



ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR ALL

SUMMARY OF INTERNATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

MADE ON THE TOPIC

At the last UPR in 2018, the French State received recommendations calling for the reduction of inequalities and discrimination between young people, in particular for Unaccompanied Minors (UAMs) and young people from overseas. Thus, France has accepted a recommendation concerning access to education for UAMs. The French State also committed itself to reducing inequalities between Overseas France and mainland France by accepting two recommendations on this subject.

The issue of equal access to education was raised by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its latest review of France, recommending "to guarantee the right to education to all children without discrimination". Indeed, the CRC states in its article 28 that "every child has the right to education and to quality learning opportunities.

Sustainable Development Goal 4 aims to ensure "equitable, inclusive and quality education and lifelong learning opportunities" for all.

NATIONAL FRAME

In France, the right to education for all is enshrined in the Constitution. The 13th paragraph of the preamble to the 1946 Constitution states that "the Nation guarantees equal access for children and adults to education, professional training and culture. The organisation of free and secular public education at all levels is a duty of the State'.

The law of 26 July 2019 makes school compulsory from the age of 3 to combat social inequalities. Circular No. 2012-141 of 2 October 2012 on the organisation of schooling for newly arrived allophone pupils specifies that "school is a right for all children residing on national territory, regardless of their nationality, migratory status or previous experience, as specified in the Education Code, which in its articles L. 111-1, L. 122-1 and L. 131-1 includes compulsory education for all children".

RECOMMENDATIONS

- To offer young people in the French overseas territories comprehensive support: food aid, access to basic necessities, social integration, support for the construction of a personal project to encourage them to stay in school;
- To guarantee comprehensive quality educational care for Unaccompanied Minors.

CHALLENGE

IMPACTS

1. The material and legal conditions are not always in place to guarantee access to appropriate, quality schooling for children in the overseas territories.

For some children, this results in refusal of schooling, non-enrolment or schooling in degraded conditions.

The rate of non-enrolment is estimated at 5 to 9% for children in Mayotte in 2022, whereas it is almost zero in mainland France.

2. UAMs do not benefit from the same educational support as other children, in Metropolitan France and overseas.

In mainland France, there are almost 20,000 young people in the care of the departments for child protection in 2022.

There is a poor distribution of specialised classes on the territory and a lack of such classes for allophone UAMs, which hinders their integration.

The schooling of UAMs is not a priority, either during their care by child welfare or during the procedures for obtaining a residence permit.

SOURCE

Study "Non-scolarisation and deschooling in Mayotte: counting and understanding", Tanguy Mathon-Cécillon and Gilles Séraphin, University of Paris-Nanterre and Centre de recherches Education et Formation February 2023

Children who access school do so in often difficult conditions:

- **Logistical difficulties in reaching school:** many young people attend boarding schools far from the family home where they live. In the absence of sufficient public transport, many children walk for hours, or wait for transport in the rain when there are no bus shelters.
- **Lack of qualified educational staff to accompany children** (54% of teachers in the French Overseas Territories were not tenured in 2018), which weakens the educational support of children.
- **The teaching methods are not appropriate for pupils who speak other languages and/or have been enrolled late.** The placement tests and the age groups for entry into secondary school are not adapted and many children are "flunked" and leave the school system.
- **Children in the outermost regions are falling behind in terms of acquiring basic knowledge.** In 2019, 12% of young people aged between 16 and 26 were experiencing difficulties in the field of reading on the national territory. In Guadeloupe, Martinique and Reunion, this rate reached 30%.

"Since I've been in France, I find that it's quickly become lonely in the world."

Young UAM interviewed by Apprentis d'Auteuil

In Mayotte and French Guiana: the schooling of UAMs is made very difficult by the backlog of regularisations (it sometimes takes more than a year to be regularised for young adults). In Mayotte, due to the lack of a stable administrative situation and despite having completed their schooling in full, young people are unable to continue their education beyond the age of majority.

These difficulties are particularly exacerbated by the quality of their care, which often falls short of what is offered to young French people (cost of a day in an institution, hotel accommodation, etc.). Young people sometimes feel more alone during their care, which focuses on providing shelter and access to the basic needs of young people without educational support. In mainland France, there are currently not enough specialised classes for newly arrived allophone UAMs and they are poorly distributed geographically.

These school conditions are not adapted to the needs of these young people, who have to build a professional project very quickly to obtain a residence permit.