

GLOBAL REFUGEE SPONSORSHIP INITIATIVE

GRSI AT A GLANCE

Six Countries Release Joint Statement Endorsing Community Refugee Sponsorship

On 16 July 2018, ministers from Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Argentina, Spain and New Zealand issued a [joint statement](#) underlining their support for community-based refugee sponsorship. Released in advance of the 2018 United Nations General Assembly and agreement on the Global Compact on Refugees, the statement demonstrates the promise of community-based refugee sponsorship as an innovative approach to refugee resettlement and a powerful way to bring communities together.

In the statement, the ministers committed to piloting or implementing community-based refugee sponsorship programs in their home countries as part of their response to the global refugee crisis. They emphasized the importance for states to share responsibility for refugees and called for others to join them in the growing cohort of states welcoming refugees through community-based refugee sponsorship.



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Following

A big step forward today in [#London](#) as our collective efforts are resulting in the development of new refugee community sponsorship programs around the globe & agreement on the global compact on migration.

Of particular significance, Spain used the statement as an opportunity to announce its new community-based refugee sponsorship pilot program. Spain's State Secretary for Migration, Ms. Consuelo Rumí Ibáñez, noted: "This programme presents not only the chance to strengthen resettlement and refugee integration in Spain, but also a unique opportunity to advance coordination among central, regional and local authorities to welcome refugees." The ministers also highlighted the importance of governments working in partnership with civil society to advance community-based refugee sponsorship, as well as the direct role ordinary people and communities play in resettlement by providing integration and emotional support to sponsored refugees.

News of the joint statement was warmly welcomed by the GRSI leadership and the international community. In a [blog post](#), GRSI Chair Jennifer Bond and OSF International Migration Initiative Program Director Gregory Maniatis

applauded the six countries for committing to an approach to refugee resettlement where communities are at the helm. GRSI partners and affiliates promoted the news widely on [social media](#), and others responded with press releases.



UNHCR Canada
@UNHCRCanada

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Thank you to:



for rallying together in support of community-based sponsorship programs ([#GRSI](#)) + to encourage responsibility sharing to find [#resettlement](#) solutions.

In one [release](#), Amnesty International New Zealand praised its government's efforts on community sponsorship: "The New Zealand Government should be applauded for being part of this innovative programme that is flourishing globally."

Alongside a full roster of sponsorship-related events scheduled for the coming months across numerous countries, this statement demonstrates obvious global momentum around community-based refugee sponsorship. It will serve as an important inspiration to other countries and communities to join the growing global community advancing the sponsorship model to foster welcoming communities and better and quicker integration outcomes for refugees.



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Following

Ministers of 6 counties on global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative. An initiative of [@RadcliffeFdn](#) in partnership with Government of Canada, [@OpenSociety](#), [@RefugeesMedia](#) and University of Ottawa



Joint Statement - Ministers from Canada, the United Kingdo...
LONDON, July 16, 2018 /CNW/ - - We, Ministers responsible for Immigration in our respective countries, are...
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GRSI update

ATCR meeting in Geneva

GRSI chairperson Jennifer Bond participated in the UNHCR's Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) on June 25 and 26. Professor Bond served as a panelist for a plenary discussion on how to safeguard resettlement as a protection tool and durable solution for refugees. She also moderated a break-out session where participants discussed how non-traditional actors, such as think tanks, research institutions and the private sector, can support governments to expand their resettlement programs.

Promoting community sponsorship in Poland

On June 27 the Canadian Embassy in Warsaw held a workshop on the potential for community-based refugee sponsorship in Poland. The roundtable event was attended by representatives of the UNHCR, the IOM, the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights, and the Center for Social Communication of Warsaw City Hall.

Sponsor training in Argentina

GRSI teamed up with the Canadian Embassy and UNHCR to organize a three-day workshop for Argentine community groups that are sponsoring refugees. Held in Buenos Aires (July 10 and 11) and Córdoba (July 12), the training focused on topics such as identifying responsibilities, fundraising, budgeting, and communications. The sessions were led by Lucila Spigelblatt (Deputy Executive Director, [Catholic Centre for Immigration Ottawa](#)) and Kaylee Perez (Refugee Sponsorship and Settlement Associate, [Mennonite Central Committee Ontario](#)). The workshop followed a webinar for Argentine sponsors hosted on July 5 by the Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) of Toronto.



Sponsor training, Buenos Aires, July 10, 2018

Spanish refugee support group tours Canada

Five members of the *Comisión Española de Ayuda al Refugiado* (CEAR) visited Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal from July 16 to 25 to study Canada's resettlement and asylum systems. The delegation met with representatives of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, the Immigration and Refugee Board, the University of Ottawa Refugee Hub, UNHCR, Amnesty International, and several service provider organizations. They also had the opportunity to hear from Canadian refugee sponsors about their personal sponsorship experiences over lunch in Ottawa. CEAR is a

Spanish NGO that has been assisting refugees, asylum seekers and stateless people since 1979.

Roundtable on complementary pathways in France

The IFRI (*Institut français de relations internationales*) and the ICMC (International Catholic Migration Commission) held a seminar on July 12 in Paris to explore complementary pathways for refugee reception and integration in France. Caroline Guimond, Minister Counsellor (Migration) at the Canadian Embassy in France, highlighted the numerous benefits of Canada's Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program (PSRP), including positive integration outcomes and increased community involvement and awareness.

Community Sponsorship around the World

Transformations – a community sponsorship of refugees in the UK

Daphne Bramham: Putting faces to the millions who desperately need help

How to sponsor a refugee, global refugee situation only worsening

The success of the privately sponsored refugee system

Yarra City Council unanimously passes motion supporting community sponsorship for refugees (AUSTRALIA)

NZ Immigration Minister joins international calls for community-based refugee sponsorship

Lionsgate founder condemns U.S. family separations



What is GRSI?

The Global Refugee Sponsorship Initiative is a partnership of five organizations – the Government of Canada, UNHCR, the Open Society Foundations, the Radcliffe 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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