



Roundtable on private sponsorship for integration: focus on humanitarian corridors

Date: 17 December 2020 (10:00-12:00)

This webinar is a wrap up of the Private Sponsorship for Integration transnational project. We will present the main findings outlined in the briefing paper and discuss the potential of sponsorship programs to improve the integration outcomes of its participants and increase social cohesion. Using humanitarian corridors as an example, we will consider the following questions: (1) How can we design private sponsorship programs to maximise their success? (2) How can welcoming communities contribute to the success of sponsorship programs? (3) How do we ensure that sponsorship programs provide effective and quality support for sponsored persons? (4) How can we engage new actors in welcoming persons in need of protection through sponsorship? (5) What role can the EU and national governments play to incentivize the development and growth of sponsorship programs?

Program Agenda:

10:00-10:10	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heather Roy, Secretary General, Eurodiaconia • Miriam Mourglia, Diaconia Valdese, <i>Introduction to the Private Sponsorship for Integration Project (PPI)</i>
10:10-11:25	<p>Private Sponsorship for integration: focus on Humanitarian Corridors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiona Kendall, Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy (FCEI) <i>Designing Sponsorship Programs</i> • Guilhem Mante, Federation de l'Entraide Protestante, France <i>Refugee Hosting initiatives: How can welcoming communities contribute to the success of sponsorship programs?</i> • Gabriela Agatiello, Eurodiaconia <i>Recommendations for the EU and National/Local Governments</i> • Fabio Massimo Castaldo, MEP, Vice President of the EP (video address) <i>How can national governments and political actors support the development of sponsorship programs?</i> • Séverine Origny-Fleishman, DG Home, Legal Pathways and Integration Unit <i>The EU's role in fostering Private Sponsorship Schemes across Europe</i> <p>Questions and discussion</p>
11:25-11:55	<p>Sponsorship from the point of view of sponsored refugees and the hosting community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suleiman Suleiman, Refugee sponsored through HC in Italy <i>Experience with humanitarian corridors and integration</i> • Arlette Sancery, Member of hosting community in France <i>Experience being a member of the welcoming community</i> <p>Discussion with the audience</p>
11:55-12:00	<p>Wrap-up and conclusions</p>



Private Sponsorship for Integration:
building a European model



Concept note for roundtable discussion on Private Sponsorship Programs: Focus on Humanitarian Corridors

The number of persons in need of protection around the world has been on an increasing trend over the last decade. In 2019 the number of forcibly displaced persons as a result of conflict, violence, persecution, or human rights violations was 79.5 million, of which 26 million were refugees.¹ Most displaced persons remain close to home, either internally displaced or in a neighbouring country, often in protracted situations, with little hope of being able to return to their countries of origin. According to UNHCR, 85% of refugees and displaced persons are hosted in developing countries, placing a significant strain on their resources.² To ensure a more predictable and fair system of responsibility-sharing among states, the European Union has committed to the implementation of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), which was adopted in 2018, and aims to improve the international response to new and existing refugee situations. In line with the goals outlined in the Three Year Strategy (2019-2021) on resettlement and complementary pathways developed following the GCR, the **EU's new Pact on Migration and Asylum**, released in September 2020, reinforced its commitment to increase the number of resettlement spaces and complementary pathways available for refugees. **The Pact calls on EU Member States to increase resettlement spaces and places emphasis on the implementation of community/private sponsorship programmes with the support of EASO and EU funding.**

Far from replacing resettlement or other routes to migration, complementary pathways provide additional avenues for refugees to access international protection and, more generally, regular routes to migration. They are not intended to substitute states' obligations to provide international protection to refugees. Rather, by facilitating safe entry to the EU, they offer migrants an alternative to unregulated and dangerous onward movement.

Sponsorship programmes typically support complementary pathways, including humanitarian admissions programmes. While they are known for originating in Canada where they have enjoyed long-lasting support from public, private and political actors; since the large displacement of Syrian refugees in 2015-2016, they have also garnered increasing support and interest in Europe and programs have developed in countries like France, the UK, Italy, Belgium, Ireland, Spain, and Germany. In Europe PSPs continue to be a flexible concept that often overlaps with resettlement (as in the UK), humanitarian visas, and family reunification programs.

Although there is no commonly agreed definition of private sponsorship, and programs continue to evolve, **the concept of private sponsorship generally refers to a partnership between government and civil society where a government facilitates legal admission for participants, and shares with civil society responsibility for providing financial, social and/or emotional support to welcome and receive participants of private sponsorship schemes in local communities.** Thus, private sponsorship schemes generally involve a transfer of responsibility from government agencies to private actors for a certain number of actions, depending on the specific program, ranging from identification of

¹ UNHCR, Global Trends: Forced displacement in 2019. <https://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2019/>

² Ibid.

participants to pre-departure activities, reception, and the integration process. The extent and exact nature of responsibilities delegated to sponsors in each of these areas varies across member states, lending some flexibility to the model.

During this roundtable we will focus on humanitarian corridors as one model of private sponsorship and discuss its potential to improve the integration outcomes of its participants and increase social cohesion. We will discuss ways to design sponsorship programs to maximise their success and encourage their development across Europe. Using humanitarian corridors as an example, we will consider the following questions:

1. How can we design private sponsorship programs to maximise their success?
2. How can welcoming communities contribute to the success of sponsorship programs?
3. How do we ensure that sponsorship programs provide effective and quality support for sponsored persons?
4. How can we engage new actors in welcoming persons in need of protection through sponsorship?
5. What role can the EU and national governments play to incentivize the development and growth of sponsorship programs