



## **A JOINT IOM, UNHCR AND ICMC project**

### **“Promotion of resettlement in the EU through practical cooperation by EU Member States and other stakeholders”**

**Update 1 July 2010**

On the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of June the second project coordination meeting of the “Project on practical cooperation in EU resettlement” took place in Lisbon. This ERF-funded project aims at promoting further engagement in resettlement of refugees by EU Member States, NGOs and other stakeholders, by drawing on the benefits of a more coordinated practical approach by all actors involved in resettlement. In the project established resettlement countries (Sweden, the Netherlands, UK and Denmark) work together with countries which have started in resettlement more recently (France, Belgium, Romania and Portugal) and with countries that have not engaged in resettlement yet (Hungary, Poland and Slovakia). The 18 month project is implemented by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) and promotes multi-stakeholder practical cooperation in EU resettlement. The programme promotes cooperation between all resettlement actors at national and local levels, relating to the different stages of the resettlement process (pre- and post-arrival).

During the first project meeting which took place in Timisoara in March 2010, governments, NGO partners, UNHCR and IOM explored various possibilities for cooperation by all resettlement stakeholders in the different phases of resettlement, from joint selection missions to exchange of best practices in the reception and integration of resettled refugees. Particular attention was given to possible cooperation at the Emergency Transit Centre in Timisoara, for example by jointly using a video-conferencing tool for cultural orientation sessions. The participants also discussed online information-sharing and cooperation between resettlement actors dealing with the selection of refugees for resettlement and those working in reception and integration.

In the months following the Timisoara meeting, project partners, including stakeholders from governments, NGOs, UNHCR and IOM, have submitted a number of proposals for practical cooperation activities. These proposals were further developed in Lisbon. In the coming weeks it will be decided which activities can be implemented under the project, which runs until June 2011.

Proposed projects include: a pilot to carry out resettlement interviews per video-link between the ETC and an EU Member State, observer-missions by aspiring resettlement countries to explore currently used models of selection and pre-departure/ cultural orientation training. ‘Go and see visits’ by local resettlement stakeholders on reception and integration matters and exchanges to analyse the keys to success for dossier submissions.

The Lisbon meeting immediately followed on a training organised by ICMC for local resettlement service-providers in reception and integration in Sintra, Portugal. Over 45 participants and facilitators from 13 different countries across Europe and from Canada gathered for three days of knowledge-sharing and exchange of practices around the reception and integration of resettled refugees. Participants included different resettlement actors and service-providers from NGOs and local authorities, such as social services, employment and housing agencies, refugee organisations and education and health-providers. The Sintra training was the first platform at EU level for knowledge-sharing (among others regarding specific refugee groups) and exchange of good practices. The exchange of knowledge aims at increasing the capacity of resettlement service providers and at engaging new local stakeholders in offering resettlement places. During the training participants and facilitators agreed on key principles for the reception and integration of resettled refugees, which are meant to form the basis of an agreed charter on key principles, and will also feed into the manual on reception and integration to be written later this year by ICMC. The training will be followed by national stakeholder-meetings on methods and practices to improve the coordination between the pre- and post-arrival phase of resettlement. ICMC will organise these meetings in the 11 participating countries during the second half of 2010.