

GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

The Spanish Secretary of State for Migration closes the opening ceremony of the community sponsorship program for refugee resettlement in Valencia



The Valencia region in Spain has launched a new community sponsorship pilot program, following the Basque region's successful pilot. The Secretary of State for Migration of Spain, Hana Jalloul, held a **working meeting** on the implementation of the new pilot for community sponsorship in Valencia. The meeting was attended by local and regional officials of Valencia and the representative of UNHCR in Spain. The director of the Delegation in Valencia of the Jesuit Service to Migrants Spain, and three representatives of Caritas Diocesana, the civil society organizations collaborating in the implementation of the program also participated in the event.

The Secretary of State highlighted the community sponsorship model as an "example of collaboration between administrations", a view shared by the vice president of the Generalitat Valencia Mónica Oltra. The Secretary of State highlighted that this "model offers the opportunity for citizens to participate directly", and recognized the close collaboration with the Canadian embassy. So far Valencia has welcomed five Syrian families through this pilot.

Refugee family: "Scotland is our second home" Refugee Sponsorship Edinburgh successfully welcomed Scotland's community sponsored refugee family a little over a year ago. The family fled Syria, and spent time in Lebanon before receiving the opportunity to live in Scotland. Their sponsors have provided vital supports as the family settled in Scotland, including helping them access local services such as healthcare, finding local supermarkets, and a link to a social life in their new home. While COVID-19 did impact how the group was able to support the newcomers, online options have been incredibly helpful. The family is adapting to school, getting involved in community activities, and learning English, "...we find everything here: peace, education. Scotland became our second home."

Refugee Sponsorship Edinburgh is currently the only sponsorship group that has successfully welcomed a family to Scotland, with many efforts by new volunteers hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Scottish Refugee Council is holding a recruitment event to give information to people considering forming a sponsorship group.

After 6 months in limbo due to COVID-19, Syrian refugee family arrives in Haida Gwaii, Canada



After a more than six-month delay due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a Syrian refugee family has arrived in the Haida Gwaii community in

British Columbia, Canada. The family was sponsored by [Operations Refugee Haida Gwaii](#). The family of five had expected to fly to Canada from Lebanon in March, but travel restrictions due to COVID-19 disrupted these plans.

Operations Refugee Haida Gwaii began the sponsorship process two years ago, but since March have faced several unexpected hurdles. While the family had a safe living space in Beirut, there were concerns after the explosion in Beirut's port in August. Also, after the Canadian federal government informed Operations Refugee Haida Gwaii that they could begin preparing for the family's arrival, the group faced another hurdle, as non-essential travel to the area had been banned, and a local state of emergency remains in effect. Organizing a detailed travel and quarantine plan was key to the group's success.

Now that the family has completed their mandatory 14-day quarantine, they are getting to know their community. The eldest child will soon be starting school, and their father is hoping to find work as a mechanic, as he had done in Syria. The family is also connecting with the three other Syrian families who have resettled in the area.

Check out the [Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative on Twitter!](#)

Follow [@theGRSI](#) on Twitter for more updates on [#communitysponsorship](#)

Pictou County has already surpassed goal for Oct. 3 Ride for Refuge

Thanks to the efforts of the community more refugees will be able to resettle in [Pictou County, Nova Scotia, Canada](#). Community members helped the sponsorship group, Pictou County Safe Harbour, to fundraise the necessary funds to welcome a refugee family to the community in 2021. While the ride is normally in-person, this year the event will be virtual, with small teams completing their fundraising activities on their own.

Over 80 participants registered for the event, including many of the former refugee families who were sponsored by the group. The initial fundraising goal has already been reached, and additional funding was provided by The Shapiro Foundation.

Support for town's bid to house refugee family in Dorset, UK

The [Bridport Refugee Support Campaign](#) is welcoming the strong support of its community as they seek to welcome a refugee family through the UK's Community Sponsorship Scheme. The campaign recently collected signatures from members of the community who would like to support the campaign in a variety of ways, including decorating the house the refugee family will live in, helping the family improve their English, and helping them orient themselves in the community.

The group is pleased with the positive response of the community, with many community members volunteering to support the family or donating funds to help the group reach its fundraising goal. The Bridport Refugee Support Campaign has also had the support of local artists as well who have been producing images that show the voyage of refugees, and who have donated artwork for a fundraising auction.

Check out the [GRSI COVID-19 Resource Portal](#) for more information about GRSI activities, tools and resources during this challenging time

<https://covid19.refugeesponsorship.org/>

Navan group to sponsor and welcome Syrian refugee family, Ireland

A group, the [Navan Community Sponsorship Group](#), has been set up in Navan, Ireland to sponsor and welcome a refugee family under the Community Sponsorship Ireland scheme. The group feels that this is an opportunity to make a real difference, joining a growing number of community sponsorship groups that have helped to welcome families to Ireland and to integrate refugees into these communities. Several fundraising projects are planned to help the group obtain enough funds to sponsor their first refugee family.

What is GRSI?

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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