

GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

Community Champions Workshop in Cork Ireland

From November 13-15, GRSI partners, Nasc Migrant & Refugee Rights Centre, Amnesty International Ireland, and Irish Refugee Protection Programme (IRPP) hosted a workshop in Cork, Ireland for civil society champions of community sponsorship from states that are implementing or exploring the feasibility of a community sponsorship program. The summit provided participants with dedicated time to discuss the opportunities and challenges in community sponsorship and will lay the foundation for continued knowledge exchange. The event allowed participants to update each other on developments in the 12 participating countries and to concentrate on policy and operational challenges, building partnerships, communications, outreach, and mobilization of a movement for sponsorship. "I am thrilled to see how community-based resettlement of refugees is gaining popularity around the world," said Chris George, the Executive Director of Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services in the United States. As was the case at last year's champions event in London, participants also had the opportunity to meet local sponsors, community organizations, and sponsored refugees and learn about how sponsorship is making a difference. The three day workshop concluded with the launch of the Irish community sponsorship program, with Irish Minister of State, David Stanton, TD.



Participants interviewing a community sponsor from Middleton, Ireland.

Germany welcomes first refugees under the German community sponsorship program NestT Germany has welcomed its first privately sponsored refugees, two sisters from Syria, under its new community sponsorship program, Neustart im Team (NesT). A group of five sponsors will support them as they settle in the North Rhine-Westphalia region while the Archdiocese of Cologne assists with housing. More than 30 mentor groups have formed in Germany and are in the process of sponsoring new refugee arrivals to Germany. These groups will help integrate new arrivals to Germany, providing financial and housing support for the first two years and social support for the first year. It is possible for groups of five to work with companies, communities, municipalities and foundations to provide suitable housing for the two year period. All sponsorship groups take mandatory training programs to better understand their role in resettling refugees.

COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP IN THE NEWS

- [SHARE Fostering community sponsorship across Europe](#)
- [Learning from Experiences of Community-Based Refugee Sponsorship in Europe](#)

New refugee resettlement scheme to be rolled out nationwide following successful pilot



Minister of State David Stanton announcing the official launch of Ireland's Community Sponsorship program. Credit to Nasc for photo.

Irish Minister of State David Stanton TD, responsible for immigration and integration, has **announced** the (Continued on page 2)

launch of a nationwide community sponsorship program, Community Sponsorship Ireland (CSI), which will allow communities across the country to apply to resettle refugees. "It's a real success story. We have had a lot of communities here come to us in the department asking what can we do to help," said the Minister. The pilot program welcomed five refugee families into small communities in Ireland. The early success with these encouraged the Irish to transition into a permanent program. Minister Stanton hopes that the success of this program will help the Irish government to potentially increase the number of refugees it would be able to resettle.

IOM, UNHCR Support Resettlement of Refugees in South America

Government representatives from Brazil, Argentina, Chile and Uruguay recently participated in roundtable discussing the Emerging Resettlement Countries Joint Support Mechanism (ERCM), a joint initiative between the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR). The ERCM has been an important technical and financial tool used in strengthening legal frameworks and selection procedures, capacity building of resettlement institutions and establishing new forms of financing. Countries belonging to the ERCM, are consolidating resettlement processes by improving national and local reception and integration structures, promoting the self-sufficiency of resettled families and contributing host communities. Best practices were shared, and potential paths forward for respective settlement programs were also examined. These included exploring complementary resettlement avenues and a focus on sharing responsibility, one of the main objectives of the Global Refugee Compact signed in 2018.

For more information, click [here](#).

European Union Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund

Calls for applications to foster persons in need of protection through private sponsorship schemes. Deadline: January 30, 2020 17:00 Brussels Time For more information on applications, [check out this page](#).

Syrian refugee family opening restaurant in Sydney

A Syrian refugee family in Sydney, Nova Scotia, sponsored in 2017, are opening Jenan's Syrian Kitchen, a traditional Syrian food restaurant for takeout and catering. The Alhssso family was the last of eight families that settled on Cape Breton Island in the last three years. The family used food as a way to integrate into the community. Working with

members of the community, including Ahmed Barakat, a Cape Breton University business graduate and business partner, the Alhssso family have been able to rent a space for their new restaurant close to their new house. The restaurant will serve Syrian favourites from fatayers, Turkish coffee, and shwarma, food that won't require customers to be too adventurous. Other items will be added as specials over time. Ahmed Alhssso spoke highly of their sponsorship experience, "[T]he sponsor group was really kind and helped us through everything." For more information, [click here](#).

NEW! Foundations of Community Sponsorship Available NOW!

The GRIS is pleased to introduce a new resource to the community sponsorship space. *Foundations of Community Sponsorship*, is a set of training materials created by the GRIS to support organizations in countries developing community-based refugee sponsorship programs. They were developed with the input of sponsorship group members, UNHCR offices, sponsored refugee newcomers, community sponsorship organizations and government experts from around the world.

Foundations of Community Sponsorship can be used to support successful integration outcomes through training sponsorship trainers and preparing sponsorship group members. It is a set of modularized and reflective training resources which includes two important tools: a **Training Manual** for in-person delivery as well as a complementary **Online Learning Resource**. These materials are universally applicable, but can also be tailored by local organizations for different community-based refugee sponsorship programs.

Foundations of Community Sponsorship is available in English on the GRIS website refugeesponsorship.org as of November 15, 2019. French, Spanish, German and Portuguese translations will be available in the coming months. (Note: A password will be sent to organizations in order to access the training package and it will be circulated in our next newsletter.)

What is GRIS?

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is a partnership of five organizations – the Government of Canada, UNHCR, the Open Society Foundations, the Giustra Foundation and the University of Ottawa. It aims to help other countries set up their own community-based refugee sponsorship programs, strengthening local communities and improving the narrative on refugees in the process.

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