights, domestic violence and giving birth.

This approach entails language and content integration, even though the main focus is on language and literacy learning. Five of the stories are adapted from ADVENUS/REGAP stories, while two are written by refugees, recounting their own experiences of migration and challenges and opportunities encountered in their own new country. The inclusion of immigrant and refugees' own stories and recycling stories that have been successfully used previously, meets Bock et al.'s [30] criteria of involvement of end users and meeting their needs. The popularity of the children's stories found in Global Storybooks for use in in adult education—in want of an equivalent site—attests to the functionality and value of the platform design.

5.1.2 Design Principle 2: Accessibility
For people with limited experience of computers, and in particular users with little or no formal schooling, simple-to-use websites are crucial in making content accessible. Reading instructions in a second language also represents a challenge, so reducing excess instructions, menus, buttons, and extraneous text and features in general contribute to making a website accessible. The LIDA Stories website has been designed with this in mind. Instead of complex menus, language-dependent guidelines, cookies, and hidden features, all the stories are visible on the front page and accessible by clicking on the image or title of the story. The small menu on top of the page only provides additional information, not the main content (see Fig. 4). Each story can be easily navigated like any other website by scrolling (using the mouse), keyboard (page up/down, spacebar to go down), as well as buttons with icons for chang-
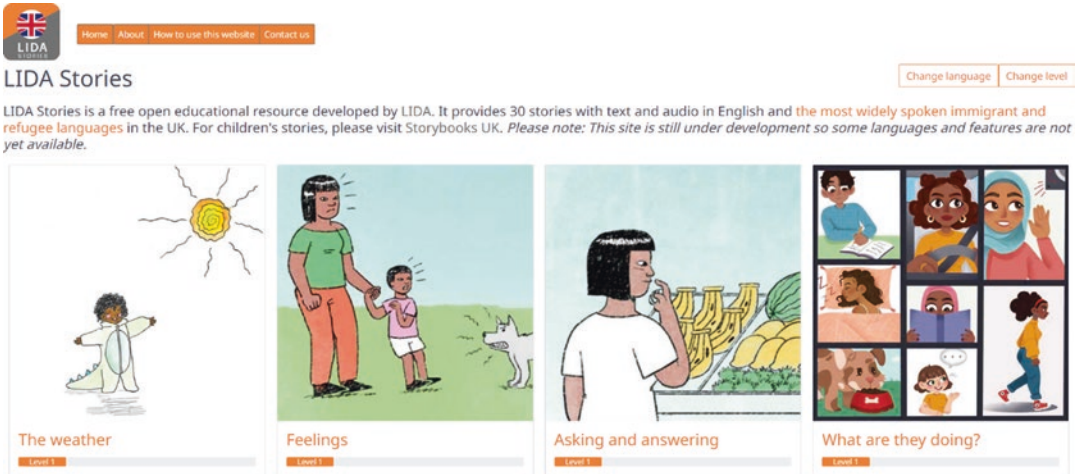
Fig. 4 The United Kingdom website at lidastories.net

Fig. 5 Bilingual booklet (PDF) in Amharic and English (https://lidastories.net/)

ing the page (see below). Similarly, the buttons for playing audio, toggling between languages, and even the equivalent of the colophon (metadata about author, translator, reader, licence) contains icons rather than text. While the website has been designed for ease of use, there is also a full description ("How to use this website") in the menu with descriptions of features, such as how to download different types of PDFs.

5.1.3 Design Principle 3: Device and Format Experience

The website works equally well on a large computer screen, a tablet, and a small smartphone. The text, images and icons neatly fold together such that the size of the screen does not affect the readability or other functions. Since it is a web

application, it is not tied to any operating system (e.g., iPhone or Android). The stories are also available for download, either as a regular A4 paper size or booklets (see Fig. 5), so the stories can be used as conventional storybooks. The printouts can be monolingual or bilingual, or even wordless, inviting users to write their own stories, in keeping with the multilingual and multimodal spirit that underpins the project.

5.1.4 Design Principle 4: Multilingualism and Multimodality

The inherently multilingual nature of the website means that the stories are easily accessible across languages. The few other websites that offer the same story in multiple languages, generally keep

Fig. 6 The buttons that toggles between the main language and another language (https://lidastories.net/)

them separated, making it hard to compare text or swiftly navigate between them. Rather than conceiving of languages other than the main language (e.g., Italian or English) as a bonus, in LIDA Stories, the multiple translations are integral to the website, and toggling between a language of choice is the main language is a core feature available with the toggle button (see Fig. 6). More importantly, by offering the same set of stories in all languages, a group of students can read the same story both in their own language, and in the shared language of the classroom, even if the teacher only speaks the language of instruction. The confluence of images, text, and audio support each other to create a multimodal experience for both enjoyment and learning.

Printed dual-language books typically provide images and texts in two languages on the same page or spread. In this mode, the same text can be read twice, once for each language. This mode is available through the website by opening a bilingual PDF (see Fig. 5), but on the website the toggle button allows the user to switch between languages without taking up more screen space. Rather than asking which mode is better—juxtaposed text or a clickable button—the point is the two modes have different affordances, and both are readily accessible.

5.1.5 Design Principle 5: Audio and Recordings

The audio recordings are a prime feature of LIDA Stories, not only to support the development of listening skills in the target language, as is often the case for audio recordings in language classrooms, but also to provide *oral* parallel texts, in addition to the written ones. For people with little or no print literacy skills in their first language, conventional print dual-language books are of little or no use. Similarly, dictionaries are often unfamiliar and challenging, and the opportunity to compare and contrast across languages is severely limited. The audio versions of the stories, however, make the translations available independent of literacy skills, and facilitates the use of the first language as a resource in the learning of the new language. The audio recordings are segmented by page, so it is possible to read a page (one or a few sentences) and listen to the corresponding audio, without the recording running until the end of the story like an audiobook (although that is also an option).

Whereas dictionaries focus on word-level equivalence in meaning, the parallel texts in LIDA Stories provide contextual cues to holistic understanding of meaning at the page and story level, which is likely to be perceived as more meaningful. Grammatical suffixes and words such as particles and conjunctions are more likely to make sense in the context of a sentence or a paragraph than in isolation. People who lack schooling are often experts at inferring meaning from spoken and contextual information, and are likely to benefit from such a holistic approach to supplement explanations given by the teacher. Audio recordings in all languages also means that people can develop literacy in their first language with support from audio to make connections between letters and sounds.

5.1.6 Design Principle 6: Truly Open

LIDA Stories is born out of the OER movement and the principle of sharing, and it takes part in the same by adhering to the same philosophy. The web architecture builds on previous projects, while new stories, illustrations, translations, and audio recordings have been created, and are made

available and easily accessible free of charge and with open licences. Part of the wonder of the OER movement—apart from making available great educational resources—is that other people can reuse and repurpose resources in novel ways. No one could have predicted that children's stories in African languages would find their way to Canada, translated into Asian, European, and Latin American immigrant languages, and in the process spawn a website framework that is ideally suited for adult refugees and immigrants in Europe who are in dire need of educational materials the bridge the gap between their own languages and the language of the host country. This is the power of open (thepowerofopen.org).

6   Discussion

Immigrants and refugees come to the host country with skills, experiences and languages that are too often not valued in the host country, notably by the fact that their first language is either ignored or silenced through explicit or implicit "English only" and equivalent school and classroom level policies [12]. Even many teachers who are in favour of including students' first language, struggle with competing norms and ideologies, and fall short of a truly inclusive and innovative practice through pedagogical translanguaging [16]. Although LIDA Stories and its predecessors Advenus and ReGap cannot be expected to change this, they represent a contribution towards supporting students and teachers to learn in general and draw on their linguistic capabilities in the process. Advenus/ReGap and LIDA Stories approach learning in different, complementary ways, but also have several commonalities.

Social inclusion mediated through the act of learning inclusion is the main framework that has informed the development of the three projects. There are several barriers to social inclusion that migrants and refugees may encounter in the hosting country [53], including discrimination; limited access to healthcare, particularly needed since they have often been exposed to violence or trauma; limited access to the education system; and unemployment.

Regarding the latter, especially refugees represent one of the most vulnerable groups when it comes to labour market integration. On average, it takes up to 20 years for a refugee to have a similar employment rate as the native-born, and the employment rate of refugee women is lower than that of other non-EU born women [54]. Among all these challenges, being unable to speak the local language of the host community can be considered the main barrier to social inclusion, since learning the local language is crucial for full participation in all aspects of society. Advenus/ReGap and LIDA stories are an attempt to overcome this barrier, making language learning open, freely accessible, and relevant for migrants and refugees.

Advenus and Regap were full online courses with an account to log in and keep track of progress, a syllabus, questions to each section, and other elements found in a course, primarily with courses on foundational skills and information for immigrants and refugees, with language learning and support built-in [43]. LIDA Stories, on the other hand, is primarily about language (and literacy) learning, with topics on managing personal and professional needs immigrants and refugees might meet integrated into the stories. In this way the two approaches are not competing, but serve different purposes and meet different needs. ReGap responded to the need for face-to-face communication that was identified in Advenus, while LIDA Stories has been designed as a collection of supplementary language and literacy materials to be used partly as part of face-to-face classes, and partly for students to use on their own.

Three central commonalities between Advenus/ReGap and LIDA Stories are their digital platforms, openness, and the use of multimodal stories. By virtue of being digital, the three projects can reach an unlimited number of people, allow for updating, interaction, and audio, which are difficult if not impossible to do on scale without digital technology. As digital devices are becoming ubiquitous, and students increasingly have access to them, and need to master them for their personal and professional lives, using digital technology in adult education classes has a double benefit.

Making the content open and without fees ensures that the opportunity to register is offered to all. It is worth noting that even symbolic fees can keep many users away and add a burden to schools that are often underfunded. OER are also possible to adapt and reuse, just as ReGap has built upon Advenus, and the LIDA Stories has been developed based on the foundation offered by Global Storybooks. In the case of LIDA Stories, the website itself, text, images, and audio are all available for reuse, and might be taken up for different purposes in the future.

Storytelling is a fundamental, universal human activity, and reading and engaging with stories in the classroom is likely to resonate with all students. Stories are at the heart of both Advenus/ReGap and LIDA Stories, but in slightly different ways. In the former, the stories frame a topic, provide key information and vocabulary, and serve as a base for questions, in addition to language learning in general. The four ReGap country trials and a workshop found that the participants identified with the stories [44]. In the latter, stories are what constitute the website, and any preparation or follow-up activities are up to the teacher and students. The LIDA Stories are available in multiple languages and the website is designed to facilitate parallel reading, effectively making the stories bilingual. The use of bilingual stories has a long tradition and a growing body of research on children (e.g., [35, 38]), but in adult education it seems that both practice and research have not explored the potential of bilingual stories.

The stories in all three projects, whether bilingual or not, will hopefully inspire students to make and share their own stories, opening the space for digital storytelling (see chapters "We Belong and Connect When We Have a Voice: Towards a Learning Design for Inclusive Learning" and "The Critique of Learning Inclusion in a Digital World: A Conversation" in this volume). Lastly, stories tend to resonate with people's lives, especially stories about people in a similar situation as the reader. When students experience that their background, interests and language are recognized as a resource (through stories and otherwise), their identities are affirmed and they are likely to be invested in the

classroom practices [19]. This is LIDA Stories' ambition—to provide a website that has been designed to be as accessible as possible and provide openly licensed supplementary materials that support both language and literacy development for immigrants and refugees.

7   Conclusion and Looking to the Future

Advenus and ReGap was trialled in four European countries, whereas the LIDA Stories, with its four country-specific websites, is fully operational. Unlike Advenus and ReGap, LIDA Stories does not depend on course management or other maintenance, so it the website will be available for the foreseeable future. Since the website is being completed at the time of writing, it is too early to report on user experiences or impact in concrete terms. However, experiences with stories from Global Storybooks with adults suggest that the new website will be welcomed. The LIDA project team has a vast and expanding network that will support the dissemination of the website across multiple countries. There is great potential for ongoing research both within and across countries.

The experience gained in developing courses for social inclusion through OER and the fostering of knowledge of the host country's language, is the legacy of Advenus and Regap for LIDA. LIDA is built upon and is benefiting from a three-year period of work, carried out in different European contexts, characterized by diverse needs concerning migrants and refugees inclusion. Since 2016, when Advenus was initiated, the nature of migration to Europe has changed considerably. At that time Europe was facing a migrant crisis, with a significant increase of movement of refugees and migrants into Europe that questioned EU's capacity to integrate them into its economy and society [55].

From 2016 onwards, migration flows have waxed and waned with recurring increases in migration due to different global and regional crises (e.g. the conflicts in the Middle East and the war in Ukraine). Despite this, the challenges

related to social inclusion remain the same: access to healthcare, education, and employment; and understanding of and participation in the host societies. For this reason, the key features of the Advenus and ReGap projects continue to be relevant, and with LIDA Stories they represent continuation of transnational efforts to improve our societies.

Advenus, ReGap and LIDA Stories are attempts to meet the need for improved education and educational materials for some of the most vulnerable people in Europe, while adhering to principles of inclusion and language as a resource in the process, in terms of contributions, content, languages, and design—the latter spanning a range of overlapping areas, as we have highlighted in this chapter. Our chapter is closely aligned to Sustainable Development Goal 4—seeking educational inclusion for all. Digital design is often seen as a question of aesthetics, or website navigability and accessibility. In the context of educational resources for immigrants and refugees, however, other concerns such as inclusion occupy centre stage and are thus equally important.

Using stories in education is as old as education itself, but the multilingual, multimodal stories of LIDA Stories are we would argue, a unique contribution pointing the way forwards for educators and developers seeking to harness the power of digital tools for inclusion and learning how to include—i.e. learning inclusion.

References

1. Malessa E (2018) Learning to read for the first time as adult immigrants in Finland: reviewing pertinent research of low-literate or non-literate learners' literacy acquisition and computer-assisted literacy training. Apples 12(1):25–54. https://doi.org/10.17011/apples/urn.201804051932
2. Wedin Å, Rosén J, Hennius S (2018) Transspråkande och multimodalitet i grundläggande skriftspråksundervisning inom sfi (Translingualism and multimodality in basic written language teaching within sfi). Pedagogisk forskning i Sverige 23(1–2):15–38
3. Ruiz R (1984) Orientations in language planning. NABE J 8(2):15–34. https://doi.org/10.1080/08855072.1984.10668464
4. Darvin R, Norton B (2015) Identity and a model of investment in applied linguistics. Annu Rev Appl Linguist 35:36–56. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190514000191
5. European Commission (2020a) Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021–2027. European Commission
6. European Commission (2020b) Inclusion of young refugees and migrants through education Thematic fiche: ET 2020 working group on promoting common values and inclusive education. European Commission
7. Street BV (2012) New literacy studies. In: Grenfell M, Bloome D, Hardy C, Pahl K, Rowsell J, Street BV (eds) Language, ethnography, and education: bridging new literacy studies and Bourdieu. Routledge, pp 27–49
8. The Douglas Fir Group (2016) A transdisciplinary framework for SLA in a multilingual world. Mod Lang J 100(S1):19–47. https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12301
9. Wedin Å, Norlund Shaswar A (2021) Litteracitetspraktiker i vardags- och samhällsliv: Skriftspråksvanor hos svenska sfi-elever med kort eller ingen tidligare studiebakgrund (Literacy practices in everyday and social life: written language habits of Swedish SFI students with little or no previous study background). Nordic J Lit Res 7(2):19–38. https://doi.org/10.23865/njlr.v7.2797
10. Rosén J (2017) Spaces for translanguaging in Swedish education policy. In: Paulsrud B, Rosén J, Straszer B, Wedin Å (eds) New perspectives on translanguaging and education. Multilingual Matters, pp 38–55
11. Cummins J (2021) Rethinking the education of multilingual learners: a critical analysis of theoretical concepts. Multilingual Matters
12. Rosén J, Lundgren B (2021) Challenging monolingual norms through pedagogical translanguaging in adult education for immigrants in Sweden? In: Juvonen P, Källkvist M (eds) Pedagogical translanguaging: theoretical, methodological and empirical perspectives. Multilingual Matters, pp 186–202
13. Hornberger NH (1990) Bilingual education and English-only: a language-planning framework. Ann Am Acad Pol Soc Sci 508(1):12–26. https://doi.org/10.1177/0002716290508001002
14. Cummins J (2000) Language, power, and pedagogy: bilingual children in the crossfire. Multilingual Matters
15. Juvonen P, Källkvist M (eds) (2021) Pedagogical translanguaging: theoretical, methodological and empirical perspectives. Multilingual Matters
16. Norlund Shaswar A (2021) Language norms in L2 education for adult migrants—translanguaging pedagogy in the age of mobility. Multilingua. https://doi.org/10.1515/multi-2021-0123

17. Creese A, Blackledge A (2010) Translanguaging in the bilingual classroom: a pedagogy for learning and teaching? Mod Lang J 94(1):103–115. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.2009.00986.x

18. Eek M (2021) Språkhjelpere, investering og sosial rettferdighet: En undersøkelse av bruk av språkhjelpere i norskopplæringen for voksne nyankomne med liten skolebakgrunn (Language assistants, investment and social justice: an investigation of the use of language assistants in Norwegian education for adult newcomers with little schooling background). PhD thesis, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences. https://brage.inn.no/inn-xmlui/handle/11250/2738680. Accessed 1 Jun 2022

19. Norton B (2013) Identity and language learning: extending the conversation, 2nd edn. Multilingual Matters

20. Barkhuizen G (ed) (2016) Reflections on language teacher identity research. Routledge

21. Cheung YL, Said SB, Park K (eds) (2015) Advances and current trends in language teacher identity research. Routledge

22. Beauchamp C, Thomas L (2009) Understanding teacher identity: an overview of issues in the literature and implications for teacher education. Camb J Educ 39(2):175–189. https://doi.org/10.1080/03057640902902252

23. Varghese M, Morgan B, Johnston B, Johnson KA (2005) Theorizing language teacher identity: three perspectives and beyond. J Lang Identity Educ 4(1):21–44

24. UNESCO (2021) Accessible open educational resources. UNESCO Publishing

25. AbuJarour S, Krasnova H (2017) Understanding the role of ICTs in promoting social inclusion: the case of Syrian refugees in Germany. In: Proceedings of the 25th European conference on information systems (ECIS), Guimarães, Portugal, June 5–10, pp 1792–1806

26. Andrade AD, Doolin B (2016) Information and communication technology and the social inclusion of refugees. MIS Q 40(2):405–416

27. Qayyum MA, Thompson KM, Kennan MA, Lloyd A (2015) The provision and sharing of information between service providers and settling refugees. Inf Res 19(2):1–23

28. UNESCO (2018) A lifeline to learning. Leveraging technology to support education for refugees. UNESCO Publishing

29. Dobson S, Zhudi M (2021) When English becomes the global language of education we risk losing other—often better—ways of learning. Conversation. https://theconversation.com/when-english-becomes-the-global-language-of-education-we-risk-losing-other-often-better-ways-of-learning-143744

30. Bock JG, Haque Z, McMahon KA (2020) Displaced and dismayed: how ICTs are helping refugees and migrants, and how we can do better. Inf Technol Dev 26(4):670–691. https://doi.org/10.1080/02681102.2020.1727827

31. Colucci E, Smidt H, Devaux A, Vrasidas C, Safarjalani M, Muñoz JC (2017) Free digital learning opportunities for migrants and refugees. An analysis of current initiatives and recommendations for their further use. EUR 28559 EN. https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/684414. Accessed 1 Jun 2022

32. Zaidi R, Metcalfe R, Norton B (2022) Dual language books go digital: storybooks Canada in French immersion schools and homes. Can J Appl Linguistics 25(1):64–87. https://doi.org/10.37213/cjal.2022.31626

33. Ho L (2000) Children's literature in adult education. Child Lit Educ 31(4):259–271. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1026431003032

34. Naqvi R, McKeough A, Thorne K, Pfitscher C (2013) Dual-language books as an emergent-literacy resource: culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning. J Early Child Lit 13(4):501–528

35. Zaidi R (2020) Dual-language books: enhancing engagement and language awareness. J Lit Res 52(3):269–292. https://doi.org/10.1177/1086296X20939559

36. Ma J (2008) 'Reading the word and the world'—how mind and culture are mediated through the use of dual-language storybooks. Education 36(3):237–251. https://doi.org/10.1080/03004270802217686

37. Taylor LK, Bernhard JK, Garg S, Cummins J (2008) Affirming plural belonging: building on students' family-based cultural and linguistic capital through multiliteracies pedagogy. J Early Child Lit 8(3):269–294

38. Sneddon R (2009) Bilingual books: biliterate children learning to read through dual language books. Trentham Books in partnership with Mantra Lingua

39. Cummins J (2007) Pedagogies for the poor? Realigning reading instruction for low-income students with scientifically based reading research. Educ Res 36(9):564–572

40. García O, Kleifgen JA (2010) Educating emergent bilinguals: policies, programs, and practices for English language learners. Teachers College Press

41. Oakes J, Lipton M, Anderson L, Stillman J (2015) Teaching to change the world. Routledge

42. Norton B, Doherty L, Stranger-Johannessen E (2021) The Global Storybooks project and Storybooks Deutschland: identity, early literacy, and open technology. In: Wilden E, Alfes L, Cantone-Altintas K, Cikrikci S, Reimann D (eds) Standortbestimmungen. 29, Kongress der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Fremdsprachenforschung in Essen. Schneider Verlag, Hohengehren

43. Damiani V (2021) Words for inclusion: research experience and perspectives on the creation of online L2 resources for migrants and refugees in Italy. Int J Incl Educ 25(1):40–51. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1673958

44. Svoen B, Dobson S, Bjørge LT (2019) Let's talk and share! Refugees and migrants building social inclusion and wellbeing through digital stories and online learning resources. Int J Incl Educ 25(1):94–

107. https://doi.org/10.1080/13603116.2019.1678802

45. Agrusti G, Damiani V (2014) LIBE project. Supporting lifelong learning with inquiry-based education. Cadmo: Giornale Italiano di Pedagogia Sperimentale XXII(2):112–114

46. Agrusti G, Dobson S (2016) ADVENUS. Developing online training resources for adult refugees. Cadmo: Giornale Italiano di Pedagogia Sperimentale XXIV(2):112–115

47. Damiani V, Agrusti G (2018) Online resources to promote social inclusion of refugees and migrants in Italy: topics, approaches and tools to develop culturally sensitive courses. Proceedings of 10th annual International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies (EDULEARN) 2018, Annual Conference Palma 2–4 July, Edited by L. Gómez Chova, A. López Martínez, I. Candel Torres, pp. 3495-3504, IATED Academy. https://library.iated.org/view/DAMIANI2018ENH

48. Stranger-Johannessen E, Doherty L, Norton B (2018) The African storybook and storybooks Canada: digital stories for linguistically diverse children. Lang Literacy 20(3):121–133. https://doi.org/10.20360/langandlit29413

49. Dent VF, Goodman G (2015) The rural library's role in Ugandan secondary students' reading habits. IFLA J 41(1):53–62

50. Ssentanda ME (2014) The challenges of teaching reading in Uganda: curriculum guidelines and language policy viewed from the classroom. Apples 8(2):1–22

51. Teng F (2018) Incidental vocabulary acquisition from reading-only and reading-while-listening: a multi-dimensional approach. Innov Lang Learn Teach 12(3):274–288. https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2016.1203328

52. Tragant E, Vallbona A (2018) Reading while listening to learn: young EFL learners' perceptions. ELT J 72(4):395–404. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccy009

53. Warschauer M (2002) Languages.com: the internet and linguistic pluralism. In: Snyder I (ed) Silicon literacies: communication, innovation and education in the electronic age. Routledge, pp 62–74

54. UNHCR (2020) Social inclusion of refugees. Background guide. https://www.unhcr.org/5fc126354.pdf. Accessed 1 Jun 2022

55. European Commission, OECD (2016) How are refugees faring on the labour market in Europe? Working Paper 1/2016. https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/87a8f92d-9aa8-11e6-868c-01aa75ed71a1. Accessed 1 Jun 2022

56. Aiyar S, Barkbu B, Batini N, Berger H, Detragiache E, Dizioli A, Ebeke C, Lin H, Kaltani L, Sosa S, Spilimbergo A, Topalova P (2016) The refugee surge in Europe. IMF Staff Discussion Note. https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/sdn/2016/sdn1602.pdf. Accessed 1 Jun 2022