

Geneva

Integration of URM – 2026



Context

A traumatic journey

Each year, hundreds of unaccompanied refugee minors (URM) aged 15 to 18 arrive in Switzerland alone. They **flee major crises, leave their families behind**, and travel **thousands of kilometers over months or even years** by land and sea.

Extremely vulnerable, they endure traumatic experiences and, upon arrival, **face deep social isolation and the challenge of rebuilding their lives** in a new society.

A complex integration process

URM are placed in existing reception structures that are often **overcrowded, under-resourced**, and facing **significant challenges** in providing adequate **social support**, as URM represent only

one part of their wider responsibilities.

It is therefore essential for local organizations and citizens to **complement these public systems** in specific areas, always in **close collaboration** with state services.

Integration is the **cornerstone of these young people's future**. Already fragile and **socially isolated**, many have experienced **long interruptions in schooling** and find themselves significantly **out of sync** with their host society. Some face **prejudice** or even **rejection** from the local population, which deepens their isolation and widens social divides. Building connections is essential to **creating a shared and hopeful future**.



Context



A positive integration

Integration through **genuine exchange with the local population is essential**, both for the youths to open up to their host country and for the host country to open up to them.

This mutually beneficial approach also **raises awareness among local communities** about the key issues of successful integration, fostering outcomes that strengthen Swiss society as well as the newcomers.

Listening to their needs

Our discussions with the youths clearly highlighted their wishes :

- To step outside the institutional setting
- To practice French beyond the classroom
- To discover local **culture** and **heritage**
- To explore a **craft**, a **profession**, or an **activity**



Our activities

Professional integration & community connections

As part of its work with unaccompanied refugee minors, Van for Life has developed an integration program built around two complementary pillars.

Socio-professional integration

The goal is to support the youths as they **shape their future** by facilitating their access to the world of work. This approach provides URM with **concrete guidance, realistic prospects**, and a **first meaningful professional experience** in Switzerland, beneficial both for them and for the wider community.

Key points :

- Organization of discovery visits with local partner companies
- Support in finding internships and apprenticeships
- Assistance with administrative procedures
- Professional orientation and career guidance

Building connections with the local Community

Van for Life **fosters strong and lasting social ties** through a network of host families and committed local residents. These encounters help the youths **better understand local culture, practice French** in a supportive environment, and receive **essential human support** for their integration. This pillar **strengthens their sense of belonging while promoting a harmonious inclusion** within the Geneva community.

Key points :

- Recruiting volunteer individuals and host families
- Organizing an initial meeting
- Ongoing follow-up of the relationship between the youth and the host
- Administrative monitoring and coordination with the relevant authorities

Our activities

Discovering Switzerland and meeting its people



Discovery Outings

- Groups of **6-7 youths**, 1 educator & 1 guide/driver
- **Discovery outings**, nature, heritage, culture, sports events, or professional environments
- **Swiss Romandie**
- **Van For Life** vehicle / **Twice** a month



“One-day Hosts” Outings

- Groups of **15-20 youths**, 15-20 volunteer “hosts” 3 educators, 1 driver
- **Discovery outings**, nature, heritage, culture, sports events, or professional environments
- **Swiss Romandie**
- Coach bus / **Once** a month



How to participate ?

Every contribution counts! Interaction with the local community, (young and adult) is **at the heart of our approach**. There are **several ways to take part**, in whichever way suits you best:

Host a discovery outing

For one day, **help young people discover** a place, an activity, a profession, or a sport **you care about**. This can be done **privately** or as a **company**.

Become a “One-day Host”

During a **themed group outing**, you form a **one-to-one pairing** with a young refugee and take on the **role of host**. Just as you would welcome a friend visiting from afar.

Financial Sponsorship

Help us **fund an outing!** This can be through **free entries, covering the costs of a specific day**, or any contribution that fits you. **A detailed list and budget are available on our website.**

Financial Support

You can also make a **direct donation** to Van For Life, in **any amount**, by specifying “URM Project”.

Together, let's turn their arrival into a real opportunity for integration and meaningful exchange. Together, let's create inspiring stories and remind ourselves that “others” are part of us too!

Our activities

Driving : a key asset

We also aim to develop **new actions** to support a group of URM through a decisive step: **obtaining a category B driver's license**. This license is a **major lever for professional inclusion, integration, and autonomy**, yet it often remains out of reach due to its high cost and administrative complexity. Currently, **no social or professional support structure provides this guidance**, leaving these youths without an adapted solution.

Because **mobility lies at the heart of our mission**, we will launch a **pilot phase** with a group of **10 youths** selected according to clear criteria:

- (i) at least one year of residence in Geneva,
- (ii) sufficient command of French,
- (iii) refugee status with a B permit, and
- (iv) minimum age of 17.

1 **Support and follow-up** throughout all administrative steps (first-aid course, theory exam, practical test, etc.)

2 **Full financial coverage** of the entire licensing process

3 **Accompanied driving sessions**, first with our volunteers, then with professional instructors for final preparation

→ **Social impact** : greater autonomy, mobility, and self-confidence for highly vulnerable youths

→ **Economic impact** : easier access to employment and increased financial independence

Provisional budget

BUDGET - SOCIO-PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION OF URM 2026					
Items	Amount	Quantity	Unit	Total	TOTAL
1. HUMAN RESOURCES					CHF89 700
General Coordinator (100%) CH salary	CHF6 500	12	month	CHF78 000	
General Coordinator (100%) CH social charges 15%	CHF975	12	month	CHF11 700	
OUTINGS					CHF53 200
2. TRANSPORT				CHF40 600	
Purchase of a vehicle	CHF25 000,00	1	vehicle	CHF25 000	
Fuel & toll costs (1 van)	CHF150,00	12	outings	CHF1 800	
Maintenance costs	CHF150,00	12	outings	CHF1 800	
Registration & insurance fees	3000	1	package	CHF3 000	
Bus rental costs	1500	6	outings	CHF9 000	
3. ACTIVITIES				CHF12 600	
Cultural & discovery activities (van) : 10 people				CHF8 400,00	
Activity costs (entrance fees, etc.) : CHF 50 pack / 10 people	500	12	outings	CHF6 000	
Per diem (meals) for 10 people	CHF200,00	12	outings	CHF2 400	
Cultural & discovery activities (coach): monthly rate				CHF4 200,00	
Activity costs (entrance fees, etc.) : CHF 50 pack / person / month	500	6	outings	CHF3 000	
Per diem (meals)	200	6	outings	CHF1 200	
DRIVER'S LICENSE (B)					CHF27 600
Driver's license (Category B)				CHF19 200	
First-aid course	CHF100	10	people	CHF1 000	
Vision test (optician)	CHF20	10	people	CHF200	
Theory exam (per exam)	CHF70	10	people	CHF700	
Learner's permit issuance (flat rate)	CHF90	10	people	CHF900	
Awareness course (8h)	CHF200	10	people	CHF2 000	
Driving lessons (12h)	CHF960	10	people	CHF9 600	
Practical exam (per exam)	CHF130	10	people	CHF1 300	
"Two-phase" course (average price)	CHF350	10	people	CHF3 500	
Accompanied driving				CHF8 400	
Fuel costs for accompanied driving	CHF400	12	month	CHF4 800	
Vehicle wear-and-tear costs for accompanied driving	CHF300	12	month	CHF3 600	
AWARENESS WORKSHOPS - CANTON OF GENEVA					CHF4 050
Awareness Workshops (50 people)				CHF4 050	
Room rental	CHF400	3	workshops	CHF1 200	
Refreshments (CHF 15/person for 50 people)	CHF750	3	workshops	CHF2 250	
Logistical costs (small equipment, supplies, etc.)	CHF200	3	workshops	CHF600	
Unexpected costs					CHF8 728
TOTAL URM					CHF183 278