

**REPORT ON**  
**THE PASTORAL**  
**CARE OF MIGRANTS**  
**IN EUROPE IN 2017**





# **REPORT ON THE PASTORAL CARE OF MIGRANTS IN EUROPE IN 2017**

**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF MILAN**

**AND**

**MIGRANTS & REFUGEES SECTION  
DICASTERY FOR PROMOTING INTEGRAL HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**



This report provides the results of a pilot study realised within the framework of a cooperation agreement signed between the Migrants and Refugees Section of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and the Catholic University of Milan, aimed at providing the First Report on the Pastoral Care of Migrants in Europe<sup>1</sup>.

It is composed by two sections. The first one provides a tentative mapping of the initiatives realised by Catholic organizations and institutions all around Europe; the second one offers a collection of good practices covering the four "verbs" suggested by Pope Francis in his Message for the 104th World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018: to Welcome, to Protect, to Promote, and to Integrate.

The first part of the report – Quantitative Analysis – provides the results of a survey aimed to identify, classify and describe all the pastoral activities implemented in 2017 by the Catholic Church in the 39 countries members of the Council of the Bishops' Conference of Europe. Data emerged from a questionnaire sent to all the Episcopal Conferences (and to various catholic organizations) are presented and discussed, along with some recommendations and suggestions.

The second part – Qualitative Analysis – offers a collection of 23 Good Practices (GPs), selected in order to cover a wide range of European countries and to obtain a sample composed of at least five GPs for each of the four "verbs" proposed by Pope Francis. The target groups of these practices are different, due to the complex character of migration phenomena; in any case, vulnerable individuals and groups of migrants, who are at heightened risk of human rights violations, are the most represented. These 23 GPs are just a drop in the ocean of thousands of initiatives on migrants welcoming, but they give evidence of the significant efforts put in place by the Catholic Church.

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<sup>1</sup> The analysis was performed by Dr. Antonio Cuciniello and Dr. Felicia Annamaria Robles, supervised by the Scientific Director of the research, Prof. Laura Zanfrini, assisted by Prof. Giovanni Giulio Valtolina.



**FIRST PART:**

**QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS**

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# INTRODUCTION

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This report is the first section of a pilot study realised within the framework of a cooperation agreement signed between the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart of Milan, aimed at providing the first edition of the "Report on pastoral care of Migrants in Europe". It is a complementary outcome alongside the second section of this study concerning the collection of 23 Good Practices (GPs) in order to obtain a sample for each of the four verbs proposed by Pope Francis in the *Message for the 104<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018* (14 January 2018): *to welcome, to protect, to promote, and to integrate*.

In contemporary migration scenario there is an increasing pastoral and civic interest in the activities carried worldwide by the Catholic Church. Although research on this topic has grown in recent years **a)** few reviews of data-based, outcome studies on the migration phenomenon managed through Church educational and first aid structures and system have appeared, but **b)** very little is known about the breadth of activities regarding the Church in the European context.

Indeed, despite the fact that Pope Francis documents on migration pastoral activities and aid provided by Catholic Church have received world-wide attention in recent years, few studies have summarized empirically-based outcome research in this emerging area (e.g. ICMC, JRS, Centro Astalli, Malteser International, Caritas, Migrantes periodical and/or annual reports). Moreover, no in-depth analysis on both empirical and Migration pastoral care in Europe has appeared.

Thus, this study was designed to address both these issues (**a + b**). First, the current analysis attempts to gauge the scope of the research domain of migration and Church commitment by conducting an analysis of data collected via a structured questionnaire, exploring particular situations of each European country. Second, a subset of these data, with a focus on empirical outcome, on the efficacy of emerging humanitarian and pastoral care in migration field was examined.

## INTRODUCTION

This report identifies a range of crucial points that need to be considered, in order to not only address pivotal topics, but either to prepare for issues on the horizon of pastoral experience(s) and multidisciplinary expertise. These are national and international issues that demand an informed approach from governments, Church Institutions/Organisations, communities and individuals. Rising to these challenges demands innovative thinking and a global perspective, integrating and applying proven governance methodologies to generate even better, more sustainable pastoral program outcomes and related dissemination.

The focal aim is to help to fully understand the underlying factors that define the arising cases, to identify and rigorously evaluate possible solutions, and deliver facts and features that can inform sound policy decisions.

# AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

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The research study has the purpose of a summary of the key findings obtained from replies to 31 questionnaires received in the framework of the inquiry that examined the overall pastoral care-Migration nexus. Thus, mapping the typological "domain" structure of the pastoral care related to Migration across Europe would be informative. Furthermore, obtaining a sense of emergent pastoral care situation related to Migration issues would be of high interest to all the actors involved.

More specifically, the following five sections were investigated: *support for integration* (training; health care; legal aid), *emergency and basic assistance*, *social aid and psychological support*, *migrants' pastoral care* and *specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors*.

As for the *support for integration* section, the training area has explored the implementation of linguistic and civic/citizenship courses, as well as, vocational training courses and initiatives for professional inclusion and requalification (for different users: migrants in search of job, asylum seekers/refugees, victims of trafficking or other vulnerable migrants), initiatives of scholastic support (for different users: newly arrived foreign minors, unaccompanied (foreign) minors or foreign minors who need support for learning) and courses of native language and grants for needy/deserving students. With reference to health care area, different types of users have been considered: migrants not covered by health system, victims of trafficking, victims of abuse/torture/mutilations and migrants in particular economic difficulty. Finally, concerning legal aid area, different activities have been investigated: formalities for issue/renewal of residence permits, formalities for recognition of the status of refugee/ asylum seeker or other status of protection, aid for internal displaced persons, legal aid for victims of discrimination, legal aid for victims of trafficking and legal aid for unaccompanied minors.

As for the *emergency and basic assistance* section, the following types of initiatives have been considered: help/assistance at frontiers/places of transit, rescue/assistance at sea, reception centres for asylum seekers/refugees, "diffused reception" (networks between parishes, hos-

## AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

pitality in families, initiatives promoted thanks to cooperation of local actors, etc.), accommodation centres for migrants or for vulnerable categories (e.g. mothers with children, victims of trafficking etc.), mobile/street units (e.g. ambulances, distribution of blankets/clothing/meals etc.), support for prostitutes, canteen services for the poor, showers and wardrobe services, Supplies of food aid and of clothing, payment of rent for accommodation and of utilities.

As for the *social aid and psychological support* section, the following types of initiatives have been contemplated: counselling centres, social aid services, individualized support for looking for accommodation, individualized support for looking for work and services of psychological support.

As for the *migrants' pastoral care* section, the number of ethnic chaplaincies, migrants who attend the ethnic chaplaincies, "ad hoc" diocesan offices (e.g. Pastoral department for migrants) and initiatives of ecumenical/interreligious dialogue have been requested, along with initiatives of personalised spiritual assistance in the following facilities: immigration reception centres, "ad hoc" diocesan offices, prisons, hospitals/hospices and homes for the elderly.

As for the *specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors* section, the following types of initiatives have been considered: reception centres, "diffused reception" (networks between parishes, hospitality in families, initiatives promoted thanks to cooperation of local actors, etc.), courses on the language of the country of immigration, civic/citizenship education courses, vocational training courses, initiatives of scholastic support, grants, medical assistance, services of psychological support, legal aid and individualized support for looking for work.

For all the above-mentioned sections the economic resources and the type of personnel employed were investigated too.

# DATA AND METHODOLOGY

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Catholic Institutions/Organisations and affiliated agencies during 2017 assisted a number of internal and international migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, IDPs and victims of trafficking, as detailed in the Tables below; based on the data of each questionnaire, the researchers created a specific Table with a descriptor that best represented the main topical focus of each area, with the number of assisted people sorted in descending order.

The data pool for the current study was obtained from questionnaires database. Based on the sections of each questionnaire, the researchers coded data with 34 Tables (indicating specific descriptors that best represented each topical focus of the research), plus 1 reporting CCEE countries and related Institutions/Organisations data.

The data were collected using statistical tools, forming a rectangular file of numbers (whether the numbers are counts/measurements), with a column for each question and a row for each respondent. The aggregated tallies then served to produce the Tables, aiming to show the most or less emphasized topical areas in Migration field.

Each Table shows data from Catholic Institutions/Organisations which completed the questionnaire. In total, questionnaires received accounted for 56% of this research data. The authors summarized the major outcome findings of 31 questionnaires that had complete or not fully complete information. Of these, half dozen questionnaires reported very poor data by either pastoral Offices or Institutions/Organisations on the implementation of Church activities for pastoral/aid purposes. Responsible lack of efficacy in managing Web 2.0 technology, privacy issues, and overall data shortage (either overload or inconsistency), were the major aspects and concerns noted. As these results are based on areas of pastoral activities of Catholic Church and related Institutions/Organisations, the current findings provide a barometer of emerging trends regarding good practices, critical issues and bias on this specific area in CCEE agenda.

A *structured questionnaire* was designed by the research team in cooperation with the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, within the domain of "First Report on the Pastoral Care of Migrants in Europe", in order to conduct the survey.

The questionnaire included an introduction explaining the objective of the survey as well as the following indications for filling in it:

- The term "migrants" refers, as well as to people who have voluntarily left their home country, displaced persons (including *internal displaced persons*, a phenomenon involving only a few European countries), refugees and asylum seekers, unaccompanied minors and trafficking victims. It has also been included the so-called "second generations", i.e. migrants' children born in the country of immigration.
- In answering the questions, a recommendation was given about bearing in mind that reference had to be made to initiatives of services addressed exclusively or prevalently, to migrants and realized in 2017. Referring to initiatives promoted and run by Catholic bodies or in the case of initiatives held in partnership with other bodies, they had to indicate only the data and the information referring to the components of the initiative run by Catholic bodies.
- When asking to indicate figures and percentages, it was expected that the respondent showed the figure deemed most accurate and reliable, even though researchers were well aware that some data could have been difficult to find. It was specified, in this regard, that the data collected in this survey would have been presented and circulated only in aggregate form, not by individual country.
- At the end of every thematic sector, it was asked to indicate one or more best practices. In this case, respondents had to underline the reasons which let them consider the initiative as particularly interesting, the name of the initiative and the contacts of those responsible, the initiative's main targets, and if available, references (e.g. websites). Informative material received, has been greatly appreciated, as previously underlined by the researchers.

At the end of the questionnaire, it was also asked to indicate one initiative (good practices) deserving further study, for each of the four "verbs" proposed by Pope Francis (indications given have helped the team to select some initiatives to study in further depth).

On 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> October 2018, the Migrants and Refugees Section of *the abovementioned Dicastery* distributed by email the questionnaire in PDF version (word version when explicitly requested), among all 31 members of CCEE, *with the request to send selected good practices by November 15th and return the questionnaire* duly filled in no later than 30<sup>th</sup> November 2018. This last deadline was afterwards extended to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019, since only *a few* respondents *sent back* (and properly filled in) *the questionnaire*. Indeed, notwithstanding *different reminders* (via phone and email) by *the Dicastery*, some questionnaires were returned during February and until June 2019.

Given this critical point, from the beginning of 2019 the Dicastery decided to email the questionnaire to congregations and religious orders working in the migration sector across Europe. In this case there were both cooperative and non-cooperative feedbacks.

Consequently, *the total of questionnaires returned* by the diverse respondents do not represent all the 31 members of CCEE and in a specific case (Italy) there is an overrepresentation due to the number of *filled-in questionnaires in comparison with other national/geographic area reality*.

# OVERALL ASSESSMENT

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The results of the data analysis indicate that emergent *status questionis* regarding pastoral care on migration, encompasses a broad range of topical areas. It appears that today's Church activities devote much attention to the phenomenon, in terms of humanitarian efforts and pastoral care. Possibly, it has influence on politics and the political process, including social movements. Although issues such as *Training area* and *Emergency and basic assistance* are popular topics, yet the data emerging from the sample represented by members of the CCEE, as well as by the different Catholic Institutions/Organisations that filled in the questionnaire, predominantly reflect an extended but still fragmented scenario. However, there seems to be evidence for emerging interest in the nexus of pastoral care and interreligious encounter (e.g. high number of Muslims assisted), and also on the development of multi-stakeholder governance actions.

In addition, the current analysis identified several areas largely neglected in questionnaire completion, (such as variables, boxes and tables in different points) and lack of statistical data; for that reason, the file data was incomplete and irregular. Many respondents failed to respond to some questions; due to this item non-response, there are holes in the grids. Topics that receive much attention in the popular media with regard to pastoral actions (e.g., the abovementioned ones) are rarely a major focus of compilation, that in many sections remains optional, providing minimum requirements or scarce information. The reason for this lapse is not clear. It is neither known the reason why data are missing from particular strata and if it corresponds to real differences in the behaviour/reality of respondents (especially those omitted or under-sampled) or not. Even if a little potentially informative non-response may be ignorable (if there is plenty of data) here, as data were sparse and informative non-response quite frequent, the analysis took account of what could be inferred from knowing that there were informative missing values. It is important to say that non-response also represent an important part of the disproportionality<sup>1</sup>. In addition, non

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<sup>1</sup> In many cases some strata are bedeviled with high levels of non-response, so that the data are not proportionate to stratum sizes. If we ignored non-proportionality, the summary over all cases would be a simple-minded and not a proper representation of the population in these instances.

consistent data largely miss complete categories; partial results are then reported, making clear which categories are not covered.

Keeping on about the reasons behind the overall low response rate, still it is possible to argue that the data are somewhat representative, also because comparing more accurate sets of results from some respondents or strata, with a very vague, ill-defined description of other cases, helps to estimate or at least to speculate, theorize and hypothesize characteristics of the respondent's national and local realities. Perhaps "sampling" problem aroused when a substantial part of the target population required, for any reason was unwilling or unable to cooperate, so that the results in effect only represent a limited subset, namely those who volunteer or agree to take part. Of course, the results are biased towards e.g. those who command sufficient resources to afford the time, or e.g. those who habitually take it upon themselves to represent others.

Moreover, in most cases the data search and compile-time appeared to have relied on volunteers. Hence, it has to be taken carefully into account any limits these factors impose on the generalisability of the conclusions.

Interestingly, the current study on the overall situation of the European Catholic Church in terms of migration policy, found very favourable attitudes and views on adaptations of modalities for social and pastoral use. These ones have been facilitated by the crucial and efficacious efforts done by Catholic Church actors, that has a myriad of actions and benefits engaging migrants in experiential learning and integration in diverse civic contexts. But on the other hand, it appears the need for continued review of policy issues, the development of standards of "good practices", and awareness of social implications and impact of European Catholic Church actions, enhanced cooperation between all the agencies concerned, both within the country and between countries, safeguarded and furthered through appropriate decisions.

Since the current study has a focus on all the social and pastoral agencies involved in this area, these findings should serve as a barometer of emerging trends regarding critical issues on the pastoral care-Migration nexus.

# RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS EMERGED FROM THE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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From the onset, all the research staff was perfectly aware of the fragmentation of the existing data (in parallel with the variety and fragmentation of the Catholic Church realities), which makes impossible an organic synthesis. Anyway, the intent has been stressing on the importance of any received data, in order to design the subsequent scenario with explorative purposes. The Inquiry, in order to shed light on the various humanitarian interventions, documents behind fragmentation also heterogeneity about the (sometimes unexpected) ways in which people, places and things come together in struggles over human life and put in action a relevant ability to weave complex and multi-layered narratives that disrupt any possibility of a simplistic understanding of the migration phenomenon. Rather than suggesting that the current analysis is conclusive or all-encompassing, it aims to provide an insight into the research processes, the reduced number of data (which are too poor for purposes of statistical significance) and the subsequent limitations of the depicted scenario.

In this albeit limited set of data, the study intends to be primarily explorative. The insights generated by the quantitative section of the research, could be enhanced in the future by addressing specific qualitative study, in order to better and explicitly emphasize the importance of coordinating Catholic Church refugee and assistance programme routes. Moreover, studying the distinct experiences of applicants/assisted in each of them, would help to select comprehensively and genuinely addressed measures, such as the building of a research team in a frame of an educational perspective and a continuous "learning" programme, in which members should liaise with others in their country and cooperate with an international network.

The results also suggest that interaction among Institutions/Organizations could improve the implementation of a more coordinated system and the discussion on how aid has to be tailored, in order to achieve a more comprehensive assistance/protection framework. With these needs in mind, the pastoral care and the assistance programs can be compared based on the grounds on which Catholic Church protection/assistance is provided and should even better conceived, such as decision-making procedure, scope of supports given and criteria for the creation of a dialogical common space of personnel involved in pastoral and aid (that would help to connect overall efforts with the multi-ethnic public sphere).

Future policies should be cognizant of the role of data; their lack may create both practical difficulties for Institutions/Organizations involved and produce inefficiencies in Catholic Church protection and general support options for migrants. Thus, responsible should organize the co-presence of multiple voices and perspectives in a shared dimension of responsibility, illustrating to the abovementioned actors involved that the emerging of data, far from being a means of control over them, could allow the connection among Conferences and local situations; most importantly, it would offer voice to the voiceless.

In consideration of the lack of data that has been identified, it is plausible to suggest the establishment of a development pathway process (trained by a research team). In this way, it would be ensured the participation of Conferences' coordinators in training and coaching, and their inclusion in specific projects (such as this Inquiry in its next steps) would be encouraged. Next data collections - unlike the low response rates reported in this pilot study - would benefit from such a more acquainted and larger pool of potential respondents, possibly rising and continue to rise over the growth of the established pathway process. These practical related policy aspects propose challenges but also opportunities, aiming to create new strategies and helpful understanding of the complexity of the phenomenon, providing new forms of narratives and debate on migration issues.

In addition to highlighting areas needing improvement in Catholic Church aid system, this research raises issues relevant to other actors. The challenges arising out of different scopes and criteria of migrants versus assistance and pastoral programs should prompt us to re-think the meaning of the person-centred approach to migration. Currently, Catholic Church implementation focuses largely on the issues of shelter, health care, legal assistance, counselling and temporary/long-term status (which are, un-

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

doubtedly, important) but maybe it does not acknowledge enough that having Conferences well-coordinated with Institutions/Organizations actions is also one of the key needs of assisted people.

The above discussion demonstrates that it may be difficult, in such circumstances, the implementation of data collection, as they often exist in isolation from each other and are not linked through a common referral mechanism that should allow an information production and its sharing, besides an overall reduction of efforts waste on both sides (researchers and the respondents). Practical and effective cooperation is still called for; should act on sharing information with, exchanging experience, carrying out policy dialogues and collaborating on related researches, bringing out more effective governance. More data production and subsequent sharing among Conferences and with Dicastery are conducive to benefiting to all the actors involved. Data would provide reference for making better related Catholic Church actions.

As noted earlier, of key importance to Catholic Church is the need to identify the migration and pastoral care *status quaestionis*. The starting point was introduced by interacting (through the questionnaire) with the transnational dimensions of the society that operate on various levels from individual connection to local Institutions/Organizations, along with the need to make use of novel approaches to collect data (for example, it would be a simplified and/or an online version of the questionnaire) and capture the complexities of the immigration and refugee issues, in order to enhance the Catholic Church understanding of the present complex situation.

In light of the above, it is important to examine the many gaps of the Inquiry process that still need to be filled and it is also necessary a reflection on the data collection experience. Such information would not only help Catholic Church to provide crucial support, but also improve Catholic Church actors' ability to enhance meaningful and outstanding contributions in the formation of public understanding of migration, refugee and humanitarian crisis. However, Catholic Church actors' willingness to take such proactive steps depends on a number of factors, defining a novel process of developing and fostering skills, abilities, processes and resources. According to a capacity building perspective – including nevertheless constant person-centred approach to the planning and implementation of policies and practices – Catholic Institutions/Organizations and communities could find new resources and strength, in order to adapt and thrive its structure in a fast-changing world.

# QUANTITATIVE SECTION

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## 1. SUPPORT FOR INTEGRATION

The following dataset is based on 21 questionnaires submitted.

In the field of **Support for integration**, concerning the training area (courses to acquire/improve linguistic skills, civic/citizenship education courses, vocational training courses and initiatives for professional inclusion and requalification, initiatives of scholastic support, courses of native language, grants for needy/deserving students), **3,016** initiatives were complexly organised with **394,303** people involved.

Specifically, 2,009 **Courses to acquire/improve linguistic skills** were offered, attended by **256,530** (60% male; 40% female).

Most of the attending students were Muslim (60%), followed by Catholic (28%) and other Christian (11%).

**Table 1: *Support for integration***

Type of initiative	No. of courses	No. of people involved	Training					
			% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Courses to acquire/improve linguistic skills	2,009	256,530	40	60	28	11	60	1

The economic resources for the services related to Linguistic courses came from: private funds (30%), public funds (24%), other types of economic resources (22%), the Catholic Church (23%), contribution by the migrants who benefited from the service (1%).

**Table 2: Support for integration**

<b>Economic resources</b>	
<b>Funders</b>	<b>%</b>
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	23
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	24
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	30
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	1
Other	22

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Linguistic courses** is divided as follows: unpaid volunteers (52%), salaried personnel (39%), religious, priests, deacons (5%), personnel in civil service (4%).

**Table 3: Support for integration**

<b>Type of personnel</b>	<b>%</b>
Salaried personnel	39
Religious, priests, deacons	5
Personnel in civil service	4
Unpaid volunteers	52
Other	0

The following dataset is based on 11 questionnaires submitted.

With regard to **Civic/citizenship education courses**, there were 267 programmes attended by **13,363** (61% male; 39% female). Most of the attending students were Muslim (58%), followed by Catholic (30%) and other Christian (10%).

**Table 4: Support for integration**

Type of initiative	No. of courses	No. of people involved	Training					
			% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Civic/citizenship education courses	267	13,363	39	61	30	10	58	2

The economic resources for the services related to **Civic/citizenship courses** came from: public funds (75%), private funds (11%), the Catholic Church (7%), other types of economic resources (7%).

**Table 5: Support for integration**

Economic resources	
Funders	%
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	7
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	75
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	11
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	0
Other	7

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Civic/citizenship courses** is divided as follows: salaried personnel (60%), unpaid volunteers (24%), personnel in civil service (16%).

**Table 6: Support for integration**

Type of personnel	%
Salaried personnel	60
Religious, priests, deacons	0
Personnel in civil service	16
Unpaid volunteers	24
Other	0

The following dataset is based on 12 questionnaires submitted.

As far as 272 **Vocational training courses and initiatives for professional inclusion and requalification** are concerned, they were attended by **81,921** migrants in search of job (57.5% male; 42.5% female), **4,421** asylum seekers/refugees (77% male; 23% female), **110** unaccompanied minors (82% male; 18% female), **107** victims of trafficking or other vulnerable migrants (95.5% female; 4.5% male).

Most of the attending students were Muslim (73%), followed by Catholic (22%) and other Christian (5%).

**Table 7: Support for integration**

Type of users	No. of courses/initiatives	No. of people involved	Training					
			% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
<b>Vocational training courses and initiatives for professional inclusion and requalification</b>								
Migrants in search of job	215	81,821	42.5	57.5	22	5	73	0
Asylum seekers/refugees	49	4,421	23	77				
Victims of trafficking or other vulnerable migrants	3	107	95.5	4.5				
Unaccompanied minors <sup>1</sup>	5	110	18	82				

The economic resources for the services related to **Vocational training courses and initiatives for professional inclusion and requalification** came from: public funds (41%), private funds (31%), the Catholic Church (27%), contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services (1%).

**Table 8: Support for integration**

<b>Economic resources</b>	
<b>Funders</b>	<b>%</b>
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	27
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	41
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	31
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	1
Other	0

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Vocational training courses and initiatives for professional inclusion and requalification** is divided as follows: salaried personnel (71%), unpaid volunteers (17%), personnel in civil service (11%), religious, priests, deacons (1%).

**Table 9: Support for integration**

<b>Type of personnel</b>	
	<b>%</b>
Salaried personnel	71
Religious, priests, deacons	1
Personnel in civil service	11
Unpaid volunteers	17
Other	0

The following dataset is based on 14 questionnaires submitted.

With regard to **Initiatives of scholastic support**, there were 306 programmes which involved: **4,399** foreign minors who need support for

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learning, **220** newly arrived foreign minors (male 65%; female 35%), **49** unaccompanied (foreign) minors (male 100%).

As for other specific services, there were 53 initiatives which involved **32,952** minors (female 57.5%; male 42.5%).

Most of the attending students were Muslim (72%), followed by other Christian (22%), Catholic (5%).

**Table 10: Support for integration**

Type of users	No. of initiatives	No. of minors involved	Training Initiatives of scholastic support					
			% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Newly arrived foreign minors	220	46	35 <sup>2</sup>	65 <sup>3</sup>	5	22	72	1
Unaccompanied (foreign) minors <sup>4</sup>	2	49	0	100				
Foreign minors who need support for learning	31	4.399	49	51				
Other	53	32.952	57.5	42.5				

The economic resources for the services related to **Initiatives of scholastic support** came from: public funds (38%), the Catholic Church (18%), private funds (18%), other specific economic resources (18%), contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services (8%).

**Table 11: Support for integration**

<b>Economic resources</b>	
<b>Funders</b>	<b>%</b>
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	18
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	38
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	18
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	8
Other	18

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Initiatives of scholastic support** is divided as follows: unpaid volunteers (45%), salaried personnel (42%), personnel in civil service (9%), religious, priests, deacons (4%).

**Table 12: Support for integration**

<b>Type of personnel</b>	
	<b>%</b>
Salaried personnel	42
Religious, priests, deacons	4
Personnel in civil service	9
Unpaid volunteers	45
Other	0

Regarding **Courses of native language**, 130 initiatives were offered, with the involvement of **480** minors (male 62%; female 38%).

Most of the attending students were Muslim (61%), followed by other Christian (34%) and Catholic (5%).

**Table 13: Support for integration**

Type of initiative	No. of courses/ initiatives	No. of minors involved	Training					
			% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Courses of native language	130	480	38	62	5	34	61	0

The economic resources for the services related to **Courses of native language** came from: the Catholic Church (70%), public funds (30%).

**Table 14: Support for integration**

Economic resources	
<b>Funders</b>	%
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	70
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	30
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	0
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	0
Other	0

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Courses of native language** is solely and exclusively composed by religious, priests, deacons (100%).

**Table 15: Support for integration**

Type of personnel	%
Salaried personnel	0
Religious, priests, deacons	100
Personnel in civil service	0
Unpaid volunteers	0
Other	0

As for **Grants for needy/deserving students**, according to data provided, only one country offered 32 grants to **25** minors (male 77%; female 23%). Most of the beneficiaries were Catholic (68%), followed by Muslim (26%) and other Christian (6%).

**Table 16: Support for integration**

Type of initiative	No. of courses/ initiatives	No. of minors involved	Training					
			% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Grants for needy/deserving students	32	25	23	77	68	6	26	0

The economic resources for the services related to **Grants for needy/deserving students** came from: the Catholic Church (50%), public funds (25%), private funds (25%).

**Table 17: Support for integration**

Economic resources	
Funders	%
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	50
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	25
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	25
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	0
Other	0

The following dataset is based on 9 questionnaires submitted.

As regards **Health support**, **21,223** people were assisted.

Specifically, the following types of users were assisted: **10,411** migrants not covered by health system (male 53%; female 47%), **4,492** migrants in particular economic difficulty (male 56%; female 44%), **58** victims of traf-

## QUANTITATIVE SECTION

ficking (female 70%; male 30%), **30** victims of abuse/torture/mutilations (male 80%; female 20%). As for other specific **Health support** initiatives, **6,232** migrants (male 60%; female 40%) were provided with interpretation service in health care.

Most of the assisted people were Muslim (51%), followed by Catholic (42%) and other Christian (7%).

**Table 18: Support for integration**

Type of users	No. of people assisted	Health care					
		% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Migrants not covered by health system	10,411	47	53	42	7	51	0
Victims of trafficking	58	70	30				
Victims of abuse/torture/mutilations	30	20	80				
Migrants in particular economic difficulty	4,492	44	56				
Other	6,232	40	60				

The economic resources for the services related to **Health care** came from: private funds (50%), the Catholic Church (25%), public funds (25%).

**Table 19: Support for integration**

Economic resources	
Funders	%
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	25
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	25
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	50
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	0
Other	0

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Health care** is divided as follows: salaried personnel (47%), unpaid volunteers (27.5%), personnel in civil service (20%), religious, priests, deacons (5.5%).

**Table 20: Support for integration**

Type of personnel	%
Salaried personnel	47
Religious, priests, deacons	5.5
Personnel in civil service	20
Unpaid volunteers	27.5
Other	0

The following dataset is based on 13 questionnaires submitted.

As far as the **Legal support** is concerned, **273,986** people were assisted.

Specifically, the following types of initiative were organised: **Formalities for recognition of the status of refugee/asylum seeker or other status of protection** with **141,844** people assisted (male 70%; female 30%), **Formalities for issue/renewal of residence permits** with **81,241** people assisted (male 76%; female 24%), **Legal aid for victims of discrimination** with **89** people assisted (male 89%; female 11%), **Legal aid for unaccompanied minors** with **40** minors assisted (male 85%; female 15%), **Legal aid for victims of trafficking** with **27** people assisted (female 76%; male 24%), **Aid for internal displaced persons** with **7** people assisted (female 57%; male 43%). As for other specific initiatives of **Legal support**, **50,738** people were assisted (62% male; 38% female).

Most of the assisted people were Muslim (86%), followed by Catholic (7%) and other Christian (7%).

**Table 21: Support for integration**

Type of initiative	No. of people assisted	Legal aid					
		% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Formalities for issue/renewal of residence permits	81,241	24	76	7	7	86	0
Formalities for recognition of the status of refugee/ asylum seeker or other status of protection	141,844	30	70				
Aid for internal displaced persons <sup>5</sup>	7	57	43				
Legal aid for victims of discrimination <sup>6</sup>	89	11	89				
Legal aid for victims of trafficking	27	76	24				
Legal aid for unaccompanied minors	40	15	85				
Other	50,738	38	62				

The economic resources for the services related to **Legal aid** came from: public funds (50.5%), private funds (28.5%), the Catholic Church (14%), other specific economic resources (7%).

**Table 22: Support for integration**

Economic resources	
Funders	%
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	14
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	50.5
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	28.5
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	0
Other	7

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Legal aid** is divided as follows: salaried personnel (62%), unpaid volunteers (22%), other specific type of personnel (16%).

**Table 23: Support for integration**

Type of personnel	%
Salaried personnel	62
Religious, priests, deacons	0
Personnel in civil service	0
Unpaid volunteers	22
Other	16

## 2. EMERGENCY AND BASIC ASSISTANCE

The following dataset is based on 19 questionnaires submitted.

In the field of **Emergency and basic assistance 1,140** initiatives were complexly organised with **262,385** people assisted.

Specifically, the following types of initiative were offered: 40 initiatives of **Canteen services for the poor** with **153,650** people assisted (male 51%; female 49%), 46 initiatives of **Mobile/street units** (e.g. ambulances, distribution of blankets/clothing/ meals etc.) with **24,123** people assisted (male 60%; female 40%), 157 initiatives of **Showers and wardrobe services** with **15,303** people assisted (male 68%; female 32%), 366 initiatives of **Supplies of clothing** with **12,120** people assisted (male 59%; female 41%), 7 initiatives of **Help/assistance at frontiers/places of transit** with **10,998** people assisted (male 71%; female 29%), 135 initiatives of **Supplies of food aid** with **10,092** people assisted (male 72%; female 28%), 151 initiatives of **Reception centres for asylum seekers/refugees** with **4,704** people assisted (male 65%; female 35%), 11 initiatives of **Payment of utilities** with **1,938** people assisted (female 56%; male 44%), 176 initiatives of **Accommodation centres for migrants** with **1,630** people assisted (male 52%; female 48%), 15 initiatives of **"Diffused reception"** (networks between parishes, hospitality in families, initiatives promoted thanks to cooperation of local actors, etc.) with **323** people assisted (female 59%; male 41%), 12 initiatives **Accommodation centres for vulnerable categories** (e.g. mothers with children, victims of trafficking etc.) with **255** people assisted (female 52.5%; male 47.5%), 10 initiatives of **Payment of rent for accommodation** with **173** people assisted (male 60%; female 40%).

Concerning other specific **Emergency and basic assistance** initiatives, there were 14 programmes with **27,076** people assisted (female 60%; male 40%).

Most of the assisted people were Muslim (57%), followed by Catholic (29%) and other Christian (14%).

**Table 24: Emergency and basic assistance**

Type of initiative	No. of initiatives	No. of people assisted	% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Help/assistance at frontiers/places of transit <sup>7</sup>	7	10,998	29	71	29	14	57	0
Rescue/assistance at sea	0	0	0	0				
Reception centres for asylum seekers/refugees	151	4,704	35	65				
"Diffused reception" (networks between parishes, hospitality in families, initiatives promoted thanks to cooperation of local actors, etc.)	15	323	59	41				
Accommodation centres for migrants	176	1,630	42	58				
Accommodation centres for vulnerable categories (e.g. mothers with children, victims of trafficking etc.)	12	255	52.5	47.5				
Mobile/street units (e.g. ambulances, distribution of blankets/clothing/ meals etc.) <sup>8</sup>	46	24,123	40	60				
Support for prostitutes	0	0	0	0				
Canteen services for the poor	40	153,650	49	51				
Showers and wardrobe services	157	15,303	32	68				
Supplies of food aid	135	10,092	28	72				
Supplies of clothing	366	12,120	41	59				
Payment of rent for accommodation	10	173	40	60				
Payment of utilities	11	1,938	56 <sup>9</sup>	44 <sup>10</sup>				
Other	14	27,076	60 <sup>11</sup>	40 <sup>12</sup>				

The economic resources for the services related to **Emergency and basic assistance** came from: private funds (38%), public funds (27%), the Catholic Church (19%), other specific economic resources (16%).

**Table 25: Emergency and basic assistance**

Economic resources	
Funders	%
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	19
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	27
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	38
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	0
Other	16

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Emergency and basic assistance** is divided as follows: salaried personnel (40%), unpaid volunteers (40%), religious, priests, deacons (13%), personnel in civil service (4%), other specific type of personnel (3%).

**Table 26: Emergency and basic assistance**

Type of personnel	
	%
Salaried personnel	40
Religious, priests, deacons	13
Personnel in civil service	4
Unpaid volunteers	40
Other	3

### 3. SOCIAL AID AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT

The following dataset is based on 20 questionnaires submitted.

In the field of **Social aid and psychological support 2,570** initiatives were complexly organised with **242,982** people involved. Specifically, the following types of initiative were offered: 516 **Social aid services** with **96,699** people assisted (refugees and asylum seekers 95%; minors 5%; male 57%; female 43%), 339 **Individualized support for looking for accommodation** with **83,648** people assisted (male 57%; female 43%), 33 **Counselling centres** with **55,378** people involved (refugees and asylum seekers 95%; minors 4%; victims of trafficking 1%; female 51%; male 49%), 1,577 **Services of psychological support** with **5,524** people assisted (refugees and asylum seekers 93%; minors 4%; victims of trafficking 3%; female 51%; male 49%), 97 **Individualized support for looking for work** with **1,020** people assisted (refugees and asylum seekers 87%; victims of trafficking 13%; male 72%; female 28%). As regards other specific **Social aid and psychological support** initiatives, there were 8 programmes with **721** people assisted (male 69%; female 31%).

Most of the assisted people were Muslim (60%), followed by other Christian (24%) and Catholic (16%).

**Table 27: Social aid and psychological support**

Type of initiative	No. of initiatives	No. of people involved	% minors	% refugees and asylum seekers	% victims of trafficking	% female	% male	% Catholic	% Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Counselling centres	33	55,378	4	95	1	51	49	16	24	60	0
Social aid services	516	96,699	5	95	0	43	57				
Individualized support for looking for accommodation	339	83,648	Data not consistent	Data not consistent	Data not consistent	43	57				
Individualized support for looking for work	97	1,020	0	87	13	28	72				
Services of psychological support	1,577	5,524	4	93	3	51	49				
Other	8	713	Data not consistent	Data not consistent	Data not consistent	31	69				

The economic resources for the services related to **Social aid and psychological support** came from: public funds (47%), private funds (30%), the Catholic Church (17%), other specific economic resources (6%).

**Table 28: Social aid and psychological support**

Economic resources	
Funders	%
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	17
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	47
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	30
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	0
Other	6

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Social aid and psychological support** is divided as follows: salaried personnel (61%), unpaid volunteers (21%), religious, priests, deacons (11%), other specific type of personnel (7%).

**Table 29: Social aid and psychological support**

Type of personnel	
	%
Salaried personnel	61
Religious, priests, deacons	11
Personnel in civil service	0
Unpaid volunteers	21
Other	7

## 4. MIGRANTS' PASTORAL CARE

The following dataset is based on 12 questionnaires submitted.

With regard to **Migrants' pastoral care** the data collected illustrate the following situation: there are **1,252 ethnic chaplaincies** which are attended by **195,508** migrants. Therefore, there are **259 "ad hoc" diocesan offices** (e.g. Pastoral department for migrants) and during 2017 **30 initiatives of ecumenical/interreligious dialogue** have been organised.

The degree of involvement of Catholic migrants in the parishes' activities (e.g. catechism, youth centre, choir, Caritas services etc.) was referred as "low".

**Table 30: Migrants' pastoral care**

No. of ethnic chaplaincies	1,252
No. of migrants who attend the ethnic chaplaincies	195,508
No. of "ad hoc" diocesan offices (e.g. Pastoral department for migrants)	259
No. of initiatives of ecumenical/interreligious dialogue	30

**Initiatives of personalised spiritual assistance** have also been offered in the following facilities: **immigration reception centres** with **34** people assisted (male 52.5%; 47.5% female), **"ad hoc" diocesan offices** with **25,357** people assisted (minors 17%), **prisons** with **1,020** people assisted (male 78%; female 17%; minors 5%), **hospitals/hospices** with **200** people assisted (male 58%; female 42%). As for other specific **Initiatives of personalised spiritual assistance**, **332** people were assisted (male 63%; female 37%; minors 10%).

**Table 31: Migrants' pastoral care**

<b>Migrants who benefited from personalized spiritual assistance</b>				
<b>Facilities</b>	<b>No. of people assisted</b>	<b>% minors</b>	<b>% female</b>	<b>% male</b>
Immigration reception centres <sup>13</sup>	34	0	47.5	52.5
"Ad hoc" diocesan offices	25,357	17 <sup>14</sup>	Data not consistent	Data not consistent
Prisons	1,020 <sup>15</sup>	5 <sup>16</sup>	17 <sup>17</sup>	78 <sup>18</sup>
Hospitals/hospices	200 <sup>19</sup>	No data	42 <sup>20</sup>	58 <sup>21</sup>
Homes for the elderly				
Other	332 <sup>22</sup>	10	37	63

## 5. SPECIFIC INITIATIVES FOR UNACCOMPANIED MINORS

The following dataset is based on 10 questionnaires submitted.

In the field of **Specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors** 60 initiatives were complexly organised with **2,038** minors involved. Specifically, the following types of initiative were offered: 16 **Services of psychological support** with **822** minors involved (male 50%; female 50%), 2 **Reception centres** with **141** minors involved (male 96%; female 4%), 4 **Courses on the language of the country of immigration** with **113** minors involved (male 73,5%; female 26,5%), (no data available) **Legal aid** with **30** minors involved (male 100%), 1 **Grants** with **3** minors involved, 1 **Medical assistance** with **3** minors involved, 1 **Initiatives of scholastic support** with **2** minors involved, 1 **Vocational training courses** with **1** minors involved, 1 **Individualized support for looking for work** with **1** minors involved, 2 **"Diffused reception"** (networks between parishes, hospitality in families, initiatives promoted thanks to cooperation of local actors, etc.). As regards other **Specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors**, there were 31 programmes with **923** minors involved (female 52%; male 48%).

Most of the minors assisted were Muslim (37%), followed by other Christian (25%) and Catholic (17%).

**Table 32: Specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors**

Type of initiative	No. of initiatives	No. of minors involved	% female	% male	% Catholic	% Other Christian	% Muslim	% Other
Reception centres	2 <sup>23</sup>	141 <sup>24</sup>	4 <sup>25</sup>	96 <sup>26</sup>	17	25	37	21
"Diffused reception" (networks between parishes, hospitality in families, initiatives promoted thanks to cooperation of local actors, etc.)	2 <sup>27</sup>	No data available	No data available	No data available				
Courses on the language of the country of immigration <sup>28</sup>	4	113	26.5	73.5				
Civic/citizenship education courses	No data available	No data available	No data available	No data available				
Vocational training courses <sup>29</sup>	1	1	No data available	No data available				
Initiatives of scholastic support <sup>30</sup>	1	2	No data available	No data available				
Grants <sup>31</sup>	1	3	No data available	No data available				
Medical assistance <sup>32</sup>	1	3	No data available	No data available				
Services of psychological support <sup>33</sup>	16	822	50	50				
Legal aid	No data available	30	No data available	No data available				
Individualized support for looking for work	1 <sup>34</sup>	1	No data available	No data available				
Other	31 <sup>35</sup>	923	52	48				

The economic resources for the services related to **Specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors** came from: public funds (72%), the Catholic Church (22%), private funds (6%).

**Table 33: Specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors**

<b>Economic resources</b>	
<b>Funders</b>	<b>%</b>
The Catholic Church (Bishops' Conferences, dioceses, parishes, Caritas, etc.)	22
Public funds (European, national funding, local authorities, etc.)	72
Private funds (foundations, donors, etc.)	6
Contribution by the migrants who benefited from the services	0
Other	0

The type of personnel employed for the services related to **Specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors** is divided as follows: salaried (89%), personnel in civil service (10%), religious, priest, deacons (0.5%), unpaid volunteers (0.5%).

**Table 34: Specific initiatives for unaccompanied minors**

<b>Type of personnel</b>	<b>%</b>
Salaried personnel	89
Religious, priests, deacons	0.5
Personnel in civil service	10
Unpaid volunteers	0.5
Other	0

(Footnotes)

- 1** Data available only from one respondent.
- 2** Data available only from one respondent.
- 3** Idem.
- 4** Data available only from two respondents.
- 5** Data available only from one respondent.
- 6** Idem.
- 7** Data available only from three respondents.
- 8** Data available only from one respondent.
- 9** Data available only from one respondent.
- 10** Idem.
- 11** Idem..
- 12** Idem.
- 13** Data available only from two respondents.
- 14** Idem.
- 15** Idem.
- 16** Data available only from one respondent.
- 17** Idem.
- 18** Idem.
- 19** Idem.
- 20** Idem.
- 21** Idem.
- 22** Data available only from four respondents.
- 23** Data available only from one respondent.
- 24** Data available only from two respondents.
- 25** Idem.
- 26** Idem.
- 27** Idem.
- 28** Data available only from two respondents.
- 29** Data available only from one respondent.
- 30** Idem.
- 31** Idem.
- 32** Idem.
- 33** Data available only from four respondents.
- 34** Data available only from one respondent.
- 35** Data available only from two respondents.



**SECOND PART:  
QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS**

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# INTRODUCTION TO QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

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The practices have been selected among the rich and heterogeneous amount of initiatives on migrants welcoming and social inclusion, implemented by (or in cooperation with) European Catholic organizations in the recent years, and in some cases still in progress (see Annex). Each GP, together with a description of the initiative and of its aims, is analysed in terms of relevance, innovativeness, impact, and sustainability. The reader may find an overview of activities, projects and programmes performed equally at the local, national and international level. Practices with a local scope are mainly concentrated in cities with a higher number of migrants (e.g. the case of Serbia and Greece).

As for the meaning of a GP, it has been adopted the following definition: "A good practice is a process or methodology that is ethical, fair, and replicable, has been shown to work well, succeeds in achieving its objective(s), and therefore can be recommended as a model. The essence of identifying and sharing good practices is to learn from others and to encourage the application of knowledge and experience to new situations. A good practice need not be viewed as prescriptive, but can be adapted to meet new challenges, becoming better as improvements are discovered"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Platform "Good Practices for Urban Refugees", UNHCR, available at website <http://www.urbangoodpractices.org> (last accessed May 13, 2019).

# OBJECTIVE OF THE COLLECTION

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The general objective of the collection is mapping and gathering GPs focused on migrants, asylum seekers and refugees (unaccompanied minors included), displaced persons and returnees, starting from the words of His Holiness Pope Francis in his address to participants in the International Forum on "Migration and Peace" (21 February 2017): "I feel the need to express particular concern for the forced nature of many contemporary migratory movements, which increases the challenges presented to the political community, to civil society and to the Church, and which amplifies the urgency for a coordinated and effective response to these challenges. Our shared response may be articulated by four verbs: *to welcome*, *to protect*, *to promote* and *to integrate*".<sup>2</sup> These four verbs as a pastoral response were also recalled in the *Message for the 104<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018* (14 January 2018).<sup>3</sup> They also represent the four sections at the base of the GPs selection.

As far as specific objectives are concerned, the collection is targeted at enhancing the exchange of information and experiences among European Catholic organizations active in the fields of migration and integration, by promoting a collaborative framework among local, national and international organizations. The GPs collected also provide the possibility for operators, decision makers, and wider public to learn more about positive and innovative initiatives aimed at migrants' support.

Moreover, it is a stock of encouraging examples to be possibly applied to similar objectives across different countries (local or national contexts). In this direction the selection is intended to serve as a source of inspiration for other Catholic organizations (as well as for other relevant

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<sup>2</sup> Available at website [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/february/documents/papa-francesco\\_20170221\\_forum-migrazioni-pace.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/february/documents/papa-francesco_20170221_forum-migrazioni-pace.html) (last accessed May 13, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Available at website [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco\\_2017\\_0815\\_world-migrants-day-2018.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/migration/documents/papa-francesco_2017_0815_world-migrants-day-2018.html) (last accessed May 13, 2019).

stakeholders), by sharing initiatives realised for the given target groups and strengthening the spirit of cooperation among the different realities of the Church. At the same time, counteracting the tone of contemporary debate about migration addressed to Europe, this report provides excellent examples of a pro-active attitude of Church and local authorities to forge new partnerships and bring new actors into humanitarian response and integration agendas. Finally, humanitarian emergency has created new relationships among new different actors, opening up opportunities for new pastoral roles and responsibilities towards positive and sustainable welcoming and integration of vulnerable people, such as migrants and refugees.

## METHODOLOGY APPLIED

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The GPs collected include the description of the considered 20 practices, available for dissemination, in the European context.

Based on a general desk review and a series of interviews/e-mail exchanges with representatives of relevant Catholic organisations, it has been analysed the Church response, in the general framework of humanitarian assistance and civil protection, in terms of rights and needs of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, along with cross-border cooperation.

A particular focus was placed on analysing the above-mentioned *Message for the 104<sup>th</sup> World Day of Migrants and Refugees 2018* and its pastoral impact through the different GPs collected. The starting point has been the broader frameworks under which the different Catholic organisations operate, including their decision-making processes, communication and dissemination of initiatives and corresponding coordination. As such, this collection of GPs provides a narrative of how the Catholic Church faces the migrant and refugee crisis, focusing on heterogeneous contexts and practices in order to map how issues were addressed by different stakeholders.

The research was divided into various phases. At first the research team conducted desktop research in different disciplines and fields of

practice relevant to the study. During this phase the team collaborated with The Migrants & Refugees Section (Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development) to collect the fulfilled questionnaires, through which the researchers identified significant initiatives here reported as GPs. These latter were selected in order to cover a wide range of European countries and to obtain a sample composed of five GPs for each of the four "verbs" proposed by Pope Francis.

Afterward, the GPs selected for in-depth investigation were analysed in their design, implementation and measurement, by exploring and studying the available published literature (e.g. annual and periodical reports by Catholic organisations, such as Caritas International Belgium, The Jesuit Refugee Service, etc.), as well as grey literature conference proceedings, newsletters and bulletins, fact sheets, leaflets, organisations website, etc.). All this literature has been validated with telephone calls or written interviews with project managers and/or volunteers.

All GPs contain an initial fact sheet clearly indicating:

- the "verb" in which they have been placed: *to welcome, to protect, to promote, to integrate* (see Annex);
- the country of the initiative;
- type of initiative;
- beneficiaries;
- thematic area(s) of GP example;
- duration of the initiative;
- source of funds;
- website;
- Catholic Church organisation involved and contacts.

Each record:

- describes the given initiative;
- considers the contribution to successful reception and welcoming and social inclusion;
- illustrates the reasons for being selected as a GP.

As for the key outcomes and success factors of the collected GPs, an analytical description per dimension has been presented. In particular, the dimensions analysed are:

- relevance
- innovativeness
- impact
- sustainability

Each record also provides images related to GPs from documents, reports and web pages with a caption providing a concise explanation and the source.

## OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF GPS

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The collection displays a variety of experiences proved to be relevant, effective, innovative, sustainable and transferable, leading to a specific objective which can provide further ideas on how to address migration issues through actions of *welcoming*, *protecting*, *promoting* and *integrating* and, in particular, what methods to use when working on refugees' integration. The financial sources of the GPs analysed are heterogeneous (e.g. donations, self-financing through voluntary work, public funding by international or national institutions, private financing through foundations, etc.).

The GPs included in this collection come from different Catholic organizations operating in several services provided for migrants (e.g. welcoming and integrating, community building initiatives, assisted return and reintegration, supporting local entrepreneurs to build professional, resilient businesses with the aim of creating new jobs, making conditions better for people to promote the right to not migrate, etc.). Consequently, it is clear that they appear quite heterogeneous and not easily comparable, even because they reflect country-specific migration trends and situations along with the role Catholic organizations play in the migration area, both at national and at international level. None-

theless, all GPs undoubtedly reflect the same attitudes of the Church towards migrants that can be also found in a booklet by Migrants & Refugees Section, *Responding to Refugees and Migrants. Twenty Pastoral Action Points*,<sup>4</sup> an additional tool that helps to accompany migrants, those who are forced to migrate, those who are returning to their place of origin, or victims of human trafficking.

Taking into account the local, national and international contexts, activities inside the selected GPs follow various aims and reinforce rights granted to all migrants (e.g. freedom of movement, education, work, health care, etc.):

- welcoming and helping to actively (re)integrate into the receiving society within a general framework (e.g. France, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Turkey);
- promoting the integration with the majority society (e.g. Austria);
- providing information about legal status and orientation in socio-cultural environment by using native languages (Czech Republic);
- improving the educational system for adults and children, as well as aiding schools with courses, training, information (e.g. Bulgaria);
- offering more information about the occupational opportunities also through supporting local entrepreneurs to build professional (e.g. Russia, Ukraine, The Netherlands, Belgium);
- making conditions better for people to stay in their own countries (e.g. Poland);
- providing psychosocial support to asylum seekers (e.g. Croatia);
- supporting (Christian) refugees (e.g. England, Scotland and Wales);
- improving the lives of vulnerable people at risk of trafficking (e.g. Spain);
- assisting and integrating unaccompanied foreign minors (Germany);
- encouraging interreligious peace-building processes (e.g. Cyprus).

Most of the initiatives presented are accessible on the Internet, but they are not always available in English or understandable in the languages most commonly spoken by migrants, with reference to the implementation context.

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<sup>4</sup> Available at website <https://migrants-refugees.va/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/20-Pastoral-Action-Points.EN.pdf> (last accessed May 13, 2019).

Although some collected activities may not meet certain expectations and not be totally innovative if compared with other successful practices, they do represent an important innovation or a further step in a specific country, big area or city. Finally, it has not been easy to identify initiatives whose purpose is first and foremost the dissemination of programmes and activities. This fact points to the conclusion that the most basic and general access to information for migrants has not yet been fully realised in most countries.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS EMERGED FROM THE RESEARCH EXPERIENCE**

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The collection and analysis of the GPs have given the opportunity to underline some peculiar aspects that is helpful to sum up. The initiatives presentation should be always accessible and updated on the Internet, include participatory approaches to support a joint sense of decisions and actions between professionals, institutions and migrants and imply a community of practitioners (authorities, community-based groups, migrants, associations, professional networks, academia, humanitarian organization, etc.).

These actions should represent a joint reflection both on migration flows and welcoming and social inclusion actions. Therefore, it would be important to provide a continuous training to all the actors involved (e.g. volunteers, parishes, foster families), as the most successful and challenging initiatives are those where the local community is part of the processes. Last but not least, Catholic organizations implementing the initiatives should always reflect on the pastoral impact on communities, to ensure that pastoral care is an integral part of each initiative.

# GOOD PRACTICES SELECTED PER VERB OF ACTION

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## TO WELCOME

### UP TOGETHER (BELGIUM)

Verb: **to welcome**

Country: Belgium

Initiative: to accompany migrants in order to further integration and orientate them for the future

Beneficiaries: forced migrants ("non- returnable migrants")

Thematic area(s) of good practice example:  
multi-stakeholder partnership (group of families, local communities and single persons)

Duration of project: 2016 to 2018

Source of funds: The King Baudouin Foundation through its Opportunity Found and a private donor

Website:

[https://jrseurope.org/news\\_detail?TN=NEWS-20160216044957](https://jrseurope.org/news_detail?TN=NEWS-20160216044957)

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts: Baudouin Van Overstraeten (+32 27380819 directeur@jrabelgium.org)

JRS Belgium has launched a hospitality project called *Up Together* which seeks to provide support to an extremely vulnerable and forgotten group of forced migrants. *Up Together* brings **locals, volunteers and social workers together to help so-called "non- returnable migrants"**. These are people who have been released from administrative deten-

tion centres and put on street without any social rights or protection status and with an order to leave the territory. With no one to turn to, it is very common that such migrants end up homeless and destitute.

With *Up Together* initiative, JRS Belgium focused mostly on migrants who saw their residence permit rejected but were nevertheless released for various reasons from the closed detention centres or return-houses where they awaited their removal. These so-called "non-returnable" migrants find themselves in a situation in which they are not allowed to work, cannot receive social support and run the risk of being exploited.

Barbara Mertens in the official JRS Belgium web page says: *"These people who have gone through so much and feel completely rejected and alone, then have the chance to live and learn in a friendly and supportive environment"*.

And: *"It means so much to them. And at the same time those who offer their help and support can learn a lot too about another's culture and experiences"*, Mertens concludes.

Forced migrants face many challenges in integrating into their new host countries, often living in isolation from the rest of society. This project provides support within the community, helping to further their integration into society thanks to the relevant service given by the network/team and a partnership based on hospitality.

### **Relevance**

The *Up Together* network is a group of families, local communities and single persons that are able to host and to accompany migrants in order to further integration and orientate them for the future. In collaboration with them, the person in migration will be able to develop a network of relationships and seek out opportunities that help to re-gain autonomy. In March 2017, Flemish Refugee Action awarded *Up Together* the prize of the best hospitality initiative in the category Associations.

### **Innovativeness**

*Up Together* is a network of hospitality that works in collaboration with partners such as social organizations. Once hosted for 6 to 8 weeks in each home, the goal is to help the migrant to familiarize themselves with the Belgian way of life, how to speak the local language (mainly French in Brus-

sels, but perhaps Flemish too!) and how to actually live within the country. The team has weekly meetings and follow up along the whole project.

From the moment they enter the *Up Together* network, they also meet with a guidance counsellor once a week. With this counsellor they can talk about their situation, projects, stay with their host family and practical and organizational details when living in Belgium.

### **Impact**

*Up Together* also provides collaboration with professional social entities. It does not replace these kinds of services but complements them. The person being accompanied still needs to see their social worker for all of the administrative steps that need to be taken and they also receive training to be able to make informed choices about their future. The project offers the possibility to reflect in a good atmosphere and to familiarize with each guest family, allowing the participants to become more confident and able to take decisions.

### **Sustainability**

JRS Belgium supports these people to give them the strength and the tools to take up their life and future again, whether that be abroad or in Belgium without a residence permit. The project faced challenges, such as difficulties in the management of the volunteers' work or problems regarding a proper balancing of the staff duties. Another critical point was the overlapping of two different conditions lived by the same person at the same time, that means being a volunteer and a guest family member; for this reason, there was a certain difficulty to keep neutral towards migrants. Anyway, the biggest trouble was the lack of financial resources. It didn't make possible to have two required full-time leading figures. Then the staff decided to have a temporary closing of this first stage of the project, taking a proper time for reflection on the outputs and for a general restructuring of it.

**RIFUGIATO A CASA MIA (ITALY)**

Verb: **to welcome**

Country: Italy

Initiative: to establish the involvement in a familiar context

Beneficiaries: holders of international protection during a period of 6-12 month

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: hosting individually in family or in small groups in parishes or religious buildings

Duration of project: 2015 till 2017

Source of funds: Caritas

Website:

<http://www.caritastarvisina.it/progetti/rifugiato-a-casa-mia/>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

Caritas (+39 422546585 [servitium@diocesitv.it](mailto:servitium@diocesitv.it))

The *Refugee at my home* project started at the end of 2015 on the occasion of the Jubilee Year of Mercy, continued throughout 2017. It wants to be an incentive to move from an idea of a project, characterized by the extraordinary nature of an experience, to the maturation of a process, or rather a path that matures and which, over time, affects a territory.

*Refugee at my home* is **defined as a "third reception" project**. It established the **involvement in a familiar context of holders of international protection** during a period of 6-12 month.

**A network of hospitality**

It represents the possibility of undertaking concrete paths to bring into the diocese "**welcoming communities**", that is, capable of standing next to the fragility of people with fraternal and compassionate spirit. Beneficiaries can be **hosted individually in family or in small groups in parishes** or religious buildings. In this case, they are supervised by Caritas Staff.

If today's reality pushes us to confront the pressing reality of migrants, the commitment cannot be limited to this but must, step by step, make a welcoming spirit sprout, expressing itself with imagination and current affairs in relation to all the different forms of poverty of today and tomorrow. A welcoming community is at 360, giving way to the rhythm of the most fragile guests.

### Four steps

1. Contact: family or parish interested in hosting a refugee can contact Caritas for an overview of the project.
2. Training: welcoming families or parishes are trained by Caritas, and should attend 4 meetings about project details, constraints, migration dynamic, Caritas guideline for reception.
3. Reception: Caritas identifies beneficiary in its second reception centres and supports the interested person in the inclusion in the family or parish.
4. Counselling and Tutoring: project monitoring through weekly meetings with the family. Meetings' main purpose is to verify goals of autonomy, and in particular: autonomy in the territory, linguistic autonomy, job autonomy and social inclusion. Playing on short relationships, families and the community support the achievement of these goals. Caritas and Trade Associations take care of administrative topics related to job inclusion.

### A testimonial (November 27, 2017)

*"About a year ago, with my wife, we joined the **Rifugiato a casa mia** project as a tutor family. Without a doubt, the moment that most characterized this path was to participate in the hearing of Pope Francis with all those who, within the Caritas Tarvisina, are engaged in any capacity in this project. When I asked Festus and Hamadou if they wished to participate with us at the papal audience, without any hesitation they accepted and with such transportation to make their happiness palpable.*

*From 6:30 am on September 26th, 2017, when we left the Votive Church of Treviso, I was full of emotion and, like me,*

*all our other travelling companions, first of all our migrant brothers. A deeply moving experience awaited us: to hear and see "live" Pope Francis. How many times I had heard and / or seen the Pope on television with participation and transportation. But this time the Pope would have been a few meters away, he would have talked to those who took part in the Caritas project and would have talked to me too. This expectation filled me with ecstatic restlessness, like the bridegroom who awaits his bride in church. The trip was calm and peaceful, pleasantly interspersed with the various announcements of Caritas operators, from coffee stops and lunch. Arrived in Rome, a guide accompanied us during the visit of some sites of the Eternal City, such as: the Arch of Constantine, the Arch of Settimo Severo, Piazza del Campidoglio, the church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli. The evening ended with the celebration of Holy Mass in the small church of the Fraternal House of Sacrofano, where we had dinner and spent the night. The next morning, after a quick breakfast at 06:00 in the morning, we left for St. Peter's Square for the long-awaited papal audience. Where we had dinner and spent the night. The next morning, after a quick breakfast at 06:00 in the morning, we left for St. Peter's Square for the long-awaited papal audience. Where we had dinner and spent the night. The next morning, after a quick breakfast at 06:00 in the morning, we left for St. Peter's Square for the long-awaited papal audience.*

*At 07:00 we were in line to enter St. Peter's Square with many other faithful. A desire all gathered together: to see Pope Francis but above all to listen to his lively voice that gives you hope and love towards others.*

*Finally, Francesco entered the "Pope-mobile" and we were all magnetized by his presence and in his usual blessing gesture he gave me the impression that he greeted each one of us. At the end of the tour of Piazza San Pietro he began his speech. Listening to those words of love and peace made me feel in communion, not only with those present, but also with all my brothers in Christ. When I was a child, I attended catechism and I was always attracted by a huge painting that adorned the parish hall, representing a Jesus who wel-*

comed children with arms wide open. Listening to the words of the Pope: "... **Christ himself asks us to welcome our brothers and sisters, migrants and refugees with their arms, with their arms wide open ...**" the image of that painting immediately leapt to my mind and with it has been awakened, that feeling now dormant that accompanied her. Before the final greetings in the various languages, Francesco started the "Let's share the journey" campaign, an initiative promoted by "Caritas Internazionale". We were all encouraged, first of all, to get more involved in welcoming our migrant brothers and sisters. Hearing the Pope's voice has already been a rich experience, but during the final greetings I felt the fullness of my heart "**I welcome the migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who, together with the operators of the Italian Caritas and other Catholic organizations, are signs of a Church that tries to be open, inclusive, welcoming**". These words have touched me particularly "the Pope has happened me. He welcomed own me". What an indescribable feeling! With the new heart, full of joy and emotion we have embarked on the journey home. During the return, at the end of the Mass celebrated in the parish of San Donato in Calenzano, the first parish of Don Lorenzo Milani, we experienced another touching moment in which I felt "piece" of the Christian family. The delivery by Don Davide to all those present of a puzzle card: in itself a single piece is nothing, but its absence makes the puzzle itself incomplete.

St. John Paul II said: «**do not let yourself live but take your life into your hands and decide to make it an authentic and personal masterpiece**». And after this wonderful experience it is what I promised in my heart. To paint a life of charity and welcome with all the brothers".

### Relevance

The project main goals are, for beneficiaries, the achievement of a good level of autonomy for an effective inclusion. The experience in family is useful to define refugee's life project. For the family, the possibility to live an experience of solidarity with other cultures and to promote a welcoming approach in the community. The intervention has obtained the following results:

- 65 migrants welcomed in the diocese
- 12 parishes welcoming
- 3 religious institutes welcoming
- 17 families welcoming

### **Impact**

The widespread reception, organized and personalized, improves the quality of life of migrants and promotes their path of social inclusion, as well as improving the quality of life of the whole community as it has managed to make room and to share. Migrants are benefiting greatly from the network and integration that family and parish offer. Welcoming communities are benefiting from access to a new experience that not only motivates but offers appropriate and practical occasion for reception, together with a concrete living expression of evangelical solidarity.

### **Innovativeness**

Compared to the usual reception methods in structures or family homes, the core of the project consists in assigning centrality to the family, conceived as a physical place and a system of relationships able to support the process of inclusion.

The project aims to accompany people for a piece of their life without having the presumption to solve all their problems. This means that at the end of the project are not insured home and work for all, two great challenges of nowadays, but that migrants have established authentic relationships, have known a territory, have discovered habits and lifestyles in part different from their own. The real challenge is therefore to live a journey of accompaniment that raises questions, and does not give answers, that provides tools for autonomy, which helps the person to question themselves on their life project.

### **Sustainability**

Two years after the start, it emerged that the project certainly could not be a solution to the migration issue itself, but it has been a great stimulus in the activation of the resources of migrants and the territory to promote real and sustainable paths of integration.

## COMMUNITIES OF HOSPITALITY (COH) (MALTA)

Verb: **to welcome**

Country: Italy

Initiative: to provide hospitality

Beneficiaries: refugees

Thematic area(s) of good practice example:

Community Building Initiatives (CBIs)

Duration of project: 2016 to present

Source of funds: Porticus Foundation; Malta Community Chest Fund Foundation; private donors

Website: <http://www.jrsmalta.org>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts: JRS Malta (+356 2144 2751 [info@jrsmalta.org](mailto:info@jrsmalta.org))

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) in Europe has been developing new ways to provide **hospitality to refugees** for many years, through day and cultural centres, family hosting projects, coffee mornings, etc. In response to the **appeals made by Pope Francis** to use empty property owned by religious communities for families in need<sup>5</sup>, JRS Malta launched the *Communities of Hospitality* project to accompany, serve and defend the rights of asylum seekers and forcibly displaced persons, who rank among the world's poorest and most vulnerable.

It is an initiative within a bigger JRS Europe project focusing on **promoting integration in host societies through grassroots advocacy**, service provision and support to access services, during the delicate period when their cycle of government assistance ends. In fact, Communities of Hospitality are present in ten different European countries (Belgium,

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<sup>5</sup> "I make an appeal to parishes, religious communities, monasteries and shrines throughout Europe, that they express the Gospel in a concrete way and host a refugee family. A concrete gesture in preparation for the Holy Year of Mercy. May every parish, every religious community, every monastery, every shrine of Europe welcome one family, beginning with my Diocese of Rome". Source: [https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco\\_angelus\\_20150906.html](https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2015/documents/papa-francesco_angelus_20150906.html) (last accessed May 13, 2019).

France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Romania) and, even though each country has developed the project in a different way, each of them seeks to respond to **the hostility that so many migrants and refugees encounter in Europe with hospitality**. It has involved JRS national offices to develop close friendly relations with forced migrants through different social activities. Every country has identified social activities, collaborations or partnerships that could work to reduce discrimination and include refugees in local communities.

In Malta Communities of Hospitality is coordinated by JRS but rely on the cooperation of religious communities and lay volunteers. The local faith-based communities (parishes, religious congregations, Christian communities, parish prayer groups, etc.) are encouraged to take up the invitation **to make hospitality an integral part of their lives, as individuals and as communities**.

They volunteer their time to welcome, support and accompany one or more refugees in need, under the guidance of JRS Malta. The ongoing support and training provided to religious communities and volunteers are constantly accompanied and supported by JRS staff, in order **to strengthen the relationship**, thereby increasing the likelihood of a longer-term commitment.

Communities participate in one of two ways. Either by **opening their doors to accommodate a family** or else by **agreeing to accompany and support a family or individual living in a particularly vulnerable situation**. In both cases, they offer friendship and moral support and make refugees feel at home. In fact, these welcoming and friendly encounters have given them a sense of belonging and created the basis for new friendships.

Since Communities of Hospitality focuses particularly on **helping refugees reach autonomy**, prior to the placement of the family/individual, JRS has conducted a **needs' assessment** (educational needs, employment, medical needs, etc.). All support provided has been part of a **care plan**, in collaboration with all the stakeholders involved (the refugee/family, JRS and the liaison person appointed by the host community), aimed at **promoting self-sufficiency, in a way which does not create unnecessary dependence**. The care plan outlines the actions to be carried out and targets to be achieved and indicates who is responsible for the implementation of the different actions. For instance, some communities offer **familiarization with the migrants' neighbourhood**

**and the Maltese way of life**, others with school work. Indeed, during the semi-autonomous period when refugees stay in the free spaces offered by religious communities, JRS follows them closely and helps them on an individual basis towards independence (for a period of not more than one year). Moreover, throughout the programme, JRS continues assisting the refugees through the presence of a social worker who assists in **areas ranging from education to employment opportunities**.

Jacqueline, a volunteer involved, describes her motivation for participating: *"I have been a member of a small Christian Life Community group for several years. Through a Jesuit priest, the idea of working with the children of a refugee family recently reunited in Malta came up. These children needed immediate support with schoolwork and English language acquisition to progress in school (...). I sought out a friend who owns a bookstore, who assisted me in finding appropriate study materials. The entire entrance area at home has been transformed into a study room with tables, chairs and bookshelves filled with support materials for the children's studies. (...) Through this project, I have learned to live each day to the fullest. I have had to let go of some things around the house, and in my life, realizing that there are more important and meaningful things in life"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2B0lfRJ>).

As part of a Communities of Hospitality project, the Loyola House community has hosted a refugee family from Ethiopia, followed by a JRS social worker. It is a Muslim family with three young children who have refugee status and have been reunited in Malta: **to acquire independence, it is essential they become self-sufficient and also regain the family life dimension, in addition to building new relationships, and progressively integrating into the local community**. This hosting is also part of an integration program that JRS is running for refugees who have chosen to permanently resettle in Malta.

**As for the positive aspects**, Fr Mark Cachia (JRS Malta Assistant Director), during an interview conducted via e-mail, said: *"Many of the refugees involved are very grateful for the support received thanks to this project. This support varies from the establishment of a new social network, the possibility of living in rent-free accommodation for a year, help with finding work and help with after school tutoring in the case of children. For the volunteers involved, this was also an invaluable opportunity to do something concrete for refugees. Within the Church, reactions to refugees are unfortunately quite mixed. But there are a number of people who would like to*

*do something but don't know where to start". While, **among the critical aspect**, Fr Mark Cachia declared that: "One of the main challenges of this project is helping refugee families to attain self-sufficiency within a year. As a rule, refugee families are not hosted by a religious community for more than one year. Rental prices in Malta have increased tremendously in the last few years and it has become very difficult for families to reach financial independence. Accompanying volunteers has also been a challenge, as many of the people involved have no previous experience working with refugees". Finally, responding to a question about **the pastoral impact** that this initiative has on the community, Mark Cachia said: "Communities of Hospitality are a concrete sign of a Church which is open to others, and more specifically to refugees. For many of the people involved, this is the first time they have had the opportunity of befriending a refugee. And this in itself is already a very positive outcome which has a multiplier effect with the church communities involved in the project".*

*Communities of Hospitality* was evaluated as **one of the top Community Building Initiatives (CBIs) that seeks to reduce xenophobia and discrimination by strengthening and promoting a culture of welcome and understanding**. Its overarching aim is the creation of communities where migrants are able to build meaningful relationships and work towards self-sufficiency and true belonging.

### **Relevance**

Since the relationship between the host community and the refugee guest is at the heart of the hosting placement, this GP seeks to strengthen and promote a culture of welcome and understanding. At the same time, it represents an opportunity to strengthen the network of *Communities of Hospitality*, including through training sessions for tutors and volunteers involved in accompanying beneficiaries.

### **Innovativeness**

Private sponsorship represents an alternative way of refugee resettlement, putting local religious communities and lay volunteers at the heart of a family's journey to a new life. The community assumes responsibility for refugees, by promoting, at the same time, self-sufficiency through a care plan in collaboration with all the stakeholders involved. Refugee families benefit from the rich social capital of a whole community, through a shared motivation and commitment to successful resettlement.

### **Impact**

To reinforce the integration process in the hosting community, the initiative has also involved native citizens, in order to create a system of relations between refugees and asylum seekers and local people. The goal reached is to transmit a better understanding of migrants.

As for the refugees, they experience the opportunity to recuperate from the affronts to their dignity they have suffered. Receiving hospitality recalls their humanity.

This perspective has given the ability to better cope with conflicts and prevent forms of misunderstanding through grassroots advocacy.

### **Sustainability**

The first aspect concerns the intervention models applied, with characteristics that can be replicated in different countries, as has already happened (e.g. Belgium, Italy and Romania). A sustainable effort is accomplished through the use of a committed group of volunteers that can act locally. The GP is well run and professionally managed, in fact hosts remain periodically in contact with the *JRS Communities of Hospitality* Coordinator throughout the placement. In doing so, they are encouraged to share their experience and give effective feedbacks.

## REINTEGRATION PROGRAM FOR MIGRANTS RETURNING TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION (RUSSIA)

**Verb: to welcome**

**Country:** Russia

**Initiative:** to provide social support to Russian nationals who return to their home country voluntarily or by force

**Beneficiaries:** Russian nationals

**Thematic area(s) of good practice example:** Assisted return and reintegration

**Duration of project:** 2016-2017

**Source of funds:** European Commission (The Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund – AMIF)

**Website:** <http://caritas.ru/erin>

**Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:**

Caritas International (+32 2 2293650 [erinrussia@caritasint.be](mailto:erinrussia@caritasint.be));

Caritas of Mother of God Archdiocese in Moscow (+7 499 9762438 [erin@caritas.ru](mailto:erin@caritas.ru))

The Caritas of Mother of God Archdiocese in Moscow, formerly known as Caritas Russia, has been cooperating with Caritas International Belgium since 2010 in the project of voluntary return and reintegration in the Russian Federation. This assistance includes social assistance, assistance for a micro business start-up, medical care etc., in order to guarantee a sustainable reintegration process.

The objective is to make sure that individuals returning to their country of origin can easily face any challenges they may encounter during or after their return, be they financial, psychosocial, administrative, or economic.

From June 1, 2016 until May 31, 2017, as part of the *European Reintegration Network (ERIN)* Specific Action Programme, a reintegration programme implemented by 18 host countries, Caritas International cooperated with Caritas Moscow and Sintem to offer reintegration assistance to Russian nationals who returned to their home country voluntarily or by force. Those who wished to return to the Russian Federation from Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania,

Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, could obtain re-integration support.

For *ERIN*, the Russian Federation Caritas Moscow and Caritas International Belgium, in close cooperation with the *European Reintegration Support Organisations (ERSO)* network, acted as one single focal point. Caritas Moscow collaborated with its Caritas network to **assist returnees all over the Russian Federation**. Since Caritas Moscow is part of the Caritas Russia network, which is extended all over the Russian Federation, reintegration assistance could be provided in every region of the Russian Federation (Kaliningrad, Moscow region, Volgograd, Siberia, etc.), through local Caritas branches or other local NGOs. Specifically, for returnees to the North Caucasus region Caritas Moscow cooperated with Sintem, a non-governmental organization founded in the Chechen Republic in 2005. Since 2012, Sintem has offered direct and indirect help to eleven thousand people in the North Caucasus area, by offering **psychological assistance for women and families in difficult situations**, as well as organizing **information sessions and activities for vulnerable profiles**.

**The reintegration services provided by Caritas Moscow included different services.**

**Basic post arrival assistance:** pick-up or reception at the place of arrival (e.g. airport) and service for immigration procedures; safe and convenient transportation to a hotel, to the final place of destination or permanent housing in the Russian Federation; emergency or temporary housing if necessary (Caritas Moscow had the possibility of making a reservation for a returnee to stay in a hotel for a maximum of 7 days); legal, administrative, medical and social support; specific assistance to vulnerable returnees (women, people with mental or physical disabilities, victims of trafficking/smuggling and UAMs); other basic assistance after arrival.

**Referral to reintegration assistance** (short and long term): housing (apartment rent, house rent, purchase of land, basic housing equipment and furniture); medical support (medical treatment, examinations, purchase of medication, transport to hospital); juridical advice and social assistance; education (educational courses and training, kindergarten, schooling for children and higher education); support in vocational training (training on CV writing, building up self-confidence, job interviews, etc.) focused upon the needs of the Russian labour market; assistance in job counselling and the wage subsidy system (this support could trigger an enterprise to employ a person returning to the Russian Federation); assistance in setting up a micro-business (identification of

needs and preferences, business training, development of a business plan, assistance in business registration of businesses, monitoring of supported businesses); other types of assistance, depending on the needs of the returnee and on the available reintegration package (with special attention for vulnerable groups: women, people with mental or physical disabilities, victims of trafficking/smuggling and UAMs).

During the reintegration process, there was a follow up of how the reintegration process of a returnee was proceeding, in order to justify the spending of the reintegration package which was made available by the respective sending European country.

Olga Timofeeva, Project Assistant at the Caritas of Mother of God Archdiocese in Moscow, said: *“As we can imagine, in many families of returnees there are children – pre-school or school age Children who have lived outside the country for 2-3-5 years, went to kindergarten or school in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Germany, so they ‘lose’ their native language. Therefore, the project provided a **tutoring service for children, paid for additional educational courses, so that it would have been easier for children to return to their former environment.** The project is good because it clearly illustrated all the steps and their sequence. We have a signed contract. And in accordance with this agreement, we were moving together with the returnee step by step, so that in the end everyone who asked for help received help. The agreement helped to bring a person back to reality if misunderstandings occurred. People must understand that our goal was not simply to give money, but to help them understand where they are and how they can start their life anew”* (Source: <http://caritas.ru/erin-about>).

Thomas Goedgezelschap, reintegration consultant at Caritas International, stated during an interview conducted via e-mail: *“the positive aspect is that persons, who return to the Russian Federation after a long stay in Europe, can benefit from an assistance after return, which can be used for many different purposes. This assistance offers to many people the possibility to overcome the first period upon return, after a very long stay abroad. Before emigration people often sell their business/house/ etc. in order to finance their trip abroad. Also, upon migration to Europe, people do not intent to return back to their home country. Some returnees have left some possessions, others have not, it depends. But we see that the financial support allocated by the ERIN program, is a huge support in most of the cases anyhow. But what we also see in the project, is that the main factor to a good reintegration, is the support of relatives and the social network in general. If returnees can rely on friends/relatives/etc., their*

*reintegration process often goes easier than if they have no one to rely on. The most vulnerable returnees are the ones without any social network”.*

### **Relevance**

Having as target group returnees who came back voluntarily or non-voluntarily in the Russian Federation from the different European countries, a focus of individual care based was introduced. A combination of identified needs and wishes of the returnees, access to services and assistance, such as health, housing, education, vocational training, job seeking, business support, including specific care for vulnerable groups, etc..

### **Innovativeness**

Considering the thematic area of this GP, namely assisted return and reintegration, this GP was highly innovative viewed against the background of the difficulties they face during the reintegration process. Thus, the main objective was to facilitate and promote sustainable homecoming and reintegration process from a multidimensional point of view, along with durable and efficient socioeconomic reintegration assistance (e.g. counselling, referral and/or reintegration assistance).

### **Impact**

In terms of reception and reintegration, by developing a tailor-made programme, this GP had a significant impact on the recipients, in order to start stimulating self-determination and independence in everyday life after a period of absence from their community, through the creation of conducive conditions for personal safety, economic empowerment, inclusion and social cohesion.

### **Sustainability**

Tailoring reintegration assistance to the individuals' needs in the Russian Federation, by undertaking vulnerability assessments, was considered to contribute towards a more sustainable return. Reintegration assistance was organized through local Caritas offices all over the country – for the North Caucasus region. Furthermore, during the reintegration process, there had been a follow up of how the reintegration process of returnees was proceeding, with the purpose of justifying and explaining the spending of the reintegration package, given that the difficulty of measuring sustainability of reintegration mainly resulted from the multidimensional nature of the process itself.

## TEMPORARY RECEPTION CENTRES FOR MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES (REPUBLIC OF SERBIA)

Verb: **to welcome**

Country: Republic of Serbia

Initiative: Reception centre

Beneficiaries: Refugees, migrants, unaccompanied minors

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: welcoming and integrating migrants

Duration of project: 2017 to present

Source of funds: Caritas Austria, Caritas Germany, German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid

Website: <http://caritas.rs/caritase/>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:  
Caritas Serbia (secretariat@caritas.rs +381 11 4099561)

A number of temporary reception centres were opened by the Government of Serbia in the second half of 2015 in order **to provide emergency reception** conditions for persons who were entering and transiting Serbia towards their preferred destination countries in the European Union. The first Centre was set up in early summer 2015 in Preševo, "One-stop centre". At the beginning of 2018, a total of 13 Reception Centres were operating in the territory of Serbia: Preševo, Vranje, Bujanovac, Ombor, Principovac, Obrenovac, Adaševci, Subotica, Bela Palanka, Dimitrovgrad, Bosilegrad, Pirot and Kikinda.

The **Obrenovac Reception Centre** was opened in January 2017 for the accommodation of a larger number of migrants (it currently houses about 670 refugees and migrants, mainly men), mostly from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iraq. It is located in the facilities of the Army of Serbia in the former "Bora Markovic" barracks. The idea behind the opening of the Centre was **to provide accommodation for persons in need of international protection** who used to stay at the informal gathering places (mostly in Belgrade) in unacceptable conditions for people. The Centre is also adapted to the needs of **unaccompanied minors** who are placed in separate dormitories.

On the occasion of marking the centenary of signing of the ceasefire of the First World War, held in Belgrade from 9 to 11 November 2018, **the Archbishop of Vienna, Mons. Christoph Schönborn** visited the Obrenovac centre, accompanied by the **Belgrade Archbishop, Mons. Stanislav Hočevar**, the Commissar for Refugees of Serbia, **Vladimir Cucic**, and the Director of Caritas Serbia, **Rev. Ivica Damjanovic**, as well as by Caritas staff from Serbia and Austria. The region of the Balkans also experienced great suffering during the 1990s. Thus, providing assistance to refugees and migrants arriving from the war-affected territories today is a way of working on building peace in the world.

Thanks to the support of Caritas Austria, the local Caritas has launched innovative services in this centre, which represent an important part of everyday life of refugees. For example, a carpentry workshop was opened for interested migrants to giving them a chance to gain new skills and knowledge in construction joinery, to work with board materials and to learn about artistic carpentry. The workshop also does small repairs in the centre. It is under the supervision of a Caritas animator, who is a forestry engineer.

In addition, Caritas teams for **psychosocial support** assist refugees on a daily basis, Monday to Friday, and provide **animation and sports activities** (guided by sports animators) for children and adults, occupational activities for adults and psychosocial counselling. This way refugees can be freed from fears and tensions and turn them into positive values and sports spirit.

At the **Obrenovac Reception Centre** (as well as in those of Adaševci, Bujanovac, Kikinda, Krnjača, Vranje) Caritas provides a regular **laundry service**, thanks to the support of **Caritas Germany** and **Caritas Austria**. In November 2015 Caritas started with this service given that there was no place where migrants could wash their laundry, a major problem above all for families with children. Through this service, washing and drying machines with fast washing cycles were introduced, which at that time was especially important for **refugees in transit**, so that they could quickly wash their clothes and continue travelling through Serbia. The laundry service is open from 8am to 8pm from Monday to Friday and from 10am to 6pm on Saturdays.

The **Bujanovac Reception Centre** was opened in October 2016, with an accommodation capacity of 250 people. Particular attention was paid to **child-friendly spaces designed for daily activities and educa-**

**tion of beneficiaries.** The overall building reconstruction and its transformation into a reception centre was financed by the **European Union**, within a broader EU-funded programme *For a better life* aimed at the improvement of living conditions of forced migrants, and implemented by the **Housing Centre**, a non-profit, non-governmental organization the objective of which is to improve the living conditions of socially vulnerable groups and support their social integration and independence (). The centre is located on the premises of the former battery plant "DP Svetlost" in Bujanovac, near the Skopje-Belgrade highway, on the main route of movement of the migrants through Serbia.

A Caritas psycho-social support team from Bujanovac Reception Centre organizes, from Monday to Friday, **English language lessons for adults and children**, in order to work on improving their communication skills. The participants are divided into three groups, in relation to their previous knowledge. The members of the Caritas team strive to help them learn in various ways, using pictures, drawings and video clips. At these classes, various topics are addressed from everyday life, in order for students to acquire the most useful knowledge that can help them to express themselves in everyday communication. Specifically, at the Krnjača and Principovac Centres, Caritas runs English and Serbian languages lessons. **In Krnjača these lessons are aimed at unaccompanied minors.** Caritas organizes also after-school activities for children attending national schools.

Adnan Hasan (Caritas translator and one of the members of the Caritas psycho-social support team) explained how the children are managing in Serbia: "One of the children, the 11 year-old Ahmad, comes to our extracurricular activities. He is very smart, he already speaks Serbian and English well, even though he only started attending regular school last September" (Source: <http://caritas.rs/caritase/?p=1180>).

In addition to these activities, in The Bujanovac Reception Centre Caritas has organized a **sewing corner**, where migrants have the opportunity to work on a sewing machine and can mend their own clothes as well as sew new garments. Caritas also provides the sewing material. On World Refugee Day, Caritas awarded two refugee women with volunteering certificates, in recognition of and gratitude for their great efforts and assistance in activities organized in Bujanovac, especially those related to the sewing workshop and the drawing school.

### **Relevance**

This GP has proven its relevance as one effective way in achieving a specific objective by improving reception capacities and ensuring higher standards for people in need of international protection in a transit country on the Balkan route, with special attention to unaccompanied minors (e.g. separate dormitories). From this perspective, integration practices have been implemented through a number of creative and educational activities (e.g. English and Serbian language classes). A particular focus is on labour market integration, by giving refugees a chance to acquire new knowledge and skills (e.g. carpentry workshops).

### **Innovativeness**

Considering this GP, new initiatives have been introduced in a context of *Temporary Reception Centre* in a transit country; i.e., psychological support, informal educational support to children and advice to parents, stress relief, animation and other activities, such as language courses.

Caritas Serbia has launched, moreover, innovative services (e.g. sports activities) which represent an important part of everyday life in a new context, by helping the refugees to free themselves from fears and tensions and promoting positive values.

### **Impact**

In terms of reception and integration, this GP seems to have a significant impact on the recipients, a general improvement of the living conditions.

Autonomy is another important element, since the refugees have the possibility to use in an autonomous way different tools for everyday needs. Examples are the sewing corner, to mend personal clothes as well as to sew new garments from materials they receive from Caritas, and the laundry services, to contribute to the overall hygiene of the centres. This last service is not only used for the needs of refugees, but also for the local poor population, primarily old, sick and lonely people.

### **Sustainability**

Since 2015 Caritas Serbia has been active in providing assistance to refugees and migrants on the Balkan route. This GP, having the potential

to be replicated and broadened in scale, is sustainable because Caritas Serbia has been financially supported by Caritas Austria, Caritas Germany, German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, European Union. Moreover, as far as national political relationships are concerned, Caritas Serbia has a great collaboration with all institutions of the Republic of Serbia and there is a readiness and will to upgrade this collaboration. In this direction, on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2017, the president of Caritas Serbia Msgr. Stanislav Hočevar and the then Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs, Aleksandar Vulin, signed a Memorandum of understanding, on assistance to refugees and migrants.

## TO PROTECT

### TRAINING ON PROTECTION OF AT RISK GROUPS AMONG REFUGEES (ALBANIA)

Verb: **to protect**

Country: Albania

Initiative: to contribute towards improved identification of protection needs of refugees and migrants, and improved protection actions by relevant authorities

Beneficiaries: local and national representatives of refugees' protection

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: trainings for state and civil society representatives

Duration of project: from 2016 till 2018

Source of funds: Caritas Albania

Website: <https://www.caritas.org/where-caritas-work/europe/albania/>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

Father Antonio Leuci, Country Director of Caritas Albania (+35 5697027210 [aleuci@rcj.org](mailto:aleuci@rcj.org)); Ariela Mitri, Head of Sector Anti-trafficking and Migration, Caritas Albania (+35 54 2230088 [caritasalbania@caritasalbania.org](mailto:caritasalbania@caritasalbania.org))

From the beginning of 2015 and forward, many refugees and migrants travelled through the Balkans, hoping to reach the western countries. During this time, many migrants and refugees entered Albania, using it as a transit country. It is for this reason that Caritas Albania, the Migration Sector and the Catholic Church network in Albania, were immediately mobilized to provide support to these people, particularly women and minors. The support consists in **emergency services, showing kindness and friendship** to them, helping them overcome the travel trauma, the war horrors, and very often violence or the risk of being involved in ex-

ploitation or human trafficking. The Catholic Church of Albania through Caritas Albania has immediately responded to the phenomenon and provided coordinated responses to the migratory situation in the last four years, affecting the region and country.

As reported by Ariela Mitri, Head of Sector Anti-trafficking and Migration at Caritas Albania: *"We have opened our hearts to their sufferings and tried to direct our work on interventions that directly help migrant groups, support the state and civil authorities to provide more dignified services for these people. Through our congregations in Gjirokaster, Bilisht and Shkoder, we have opened new offices thanks to the support of donors such as UNHCR, CRS, US Embassy, UK Government, who believe in the services we provide."*

The purpose of the training has been **to contribute towards improved identification of protection needs of refugees and migrants**, and improved protection actions by relevant authorities, thanks to local and national actors' increased coordination in identifying and protecting refugees. Going on with the correspondence with the Head of Sector, about what is the pastoral impact that this project has on the community, the answer was: *"All our actions are based on the four pillars proposed by the Pope in his message of peace: To welcome: Caritas Albania is part of the working group for the drafting of the emergency plan in the country and is part of the implementation group of this program. [...] We are also trying to limit and eliminate the feeling of "national fear", now so common in Europe, welcoming them and treating them with dignity."*

Inspiration from the four verbs mentioned by Pope Francis comes from the same document sent by email: **"To protect:** *this pillar was one of the strengths of our work. For three years we were committed in strengthening the capabilities of the Albanian police to identify and report cases of exploitation, violence, trafficking in human beings. Many of them travel accompanied by traffickers, therefore exposed to dangerous phenomena. Often, **unaccompanied minors** have been identified and by providing protection services we have also strengthened our cooperation with state structures at local and national levels. Looking and working through the problems faced by these children, Caritas suggested recommendations to improve the law on the rights and protection of children and related regulations.*

**To promote:** *as it is written in the Bible, "The Lord loves his neighbour, and gives food and clothes". Caritas Albania has assisted and continues to provide migrants and refugees with food, clothing, medicines and basic health*

*services, supports them with transport within the country and provides them with interpreting and translations, as well as **fostering continuous communication** to face all the difficulties they meet during their stay on the territory.*

**To integrate:** *Thanks to donors, a process of integration and development have been provided to different groups of asylum seekers. Caritas Albania has provided language courses or professional courses, **supporting the integration activities of asylum seekers**, and a guide has been developed providing detailed information on social life in Albania. The children were also assisted with animation activities, interactive and educational activities. We are aware that this situation will require serious commitment in the coming years, considering also the continuous increase in arrivals in our territory. Only in the first three months of 2018 it arrived in Albania the same number of refugees that entered in 2017. We are facing this new challenge in favour of migrants and refugees with a feeling of trust and hospitality. Caritas Albania continues to show solidarity and services to all people in need".*

Considering the thickness of training contents and the related wide range of participants, as reported in the Inquiry on Migrants' Pastoral Care, the training was defined as: *"very helpful in understanding how co-ordination in case management should function in the local level."*

The trainings have overall been assessed as very good trainings with regard to **quality and content of presentations, methodology of presentations**, testing knowledge received through "games", diversity of participants, **group work**, logistics, etc.

As reported by Ariela Mitri: *"The participants considered the training as very important, especially considering the topic of reviving and protection from burning as most of the cases they face suffer from these. The participants got important knowledge especially on the steps they have to follow while identifying a sick person, how to take care of the person while transporting to the hospital as well as how the survival mechanisms works in the local level etc."*

And: *"The training was defined as very helpful in understanding how co-ordination in case management should function in the local level. It was evaluated as an important method to gather all responsible local government partners in order to generate constructive debates while speaking about case management (from identification to protection of refugees)".*

### **Training evaluation and expected results**

The training has also served as an important **activity to generate discussions about the roles and responsibilities** of each actor at the local level. Thus, the sessions on the referral mechanisms are evaluated as extremely important.

As reported in the related Inquiry, public institutions face: *"Challenges while providing protection to at risk mixed group migrants" such as "Lack of proper rooms for interviewing/registering, accommodating refugees/migrants. Lack of proper knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of each actor in identification, protection of mixed group migrants, specifically in cases of unaccompanied children potential victims of trafficking".*

As reported by Ariela Mitri: *"Almost all the participants coming from other institutions apart from the Border and Migration Police had never received training on this topic, thus all the knowledge they gained was evaluated as extremely important. Cultural background information integrated on different exercises, videos, legislation were important parts of the training which also generated discussions and provided important theoretical and practical information on the refugees. Participants considered the sessions as helpful for their daily work and also for raising awareness among them on these vulnerable categories and provide quality services to them".*

### **Relevance**

Due to the urgent situation, three trainings were organized by Caritas Albania for state and civil society representatives on the topic of "protection of at risk groups among refugees", in order to improve institutional collaboration and referral system especially for people with special needs, such as unaccompanied children, women victims of domestic violence or trafficking. The three trainings took place in Kukes, Gjirokaster and Shkoder with the participation of 119 people from State Police, Border and Migration Police, State Social Service, Labour Office, Education Directory, State Secret Service, Local Government, Prefecture, Municipality, Local Council, civil society organization etc. Conceived as an inter-institutional mechanism, it has allowed participants to be informed and to learn about services provided by NGOs and to improve the collaboration with them at the local level, together with exchange visits among border police units and joint regional round tables, provided in order to let all the actors to learn from each other.

### **Innovativeness**

The training is divided into theoretical and practical part. The participants get in-depth information on the Albanian Legislation regarding mixed groups migrants and on the culture of Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq during the first day of the training. They also do practical exercises in order to distinguish refugees and migrants, understand their cultural background by somehow clarifying which are cultural norms and whether accepting or not these norms in the Albanian territory. Case studies are an important tool in making people discuss more and better understand the referral and protection system. Training methodology is a combination of theory with practice, interaction in group work, participants' group work presentation; the cooperative method was considered important, as people were really discussing important issues among small groups.

### **Impact**

The staff assisted all the refugees entering the country or identified by the Police at the points of entry and exit, informing them of their rights through flyers in specific languages such as Farsi, Arabic, English, etc. Furthermore, translations were made in languages that are not well known thanks to the experience of some of the missionaries present in Albania. Caritas has also contributed to the restructuring of some refugee reception facilities used for interviewing and identifying the refugees, dormitories, canteens, medical rooms, and rooms for personal hygiene, social facilities for women and children, and some construction work to guarantee water supply. The training increased participants' awareness, knowledge and skills about mixed migration, providing them a shared understanding of the cultural background and displacement experience of the refugees and migrants. Moreover, it has allowed a better perspective on the protection risks facing vulnerable individuals and victims of trafficking. The trainings have been assessed with regard to understanding definitions and legal framework in providing quality services, bringing all responsible actors together. It is an added value for institutions, giving the possibility to clarify among each other the roles and responsibilities, generating more constructive debates and building better institutional relations.

**Sustainability**

After the implementation and development of the abovementioned training, it emerged the need to advocate and lobby with the central government to allocate specific budget for the protection of the refugees. In the regions where the training took place, the local government representatives informed that in case they identify people in vulnerable situation they don't have the minimum budget to offer them basic needs, thus are forced to request support from NGOs. Many challenges faced by public institutions while providing protection to at risk mixed group migrants, such as difficulties in pre-screening process especially while recording finger prints as the Border of Kapshtice do not have the proper equipment thus are obliged to go to the local directory to register cases, lack of proper rooms for interviewing/registering, accommodating refugees/migrants, lack of proper knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of each actor in identification, protection of mixed group migrants, specifically in cases of unaccompanied children potential victims of trafficking.

According to a commentary sent via email by Ariela Mitri, there is an emerging consideration about planning future projects after this first stage, especially with regards to prevention of trafficking and violence among mixed group migrants.

**SUPPORTING IRAQI CHRISTIAN REFUGEES IN JORDAN  
(ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES)**

**Verb: to protect**

**Country:** England, Scotland and Wales for Jordan

**Initiative:** to provide humanitarian assistance and integration

**Beneficiaries:** forced migrants

**Thematic area(s) of good practice example:** Churches responding to the refugee crisis

**Duration of project:** 2016 to present

**Source of funds:** donations from charitable trusts, individual donations, fundraising activities, parishes and dioceses through appeals or activities of support groups

**Website:** <https://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/>

**Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:** Friends of the Holy Land (01926 512980 [office@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk](mailto:office@friendsoftheholylan.org.uk))

As known, the non-Christian denominations of the Holy Land are fluently supported by several governments as well as by private foundations and organizations. To avoid leaving out the Christians, in 2007 the Archbishop of Birmingham, Vincent Nichols (now Cardinal, Archbishop of Westminster), led the first diocesan pilgrimage to the Holy Land and called on pilgrims to support their Christian brothers and sisters. Thus, once the pilgrims had returned home, a little group from Worcester worked together and the result was a national charity, Friends of the Holy Land (FHL). It was officially launched by Michael Whelan in 2009, with the personal support of the Archbishop of Birmingham himself who declared: *"The development of Friends of the Holy Land will make it a more effective expression of our support for brave fellow Christians in all the difficulties they face"* (Source: <https://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/who-are-fhl/our-patrons>).

FHL is a non-political Christian charity in England, Scotland and Wales supporting the neediest Christians of all denominations in the West Bank, Gaza, Israel and Jordan, with a particular focus on the most vulnerable groups (especially children and the elderly). Indeed, FHL's work aims at reducing the pressure on them to abandon their homeland and

developing a self-sufficient and more resilient Christian community. In this regard, an Iraqi Christian refugee currently settled in Ashrafiyah parish (Amman) said: *"We are living under difficult circumstances, we cannot return to Iraq because our lives are threatened with death. The Iraqi government cannot protect us"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2MuTdQD>).

At the moment FHL has a UK based Management Committee reporting to a Board of Trustees, an office in Bethlehem and a Holy Land Committee in the West Bank. This latter supports the Bethlehem office and helps identify and verify projects and needy Christians requiring support. Volunteers are certainly an essential part of the FHL team to fulfil specific objectives:

- **raising awareness of the challenges faced by Christians in the Holy Land;**
- **generating and channelling financial resources to offer practical help for a sustainable future;**
- **encouraging pilgrimages to the Holy Land to meet local Christians**, to pray with the local community and simply be among them, so that they know they are not forgotten;
- **encouraging prayer on their behalf.**

FHL funds diverse sustainable and immediate relief work and focuses on the following areas: education, employment, family support, health, housing.

In 2011, following an Anglican appeal by Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, **FHL became ecumenical**, so that Christians, regardless of denomination, help other Christians. In fact, more recently Bishops of two-thirds of all Catholic and Anglican Dioceses in England, Scotland and Wales have appointed FHL Diocesan Coordinators to advise the FHL Trustees and Management Committee how best to fulfil FHL's objectives in their Dioceses. Therefore, FHL has the support of Catholic and Anglican Bishops who enthusiastically express their commitment to its work, as the Most Revd. and Rt. Hon. Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, stated: *"I am very pleased to have become a patron to the Friends of the Holy Land. I support the essential work this charity is doing in the Holy Land, giving practical help and moral support to those in the greatest need"* (Source: <https://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/who-are-fhl/our-patrons>).

Many of FHL supporters are organised through parish groups in both Catholic and Anglican parishes across England, Scotland and Wales. At the same time, building a bridge between West and East, **FHL also works in partnership with different *Christian based* organisations such as Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem, the Pontifical Mission of Palestine and Jerusalem and the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem.** The certainty is that, acting together, Christian communities around the world can provide moral support and practical assistance to the neediest Christians living in a hostile part of the world and enable them to rebuild their lives for a better future.

In the last years many Iraqi Christian families have been forced to flee their homes because of conflict or religious persecution. Many of them, leaving their homeland, have found shelter in Jordan, convinced they will return to their home country. For this reason, Revd. George Al-Kopti, the Vicar of St. Paul's Anglican Church (Amman) called on Christians to join forces to protect and support Iraqi families: *"I would like to urge our sisters and brothers to help us in our ministry among these Iraqi Christian families who were ready to lose everything, but not their Christian faith, when ISIS invaded their villages and homes... we feel Christ calling us to serve our sisters and brothers from Iraq until God finds them another way for safe future"* (Source: ).

**The situation of Christian refugees in Jordan is a matter of concern even for Pope Francis.** In fact, in 2014, during his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he met with refugees and disabled young people in the Latin Church, Bethany beyond the Jordan, and uttered the following words: *"As part of my pilgrimage I have greatly desired to meet with you who have had to leave your homes and your country as a result of violence and conflict. Here in Jordan you have found welcome and refuge. I have wanted also to meet with you, dear young people who bear the burden of physical disabilities"*<sup>6</sup>.

Since early 2016, after several representatives of FHL had visited Jordan to identify what help could be given to displaced Christians, funds have been provided to help them through both immediate financial family support and tailored assistance to integrate in the new context of life.

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<sup>6</sup> Available at website [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/may/documents/papa-francesco\\_20140524\\_terra-santa-rifugiati-giovani-disabili.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/may/documents/papa-francesco_20140524_terra-santa-rifugiati-giovani-disabili.html) (last accessed May 13, 2019).

FHL supplies, through its funds, medicines, food vouchers, blankets, heaters, clothes, furniture, urgently needed house appliances and help with rent. Hence, through a locally-based Christian network and thanks to a partnership with the Latin Patriarchate and the Anglican Diocese of Jerusalem, FHL has supported around 100 Christian refugee families who fled from Iraq, living in a Latin Parish in Amman. Moreover, through the direct help of Fr. Mario Cornioli (FHL project partner), young Iraqi Christian refugees have been supported to learn sewing skills, in order to create dresses, bags and ties being sold to the local community and internationally through its Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/Rafediniraqigirls/>). Besides supporting current employment initiatives, skills development, such as the dressmaking one, could improve employment opportunities when refugees will eventually relocate in a peaceful and safe context, as an Iraqi Christian woman currently settled in Ashrafieh parish (Amman) stated: *"I was born at the beginning of the Iran-Iraq war, and my child was born in the war against ISIS, I do not want my grandson to be born in another war"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2MuTdQD>).

### **Relevance**

With different Catholic and Anglican representatives, FHL reflects its ecumenical credentials. Given that the Christian community of the Holy Land have been under economic and political pressure, FHL was established in order to encourage Christians to flourish in their original land, by helping them to deal with high levels of unemployment and poverty, a shortage of social services and affordable health care. Finally, FHL helps Christian people and communities to improve their lives and develop the resilience needed to survive the many difficulties they daily have to face. Through close work with the Churches in the Holy Land, FHL's activities are completely apolitical and have the support of Catholic and Anglican Bishops.

### **Innovativeness**

The innovativeness of the GP lies mainly in two aspects. The first can be found in its ecumenical structure. Indeed, it is a meaningful way to practice unity amongst the grassroots and an outstanding example in the field of pastoral care of migrants. And as a matter of fact, in recognition of its ecumenical contribution, both in the UK and in the Holy Land, FHL has recently been elected as a "Body in Association" of Churches Together in England and CT Great Britain and Ireland. The pilgrimage to

the Holy Land represents the second aspect of innovativeness, since pilgrims have direct experience with the local community, sharing a real pastoral approach, while going beyond merely material assistance.

### **Impact**

This GP has an important impact both on the Christian refugees in Jordan, thanks to the support received by FHL, and on the community of Christians in England, Scotland and Wales. In fact, besides providing humanitarian assistance, FHL encourages UK Christians visiting the Holy Land, to sharing with them support and friendship. Pilgrimages also include visits to FHL projects, such as "St. Martha's House", a day care centre for elderly Christian women in Bethlehem, as well as "School of Joy", a Christian run school for young people with learning difficulties. As a confirmation of the positive impact, a Holy Land pilgrim stated: *"Thank you for arranging our visit to St Martha's House and the School of Joy. We had our eyes opened to the plight of ordinary Palestinians in the Holy Land and have decided to do some fundraising for FHL. Our week in the Holy Land was wonderful; probably something we will be unable to repeat"*. (Source: <https://www.friendsoftheholylan.org.uk/what-we-do/pilgrimage>)

### **Sustainability**

As for organizational and financial aspects, the sustainability of this GP can be found in the fact that FHL is essentially organised through groups within parishes in Catholic and Anglican Dioceses. Moreover, a national management committee meets regularly and reports to the trustees, ensuring accountability for all funds raised and distributed in the Holy Land by the FHL and its partners. As far as the community sustainability is concerned, FHL through its activities ensures the acquisition of new skills, such as the art of fashion design and sewing, that can be spent on the job market, both in the context of migration and in the country of origin or in the country to which refugees will eventually relocate. Indeed, the dress-making project has already generated a small income for Iraqi Christian in Jordan. Finally, working together has also positively affected the people involved. In fact, Fr. Mario reports: *"As they work, you see them smiling. It helps them forget the violence and fear they have encountered"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2Za4ven>).

**RODZINA RODZINIE (POLAND)****Verb: to protect**

Country: Poland for Syria

Initiative: to help the people in need in Middle East

Beneficiaries: children and adults of Aleppo

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: making conditions better for people to stay in their own countries

Duration of project: 2016 to present

Source of funds: Fundraising by Fundacja św. Mikołaja, "The St. Nicholas Foundation"; Polish parishes; Catholic Church organizations; Companies; Individual donors.

Website: <https://rodzinarodzinie.caritas.pl/>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

Caritas Polska (+48 223348585 [caritaspolska@caritas.pl](mailto:caritaspolska@caritas.pl));

Fundacja św. Mikołaja, "The St. Nicholas Foundation" (+48 228250390)

The idea of *Rodzina Rodzinie* programme, which means "Family for Family" in Polish, is **to create a bridge between Poles and Syrians** who are exhausted by the war in their country, according to Fr Marian Subocz, the president of Caritas Polska from 2007 to 2017. It is the largest humanitarian programme run by Caritas Polska which brings together 20,000 Polish donors: families, parish communities, institutions and companies. Since its beginning, over 8,700 families in need, including Muslim families, have been supported.

The areas of intervention are the following: basic assistance, social aid, health care, psychological support, scholastic support (grants, vocational training courses, initiatives for professional requalification), pastoral care, recreational activities. The educational and health services, along with food support, given the malnutrition of many people, continue to be considered the most urgent.

This programme represents **an answer to the appeal of Pope Francis**: *“Therefore, as the Jubilee of Mercy approaches, I make an appeal to parishes, religious communities, monasteries and shrines throughout Europe, that they express the Gospel in a concrete way and host a refugee family. A concrete gesture in preparation for the Holy Year of Mercy. May every parish, every religious community, every monastery, every shrine of Europe welcome one family, beginning with my Diocese of Rome”*.

*Rodzina Rodzinie* has already celebrated its second anniversary and will continue throughout 2019. Due to the decreasing interest in the situation in Syria, some families cannot continue to receive support, although Caritas Polska is constantly looking for new donors. The funds raised by the Church go to local partners who take care of the families and continuously monitor their needs, so that they can become self-independent financially and get back on their feet and secure a decent life for all family members. The monitoring centre in Aleppo is **the Christian Hope Centre** which is coordinated with the local churches. From the beginning of the conflict, they have helped people in all dimensions of everyday life: food assistance, support for renting apartments or repairing apartments destroyed by the war, medical care and support for older people, educational activities for children.

In any case, the Church is offering not only financial help, but also sends teachers, doctors and technology experts who set up and teach the locals how to run the necessary institutions for themselves and how to make their countries function better.

Since January 2018, Caritas Polska has been a partner of the Hope Centre in Aleppo to expand the scope of assistance provided in Aleppo. In addition to the continuation of the *Rodzina Rodzinie* programme, a number of initiatives of a developmental and pastoral nature were initiated. Thanks to this support, some of those in need can start out on becoming independent of outside help.

### **Micro-entrepreneurship: the way is to regain jobs**

Due to the relatively stable situation in Aleppo, it was possible to launch a number of development support projects for micro-enterprises in

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7 Pope Francis, Angelus, Saint Peter's Square, Sunday, 6 September 2015, available at website [\(last accessed May 13, 2019\)](#).

Aleppo. Therefore, as part of a pilot project, in 2018 150 projects have already been funded. These are, for example, weaving workshops, sewing shops, grocery stores, small street restaurants, car workshops, electrical equipment shops, blacksmith's workshops. As part of the programme, the beneficiaries received training and equipment needed to start their business – depending on the profession, skills and business plan prepared by the applicants.

Unemployment in Syria reaches 57.7%: a factor encouraging young people to emigrate from the country. In response to this need, Caritas Polska supports the project run by the Marist Brothers' Assembly. Thanks to it, the first young entrepreneurs could start training in the knowledge and skills needed to start and run their own micro business. In the next stage of the project, they will receive support for the purchase of the most essential materials necessary to run their business.

### **Rooftop Playground**

The rooftop was ruined by mortar bombs and missiles that caused it to be in a very bad condition. **The idea of a closed rooftop playground was new and creative.** There were reconstructing and maintenance works. The biggest impact was on the children who were very pleasantly surprised by this playground and the game rooms. The beneficiaries are Scouts' members, Sunday school children-fraternities, Christian youths and people of this area plus a group of the monastery students from other providences. Their number exceeds 400 individuals, ages between 5 and 35.

**Testimonials:** Emil, 7 year-old

*"This playground is amazing. I love it very much. We didn't have any place to play freely in, we used to search for any place just to do an activity or sometimes we just cancelled it"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2Y7xWOs>).

### **Pastoral and artistic initiatives**

In Aleppo before the war there were 135,000 Christians, today 30,000. Bearing in mind the needs of Aleppo residents who ended up in the war, Caritas Polska supports the pastoral and artistic initiatives of local Christian communities. Many of them interrupted their activity during the war, focusing on bringing humanitarian aid to the inhabitants. Today, for the

first time in a few years, they can return to their traditions, wanting to return to normality at least for a moment. Many churches were partially or completely destroyed during the fighting in Aleppo. During one of the initiatives, the youth removed shards of destroyed parts of church of St. Michael, preparing it for meditation, in which parishioners could participate.

During the April 23 Regina Caeli prayer in Vatican, Pope Francis thanked Caritas Polska for this initiative: *"I greet the Polish pilgrims and express heartfelt appreciation for the initiative of Caritas Poland in support of many families in Syria"*<sup>8</sup>.

### **Relevance**

In order to create a bridge between Poles and Syrians, the GP is relevant since it is focused on Polish families, parish communities, companies and various institutions wishing to help in their homeland Syrian families affected by the war, in desperate need of basic necessities of life, by offering the humanitarian aid on-site. Muslim families in need are also included in the Christian programme.

### **Innovativeness**

Through an adoption process of Syrian families, the Church is offering not only financial help, but has provided targeted material assistance, socio-economic and recreational activities, psychosocial support, child protection services to protect and promote human rights and the protection of civilians with particular attention to vulnerable groups.

### **Impact**

The GP has one peculiar aspect some other programmes lack. It promotes personal responsibility by linking donors with families in need, so that the aid is not anonymous. Through an act of mercy, donors know the family they help and feel responsible for them.

Syrian families can become self-independent financially and get back on their feet and secure a decent life for all family members.

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<sup>8</sup> Available at website [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2017/documents/papa-francesco\\_regina-coeli\\_20170423.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/angelus/2017/documents/papa-francesco_regina-coeli_20170423.html) (last accessed May 13, 2019).

### **Sustainability**

This is the largest humanitarian programme run by Caritas Polska which brings together a large amount of donors that gives sustainability to the programme itself.

The funds raised by the Church are managed by local Catholic organizations who know the real needs of each family, so as to provide the necessary support and services in an effective way, and improve efficiency through continuous monitoring.

**REFUGEE PROTECTION AND SERVICE DELIVERY DIALOGUE:  
STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS TO RESPOND TO SYRIAN  
REFUGEE NEEDS (TURKEY)**

**Verb: to protect**

Country: Turkey

Initiative: to strengthen capacities in refugee service provision in Turkey (community empowerment)

Beneficiaries: Syrians under temporary protection status and other refugees in Turkey

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: fostering the protection and integration of refugees

Duration of project: 2016-2017

Source of funds: European Union and Republic of Turkey

Website:

<https://www.icmc.net/programs/volunteering-for-refugee-protection-strengthening-refugee-assistance-services-in-turkey>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

ICMC (The International Catholic Migration Commission) Europe  
(+32 2 2279729 info@icmc.net)

The International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), since 1951, has responded to the needs of the most helpless people and communities in over 40 countries, by **preserving the rights of migrants, refugees and displaced persons, in spite of their ethnicity, nationality or faith**. Thus, working around the world in partnership with governments and local actors, as well as with the UNHCR (the UN Refugee Agency), faith-based organisations and other partners, ICMC's expertise consists of refugee resettlement, humanitarian assistance and prevention.

The ICMC in Brussels serves as a liaison with European Union institutions. It follows policy developments within the European Union and engages with different actors to promote, along with **resettlement, alternative legal pathways and refugee integration in Europe**.

In this perspective, ICMC Europe developed in 2010 an inclusive network the "European Resettlement Network" (*ERN*), together with UN-

HCR and IOM (The International Organization for Migration) to promote **information sharing, capacity building and exchange on best practices**. As a result, recognising the need for new approaches, from 2016 to 2018 a new phase of the *ERN* was carried out, "Developing Innovative European Models for the Protection of Refugees and Providing Support to New Resettlement Countries"– **ERN+** – (co-financed by the European Union – AMIF fund) to **explore complementary forms of admission** for those in need of international protection and highlight the need for safe and legal ways to reach the EU. It also focused on community-based sponsorship, student scholarship schemes, **and** humanitarian admission plans. At present, *ERN* counts over 3,000 stakeholders: organisations and individuals working in resettlement and integration policy and practice, at different levels and in a variety of sectors. The network membership also includes refugees previously resettled to Europe, since their expertise contributes to enhancing and developing European resettlement programmes.

As an integral part of the *ERN*, in order to engage local actors in resettlement and integration, ICMC Europe has implemented since 2012 the "SHARE Network". It provides a platform for peer exchange between European local and regional authorities, as well as civil society organizations, to promote a culture of welcome through a **coordinated refugee reception and integration procedures** across Europe.

In the field of volunteering for refugees, following the "SHARE Network" activities, ICMC Europe implemented from 2016 to 2017 the programme titled "Refugee Protection and Service Delivery Dialogue – Strengthening Partnerships to Respond to Syrian Refugee Needs" (referred to herein as the "Refugee Service Delivery Project"), in cooperation with the Istanbul-based Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF), a non-profit and non-governmental organisation assisting vulnerable groups.

Petra Hueck, Director ICMC Europe, declared: *"The cooperation between ICMC Europe and HRDF within the framework of this project is a living example of a practical cooperation fostering inclusion and supporting durable solutions for refugees residing in Turkey"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2UN1gaP>).

The project, as part of the EU-Turkey Civil Society Dialogue initiative, brought together Civil Society Organisations from Turkey and the EU **to facilitate an ongoing dialogue between organisations**. The main objective of the "Refugee Service Delivery Project" was to support the

**creation of volunteering opportunities** managed by Turkish Civil Society organisations for refugee groups under temporary protection status.

HRDF piloted a volunteering programme within service provision at the "Syrian Refugee Service Centre" that accommodated changing numbers of volunteers, mainly students/postgraduate students from the departments of psychology, social work and medicine of different universities in Istanbul, along with musicians, art teachers, and psychologists. Most of the volunteers were female. The activities run by volunteers included: Art therapy for children and adults, Turkish classes for children and adults, Health seminars, IT classes, Handcraft classes, Music/choir classes for adults.

In addition to encouraging the integration process of refugees and empowering them to make use of their skills for the benefit of the refugee community, the project also provided a platform for Turkish and European civil society actors **to network, exchange best practices and build relationships with organizations implementing similar initiatives, in order to support sustainable solutions for refugees across Turkey and the EU.**

In this regard, Petra Hueck said: *"Europe and the international community have not yet been able to provide a long-term sustainable response to the current displacement situation. Meanwhile, Turkey hosts more refugees than any other country in the world, having received more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees alone since the civil war began in 2011. Despite Turkey's generous humanitarian response, longer-term durable solutions for these refugees remain unclear"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2UN1gaP>).

Surely, both Turkish and European Civil Society benefitted from good practice exchange and experts' inputs (e.g. the European Exchange visits in Turkey and Italy), jointly defining a volunteer strategy, creating of a Turkish e-learning module to train volunteers online, as well as numerous presentations and reports on volunteering and refugee service provision in Turkey and the EU. The first exchange visit was organized in Istanbul on April 4-6, 2016 to launch the project. ICMC Europe and the representatives of 8 European NGOs met with 23 Turkish representatives from Civil Society, local authorities, central government, universities and UNHCR, to discuss **challenges and opportunities to enhance the refugees' integration and to promote the delivery of tailor-made social services.** The second European Exchange visit was in Milan on 23-25 November 2016 hosted by ICMC Europe and the Italian Caritas

branches Consorzio Communitas and Consorzio Farsi Prossimo. Participants examined how to address **the needs of refugees in accessing mainstream health and education**, and how to ensure integration in host communities. Lastly, a final project conference was hosted by ICMC Europe and HRDF on 9 May 2017 in Ankara. The one-day meeting programme had the objective of **strengthening cooperation and exchange of practices between Turkish and European stakeholders on the topic of increasing the quantity and quality of services and assistance to refugees**, to ensure protection and promote integration, besides formulating final conclusions and recommendations with regard to engaging volunteers in refugee service provision in Turkey.

As for the positive impact of the project, Petra Hueck pointed out: *"During the 19 months implementation, the Refugee Service Delivery project witnessed how citizen engagement and volunteering have rapidly grown in the country. Similarly, the service landscape offered to refugees in Turkey has developed considerably. NGOs and citizen-led grass-roots initiatives offer creative and innovative solutions to meet the humanitarian needs of the most vulnerable in society as well as address refugees' longer-term needs to settle and integrate in local communities"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2UN1gaP>).

*"A major challenge HRDF noticed during the course of the project was that not all volunteers could handle working with very vulnerable people. Some volunteer agreements were terminated because the volunteer did not feel able to face the challenge and did underestimate the impact on oneself while working with vulnerable people in need"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2VFS6O2>).

ICMC Europe finalized work on a publication, *Paving the way for refugees in Turkey: from reception to durable solutions* (April 2018), looking at sustainable refugee services engaging volunteers to promote integration in Turkey and across Europe. The publication also offers final conclusions and concrete recommendations on how to strengthen volunteering for refugees in Turkey.

### **Relevance**

The GP is linked to social inclusion and empowerment of refugees through the development of volunteerism among civil society organizations, as a pathway for supporting refugee service-provision and longer-term efforts, as opposed to the expectation of a temporary protection situation.

The GP aimed also at building national platforms to ensure collaboration between relevant actors.

### **Innovativeness**

Starting from the specific characteristics of the concept of volunteering in the Turkish national context, it was achieved the objective of strengthening capacities in refugee service provision through facilitating exchange of practices between Turkish and European stakeholders on professionalising the engagement of volunteers and on the issue of increasing the quantity and quality of services. Moreover, it was ensured that the voluntary work was linked to the strategic objectives of the different organizations.

### **Impact**

Since civil society actors have witnessed a growth in volunteering efforts, the GP had favourable effects on both the volunteers and the beneficiaries. As far as the first ones are concerned, most of them had the chance to experiment the integration process of refugees in their new neighbourhoods, providing them and local residents with opportunities to meet one another, and in raising awareness about refugee protection needs in society. As for beneficiaries, they had the opportunity to have direct contact with Turkish population, better understand the local culture and learn the local language.

### **Sustainability**

Engaging citizens as volunteers increased local capacities in both humanitarian assistance and longer-term integration of refugees, even in the context of scarce available financial resources. Furthermore, the GP facilitated the development of a tailor-made volunteer strategy to support and structure volunteer engagement. Despite a negative public discourse about refugees, volunteering in refugee service-provision is growing in Turkey. Since the start of this GP, different initiatives have spread across the country, by activating positive expressions of civil society and citizens' support for refugee protection.

## TO PROMOTE

### CAREER FOR NEW LIFE (UKRAINE)

Verb: **to promote**

Country: Ukraine

Initiative: social portal of employment assistance

Beneficiaries: internally displaced persons (IDPs)

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: integration of IDPs in social and employment terms

Duration of project: 2016 to present

Source of funds: Renovabis (The Eastern Europe Relief Organization of the Catholic Church in Germany); CRS (Catholic Relief Services); other international donors

Website: <https://careerfornewlife.com>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:  
Caritas Ukraine (+380 322976636 [caritas@caritas.ua](mailto:caritas@caritas.ua))

Caritas Ukraine operates in 20 regions of Ukraine, mostly in the western and in the eastern regions. As the largest single national organization responding to the crisis, it started to provide **humanitarian assistance** to Ukrainians affected by the conflict in April 2014, when the mass **displacement of people** in Ukraine began, both in regions and cities with the largest shares of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and in the buffer zone.

**Specific interventions have been made in the following areas:** livelihoods, food, drinking water, medical support, business development grants, rehabilitation and integration of internally displaced people, reconstruction of destroyed buildings, education and psychosocial support.

Andrij Waskowycz, President of Caritas Ukraine, said: *"In Ukraine, we are faced with a forgotten war and an invisible humanitarian crisis. This crisis has impoverished millions of Ukrainians and deprived them of their basic needs and fundamental rights. The most vulnerable – the elderly, the disa-*

*bled, and children – face the harsh realities of this war every day"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2Fpb GYU>).

**The social portal for assisting IDPs** with employment *Career for new life* operates within the framework of *Employment for IDP* project, aiming at the integration of IDPs in social and employment terms. It is a fact that the lack of employment and subsequently lack of a regular income are the main obstacles for integration and living arrangements. Therefore, *Career for new life* encompasses **professional education, business consulting and provision of individual grants for education and business start-ups, creation of work space and cooperation with employers.**

Nataliia Maliutina, Employment Project Coordinator (Caritas Kharkiv), declared: *"We have developed the website for assistance to IDPs who live outside cities where Caritas centres run their activities. We have put into this portal all our experience of employment assistance to IDPs. At present, we have moved to the new platform. We have refreshed the design, simplified the registration procedure and how to surf though the website. We believe it can help both employers to find new staff and job seekers to find a desired job"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2Tkwd0>).

The **website** is run by Caritas Kharkiv and contributes to **job placement of IDPs** through training programmes and the development of cooperation with employers, and the creation of workspaces.

*Career for new life* offers a wider range of opportunities and advantages for employers and job seekers in any city of Ukraine. Specifically, the project objective aims to facilitate the employment of **IDPs and people affected by the military operations**, with the help of a unified communication space for employers and IDPs in Ukraine.

The website started to operate in 2016 and through its operation, more than 3,500 IDPs and about 2,000 employers have registered there and posted more than 1,500 vacancies.

The creators have increased the level of protection: personal information can only be viewed by registered and audited employers. All the services provided are free.

Gennadiy Yakubov (Caritas Ukraine), during an interview via e-mail, pointed out: *"At present the web portal is operating within a 3-year project called Strengthening resilience of conflict-affected communities in the East and*

*South of Ukraine. The goal of the project is to contribute to improving the integration, resilience and self-help capacity of conflict affected people (CAP) in Ukraine. There are three components in the project: peace building (Integration of conflict-affected individuals and groups is achieved and willingness of peace building is strengthened); livelihood (the individual resilience of the most vulnerable groups of people affected by conflict is increased through renovation of their livelihoods); strengthening resilience of affected communities".*

Given that the portal objective aims **to facilitate the employment of IDPs** with the help of a unified communication space for employers and IDPs in Ukraine, **the website consists of four main parts:** informational (news and projects data), service (placement and review of vacancies/CVs), educational (a blog with useful materials) and social (services from IDPs, volunteers, social projects). As a part of employment projects, in the framework of *Career for new life* portal, **Caritas Ukraine also provides grants for reskilling, business launch and development and employment grants**, since some IDPs cannot find jobs because their previous professional experience is not in demand on the local labour market where they currently reside.

The site manager, Anastasia Lopanova, explained: *"Our goal is not only to focus on employment services. Visitors can get information about fund programmes to assist the IDPs, seeking self-education and self-improvement. Organizers publish stories of successful employees on the website".* (Source: ).

Under the project *Careers For New Life*, in 2017 **Caritas Zaporizhzhia started, in the Edison Space Coworking, a series of job fairs** which brought together more than 400 visitors. Then, Caritas Kharkiv and Caritas Kramatorsk picked up the initiative. Employers participating in the fairs represented various areas of job opportunities, but mainly the service sector, trade and industry. At the same time in all the cities involved in the fairs, seminars were held both for employers and job seekers.

Alina Soldatenko, recruiter of Caritas Kramatorsk, said: *"The fair is a free space where employers and job seekers can meet each other and find new opportunities for themselves. After the fair, more than 40 job seekers left their contacts with employers and scheduled interviews. This is a good indicator"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2OdyCxn>).

The job fairs were useful for both job seekers and employers, as they gave the opportunity **to gain new knowledge and make new friends**, confirm-

ing that Caritas Ukraine is constantly improving tools and means for effective activities in support of the integration and employment of IDPs.

**Oleksandr, a displaced person from the Crimea**, where he had a small computer repair shop, has moved and now lives in Poltava. As the Crimea is a sunny place, he built himself an independent solar power station, which powered the house. Having moved, **he started a construction of the same power station in his new house**. He obtained an opportunity to transfer resources of the power station from autonomous electric power supply of the house to a commercial sale of the energy resource. The project required substantial financial investments, and Oleksandr had to support his family too, which is why information about business grants from Caritas was quite useful for him. **He filed an application with the business plan and received the grant**. The business started to develop rapidly. At present his solar power station is not self-sustaining, but within just a couple of years it is to reach the target power and bring in a good income.

### Relevance

This GP is related to durable and sustainable solutions for access to social services and economic reintegration of IDPs at the place of origin, through three main components: peace building, livelihood and strengthening resilience of affected communities.

### Innovativeness

The social portal provides strength from within by connecting employers and IDPs looking for a job. It is an effective intervention strategy that promotes employment (and self-employment), in order to tackle socio-economic problems, improve the situation of IDPs in the labour market and reduce social tension.

### Impact

To reduce social exclusion, along with a general improvement of the living conditions of IDPs and the activation of reintegration process in civic participation, Caritas also provides grants for training to acquire new skills, business launch and development and employment grants, since some IDPs previous professional experience is not in demand yet. Furthermore, the social portal provides information about fund programmes, self-education and self-improvement.

## **Sustainability**

One of the major priorities of this GP is to help IDPs sustain themselves through appropriate employment and productive activity. Moreover, since the issue of skills is an essential element of a sustainable labour market reintegration for IDPs, job fairs represent important occasions where job seekers and employers can meet each other, matching supply and demand easily through the valorisation of territorial networks and partnerships.

## THE REFUGEE PROJECT (BULGARIA)

**Verb: to promote**

Country: Bulgaria

Initiative: to help refugees and migrants to feel included in Bulgarian culture

Beneficiaries: asylum seekers and refugees

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: multi-stakeholder partnership

Duration of project: 2011 to present

Source of funds: Cooperation for Voluntary Service (CVS) Bulgaria and Caritas Sofia

Website: <http://refugeeproject.eu/en>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

Caritas Sofia, Diana Nedeva (+35 9884924031 [therefugeeproject@gmail.com](mailto:therefugeeproject@gmail.com) [www.facebook.com/refugeeproject](http://www.facebook.com/refugeeproject))

The *Refugee Project* is a joint initiative between CVS Bulgaria and Caritas Sofia that provides educational assistance and a range of activities for refugee children and adults in conjunction with the State Agency for Refugees in Sofia, Bulgaria. The initiative enlists and trains volunteers of all ages to help refugees and migrants to feel included in Bulgarian culture. The *Refugee Project* brings together volunteers to organise a wide range of lessons and **activities for asylum seekers and refugees in the reception centres** (also informally called refugee camps) in Sofia. The period when they live in these camps is a time when many refugee families feel vulnerable; so, they help adults and children to integrate into their new environment by teaching them language skills and giving them new experiences and positive interactions.

### Roots of the initiative

In 2010 CVS-Bulgaria started a project in the Integration Centre in Ovcha Kupel that aimed to help children and youngsters in their insertion to Bulgaria and to facilitate their inclusion in the education system. The

project started with a few volunteers who assisted the Bulgarian teachers in their lessons as well as organizing their own lessons. The project was very successful, so in 2011 CVS-Bulgaria joined forces with Caritas Sofia to continue working with children and adolescents in the integration centre. Since then, over 300 volunteers have participated in the project, with each volunteer dedicating at least two hours per week over a minimum period of 4 months, **to help with Bulgarian lessons for children, English lessons for adults and occasional workshops and special events.**

### Aims

The objective of this initiative is to give refugees and asylum seekers the chance to learn host languages, obtain new aptitudes and skills, experience life in Bulgaria through the eyes of accommodating locals. Moreover, it promotes volunteer work and skills advancement among Bulgarians, who in turn, help grown-ups and children refugees and migrants be socially included by **teaching them the host language** and other activities including ICT and art workshops. Asylum seekers and refugees benefit from the project by having increased interaction with Bulgarian people, opportunities to improve their language skills, and the option to participate in a wide variety of activities while they are staying in the centres.

### Relevance

The setting-up of such a project aims at providing educational support and care together with recreational activities free of charge. Project like these show that education is not only a key component of successful integration, but also a promising future.

### Innovativeness

The main innovation of the initiative is to utilize volunteers from Sofia to offer their time (minimum 2 hours per week for 4 months) while helping refugees assimilate with the local culture and make their future employment easier. For this to be successful, it needs a strong volunteer network and management. Since then, over 300 volunteers have participated in the project. The project was very successful, so in 2011 CVS-Bulgaria joined forces with Caritas Sofia to continue working with children and adolescents in the integration centre. Volunteers now provide not only Bulgarian and English lessons, but also art workshops,

music activities, sport and games sessions, IT lessons and even cookery workshops on a weekly basis.

### **Impact**

Due to their age, especially children from families with migrant backgrounds can find themselves in particularly vulnerable situations and experience difficulties in integrating in their host country. In this way, they have the opportunity to participate in these activities to enhance their knowledge of the language, improve their reading and writing skills, do homework and prepare for tests, develop communication and social skills, and nurture their global motivation.

### **Sustainability**

Behind the operational and financial efforts made by the two promoters, the project is run by many volunteers. They have the opportunity to hear at first-hand the experiences of refugees coming to Bulgaria and to have an active role in their adaptation to the education system and their social integration in Bulgaria. They gain experience of intercultural communication, knowledge of different cultures, experience of working with people of all ages, and with leading and participating in workshops. The project continues to expand. There are activities in all three refugee camps in Sofia – Ovcha Kupel, Voenna Rampa and Vrazhdebna.

*The Refugee Project* was awarded and recognized as *Volunteer Initiative of the Year* in 2014.

## CHILD FRIENDLY SPACE AT RECEPTION CENTRE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS (CROATIA)

Verb: **to promote**

Country: Croatia

Initiative: to provide psychosocial support to the asylum seeking children

Beneficiaries: children

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: child-friendly space (language courses, painting workshops, handicrafts)

Duration of project: May 2017 – January 2018

Source of funds: United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)

Website: <http://www.jrs.hr/en/causes/support-to-refugee-and-migrant-asylum-seeking-children/>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

JRS Croatia, Martina Prokl Predragović Communications Officer  
(+38 598 952 5020; [martina.prokl@jrs.net](mailto:martina.prokl@jrs.net))

The aim of *Child Friendly Space* has been to provide psychosocial support to the asylum seeking children according to the JRS mission (accompany, serve, advocate) by ensuring **protected and stimulating environment** and activities, in order to strengthen their cognitive, emotional and social development, minimize their stress and establish a sense of security and self-esteem. The Reception Centre for migrants in Zagreb (former Hotel Porin) has been used for accommodating people on the move arriving to Croatia, depending on their particular status (transit or asylum seekers).

During 2017 in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Zagreb, a *Child Friendly Space*, financially supported by UNICEF, was made available in cooperation with JRS Croatia and the Society for Psychological Assistance; a place where children had a reliable environment in which they feel safe and secure. With support by the International Federation of the Red Cross (IFRC) and other donors, the Croatian Red Cross purchased and installed different equipment and materials in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Zagreb. Children participated in different activities and workshops organized on a regular basis by JRS in the child-friendly space (**language courses, painting workshops, hand-**

**crafts**). This strengthened their cognitive, emotional and social development, minimized their stress and established a sense of security and self-esteem. It was conceived as a place of laughter, happiness and fun.

The *Child Friendly Space* encouraged and supported integration processes **through non-formal education**, such as painting workshops, handicrafts. Mental health care is also an area where non-governmental organisations have undertaken an important gap-filling role. Psychological and psychiatric support is generally provided by two organisations, the Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma and the Society for Psychological Assistance. With regard to victims of torture more specifically, HPC provided psychological support as part of two projects: Protection of Victims of Torture among Vulnerable Groups of Migrants, funded by the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture (UN-VFVT), and the ACESO project, run until March 2017 in partnership with the Hungarian Helsinki Committee, the Cordelia Foundation, the Greek Council for Refugees, the Foundation for Access to Rights and the Assistance Centre for Torture Survivors. Other actors such as the Croatian Red Cross provided psychosocial support, which in many cases catered for people's tension and overall frustration in the Centre.

As reported during an interview conducted via email, Drazen Klaric says: *"In our work through respecting the daily routine we encourage safe and child friendly environment. We are grouping children based on activities that are appropriate for their age. We have implemented activities that are useful for adoption of Croatian language and also for strengthening social and emotional development of children. In order to achieve our goals, we plan sport activities, play board games, do creative activities, expand their vocabulary by image associations and practice various games that are designed to help them in development of their social skills. We encourage socially accepted behaviours that emerge during everyday activities (eating meals, cleaning, playtime, etc.) and at the same time we disapprove any unwanted behaviour. As we play dodge ball, we teach children cooperation techniques and we encourage respecting common rules; we encourage ecological awareness by waste separation, we teach them rules of behaviour and encourage healthy eating habits while eating snacks we bought for them, introducing role play (impersonating real life situations like going to the store, going to the doctor, acting like a family) as creative techniques we improve managing in different life situations, we use pantomime for repetition of learned words, children adopt work habits as they clean playroom".*

## Relevance

The good work made by JRS with this project has been recognized by state and civic authorities; it became an official partner of Croatian state for integration of legally resettled Syrian citizens from Turkey. *Child Friendly Space* in Reception centre for asylum seekers in Zagreb was open every day (from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.) offering structured program and activities for children of different age groups structured in: psychosocial workshops, cognitive development, educational and health workshops, workout and sports workshops, creative workshops. Beside targeted workshops for children, additional services provided were: assistance with school homework, learning Croatian language for children and their parents, psychosocial and general aid for other beneficiaries.

## Innovativeness

*Child Friendly Space* activities have involved children of different ages with a variety of proposals, from workshops to different recreational forms and language courses, fostering cognitive, emotional and psychosocial development, helping to reduce their stress and increase trust, self-esteem and a sense of security. Weekly coordination meetings involving the administration of the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers with representatives of different groups of residents, have helped to address challenges of coordination and living conditions, and would be developed further as a mean fostering a greater sense of community and belonging, especially involving children' well-being.

## Impact

The project has helped young newly-arrived migrants to better integrate, ensuring at the same time psychosocial support through a grass-roots and bottom-up approach.

During an interview conducted via email, Drazen Klaric reported: *"Positive aspects of the project are various: socialization of the children after usually a long period started into organised manner, integration started, we could detect if children or families had some difficulties and react (send them to experts), higher quality of life in Reception Centre for families included... The biggest problem was that most of the beneficiaries would often left the country and you would never know who will appear next day. We included a lot of volunteers in the project, most of them never worked with refugees and most of them were from catholic organisations, so they changed an attitude towards migrants in their communities"*.

Throughout the time, the *Child Friendly Space* and the Centre have been extremely committed to including children refugees, asylum seekers, people granted asylum, and other migrants into playing games, helping organizing events, to feel better accepted by the mainstream Croatian society and as a perfect, straight-forward, relaxed way of inclusion, and subsequently, integration into the social context of Zagreb's neighbourhoods and the network of recreational activities, regardless of race and ethnicity. JRS advocacy work (with other organisations) obtained good results, so most part of children from Reception Centre are integrated in Croatian schools and kindergartens and continue their educational integration if they get international protection.

### Sustainability

Although Reception Centre in the other welcoming city Kutina was aimed at the accommodation of vulnerable applicants, with the increase in numbers of asylum seekers during 2016, vulnerable asylum seekers were also accommodated in one part of Reception Centre in Zagreb<sup>9</sup> and this situation continued along 2017. The Rehabilitation Centre for Stress and Trauma reported that accommodation in the Reception Centre for Asylum Seekers in Zagreb was not appropriate for families with children. As reported by Croatian Red Cross, for example most of the rooms in the Reception Centre in Zagreb were in poor condition (which was supposed to be resolved by renovation in 2018)<sup>10</sup> but, again, poor conditions in Zagreb were also reported by the Jesuit Refugee Service. Unfortunately, this project finished in January 2018, because UNICEF changed priorities. Since then, JSR staff opens the Centre few times a week, according to volunteers' availability.

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**9** "The first reception centre in Šašna Greda consisted of 12 prefabricated houses. In 2006, a second reception centre was opened in Kutina for approximately 80 people. In 2012, a Zagreb reception centre was opened at the former Porin Hotel with the estimated accommodation capacity for 500 people. Unaccompanied minors are placed in the so called correctional homes together with children with behavioural disorders". Source: [https://border-monitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Formation\\_and\\_Disintegration\\_of\\_the\\_Balkan\\_Refugee\\_Corridor-2018.pdf](https://border-monitoring.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Formation_and_Disintegration_of_the_Balkan_Refugee_Corridor-2018.pdf) (last accessed May 13, 2019).

**10** "The Croatian Government managed the transit of 650,000 migrants and refugees in late 2015 and early 2016 by coordinating the activities of an extensive number of international, national and local stakeholders to ensure quick and appropriate responses to these people's needs. The levels to which small local governments and communities were affected by the crisis and able to respond effectively were influenced by several factors. These included the rapid mobility of people in need of humanitarian assistance, the competency of local organisations that responded and the central government's decisions about how to coordinate assistance. The response relied on local resources and communities in a major way but it spared local governments from bearing significant direct costs". Source: (last accessed May 13, 2019).

## CYPRUS RELIGIOUS TRACK - RTCYPP (CYPRUS)

**Verb: to promote**

**Country:** Cyprus

**Initiative:** to encourage, facilitate and serve the religious leaders' dialogue and efforts for religious freedom and peace

**Beneficiaries:** religious leaders and inhabitants of Cyprus and other countries involved

**Thematic area(s) of good practice example:**

multi-stakeholder partnership involving the Greek Orthodox primate of the Church of Cyprus, the Muslim Mufti, the Armenian Orthodox, Maronite and Latin Catholic Churches

**Duration of project:** 2009 to present

**Source of funds:** under the Auspices of the Embassy of Sweden

**Website:** <http://www.religioustrack.com/>

**Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:**

info@religioustrack.com; Salpy Eskidjian, Executive Director (salpy@religioustrack.com); Clara Orstadius, Program Officer (clara@religioustrack.com); Elizabeth V. Kassinis, Executive Manager Caritas Cyprus (+35 722 662606 elizabeth.kassinis@caritascyprus.org)

*RTCYPP* is a peace building initiative with the religious leaders of Cyprus who are committed to work together for human rights, peace and reconciliation. The Office of *RTCYPP* was established to encourage, facilitate and serve the religious leaders' dialogue and efforts for religious freedom and peace in Cyprus and to contribute positively and constructively to the Cyprus peace talks. It also offers community space for people to practice their religions and traditions, planning the organization of events and activities with the local community.

Elizabeth V. Kassinis, Executive Manager at Caritas Cyprus, talks about the project as follows: "*Indeed a **unique and laudable initiative**. Both **the President of Caritas** – Maronite Archbishop Soueif – and the Vice President – Father Jerzy Kraj, Latin Patriarchal Vicar – are **involved in the RTCYPP**".*

The project is considered **a nationwide model for peace-building process and religious debate** into society, particularly because of the involvement

of the local community as a means to prevent discrimination and conflict. In 2011 Archbishop Chrysostomos II and Mufti Atalay co-host the first ever faith-based dialogue encounter for Cypriot youth together with Muslim, Jewish and Christian youth from Palestine and Israel for a one-week residential peace building workshop (***Peace in My Land***). This first concrete project with the full cooperation of the two religious leaders of Cyprus was organized and coordinated by the Office of *RTCYPP* with funding from the Olaf Palme Institute in Sweden, the *UNDP/ACT* (from *USAID* funds), the Archbishopric of the Church of Cyprus and the Muftiate of Cyprus.

**Originally a quiet initiative** that started in 2009, at the residence of the Swedish Ambassador to Cyprus, the *RTCYPP* **evolved into an active peace building** effort based on four pillars:

- to get to know and build trust among the religious leaders and respective faith communities;
- to promote confidence-building measures;
- to advocate for the right to free access and worship at churches, mosques and monasteries;
- to ensure the protection of all religious monuments in Cyprus.

The *RTCYPP* brought about **important breakthroughs for religious freedom and human rights in Cyprus** fostering **interreligious, cross-community communication and cooperation**. Among others, with the support of and in the presence of Muslim and Christian religious leaders or their representatives, the *RTCYPP* has contributed to the opening, repairs and cleaning of a number of neglected and closed religious monuments to be used for worship, some for the first time ever since 1963 or 1974 and has facilitated special pilgrimages to Hala Sultan Tekke since 2014.

Archbishop Chrysostomos II and Mufti Talip Atalay are the first **religious leaders** of Cyprus in over five decades who have established a successful working relationship with each other, with the help of Swedish facilitation. In 2012, the Greek Orthodox primate of the Church of Cyprus and the Muslim Mufti invited the heads of the Armenian Orthodox, Maronite and Latin Catholic Churches to join them in their efforts to advocate for religious freedom, human rights and peace in Cyprus. Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades and Turkish Cypriot leader Mustafa Akinci have been engaged in UN-led peace talks with a view to finding a solution to the Cyprus Problem. The island has been divided since 1974 when Turkey invaded and illegally occupied its northern third.

On 24 November 2016, the religious leaders issued a joint statement expressing their united voice against all forms of attacks, terrorism and violence in Cyprus and beyond, stressing that the dialogue they had experienced had strengthened their conviction that there would be no future without tolerance, mutual understanding, respect and peaceful co-existence. The visit to Cyprus of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief from 5 to 8 October, for its part, served to highlight the role that cooperation among the religious leaders had played in promoting progress towards the realization of freedom of religion or belief across the island.

In a **joint declaration** on 8 March 2017, the religious leaders of Cyprus have condemned all forms of violence against women and girls: *"We, the religious leaders of the five main faith communities of Cyprus, Greek Orthodox, Muslim, Armenian Orthodox, Maronite and Latin Catholic, who form the Religious Track of the Cyprus Peace Process under the Auspices of the Embassy of Sweden, are deeply concerned that violence against women and girls continues to be one of the most pervasive manifestations of discrimination against women in Cyprus. This includes economic, psychological, sexual, and physical violence. We acknowledge with pain that violence against women affects women and girls of all ages, religions and ethnic backgrounds. Violence undermines women's dignity and integrity and has devastating effects on the lives of women and girls with severe consequences on families, communities and societies. As long as it persists, the world cannot claim to be making real progress towards equality, development and peace. We reiterate our common belief that men and women have equal value in the eyes of God. Christianity and Islam condemn violence against women. Violence against women and girls, in whatever form, is a contradiction to the will of God and unacceptable in His eyes. We strongly believe that religious leaders don't only have a responsibility but also a religious duty to stand united against violence in all its forms everywhere, including violence against women and girls."*

On 28 September 2018, the *Religious Track of the Cyprus Peace Process*, in cooperation with the *Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)*, convened the third round table on human rights since 2013. *OHCHR* introduced the "Faith for Rights" initiative, launched in March 2017 with the adoption of the Beirut Declaration, in which faith-based civil society actors recognized "religious or belief convictions as a source for the protection of the whole spectrum of inalienable human entitlements". Religious leaders and representatives from 16 religious

groups and civil society organizations participated in the discussion in Cyprus, and the Beirut Declaration and its 18 commitments were translated into Greek and Turkish by the Religious Track.

As reported by UN Report on 9th January 2017, the religious leaders continue to lend much needed and broad-based support for **freedom of worship** and the **peace**. Sustained open dialogue combined with a commitment to freedom of worship by both sides can only serve to open doors for greater understanding and trust.

### Relevance

The Office of *RTCYPP* aims to foster knowledge, nurture respect and understanding, and to build trust between the communities in Cyprus, with the initiatives:

- *Know Your Neighbour: Respect One Another*, which promotes awareness and respect for the different commemorated feast by the religious communities in Cyprus. An informative and educational initiative to learn the commemorated holidays of the different faith communities in Cyprus. Part of living together is to know and respect each other's cultural, literary, musical, religious traditions and more. In the case of religion, knowing what is holy and significant for the other enhances respect for the other. Respecting each other's differences contributes to the promotion and protection of religious freedom and belief, a fundamental human right enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
- *RTCYPP Round Table for Human Rights*, which encourages dialogue on freedom of religion between faith communities and civil society. The Office of *RTCYPP* convened the first Round Table for Human Rights in 2013, in cooperation with the UN *OHCHR* and the Special Rapporteur on *Freedom of Religion and Belief (FORB)*. For the first time faith communities in Cyprus came together with civil society partners from both sides of the divided island to address and discuss together issues related to freedom of religion or belief. The second Round Table for Human Rights took place in October 2015 once again in cooperation with the UN *OHCHR* and the Special Rapporteur on *FORB* focusing on the right to access and restore sacred places and education as a tool to promote freedom of religion. The Office of *RTCYPP* convened its third Round Table for Human Rights with representatives of faith communities and partner civil society organizations on

the 28 September 2017 at the Home for Cooperation. The main aim of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to introduce its initiative "Faith for Rights" including the "Beirut Declaration" and its 18 Commitments as a follow up of the 2012 "Rabat Plan of Action" to the faith communities in Cyprus.

### **Innovativeness**

The ongoing dialogue among the leaders of the religious communities contributes positively to the climate surrounding the talks. By easing access to religious sites across the island, religious leaders have played an important role in fostering understanding and reducing mistrust between the communities which, in turn, has helped build grassroots support for reunification.

### **Impact**

The religious leaders of Cyprus continued to demonstrate their commitment to joint dialogue and the promotion of religious freedom within the framework of the Religious Track of the Cyprus Peace Process under the auspices of the Embassy of Sweden, with ongoing support from *UNFICYP*. During the reporting period, the religious leaders launched an unprecedented joint initiative to provide Greek and Turkish language classes for members of the clerical orders, nuns and laypersons working in different religious institutions. The participants meet weekly in the buffer zone, broadening the circle of dialogue and cooperation among the religious institutions.

### **Sustainability**

The dialogue among the leaders of the religious communities continues to make good progress by fostering understanding and overcoming mistrust. UN and the Religious Track strongly encourage both sides to support the dialogue. Dialogue in support of the peace process among the leaders of the religious communities continues to provide a model for constructive cooperation. Thereby, the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief undertakes his follow-up visits to Cyprus. Unluckily, at the moment the communication output on social media and website is not that clear (and easy, quickly interactive) as declared.

## THE HEALING GARDEN (GERMANY)

Verb: **to promote**

Country: Germany for Iraq

Initiative: to provide support in a safe space

Beneficiaries: women, children, and youth who have experienced domestic violence, abuse, and other human rights violations

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: multi-stakeholder partnership

Duration of project: 2015 to present

Source of funds: Misereor, the Jiyān Foundation for Human Rights, the Foundation Wings of Hope, Ein Herz für Kinder, the Evangelical Church in Hesse and Nassau, the Autonomous Province of Bolzano/ Alto Adige, as well as a private benefactor

Website: <https://www.jiyan-foundation.org/programs/children/healinggarden>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

Misereor (info@misereor.de +49 02414420); Jiyān Foundation in Berlin (info@jiyan-foundation.org +49 3026579380)

In northern Iraq, the MISEREOR (Catholic organization for development cooperation) and its long-time local partners look after the people who fled the terror of the IS fighters. Contrary to current public perception, people do not primarily flee to Europe or Germany. Most flee to other regions of their home country or neighbouring countries. Therefore, MISEREOR supports refugees in many countries with **aids, psychosocial work and projects**, such as *The Healing Garden* in Chamchamal. Built together with the Jiyān Foundation, the building is a therapeutic garden for women and children; the first of its kind, the healing garden provides a safe space for women, children, and youth who have experienced domestic violence, abuse, and other human rights violations. The garden provides survivors and their families with a safe and unique space to heal. **Garden therapy and group work** offer to people new ways to overcome their ordeal. A petting zoo helps children and survivors a novel approach in order to manage their fears and worries through animal-assisted treatment.

### **Reviving traditional and sustainable architecture**

All buildings on the property are made out of sustainable materials such as clay, bricks, and wood combining the traditional Kurdish style with the expertise of modern clay architects. Present-day glass and concrete buildings are not sustainable in the area but are becoming more popular as fewer people know how to build with clay. However, traditional buildings have superior insulation and keep houses naturally warmer in winter and cooler in summer. With today's knowledge, clay can be made to last, reducing the environmental impact significantly. These buildings can be a role model for similar developments in the region.

### **Promoting Environmental Awareness**

*The Healing Garden* is the perfect place to start the much-needed conversations on climate change, renewable energy, and conservation in Chamchamal. There are plenty of examples in the garden ranging from: sustainable gardening, bee keeping, housing and heating. The German partner Bremen Overseas Research & Development Association (BORDA), a German NGO, provided designs and specifications for a constructed wetland, which clean waste water; it also funded and built a fermentation plant to produce energy from the waste materials produced by the plants, animals and guests of the garden. Local staff has been trained in maintenance and upkeep, spreading the knowledge needed to operate the machinery. Another issue is preservation of water: Kurdistan has been experiencing severe shortages of rainfall over the past years. Groundwater levels are depleting. As the garden and its animals need a lot of water, the focus is on keeping this resource safe; a sewage canal runs underneath the garden that carries household grey-water from the nearby houses. Partners from BORDA, constructed a decentralised water treatment system cleans 100 cubic metres of dirty water each day. Enough to provide the entire garden with clean water.

### **Relevance**

*The Healing Garden* offers a safe space for people who have experienced violence, providing psychological, medical, social and legal services -regardless of their faith or ethnicity- to survivors of human rights abuses.

### **Innovativeness**

Through the rejuvenating of traditional artisanal handicrafts, a global support is provided. The seminar house is a space where the Jiyan Foundation offers traditional Kurdish handicraft courses in sewing, knitting, pottery making, and carpet weaving to women survivors of violence. These artisanal abilities are quickly fading, as fewer people opt to learn these skills. The classes help to prevent these art forms from being lost, while also providing therapeutic benefits for the women involved.

### **Impact**

*The Healing garden* is a humanitarian project benefitting the community of the city of Chamchamal. Locally, the organizations have worked with architectural engineer Kamaran Mustapha Mohammed. A fermentation plant will be constructed, and staff trained on its use and maintenance in order to turn the garden's waste products into clean energy.

### **Sustainability**

The *Healing Garden* project is being made possible with contributions from partners Misereor, the Foundation Wings of Hope, and Ein Herz für Kinder as well as a private benefactor. They have been raising over € 350,000 to build and maintain the garden's core elements for the first three years. Another € 25,000 came from private donors. The Berlin-based firm Ziegert | Roswag | Seiler Architekten Ingenieure support the planning, design and construction of the clay buildings on the ground. Four Master's students created the garden's and building architecture as part of their thesis. They have been supported academically by Prof. Ralf Pasel, chair of the Faculty of Construction and Design (CODE) at the Institute of Architecture at TU Berlin. Prof. Bernd Rudolf, chair of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism at Bauhaus-Universität Weimar, as well as Dipl.-Ing. Eike Roswag.

**COIN****COOPERATIEF ONDERNEMEN IN NEDERLAND - COOPERATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE NETHERLANDS**

Verb: **to promote**

Country: The Netherlands

Initiative: to foster economic growth

Beneficiaries: adults in the Netherlands

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: supporting local entrepreneurs to build professional, resilient businesses with the aim of creating more jobs

Duration of project: 2013 to present

Source of funds: the Ministry of Social Affairs of the Netherlands is providing 25% of the funding of the programme, the other 75% comes from private donors and donations

Website: <https://www.cordaid.org/en/topic/private-sector-development/#team>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

Cordaid (the Catholic Organization for Relief and Development Aid) – Caritas Netherlands +31-70-3136300 info@cordaid.org

Catholic social thought (CST) is one of the cornerstones of Cordaid's identity and its policies. It is the expression of the spirituality of the Gospel applied to social and economic policies. Indeed, it has four main principles that regulate the different circumstances of social life: **human dignity, common good, subsidiarity and solidarity**. Cordaid, as a Catholic agency active in social, economic and political life applies these principles to its policies and actions taking into account the context and circumstances.

Starting from this perspective, Cordaid has been increasingly adopting **entrepreneurial models** in its programmes to respond to new challenges. Cordaid wants to bridge the gap between civil society and the private sector and believes that entrepreneurial models make programmes more sustainable and resilient. In adopting entrepreneurial

models, it exclusively supports enterprises that act according to the principles of corporate social responsibility or social entrepreneurship. Cordaid prefers social enterprises because through their work they aim to have a positive social and environmental impact and promote a holistic socio-economic perspective.

### **Strengthening entrepreneurial skills through cooperatives.**

Over 800,000 people in the Netherlands, including many refugees, live in poverty, are socially excluded and have poor job prospects. They have difficulty finding regular employment, due to a lack of education and inadequate language skills. Yet many of them possess the skills and talents to start their own business. Cordaid's *COIN* programme provides business, organisational and judicial support as well as their extensive network to people with entrepreneurial talent but no resources to start their own business in the Netherlands. In collaboration with various parties, such as local businesses and civil society organizations, Cordaid helps social cooperatives to become sustainable, through the formal and legal establishment, the financial administration system, board composition, consultation with the municipality, support with the development of business plans issues such as marketing and pricing.

Cordaid supports cooperatives for two years. After this, they should be financially sustainable to continue their work.

In these cooperatives, **people with various backgrounds strengthen their entrepreneurial skills.** They can start their own business while retaining their social benefits. Cordaid supports all cooperatives with general coaching, advice on financial matters, connections, as well as with workshops and a series of training sessions developed in collaboration with the Tientjes Academie (<http://www.tientjesacademie.nl/>).

The *COIN* programme aims at **supporting long term unemployed people** to make the transition to employment by enabling them to create their own jobs without running the risk of losing all income. Additionally, Mieke van Tilburg, programme manager for *COIN* in The Netherlands, pointed out during an interview conducted via e-mail that: *"This program supports setting up social cooperatives for people outside the labour market. These are people living on social benefits and include refugees. In the cooperative the participants set up their own small-scale business". This program for social cooperatives includes information to people about the*

*program, setting up the cooperative, training of participants and providing assistance with the writing of their business plans".*

Migrants are also included in the programme. Therefore, people with various backgrounds strengthen their entrepreneurial skills so that they can start their own business. Cordaid, translating inclusive labour markets into practice, supports their ambitions by setting up and promoting social cooperatives where they can improve their skills and gain the necessary expertise to set up their own small businesses, thereby becoming **socially and economically more integrated into society**. The programme, through training and providing assistance with the writing of business plans, supports their self-esteem and self-confidence and makes them less dependent on the welfare system: an example of how social entrepreneurship can enhance **human dignity and subsidiary**. COIN has concluded agreements with several Dutch cities, thus creating the conditions for cooperatives to be created in a safe environment but with the clear target of preventing people ending up in the poverty trap.

The original project, launched in Breda with local funding and 13 people from very different professional backgrounds, has now turned into a **good practice example** for the rest of the Netherlands. This cooperative came into being in close cooperation with the local authority in Breda who created a "minimal regulation zone", which exempts these informal entrepreneurs from the restrictions applicable to those on welfare living in Breda.

In 2017, COIN supported **26 social cooperatives in 19 municipalities** (4 different regions) in the Netherlands for people with low incomes and outside the labour market. These cooperatives supported **116 entrepreneurs** (40% of whom are migrants). The underlying idea of the cooperatives is that there is a continuous entry and exit of members, so that the cooperative has sufficient members to continue to exist. In 2017 18 people left a cooperative, 7 of them obtained a job or started a business of their own. Therefore, they are no longer dependent on social benefits.

**Added value:** migrants outside the labour market find an opportunity here for economic integration and they also develop social links through cooperating with the receiving community. In creating spaces for encounter and cooperation among different categories of vulnerable people, the project also promotes solidarity among the different actors.

### Catering for integration

Among the different cooperatives (e.g. SCOPE; Ondernemersladder Soest; Co-Factory; Ik Wil), Jude Catering in Huizen, which originated from Jude Foundation), is a noteworthy example of a new cooperative. All the members of this cooperative are **female Syrian refugees**. It organizes home-made Syrian dishes for lunch, drinks, high tea and dinner, by using women's cooking skills to build a catering business that offers them the opportunity to earn a living and participate in socio-economic life. Young migrants support these women in marketing and administration.

Zena, a young woman participating at *Jude Catering* said: *"I have learned more Dutch since I have been working at Jude Catering. And I have made more friends* (Source: <https://judefoundation.nl/vrouwencafe-huizen/>).

This cooperative started as a **meeting place for women of different backgrounds**. For Syrian refugees this was a nice way to **become more familiar with Dutch culture**. When the Syrian women were asked to bring snacks from their country to the meetings, this sparked the idea for a catering cooperative. Cordaid provided support at the start and continues to be involved.

Jude Catering also organizes a Women's Café every month. Women with different cultural backgrounds can meet at these Women's Cafés.

Mieke van Tilburg underlined, during an interview conducted via e-mail, that: *"A critical aspect of the programme is the need for close cooperation with the municipality and their approval for the participants to join in the programme. Furthermore, it is essential that there is in each cooperative a local project leader to run the cooperative on a daily basis. While, as far as the pastoral impact on the community is concerned, "we see that the participants, by joining the cooperative, regain their self-confidence, strengthen their network, and feel more part of society again than before".*

### Relevance

The GP supports entrepreneurship of people with a low income and/or a distance to the labour market, by reducing social exclusion and promoting social cooperative entrepreneurship, along with a general improvement of the living conditions and the activation of integration process in civic participation.

### **Innovativeness**

Through the initiative Cordaid adopts entrepreneurial models to respond to new political and socio-economic challenges facing society. Thus, by developing new business models, the GP bridges the gap between civil society and the private sector. Furthermore, in adopting entrepreneurial models, the GP supports enterprises that act in the framework of the principles of corporate social responsibility and social entrepreneurship.

### **Impact**

In social cooperatives people with different backgrounds have the possibility to discover and strengthen their entrepreneurial skills, for the purpose of starting their own business and becoming more self-reliant.

People who are socially isolated or may lack working experience take part in society again, perceiving themselves as fully integrated subjects.

This GP supports social enterprises because they aim to have a positive social and environmental impact, by promoting a holistic socio-economic perspective.

### **Sustainability**

Territorial networks and partnerships allow overcoming various obstacles, both economic and organizational, thanks to a significant enhancement of the networks that revolve around the GP. Moreover, the GP potentially can generate new resources, through the stability of the benefits of a job placement path for beneficiaries.

## TO INTEGRATE

### PROYECTO ÖDOS (SPAIN)

Verb: **to integrate**

Country: Spain

Initiative: to improve the lives of vulnerable people at risk of trafficking

Beneficiaries: refugee women accompanied by young children; refugee pregnant women

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: responding to the refugee crisis

Duration of project: 2018 to present

Source of funds: private funds through the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus

Website: <https://fundacionarcoiris.org/proyecto-odos/>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart (+34 956 26 11 06 rscjespana@rscj.es); the Hospital Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus (+34 915 040 252 comunicacionprovincia@hospitalarias.es); Villa Teresita (+34 660121398; villateresitavalencia@yahoo.es); Jesuit Migrant Services (+34 91 733 54 49 info@sjme.org); Caritas of Spain (+34 91 444 1000 correo@caritas.es); La Merced Migraciones (+34 91 355 55 50; lamerced@lamercedmigraciones.org); the Pontifical University of Comillas (+34 91 542 28 00 oia@comillas.edu); Loyola University of Sevilla (+34 957 222 100 info@uloyla.es)

In 2018 it has been launched, within the project *Ödos*, a comprehensive care centre for **Sub-Saharan women accompanied by young children and pregnant women arriving on the Andalusian coast**. Since they are potential victims of trafficking and fraudulent recruitment process, this initiative focuses on expanding the protection of minors and their mothers towards restoring their dignity as human beings and building coexistence based on respect for difference. Indeed, their vulnerability places them at risk, in *limbo* without appropriate treatment, as stated

by Pope Francis in His Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace (2015): *"Not infrequently, the victims of human trafficking and slavery are people who look for a way out of a situation of extreme poverty; taken in by false promises of employment, they often end up in the hands of criminal networks which organize human trafficking. These networks are skilled in using modern means of communication as a way of luring young men and women in various parts of the world"*<sup>11</sup>.

To reduce inequalities by working for common good, by promoting effective networking and linkages, the project *Ódos* has enhanced the creation of solidarity networks among different organizations (religious and secular non-governmental organisations), as well as the effective coordination among organizations and resources.

By means of an agreement of collaboration, since the beginning of the initiative the network has been composed of the following subjects: the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart, the Hospital Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Villa Teresita, Jesuit Migrant Services, Caritas of Spain, the Proyecto Solidaridad de Responsabilidades, led by La Merced Migraciones, the Pontifical University of Comillas and Loyola University of Sevilla (both of which are Jesuit institutions), the University of Malaga, the EMET Arco Iris Foundation and Save the Children. Later, others have joined: the Profesor Uría Foundation, the Foundation of Spanish Advocacy and the Law School of Cordoba. Actually, the network has extended also toward Morocco, through the Diocesan Delegation of Migrations of Tangier, as a transit country, and should extend itself also to the countries of origin.

The project has three phases:

1. **First aid and arriving at a reception centre.** This phase lasts approximately three months. The families are sheltered in a humanitarian reception centre in Montilla (Córdoba), where all their basic needs are covered and where they receive comprehensive assistance.
2. **Supporting the integration process** that takes place in different cities in Spain, thanks to the coordinated work of the different organisations involved in the *Ódos* Network.

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<sup>11</sup> Available at website [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco\\_20141208\\_messaggio-xlviiii-giornata-mondiale-pace-2015.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco_20141208_messaggio-xlviiii-giornata-mondiale-pace-2015.html) (last accessed June 3, 2019).

Alongside the provision of humanitarian assistance and the first intervention for physical and mental recuperation, the initiative offers:

- health care within the public health system;
- protection system for asylum seekers and refugees;
- schooling for the children;
- education for the mothers and children;
- support for families who leave this first shelter and move to other towns in Spain.

These different steps are obviously crucial. In particular, as far as children are concerned, Isabel Lázaro, professor of Law at the School of Law of the Universidad Pontificia Comillas, stated: *"The lack of self-identification means that the system does not respond to their special vulnerability and, as a consequence, the children who accompany these women lack the least protection that the system could offer"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2wKBKZF>).

**3. Integrated communication and advocacy strategy** based on the critical analysis of data and results obtained by the project *Ödos* and scientifically validated.

This third phase will be addressed both to civil society (awareness) and to those involved in the field of refugee work (public and private). The Pontifical University of Comillas will be responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the project, while the University of Málaga will be responsible for the external evaluation of the project.

It is known that, after identification and having been directed to humanitarian shelters, these vulnerable women usually disappear with their children after a short time. There could be different reasons, among them the presence of organised crime or because they don't find in the country of arrival what they hoped for. On the contrary, **the first and evident great success of the project *Ödos* can be found in the fact that they have not disappeared.** This has also been confirmed, during an interview conducted via e-mail by, Cristina Manzanedo (member of the Coordination team of *Ödos*): *"The project has been able to retain them for some months and thus allow their physical and psychological recovery. They receive valuable orientation and gain in empowerment"*.

Moreover, thanks to this initiative it has been possible the official registration of children born in Spain. The institutions of Montilla are showing, therefore, a growing interest towards the questions of children at risk

and their enrolment in school, the reunification of separated families, the health care of mothers and children, etc.

**As for the positive aspects**, Cristina Manzanedo continues by saying: *"The project has been very successful to make a stop in the journey of African women arriving with small children by boat to the southern coast of Spain. Upon arrival to Spain, these women always continue their journey to other countries of Europe, where many end up exploited. Another positive aspect is that we focus on women arriving with small children or pregnant. We assess the risks for the children and work intensively in protection of the child, family reunifications or sometimes, separation of the child from the women that accompanies him/her"*. While, **among the critical aspects**, Cristina Manzanedo declared: *"Ódos works with a reality that was not being attended in Spain. We have no model to follow, we are inventing a model. Furthermore, there are also resistances from the government. In fact, "humanitarian reception to people arriving by boat in Spain is the competence of the State that delegates it in some NGO. The reception centres have to receive thousands of people and have no model for attention to very vulnerable people, like these women and their children. Our pilot project challenges the actual reception policy and shows the need for a specialized intervention with potential victims of trafficking upon arrival at Spanish coast"*. Indeed, *"the lack of well-trained professionals in southern Spain to deal with trafficking"* is another critical aspect. Finally, responding to a question about **the pastoral impact** that this initiative has on the community, Cristina Manzanedo said: *"We have worked to gain acceptance by the community: The project has been shared with the local community so that it is accepted among the local institutions: schools, kindergarten, doctors and nurses, the townhall, etc. Children go to school with local children without any problems. The project is a network of institutions, many of them church institutions: Caritas, Esclavas [the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart, ed.], Jesuits, Hospitalarias. It is a sign that we can only work with these complex realities by networking. Esclavas have opened their religious communities to these women and their children."*

### Relevance

Planned as a pilot project, this GP has aimed to show that a different approach can yield different results. In fact, since there is a severe shortage of specialised reception places for persons with special needs and vulnerable groups organised by the Communities, the main purpose

is reception and accompaniment of refugee women so as to resettle and protect them and their children who undoubtedly are at serious risk of trafficking. At the same time, their situation would not be resolved through a simple declaration of destitution which, indeed, indicate only one aspect of their suffering. Therefore, the project is not only limited to offering a serene atmosphere for a rest after long voyages.

### **Innovativeness**

The innovativeness of the GP lies essentially in the “integral support” of women considered as particularly vulnerable and in need of special help. Actually, this initiative, through a network of collaboration between religious and secular non-governmental organisations, guides these women and their children to develop social inclusion strategies and positive future perspectives, though it primarily aims at fighting against modern slavery and human trafficking and raising awareness on the refugee crisis, with a particular focus on refugee women with children.

### **Impact**

This GP has an important impact both on social protection and inclusion and pastoral care of migrants. Indeed, the project *Ödos* has a direct impact on the implementation of the law and social justice, focusing on the potential female victims of human trafficking and their children, so as to offer and protect human dignity on a personal and collective level. On the other hand, the GP also promotes efforts to build a more human world that reflects the Gospel value of solidarity. In fact, *“We know that God will ask each of us: What did you do for your brother? (cf. Gen 4:9-10). The globalization of indifference, which today burdens the lives of so many of our brothers and sisters, requires all of us to forge a new worldwide solidarity and fraternity capable of giving them new hope and helping them to advance with courage amid the problems of our time and the new horizons which they disclose and which God places in our hands.”*<sup>12</sup>

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**12** Pope Francis, Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace (2015), available at website [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco\\_20141208\\_messaggio-xlviij-giornata-mondiale-pace-2015.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/peace/documents/papa-francesco_20141208_messaggio-xlviij-giornata-mondiale-pace-2015.html) (last accessed June 3, 2019).

### **Sustainability**

As for financial aspects, the initiative was set up with private funds, through the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, but the future objective is *"to receive public funds and to include the model among Spanish migration reception policies"*, as Cristina Manzanedo pointed out. As far as the community sustainability is concerned, Ödos has created a more articulated helping network which protects and sustains both refugee women accompanied by young children and refugee pregnant women, and at the same time also uses largely existing resources that were not well coordinated.

## YOUNG REFUGEES IN CENTRES IN MUNICH AND NUREMBERG (GERMANY)

Verb: **to integrate**

Country: Germany (Munich and Nuremberg)

Initiative: to assist young refugees from African countries, Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq

Beneficiaries: unaccompanied foreign minors (UFMs)

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: responding to the refugee crisis

Duration of project: 2017-2018

Source of funds: BNP Paribas Group's foundation in Germany

Website: <https://www.donbosco.de/>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

Salesians of Don Bosco, Germany (+49 (0) 89/48008-421 provinzi-alat@donbosco.de)

The Salesians of Don Bosco have always worked in support of migrants (first or second generation), refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons whose lives have been affected by war, persecution, famine and natural disasters: they are privileged recipients of the Salesian mission. Indeed, the first people Don Bosco worked for were young migrants and the first missionaries in Argentina had to take care of Italian migrants. In particular, the Salesians have always paid particular attention to the neediest of children and youth: a multi-faceted action that takes place across the globe. In this field of action, they have centres active in first-line and second-line reception operations for Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (UFMs). They also run schools, vocational training centres and social works for the children of refugee families in transit from the countries of the Middle East to the West. Moreover, in Africa, in different countries, the Salesians personally manage refugee camps, as well as missionary houses, and work with refugees, providing humanitarian assistance and courses in vocational training, along with healthcare and nutrition, and offering them spiritual care. Many other noteworthy pastoral initiatives take place in the different continents, sites where **the spiritual Sons of Don Bosco follow the Pope's invitation to the reception, protection, promotion and integration** of people who are forced to escape their own countries.

Across Europe Salesian missionaries and their network of programs are part of a network of organizations headquartered in Portugal that assists European countries with the refugee crisis. Throughout Germany there are numerous projects and facilities run by the Salesians for young migrants who have sought asylum and arrived in the country without their family. In 2009 They opened **the first residential group for unaccompanied minor refugees**: eleven young people from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Iraq and Somalia.

Over the past few years, at the height of the refugee crisis, to meet the large and growing need in Germany, Salesian missionaries have been recurrently increasing the number of houses to give assistance to vulnerable youth. Nowadays different institutions of the German Province of the Salesians of Don Bosco accommodate UFM's aged between 16 and 18 who are principally from African countries, Afghanistan, Syria and Iraq. The objective is to help them with daily lives and assist with finding them a home and an employment.

Abdullah, a 15-year-old boy, after been kidnapped by a Pakistani Taliban terrorist organization who aimed to train him as a suicide bomber, managed to escape and headed for Europe, travelling for 45 days by car, by train and then on foot. Finally, he arrived in Frankfurt's refugee centre, then was sent to the Don Bosco Youth Help Centre house in Sannerz, where he has also always shown his skills at the sports field: cricket is his favourite sport. Since arriving in Germany, Abdullah has graduated from junior high school, then attended a vocational training course in carpentry. Fr. Clemens Schliermann, the director and head of the project, said: *"At the moment, as part of our integration project, nine young people from Sannerz are attending courses for carpenters, painters and metallurgical workers. Donors have helped provide the funding for the project"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2WrWqVo>).

In 2016 on the occasion of the **Migrants International Day** (on December 18<sup>th</sup>), Don Bosco International, an agency that represents the Salesians in the European Institutions, issued some **guidelines for the Salesian work with unaccompanied minor refugees**:

- appropriate support, starting from their treatment as individuals, from the first contact and beyond the age of 18;
- commitment to cooperation with other qualified institutions;
- integral education;
- promotion of the human dignity;

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- specific integration through proper structures, avoiding the creation of ghettos;
- support in the learning of languages;
- paths of ongoing formation for those who are committed with pedagogical roles.

(Source: <https://bit.ly/2hL1qyF>).

Being aware that accommodation alone is not enough unless refugees are helped to learn and to stand on their own feet, in 2017 Salesians partnered with the BNP Paribas Group's foundation in order support the work on behalf of **refugee children in centres in Nuremberg and Munich**, where the community of the Salesians of Don Bosco has settled since 1919 and has always been representing a home for young people, but also faith, education and meeting.

The support of Paribas was intended to finance a coordination centre for part-time volunteers and to sustain refugees during the transition period between finishing school and beginning vocational training, in consideration of the particular state of vulnerability in which they are found. In fact, the priority for Salesians is the development of educational processes that will enable UFM's to enter the labour market, increasing their employability.

At the same time, the funding was aimed at facilitating the integration of UFM's in Germany and helping them to build better prospects for the future, becoming fully-integrated and independent into their new communities. In this regard, Fr. Stefan Bauer, Salesian program in Munich in Bavaria, declared: *"It is very important for us to promote contact and exchange between young refugees and young people in Germany. It is important that they can learn from each other"*. Furthermore, Fr. Stefan Müller, Director of the Salesian Youth Centre in Nuremberg, said: *"The first thing that is required is that young people have a means of transportation and it was decided to provide them with bicycles and economic support for the use of public transport"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2QWhBJb>).

### Relevance

Don Bosco used to say: *"It is enough that you are young for me to love you very much"*. For this reason, in the Salesian family each minor is an active holder of his/her rights, not only a mere beneficiary of services, but also

as an individual with his/her specific needs. In fact, as far as this GP is concerned, refugees, alongside the delivery of material assistance, are mainly engaged in a social inclusion initiative, a sort of "accompanying measure" to contribute concretely to their integration, inclusion, and coexistence.

### **Innovativeness**

The innovativeness of the GP lies essentially in the support intended to create and run a coordination centre to sustain refugees during the transition period between finishing school and beginning vocational training. Actually, this initiative, through a support network, guided UFM's in transition to early adulthood and helped them to develop realistic future perspectives through social inclusion.

### **Impact**

This GP has an important impact both on social inclusion and pastoral care of migrants. Indeed, on the one hand the priority for Salesians is the development of educational processes to support UFM's in labour market entry, becoming active members of the host society. On the other hand, the Salesians also work to pass on to the host society the Gospel value of solidarity, through fostering integral inclusion and mutual trust.

### **Sustainability**

As for financial aspects, although the support was limited to a specific period, the sustainability of this GP can be found in the fact that the initiative created a GP in the process of sustaining UFM's social/professional integration and, at the same time, their integral development so to become self-confident and deal with daily life in a more balanced and effective way.

As far as the community sustainability is concerned, this GP created a helping network which will sustain UAM's even during the transition from the youth support and education system to the adult education and employment system.

## COULOIRS HUMANITAIRES (FRANCE)

Verb: **to integrate**

Country: France

Initiative: to allow the reception in France, in good conditions of integration, of people having fled Syria, having found a temporary shelter in Lebanon, and applicants for international protection

Beneficiaries: people in "vulnerable condition" (e.g. victims of persecution, torture or violence, families with children, single women, elderly people, sick people, disabled people)

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: humanitarian corridors

Duration of project: 2015 to present

Source of funds: French Ministry of Interior and Foreign Affairs, the Federation of Protestant Mutual Aid (FEP), the Protestant Federation of France, Catholic Relief - Caritas France, Sant'Egidio, Conference of Bishops of France.

Website: <http://www.santegidio.fr>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:

Sant'Egidio (+01 42031141 [contact@santegidio.fr](mailto:contact@santegidio.fr))

*Couloirs Humanitaires* is a **citizens' ecumenical initiative** that aims to contribute to the European agenda on migration. The project follows a similar example from Italy. Its purpose is to offer protection to refugees of war, and to enable them to travel safely without having to use the often-fatal services of traffickers. The Italian initiative has opened safe and legal routes to refugees. It was launched by the Community of Sant'Egidio, in collaboration with the Federation of Evangelical Churches and the Waldensian and Methodist Churches<sup>13</sup> and it is a concrete

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**13** Catholics and Protestants of Italy, at the initiative of the Community of Sant'Egidio, proposed and launched on 15 December 2015 the pilot project Humanitarian corridors. The Corridoi Umanitari are meant to prevent refugees crossing the Mediterranean by boat, to avoid trafficking and to grant vulnerable people legal entry into Italy. Once in Italy, they are housed with the churches while undergoing the official asylum application process. On the basis of a protocol signed with the Italian Ministries of the Interior and Foreign Affairs, this project has already led to more than 1,500 migrants fleeing Syria, and some to Iraq, who have been guaranteed a safe access to Europe (by plane) together with an integration program. These families were refugees in Lebanon. Source: <http://www.fep.asso.fr/vie-federative/vie-de-la-federation/la-plateforme-protestante-pour-laccueil-de-refugies/les-couloirs-humanitaires/> (last accessed May 13, 2019).

and reproducible implementation of what the European Commission was calling for on May 13, 2015, stating that "*Member States should use all the other legal possibilities open to those in need of protection, including private / non-governmental sponsorship and residence permits for humanitarian reasons as well as provisions relating to family reunion*".

The French version of *Couloirs Humanitaires* is **based on a protocol** signed by the French Ministry of Interior and Foreign Affairs on one side, and the Federation of Protestant Mutual Aid (FEP), the Protestant Federation of France, Catholic Relief - Caritas France, the Sant'Egidio community in Italy and the Conference of Bishops of France. This protocol authorizes the travel and entry of refugees, from Lebanon to France. The selected people are given travel documents and a short term visa to safely reach France, where they have to undergo the normal asylum application process. The people concerned are refugees from the wars in Syria or Iraq. They are often families, sometimes also individuals, who have been selected by aid organizations working for resettlement, such as *Médecins sans Frontières*, Norwegian Refugee Council, Armenian Evangelical Church and various Protestant associations or by the High Commissioner for Refugees.

Before they are selected, people are interviewed by a doctor, a psychologist and an employee of Sant'Egidio, who will also present their case to the French Consulate in Lebanon. A mixed team of FEP/Sant'Egidio staff, residing in Lebanon, accompanies the refugees selected in obtaining visa and other travel documents. It informs them of the reception and accompaniment framework in France, the sometimes complex and lengthy bureaucratic process they need to follow to apply for asylum, the need to be both patient and proactive and certain aspects of life in France. A flight is then organized at the beginning of each month between Beirut and Paris. When the refugees land in Paris, they must begin the regular process of applying for asylum to obtain international protection. During their stay in France, they are **hosted by volunteers** who provide accommodation free of charge.

In the tragic context of the "death journeys" leading thousands of refugees to lose their lives in the Mediterranean, it is a demonstration of a possible alternative, safe and sustainable.

### **Important recognitions**

Here are a few:

**Nils Muiznieks**, Commissioner for Human Rights of the Council of Europe, 2 March 2016: *"A good example of what Europe can do to help migrants and cope with current refugee flows"*.

**Pope Francis** during the Angelus of March 6, 2016, with regards to the pilot project realized in Italy, said: *"As a concrete sign of commitment to peace and life, I would like to mention the humanitarian corridors for refugees initiative, recently launched in Italy. This pilot project, which unites solidarity and security, helps people fleeing war and violence, such as the hundred refugees already transferred to Italy, including sick children, people with disabilities, widows of war with their children and the elderly. I am also delighted because this initiative is ecumenical, and is supported by the Community of Sant'Egidio, the Federation of Evangelical Churches of Italy, the Waldensian and Methodist Churches"*.

### **Relevance**

The project has a great importance because offers an integration into the French social and cultural fabric, through the learning of the French language, the schooling of minors, access to health professionals if necessary and other initiatives. Participants are welcomed by the promoters of the project and, in collaboration with other partners, are housed in different houses and structures spread throughout the national territory. The organizations that proposed the project to the French State undertake to provide accommodation and hospitality for the appropriate period, economic support for the transfer to France (self-financed project), administrative support to people and assistance for the integration process in the country.

This humanitarian action is aimed at all people in vulnerable situations, regardless of their religious or ethnic background.

### **Innovativeness**

A new consistent solution is provided by the network of different associations proposing this project. Through direct contacts in the countries concerned by the project or reports provided by local actors (NGOs, associations, international organizations, churches and ecumenical organizations, etc...) the leading staff proposes a list of potential beneficiaries selected from the most vulnerable; each signage is verified first by the leaders of associations, then by the French authorities to allow the granting of visas under the asylum for France. Rapid refugee status and strong

civic and ecumenical engagement with professionals from the beginning to the end of the process are the two important and innovative dimensions of this pilot project, which seeks to promote the identification and development of refugees, rapid integration of vulnerable refugees as well as a broad awareness of fraternity in hosting by civil society. The humanitarian corridors are a replicable model for the Schengen States and other ecumenical initiatives are underway in several countries.

### **Impact**

Since the beginning, it has been developing as an ecumenical project, through an ecumenical alliance uniting the Community of Sant'Egidio, the Protestant Federation of France, the Federation of Protestant Mutual Aid, the Conference of Bishops of France and Secours Catholique-Caritas France, all already strongly mobilized in the reception of refugees and their social integration. It is determined to promote protection and an alternative to the criminal exploitation of vulnerable persons by traffickers indifferent to the shipwrecks they cause, offering an innovative vision to Europe for the welcoming of the most vulnerable refugees. It is the first of its kind in Europe, and wants to achieve changes in order to avoid refugees travelling on death boats in the Mediterranean Sea, to combat the deadly trade of smugglers and traffickers of human beings, to grant to people in "vulnerable condition" (e.g. victims of persecution, torture or violence, families with children, single women, elderly people, sick people, disabled people) a legal entry on the French territory in the context of an admission for humanitarian reasons, and also to allow to enter France in a safe way for oneself and for all, because the issue of visas provides the necessary controls on the part of the French authorities. This protocol provides the conditions for identification, reception, integration and inclusion in France of 500 people within 18 months after the signature of the protocol with a priority to the most vulnerable people.

### **Sustainability**

This project sustainability in France is based on the operational and financial capacity of the five promoters of the project (the project is totally self-financed) and the mobilization of their solidarity networks (volunteers, donors), eager to bring such an innovative project in terms of fraternity in the reception by the civil society. Therefore, it exists a signature of a memorandum of understanding, on the initiative of the Community of Sant'Egidio, between the five promoters of the project and the Ministries of the Interior and Foreign Affairs.

## ΜΑΓΙΣΤΟΡΙΕΣ – MAGISTORIES (GREECE)

**Verb: to integrate**

**Country:** Greece

**Initiative:** supporting non-formal education, including life-long learning and employability

**Beneficiaries:** refugee (youth and adults)

**Thematic area(s) of good practice example:** books in different languages, eBooks, videos, applications, board games, educational and recreational material

**Duration of project:** December 2018 to the present

**Source of funds:** JRS Hellas Jesuit Refugee Service in Greece

**Website:** <https://www.jrsellada.com/en/magistories-an-innovative-multimedia-educational-project-in-victoria-area-by-jrs-hellas/>

**Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:**

JRS Hellas, Carmen Elisa Bandeo (+306986627123 carmen-bandeo@gmail.com)

Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS Hellas) **in partnership with the program “Ideas Box of Libraries Without Borders”** (Bibliothèques Sans Frontières) has recently launched a new program, *Μαγιστορίες – Magistories*, with the aim to foster refugees' inclusion and social cohesion in Victoria's neighbourhood.

*Μαγιστορίες – Magistories* is a program that aims at supporting non-formal education, including life-long learning and employability of refugee youth and adults and contributing to protection and psychosocial relief for the youth, through the setup of **a safe, creative and pedagogical space**. The program will also foster the interaction between Greek and refugee youth and adults. As a no-formal education project, for refugees, asylum seekers, migrants and Greek people, *Μαγιστορίες* is a space where everyone can learn, teach and start to be more involved in a Greek culture and in a European culture, and that the same time is a place where everyone can appreciate the role of culture in their lives and continue in relation with his culture and where **everyone can share to the others his culture**. It is a space where each person can look with

a holistic vision and where the person can start to think what she needs to get a better life or to get a better time to wait to go to the country where she wants to live. In this project the big challenges are to overcome geographical, racial, cultural and religious frontiers and divisions.

To put in action the objectives, the *Μαγιστορίες* have a number of **areas and activities** to offer to the users. The principal activities are language classes, workshops (to inform or creatives), free time, cultural activities, movie time and debate about the movie. The areas (for the workshops) are rights (refugee rights, humans rights, children rights), Europe (politic atmosphere in Europe, geography and history of Europe, specific information about some countries, Greek culture and habits of live), financial literacy, employment (how to prepare a CV, a cover letter and how to manage an interview), communication (how to be a better communicate; skills in a communication; resources to communicate), leadership and empowerment. The workshops and activities about culture are cultural mediation, ways to learn the cultures that exist in the neighbourhood, and the making of a movie "Tell your story to the world".

As reported by the coordinator Carmen Elisa Bando: *"The beginning of the Project was a challenge, because the people start to see the building not just for the activity that they knew (a space for social time) but a place to learn, use digital material, rest, read, play..."*

Specific objectives are designed in order to support **non-formal education**, including **life-long learning** and employability of refugee youth and young adults and information provision about asylum procedures, as well as Greek and European culture.

The project wishes:

- to provide everyone with **encouraging intellectual development and empowerment**, both individual and shared the means to create their own content;
- to create a common space for organizing exhibitions and debates;
- to facilitate the integration, management and hosting of refugee / displaced populations;
- to be a space where the people learn and connect to the world.

In a text sent by email, it has been written by the coordinator: **"Many donors and volunteers are giving body and flesh to the project,** in our case *Magistories*. But are many other. I am just one of the volunteers. I am Missionary Sister Servant of the Holy Spirit (SSPS), my congregation is collaborating with the Jesuits here in Athens. I am placing my grain of sand as coordinator of the project but we work together as a team with the JRS Hellas (Greece) director, the other staff members, and the volunteers: teachers, young volunteers from different countries and some volunteers among the refugees also. The JRS has a wide network of people and experience that benefits everybody: we are nourished by the expertise of other people in different part of the globe and we share our experience with them."

As further added during a telephone interview by Ms. Bando: *"Till today the Project had 270 plus registrations. But the attendance is reduced to 50 more or less. That is phenomena that occurs in all the others NGO that are giving the same service. The people come and goes as matter of fact. Nationalities that are registered: Afghanistan, China: Iran; Pakistan; Bangladesh; Congo; Cameroon; Krimea; Egypt; Syria, Chile, Russia, Palestine, Turkey. The average age of the users is between 18 and 40 years old. But we have 3 students over 60 years old"*.

The project has a little team that everyday works to welcome the users and in the workshops and classes, composed by a coordinator, a Greek teacher, two volunteers in a full-time and other volunteers to make specifics workshops.

There are some **challenges** faced by the organization, such as irregular attendance to the classes, predominance of men (but slowly the number of women is increasing), the disparity of formal level of education among the people who come (from total illiterate to professionals), their discouragement towards the future (their dream of reaching certain countries stops them to see the whole picture of their situation). Further, they do not know how to study, or they do not know how to manage study and homework by themselves. In general, the whole project scenario **encourages interaction** among people of different ages, educational levels, sexes and cultures, promotes respect for diversity, opens a window to the understanding of life and different cultures in Europe, expands the horizon of participants' lives in Athens and allows the acquisition of new learning in areas they had not previously thought of.

About the **pastoral impact** of this project, the coordinator sent the following commentary: *"I would like to say that **it is more than a pastoral impact, we need to have a more holistic approach.** In the Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church number 62-68, [...] was quoted: «Nothing that concerns the community of men and women – situations and problems regarding justice, freedom, development, relations between peoples, peace – is foreign to evangelization, and evangelization would be incomplete if it did not take into account the mutual demands continually made by the Gospel and by the concrete, personal and social life of man»".*

In "Justice in the world", a document from the Bishops Synod in 1971: *"35. The present situation of the world, seen in the light of faith, calls us back to the very essence of the Christian message, creating in us a deep awareness of its true meaning and of its urgent demands. The mission of preaching the Gospel dictates at the present time that we should dedicate ourselves to the liberation of people even in their present existence in this world. For unless the Christian message of love and justice shows its effectiveness through action in the cause of justice in the world, it will only with difficulty gain credibility with the people of our times".*

*"So, we need to speak about evangelization, continuing God's mission and not only pastoral. Our project is in that line, women and men are part of the society, they are primarily the way of the Church, as once John Paul II said. **All that belongs to the human being is a concern for the Church, so we need to accompany, to serve, to advocate for the most vulnerable** in the society".*

### Daily activities

The program started in December 2018 and is housed in JRS Community Hub, Fylis 68. Everyone is welcome to come there and register during opening hours. Adults and children follow different programs. Children are accompanied by a guardian/parent who can visit the "Tea Place" in the same building during children's programs.

Ms. Bando adds: *"A big number of users with kids, which impel us to take care of the children, so the parents can attend properly the class. Among our people is quite common that many of the children are not attending the Greek school, so we are trying to offer some spaces of learning for them also".*

Besides the space, the equipment and the library, special courses are being provided daily. The program of the classes is showed here:

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Opening hours	Monday	Tuesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning: 10:00-13:00 Afternoon: 14.30-17:00	Open: Afternoon Adults French class: 15:30 – 17:00	Open: Afternoon Children Computer class: 15:00 – 16:30	Open: Morning & Afternoon Adults English workshop: 11:00 – 12:30 Adults Greek Level II: 15:30 – 17:00	Open: Morning Adults English class: 11:00 – 12:30

The English workshop includes CV writing, basic computer skills in English (e-mail, Word, etc.), preparation for a job interview in English, movies and discussion in English.

### Relevance

The *Μαγιστορίες* has as its mission to create a space where through education, knowledge and sharing, the people begin to live in a world where the values of hospitality and compassion are extended to everyone. In this project, through education the aim is the global growth of the person and the construction of mentalities for a world without borders, divisions and displacement, where people can move freely and securely. The idea is about building a space where everyone is accepted and where they can grow and acquire new knowledge and skills. For that, promoting hope and reconciliation, this GP works with compassion, love and hospitality with people of all races, cultures and religions in an open and respectful way.

### Innovativeness

Through Internet access, this GP allows fragile people to connect to the world, to inform themselves and to communicate freely. It also integrates participants with the global community, offering infinite resources to learn and break their isolation; creating a space for the exchange of information, together with orientation offered for vocational training services addressed to young adults, it offers a large selection of movies and gaming applications, providing an alternative access to activities coupled with a suitable mediation.

In particular, the Ideas Box is an award-winning innovative multimedia educational project: a multimedia centre in a kit equipped with tablets, computers, home cinema, and with an extensive selection of digital and physical contents systematically adapted to the implementation context (books in different languages, eBooks, videos, applications, board games, educational and recreational material). The Ideas Box also creates a Wi-Fi hotspot on which users can connect with their smartphones or tablets to access thousands of pedagogical, educational and cultural resources.

### Impact

In order to contribute to protection and psychosocial relief for the youth and young adults through the setup of a safe, creative and pedagogical space, the Day Centre volunteers:

- organise creative workshops;
- create a common space for organizing exhibitions and debates;
- promote literacy and mastery of reading and writing workshops;
- organise free access times where users can relax and play on their own, in their native or target languages;
- foster the interactions between Greek and refugee youth and young adults in the Day Centre as a meeting place between cultures and ethnicities and allow people to fight boredom, overcome the trauma and begin the long process of resilience, grief and reconciliation;
- facilitate the integration, management and hosting of refugee or displaced populations;
- integrate the participants with the global community.

A commentary reported by Carmen E. Bando: *"As impact, in this few months I can see the growing trust of the people, who comes and ask all kind of questions to us. That show us that they understand that we cannot provide other services but we can orient them. They also come just to be around us for a while. The language improvement in our students and in the children"*.

Then she adds: *"I notice that the volunteers (who take a part in the project) grow in awareness about the dignity of the persons and their own. How important is every gesture, action and service. Among the refugees the joy of learning something new, the joy of meeting people who treats them as equal, the sense of security when they reach our place are speaking to me of a little impact already"*.

### **Sustainability**

The action is a pilot project, so in this first year it is divided in three phases:

- 1<sup>st</sup> phase (November to December 2018): starting;
- 2<sup>nd</sup> phase (January to April 2019): extension of activities and evaluation with focus group;
- 3<sup>rd</sup> phase (May to July 2019): extension of activities and final evaluation.

General criteria are:

- number of activities programed/produced, activities done, organizations addressed, partners' participation, participants in each activity;
- analysis of the participant's satisfaction surveys, of the other measures about the activities, of the stakeholder's satisfaction surveys.

About the partnerships, the *Μαγιστοριες*, compromised in his relation with its partners, in order to define with them objectives, responsibilities of each actions and resources available, making sure each member that the process runs as planned and communicating the results to all of them, using a transparent communication mechanism (providing feedback during the process and then communicating the information about results and impact).

## RIM - REDE INTERINSTITUCIONAL PARA MIGRANTES (PORTUGAL)

Verb: **to integrate**

Country: Portugal

Initiative: to contribute to a better integration of migrants in the national territory through cooperation among Civil Society Institutions

Beneficiaries: migrants residing in the Lisbon Metropolitan area

Thematic area(s) of good practice example: information-sharing network of civil society organizations involved in the reception/integration of migrants

Duration of project: January 2017 to December 2018

Source of funds: co-financed by the FAMI (Fund, Asylum, Migration and Integration) in the scope of Application PT / 2016 / FAMI / 122.

Website: <http://www.jrsportugal.pt/2660-2/>

Catholic Church organization involved and contacts: the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) (+ 351 217 552 790 [jrs@jrspportugal.pt](mailto:jrs@jrspportugal.pt)); the Portuguese Catholic Migration service (OCPM) (+ 351 218 855 470 [ocpm@ecclesia.pt](mailto:ocpm@ecclesia.pt)); Centre Father Alves Correia (CEPAC) (+351 213 973 030 [geral@cepac.pt](mailto:geral@cepac.pt))

The Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) Portugal, since it opened in 1992, has positioned itself as a reference organization in the field of migration and asylum issues. It has continued its work under the scope of *Plataforma de Apoio aos Refugiados [Refugee Support Platform] (PAR - <http://www.refugiados.pt/>)* – a collaborative network of more than 350 Portuguese civil society organizations (the founding members include: JRS, Caritas Portugal, Ordem hospitaleira S. João de Deus), which was awarded the European Citizen's Prize 2017 by the European Parliament, and of the *Centro de Acolhimento Temporário de Refugiados [Temporary Centre for Refugees of Lisbon Municipality] (CATR)*. In 2017 PAR hosted 144 families, 671 persons, in 90 different organizations across the country, whilst CATR welcomed 151 refugees.

**JRS is answering Pope Francis's call, so that more refugees can heal, learn, and determine their own future:** "In a spirit of compassion, let us

embrace all those fleeing from war and hunger, or forced by discrimination, persecution, poverty and environmental degradation to leave their homelands" (*Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the Celebration of the 51<sup>st</sup> World Day of Peace*)<sup>14</sup>.

JRS Portugal is present to provide specialized assistance to the refugees. In 2017, counting on the help of 80 volunteers, it reinforced its presence on the ground and, directly or indirectly, welcomed about 60% of asylum seekers arriving in Portugal under relocation and resettlement programmes. With the continuation of partnerships and projects in the field of reception and integration, JRS also supported the different organizations involved, by gathering data, monitoring the integration process, channelling resources to the communities and liaising with the Portuguese authorities and trained about 140 people in different areas (such as care of the elderly, childcare, domestic services and retail).

Inspired daily by the leadership of Pope Francis and by the address he gave in 2017 (a shared response to migrants and refugees structured around four verbs: **to welcome, to protect, to promote, and to integrate**), JRS *integrates* refugees through all its programmes and initiatives. The integration of refugees into host communities, or into the societies that in some cases they eventually return to, is the goal of everything that JRS does.

**Testimonial:** Teresa Alves Martins, volunteer in JRS

*"I started my work as a volunteer in JRS Portugal in October 2016. Since then, I have worked in the Employment Office, where I am responsible for guiding migrants to find job offers. Finding a job means, for most of them, the opportunity to stay legally in Portugal. Personally, this experience gave me some challenges, namely the appreciation of the importance of the anonymous help. It also helped me to value and to develop a close relationship with people whose diversity reveals the treasure of each person individually and the enormous potential for the development of a society that practises and cherishes social inclusion"* (Source: JRS, Annual report 2017 <https://bit.ly/2ulaWO8>).

JRS Portugal, in the development of its work with migrants, is aware that there is a growing need for **stronger cooperation between the dif-**

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<sup>14</sup> Available at website <https://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2017/11/24/171124e.html> (last accessed May 13, 2019).

**ferent organizations that work mainly with the migrant population.**

This is why, in 2017 JRS, along with Obra Católica Portuguesa das Migrações (OCPM), Centro Padre Alves Correia (CEPAC), Associação Lusofonia, Cultura e Cidadania (ALCC), Casa do Brasil de Lisboa, Associação de Promotores de Saúde, Ambiente e Desenvolvimento Sócio-Cultural (Prosaudesc), Culturface – Associação Cultural Para o Desenvolvimento and *Porta do Mais* joined forces to create *RIM – Rede Interinstitucional para Migrantes* [Interinstitutional Network for Migrants].

*RIM* was officially launched on 29 November 2017 in Lisbon with a first public meeting, *Migrações em Portugal: que Estado?*, to discuss some topics related to **the integration of migrants in Portugal** and **share good practices**. The event also had the aim of disseminating the network, in order to promote the adhesion of new partners to the mission of *RIM*. About 50 participants of various organizations/institutions of Civil Society registered in the different workshops. Seven thematic meetings were held in the months that followed between the different partners.

For two years *RIM* aimed **to contribute to a better integration of migrants residing in the Lisbon Metropolitan area**. This has been achieved through the creation of an information-sharing network of Civil Society Organizations, by promoting advocacy, capacity building and training toward key public or private institutions involved directly or indirectly in the integration process.

In addition to improved coordination between organizations involved in the reception/integration of migrants, **the network promoted the formalization of institutional cooperation with the intent of a more effective quality of the support provided**. To achieve this purpose, a web platform was designed, common to all member organizations, to develop an institutional capacity to gather, analyse and disseminate data on issues dealing with migrants. At the same time, *RIM* developed **awareness-raising actions to increase the capacity to host and integrate third-country nationals**.

Eugenia Quaresma, director of the Portuguese Catholic Migrations Services (Obra Católica Portuguesa de Migrações– OCPM), during an interview conducted via e-mail, said: "*The RIM Project aims to contribute to a better integration of immigrants in the national territory, through cooperation among Civil Society Institutions, promoting advocacy and promoting the training of specialized institutions in the area and other public or private*

*institutions in the integration process. As a platform for meeting and sharing relevant information and good practices, cross-checking of data and experiences allows us to know the real impact of public policies and to unlock obstacles. Networking gives strength to arguments. As a negative aspect I would indicate the difficulty of reconciling agendas, translating into face-to-face availability for meetings. With regard to pastoral aspects, **we work on the Welcome and Protect verbs**, particularly the most vulnerable in the process of regularization, to promote greater efficiency in the institutions of justice, health, and seek to include those who have already passed the stage. This is a joint effort to better recognize the cultural value and leading role of the migrant in the development of Portuguese society".*

### **Relevance**

The GP aimed at strengthening cooperation between Civil Society Institutions in the promotion and protection of migrant population rights in the integration process, by developing awareness-raising actions to increase the capacity of hosting and sharing good practices.

### **Innovativeness**

To promote advocacy, capacity building and training toward institutions involved in the integration process, *RIM* designed a web platform to develop an institutional capacity to gather, analyse and disseminate data on issues dealing with migrants. This way the network promoted institutional cooperation with a view to stimulate a more effective quality of the support provided.

### **Impact**

Networking gave strength to arguments about the synergy between Civil Society Institutions and the real impact of public policies when dealing with *"the cultural value and leading role of the migrant in the development of Portuguese society"*.

### **Sustainability**

The sustainability of the project is guaranteed due to the fact that among the main objectives of *RIM* there was the dissemination of its network to promote the adhesion of new partners to its mission. This meant that this GP relied on the ability to keep on generating new contexts where fostering community dialogue on migration issues.

# ANNEX - GOOD PRACTICES

	Good Practice	Country	Organization(s) Involved	to welcome	to protect	to promote	to integrate
GP1	Up together	Belgium	JRS Belgium	X			
GP2	Rifugiato a casa mia	Italy	Caritas Tarvisina	X			
GP3	Communities of Hospitality (CoH)	Malta	JRS Malta	X			
GP4	Reintegration Program for Migrants Returning to the Russian Federation	Russia	Caritas International. Caritas of Mother of God Archdiocese in Moscow	X			
GP5	Temporary Reception Centres for Migrants and Refugees	Serbia	Caritas Serbia	X			
GP6	Training on protection of at risk groups among refugees	Albania	Caritas Shqiptar		X		
GP7	Supporting Iraqi Christian refugees in Jordan	England, Scotland and Wales	Friends of the Holy Land		X		
GP8	Rodzina Rodzinnie	Poland	-Caritas Polska -Fundacja św. Mikołaja. "The St. Nicholas Foundation" -Christian Hope Centre – Aleppo		X		
GP9	Refugee protection and service delivery dialogue: strengthening partnerships to respond to Syrian refugee needs	Turkey	ICMC		X		
GP10	Career for new life	Ukraine	Caritas Ukraine		X		
GP11	The refugee project	Bulgaria	Caritas Sofia			X	
GP12	Child friendly space	Croatia	JRS Croatia			X	

ANNEX - GOOD PRACTICES

	Good Practice	Country	Organization(s) Involved	to welcome	to protect	to promote	to integrate
GP13	Cyprus Religious Track (RTC/YP)	Cyprus	RTCYP			X	
GP14	The Healing Garden	Germany	Misereor			X	
GP15	Cooperatief Ondernemen in Nederland - Cooperative Entrepreneurship in the Netherlands (COIN)	The Netherlands	-Cordaid -Caritas Netherlands			X	
GP16	<i>Proyecto Ódós</i>	Spain	-The Handmaids of the Sacred Heart -The Hospital Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus - <i>Villa Teresita</i> - Jesuit Migration Services -Caritas of Spain- <i>La Merced Migraciones</i> -The Pontifical University of Comillas -Loyola University of Sevilla				X
GP17	Young refugees in centres in Munich and Nuremberg	Germany	<i>Salesians of Don Bosco</i>				X
GP18	Couloirs humanitaires	France	Sant'Egidio				X
GP19	- Magistories	Greece	JRS Greece				X
GP 20	RIM Rede Interinstitucional para Migrantes	Portugal	-JRS Portugal -OCPM -CEPAC				X

# APPENDIX - OTHER GOOD PRACTICES

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## MIND - MIGRATION INTERCONNECTEDNESS DEVELOPMENT

**Verb: to protect**

**Country:** Austria (lead applicant), Germany (Bavaria), Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Italy, Portugal, Netherlands, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden

**Initiative:** to raise public awareness about the links between migration and development

**Beneficiaries:** adults and minors

**Thematic area(s) of good practice example:** to promote development education in the European Union

**Duration of project:** 2017-2020

**Source of funds:** European Commission – Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development (DG DEVCO)

**Website:** <https://www.caritas.eu/mind/>

**Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:**

Caritas Austria (office@caritas-austria.at +43 (1) 48831410); Caritas Bavaria (stefan.wagner@caritas-bayern.de +49 89544970); Caritas Bulgaria (info@caritas.bg +359 2 9441858); Caritas Czech Republic (sekretariat@charita.cz +420 296243330); Caritas Netherlands (info@cordaid.org +31 703136300); Caritas Europa (info@caritas.eu +32 22800280); Caritas International Belgium (direction@caritasint.be +32 2 2293611); Caritas Italy (segreteria@caritas.it +39 06 66177001); Caritas Portugal (caritas@caritas.pt +351 218454220); Caritas Slovakia (sekretariat@charita.sk +421 2 54431506); Caritas Slovenia (info@karitas.si +386 1 3005960); Caritas Sweden (caritas@caritas.se +46 8 50557674)

Inspired by the words of Pope Francis in his **Encyclical Letter Laudato Si'** *"There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference"*<sup>15</sup>, **Eleven European Catholic Caritas charities** have joined forces to raise the public's awareness of civil society and national and European institutions on the **complex** links between migration and development issues. They will work for three years (2017-2020) on key issues, including the underlying causes of (forced) migrations, problems faced by hosting societies and integration processes, steps for creating welcoming societies, migrants' contributions to their communities in their new countries and in the countries of origin.

European Caritas staff and volunteers will have the opportunity to strengthen their work and to further promote the widespread network present both in the countries of origin of migrants and on European territory. The three-year project will be implemented at a European, national and local level. In Italy, for example, it will involve five Caritas organizations in Benevento, Biella, Bolzano, Milan and Verona, together with other partners already working on specific projects in this specific area.

Private actors, along with enterprises, academics, schools, civil society organizations, migrant volunteer groups, journalists, politicians and decision-makers, will have the opportunity of becoming more aware of themes that are relevant to international migration events and start building the Europe of the future that welcomes, protects, promotes, integrates and leaves no one behind.

For Caritas *MIND* represents an opportunity to contribute to the **Agenda 2030** and the **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs): Caritas is convinced that building progressive societies based on humanity, solidarity and concern for the common good is key to reaching the SDGs and creating a better world for future generations.

Shannon Pfohman, Caritas Europe's Head of Policy and Advocacy Unit declared: *"With the aim of bringing about global social justice, we seek with this project to contribute to developing policies on migration and development that put the person at the centre. At a time with rising anti-migrant sentiment, we also hope this collaboration will contribute to changing the negative narrative on migration"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2Feo6l9>).

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<sup>15</sup> Available at website [http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco\\_20150524\\_enciclica-laudato-si.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html) (last accessed May 13, 2019).

### The main goals of the project

The anticipated outcomes from the engagement on advocacy and campaigning over the three-year period will result in:

Improved public understanding of the relationship between universal sustainable development and migration, its role both in the EU and developing countries and the EU's contribution to development cooperation.

State authorities, CSOs, individuals and other (potential) development actors being increasingly engaged in addressing root causes of migration and in investing in migrants and refugees as actors of development.

The youth are at the heart of the activities. Project partners will deliver national advocacy and campaigning actions involving a range of stakeholders including roots organizations working with refugees, migrants and diaspora groups.

### The #whatishome campaign

On World Refugee Day (June 20, 2018), in the framework of *MIND*, a Europe-wide summer campaign called #whatishome was launched: it asked people to reflect on the meaning of home.

It is a Europe-wide campaign focusing on the reasons behind migration. It aims to create a broader understanding of why people move from one place to another and how the lack of sustainable development creates unworthy living conditions. In addition, it aims to create a more welcoming environment for migrants and refugees in Europe.

On the subject of policy, the campaign intends to encourage EU Institutions, Member States and third countries to address drivers of forced migration and to invest in **migrants and refugees as actors of development**.

There is the possibility to participate in the campaign by sharing a photo or video with the hashtags #whatishome on Instagram or Facebook and tell the world what home is, or making a political statement by signing the European Citizens' Initiative at [www.whatishome.eu](http://www.whatishome.eu)

Fr. Francesco Soddu, the director of Caritas Italia, said: *"This will provide an opportunity to gain a new perspective. It will show people that human mobility involves co-responsibility"* (Source: <https://bit.ly/2UUkpXV>).

As for the positive aspects, Suzanne Jenner (*MIND* Project Manager – Caritas Sweden) said during an interview conducted via e-mail: *"We have had two media campaigns on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram that raised quite a lot of interest and awareness. We have also organized a few round tables and panel discussions for the general public. The focus is practically always on the relationship between migration and development – something that is often neglected or not discussed".* As for the critical aspects, she said: *"It's hard to organize events with young people as we here in Sweden do not have any Young Caritas. The activity called Buddy Groups has therefore been delayed, but the first meeting between young Catholics and newly arrived young people, mainly from the Middle East, is due in February [2019]. We have also found it difficult to involve migrants to tell "their stories", which is a prerogative for the activity Living Books. This has not yet been solved so we keep looking for opportunities to collaborate with other organizations where such migrants can be found".*

According to Giovanna Corbatta (Caritas Italia), as declared during an interview conducted via e-mail: *"This project stimulates us to think with a new perspective on issues related to migration and development. Usually the approach to these two issues has always been separate, in our situations: on the one hand the themes of immigration, under the national area, on the other the themes on development, SDGs, Agenda 2030 etc., under an international area. This project has contributed to planning in a joint dimension that allows creating/strengthening networks and synergies. The critical aspects of the project actions lie in the sensitivity of the topics dealt with. It is undeniable that migration and development are two strongly politicized issues that move conflicting feelings. Since this is a project of communication and advocacy, the greatest challenge that this project poses us is how to communicate issues related to migration and development outside without triggering haters. Finally, the activities in the dioceses have started too little time to already have feedback in terms of pastoral impact".*

During an interview conducted via e-mail, Filipa Abecasis (Unidade Internacional – Portugal) stated: *"The first months of the MIND project was a lot about planning and positioning ourselves, as Caritas Portuguesa, as a relevant actor on Migration and Development. Therefore, we did a lot of research on political, legal, and social context, power mapping, existing projects and potential allies and partners for the several activities within the project. Besides participating in the planning and preparatory meetings with other MIND partners, we conducted some meetings with partner organisations, including those belonging to the Portuguese Episcopal Conference, to present the*

*MIND project and discuss opportunities of working together along the three years. We took the opportunity of the Caritas Internationalis Campaign "Share the Journey" Action Week (in June 2018) to bring us closer to the Diocesan Caritas and Diocesan Secretariats for Migration, proposing some activities and a joint action of sharing a meal with migrants and refugees locally, all across the country. We also decided to have the official launch of the MIND project during that time. The event took place on the International Day for Refugees, with the participation of a wide range of political and civil society representatives, including, on the political level, our Prime Minister, the Minister for Internal Affairs, the Secretary of State for Equality, among other, Ambassadors, representatives of relevant governmental bodies (such as the High Commissioner for Migration), as well as migrants and refugees associations, other religious or beliefs representatives, CSOs, media. More on the Advocacy level of the project, we worked together with the Forum for Catholic Organisations for Migration (FORCIM) to prepare a Manifesto on the Global Compacts for Refugees and for a Safe, Orderly and Safe Migration, during its negotiation (intergovernmental consultations), that was then handed to the Prime-Minister, and presented in sessions with the Vice-President of the National Assembly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (General Directorate for Foreign Policy), and the Presidency of the Republic. It was also sent to all the Political Parties. We also conducted research and worked together with a national consultant, to prepare the Common Home National Publication (that will be launched next May [2019]) and had a scope visit from the GMPA (Global Migration Policy Associates) consultants for the European Study, during which we held several meetings with different focus groups".*

### **Relevance**

The GP promotes a proper public understanding of the relationship between sustainable development and migration, both in the EU and developing countries, by increasing the space for encounter between people to better understand this complex issue and the responses to it with humanity, dignity and respect. Moreover, it shows people that human mobility involves co-responsibility.

### **Innovativeness**

Aiming at investing in migrants and refugees as actors of development, through advocacy and campaigning actions (e.g. contests, mobile exhibitions, summer schools, and awareness raising workshops), this GP revolves around three pillars: forced migration, welcoming societies and sustainable development.

### **Impact**

The GP has one peculiar aspect, namely, to ensure that EU and Member States' development aid is used exclusively for the purpose of poverty alleviation to improve people's lives.

A range of involved stakeholders (e.g. national and local decision makers, private sector, civil society, academia and grass roots organisations working with refugees, migrants and diaspora groups) have the opportunity of becoming more aware of themes that are relevant to current events.

### **Sustainability**

Through the financial support of the European Union, different European Caritas (12 countries) have the opportunity of strengthening their work, both in the countries of origin of migrants and on European territory, to benefit integration processes and to further promote their widespread network.

**WIR-ZUSAMMEN****Verb: to integrate**

Country: Austria

Initiative: to empower active participation of volunteers, refugees and interested citizens in small municipalities

Beneficiaries: refugees and interested citizens

**Thematic area(s) of good practice example:**

multi-stakeholder partnership involving local communities, interested citizens, volunteers

Duration of project: 2017 to present

**Source of funds:** Government funds of Lower Austria for one offered activity of the NGO Empathy Now!, the Communities of Practice (CoP); Diakonie; Kompa Caritas (Conflict Prevention, Mediation and Participation in Vienna & Lower Austria); Caritas Diocese St. Pölten; Co-Financing-strategies with local NGOs and smaller funds for certain specific activities within the project; some other sponsor such as institutions, committed people and initiatives

**Website:** <http://www.wir-zusammen.at>**Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:**

local Caritas (Empathy Now!) NGO (+43 650 84 88 168 ssteyrer@wir-zusammen.at)

*WIR-ZUSAMMEN* – Begleitung von Integrationsprozessen ("We Together" – Accompanying by Integration Processes) is a project on social integration and political participation, with a focus on **empowerment and active participation** of volunteers, refugees and interested citizens in small municipalities. "We Together" is also a non-profit organization offering its expertise in supporting long-term integration processes in certain regions in Lower Austria. The *WIR-ZUSAMMEN* project recognizes the potential of human (geographical) movements (migration, flight) and promotes a culture of community in respect for human dignity and human rights. *WIR-ZUSAMMEN* accompanies volunteers, in their valuable commitment, so that this can be guaranteed in the long term.

One of the staff statements reports: *"By strengthening communities, facilitating encounters, the gap within the population of Austria will diminish, fears and overstrain will be heard and strategies will be found to fulfil the individual and unifying need for security and belonging. It is stimulated to integrate one another into one's own life and to perceive oneself as a cultural designer and to actively experience it".*

In the official webpage of the project, Margret Steixner, a pedagogue, cross-cultural trainer and coach, says: *"All real life is encounter"* and Martin Buber adds: *"I want to contribute to sustainable relationships between incoming and helping people, can arise. Learning and intercultural encounters are my core topics and I want to contribute to better living together with WIR-TOGETHER by inviting volunteers and communities to learn together".*

### Aims

The general aim of the activities is **to foster and build cross-cultural competencies** and:

- to learn from and with each other;
- to work together on a common culture of living peacefully and respectfully in a changing, multicultural environment, facing the fact that all the social actors are creating culture together;
- to learn and teach how to listen carefully;
- to work together on solving current and future challenges and problems;
- to create creative solutions, ideas, answers and deeper questions about challenges;
- to foster empathy and the ability to change perspective;
- to make the multiple engagements of society visible and provide a platform for sharing good-practices;
- to teach tools and methods to empower for (political) processes in their own small municipalities, encourage for empowerment.

According to what Mrs. Steyrer stated: *"We want to make us unnecessary again."*

As reported by the core staff: *"We are all cultural designers. It is important for us to give each other space to live our culture, individuality, values. If we*

*can certainly develop ourselves, we are also ready to allow this unfolding to our fellow human beings. We want to create spaces that provide security, to express feelings, to perceive needs and to formulate wishes. In order to come into self-responsible action, which is useful to us and our environment. Room for a good life means space for us: enjoyment, responsibility and courage to try new things".*

### **Activities**

- 1 CoP every 6-8 weeks a new CoP somewhere in a community/village in Lower Austria;
- 2-3 members of the *WiR-ZUSAMMEN* team;
- 1 person from the cooperation partner Caritas (person in charge of volunteer coordination);
- 1 person from Diakonie – which is a non-financial cooperation partner (person in charge of volunteer coordination);
- sometimes 1-2 persons from regional authorities (if available);
- 6-8 people from host & local stakeholders at the first preparation period;
- 35-45 participants;
- journalists from local newspapers (if available).

### **Target group**

*"Alle, die jetzt da sind"* ("All that are here now"): everyone who gets to know from this event and wants to come. Among participants, almost half so far are refugees (Asylberechtigte, AsylwerberInnen) or migrants. Most of the participants are engaged in volunteer work in their region in some kind. The CoP is conducted in German; therefore, a minimum of language skill is necessary. Often there are whisper interpreters in different languages present to support. Additionally, there is the possibility to contact *WiR-ZUSAMMEN* beforehand to organize volunteer translators for the CoP (whisper interpreting).

### **Relevance**

This project is based on the believe that migration movement and the arising new challenges in living together need this form of empowering settings. CoPs are a form of low-threshold "supervision" that is not

provided from other systems or institutions (in case of volunteers/active citizens), fostering participation and creating safe and educational places. Another aspect is the great diversity of participants in each CoP, which benefit together of an experience-based learning during the process of integration. Participants take an active role since the beginning of a CoP cycle and get to know each other" with expertise guiding through a process. From the very beginning of the process, effective solutions bloom as they come from the community itself. The approach for individual support and services is needs-based.

### **Innovativeness**

The methodological approach within the Communities of Practice (CoP) is quite innovative; the process facilitators use methods according to the purpose of the topic as well as to the current situation in each CoP-session. Some of them are mentioned in the information at disposal: Art of Hosting (including circle practice, world café, storytelling, drawing, rituals etc.), Theatre of the Oppressed, Non-Violent-Communication or Constellation Work. Important is that the topic is always community-driven and decided together in a small group (everybody is invited to join) during a preparation meeting. One method in all the meetings carried out by the NGO *WIR-ZUSAMMEN* is the formation of the participants and facilitators in a circle with chairs – (called "The Circle Practice") as well as participatory communication tools like a "talking stick" (meaning for example an object made of stone/marble, or a ball) that is passed around in the circle. Only the person holding it can talk. The others are supported by the object's presence to listen fully focused. Participants are multiplier and ambassadors for "the good living together". Challenges and problems of people in Austrian's communities are often similar – a CoP gives the chance that other regions can also learn from the current CoP.

### **Impact**

Regions and municipalities involved, learn from each other, generating a great empowering effect and impact on motivation to proceed, through the sharing of expertise, ideas, feelings, power and common aims. The idea is that culture it is something actively shaped by humans living together (in this case no outsider does something for someone, but it is "a building together"). Participants get a better understanding for "the unknown", "the stranger", enhancing abilities to better solve conflicts and prevent misunderstanding. As reported, volunteers stated that they feel strengthened, supported and motivated by regular CoP-activities.

### **Sustainability**

Thanks to the volunteers' work and the strong motivation of the whole team involved, together with the constant applying for funds, this project continues to expand and to increase in terms of participants. *Wir-ZUSAMMEN* also works with collaborative platforms for sharing the outcomes of each CoP and it is open for any inquiry from other NGOs in order to enhance collaboration.

## ASSISTANCE HOTLINE IN THE VIETNAMESE AND MONGOLIAN LANGUAGE

**Verb: to integrate**

**Country:** Czech Republic

**Initiative:** to support the integration process of Mongolian and Vietnamese speaking migrants legally residing in the Czech Republic

**Beneficiaries:** migrants from Mongolia and Vietnam

**Thematic area(s) of good practice example:** legal status and orientation in socio-cultural environment/ empowerment of migrants

**Duration of project:** 2008 to present

**Source of funds:** 70% by means of public funds (via the Ministry of the Interior of the Czech Republic, under the grant title "Integration of Foreigners") and 30% by Caritas Czech Republic (from "Three Kings Collection")

**Website:** <https://www.charita.cz/jak-pomahame/pomoc-cizincum-v-cr/infolinka/>

**Catholic Church organization involved and contacts:**

Caritas Czech Republic (Klára Boumová +420 296 243330 sekretariat@charita.cz)

Caritas Czech Republic has been operating a **helpline intended for Mongolian (since 2008) and Vietnamese (since 2012) speaking migrants in the Czech Republic**. Currently the helpline operates 8 hours per week in Mongolian (twice a week: Monday and Wednesday from 9 to 11 a.m. and from 2 to 4 p.m.) and 18 hours per week in the Vietnamese language (three times a week: Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon and from 2 to 5 p.m.).

The service provides an **anonymous and free of charge, phone and internet (via chat, e-mail and online apps as well) information and interpreting line**. Clients pay only the price of the call according to his/her phone operator's rate.

The services offered are being used anywhere in the Czech Republic, by people living in Prague as well as the ones in remote Czech regions who

do not have any NGO-provided service at disposal. They are available for any client regardless of his/her age and social status. The only condition is either coverage by any mobile operator or a working Internet connection.

**The hotline serves around 1,000 clients and their family members a year.**

A Ukrainian Assistance Line has also been operational since July 1, 2018.

The *Assistance hotline in the Vietnamese and Mongolian language* has the objective of assisting legally residing migrants from Mongolia and Vietnam with a contact and communication with institutions in order to facilitate their integration into Czech society.

Operators provide **information concerning legal status** of foreigners in the Czech Republic, **education, employment, housing, health care system, social services system, social security system and related rights and obligations**. Yet most of users' requests are linked to the questions of **residence permits, employment, education and health care insurance**. Operators also give information and **psychosocial support** in dealing with other difficult life situations. As infoline cannot offer consultancy, more complex issues (e.g. unpaid wages, execution, people facing family violence, psychiatric problems, HIV-positive patients,) are handed over to other relevant institutions and organizations (e.g. social counselling centres of Caritas, NGOs). Finally, they also provide a telephone assistance in filling out official forms.

Operators are being contacted even by clients who would not be able to visit any other consultancy institutions, NGOs or authorities because of their language obstacles, family conditions, financial situation or state of health.

The telephone interpreting service is mostly used when Vietnamese and Mongolians have to deal with institutions and authorities (e.g. municipal authorities, revenue authorities), but also during other contacts (e.g. landlords, employers). It helps to prevent misunderstandings in dealing with them which has fundamental impact on their life in the Czech Republic.

**The service is primarily intended for Mongolian and Vietnamese citizens, nevertheless it is also for all others who come into contact with Mongolians and Vietnamese living in the Czech Republic.** In fact, the operators can also answer queries from Czech institutions (e.g. Department of Asylum and Migration Policy, hospitals, schools, authorities).

It thus helps to reduce unfair behaviour or incorrect information, fight against exploitation of immigrants, remove prejudices of foreigners about Czech society as well as prejudices of Czech society about foreigners.

The helpline contributes to migrants feeling more integrated, in particular because the operators are migrants themselves (3 for the Mongolian line and 3 for the Vietnamese one), who are more settled: they can be an important key figure for newcomers on their path to integration. Thus, the *Assistance hotline in Vietnamese and Mongolian language* **promotes the empowerment of migrants working as operators and serves as a bridge between newcomers and public institutions.**

Furthermore, the users are also being given contacts with experts, organizations and institutions, in order to facilitate information exchange between migrants, institutions, authorities, NGOs as well as Czech citizens, and remove the mistrust migrants feel towards various Czech institutions.

Since Mongolians and Vietnamese are often exposed to an inappropriate linguistic competence in Czech language and knowledge of Czech socio-cultural reality, they are not always able to solve problems using their own capacities and are forced to search for commercial mediators, thus reinforcing their dependent status.

For these reasons, among the positive aspects of this project, Klára Boumová (Project Coordinator), during a telephone interview, stated: *"There is the involvement of foreigners from communities that are very closed and usually use dearly paid services by their own intermediaries who often provide inaccurate or misleading information, not official and certified services"*.

As for the critical aspects, Klára Boumová underlined that *"the risk is the loss of confidence in the community if we provide them with wrong information or misuse their confidential information. The choice of the right operators is important – they have to be fluent in both languages, competent and honest. Financing is also problematic – we have been providing the service continuously since 2008 in Mongolian and since 2012 in Vietnamese, although funding is uncertain for the first few months every year. Hotline does not run non-stop, but only for a few hours some days a week. This period is regular, we are trying to make minimal changes"*.

Even though some clients use the service frequently, a regular growth in the number of contacts during the first years of the provision of the service has been observed.

The service is promoted through the distribution of flyers and info cards, migrant associations and NGOs, in addition to participation in various social events, seminars and conferences and word of mouth between migrants.

The need to extend the service to Russian-speaking clients in the future has been emphasized.

### **Relevance**

The project is linked to social inclusion, since it is aimed at supporting the integration process through a free-of-charge phone helpline, providing a wide range of information (e.g. legal status, education, employment, housing, health care system, etc.) in the language of origin.

### **Innovativeness**

Since the helpline operators are more settled migrants, the GP helps migrants to believe in integration. Therefore, by promoting the empowerment of migrants, operators are an important key figure for newcomers.

### **Impact**

Because of different obstacles (e.g. language, family conditions, financial situation, state of health, etc.) migrants would not be able to visit any other consultancy institutions, NGOs or authorities. For this reason, this GP prevents misunderstandings, for example when dealing with institutions, by promoting the integration process. Furthermore, the service is also intended for Czech institutions who come into contact with Mongolians and Vietnamese. This is a real opportunity to remove prejudices towards each other.

### **Sustainability**

The sustainability of the project lies in an important networking, so as to facilitate information exchange and remove the mistrust migrants feel towards various Czech institutions. For more complex issues (e.g. execution, psychiatric problems, etc.) migrants are supported by relevant experts, institutions and organizations.

