

GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE AT A GLANCE

Factbox: What President Biden is doing to bring more refugees into the US

President Biden has announced that the US will increase annual refugee admissions to the US. This announcement also included a commitment to launch a private sponsorship pilot. The pilot will focus on family reunification, and will not be limited by nationality. Read more about the announcements [here](#).

From learning Irish to learning Arabic: Cape Clear, Ireland looks to a more diverse future



Cape Clear, County Cork, has become the **first Irish island** to be accepted as a destination for approved refugees under Community Sponsorship Ireland.

The islanders are considering opening a new language college, in addition to existing Irish-language instruction, for those interested in learning or improving their Arabic before a refugee family arrives in the next few weeks. A few islanders have already begun learning.

The community is currently raising money to help support the newcomer family, and are hoping that the family will bring young children to the island to increase the local school's population. "We are trying to do everything we can to keep the prospects for this island's future as bright as possible. But apart from that we are also delighted to be able to play a role in a wider global humanitarian crisis from the shores of this small Cork island," said Mary O'Driscoll,

one of the members of the community sponsorship committee. "The support among islanders has been brilliant."

The first refugees from Moria have arrived in Augsburg, Germany



The city of **Augsburg** in Germany has welcomed two more refugees through the community sponsorship program, "New Start in Team" (NesT), which is aimed at refugees who are particularly in need of protection. The mentors in Augsburg had declared their readiness at the end of 2019, but COVID-19 delayed arrivals. The NesT program offers numerous local points of contact to help support refugees when they first arrive in Germany. Three more refugees are scheduled to arrive in Augsburg in the near future.

Community effort to house refugee family in Waltham Forest, UK

Thanks to the work of the dedicated community in Waltham Forest, a family of Syrian refugees will find a new home there at the end of February. The family have been living in Lebanon since they fled the city of Aleppo in 2012.

The **Waltham Forest Community Sponsorship Partnership** (WFCSP) raised the necessary funds to support the family of five through strong community engagement. "People have been extremely generous," said Iftakhar Latif. "We felt that this was a project that would bring the

wider community together ... We have teachers ... accountants and people from all sorts of different backgrounds involved." The family's rent will be paid by WFCSP for two years and the partnership will support them in learning English and getting settled during their first 12 months.

WFCSP was established three years ago by the Waltham Forest Council of Mosques and Leyton Sixth Form College, and hopes to support more refugees in the future.

Check out the [Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative on Twitter!](#)
Follow [@theGRSI](#) on Twitter for more updates on [#communitysponsorship](#)

New Zealand Refugee Sponsor Hub of South West Baptist Church launches Kiwis Welcome Refugees website

The New Zealand Refugee Sponsor Hub has launched a new site named [Kiwis Welcome Refugees](#). The New Zealand Refugee Sponsor Hub is an initiative of the South West Baptist Church of Christchurch, one of New Zealand's first four community groups that welcomed refugees through New Zealand's pilot programme in mid-2018. The website [Kiwis Welcome Refugees](#) is designed to support New Zealanders in welcoming refugees into their communities. The site currently has a timeline of refugee sponsorship in New Zealand, links to the Canadian and UK programs, and frequently asked questions.

Welcoming the Stranger to Canada Survey 2021

The Environics Institute is partnering with [Refugee613](#), an Ottawa-based refugee settlement organization, to conduct a [national market study](#) of refugee private sponsorship. The research looks to identify segments of Canadian society that may be interested in sponsorship, and who have the capacity to become sponsors.

The goal of this research is to help provide insights to guide new initiatives to promote the Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) sponsorship program and support recruitment

of new sponsors. The BVOR program allows Canadians to support the resettlement of vulnerable refugees, with whom they have no prior connection. This sponsorship stream was established in 2013 to help "welcome the stranger".

The results of this project will be published in May 2021.

Human rights organization launches new initiative in Limerick to support refugee families

Doras, the migration support and human rights organization in Limerick has become a [Regional Support Office](#) in Ireland's Community Sponsorship Scheme to help support sponsorship groups. "Community sponsorship is proven to have positive outcomes," says John Lannon, CEO of Doras. "Community sponsorship is unique in that it provides a special and powerful bond between the community and the refugees themselves." Doras is encouraging members of the community to get involved, and recently held an information webinar on February 22 to help people learn more about the initiative. Read the article [here](#).

ANNOUNCEMENT: The GRSI has developed a policy workbook, intended to help with the development of community sponsorship policies. Find out more [here!](#)

What is GRSI?

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is a partnership of six organizations – the Government of Canada, UNHCR, Open Society Foundations, the Giustra Foundation, The Shapiro 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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