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Attaining Durability in the European Resettle- ment Regime: The Role of Norms and Values

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Executive Summary

With the rising number of international refugees worldwide in the recent decade, protracted situations of extended exile are becoming increasingly more common. Among them, almost 64,000 persons started their life anew in a third country through UNHCR's resettlement programs in 2019. Furthermore, the 2015 refugee reception crisis in Europe generated increased attention regarding resettlement as a solution for the international protection of refugees among EU policy makers and practitioners. In 2015, the EU commission created a recommendation for a joint European resettlement scheme aiming to resettle 20,000 people in need of international protection and provided financial support to member states who engaged in this. The EU's call for action led to a significant increase in resettlement places and projects developing resettlement systems into permanent pathways for refugee protection.

This report aims to contribute to continued and growing support of resettlement and the humanitarian values it stands for. By considering the norms and values transmitted through the *European resettlement regime*, we ask how to best ensure resettlement's function as a *durable solution* for refugee protection (as intended by the UNHCR). On the one hand, we regard the durability of resettlement as dependent on international law and receiving states granting formal rights (such as citizenship) to those who are resettled. On the other hand, and as is our focus in this report, our research material shows that formal rights are not enough to ensure durability. Rather, durability in resettlement is about making sure that each step of the process is conducive towards resettlement beneficiaries' ability to and opportunities for engaging actively and long-term in the receiving society. This entails to not only be on the receiving end of value transmissions, but also to be able to participate in public debates and in society on their own terms, with a possibility to influence how values are understood in their new place of residence.

The research material analysed in this report reflects ideas and practices of different actors within the *European resettlement regime*. This regime encompasses the actors and processes of resettlement to different member states – from selection in first countries of asylum to the reception of resettlement beneficiaries and their integration in receiving municipalities. Our material consists of interviews and participant observation with actors involved in all steps of resettlement to Germany and Sweden, and from local and international organizations in countries of first asylum (Lebanon and Turkey), as well as comparative insights from the USA.

Based on the best practices observed in our material we provide recommendations that we deem conducive to a more holistic and humanitarian approach to resettlement. These best practices and recommendations include:

- ◆ Creating spaces and opportunities for building resettlement beneficiaries' agency throughout the regime.
- ◆ Streamlining communication, information, and strategies between pre-departure and post-arrival efforts.
- ◆ Targeting children's needs directly by including their direct input regarding resettlement and integration processes that concern them.

- ◆ Relying on local and international expertise, and the collaboration between them, to develop strategies and actions within the resettlement regime.
- ◆ Employing people with relevant personal experiences, linguistic and cultural knowledge as integration and resettlement workers to enhance communication and trust in the system.
- ◆ Actively involving the public and civil society in integration and resettlement processes through, for instance, community sponsorship.
- ◆ Funding continuous research on resettlement to monitor the European resettlement regime's development and to identify shortcomings and new best practices.
- ◆ Applying a long term and holistic approach to integration and thereby build different actors' trust in the resettlement system and receiving state and foster a sustainable receiving society.

Ultimately this report argues for centring durability in the different processes of resettlement as a way for the EU to commit to the humanitarian values at the core of international refugee protection.

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Abstract

Resettlement is a tool for the international protection of refugees which has received increased attention by the EU and member states in the wake of the 2015 refugee reception crisis. This report asks how to best ensure that resettlement functions as a *durable solution* for refugee protection, as is intended by the UNHCR. Here we consider ideas, practices, and actors within the *European resettlement regime* – from selection in first countries of asylum to the reception of resettlement beneficiaries and their integration in receiving municipalities. Our analysis is based on interviews and participant observation with actors involved in all steps of resettlement to Germany and Sweden, and from local and international organizations in countries of first asylum (Lebanon and Turkey), as well as comparative insights from the USA. Based on the best practices observed in our research material we provide recommendations that we deem conducive to a more holistic and humanitarian approach to resettlement. This includes facilitating spaces for resettlement beneficiaries' agency throughout the regime, for 'eye-level' encounters of mutual respect between the actors involved, and for thinking long-term and holistically about integration as an intrinsic part of resettlement. Ultimately, we argue that centring durability in the different processes of resettlement can serve as a way for the EU to commit to the humanitarian values at the core of international refugee protection.

Introduction

In the end it is about refugee protection, it is about solidarity between states and resettlement is in my opinion an important component. – (UNHCR representative Germany)

It is about agency and the first step is listening to the beneficiaries. – (Programme officer, resettlement and family reunification, IOM Finland)

Resettlement is one of three *durable solutions* for the international protection of refugees put forth by the United Nations Refugee Agency (henceforth the UNHCR).² It is a system in which internationally displaced refugees are selected from countries of first asylum for direct settlement in third countries. Prior to settling in the receiving states, resettlement is orchestrated mainly through international organizations such as UNHCR and IOM (International Organization for Migration). Although the motivation for states to participate in resettlement may differ, it is regarded by many as a humanitarian pathway and instrument of global solidarity to deal with the growing number of people displaced by conflict, wars, and natural disasters across the world and the increased pressure on countries of first asylum (usually in the Global South) to receive them.³

In the wake of the refugee reception crisis⁴ in 2015 resettlement has garnered increased attention among EU policy makers and practitioners. To promote resettlement as a response to the crisis, the EU commission created a recommendation for a joint European resettlement scheme aiming to resettle 20,000 people in need of international protection in 2015 and provided financial support to member states who engaged in it.⁵ Some EU member states, such as Denmark, Ireland, Finland, the Netherlands, and Sweden already had a long history of resettlement of refugees, while others, such as Germany and Belgium, have just recently joined the ranks of resettlement countries.⁶ The EU's call for action led to a significant increase in resettlement places and projects developing resettlement systems into permanent pathways for refugee protection.

In light of Europe's increasing pursuit of resettlement as a tool for refugee reception, this report asks: How do we ensure that resettlement functions as a *durable solution* for the international protection of refugees? And which ideas, practices, and actors are relevant to this work?

To answer these questions, we investigate what we call the *European resettlement regime*. This is a system that consists of the different actors that are involved in resettlement to Europe and the steps

² The other two durable solutions are local integration or repatriation.

³ For some states, the possibility of migration governance may be the convincing factor rather than the humanitarian aim, for a detailed discussion see N. Hashimoto, 'Refugee Resettlement as an Alternative to Asylum'. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 37, 2 (2018) 162-186.

⁴ By refugee reception crisis we are referring to the arrival of hundreds of thousands of displaced people in the EU in 2015 and the political turmoil in its aftermath, such as the EU's reception policies and border management, which has increased this humanitarian crisis further. Refugees are not the crisis; the lack of protection is.

⁵ European Commission, *Commission recommendation of 8.6.2015 on a European resettlement scheme*. C(2015) 3560 final (Brussels: European Commission, 2015).

⁶ For a more detailed history of resettlement to Europe see A. Krasniqi & B. Suter, 'Refugee Resettlement to Europe 1950-2014: An Overview of Humanitarian Politics and Practices', *MIM Working Paper Series*, 15, 1, Malmö University, (2015).

involved in making this happen – from selection in first countries of asylum to the reception of resettlement beneficiaries and their integration in receiving municipalities. We draw on research material from different geographical contexts: we have interviewed actors involved in all steps in resettlement to Germany and Sweden and we have done fieldwork with actors working in local and international organizations in countries of first asylum (Lebanon and Turkey). Moreover, we draw on the expertise and material of our colleague and USA resettlement expert,⁷ which supplies a valuable comparative point. These different empirical contexts serve as entry points to our discussion of value transmission in the resettlement regime, and to develop policy recommendations based on the best practices observed in our material.

When presenting the material, we highlight *norms and values* that are present in this regime in order to examine how they come to matter for the overall *external transmission of European norms and values*, meaning the values that the EU transmits beyond its borders. Resettlement is introduced by the EU as a humanitarian solution and so examining the extent to which the norms and values transmitted in each step of the process are indeed humanitarian is relevant to assessing the viability of resettlement as a durable solution. Values and norms impact all aspects of social interaction, including political processes, and so they are also key in resettlement.⁸ In this report, we consider how values and norms are transmitted directly through information and training given to refugees through e.g., pre-departure orientation programmes, but also how norms and values indirectly inform practices and actors' views and decisions within the resettlement regime. In other words, we observe how norms and values are transmitted from actor to actor through different forms of actions, practices, and communication.

The starting point for our investigation is an ambition to contribute to continued and growing support of resettlement and the humanitarian values it stands for. As we have seen in our research material, the EU's fundamental norms and values – mainly the respect and protection of human dignity and human rights – are interpreted in strongly diverging and even contradictory ways within the various member states with regard to the treatment of refugees.⁹ To ensure that resettlement be, in fact, a *durable solution* for the international protection of refugees, it matters if and how these humanitarian values are practiced throughout the regime. On the one hand, we regard the durability of resettlement as dependent on international law and receiving states granting formal rights (such as citizenship) to those who are resettled. On the other hand, and as is our focus in this report, our material shows that formal rights are not enough to ensure durability. Rather, durability in resettlement is about ensuring that each step of the process is conducive towards resettlement beneficiaries' ability to and opportunities for engaging actively and long-term in the receiving society. This entails to not only be on the receiving end of value transmissions, but also to be able to participate in public debates and in society on their own terms, with a possibility to influence how values are understood in their new place of residence.

⁷ Galya Ben-Arieh, Northwestern University, USA.

⁸ For a more detailed discussion on values in European policy making, see A. Dimitriadi & H. Malamidis, 'Talking of Values: Understanding the Normative Discourse of EU Migration Policy', NOVAMIGRA, Deliverable D2.1, (2019).

⁹ A. Facchi et al., *Values in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights – A Legal-Philosophical Analysis with a Focus on Migrants' Rights*, (Torino: G. Giappichelli Editore, 2019); M. Göbel, *Toward a Cosmopolitan Europe: Normative Requirements for EU Refugee Policy in the Light of Empirical Possibilities and Constraints*, NOVAMIGRA, Policy Research Alert No.8 (D4.2), 2020.

As our analysis will reflect, durability goes hand in hand with what we call a holistic approach to integration. Achieving durability in resettlement thus means considering all parts of the regime: the country of first asylum; the receiving state and society; and the refugees themselves and the lives that are made possible for them through the resettlement system. Through a *regime analysis*¹⁰ we examine processes taking place both internally and externally of European borders and seek to understand how implicit and explicit transmissions of norms and values shape the resettlement process both prior to and after refugees arrive in Europe. Ultimately, we supply the reader with recommendations based on the best practices observed in our research material that we deem conducive to a more holistic and humanitarian approach to resettlement.

Our research has been done within the Horizon 2020-funded project Norms and Values in the European Migration and Refugee Crisis (NOVAMIGRA), which asks whether and how the large arrival of asylum seekers in 2015 has had an impact on European norms and values. This report builds on an internal deliverable from the same project, where we provided a literature review of studies regarding value transmissions taking place within the European resettlement program; contextualizing where in the European resettlement system values are found and transmitted and in which way and to what extent resettlement represents the external dimension of EU value transmission.¹¹ Our main arguments in this report align with key findings from the NOVAMIGRA project, particularly the project's recommendation of steering the EU towards a more cosmopolitan future by anchoring the union's development in a moral commitment to humanitarian values.¹² Resettlement durability is an important tool through which Europe can commit to these values.

The report is structured as follows: the background section gives an overview of what resettlement entails. It is followed by a brief discussion of our methodology before we present the analysis of our material in two (chronological) sections: pre-departure and post-arrival to Europe. We follow up our analysis with a discussion of our material and findings vis-à-vis material and insights from our project partner in the USA, and we conclude with a section presenting the best practices and policy recommendations we have found through this investigation.

¹⁰ For more detail on the methodology of a regime analysis see, F. Böhm et al., 'Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement. A Literature Review of Resettlement to the EU', *Current Themes in International Migration and Ethnic Relations*, Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare (MIM) publication series, (2020).

¹¹ A version of this internal deliverable has been made available as, Böhm et al. 'Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement. A Literature Review of Resettlement to the EU', Malmö Institute for Studies of Migration, Diversity and Welfare's (MIM) publication series, *Current Themes in International Migration and Ethnic Relations*.

¹² NoVaMigra (Norms and Values in the European Migration and Refugee Crisis), *Norms and Values in the European Migration and Refugee Crisis: Final Report*, (Essen: University of Duisburg-Essen, 2021).

Background: Resettlement as a Durable Solution

We do think that this work is enormously important, because we really do reach... not always, but in many cases... the most vulnerable refugees. But then again, the places [available in Sweden] don't go a long way. 1.4 million refugees who are in need of resettlement and we only provide the opportunity for 5000 people to come here [to Sweden], so... It's not many [individuals], but it is still a signal – both to refugees out in the world and to the countries of first asylum that have a lot of refugees. We do relieve their systems with only a few individuals, but I think it is still better than nothing.

The quote above is from an operational expert in the Swedish Migration Agency. It reflects the central position of the notion of vulnerability within the global resettlement regime.¹³ It also reflects one of the primary challenges when it comes to resettlement, namely the discord between the number of available placements in receiving states and the vast number of people in need of a permanent solution to their refugee situation.

With the rising number of international refugees worldwide in the recent decade, protracted situations of extended exile are becoming increasingly more common. Among the 79.5 million displaced people by the end of 2020, 26 million of them fall under UNHCR's mandate. Of them almost 64,000 persons were able to start their life anew in a third country through UNHCR's resettlement programs in 2019.¹⁴ Still, the number of people in need of resettlement places is steadily increasing and reached 1,445,383¹⁵ individuals for 2021.¹⁶ For context, only 4.5 percent of global resettlement needs were met in 2019, meaning that resettlement entails continuous prioritising, both when it comes to selection and to the allocation of resources.¹⁷ Durable protection through resettlement is thus only afforded to a fraction of all forcibly displaced people.

UNHCR's aim is to protect refugees, who are defined as such by fulfilling the UNHCR's criteria for vulnerability.¹⁸ Resettlement in particular aims to protect those *most in need*¹⁹ and thus cannot be a protection solution that can be offered to everyone who classifies as a refugee. On the contrary, UNHCR emphasizes that unlike the right of refugee status determination, resettlement is not anchored in international law. Considering the extreme imbalance between the number of resettlement places that member states offer and the number of vulnerable people across the world in need of placement is central to understand the importance of ensuring durability within the European resettlement regime.

As one of UNHCR's three *durable solutions* to refugee protection, resettlement fulfils three main functions: (1) it is a tool for international protection of individuals whose fundamental rights are at risk,

¹³ In our previous research report on resettlement the notion of vulnerability was found to hold a central position in the debate and system of resettlement, Böhm et al., 'Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement'.

¹⁴ UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, (2020).

¹⁵ In comparison to 1,440,408 individuals in 2020, UNHCR, *Resettlement Data Finder*, (2020).

¹⁶ UNHCR, *UNHCR Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2021* (Geneva: UNHCR Resettlement and Complementary Pathways Service, 2021).

¹⁷ UNHCR, *Projected Global Resettlement Needs 2021*.

¹⁸ See page 17 for a further discussion of this notion.

¹⁹ See the link here for UNHCR's criteria for resettlement: <https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/protection/resettlement/4a2ccf4c6/unhcr-resettlement-handbook-country-chapters.html>.

(2) it is a durable solution for protecting groups of refugees, and (3) it is a tangible expression of international solidarity and responsibility sharing of refugee protection.²⁰ Resettlement differs from the two other solutions – repatriation and local integration – in that it is ‘no legal obligation’.²¹ As such, it depends on political and popular support by receiving states and their constituents. Safeguarding that resettlement functions as a system, and that the process does, indeed, offer refugees possibilities for leading meaningful lives in receiving communities where they are welcome and that can thrive *with* them, is thus fundamental to resettlement’s durability as a protection measure for refugees. At the same time, for those that are *the most vulnerable* resettlement is indispensable, as the other two durable solutions – repatriation and local integration – are often not feasible.

Resettlement countries offer refuge to particularly vulnerable people in need of further protection which cannot be fulfilled in their countries of first asylum. In Box 1 and 2 we offer snapshots of the situation on the ground informed by fieldwork done in two such countries – Turkey and Lebanon. These insights from the field illustrate in which circumstances resettlement becomes essential and underline the overwhelming need for a global increase in resettlement spaces.²²

Turkey and Lebanon have experienced a continuous and dramatic flow of forcibly displaced people and are two of the main sending countries for resettlement to Europe. In both countries, civil society organizations and NGOs provide support to refugees, ranging from essential

BOX 1: A snapshot from Lebanon and Turkey: the lack of durability in countries of first asylum

‘The government framed them as guests, and guests should leave, and the public has not seen that happening’ – Turkish NGO representative

At the beginning of the conflict in Syria, around 2011, in Turkey and Lebanon, the public was welcoming, but with the protracted crisis and the continuing influx of people, little support from the outside and internal political, economic, and social challenges, they increasingly see refugees as a burden. The current situation for refugees in both countries is still characterised by unstable conditions, insufficient integration services, difficult access to education and the labour market, and adversity and discrimination in the communities and society at large.

‘There is no sense of security, there are no jobs, everyone is working illegally, for much less than Turks, it’s hard to make a life’ – Cofounder of a community centre in Turkey.

Turkey has not ratified the 1951 Geneva convention and does not perceive of Syrians in Turkey as ‘refugees’ in the legal sense. Turkey has no legal obligation to protect refugees and as a result, a central issue for refugees in Turkey is their special status of protection. It can be withdrawn at any time and this makes many Syrians in Turkey feel as if they live in limbo. In the interviews, it was indicated that the situation is getting worse – that many people experience discrimination, which occasionally turn into violence. According to a member of an NGO, LGBTQ+ individuals experience discrimination and ‘while they wait for the final decision and the whole [resettlement] process to be carried out, they are placed in locations that are very similar to the surroundings they had to flee from’.

²⁰ M. Piper et al., ‘Refugee resettlement: 2012 and beyond’, *New Issues in Refugee Research*, 253, (Geneva: UNHCR, 2013).

²¹ Hashimoto, ‘Refugee Resettlement’, 163.

²² The situation of refugees in Turkey and Lebanon has been widely discussed in the literature e.g., A. Makovsky, ‘Turkey’s Refugee Dilemma. Tiptoeing Toward Integration’, *Center for American Progress*, 13 March 2019; Ç. Bozdağ, ‘Bottom-up nationalism and discrimination on social media: An analysis of the citizenship debate about refugees in Turkey’, *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 23, 5 (2020), 712-730.

services in refugee camps to education programmes and specific integration support in communities. The high numbers of refugees received in Turkey and Lebanon compared to the EU is partly what makes the situation in first countries of asylum difficult.²³ The responsibility to cope with these huge numbers of displaced people cannot lie with the neighbouring states alone. Our research material indicates that the situation for refugees, for instance in urban metropolises like Istanbul and Beirut, is not conducive to a durable solution of local integration for all refugees. The protracted crisis situation in both Turkey and Lebanon has had a severe impact on the countries' economies and political stability. Moreover, the sheer number of people who are living in precarious situations and in migratory limbo is a testament to the importance of resettlement.

BOX 2: Civil society providing solidarity on the ground in Turkey and Lebanon

NGOs and civil society organizations in both Turkey and Lebanon are continuously responding to what they regard as a 'permanent crisis'. In both countries, we encountered different civil society organisations and NGOs supporting refugees; some of them provide support to refugees during their asylum applications and act as intermediaries for UNHCR, whereas others provide services that help them on the ground. Some of these organizations are:

- Centres providing Turkish, as well as English, and German language courses and vocational training to Syrian refugees.
- A self-proclaimed community centre aimed at families with children that are new in communities in Turkey.
- An organization that creates spaces for sharing experiences, mutual support, and support to other marginalized groups.
- An organization helping children through educational drama productions in Beirut and in refugee camps across Lebanon.

'We gather kids and show them that there is always hope, there is love, there are always people who want to help them.' – Representative of an organization working with refugee children in Lebanon

'I think the most important thing that we do here is we provide community. When people start feeling they are part of a community it helps them a lot' – Cofounder of a community centre in Turkey

NGOs in both countries thus work on creating lasting solutions by bringing communities together, so that refugees and locals get to know each other. However, they report feeling abandoned by the state and overwhelmed at the prospect of the task at hand. In our interview, the founder and head of an NGO in Istanbul exclaimed that: 'these are 3.5 million people. I am not sure NGOs can do much because of the scale'. Moreover, much of the humanitarian and civil society sector in both countries rely on international funding and thus depend on what their donors want instead of implementing their own projects that are tailored to the particular needs of their community. So, although the crisis seems permanent, NGOs struggle with creating long term practices because there are no clear future-oriented policies by the government on how to deal with refugees staying in either Turkey or Lebanon.

²³ According to UNHCR data from 2020, Lebanon hosts the largest number of refugees per capita in the world, 865,531 registered Syrian refugees in the country and 15,800 refugees of other origins. Comparably, Turkey hosts the world's largest refugee population with 3.6 million Syrians and close to 330,000 refugees and asylum seekers of other nationalities, cf. UNHCR, *Fact sheet Turkey*, March 2021; UNHCR, Lebanon: *Fact Sheet*, January 2021. Ç. Bozdağ, 'Bottom-up nationalism and discrimination on social media: An analysis of the citizenship debate about refugees in Turkey', *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 23, 5 (2020), 712-730.

Resettlement to Europe: recent developments

Europe only became a major actor in resettlement in early 2000. Since then, the EU – with the Commission as the driving force – has continuously expressed its political aim to step up its resettlement efforts, and the refugee reception crisis of 2015 has accelerated the development towards increasing the number of resettlement places in EU countries.²⁴ For a long time, the USA (together with Canada and Australia) has been the country to accept the largest number of resettled refugees.²⁵ The US resettlement program has seen many changes in policy over the years despite it being strongly institutionalized.²⁶ Observing the ebbs and flows of different approaches within the US system, can provide important lessons for the EU's currently developing resettlement regime. In the New Pact on Asylum and Migration, the EU calls for an increase in the number of resettlement places in the EU.²⁷ Additionally, member states are encouraged to introduce community sponsorship for resettlement in collaboration with civil society, inspired by the sponsorship programs we can observe in the US and Canada.

Importantly, the current pandemic has also had a severe impact on migration in general, and resettlement efforts specifically. The COVID-19 pandemic has rendered evident the global economy's dependence on both migrants (as, e.g., workforce) and open borders (for, e.g., commerce). At the same time, the pandemic has led to severe disruptions of resettlement programmes. For several months during 2020 resettlement reception was shut down in most receiving states, including Sweden and Germany. Most resettlement programs are again functioning and the majority of actors – EU, state, and civil society – have recognized the need to prioritise the continued functioning of refugee reception and protection schemes even during crisis situations (if not especially then) to counteract unequal effects of crises on already vulnerable people.²⁸

Steps and key players in the international resettlement regime

The process of resettlement to Europe consists of a series of steps. These steps constitute encounters between different actors in the resettlement regime, and they are moments where norms and values become salient in different ways. As a rule, the steps are as follows:

- receiving states' selection of refugees to be resettled:

Geographically, this takes place in third countries, sometimes in refugee camps but also in urban areas. Selection is based on UNHCR's expanded interpretation of the 1951 Refugee Convention's definition of what a refugee is – a person deemed vulnerable for persecution – and,

²⁴ For a detailed account of the development of the EU resettlement system see, Böhm et al., 'Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement'.

²⁵ For a broader overview of the development of refugee resettlement see Krasniqi & Suter, 'Refugee Resettlement to Europe'. Also, the Trump administration has brought resettlement to the US to an all-time low: in 2019 only 30,000 refugees were resettled to the US, data from: Refugee Processing Center, *Admissions and Arrivals* (2020).

²⁶ A detailed account of the history of US resettlement can be found in R.E. Wasem, 'More than a Wall: The Rise and Fall of US Asylum and Refugee Policy', *Journal on Migration and Human Security*, 8, 3 (2020), 1-20; S. Martin, 'Rebuilding the US Refugee Resettlement Program', *Center for Migration Studies, Essays* 26 August 2020.

²⁷ European Commission, *New Pact on Migration and Asylum: A fresh start on migration in Europe*, September 2020, 2-5.

²⁸ According to a resettlement specialist at IOM Finland (covering Finland, Iceland and Sweden), this refers particularly to states managing their border closures during the recent Covid 19 pandemic (also in line with the European Commission's Communication C(2020) 2516 final, section 2, available online: <https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/default/files/guidance-implementation-eu-provisions-asylum-retur-procedures-resettlement.pdf>), in which refugees should be considered within the exemption categories for continued mobility and safeguarding practices have to be established to ensure their physical safety during the process.

to a varying degree, selection criteria from different receiving states. UNHCR determines refugee status and develops a dossier for a potential resettlement beneficiary which in turn is evaluated and decided on by the possible receiving state's representatives (either through selection missions to the third country or based on the dossier).

- the information and training resettlement beneficiaries receive prior to travelling to their new country of residence, through **pre-departure orientation**:

Organized either directly by receiving states or through third party organizations, such as IOM. Such orientation aims to prepare refugees for their new lives and informs them about economic, social, and practical issues of their new place of residence, as well as practical issues regarding their travel to the receiving country.

- refugees' **reception** upon arrival and their **integration** in the receiving society:

Organized by receiving states in very different ways depending on the country in question. Sometimes beneficiaries are placed directly in their receiving municipalities across the country (Sweden), while in other cases they pass through centralized reception centres (Germany).

- additionally, some receiving states employ programs of **community sponsorship** to promote both higher numbers of resettlement and better integration.

In our analysis we engage analytically with these different steps in order to understand how norms and values come to matter in each of them in relation to ensuring a durable solution of refugee protection. The research material we present below hence further elucidates the different ways in which these steps are organized according to practices and policies of the reception countries and presents best practice experiences within the regime. However, before we turn to our analysis, we present the methodology employed to gather the material for this study.

Methodology: Understanding the External Transmission of Values from an Ethnographic Regime Perspective

To discern how resettlement can be a durable solution, it is important to investigate the multiple and interlinked processes on different levels that produce this solution. As implied above, central to comprehending value transmission in any context is to contemplate that values and norms are always transmitted from somewhere/someone to somewhere/someone. Transmission is about forms of communication, with its intrinsic power relations between the actors who communicate.²⁹ The analysis we present below approaches the European resettlement system as a *regime*.³⁰ The regime of resettlement to Europe consists of various actors (states, institutions, organizations, and individuals) through which values and norms are conveyed, negotiated, and transmitted. In our previous desk study and literature analysis, we identified the relevant ideas, practices and actors that constitute the European resettlement regime.³¹

Geographical contexts

What we present in this report is an in-depth analysis of the norms and value transmissions taking place, implicitly and explicitly, in the process of resettlement with end destination in Germany and Sweden. The two countries serve as illustrating cases of resettlement to Europe. **Germany** has the highest reception place pledges in Europe and increased their resettlement numbers to 5,000 places in 2020, while immigration and asylum numbers remain high. Germany has a role model function for other EU member states engaging in resettlement and introduced a pilot programme for community sponsorship in 2019 to resettle an additional 500 people with a civil society led project to provide additional integration support. **Sweden** has a long history with resettlement and developed national programs early on. Sweden pledges high reception numbers (in relation to population size) and is in the process of implementing a community sponsorship approach and a new pre-departure orientation programme. The country increased its yearly quota from roughly 1,900 places prior to 2015, to 3,400 in 2017, and 5,000 annually in the years thereafter.

In addition to the material from these two cases, we interviewed international actors, IOM, UNHCR, and ICMC (International Catholic Migration Commission), who are central for the organization and operation of resettlement before arrival to Europe. Moreover, we follow up our analysis with a discussion of our findings with material and insights from our project partner in the USA. As the protection of refugees is a global challenge, its solution must also be. Our research, limited to the context of the EU, can benefit from the experiences made with resettlement in the USA. Resettlement to the USA functions in a political system that stands in contrast to the welfare states of Germany and Sweden, hence

²⁹ In a report on gender equality in everyday integration work, we presented the multi-faceted role of integration workers for value transmission by reflecting on their positionalities, beliefs, and experiences, as well as the context in which they work. One finding was that the positionality of the integration worker matters for which and how norms and values are transmitted, Suter et al., 'Valuing Gender Equality: Ideas, Practices and Actors in Everyday Integration Work – Integration and the Value of Gender Equality in Germany, Hungary, Poland and Sweden', *NOVAMIGRA Briefing Paper*, D3.3c (2020).

³⁰ A regime is here understood as consisting of 'principles, norms, rules and decision-making procedures' and as something that is 'defined as institutionalized forms of behaviour in the handling of conflict that are guided by norms and rules' V. Tsianos & S. Karakayali, 'Transnational Migration and the Emergence of the European Border Regime: An Ethnographic Analysis', *European Journal of Social Theory*, 13, 3, (2010), 376.

³¹ Böhm et al., 'Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement'.

it proves an interesting external perspective to discuss our findings. The information and experiences with resettlement in the USA are contributed by our colleague Galya Ben-Arieh, who has done extensive research on the impacts and outcomes of refugee resettlement in the USA. She took part in discussion sessions with our team in which we exchanged and compared findings and insights from the respective contexts.

Collecting material: doing fieldwork in and beyond Europe in pandemic times

We approach the cases above through an ethnographic regime analysis.³² Ethnographic research commonly entails interacting and communicating with actors both formally and informally, undertaking participant observations, and ‘advanced hanging out’.³³ The collection of the material has been influenced by the ongoing pandemic and reorganized accordingly with a stronger focus on digital encounters with relevant actors. Still, the fieldwork and analysis are characterised by a strong ethnographic component, as we emphasise a holistic approach of the regime under study. This means attempting to understand each component at hand in relationship to a larger whole to both grasp its place within the European resettlement regime, to gain knowledge on the norms and values that permeate and govern the regime, and how each component functions as part of an overall durable solution for refugee protection.

The Polish team of the project collected material in countries of first asylum through in-depth interviews with representatives of organizations involved in resettlement in Lebanon and Turkey, along with participant observation and interviews with local and international NGOs in Istanbul, Turkey and Beirut, Lebanon. The material on the systems of resettlement in Germany and Sweden was collected through mainly digital semi-structured interviews with German, Swedish, and international stakeholders and partaking in formal digital meetings, conferences, national stakeholder meetings with state and non-state actors. In addition, the Swedish team engaged in participant observations among stakeholders at conferences and national meetings in Sweden, as well as visits to reception sites in Germany.

We have conducted 74 interviews with actors within the EU resettlement regime. Interviewees include 21 in Turkey and 20 in Lebanon; in Germany we interviewed 7 representatives of civil society and state institutions, such as BAMF (German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees), Caritas, Red Cross, protestant Church, local NGOs, and UNHCR; 23 of civil society and state institutions in Sweden, including SMA, UNHCR, municipal representatives, local NGOs and study associations; and 3 with intergovernmental organisations on the EU level, including IOM. Most interviews were recorded and transcribed and are quoted directly in the analysis of our material below. Quotes from interviews done in either Swedish or German have been translated by the authors, and all material has been anonymized.

³² An ethnographic regime analysis (or ERA approach) implies ‘tracing the way in which the different actors, discourses or technologies [create] new webs and relations of power’, Tsianos & Karakayali, ‘Transnational Migration’, 375.

³³ A. Gottlieb, ‘Ethnographic methods: ethnography: theory and methods’, in E. Perecman & S. R. Curran (eds.), *A handbook for social science field research: Essays & bibliographic sources on research design and methods* (SAGE Publications, 2006), 46-84.

Ideas, Practices and Actors of Resettlement to Europe – a Durable Solution?

In this section we present our research material with focus on the experiences and reflections of the actors involved in the different steps of the European resettlement regime. We discuss how the ideas and practices that these examples demonstrate can contribute to ensuring that resettlement be a durable solution for the international protection of refugees.

Analytically, we examine the regime following the above-mentioned steps in the resettlement process. As such, we start by addressing the processes that are external to EU geographical territory, namely the selection process and pre-departure orientation of selected refugees. We then continue to those steps of the regime that take place within the member states. Importantly, however, and as will be discussed below, our research material clearly shows the importance of understanding all steps of the process as part of the same regime – only by approaching resettlement holistically will the regime be able to safeguard the humanitarian values it is established on and member states have committed to. Moreover, complying by these values systematically will arguably ensure durable protection and a dignified life for people who are resettled in Europe, but also aid receiving states in building societies in which all members, including refugees, can fully participate and be self-sufficient.

Pre-departure steps: laying the ground for a durable solution

Selection

Resettlement leads to more protection in first asylum states for more refugees and helps to ease the situation there. As part of UNHCR, the fact that the work aims to help the most vulnerable is a guiding principle in our work. – UNHCR Germany

As mentioned in the background section, the principal selection criteria employed by the UNHCR and most receiving states are to be considered a *refugee* based on the 1951 Refugee Convention's definition and to be deemed *vulnerable*.³⁴ In addition, several receiving states operate with so-called integration criteria when choosing who to accept as new members of society.

BOX 3: UNHCR's resettlement submission categories

- Legal and/or physical protection needs
- Survivors of torture and/or violence
- Medical needs
- Women and girls at risk
- Family reunification
- Children and adolescents at risk
- Lack of foreseeable alternative durable solution

The protection of vulnerable people is thus the explicit goal of resettlement. While it is a complex process – not least because of the extreme imbalance between the number of placements available in receiving states and the number of people in need of resettlement – UNHCR emphasises that it is the

³⁴ UNHCR, *Information on UNHCR Resettlement*, Resettlement in the United States, (2021).

individual, rather than numbers, that is at the centre of the process. According to one UNHCR interviewee in Germany, the organization's focus is to protect the human dignity of the individual. She says, 'the screening that UNHCR does as part of the selection process is extensive, including the family relations, the history of fleeing, and highlighting various vulnerabilities.'

Still, how the criterion of vulnerability is understood varies between different resettlement actors. In practice, vulnerability seldom works alone.³⁵ In fact, embedded in the selection process are frictions between vulnerability as a principle for protection and the perceived potential security threat refugees can pose to receiving states, as well as the potential different individuals have to integrate. These frictions place some individuals at an advantage when it comes to selection, and others at a disadvantage. In other words, while some people – for instance single men – are more likely to be perceived as a security threat, others – like mothers and children – are more likely to be interpreted as vulnerable.³⁶

The criteria employed by receiving states in the selection process vary across the board. Sweden uses no integration criteria in their selection process, while the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) evaluates a person's ability to integrate through a specific set of indicators: degree of schooling and vocational training, professional experience, language skills, religious affiliation, and age. Having existing family ties to Germany is also deemed conducive to integration. These criteria are applied as part of BAMF's evaluation of the selection dossier provided by the UNHCR. Should the individual be deemed eligible 'on paper', their integration potential is assessed further through an interview with BAMF (who do regular selection missions to first countries of asylum) and vetted by the German security agency. However, the content of the criteria is not made explicit to potential resettlement beneficiaries, hence expectations from German officials (as representatives of German state and society) are not communicated to potential new residents at this point.

Like Germany, the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) also carries out selection interviews, although only for around half of the potential beneficiaries. The other half are chosen and selected solely on the basis of information provided in their UNHCR dossiers and by the Swedish Security Police's vetting. The potential resettlement beneficiaries who do undergo an interview by the SMA are, on the one hand, those whose dossiers are deemed lacking in information either by SMA or the Security Police, and, on the other hand, those hailing from specific countries that are classified as more probable to have citizens that pose a security threat to the Swedish state. One interviewee working for the SMA explains:

There are unfortunately specific nationalities that are a bit more difficult than others, from a security perspective – where the Security Police wants us to investigate

³⁵ Böhm et al., 'Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement'.

³⁶ In our previous research report on resettlement, we discuss the intersection of gender with narratives of deservingness and vulnerability and how these contribute to conceptualisations of victimhood and threats, see Böhm et al., 'Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement'. The refugee experience is highly gendered, see A. Kublitz, 'The sound of silence: The reproduction and transformation of global conflicts within Palestinian families in Denmark' in M. Rytter, K. Fog Olwig (eds.), *Mobile Bodies, Mobile Souls: Family, Religion, Migration in a Global World* (Aarhus: Universitetsforlag, 2011), 161-180; as are categorizations of vulnerability and victimhood, see N. Begikhani et al., 'Theorising women and war in Kurdistan: A feminist and critical perspective', *Kurdish Studies*, 6, 1 (2018), 5-30. Western European gender and family norms often mean that women and children are much more likely to be selected for resettlement, especially in comparison to single men cf. L. Turner, 'Who will resettle single Syrian men?', *Forced Migration Review: Resettlement*, Issue 54 (Oxford: Refugee Studies Centre, 2017); N. Welfens & S. Bonjour, 'Families First? The Mobilization of Family Norms in Refugee Resettlement', *International Political Sociology*, 15, 2 (2020), 212-231.

more carefully; obtain more information for them so that they can do a sufficiently good security clearance. [...]. We cannot take them [solely] on their dossier. [While others,] we can take based on the dossier alone.

Moreover, vulnerability is an issue of concern in the Nordic context as well: ‘I mean at least in Sweden and also several of the Nordic countries, people are still open to receiving more refugees, but they want them to be vulnerable’ (Durable solutions associate, UNHCR Sweden).

When it comes to refugees’ ability to influence the selection process, potential beneficiaries do have the choice of whether or not they wish to take part in resettlement and community sponsorship programs. However, an integration practitioner working with safe pathways and reception facilitation as part of a German civil society organisation doubts to what extent the encounter with resettlement state agencies during the selection process allows for agency beyond that, because ‘no matter how hard the German state representatives try to encourage an exchange, in the end they [the refugees] are not in a situation in which they are really in the position to be self-determined’. Hence, the friction between vulnerability and agency is apparent from the beginning of resettlement. When it comes to selection processes and their effect on the durability of resettlement, the emphasis on refugee vulnerability and how this is transferred further into the resettlement regime is an important element, as it can perpetuate an idea of refugees as victims.³⁷ This, in combination with the severe lack of control over the selection procedure, strips refugees of all possible agency at the beginning of the resettlement process. The issue of beneficiaries’ agency is a recurring element in all steps of the resettlement regime.

Pre-departure orientation

Well, we can say that integration starts already before they are resettled, it starts through this PDO which is very much like providing preliminary tentative information and preparing for what is coming ahead, what the integration process entails. So, that they would have realistic expectations and that they would have the correct attitude and willingness for what is coming ahead. – (PDO coordinator, IOM Finland)

Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) – or Cultural Orientation Programs (COPs) – are an important part of most receiving states’ resettlement programs, and central to making resettlement a durable solution.³⁸ PDOs are either organized directly by receiving states or by third party organizations (such as IOM) on their behalf. Our fieldwork with ICMC, EASO (European Asylum Support Office), and IOM in Turkey and Lebanon also underlined the heterogeneity of approaches that different states employ – from information meetings of a couple of hours to training programs of several days. Hence, PDOs are developed to reflect specific local and national circumstances, supplying beneficiaries with specifically tailored

³⁷ Böhm et al., ‘Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement’, 31; C. Mackenzie et al., *Vulnerability: New Essays in Ethics and Feminist Philosophy* (Oxford: University Press, 2013).

³⁸ A. Chindea, *Headstart to Integration: A Global Review of Pre-Departure Support Measures for Migrants* (Budapest: International Organization for Migration, 2015).

information and training to prepare them for living in the place they are heading for. Most European states (including Sweden and Germany) outsource their PDO implementation to IOM.

The aim of PDO is to link ‘the pre-departure phase to post-departure [...], by preparing participants for their introduction in the new country already before the move’,³⁹ and by constructing a solid foundation of knowledge ‘upon which reception and integration services can build’.⁴⁰ To reach this goal, PDOs take various shapes depending on e.g., geographical context, political situation, and economic and other resources of the receiving states.⁴¹ As is conveyed in the interview quote above by an IOM officer in charge of developing PDOs for different countries, a key element of all pre-departure orientation is to ‘manage expectations’. This notion is repeated by several actors throughout the resettlement regime.

One municipal level integration worker from a small town in Sweden told us that one side of expectation management is confronting the rumour mill that exists online and through which refugees hear ostentatious stories and dreadful rumours about (family) life in the future country of residence. For instance, one of the persistent rumours refers to refugee children being taken away by the social services in Sweden or children being forced to move out of their parents’ house at the age of 18. At the same time, utopic expectations can also be transmitted through the same channels, and can set the relationship between newly arrived resettled refugees and the receiving community off on the wrong foot:

We have experienced that some resettled refugees can be disappointed and say, “you brought us here from the refugee camp and we don’t have it better”. So, they think that Sweden is a country of dreams – some think they will be given a house, some think they will be given a job. [...] I mean, they have really high expectations.
– (Municipal integration worker, northern Sweden)

For some years, such expectations – both positive and negative – remained unmet within the Swedish resettlement system, as no PDO was in place other than written information given to resettlement beneficiaries prior to departure. Currently, IOM is in charge of developing and implementing a new Swedish PDO. This development is based on a commissioned evaluation carried out by the Migration Policy Institute (MPI) in Brussels of the needs detected by municipal and regional integration workers, as well as former resettled refugees, in the Swedish reception system. The evaluation report confirms that the challenging task of managing expectations is a continuous element of pre- and post-arrival encounters with resettled refugees.⁴² In other words, having a holistic and streamlined approach to

³⁹ M. Muftee, “That will be your home”: Resettlement Preparations for Children and Youth from the Horn of Africa, PhD thesis (Linköping University, 2014), 31.

⁴⁰ S. Fratzke & L. Kainz, Preparing for the Unknown. Designing effective pre-departure orientation for resettling refugees (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2019), 3.

⁴¹ Muftee, “That will be your home”.

⁴² Fratzke & Kainz, The Next Generation of Refugee Resettlement in Europe: Ambitions for the future and how to realise them, (Brussels: Migration Policy Institute Europe, 2020).

communicating important information to beneficiaries is paramount throughout the entire resettlement regime.

BOX 4: A holistic approach to managing expectations in a new Swedish PDO

Resettlement refugees aren't as prepared as they perhaps were earlier [during the years of the previous PDO] – they don't really know what it is they are going to and which expectations Sweden has of them once they get here. – (SMA officer involved in PDO development)

In September 2019, the Swedish Migration Agency (SMA) held a new yearly stakeholder conference to collect feedback from actors across Sweden working with resettlement – the dire need for a new PDO was one of the key points made. While the SMA ran its own PDO for several years – *Sverigeprogrammet* – this was shut down in 2016 due to budget restraints and lack of applicability. During 2019-21 SMA outsourced the PDO development to international experts in two stages. First, MPI mapped Swedish PDO needs in the above-mentioned evaluation and results were discussed at a national stakeholder meeting in spring 2020 (online), giving a solid starting point for PDO development resonating strongly with most stakeholders.

In the second stage, IOM was contracted to develop and implement the new PDO, with different programs for adults and for children. Both programs run across three days and are organized through an interactive, discussion-based pedagogy. The program for children is less time intensive and includes a more picture- and narrative-based approach (IOM 2021). A pilot version of these programs was carried out in Uganda in December 2020 by *cross cultural facilitators* recruited especially for Sweden on direct demand from SMA: Facilitators must have experience from living in Sweden in addition to speaking the same languages as the resettlement beneficiaries they will provide orientation to. Having a refugee background is also considered a major asset. Communicating about and discussing expectations without the need for translation nor (extensive) cultural mediation in the process has been deemed essential to effectively manage expectations towards resettlement.

Relying on local and international expertise

What can we learn from Sweden's approach to developing a new PDO? How can pre-departure orientation support resettlement's durability? On the one hand, we see that relying on international expertise opens possibilities to draw on the experiences of leaders within this specific niche of resettlement work, as well as on the experiences of other receiving states. On the other hand, recognizing that knowledge about how and which expectations to manage also needs to be drawn from 'the ground': from former refugees and from the local integration workers whose day-to-day encounters with beneficiaries are shaped by preparation the latter have or have not received prior to their arrival in Europe. If streamlined throughout the resettlement regime, such knowledge will benefit actors in every step of the system. For this reason, one of IOMs thematic support officers for PDOs encourages governments to budget in monitoring and evaluation of what refugees have learned to measure PDO effectiveness and adapt where necessary. Both our research material and our literature review show that

for effective PDOs it matters what *content* is conveyed, which *pedagogy* is used to convey it, and *who* it is that conveys it.⁴³

Content: convey information and knowledge to build agency

In general, when EU countries develop their PDOs, IOM often functions as a consultant. An IOM representative can advise receiving countries on the culturally appropriate practices in the third countries before the departure of their selection or PDO missions. One IOM interviewee emphasised the importance of adapting to the particular customs and needs of the refugees when conducting pre-departure activities, while the training should also include issues specific to each receiving country:

To build a successful PDO curriculum, you should do an assessment need study of your population. You have to understand their culture, what are some of the things that are acceptable in their culture that's probably going to be a major clash when they go and be resettled. So, it's a two-way street, you have to understand the culture of the receiving country, but also the culture of the country of origin of the refugees. – (Thematic support officer and global migrant training and integration specialist, IOM HQ)

When it comes to the Swedish PDO program, the course curriculum includes four themes: 1) practical information about travel and the initial post arrival period, 2) everyday life in Sweden, 3) rights and responsibilities, and 4) values and core principles in the Swedish society. These four pillars, according to a PDO coordinator at IOM Finland, are aimed at 'providing accurate information and developing realistic expectations about life in Sweden' and 'enhancing mental preparedness', and 'ensuring continuity between the PDO and post arrival service provision'.

This is in line with MPI's recommendations that a PDO should not only inform refugees about conditions in their new country of residence, but also build skills and a positive attitude towards their new lives.⁴⁴ Focus should be on building beneficiaries' agency, including their 'confidence and feelings of control [and] their ability to cope with unfamiliar situations [...] to navigate everyday life in the resettlement country'.⁴⁵ Both pre-resettlement and post-resettlement trauma has proven to correlate with refugees' mental health.⁴⁶ Structural factors of the receiving context and the possibilities and abilities of individuals to adapt to them are therefore important.⁴⁷ In this regard, pedagogy is key.

Pedagogy: conveying content through a learner's centred approach

MPI recommends a pedagogical style that offers clear and tailored communication in a stress- and distraction free environment. This is more likely to contribute to building refugees' confidence and thus ability to exert agency during their resettlement process and adaptation to life in a new place. As

⁴³ Böhm et al., 'Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement'.

⁴⁴ Fratzke & Kainz, *Preparing for the Unknown*.

⁴⁵ Ibid. 1.

⁴⁶ F. Lindencrona et al., 'Mental health of recently resettled refugees from the Middle East in Sweden: the impact of pre-resettlement trauma, resettlement stress and capacity to handle stress', *Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology*, 43, 2 (2008), 121-131.

⁴⁷ I. Kim, 'Beyond trauma: Post-resettlement factors and mental health outcomes among Latino and Asian refugees in the United States', *Journal of immigrant and minority health*, 18, 4 (2016), 740-748.

such, PDOs should focus mainly on facilitating realistic expectations, attitude to deal with change, empowering refugees and creating spaces for agency in the process of resettlement, according to a PDO coordinator at IOM Finland. An IOM representative underlines this same approach to learning:

If a man or a woman who is 40 or 50, they never went to school, they are in your classroom, don't think that they are incapable of learning. These people have huge life experiences. And the fact that they survived and fled and are now in a refugee camp speaks volumes about their resourcefulness and the resilience. So, you need to build on that. [...] What we at IOM advocate is that the methodology has to be 'learner's centred'. It is not about the trainer; it is about the refugees. It is not a lecture. [...] The methodology really is even more important than the content. – (Thematic support officer and global migrant training and integration specialist, IOM HQ)

Such a learner's centred approach to PDO delivery is in line with what other interviewees expressed. According to the project leader of a refugee rights NGO in southern Germany, it is important not to assume which norms and values the newcomers do and do not bring with them, but rather be open to take in the experiences and knowledge of the PDO attendees. In other words – as the same IOM representative expresses – while content is important, pedagogy is key, and intrinsic to pedagogy are the trainers:

To me really who provides the PDO is not as important as what pedagogical qualifications the training staff have to provide the PDO.

Trainers' competence regarding language and culture are paramount in transmitting content in the right way, as well as their ability to communicate in a manner that invites openness and mutual respect. As such, PDO facilitators should work with methods of open discussion and debate, rather than a top-down approach. IOM's thematic support officer explains:

We have to engage them. We have to let them have a say in what they want to learn and how they want to learn it.

As will be discussed below, IOM's pedagogical approach signals a general need for taking into account refugees' experiences, views, and competencies in resettlement and integration approaches in order to build mutual trust between beneficiaries and the resettlement regime.

Post-arrival: cementing durability through a value-based approach

The pre-departure phase of the resettlement regime lays the ground for the work carried out once selected resettlement beneficiaries arrive in the receiving countries. This work entails reception practices (that take place in close connection to beneficiaries' arrival) and integration practices (that can have both short- and long-term perspectives and take place at any time post-arrival) that often overlap and become interchangeable. Here they are thereby understood as part of the same phase of the resettlement regime.

In **Germany**, reception is organised by the state (BAMF and BMI)⁴⁸ and implemented on the ground by civil society organisations. All resettlement refugees are received in a central reception facility – the border transit camp in Friedland, close to Göttingen. The two-week stay in Friedland is packed with information events led by civil society organisations, and includes an initial integration course (*Wegweiserkurs*), German language classes, and information courses on different topics (laws and rights, history, mobility, health, education and first steps in the new home) in cooperation with a language interpreter. Afterwards, they are placed in municipalities, in pre-arranged housing facilities. What the integration phase thereafter looks like depends on in which municipality resettlement beneficiaries are placed.

In **Sweden**, the reception phase has less clearly defined perimeters. Individuals are welcomed at the airport by staff from the municipality and driven/transported to their pre-arranged housing. At the point of arrival, a two-year establishment program starts – a time period in which resettled refugees have access to specific assistance from the authorities, including civic orientation, introduction to the labour market, and Swedish language courses – however, there is no clearly defined end to the reception phase nor start to the integration phase.

The reception and integration phase of resettlement thus varies greatly according to geographical location, both in terms of receiving states, but also receiving municipalities/communities, and it encompasses a large spectrum of actors and practices. Below we present a selection of these practices and discuss how they contribute to making resettlement a durable solution for refugees.

Covering basic needs as the foundation for long-term integration

When speaking of reception and integration practices, interviewees shared a range of examples that go above and beyond covering basic humanitarian needs. However, the material from both Germany and Sweden shows that the importance of particular components of the integration process cannot be overstated, although the weight placed on different issues varies according to context. These issues include housing, access to (mental) health care, and the building of personal support networks.

Access to housing

Practitioners in Sweden report that finding and organizing **housing** for refugees before they arrive is one of the main challenges faced in their work. The aim is to be able to offer beneficiaries a long-term contract from the very beginning, but this often proves impossible. Moreover, once the initial two ‘establishment’ years are over, refugees are themselves in charge of finding housing. In Sweden, the housing market is complex with queuing systems and long waiting times to access rental apartments. The way the housing sector is organised means many refugees struggle to access stable accommodation.⁴⁹ Lack of stable living conditions can affect every other step of the integration process, as both

⁴⁸ BAMF: *Bundesamt für Migration und Flüchtlinge*, (Federal Office for Migration and Refugees); BMI: *Bundesministerium des Innern, für Bau und Heimat* (The federal ministry of the interior, building and community).

⁴⁹ For a detailed account of how accommodation for asylum seekers and refugees is organized in Sweden and which issues and tensions arise, see E. Righard & K. Öberg, *Integration Governance in Sweden: Accommodation, Regeneration and Exclusion*, GLIMER, WP3 report, Sweden, 2020.

practitioners and refugees often pool their energy and resources towards securing housing instead of focusing on other important aspects, such as language learning or looking for work.

An integration coordinator and worker in a Mid-Sweden municipality says that an important part of their work is to provide extra assistance to refugees to receive long-term rental contracts. She describes a local initiative they developed in her municipality – regular Tuesday meetings with her personally where they discussed and gave advice on anything refugees might need or wonder about, but with particular focus on housing issues:

We had a project in 2019 in line with our municipal integration model, where we asked newly arrived refugees what they were missing and needed the most [within this process]. And there were many questions about housing and how they can attain their own housing [contracts], and a lot of dissatisfaction regarding the information they had received. So, this resulted in “Tuesdays with Klara⁵⁰” and the idea was they would come and get information about society and about activities we knew of, and then I wanted us to focus especially on the housing issue. – (Municipal integration worker, Mid-Sweden)

While such initiatives serve to remedy some of the difficulties resettlement beneficiaries face during their first years in Sweden, the lack of housing is a structural problem for both refugees and other members of Swedish society. It is therefore essential that targeted political efforts be made to address this issue both in regard to refugee reception and in society at large.

Access to a support network

While the housing issue is less pronounced in the material from Germany, integration workers do underscore the extent to which newly arrived refugees struggle with organising the logistics of settling in a new place. Currently, civil society plays a key role in the initial reception phase in Germany, as it is organised by Caritas from their office at the central reception facility in Friedland.

We are the first contact person, we offer counselling, answer questions, provide first orientation in Germany, explain the rights. – (Migration advisor and coordinator of volunteering at Caritas Friedland, central reception facility)

During the initial reception phase, Caritas staff thus aims to prepare refugees for their transition to life in different municipalities. This is partly done through collecting information about local integration services, contacting those services to exchange information on specific needs of the people moving there, and, most importantly, having conversations with individual beneficiaries to ensure that their vulnerabilities are known, and their needs met. The emphasis in this work, according to one Caritas employee in Friedland, is on creating a ‘safe space, where refugees have the possibility to ask individual questions and where translators help avoid miscommunication’. However, another interviewee urges to establish more widespread and local support for refugees to help with arrival logistics.

There is a definite need for a local contact person [after beneficiaries arrive in the receiving municipalities], only due to the fact that the people’s life circumstances

⁵⁰ The name is a pseudonym to anonymize the interviewee, but her real name was used for the initiative.

have changed too rapidly and drastically compared to the rather dangerous asylum routes. – (Project leader at the refugee rights NGO SaveMe)

The same interviewee reports that only a few municipalities in Germany have such services in place, and it is especially difficult to access assistance in more rural areas. There is thus a need for developing local **support networks** consisting of local and personal contact points that can help resettlement beneficiaries with the first steps of settling into a new place.

Access to (mental) health care

The need for specialized support is also dire when it comes to the issue of health, and particularly **mental health**. As mentioned, many refugees have challenges due to their experiences and traumas which can pose a challenge for integration in different ways.⁵¹ In Germany, beneficiaries have little to no time to adjust to the changed circumstances of their life in a new country. According to an integration worker at the Friedland reception facility, refugees are almost immediately left to their own devices upon arrival. In Sweden, mental health issues are also a concern that emerges in different integration activities. One integration worker provided an example of a recurrent difficulty which occurred when the municipality organized language training through the initiative *Språkvän* (language buddy). Refugees were paired with native speaker volunteers to practice Swedish, but many leaned on the volunteers to, rather, talk about their difficulties and try to build a friendship.

When it comes to Språkvän I think that if what you want is someone to help you, it is not going to work well. That “I don’t want help [with the language], I just want a friend”. Of course, many refugees have come here with crushed dreams and trauma. I noticed that in the last few years – many of them are sick; physically or psychologically. And when we talk about Språkvän, it can be a nice way of meeting people. But it won’t work when it comes to getting the help [they need]. – (Swedish integration worker in Southern Sweden)

Creating awareness and making mental health support available on a large scale seems paramount for long term integration success since the wellbeing of the individual presupposes the success in other areas of their integration.⁵²

Forging long term trust and agency in first encounters

The initial reception phase consists of first encounters with the receiving society and thus provides a space for the transmission of norms and values, but, as our material shows, it matters greatly *how* norms and values are conveyed. Trust is central to making reception and integration work serve its purpose – to facilitate that resettlement beneficiaries become active, well-informed actors in their receiving countries – and to make resettlement a durable protection measure for refugees. But how is trust built?

⁵¹ Böhm et al., ‘Norms and Values in Refugee Resettlement’.

⁵² Ibid.

There is no value transmission directly to refugees. It is more about embodying values and that might have an influence. I mean acting in accordance with values such as solidarity, openness, eye level, equality, and human dignity which we want to present through our own actions. – (Civil society practitioner, Germany)

The quote above points to how it is the way in which information and messages are transmitted that ultimately reflects the norms and values that the receiving society wishes to convey. Another integration worker at Caritas Friedland in Germany describes her understanding of engaging with refugees and mentions how important openness, empathy and intercultural experiences are in her work to **help build trust** in the practitioners and their new home country. Transmitting information, norms, and values in a convincing way thus entails creating encounters that allow for open and respectful communication.⁵³

To make such encounters possible, the interviewees from Caritas Friedland describe that they try to include language interpreters in all their meetings with resettlement beneficiaries. This makes an exchange of ideas possible since beneficiaries can speak for themselves and voice their needs and questions. Swedish integration workers also express the same idea of adapting information and how you communicate with the beneficiaries upon arrival. In their experience, to encourage participation and build trust, listening and taking into account the different resources refugees carry with them is as important as conveying the information they have to give.

It is the most vulnerable that come here, so we have to understand who it is that we are receiving. It can be somebody who cannot read or write. A 55-year-old illiterate woman who has worked at home [all her life]. [...] But [...] there can also be highly educated people that have been to refugee camps and that understand [everything], so you have to adapt depending on the person. – (Municipal integration worker, North of Sweden)

Hence, encounters with refugees should be on **'eye level' and based on mutual respect**, focusing on resettlement beneficiaries as individuals with their own personal histories and needs. A practical example of one such practice can be observed by the reception work of one federal state in Germany.

BOX 5: Best practice example: eye level encounters in reception work in Germany

The state North-Rhine-Westphalia (NRW) introduced their own reception practice: sending staff to the central reception facility in Friedland to individually welcome every refugee family to be placed in their state. In this initial meeting the staff listens to beneficiaries' needs and suggestions (medical issues, possible family connections, religious affiliations, education/job prospects) to facilitate the best possible placement for each individual/family. They further inform the receiving municipality directly to organise the following reception and integration steps in the community. The staff works with translators to avoid misunderstandings, facilitate trust, and build agency.

⁵³ While a consensus exists among German interviewees on the importance of eye-level and open communication, the Covid-19 pandemic has entailed significant challenges in this regard. In Germany, resettlement beneficiaries have not attended courses in the central facility during the pandemic and have, rather, been transferred directly to their respective receiving municipalities. Despite offering digital courses, Caritas workers agree that this cannot become a long-term replacement for the courses in-situ.

Seeing different needs: the importance of language, culture, and children as their own individuals

As signalled above, long-term integration success, and thereby the durability of resettlement as a solution to refugee protection, is dependent on meeting the different needs each individual might have. These needs can vary greatly depending on each person's migration trajectory and possible trauma, but also in regard to other factors, such as gender or age.

Salient in the interview material from Swedish resettlement actors is the recent adoption of the UN's Convention of the Child as national law. Refugee children and their needs have, as a result, received increased attention in Sweden, and within the resettlement regime, children's particular needs are being duly considered. For instance, a municipality in northern Sweden has established arrival interviews with children:

Within the first month after arrival, we want to collect their thoughts on how they perceived the journey to Sweden, leaving and coming here, and how they perceived the reception so far but also about what expectations they have in general to their new country and how we can support them. This can, for example, be about a sport that they are interested in and then we think about how we can organise a contact for this. – (Municipal integration worker, Mid-Sweden)

These interviews serve to tailor reception and integration efforts to children's needs and strengthen their agency in a challenging time of their lives. This initiative is an opportunity for individually catered, age-appropriate integration support and for informing other resettlement actors, such as IOM in charge of the Swedish PDO, about systemic improvements needed to better support children during the resettlement process.

While these interviews are unique (in our research material) to this particular municipality, another more widespread initiative is that of parenting courses catering to resettlement beneficiaries and other immigrants to Sweden. One interviewee from northern Sweden explains how this has been done in their municipality:

We supplied [the program] in four different languages with an interpreter who also spoke Swedish and with material from the national study association Studieförbundet. The material is called 'Älskade Barn' (Beloved Child) and builds on the Children's Convention. In this course you had a lot of discussion about how it was to be a parent, and a lot of people thought it was great to learn about how things work in Sweden and about how your role as a parent is in Swedish society – what is expected and so on. – (Municipal integration worker, North of Sweden)

Hence, catering to resettled children's needs entails supporting their parents in their transition to life in the receiving society. Moreover, recognizing children as actors with valid opinions and emotions of their own shapes how they perceive their receiving community and their position in it.

Practitioners with diverse knowledge can supply tailored communication

After arrival in the resettlement country, the encounters with different actors, whether integration workers or other community members, matter greatly. A way to meet individuals' needs is by supplying relevant information and support in an accessible way. As seen in the case of PDO trainers with particular linguistic knowledge or migration experience of their own, when it comes to resettlement beneficiaries, tailored communication can be especially important. For instance, the NGO SaveMe in southern Germany has set up a 'buddy project' to receive resettled families or individuals. The buddy is a volunteer who provides initial support and acts as a first contact person in the new home. As a central part of the project, the organizers encourage previously resettled refugees (or other migrants) to become volunteers and share their own experiences and knowledge with the newcomers. In this way, the volunteers also act as role models, showing newly arrived beneficiaries that there is indeed a place for refugees in the receiving country and that there are many opportunities to become a part of their new community.

In the same vein, a municipal level integration coordinator in Sweden, who himself arrived as a refugee from Syria, underscores that his position in the Swedish labour market is often an inspiration to the refugees he works with, while his particular set of skills and knowledge is a great asset in his work. He explains that not meeting people as equals in integration work might endanger the process of integration in itself. If people are treated as if they do not know (how to do) anything, they end up taking on a passive, 'child-like' role. On the contrary, assuming that people indeed have extensive knowledge and valuable experience will shape their encounter with the receiving community in a positive way. Employing people with a relevant background, such as personal refugee experience,⁵⁴ can help to foster such encounters and help build a refugee centred integration process.

Community-based sponsorship: a new approach to resettlement and integration

Community sponsorship is one approach to incorporating integration practices in resettlement that is receiving increased attention in Europe. Sponsorship is a particular way of organizing resettlement, while it also entails a more holistic and long-term approach to integration. What sponsorship programs look like differs across countries but follows to a varying degree the aims of providing additional resettlement spots, supporting citizens to actively participate in integration work, and providing refugees with personal assistance for integration through individuals or mentor groups. While countries such as Canada, Australia, and the USA have been 'sponsoring' refugees since the end of World War II, sponsorship programs are fairly new to European receiving states.

Establishing community sponsorship is one of the main priorities in UNHCR's strategy on resettlement and complementary pathways. However, according to UNHCR Sweden, for a country to establish such a program, an already functioning resettlement system is required. The aim of this strategy is ultimately to manifest a more holistic and long-term understanding of resettlement, in which integration

⁵⁴ The term refugee experience refers to having personal experiences what it means to be a refugee, seeking asylum, or similar experiences and can hence relate to and better understand the life circumstances that beneficiaries are experiencing.

in the local communities is part of the process. In a sponsorship approach, refugees are not regarded as responsible for integration on their own, but rather integration is seen as a two-way process:

That is the whole idea behind the context [of including community sponsorship], that we are all taking responsibility and that each individual can contribute with what they can contribute with. – (Durable solutions associate, UNHCR Sweden)

In Germany, the pilot project NesT (Newstart in a Team) was developed in 2019 to test community-based sponsorship as part of the German resettlement system. The pilot is organised by the state (BAMF and BMI) in cooperation with selected civil society organisations (Caritas, Red Cross, Evangelical Church of Westphalia). The project's key principle is to identify those in need of protection, provide a safe pathway, and help them to integrate. It aims to resettle an additional 500 people to Germany and provide a mentor group (of minimum five volunteers) for every family or individual arriving.

BOX 6: What we can learn from the German NesT program

One interesting experience that we made with community sponsorship is that in almost every mentor group there are individuals who themselves have experienced forced migration and came to Germany. While it differs how long ago this happened, they have received help and now want to give back. – (Head of department on refugees, migration, and integration at institute for church and society, protestant church of Westphalia)

Refugees and mentors that have been part of NesT say they profited from the programme, especially in the initial organisation and interaction with state institutions (regarding legal status, social services, access to employment and education) and help with language barriers.

The value of individual integration support is unparalleled, and it would be beneficial to provide mentoring for all resettlement refugees. There are some NGOs/civil society organisations who try to facilitate this support in some municipalities, though this is not nationwide.

It has a lot of value if people arrive in a community and receive individual support: 'One result that the pilot project NesT might bring with it, is the awareness of how important and valuable the mentoring concept is' (Coordinator, Caritas Friedland).

Refugees regarded as the most vulnerable by BAMF, for instance those with medical requirements or without any family ties in Germany, are prioritized and matched with a mentoring group according to the skills, experiences, and support opportunities in the community, and the size of housing it can provide. During the two first years, the groups provide financial and personal support, by, for instance, organising housing. The mentoring groups participate in training throughout the process, for example on how to deal with trauma, first steps on how to organise the logistics of the newcomer's lives and reflecting on the concept of vulnerability.

In our work with training the mentoring groups we focus on creating awareness for the power relations and [...] for openness for exchange of different perspectives. And I think one value that we definitely want to convey is empowerment. – (Integration practitioner for safe pathways and reception facilitation, Germany)

The Swedish approach to community sponsorship differs from the German model. UNHCR and a working group of civil society actors and NGOs are currently developing a pilot programme based on a feasibility study from 2020. They exchange ideas and experiences with Finland and Germany on the topic. The government is not directly involved in the process, it is solely civil society driven.

The idea is that one or several civil society organizations are the ones that are responsible for the programme, with, of course, the support of the state and the municipality. – (UNHCR Sweden)

The sponsored resettlement will be an additional system of integration support, but, in contrast to the German model, will not increase Sweden's resettlement quota. Upon arrival, beneficiaries will be introduced directly to a support system in the form of a contact family or group of individuals in Sweden. The participation will, of course, be voluntary for the contact group and the newcomers, as an interviewee from UNHCR Sweden highlighted.

BOX 7: Key features of community sponsorship in Sweden

Our interview with an UNHCR representative responsible for community sponsorship in Sweden revealed key features for the development of such a program, as the quotes below demonstrate:

It is an additional system for integration support but counted within the regular resettlement quota:

'A support system right from the beginning, with practical issues, with integration into society, with being this link into the Swedish society, to ease then the integration.'

'of course, we are working for increasing complementary pathways but for now we also think that the focus right now is to look at the integration systems and to strengthen them through sustainable support systems.'

The community sponsorship aims to support refugee-led civil society organizations and they will be key actors in implementing the project:

'We need to look at more ways of supporting the integration systems. They are there, I mean, the structures are there but we do see that there is a need for strengthening the side of the community element and to [...] work against this kind of negative narrative that is currently happening in our countries, and to support what is there [...] to have welcoming societies. So, there is a lot coming together in that sense.'

Ultimately, community sponsorship programs are valuable additions to the already functioning resettlement systems to European receiving states. While they cannot function as a substitute to these systems, they open possibilities for focusing on the continuity and personal and individual support often missing from the ways resettlement is traditionally organized. As such, sponsorship can help us think about integration in new and more opportune ways, and thus safeguard the durability of the European resettlement regime as a whole. Worth noting is also that, in line with other findings from

our analysis, community sponsorship invites us to consider how integration works in general, and not only in European countries that participate in the EU resettlement regime. Rather, thinking long-term, refugee-centred, and holistically about integration can benefit every national reception and integration system. The next section reflects further on the role of integration support as part of a holistic approach to resettlement and discusses how the practices highlighted here may contribute to resettlement as a durable solution for refugee protection.

Discussion: A Holistic Approach to Integration and Resettlement Durability

From our analysis we draw the conclusion that integration is an intrinsic concern of the European resettlement regime, as the two cases of our study illustrate. Germany employs integration criteria for the selection of resettlement beneficiaries to prioritise individuals that are more likely to adapt to the German context and become active members of society and the labour market. One of the main foci in the new Swedish PDO – developed based on the international expertise of MPI and IOM and the experiences of integration workers and former refugees – is on communicating coherent messages from pre-departure orientation to post-arrival encounters between refugees and representatives of Swedish society. These messages are not integration ‘criteria’ per se, but they do express ideals and values that are present in Swedish society regarding what membership there entails. In our analysis we found that attention on the integration process is paramount to ensure that resettlement functions for the receiving state. As will be discussed below, this attention ought to go hand in hand with ensuring the durability of the resettlement process at large, maintaining it as a pathway to refugee protection and increasing resettlement places.

In this section we return to the questions asked in the introduction of this report: How do we ensure that resettlement functions as a durable solution? And which ideas, practices, and actors are relevant to this work? As spelled out in the introduction, we understand durability as a long-term perspective in resettlement which grants beneficiaries both legal rights (such as citizenship) and, importantly, a holistic approach to processes of integration. This means actively working towards resettlement beneficiaries becoming full members of society by partaking in and influencing the value transmissions taking place in European states. It also means taking into account what durability entails for the different parties involved: countries of first asylum, receiving states and societies, and the resettlement beneficiaries themselves. Three general themes emerge from our study on the regime of resettlement to Europe around which this concluding discussion will turn: First, the notion of integration and how it is approached by different actors. Second, and relatedly, questions pertaining to the resettled refugees’ agency. And third, an emphasis on ensuring a functioning and durable resettlement system/regime as a whole.

A holistic integration approach with a long-term perspective

Our material shows that resettlement and integration go hand in hand, so that the entire resettlement regime must be organized towards providing the best possible starting conditions for refugees in their destination communities. This means that ensuring the durability of resettlement entails connecting the information and messages that reach beneficiaries prior to and after their arrival in the destination countries. Thinking holistically of resettlement and, indeed, conceive of the processes involved as part of a *regime*, can help us envision how such messages are best communicated. However, a holistic approach to integration and resettlement does not only mean consolidating the messages transmitted from receiving states to refugees. Since receiving states’ approaches to integration are intrinsic elements of achieving durability, these approaches must be organised according to the same humanitarian values on which the Refugee Convention is centred. A holistic approach therefore consists of considering how integration is understood within each specific receiving context and which values shape how one can become a member of the respective society.

Integration is a multifaceted and contested term. It is often unclear, even to those working with the related processes, what ‘integration’ is and what it should achieve. It is a concept used to talk about the mechanisms of making an outsider/newcomer become a part of the receiving society.⁵⁵ What the integration process entails is therefore context specific in that the mechanisms needed to become part of a particular society depend on how that society is organized at large. In other words, becoming part of the German society is not the same as becoming part of society in the USA or Sweden. In order to understand integration, we must thus ask how it is defined and understood in relation to the context where it is taking place. Integration, and resettlement, will necessarily be organized according to how each society is organized (on national, regional, and municipal levels) and according to which values and principles steer this organization. One example of this is discussed in relation to resettlement to the USA below.

Agency, trust, and societal membership

Resettled refugees arrive to the United States with a clear pathway to citizenship within five years.⁵⁶ Resettlement, as legislated in the 1980 Refugee Act and institutionalized through regulations, focuses on self-sufficiency through early employment. Self-sufficiency as a central social value is recognizable in cultural tropes such as ‘the American dream’ and it is also intrinsic to the USA as a receiving state of resettlement beneficiaries. But what happens when self-sufficiency is the organizing principle and aim of approaches to integration? In her ongoing work, Ben-Arieh recognizes that approaches to integration to the USA change over time, but that citizenship and the notion of self-sufficiency remain paramount. However, Ben-Arieh also observes that many civil society organizations and NGOs shift away from centring integration efforts around self-sufficiency and towards focusing on building refugees’ agency. Such an approach helps safeguard the humanitarian principles of the resettlement scheme and is more likely to make more people self-sufficient in the long run.

Changing the narrative of what is required to become a member of society is thus a way of benefitting both the receiving society and the resettlement beneficiaries. While such a change takes time, civil society’s focus on agency for refugees in the USA is an example of how such a shift might occur. If integration efforts are organized around agency (rather than self-sufficiency) and thus regarded as conducive to the durability of resettlement, then continuously building the agency of refugees throughout the resettlement process is key: it must be in focus from when beneficiaries are selected, to the PDO curriculum and pedagogy, and to the different encounters between beneficiaries and the receiving society upon arrival.

When it comes to European approaches to resettlement and integration, the value of self-sufficiency has not been equally explicit, despite it being a central aim of integration efforts in both Sweden and Germany. At the same time, our material reveals that integration work also leaves room for agency,

⁵⁵ For discussions of the concept of integration see for instance K.F. Olwig & K. Pærregaard, ‘Introduction: “strangers” in the nation’, *The Question of Integration: Immigration, Exclusion, and the Danish Welfare State*, 2011 (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing); W. Schinkel, ‘Against ‘immigrant integration’: For an end to neocolonial knowledge production’, *Comparative migration studies*, 6, 1, (2018).

⁵⁶ This is part of ongoing work by project partner and resettlement expert, Galya Ben-Arieh.

as expressed for instance in the often-repeated interest in building trust between refugees and receiving societies. Trust is key for newcomers to engage actively with the receiving society *and vice versa*. As we discuss below, communication is paramount for building this trust.

Communication for trust and collaboration

In many ways, the European resettlement regime is dependent on trust. Refugees' trust for the institutions and general society of the receiving state must be encouraged from the start of the resettlement process, while actors employed within the resettlement regime must also be able to trust those same institutions in supporting them in the tasks their jobs entail. Common to both versions of trust is that it is built through a feeling of being heard and seen – through communication. Understanding integration as a two-directional process, makes both refugees and all members of society a part of integration strategies. As such, what is being communicated *about* refugees within receiving states, and what is communicated *to* them, goes hand in hand. In other words, how refugees are viewed, and the values placed upon them and on the integration processes, become visible not only in what is communicated to them, but *how*.

When it comes to resettlement beneficiaries, being met 'eye-to-eye' and with respect matters. As seen in the material above, *how* messages and information are communicated is of utter importance in both PDOs and in the encounters between refugees and integration workers. An important tool that has been increasingly used in both the Swedish and German contexts, is the employment of integration workers who have relevant linguistic and cultural knowledge, or personal refugee experience. A common language alleviates communication, while shared cultural knowledge or a common experience of migration can increase trust and put newly arrived refugees more at ease in a new context and a difficult life transition.

Connected to this, another important aspect of communication is that of listening to what beneficiaries share with integration workers about who they are, where they come from, and where they would like to go. The integration process is about looking both backwards and forward in time. It needs to take into account what people carry with them – both when it comes to, e.g., trauma or mental/physical health issues, but also when it comes to resources. Meeting people with respect and openness towards what they have learned both in their places of origin and through the experience of being a refugee shifts the framing of refugees away from regarding them as a burden. Rather, this opens up the resettlement regime and receiving state to learn from beneficiaries and consider what they can contribute with as members of society.

Regarding communication between actors employed within the resettlement regime, our research material clearly reveals the benefits of open exchange of information, knowledge, and best practices. Streamlining the information and messages that are communicated to refugees throughout the regime is not only about bettering the integration processes for beneficiaries, but also a matter of actors at either end of the resettlement process being attentive to the needs and experiences of each other, such as in the example of the development of the new Swedish PDO.

Other such processes of exchange and collaboration are visible on local, national, and international levels. Swedish municipality officers closely monitor the activities of ongoing projects on resettlement and integration in order to adopt and share useful information. A regional authority in Sweden (Region Kronoberg) organizes biannual study trips to countries of first asylum where integration workers from different municipalities and regions learn more about refugees' living situation and the work of organizations such as UNHCR and IOM. A durable solution associate at UNHCR in Sweden emphasises the importance of having an exchange on synergies and sharing good practices. The more similar the immigration context is, the more relevant such exchanges are. Exchanging ideas and reflections on resettlement with other regions or even countries creates networks and can inspire collaboration, and ultimately contributes to durability by streamlining relevant processes and by learning relevant knowledge from all actors across the regime.

Concluding remarks: centring durability as a value in resettlement

The stated aim of resettlement is to provide a durable solution for refugee protection. While supplying this is something that the EU and its member states have committed to, we argue for further centring durability as a value within the European resettlement system. This means consolidating efforts to focus on durability in all aspects of the resettlement regime: durability must be a central aim in the ideas, practices, and actors that make up the regime, some of which transmit values explicitly, others more implicitly. This report has provided examples of such aspects, focusing particularly on the best practices that would be conducive towards promoting durability as the key aim in resettlement.

What is clear from our research is that policy makers must pay attention to how – and which – values are conveyed through resettlement, in every step of the system, as these transmissions are arguably reflective of European migration and integration politics at large and the power relations that exist between Europe and the world beyond its borders. Approaching resettlement from a regime perspective allows us a holistic view of values and principles that are part of its structure. When it comes to the European resettlement regime, we see that these values are multiple and that the resettlement system can thus develop in different directions, depending on the foci chosen by policy makers and practitioners in different states.

Relatedly, we emphasise the importance of discerning how integration is understood and practiced within different receiving states. We regard integration as a long-term process that happens through encounters, over time, and through mutual trust. A central factor in constructing an integrated society is thereby to have the general population, not only newly arrived refugees, participating in integration processes. Community-based sponsorship schemes are one way to transmit humanitarian values and contribute to a durable solution. However, in all approaches to integration, reflecting upon the values they transmit to ensure that they are, in fact based on humanitarian ideas of solidarity, equality, and respect for differences remains important to ensure durability.

Observing integration efforts in different countries further informs us about the national self-image and consequently where boundaries are drawn between refugees and the people already living there. Such observations are an opportunity to consider the way that each society is organized – what are, indeed, the values that underlie social, political, and economic relations in the different receiving

states? Are these relations conducive to durable and cohesive 'integrated' societies that permit newcomers a fair chance at membership and a dignified life? Such a discussion is beyond the scope of this report, but these questions allow us to ponder what we can learn by taking different values than, for instance, self-sufficiency as an organizing principle of society and integration practices.

We thus argue that for integration to be successful and resettlement to be durable, access to opportunities that permit newcomers a fair chance at society membership and a dignified life must be available. As reflected in this report, when such access is available, resettlement can indeed function as a durable instrument for refugee protection and it embodies an indispensable pathway for those in need of protection. Considering the global need for resettlement, the EU and member states can contribute by both making more places available and ensuring durability by shaping policies through a holistic perspective that considers integration a central element of resettlement.

Conclusively, this report has examined ideas, practices, and actors of resettlement and asked how these contribute to safeguard resettlement as a durable solution. By 'durable' we are alluding to the UNHCR's promotion of resettlement as one of three ways to ensure protection for refugees. Included in this approach are the humanitarian values by which UNHCR abides and on which the 1951 Refugee Convention is founded, such as solidarity and equality. The three general themes that we have identified above – (1) the significance of context-specific approaches to integration, (2) the promotion of resettlement beneficiaries' agency, and (3) the importance of streamlining messages and building communication channels/methods that aim to dismantle power hierarchies and 'othering' long-term – serve as food for thought in how to approach resettlement durability from within the regime. Here we have pointed to the ideas and practices within the regime which might serve to centre durability as a value in resettlement. In the last part of this report, we outline concrete recommendations based on the best practices we have seen in our material.

Recommendations

Based on interviews and fieldwork with actors from every step within the European resettlement regime, below we provide a selection of policy-relevant recommendations that serve to guide resettlement work towards the aim of durability and the humanitarian values that are at the centre of the resettlement regime. These specifically address two spheres of the resettlement regime, namely issues related to beneficiaries themselves and issues pertaining to the resettlement system and the work done by the actors within it.

TARGET THE NEEDS OF RESETTLED REFUGEES:

Meet basic needs according to the specific vulnerabilities

- ◆ Which basic needs are regarded as most pressing can be context dependent. Housing, support networks, and mental health issues are prerequisites for other integration efforts, such as language learning. Meeting basic needs is key to building a durable resettlement regime with a long-term perspective, enhancing durability especially for the receiving societies and resettlement beneficiaries.

Target children's needs directly

- ◆ Children make up their own target group when it comes to all services provided to beneficiaries throughout the resettlement regime. Ensuring that children partake in shaping these services so that their needs are met, and monitoring what their needs are over time, will establish the basis for good (mental) health and adaptation to their new places of residence.

Streamlining information and strategies between pre-departure and post-arrival

- ◆ Connecting the information provided to beneficiaries upon selection and during the PDO to the information shared by integration services in the different receiving countries is essential. Such information should be as context specific as possible and be sure to transmit the same message throughout the resettlement regime. This will aid in 'managing expectations' – an important part of integration work.

Create spaces and opportunities for agency

- ◆ How encounters between beneficiaries and resettlement/integration workers are set up matters. All encounters should be based on mutual respect and meeting each other on 'eye level'. This can entail giving beneficiaries the opportunity to make their own choices, whenever this is practically possible. It can also mean prioritizing pedagogical approaches over amount of information given in e.g., PDOs, and to employ trainers and integration workers with relevant language skills and refugee experience. Such an approach will build beneficiaries' trust in both the resettlement regime and the receiving state, in turn benefiting the integration process.

TARGET THE SYSTEM AND OPTIMISE RESETTLEMENT AND INTEGRATION WORK:

Communication and collaboration are key

- ◆ Lines of communication should run across the entire resettlement regime, making actors at different ends of the resettlement process aware of each other's experiences and knowledge. Information should be streamlined so that actors can inform refugees in a similar way at each step of the process. Moreover, all collaboration and exchange of best practices across municipalities, regions, countries, or even internationally has proven very fruitful to, for instance, the development of pre-departure orientation programmes.

Rely on local and international expertise to develop processes and practices

- ◆ We encourage knowledge sharing between different resettlement actors, experts, and projects. The Swedish Migration Agency's use of MPI and IOM to develop their new pre-departure orientation program serves as one successful example, as well as their communication with former refugees and practitioners for informing the process. Furthermore, any project should include evaluation processes to determine their efficacy, for which the use of experts is particularly relevant.

Employ people with relevant personal experiences, linguistic and cultural knowledge

- ◆ In both Germany and Sweden, employing former refugees or others with relevant linguistic or cultural knowledge as integration practitioners is becoming more common. This not only enhances communication with resettlement beneficiaries, in that information can be provided in a common language and through similar cultural codes. It also facilitates building beneficiaries' trust in the system and provides potential role-models for newcomers. This approach is beneficial throughout the entire regime, not only after arrival.

Involve the public and civil society in integration and resettlement

- ◆ Integration is (at least) a two-way process and cannot be built solely on activities and services targeting refugees. Civil society at large must also become engaged in integration and resettlement processes. One example of efforts made to such an end are the community sponsorship programs seen in Germany and Sweden, which actively create spaces for refugees to meet with peers in the receiving community for mutual exchange.

Fund research on resettlement

- ◆ Continuous funding of resettlement related research will allow the academic community to monitor how the European resettlement regime develops over time. Such research can identify not only the degree to which durability remains a central value in resettlement processes but can also help policy makers and practitioners keep up to speed with needs and shortcomings within the system.

Apply a long term, holistic approach to integration as part of the resettlement system

- ◆ Ultimately, resettlement and integration go hand in hand. Open communication and collaboration across the regime are important, allowing all actors to feel heard and seen, while centring the experiences of the refugees. A holistic approach further entails considering the long-term effects of practices in place in every step of the resettlement process, learning from the best practices of actors in the different steps, and finding a balance which serves to safeguard the humanitarian values that the resettlement system is built on, the rights of refugees, and a sustainable society based on all members' active participation.

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About NOVAMIGRA

Several, partly interconnected crises have profoundly challenged the European project in recent years. In particular, reactions to the arrival of 1.25 million refugees in 2015 called into question the idea(l) of a unified Europe. What is the impact of the so-called migration and refugee crisis on the normative foundations and values of the European Union? And what will the EU stand for in the future?

NOVAMIGRA studies these questions with a unique combination of social scientific analysis, legal and philosophical normative reconstruction and theory.

This project:

- Develops a precise descriptive and normative understanding of the current “value crisis”;
- Assesses possible evolutions of European values; and
- Considers Europe’s future in light of rights, norms and values that could contribute to overcoming the crises.

The project is funded with around 2.5 million Euros under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme for a period of three years.

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