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**Abstract**

In this article we wish to clarify not only if, but also how – through which institutional settings – higher education (HE) is accessed by students from vulnerable immigrant groups in France, Switzerland and Canada. We are interested in the possible educational mobility that immigrant youths can experience arising from country-specific educational policies designed to increase the enrolment in HE, particularly the flow from upper-secondary vocational educational tracks to HE ones. We analyse using panel data in each country the accessibility of different pathways to HE while taking into account the characteristics of the students. In terms of educational mobility, in France the democratization of the educational system, including the development of the vocational baccalauréat, has enabled more youths of immigrant background to access HE. In Switzerland and Canada there is more ‘cooling down’ and down-streaming of their educational aspirations towards non HE and more labour market-oriented pathways. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)