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SHARE-ATCR Integration Working Group Norway, 20-21 May 2015

IWG Organisers & Participants

Welcome to the SHARE-ATCR Integration Working Group in Norway! This document provides you with a brief introduction to the IWG organisers and hosts, and an overview of IWG participants, listed by country.

IWG Organising & Hosting Partners

International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) Europe

ICMC serves and protects uprooted people – refugees, internally displaced persons and migrants – regardless of faith, race, ethnicity or nationality. Since its creation in 1951, ICMC has identified and accompanied over one million refugees for resettlement. Additionally, ICMC provides expert resettlement personnel to UNHCR field operations through the ICMC-UNHCR Resettlement Deployment Scheme. Through its Turkey and Lebanon offices, the ICMC Refugee Support Centre (RSC) process refugees for resettlement to the US.

The ICMC Europe office in Brussels works to promote resettlement in Europe and to build European resettlement capacity and expertise. Since 2011, we have developed the European Resettlement Network with our partners IOM and UNHCR. Since early 2012, ICMC Europe has led the SHARE Network, building a European resettlement network for regions, cities, municipalities and their local civil society partners involved in or with a commitment to refugee resettlement and integration. The IWG takes place in the framework of the SHARE Network, and in partnership with IOM Norway, UNHCR and the Norwegian state chair and NGO Focal Point of the ATCR 2015.

ICMC Europe is represented at the IWG by **Rachel Westerby** (Senior Policy & Programme Manager).

Norwegian State Chair & NGO Focal Point – ATCR 2015

The Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) process for 2015 is chaired by Norway. The ATCR state chair role is led by the Ministry of Justice & Public Security, and the Norwegian NGO Focal Point is the Norwegian Red Cross.



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The Norwegian state chair is represented at the IWG by:

- **Siw Lexau** (Deputy Director General, Ministry of Justice & Public Security)
- **Marit Rosenvinge** (Senior Adviser, Ministry of Justice & Public Security)
- **Hanna Krogenaes** (Adviser, Ministry of Children, Equality & Social Inclusion)
- **Kofi Amankwah** (Assistant Regional Director Regional Office West, Norwegian Directorate of Integration & Diversity)

The Norwegian Red Cross is represented at the IWG by:

- **Ulf Rikter Svendsen** (Head of Section, Social Inclusion and Diversity)
- **Annette Sørli** (Senior Advisor Migration)

UNHCR

UNHCR are represented at the IWG by the Resettlement Service and Europe Bureau. The Head of the Resettlement Service serves as a Deputy Director of Division of International Protection, and is supported by the Senior Resettlement Coordinator **Ms. Aurvasi Patel**, and staff with responsibilities for either geographical issues or global themes and policy issues, and processing unit staff managing dossier submissions. **Seda Kuzucu** and **Eric Groonis** are working on global policy issues and are the UNHCR focal points for the ATCR/WGR.

UNHCR's Europe Bureau collaborates with EU institutions in Brussels and maintains liaison offices in Malta and Poland, which deal respectively with the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) and Frontex, the EU's external border agency. Promoting respect for international protection norms in EU law and policy is of vital importance to UNHCR, and the agency accordingly provides its views on a wide range of issues related to refugee protection, resettlement and integration in the 27-member EU. The Europe Bureau is represented at the IWG by **Peter O'Sullivan**, Resettlement Officer, who focuses on resettlement, other forms of admission and integration.

International Organization for Migration (IOM) Norway

IOM Norway are the local SHARE focal point for the IWG, and play a key role in the Norwegian resettlement programme. IOM Norway are represented at the IWG by :

- **Joost van der Aalst** - Country Representative of IOM Norway since 2012. Joost has over 20 years of experience with IOM in Rwanda, Mozambique, Pakistan and the Netherlands.
- **William Kweku Paintsil** - originally from Ghana and working for IOM Oslo 2003, William currently coordinates IOM Norway's Cultural Orientation (NORCO) programme, and has assisted in the training of CO facilitators in Holland, Estonia and Norway.



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IWG Participants

Australia

1. Settlement Services International - Violet Roumeliotis (CEO)

Settlement Services International (SSI) is a leading not-for-profit organisation providing a range of services in the areas of humanitarian settlement, accommodation, asylum seeker assistance, foster care and disability support in New South Wales. Formed in 2000, SSI is also the state-wide representative body for 11 Migrant Resource Centres and Multicultural Services across New South Wales and is the largest provider of settlement services in Australia.

SSI operates a unique decentralised model of practice in which settlement caseworkers are co-located within local multicultural NGOs in order to create seamless service transitions for refugees as they integrate within mainstream community supports. In addition, SSI has developed tailored models of settlement intervention for young people and vulnerable refugee women, and partnered with local universities to develop expertise in measuring and preventing mental health issues during settlement. SSI also currently supports approximately 5,500 asylum seekers that are living in the Australian community.

Belgium

1. Federal Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (FEDASIL) - Mélanie Hostaux (Resettlement Officer)

FEDASIL is in charge of the reception and integration aspects of the Belgian resettlement programme. FEDASIL is also in charge of finding voluntary municipalities that will provide accommodation and assistance to the resettled refugees. We also monitor the integration process of the resettled refugees through operational coordination meetings with the municipalities and NGOs. The Belgian resettlement programme is still quite new - it started in 2013 – but we have developed several good practices including the provision of socio-cultural orientation and training pre-departure and during the early reception phase. It is important though for FEDASIL to learn from experienced resettlement state like Norway on topics such as expectation management, collaborating with the actors in charge of the integration and so on.

2. Caritas International - Elisabeth Verniers (Resettlement Coordinator)

I coordinate the Belgian resettlement integration programme for the NGO Caritas International, one of the two NGOs responsible for the integration of resettled refugees in Belgium. I work with refugees in the field, but also coach staff, manage budgets and report to the Belgian resettlement authorities. Our best practices include working with bicultural



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experts for vulnerable groups, supporting women at risk and cooperating with NGOs, local authorities and other organisations. I would like to share our integration practice experiences, and learn about NGO-state cooperation and working with volunteers.

3. Dendermonde Public Social Security Agency - Sofie Van Goethem (Social Worker)

In my role as a Social Worker at the Public Social Welfare Centre in Dendermonde in Belgium, I work in four areas - material assistance to asylum seekers, financial assistance for foreigners, emergency medical care for illegal immigrants and refugee resettlement. We have developed a good model that ensures refugees are closely accompanied over the first 12 months of their settlement in Belgium, and I would like to expand this knowledge based on practice and approaches in Norway.

Canada

1. Citizenship & Immigration Canada - Alain Bernier (Manager, Family Reunification Unit)

I have worked as an Immigration Officer with Citizenship & Immigration Canada since 2004. My postings abroad include Bangladesh, Syria, the Philippines and the United Arab Emirates. I am currently posted in the United Kingdom where I hold the position of Manager of the Family Reunification Unit, which is responsible for processing applications for Permanent Resident Visas under the Family Class and the Refugee Class.

In the past I have been actively involved in the selection of refugees abroad. My experience includes the selection of refugees from several different countries in a number of locations, from Eritrean and Ethiopian refugees in South Africa to Somali and Eritrean refugees in Saudi Arabia and Yemen, as well as Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh and Iraqi and Palestinian refugees in Syria and Lebanon. My experience includes urban refugees, detained refugees and refugees in camps.

Czech Republic

1. Department for Asylum and Migration Policy at the Ministry of the Interior - Petr Novak (Head of Working Group, Integration of Refugees)

I am responsible for the integration of beneficiaries of international protection in the Czech Republic via the State Integration Programme. This programme also supports refugees resettled to the Czech Republic. The State Integration Programme works with a variety of partners to provide housing, language courses, counselling and access to the labour market. I hope learning more about practice in Norway will add to the experience we have acquired through this programme.



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Finland

1. ELY Centre (North Ostrobothnia) - Hanna Määttä (Head of Immigration)

ELY Centres are part of regional government, and are part of the Ministry of Employment and the Economy. Our role is to support and give advice to the municipalities, projects and NGOs working with issues of integration and resettlement. We present regional views and experiences to the Ministry and monitor how the Act on the Promotion of Integration is enforced in the region. We also coordinate the regional Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations.

I work as the Head of Immigration in the regions of North Ostrobothnia and Kainuu in northern Finland. My work concentrates on integration of immigrants and refugee resettlement. I would like to learn more about the Norwegian approach to resettling refugees, and approaches in IWG participant countries.

2. Finnish Refugee Council - Pia Lindfors (Head of Domestic Programme)

The main goal of the Finnish Refugee Council is to support refugees and immigrants to participate and be active in Finnish society and their everyday lives. As Head of Domestic Programme, I'm responsible for the work we do to promote integration in Finland. Our main activities are peer support groups, preventing and solving conflicts in multiethnic neighbourhoods and supporting and mentoring immigrant associations. I would like to hear about the Norwegian and other countries' experience in supporting integration, particularly regarding the relationship between government, municipalities and NGOs. Also new ideas are always welcome, as would be finding possible partners for international, EU-level projects. Hopefully we will be able to use some of the ideas I learn about and modify them for the Finnish context, either as part of our existing work or as new project and cooperation ideas.

The Netherlands

1. Dutch Council for Refugees - Roswitha Weiler (Senior Policy Officer)

As a Senior Policy Officer I coordinate the national advocacy efforts of the NGO the Dutch Council for Refugees. For many years I have been involved in research and policy with regard to refugee resettlement with a focus on integration issues, and I am also responsible for the Dutch Council for Refugees' Integration Barometer publication. Dutch Council for Refugees will co-host the ATCR in 2016, and I am part of the organising project team.

I am interested to learn more about information and advice, and good practices in integration policy and practice in Norway, including the experiences of refugees, as well as reflections on these topics from other countries. I also would like to learn about information and good practices for organising an inspiring ATCR Working Group!



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2. Dutch Council for Refugees - Annet Ijff (Officer, Social Support & Integration)

I am the intermediary between the national Dutch Council for Refugees office and local structures for refugee support in The Netherlands, with a specific focus on social support and integration. I am interested to learn more about experiences in refugee resettlement from other countries, to take back into my national context as part of my role of informing the local structures about lessons learned.

3. Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) - Nicolien Rengers (Coordinator Resettlement)

I coordinate Cultural Orientation training for the Dutch resettlement caseload on behalf of the Dutch government. I hope to be inspired by practices in the Norwegian resettlement practices, and to gain knowledge and insight to assist in the preparation of an IWG in the Netherlands in 2016 when we chair the ATCR process.

4. Foundation for Refugee Students (UAF) - Gaya Blom (Project Leader Resettlement)

UAF assists the integration of higher educated refugees, by helping them to learn the language and fulfil the entry requirements for higher education. We also assist them in finding employment suitable for their qualifications. I am interested to learn more about the integration programmes which are running in other countries, especially Norway, particularly in relation to issues that we still find challenging such as recognition of diplomas, discrimination, and working with cultural difference in areas such as job or academic interviews. Since we work specifically with refugee students, it would be interesting to know what the role of higher educational institutions in the integration of refugees in other countries, including students, employees, scholarship schemes and advocacy/awareness-raising.

Norway

1. Mr Abduljabal Haroun Rwegamira

Originally from the Congo, Mr Rwegamira was living in Uganda before being resettled to Norway in June 2013. He recently sat the Level 3 Norwegian language exams in preparation to enter university.

2. Mr Abdullahi Dahir Mire

Originally from Somalia, Mr Mire refugee arrived in Norway from Dadaab in September 2014. He is attending the Introduction Programme, which is a requirement for all those resettled to Norway.



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3. Ms Florence J Myklebust

Ms Myklebust is originally from Liberia, and arrived to Norway from Ghana in August 2005.

4. Ms Iman Haroun

Ms Haroun is from a Sudanese family, although she grew up in Libya, and spent time in Tunisia before being resettled to Norway with her family in 2011. Ms Haroun has been the SHARE Resettlement Ambassador for Norway since early 2015.

5. Municipality of Oslo – An-Magritt Aftret (Coordinator Introduction Programme)

Switzerland

1. State Secretariat for Migration - Loredana Monte (Integration Specialist)

I work within the Integration Department of the Swiss State Secretariat for Migration. Our team is responsible for all integration aspects of the Swiss resettlement programme. I work closely with the 8 cantons and their respective "coaches", usually Social Workers, who work with resettled refugees on a daily basis. Switzerland has a special integration programme for the pilot resettlement quota of 500 refugees, and I am also coordinating and implementing the monitoring and evaluation of the integration programme in collaboration with the 8 pilot cantons.

I am very interested in learning about integration approaches in other countries and the challenges of implementing programmes at the local level. I also hope being able to discuss the question of how to manage expectations on both sides – both for refugees and for staff in cantons and municipalities - training of "ground staff" in reception centres and regional accommodation centres on cultural competencies, volunteering, and how to optimise cultural orientation in countries of departure. I can share our experiences in resettlement and integration to date, pending our first formal evaluation of the programme in June 2015.

United Kingdom

1. Refugee Action - Kate Ferguson (Deputy Manager Operations)

Refugee Action is an independent national UK charity, and has been providing reception and integration services to refugees arriving in Greater Manchester through the UK's refugee resettlement programme (the Gateway Protection Programme) since 2004. I manage a team of Resettlement Workers who work with refugees and local stakeholders to facilitate integration and enable 470 people to build new lives in Greater Manchester each year. The Refugee Action service is designed around an empowerment model that includes the principles of working in partnership with refugees and enhancing - rather than replicating -



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local services. We work in partnership with 5 local authorities in the region to deliver the programme, which includes strong volunteering and community development components.

I hope to find out about the Norwegian programme and other European resettlement programmes, and to discover new practices and approaches that could improve our work in the UK. I would also like to reflect on wider global and European resettlement policies, practices and responses, and the impact that factors such as economic instability are having on this work.

2. First Choice Homes Oldham - Michelle Brennan (Gateway Programme Support Worker)

I work primarily as a support worker with families arriving into Oldham on the Gateway Protection Programme. I have 12 years experience of working with refugees and asylum seekers, and my current work is primarily around providing suitable housing and supporting integration into the local area. We work in conjunction with five other neighbouring local authorities and Refugee Action, and with a wide range of local voluntary and statutory agencies.

I would like to learn about how approaches in Norway and other countries differ from the UK, and how far these examples could improve our work in the UK.

United States

1. Office of Refugee Admissions, US Department of State - Irving Jones (Program Officer)

Irving is a Program Officer at the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration at the U.S. Department of State. His portfolio includes three resettlement agencies. Prior to joining PRM he served for three years as a Refugee Officer at the Department of Homeland Security, conducting refugee determination interviews primarily in the Middle East. From 2001 to 2005 he worked as a Program Analyst at the Office of Refugee Resettlement. From 1997 to 1998 he worked at resettlement affiliates in Austin, Texas. From 1994 to 1996 he served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Uzbekistan. He has also worked as an election monitor for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the Balkans and central Europe and for USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives in Kosovo. He completed a Master's in Public Administration at New York University and a Bachelor's degree in Literature from Samford University. He has three young children, a hefty mortgage and high blood pressure...

2. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops - Kristyn Peck (Associate Director of Children's Services)

Ms. Peck provides leadership and vision in the design and implementation of USCCB/MRS's protection efforts for vulnerable migrating children. She oversees a national network of more than 200 diocesan and other community-based social service agencies providing family



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reunification and specialised foster care services to unaccompanied refugee and immigrant children. Specialising in the intersection of immigration and child welfare, her experience includes developing and coordinating a national case management program for foreign-born victims of human trafficking at USCCB/MRS; as a Child Protection Specialist within the Anti-Trafficking in Persons (ATIP) unit at the department of Health and Human Services (HHS); and at Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service as an advocate for the best interests of unaccompanied children. Ms. Peck has testified in Congress and has served as a subject-matter expert at conferences in the U.S. and internationally. She has a Masters in Social Work from the University of Maryland.