

## **KNOW RESET – BUILDING KNOWLEDGE FOR A CONCERTED AND SUSTAINABLE APPROACH TO REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT IN THE EU AND ITS MEMBER STATES**

Co-financed by the European Union

### ***Refugee Resettlement in the EU: The capacity to do it better and to do it more***

**Elona Bokshi**

KNOW RESET Research Report 2013/04  
*EU Comparative Report*



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**Building Knowledge for a Concerted and Sustainable Approach to Refugee Resettlement**  
**in the EU and its Member States**

**Research Report**  
**KNOW RESET RR 2013/04**

**Refugee Resettlement in the EU:**  
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European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE)

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## **KNOW RESET - Building Knowledge for a Concerted and Sustainable Approach to Refugee Resettlement in the EU and its Member States**

The KNOW RESET Project, which is co-financed by the European Union, is carried out by the EUI in partnership with ECRE (the European Council on Refugees and Exiles). The general objective of the project is to construct the knowledge-base necessary for good policy-making in the refugee resettlement domain in the EU and its 27 Member States. It aims to explore the potential to develop the resettlement capacity, to extend good practices and to enhance cooperation in the EU.

KNOW RESET maps and analyses frameworks and practices in the area of refugee resettlement in the 27 EU Member States. The team involved in the project, gathering members of the EUI's and ECRE's large networks, has proceeded with a systematic and comparative inventory of legal and policy frameworks and practices related to resettlement in the EU and its 27 Member States, providing the most updated set of information. The publication of comparative data and the dissemination of research results contribute to raising awareness for refugee resettlement and refugee protection in the EU and provide a knowledge-tool for policy-makers, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders interested or involved in resettlement activities and policies in the EU and countries of first asylum. The project involves too field research in Kenya, Pakistan and Tunisia, which will add to the knowledge and the assessment of resettlement practices of refugees from countries of first asylum to the EU.

KNOW RESET has resulted in the first website mapping EU involvement in refugee resettlement. It focuses on resettlement in the EU and covers the 27 Member States, involved in resettlement in one form or another, and to various degrees. It contains a unique database providing legal, administrative and policy documents as well as statistics collected from national authorities by the project team. It also includes a series of comparative tables and graphs, the country profiles of the Member States, country of first asylum reports, as well as thematic reports and policy briefs. This user-friendly website is a valuable instrument for: comparing the varied frameworks, policies and practices within the EU; for evaluating the resettlement capacity in the EU; for following the evolution of Member States' commitment in resettlement; and for assessing the impact of the Joint EU Resettlement Programme.

Results of the above activities are available for public consultation through the website of the project:  
<http://www.know-reset.eu/>

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## **Abstract**

Know Reset was an EU-wide research project<sup>1</sup> that aimed to analyse how resettlement is currently conducted in the European Union, and in what ways it can be improved. The purpose of this report is to make the case for the increased use of resettlement by European countries on two levels: firstly, through the establishment of new national resettlement programmes in different countries and the expansion of national programmes where they already exist; secondly, to continue common efforts at national and EU level for a harmonized European resettlement programme, the future of which will be negotiated in the context of the EU financial perspectives for the period 2014-2020.

The report is illustrated with examples from various Member States. Drawing from the collated country profiles, the findings illustrate capacity for resettlement in four areas: funding; the different actors involved; political will; and the methods used. The paper looks at each of these areas and starts by assessing the capacity of EU Member States to commit or not to resettlement; to expand their efforts (more resettlement places); and to conduct more effective (better quality) resettlement. This makes up the first section. Secondly, the future of resettlement across the European Union is explored. Finally, we formulate recommendations to improve the quality of national resettlement and to promote a better resettlement policy in Europe.

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<sup>1</sup> Know Reset is co-funded by the European Commission through the European Refugee Fund (ERF) 2010

## **ACRONYMS**

UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
EU	European Union
EP	European Parliament
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
JEURP	EU Joint Resettlement Programme
ERF	European Refugee Fund
AMF	Asylum and Migration Fund
ECRE	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
CCME	Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe
CO	Cultural Orientation
JHA	Justice and Home Affairs
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MS	Member States of the European Union
UKBA	United Kingdom Border Agency
EASO	EUROPEAN ASYLUM SUPPORT OFFICE
COA	Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers in Netherlands
UAF	University Assistance Fund in Netherlands

## I. Introduction

### i. Resettlement Capacity in Europe at a glance

The scale of resettlement has changed dramatically over the last thirty years. The phenomenon of resettlement in the international arena originated and evolved in the context of the Cold War.<sup>2</sup> Historical efforts across nations were exerted to help the large numbers of displaced people in the aftermath of Second World War. Since then, Europe has been offering resettlement as a protection tool for refugees, albeit not at a scale comparable to other countries<sup>3</sup> like the US, Canada and Australia.<sup>4</sup>

UNHCR set a goal to increase the number of countries conducting resettlement and their encouragement of new programmes had already showed some success by 2000.<sup>5</sup> Their programmes were relatively small but their involvement was very important in giving new strength to this policy tool. Since then individual EU Member States have responded to resettlement as a protection tool in different ways. In 2002 the UK Home office announced its plan to establish a resettlement programme.<sup>6</sup> By that time there were seven<sup>7</sup> EU Member States with some form of resettlement programme or who had established the firm ambition to carry out resettlement. However, in addition to this, several other Member States were in fact already resettling some refugees on an ad hoc basis at the specific request of UNCHR. These resettlement cases were often people with an immediate need for protection, often with a family member, in the state in question.

After years of a solely national approach to carrying out resettlement, momentum began for a combined European approach in 2008, which demonstrated that Europe was ready for a collaborative approach to resettlement. Through Conclusions of the Justice and Home Affairs Council that year,<sup>8</sup> the EU committed to resettle up to 10,000 Iraqi refugees, after a call was released from UNHCR. This commitment represented the first joint effort of EU Member States to offer international protection to a specific refugee population through resettlement.<sup>9</sup> The response of the EU to the Iraqi refugee crisis, however, showed some of the difficulties of a joint EU response without an existing decision-making mechanism or any corresponding infrastructure.<sup>10</sup> The ICMC report “10.000 refugees from Iraq”, May

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<sup>2</sup> More info please see also the introduction “ Refugee Resettlement in the EU: Between Shared Standards and Diversity in Legal and Policy Frames” Delphine Perrin and Frank McNamara, pg.7 <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00013>

<sup>3</sup> A comprehensive database on Resettlement in the EU, and throughout the Member States can be found at the Know Reset Website < <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=2>>

<sup>4</sup> Know Reset, Country of First Asylum Report: Tunisia, 2013 p13: “burden sharing is spread unevenly between the 27 EU Member States, since the EU received 5,000 refugees between 2011/2012 (4,700 in 2010), the vast majority are hosted by the USA, Canada and Australia., <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00012>

<sup>5</sup> Joanne van Selm, Tamara Woroby, Erin Patrick and Monica Matts, Study on The Feasibility of setting up resettlement schemes in EU Member States or at EU Level, against the background of the Common European Asylum system and the goal of a Common Asylum Procedure. 2003  
[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/elibrary/docs/pdf/resettlement\\_study\\_full\\_2003\\_en\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/elibrary/docs/pdf/resettlement_study_full_2003_en_en.pdf),

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

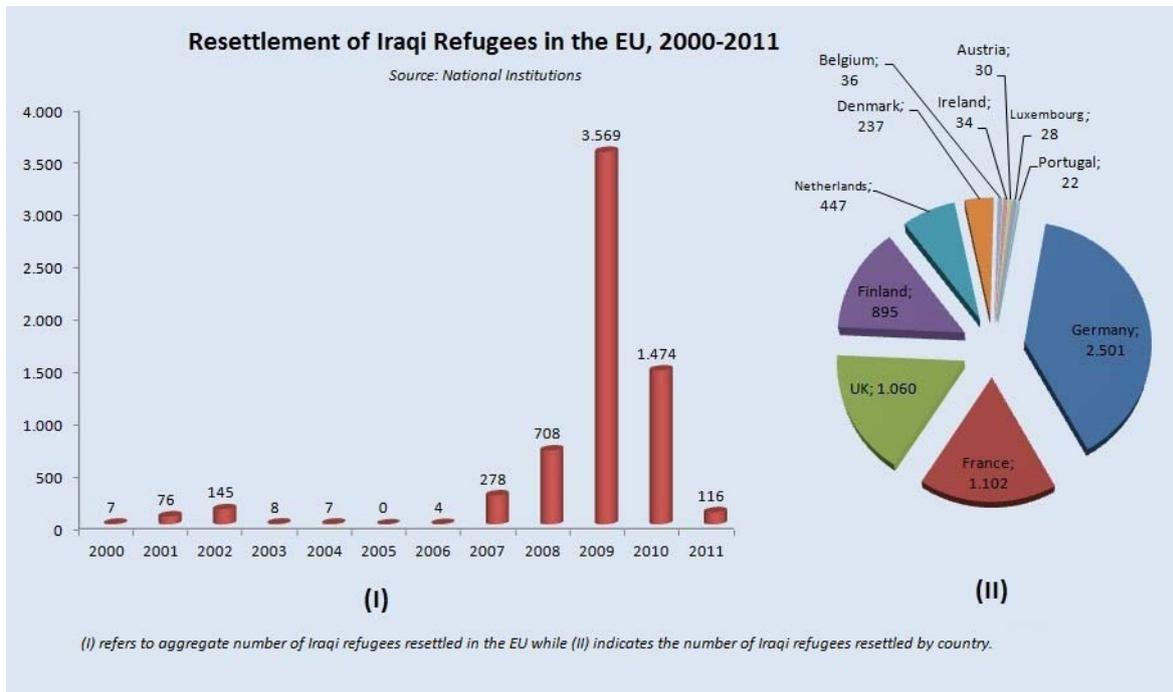
<sup>7</sup> Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain and United Kingdom.

<sup>8</sup> European Council (2008), JHA Council Meeting, Council Conclusions on the reception of Iraqi refugees, Brussels, 27-28 November 2008.

<sup>9</sup> International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), 10,000 refugees from Iraq: A report on joint resettlement in the European Union, May 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Churches’ Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME) Twelve Arguments and Seven Proposals for the EU Refugee Resettlement Scheme, 2009.

2010, concluded that the pledge to resettle up to 10.000 refugees from Iraq had not been met and by December 2009, only about 85 % of the refugee had effectively arrived in the European Union.<sup>11</sup>



Building upon the public consultations carried out in the framework of the Green Paper on the future of the CEAS in 2007, the EC announced in its policy plan of 17 June 2008 that it would make proposals to develop an “EU Resettlement Scheme” in the course of 2009 (in which Member States would participate on a voluntary basis). The new European Refugee Fund (ERF III),<sup>12</sup> which became operational in 2008, provided financial assistance for the resettlement of refugees from third countries to the EU Member States.

The second half of 2009 was of crucial importance for the future of the of EU policy on refugee resettlement. In September 2009, during the Swedish Presidency, the EU Member State with the most extensive experience in refugee resettlement, the EC presented its proposal for an EU Resettlement Scheme.<sup>13</sup> The Stockholm program welcomed the initiative by inviting the EU institutions to encourage the voluntary participation of Member States in the EU resettlement scheme’. The Stockholm Programme was another step further and one that reached a strong institutional consensus.

In addition, on 18 February 2009, the Commission adopted a proposal for the creation of a European Asylum Support Office (EASO) which became operational in 2010. EASO is tasked with providing a structural framework for the carrying out of practical cooperation activities in the field of asylum, including activities related to resettlement.

**The year 2011 was very important on the worldwide political arena,** due to the uprisings in North Africa and the war in Libya both of which created massive flows of people fleeing their countries to seek asylum elsewhere. During the height of the 2011 Libyan civil war, Tunisia absorbed

<sup>11</sup> ICMC “10.000 refugees from Iraq A report on Joint Resettlement in the European Union”, op.cit.

<sup>12</sup> Decision No 573/2007/EC.

<sup>13</sup> Commission proposal (2009) 447 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2009:0447:FIN:EN:PDF>

over a million people seeking sanctuary — Choucha alone received upwards of 18,000 people a day.<sup>14</sup> In response to that, the European Commission organized a pledging conference on resettlement in May 2011 for Member States to pledge places for the thousands of refugees waiting in camps with poor living conditions. The pledging conference was a decisive step towards the adoption of the Joint EU Resettlement Programme (JEURP).<sup>15</sup>

The conference was soon followed by another call for a resettlement plan<sup>16</sup> for refugees stranded in Choucha unable to return to their country of origin, to which a number of MS responded collectively. Thus began a political drive across the European Union for more collaborative resettlement approach, continuing the **joint commitment that had** already started with Iraqi refugees that resulted in offers to resettle 5000 refugees fleeing the civil war in Libya<sup>17</sup> who were residing in the Tunisian Transit camp, near Choucha.

This on-going momentum for resettlement led to the adoption of the JEURP,<sup>18</sup> although it was almost two years later, during which time the proposal remained stuck between institutions mainly due to annual priority setting and because of an argument about which decision procedure to use in connection to the implementation of the Lisbon Treaty. During these two years, it is important to emphasise the importance of the role of the European Parliament in advocating for the adoption of the JEURP.

Up until the adoption of JEURP, resettlement was carried out by EU Member States without much consultation and coordination among each other. There had been several trans-national resettlement-related projects, including “twinning”, which were carried out within the EU over the past few years, using European Refugee Community funds (including ERF).<sup>19</sup> These projects covered a wide range of activities, such as the selection process and reception and integration of resettled refugees. Many different actors, both governmental and non-governmental (international and local NGOs, UNHCR, IOM), from both resettlement and non-resettlement countries participated in projects of this type, with the aim of facilitating the collection of information and the exchange of practices between Member states. These projects and a few joint missions, which took place between 2008 and 2009, paved the way for creating a more favourable environment for resettlement and encouraged more Member States on board.<sup>20</sup>

The central element of the EU Resettlement Programme<sup>21</sup> is a mechanism allowing for the setting of common priorities on resettlement for 2013, as well as more effective use of financial assistance available through the European Refugee Fund which is designed for resettlement activities. The JEURP allowed for closer political and practical cooperation among the Member States, so as to increase the effectiveness and cost-efficiency of their resettlement activities, and the humanitarian and strategic impact of resettlement. The JEURP also provided the impetus for other Member States to take part in resettlement. This political and financial incentive allowed some Member States *to move from ad hoc resettlement to annual/programme-based resettlement*, for example, Belgium and Germany, and for other Member States new to resettlement such as Hungary, *to begin their efforts*.

<sup>14</sup> Kristopher Sobo, 2013 <http://www.mediaglobal.org/2013/07/31/unhcr-helps-tunisia-with-refugees-in-wake-of-libyan-civil-war/>

<sup>15</sup> European Parliament, ‘Comparative Study on the best practices for the integration of resettled refugees in the EU Member States’, pg.17 <http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.ttp.eu/files/EP%20study.pdf> 2012

<sup>16</sup> European Parliament (2011), Debate on Support to Refugees in Tunisia, 28 September 2011, Strasbourg.

<sup>17</sup> Wafa Baba, Know Reset, Country of First Asylum Report: Tunisia, pg. 8, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00012>

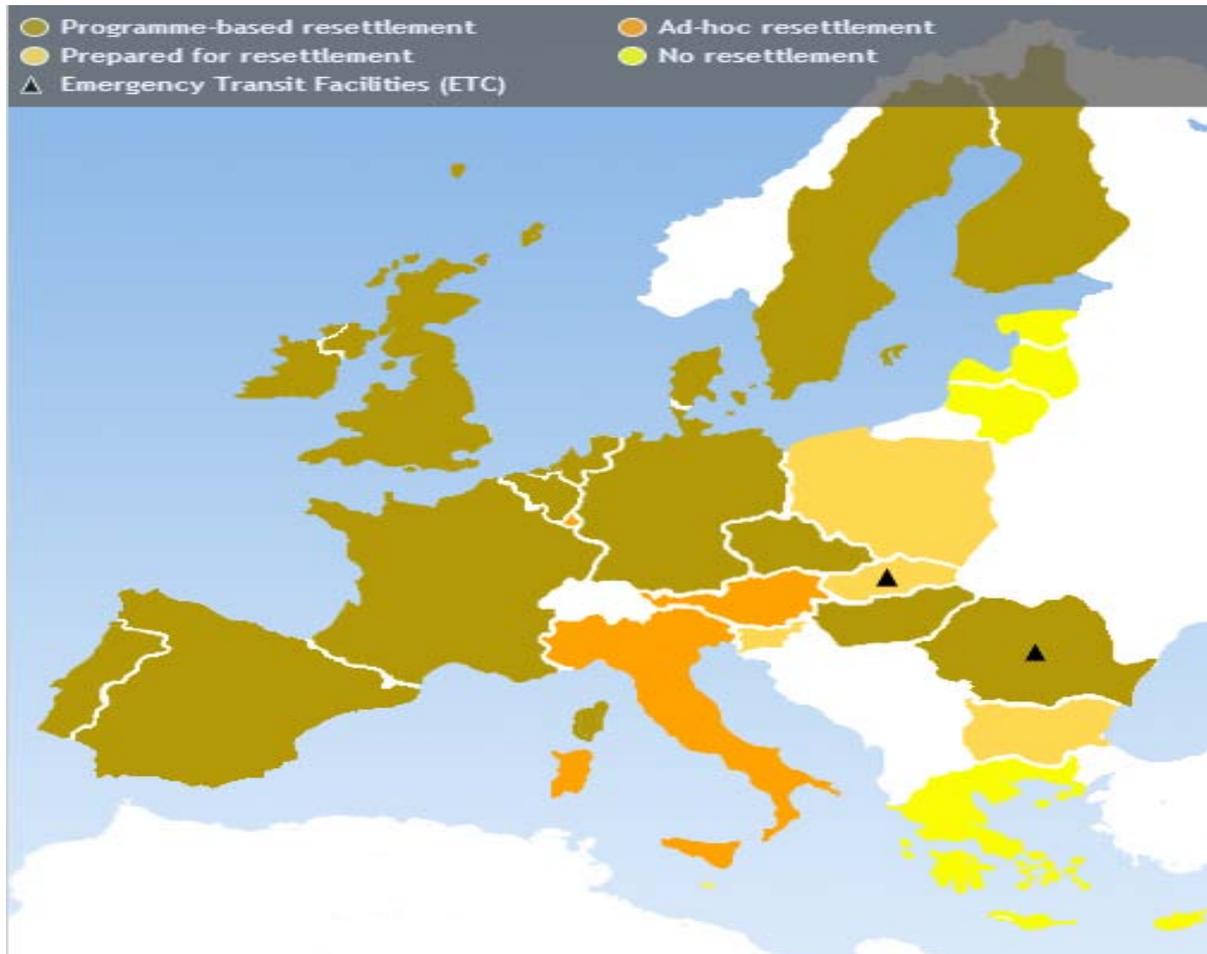
<sup>18</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:092:0001:0003:EN:PDF> 6444/12;  
<http://register.consilium.europa.eu/pdf/en/12/st06/st06444-ad01co03.en12.pdf>.  
For more information please read “ Joint EU Resettlement Programme” in <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00069>

<sup>19</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/refugee-fund/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/migration-asylum-borders/refugee-fund/index_en.htm)

<sup>20</sup> European Parliament, Comparative Study on the best practices for the integration of resettled refugees in the EU Member States, 2012:18 [www.ecre.org/component/downloads/downloads/747.html](http://www.ecre.org/component/downloads/downloads/747.html)

<sup>21</sup> Decision 281/2012/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 March 2012.

The data gathered in the research points out that there are now more Member States (16) conducting resettlement than ever before, however obstacles remain which hinder the capacity and quality of the resettlement conducted.



Four Member States have only conducted ad-hoc schemes, fourteen Member States have or have had an annual or multiannual programme.

Apart from an increase in committed resettlement places made available by more Member States over the last thirty years, another **innovative approach** is that **resettlement is now more regulated and framed**: 13 EU countries refer to resettlement in Law. 15 EU countries have adopted governmental acts related to resettlement.<sup>22</sup>

In addition to this level of formal commitment, our research has shown that socio-economic factors remain an influential part of the decision process on behalf of Member States. This leads us to believe that *issues and challenges related to resettlement policy cannot be addressed in isolation from broader migration trends and issues.*

This means that any national public discussion on resettlement does not take place in a vacuum but is entangled with other migration issues. The public remain largely unaware of resettlement occurring, to the point where there is confusion regarding the difference between asylum seekers, economic

<sup>22</sup> Know Reset, Formal Basis for Resettlement and Effective Resettlement in the EU Member States, <[http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00700\\_20130812105725\\_final.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00700_20130812105725_final.pdf)> June 2013

migrants and resettled refugees.<sup>23</sup> Public opinion has shifted even in traditional resettlement countries to people being more reluctant to resettle more refugees. This is partly linked with the **asylum “crisis”** in a few countries like Belgium, for example.

The impact of the economic crisis has been specifically named in a number of cases. Policy makers (Governments) in a few Member States (like Spain) have been cautious not to refer to resettlement efforts openly due to the economic crisis and the fear of negative backlash from the public. The worsening economic situation across and Eastern Europe has affected also Bulgaria and the country’s recent initiatives in the area of resettlement.<sup>24</sup> Other countries not engaged to resettlement are affected by this too.

Some states have resettlement mechanisms in place and have had such mechanisms for a number of decades, whereas other states are new to the process and have not the same level of experience. This was reflected in the Know Reset research, in each Member State Country Profile, **collated** here in this paper, where we saw real diversity in capacity. With such diverging capacities across the Member States *it still remains important that states maintain the high quality of resettlement*, as well as the fulfilment of the quantitative expectations set by quotas.

Recently, with no end to the conflict in sight in Syria, the UN agency has urged EU nations to offer asylum to some 10,000 Syrians this year and another 30,000 in 2014.<sup>25</sup> To date, Germany, Austria, France, Finland, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Luxemburg, Hungary and Ireland<sup>26</sup> are amongst countries who have accepted to resettle Syrian refugees.

## ii. About the report and method research

The research undertaken as part of the Know-Reset project examined all 27 EU Member States, both those that have resettlement experience and those that do not, in an effort to bring about a better understanding of resettlement and the potential expansion of resettlement practices in Europe. The different approaches to resettlement, the historical relationship with resettlement, and the legal framework of resettlement were thoroughly analysed in each country. As a result of the project, 27 country profiles, an online database at EU level (EU legal and policy documents directly or indirectly linked to resettlement) and of national information<sup>27</sup> (on different legal and administrative framework, statistic, policy statements and debates, and reports), and tools for quantitative and qualitative country comparison have all been published on the Know-Reset website.<sup>28</sup>

The research covers resettlement and non-resettlement Member States of the European Union (MS). Within the MS which conduct resettlement, there are two broad types of resettlement:

- *Ad hoc* resettlement, which responds to situations as they happen with no pre-defined quota;
- Programme-based resettlement in which MS set annual or multi-annual quotas.

In addition to this, the research was guided by two overriding questions:

- What is the current resettlement policy and practice in Europe and how can EU Members states do more and better?

<sup>23</sup> Know Reset, Finnish Country Profile, [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00151\\_20130705130136\\_knowresetcountryprofilefinland.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00151_20130705130136_knowresetcountryprofilefinland.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00146>, pg.1

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.unhcr.org/5249282c6.html>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> For more information please see: <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00002>

<sup>28</sup> Know-Reset Website, <<http://www.know-reset.eu/>>

- Do existing resettlement systems in Europe meet the needs of refugees, and what can be done to improve these systems?

To answer to those questions, background research was conducted in each country engaged in resettlement, including desk and field research. Field research consisted of a series of semi-structured interviews<sup>29</sup> with relevant authorities in each EU Member States, as well as other stakeholders at national level. Desk research also included background statistical research. For each EU country, data on resettlement and related phenomena on asylum and immigration were provided by national institutions. The on-line database<sup>30</sup> now provides statistics for each Member State. Background research and interviews were also conducted in other EU countries not committed to resettlement for comparison.

By looking at both types of resettlement (**programme-based resettlement and ad hoc**) at two distinct stages of the resettlement process (from pre-departure to post-arrival of refugees), the research enabled us to compile an inventory of the legal frameworks and actual practices of each resettling EU member state.

The first part of the paper builds on the major elements in any resettlement programme, which are identified and explained in each sub-section. As part of this review the resettlement programmes of **14 Member States** are discussed: **four**<sup>31</sup> of the “traditional” countries of resettlement, which are Denmark, Finland, The Netherlands and Sweden, together with the other **ten** EU Member States implementing programme-based resettlement, which include: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Spain, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, and Romania.<sup>32</sup> Other ad hoc programmes and measures in other EU Member States are also considered.

Various trends emerged during the examination of differences between resettlement Member States, which also had an impact on identifying the potential for future resettlement in non-resettlement Member States. These trends can in part explain whether and how resettlement can quantitatively be increased (more numbers resettled), whilst at the same time boosting the quality of resettlement programmes (better conditions and smoother processes). Trends emerged around four distinct categories:

1. **Methods used:** How are quotas set by Member States, and how does this affect decisions making? How are refugee selected, and by whom?
2. How is the setting of quotas linked to the country's overall foreign policy (provided that there is enough evidence to evaluate this) and development objectives?
3. **Actors involved:** Who are the stakeholders involved in the process? What is the division of roles between the national government, NGOs and local authorities? What human resources are available for resettlement programmes from the national governments?
4. **Funding:** Is there enough EU financial assistance and/or national funding to ensure that quality resettlement is conducted? Has the economic crisis in Europe influenced decisions to resettle?
5. **Political will:** What is the overall political debate around asylum in the country, the overall asylum situation and needs? Is there a preference for the kind of refugees accepted? How far do public opinion and the media influence resettlement decisions? What other factors contribute to resettlement decisions?

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<sup>29</sup> Some names are cited in the report, others are not when the interviewees did not wish to be named.

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00011>

<sup>31</sup> Norway is not included in the research as it is not part of the EU.

<sup>32</sup> Bulgaria plans to implement a resettlement programme in 2014.

To assess the current and future capacity of Member States carrying out resettlement, and the potential of future resettlement in non-resettlement Member States, these four categories, were examined further in the first section of the paper, entitled ‘2013: Resettlement capacity at a glance’.

It should be noted that the capacity for integrating resettled persons is beyond the scope of this paper. Other recent reports have covered this issue in depth for example the EP comparative study on the best practices for the integration of resettled refugees in the EU Member States<sup>33</sup> and the new UNHCR Guide on the Integration of Resettled Refugees.<sup>34</sup> The EP study examines the question of the integration of resettled refugees in Europe, by analysing the policy framework for resettlement and refugee integration and the practices at the national and the European level. The UNHCR Guide explains the essentials for establishing a resettlement programme and the fundamentals for achieving sustainable resettlement programmes.

As a result, this paper does not focus on material capacities (eg, housing, etc), although it did come up in the research that the reception and integration of resettled refugees poses challenges to resettlement countries, local authorities, local communities, and partners. Some important elements of reception capacities and their impact, however, will be touched upon in the course of the paper as a crucial cross cutting issue such as the lack of specific reception/accommodation facilities.

The first part of the paper builds on the major elements in any resettlement programme, which are identified and explained in each sub-section. As part of this review the resettlement programmes of 14 Member States are discussed: four<sup>35</sup> of the “traditional” countries of resettlement, which are Denmark, Finland, The Netherlands and Sweden, together with the other 10 EU Member States implementing programme-based resettlement, which include: Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Spain, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, and Romania,<sup>36</sup> Other ad hoc programmes and measures in other EU Member States are also considered.

The second section entitled ‘The Future of Resettlement in Europe’ explores the possibility to conduct more and better resettlement across the European Union. Finally, the conclusions of the Know Reset findings are included, followed by a set of recommendations for more effective resettlement in Europe.

## II. Resettlement practices and capacities across Europe

**Sub-section A** looks at the question of whether the number of resettlement places made available has increased or not in parallel with the expansion of the number of EU resettlement countries.<sup>37</sup> One would think that there would be a considerable increase in the number of resettlement places automatically with the expansion in the number of EU resettlement countries, but the research indicates that is not necessarily the case.

**Sub-section B** looks at the method used in selecting refugees and in setting the quotas which from the research also impacts on the capacity of host member states to resettle. The national Governments are the main actors in this phase.

Although national governments are responsible for the selection of refugees for resettlement, Regional and Local Authorities play a central role in offering reception and integration support once

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<sup>33</sup> European Parliament, ‘Comparative Study on the best practices for the integration of resettled refugees in the EU Member States’ <http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.ttp.eu/files/EP%20study.pdf> 2012

<sup>34</sup> <http://www.unhcr-centraleurope.org/pdf/resources/legal-documents/unhcr-handbooks-recommendations-and-guidelines/unhcr-guide-on-the-integration-of-resettled-refugees.html>

<sup>35</sup> Norway is not included in the research as it is not part of the EU.

<sup>36</sup> Bulgaria plans to implement a resettlement programme in 2014.

<sup>37</sup> Please note that the statistics gathered in the framework of this project covers the period 2000-2011.

refugees have arrived. The success of national refugee resettlement programmes thus depends on the commitment, ability and partnerships of cities, municipalities and regions. In addition to this, it is also important to highlight the major role that NGOs play in the whole resettlement process. **Sub-section C** assesses the level of cooperation between these actors, the services they provide and the extent of their involvement on the effectiveness of resettlement. The analysis of this section clearly shows that cooperation between stakeholders not only varies from one country to another but also within each country.

A further section on the economics of resettlement elaborates upon the type of the information necessary to understand how much resettlement costs. Financial incentives continue to play an important role in encouraging resettlement across the EU Members States, so the existing funding at EU and national level will also be important and is looked at in **sub -section D**. This section will also analyse the impact that the ERF has had in Member States to increase the number of refugees resettled in each of them. Going back to the paper “Twelve Arguments and seven proposals for the EU Refugee Resettlement Scheme” published by CCME on 29 June 2009,<sup>38</sup> it is interesting to note that this research indicates the same results, namely that: Member states (especially the smaller ones or poorer ones) have often been reluctant to engage in resettlement because they believe that the infrastructure for a resettlement programme may be too costly.

Crosscutting aspects of political reasoning and decisions about resettlement are analysed in **sub-section E**. This sub-section analyses not only the current political socio-economic factors affecting EU Member States engaged in resettlement; but also the future political trends in both resettlement and non-resettlement EU countries relating to political decisions regarding their commitment or lack of, to resettlement. The impact of public opinion and media is also explored in this sub –section. It seems that with strong public support and demonstrable political will, adequate resettlement possibilities and good cooperation with the regional and local authorities,<sup>39</sup> European resettlement efforts may better respond to dramatic resettlement needs.

#### **A. Capacity in terms of numbers: more new resettlement countries, more places?**

According to UNHCR the number of people currently in situations of displacement has reached 45 million worldwide, the highest figure for 14 years. While global resettlement needs now stand at 691,000, not including the massive outflow of refugees fleeing the crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic, the number of annual quota places from UNHCR submissions<sup>40</sup> sits at 86,000. This highlights the huge disparity between resettlement needs and state response.<sup>41</sup>

In the context where the global protection needs are larger than the willingness and capacity of host countries to resettle, the question “who to resettle” and “how many” is a pressing and critical one for EU Member States. The evidence found in the course of this research highlights many factors which emerge around the four distinct categories examined above: method used, actors involved, political will and funding. A few of them related to capacity in terms of numbers and methods used will be elaborated upon this section.

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<sup>38</sup> These are available at:

<http://www.ccme.be/secretary/NEWS/090629%20RR%20CCME%20considerations%20and%20recommendations%20EU%20RR%20scheme%20FINAL.pdf>

<sup>39</sup> Interview with Janneke van Etten, Senior Policy Officer at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Migration Policy Department , Asylum, Reception and Return, Netherlands.

<sup>40</sup> UNHCR Resettlement Handbook, June 2011 Chapter 6: UNHCR Resettlement Submission Categories  
<http://www.unhcr.org/3d464e842.html>

<sup>41</sup> UNHCR, Projected Global Resettlement needs 2014. <http://www.unhcr.org/51e3eabf9.html>

The research also suggests that a link between the number of asylum seekers and of resettlement arrivals exists, even if it varies from one country to another. Even though the evidence is not clear, there seems to be a point at which an increasing number of asylum seekers impacts the government's decision to engage in resettlement or vice versa. Resettlement programmes can also impact the number of asylum seekers arriving in the EU. For example, France saw the number of asylum seekers increasing very significantly over several years (from 35,520 applications in 2007 to 57,113 in 2011), which causes difficulties in terms of reception and accommodation. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to envisage more cases of resettlement. In an interview, the Finish Refugee Advice Centre considered that “It would be good if the EU could create mechanisms through which countries that receive less asylum seekers would be motivated to increase their resettlement quota. Refugees and asylum seekers are often seen as two separate groups and a holistic approach is lost”. More evidence is found in the Belgian case where the number of persons to be resettled is a political decision. Various factors are relevant, including the number of regular asylum seekers and the situation of the reception network. In 2009 but especially in 2011, the reception network and the national asylum system in Belgium were under very severe pressure, which led to a relatively restrictive number of resettlement places. Although the choice of countries has not been based on strategic choices connected to Belgian Foreign Policy so far.<sup>42</sup>

In 2000, the UK Home Secretary Jack Straw, proposed an EU-wide programme that would have impacted the number of asylum seekers arriving in Europe and in 2002 the UK government published a white paper “Safe Borders, Safe Haven” proposing reforms to the UK's immigration system. These included provisions to develop a resettlement programme based on quotas in order to open a legal and safe route to the UK for vulnerable refugees and to avoid them falling into the hands of smugglers and traffickers.

The table below gives a snap picture of the number of refugees granted protection during the last decade in the European Union. Despite the arguments above, the numbers show that it is the countries receiving more asylum seekers who also resettle more refugees.

<b>Number of Refugees Granted Protection in the EU Member States, 2000 - 2011</b>				
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Admission to Refugee Status</b>	<b>Resettlement</b>	<b>Total Protection Granted</b>
1	<i>Sweden</i>	120,350	18,957	139,307
2	<i>United Kingdom</i>	115,113	3,637	118,750
3	<i>Italy</i>	112,602	151	112,753
4	<i>Germany</i>	105,577	2,756	108,333
5	<i>France</i>	85,189	1,456	86,645
6	<i>Netherlands</i>	70,516	4,621	75,137
7	<i>Denmark</i>	30,250	6,003	36,253
8	<i>Austria</i>	33,027	30	33,057
9	<i>Belgium</i>	25,358	72	25,430
10	<i>Finland</i>	10,453	8,305	18,758

Source: National Institutions. The term "Total Protection Granted" refers to the total number of Admission to Refugee Status and Resettlement. The term "Admission to Refugee Status" indicates the number of refugees granted protection under refugee status, and other type of protection (i.e. subsidiary protection, humanitarian protection) while "Resettlement" refers to protection granted by resettlement activities.

Note: No information available to Know Reset for following countries and years: the UK (2000), Italy (2010, 2011 information available only from national authorities, see country page for detailed information), France (2000, 2011), Austria (2000, 2001), Belgium (numbers indicate of number of files instead of number of individuals).

Deciding how many refugees to resettle is in many ways about defining the nature of the programme as well as the image<sup>43</sup> of the resettlement country in the global refugee protection system.

<sup>42</sup> Written interview with Ewout Adriaens, op.cit.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

For example, in the Swedish context, it is very important that politicians are not afraid to stand up for refugees and openly say that Sweden needs to show solidarity. In addition to this, politicians always include resettlement in the talks about asylum issues as an important issue.<sup>44</sup> Since the resettlement of refugees plays an important role in the EU's external policies on asylum, the involvement of Romania in the resettlement programme was driven also by the desire to assume more responsibility as an EU Member State.<sup>45</sup> The research shows that there is no implementable guideline in determining how many resettled refugees would be a 'good' number for any given state. This is mainly linked with the way Member States decide on the annual numbers and their levels of setting a 'quota', a 'target' or a 'ceiling'. The decision on the national annual budget also impacts on the annual numbers along with political will and the capacity for reception and integration. Sweden, for example, in contrast with most other member states, links a specific amount of resources to each refugee entering the country, rather than making a standard budget available. The UK is aspiring to increase the quota by 1000 per year when this becomes affordable. The present financial climate suggests that additional money for resettlement is unlikely to be available in the near future and the focus will need to be either: increased funding from Europe; or reducing the levels of support and accommodation to refugees in order to increase the numbers resettled within the existing budget.<sup>46</sup>

The adoption of the Joint EU resettlement Programme, in March 2012, was a positive step towards increasing the number of resettlement places made available by EU Member States. However, the resettlement capacity has not significantly increased in parallel with the expansion in the number of EU resettlement countries. Efforts by EU member states in resettlement are still limited particularly compared to the global resettlement needs as well as their potential capacity.

A comparison of the two graphs/maps below proves that although the EU map of resettlement countries<sup>47</sup> is expanding with more Member States committed to resettlement, the rate has not kept pace with the number of refugees resettled. If we refer to the data gathered by the Know Reset project in 2011<sup>48</sup> (4,325 refugees) then the EU resettled 1,062 refugees less in that year than in 2010 (5,387 resettled refugees).

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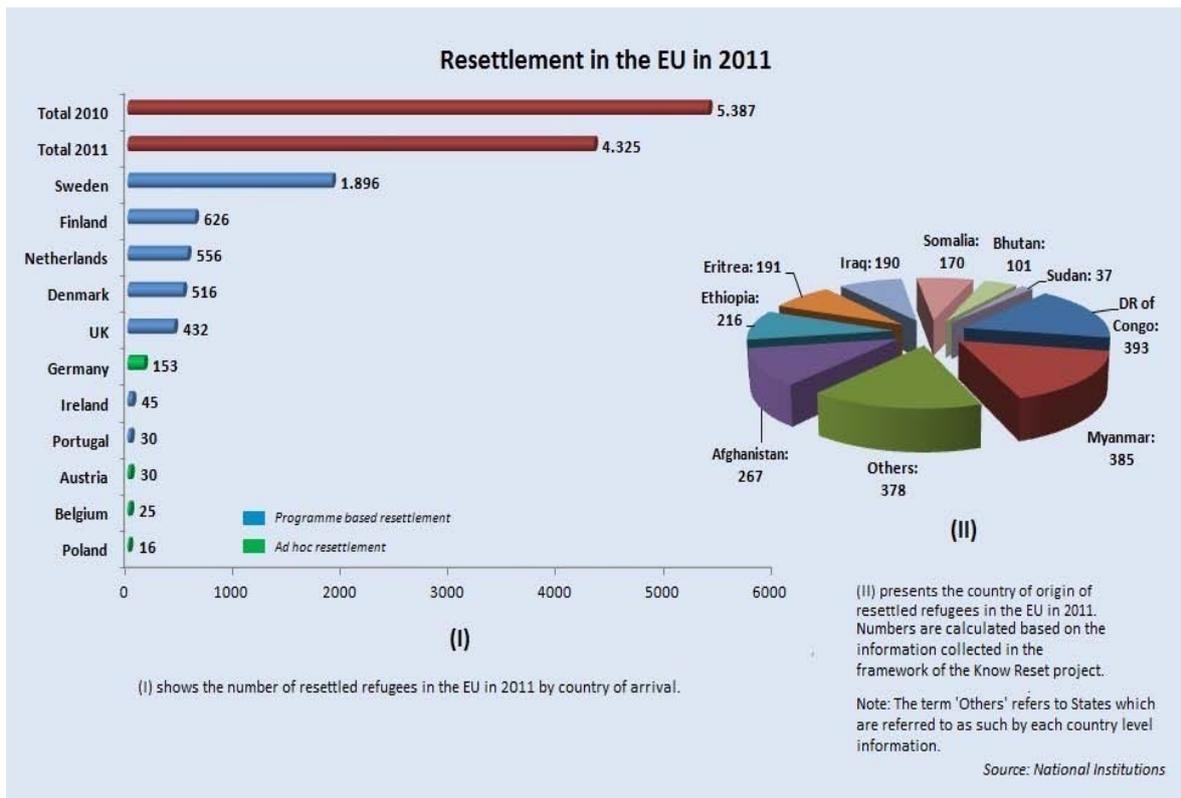
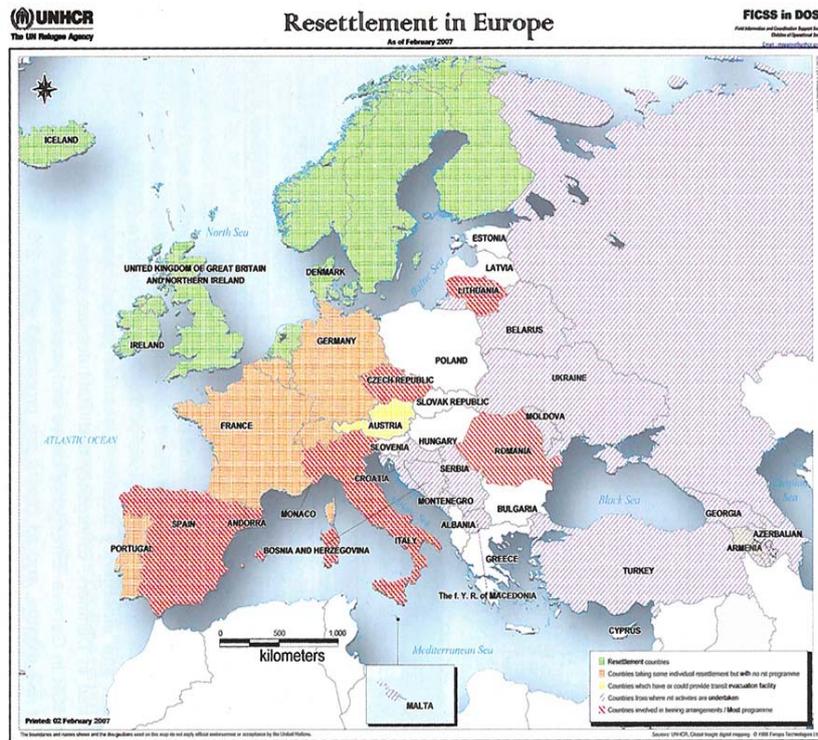
<sup>44</sup> Interview with the Swedish Justice Ministry.

<sup>45</sup> Interview with the RUMANIAN OFFICE OF IMMIGRATION, *op.cit.*

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Dave Atkinson, Refugee Team, London and South East Region, UK Border Agency 16/05/12.

<sup>47</sup> Know Reset Website 2013 <<http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00001>>

<sup>48</sup> Know Reset, Resettlement in the EU in 2011, 2013, <<http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00689>>



As a result, we can say that despite an increase in the number of countries resettling, Europe's overall contribution to global resettlement remained approximately the same (7.9 % of the total number of refugees resettled in 2007 as compared to 2011 and 8.3 % in 2012).<sup>49</sup>

The total number of individuals that European Member States have committed to resettle in 2013 is approximately 5,500.<sup>50</sup>

14 Member states<sup>51</sup> implement resettlement programmes, many with relatively small numbers. In December 2012, the Hungarian Government announced the establishment of an annual resettlement programme thus becoming one of the newest States in Europe to resettle, together with countries like Spain, Belgium, Germany and Bulgaria. **New resettlement countries are initially able to offer only a very limited number of places**, as they require time and resources to build their capacity to develop and implement their resettlement programmes. However, for resettlement to fulfil its function as a meaningful demonstration of solidarity with countries of first asylum and as a useful component of a comprehensive durable solutions strategy, **resettlement numbers need to be more significant in comparison with the number of refugees waiting for resettlement in the country of first asylum**. It is of paramount importance that Member States at least maintain their pledges. Hungary for example, considered the resettlement of a big family in 2012-2013 as a pilot programme but at the end resettled only one refugee.<sup>52</sup> Likewise, in Bulgaria the difficult economic and political environment meant that the official launch and the implementation of the resettlement programme that had been approved since 2010, had to be postponed.<sup>53</sup>

The graph below demonstrates clearly the share of resettlement within the EU for the last decade. It also indicates the size of the impact which the traditional European resettlement Member States<sup>54</sup> have with regard to the number of resettled refugees.

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<sup>49</sup> ICMC, 'Welcome to Europe: A Guide to Resettlement' 2013

[http://www.icmc.net/system/files/publication/welcome\\_to\\_europe\\_a\\_guide\\_to\\_resettlement\\_a\\_comp\\_64641.pdf](http://www.icmc.net/system/files/publication/welcome_to_europe_a_guide_to_resettlement_a_comp_64641.pdf)

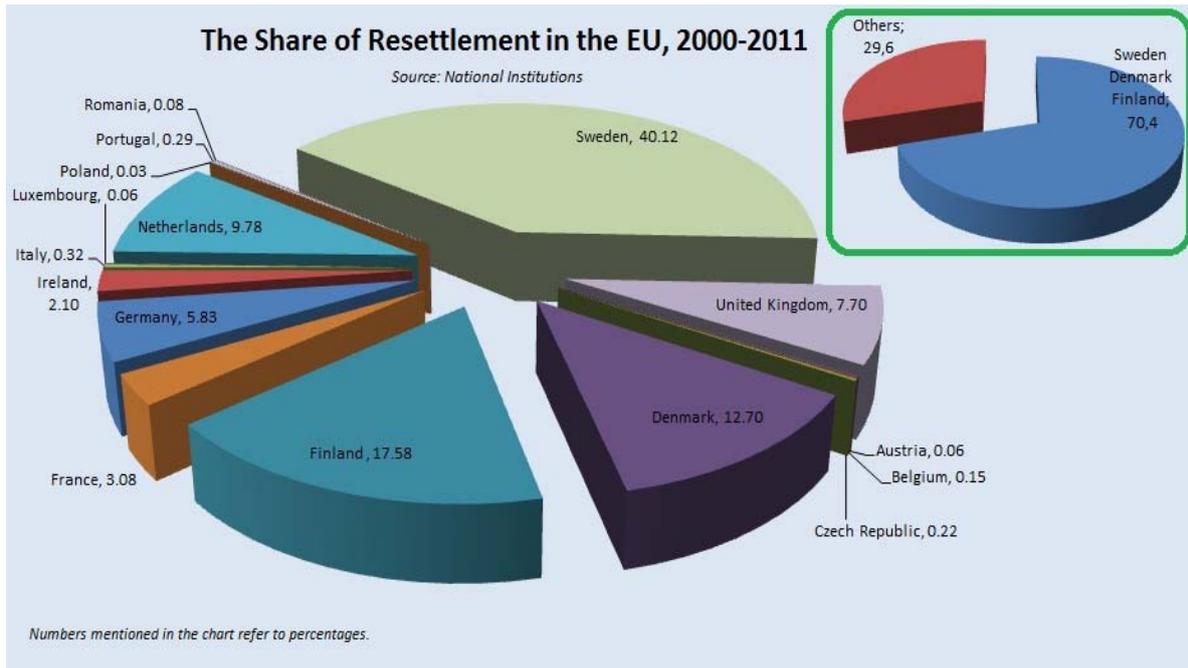
<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Know Reset, Formal Basis for Resettlement and Effective Resettlement in the EU Member States, <[http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00700\\_20130812105725\\_final.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00700_20130812105725_final.pdf)> June 2013

<sup>52</sup> Hungarian Country profile, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00155>

<sup>53</sup> Anna Andreeva, Bulgarian State Agency for Refugees, Know Reset Conference, Brussels, 10 July 2013.

<sup>54</sup> Denmark, Finland, Netherlands and Sweden (Norway not included in here it is not part of the EU).



The decision to resettle a refugee from another country is taken by the government of the resettlement country. The resettlement country decides on the numbers of refugees it intends to resettle, on the nationalities of the refugees resettled, on the countries from which resettlement takes place and on specific categories of refugees it wants to resettle. Resettlement is generally carried out with the UNHCR acting as an intermediary.

While the general and basic decision “to resettle or not” seems to be quite straightforward, another question on how to set quotas still remains open: should the Member States apply a quota, a ceiling or a multi-year target for resettlement?

Before going through the challenges as to why the available annual quotas are not fulfilled, it is important to emphasise the differences between the settings of levels as described below:

A quota has an advantage as it gives a precise quantity for measuring the success or failure of resettlement programmes. A fixed quota system can also become a disadvantage either when it cannot be filled, or proves insufficient to the needs in reality. Similarly, a ceiling sets up an upper limit as well as expectations for the programme. European Member States do not currently apply a ceiling, but other countries like the US do.<sup>55</sup> A target level has the advantages of flexibility and range, with less opportunity for any failure (in numbers) in the programme.

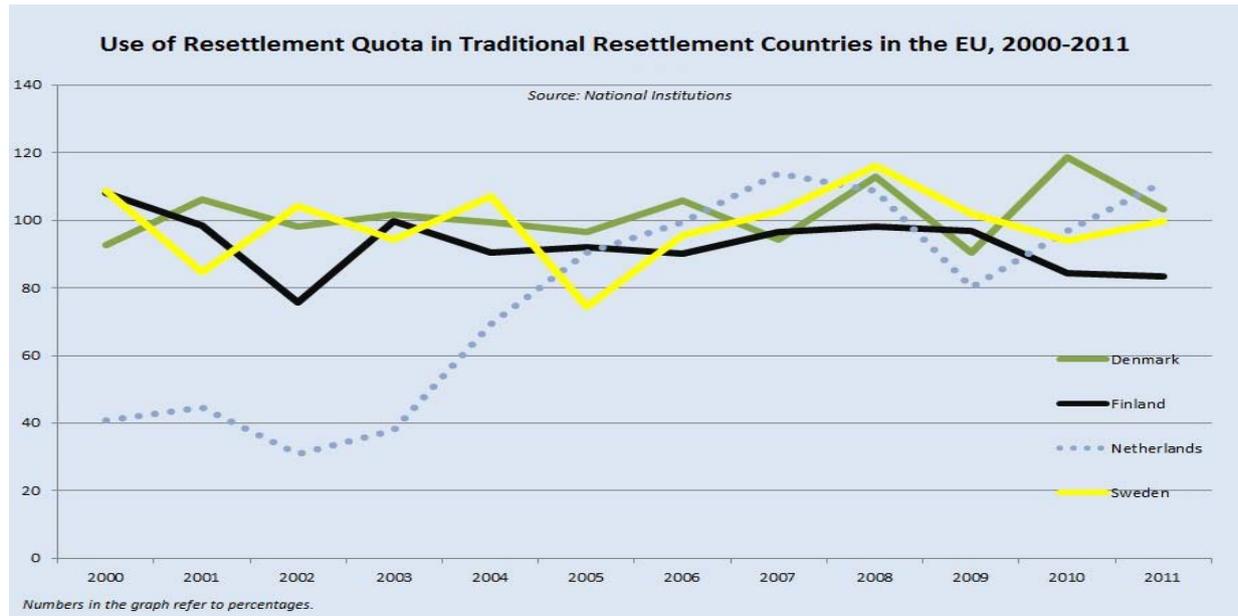
At present, resettlement programmes in Member States such as Denmark and the Netherlands are based on quotas planned on a multi-year basis. Additionally, recently, Germany has decided on a 3 year-quota. Other resettlement programmes in Member States such as Finland, Sweden, the UK, Portugal and Ireland are set on an annual basis, but with fixed quotas, often fixed many years ago. France has had the same fixed quota since 2008. Finally, resettlement programmes in Belgium, the Czech Republic, and Spain, are based on a quota decided every year. For Hungary, the first “quota” was a test so there is no information on how that will be applied in the future. Furthermore, Bulgaria is

<sup>55</sup> Joanne van Selm, Tamara Woroby, Erin Patrick and Monica Matts, Study on The Feasibility of setting up resettlement schemes in EU Member States or at EU Level, against the background of the Common European Asylum system and the goal of a Common Asylum Procedure, 2003  
[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/elibrary/docs/pdf/resettlement\\_study\\_full\\_2003\\_en\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/elibrary/docs/pdf/resettlement_study_full_2003_en_en.pdf),

a non-resettlement country but will participate in the joint EU Resettlement Programme by developing and implementing a small-scale (20 refugees) pilot resettlement programme in 2014.<sup>56</sup>

As stated in many country reports, the available specified numbers of resettlement places within a defined period are rarely fully filled in most of the countries. The numbers are set annually, and any places not filled are simply 'lost'. This may seem to be a common feature yet the research shows that the motives differ from one country to another.

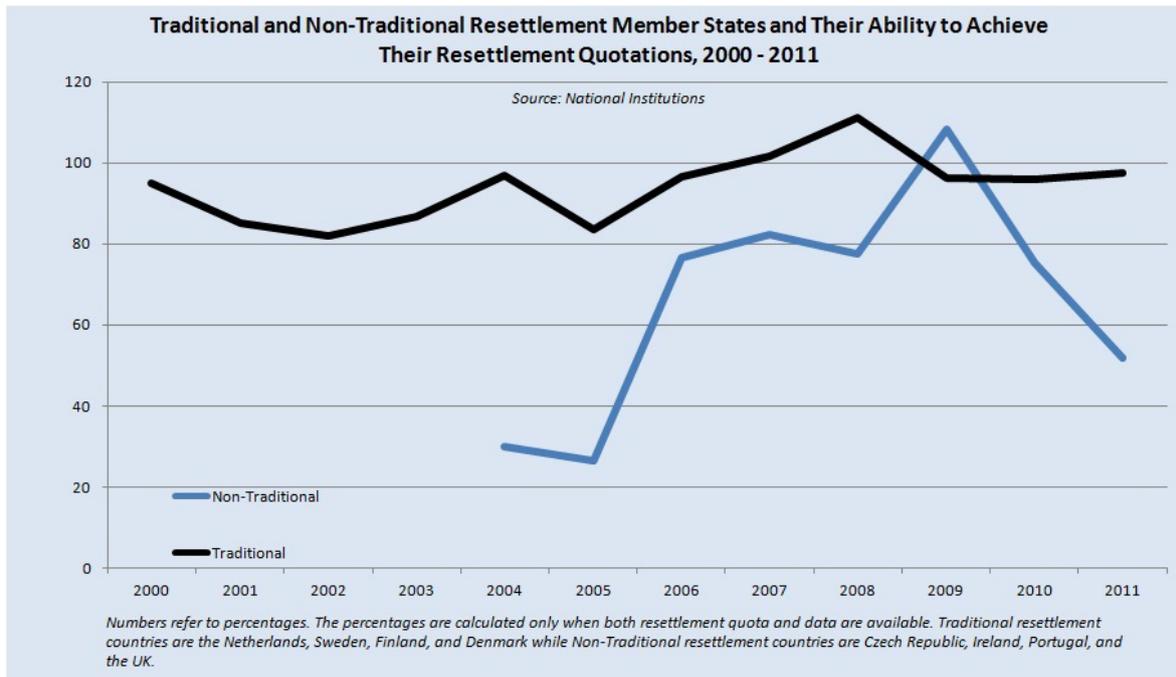
Taking the traditional European resettlement countries, which have a long experience of resettlement, as examples, they made a quota of over 7,000 refugees available in total during the period 2008-2011. However, as we shall see later on, not all these places were actually filled.



The graphs which also point out that in recent years (e.g. 2009-2011) the traditional resettlement Member States have kept more or less the same pace in resettling refugees. However, in some of the non-traditional Member States<sup>57</sup> there has been a significant decrease in numbers.

<sup>56</sup> Declaration of the State Agency for Refugees with the Council of Ministers, 24 March 2011. "Bulgaria – equal partner in the building of the Common European Programme on Resettlement of Refugees, confirmed the 23 and 24 March, 2011 in Sofia." <http://www.aref.government.bg/?cat=13&newsid=399> [accessed 14 November 2011]. Available only in Bulgarian.

<sup>57</sup> Non-traditional Member States included in this graph are Czech Republic, the UK, Ireland and Portugal.



The few examples examined below describe the challenges in filling the quotas. In Finland since 2001, the quota has been fixed at 750 refugees per year. This quota has never been filled but the number of resettled refugees varies from year to year. Ireland is another example, which has fixed a resettlement quota of 200 persons per year, which was filled until the economic crisis began (in 2009 Ireland resettled 192 refugees and during the last few years between 20 to 49 refugees have been resettled per year).

Filling the quotas has also been a consistent problem in the UK, where the quota of 750 was achieved for the first time in 2011/2012, mainly because of budget issue. For Sweden unused quotas cannot be rolled over to the following year. The quota in Sweden is not always reached mainly because of logistical reasons.

In addition to this Romania also committed to resettle a maximum of 120 refugees for the duration of the Programme (3 years), in annual quotas of 40 refugees, which it failed to fulfil. Only 38 refugees were resettled in the context of this provision, representing the quota due in 2009 and the programme was subsequently suspended. Resettlement was fully funded by the ERF.<sup>58</sup> The quotas due for 2008 and 2010 have not been fulfilled due to the delayed approval of Government Decision no. 1596/2009 on the resettlement of refugees in Romania, as well as due to the economic and social situation resulting from the global economic crisis.<sup>59</sup>

The exceptions to this are found in Denmark that has a three-year programme quota (1500 refugees /3 years) and the Netherlands, which has four- year programme quotas (2000 refugees /4 years).

In the case of the Czech Republic, the system is based on annual quotas and was chosen due to its flexibility as it could be changed each year according to the current situation. Between the years 2008 – 2010, on the basis of the National Resettlement Strategy, 81 Burmese refugees from Malaysia and Thailand were resettled; in 2008 9 families were resettled and in 2010 it was 8 families. In 2011 no

<sup>58</sup> Interview with the Romanian Office for Immigration (ROI), 23 January 2012.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

resettlement activities were implemented, in the same year the Ministry of Interior committed to resettle- under the Czech ERF annual programme for 2012- 40 persons in 2012.<sup>60</sup>

Challenges were also identified in Spain. Despite the willingness to resettle, especially after the formal approval of the resettlement programme (2010-2011) in the Council of Ministers, Spain failed to carry out any resettlement until 17 July 2012, when Spain resettled 80 refugees following the UNHCR Global Resettlement Solidarity Initiative in 2011.<sup>61</sup>

As mentioned earlier Hungary could not maintain its pledge to resettle one big family and in the end resettled only one refugee.

It is also worth briefly mentioning the added value of the past ad hoc programmes that offered resettlement to many refugees in need. As many of Member States have moved away from ad hoc resettlement to annual/programme-based resettlement, they will not be examined under this section.

The information above and the Know Reset country profiles clearly demonstrate that that difference in the numbers of resettled refugees and the “loss” in the quotas can be attributed to a number of factors such as reception capacities, socio economic situation, financial means etc. The case of Finland deserves particular attention. According to the Finnish authorities, *“this is mainly due to the lack suitable candidates proposed by UNHCR and the lack of flexibility in changing allocation decisions to include candidates from other regions. Since the Finnish Government policy regarding selection is explicitly based on humanitarian criteria and not on integration perspectives, it is unclear why the set of quota cannot be fulfilled. It may also be linked to the reluctance of the municipalities to resettle refugees and the fact that they do not get enough compensation from the state for the integration services they provide. The municipalities may also refuse to resettle refugees with special needs (medical or other) on the grounds that they are unable to provide adequate services due to a lack of resources. There have also been complaints from resettling municipalities that the information provided by UNHCR on submitted cases with special needs has been insufficient and, at times, not updated. This can lead to expectations of refugees and those of the receiving staff being very different and can in turn negatively impact upon the integration process. Some municipalities may also feel uncomfortable in resettling refugees with a different skin colour due to negative attitudes locally, both among the population and the policy makers. It is important to point out that the Finnish municipalities are very independent from the central state and cannot be forced to resettle against their will. The decision to resettle is taken through a political process in the municipalities.”*<sup>62</sup>

In the case of Ireland, the resettlement of refugees for the year 2012 has taken place and official figures will be released at the end of the year. The reason for the failure to meet the quota in recent years has been put down to Ireland’s current economic difficulties. Thus the quota of 200 persons is in name only at present, with annual quotas being fixed on a year -by -year basis: for example a quota of 50 persons was fixed in 2010 (with 5 places reserved for medical cases).<sup>63</sup>

Furthermore, it is equally important to note that the statistics provided in the above graphs are related to the number of refugees already resettled in the host Member States and are not the numbers referred to in their pledges or the settled annual quotas. As we shall see, **there is a disparity in**

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<sup>60</sup> Know Reset, Czech country report, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00148>

<sup>61</sup> Know Reset, Spanish country Report, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00168>

<sup>62</sup> Know Reset, Finish Country Report, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00151>

Collated information from the interviews with stakeholders. Ann-Charlotte Sirén-Borrego, (ECRE ) Qualitative National report for Finland , May 2012

<sup>63</sup> Know Reset, Irish Country Report 2013, [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00164\\_20130705130333\\_knowresetcountryprofileireland.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00164_20130705130333_knowresetcountryprofileireland.pdf)

**numbers between the established annual quota and the number of refugees effectively resettled in each Member States.**

In some Member States, a roll-over of unfilled places can occur. Some other states count the number of people selected in a year, regardless of the precise moment of their travel; others count people who arrive during a given year, and others the quota committed. For example in Sweden, another reason for not reaching the quota is that Sweden counts refugees that actually arrived in Sweden as fulfilled quota, not those who were selected but not transferred (because of conflict etc.)<sup>64</sup> For this reason, the statistics used in this project highlight to some extent the difficulty in comparing data. There is a disparity in the yearly figures provided by UNHCR and Know Reset due to this difference in counting. Comparing the figures for the year 2010, provided by UNHCR and Know Reset project, we see that there is a difference in the number of resettled refugees of 382. UNHCR data says that in 2010 4 707 refugees were resettled instead of 4.325 which is the figure provided by Know Reset. Therefore, the way the number of resettled refugees is calculated is crucial as it impacts what we actually know concerning the total number of refugees resettled. This also impacts the judgements made to increase numbers or not of resettled refugees each year.

*However, despite the fact that the total number of resettled refugees per year is a “drop in the ocean” in view of global resettlement needs, we should not forget that it offers a chance for a new beginning for every resettled refugee.*

If Member States decide to have a common system of level setting for an EU programme, it is suggested that they establish a collective target range and a bidding process allowing them to determine their own target within the collective target.

Planning for total arrivals would be useful, particularly if the total number of arrivals might be high. Allowing flexibility in distribution of places would be advantageous.

The following Recommendations were drawn up on the basis of a comparative overview from the Know Reset Country Profile data.

- The research indicates that the existing quotas should be used as baseline figures not as a ceiling.
- Multiyear planning (e.g. three years) should be implemented in terms of numbers (flexible quota) and also in terms of priorities. This would give more certainty to UNHCR, local authorities and NGOs and enable them to plan their integration efforts more effectively. If substantial changes take place in terms of the refugee groups most in need of resettlement, the plans could be altered during the period. This would also mean a better allocation of funds for different projects run by NGOs.
- By introducing a multi-year quota, the yearly national and international bureaucratic decision-making process could be avoided and resources could thus be better directed into planning, developing and implementing the scheme. However, for some Member States, especially the smallest and the poorest countries, multi-year budgeting is not yet an existing option due to the economic crises.
- Governments need to secure their annual or multiyear targets of the resettlement quota. Establishing the quota and maintaining them. This is especially important in a few new Member States engaging in resettlement. For some it might be necessary to conduct an evaluation of their resettlement programmes and its different stages to find out the reasons for the backlog. Questions such as the following should be taken into consideration: Is it a lack of resources? Could the cooperation and coordination between the different stakeholders, both national and international, be improved? What other steps could be taken?

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<sup>64</sup> Interview with Mr. Oskar Ekblad (OE) Migration Board, the Unit for Asylum Procedures

## B. Capacity in terms of methods and tools

### *Not being able to fulfil the quotas is linked to the selection methods and selection process.*

As clearly described in the EU comparative legal report “Refugee Resettlement in the EU between Shared Standards and Diversity in Legal and Policy Frames”<sup>65</sup> the decision to resettle a refugee from another country is taken by the government of the resettlement country. The legal and political nature of this decision is discussed further in the aforementioned report where it usefully reminds us that: the resettlement selection decision is in itself administrative in nature and is discretionary.

Most of the countries view resettlement generally as a tool of international protection for individual refugees. The selection criteria/goals are very broad and vary from country to country, but are in essence to support UNHCR in providing humanitarian protection for vulnerable refugees. This was also the case with the recent approval of JEURP harmonized specific EU resettlement priorities, specifying the nationalities of refugees and the countries from which resettlement should take place as a priority, and for whom EU funding is available. The new Member States engaging in resettlement-along with the more experienced - responded to those priorities and especially to the EU call to resettle refugee from the Shousha camp in Tunisia.

While incorporating UNHCR resettlement criteria and case submission as the basis of the selection process, some governments shy away from receiving refugees that they think might have less integration potential or may require more financial and public services support<sup>66</sup>. This “integration potential” concept has been the subject of much debate among stakeholders in resettlement and especially in the Member States in which this criteria it is still present in national legislation. Several countries find integration ‘potential’ to be important, though none has a real measure for it. In this view, it is worth highlighting the few cases of the application of the ‘integration potential’. In the Netherlands for example, the integration potential, viewed as the willingness and ability to integrate into Dutch society, has played a role in selecting refugees for resettlement since 2005.<sup>67</sup> In the Czech Republic, some integration aspects are also taken into consideration such as: the willingness of the refugee in question to be resettled to the Czech Republic and the willingness to integrate into the Czech Republic.<sup>68</sup> For Finland the refugee’s motivation to integrate is seen as an important factor too. However, the Danish Government has recently committed to remove the integration criteria<sup>69</sup> and Romania recently abolished the “integration potential” criteria. The ‘Integration potential’ can be problematic in determining who should be resettled, as there is no clear way of measuring integration potential or ensuring it is not discriminatory.

Despite the fact that the over-riding selection goals are based on UNCHR recommendations/criteria and EU priorities, any additional selection criteria adopted by Member States remain an equally important factor in implementing both ad hoc resettlement and resettlement programmes. A few examples from the country profiles can be taken to illustrate the above statement. The Belgium national report states that until now the number of selected refugees for resettlement was a political choice and was dependant on a number of factors, including reception conditions. The decisions regarding the target groups to be resettled were also based on Belgium Foreign Policy as well as to the

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<sup>65</sup> Refugee Resettlement in the EU: Between Shared Standards and Diversity in Legal and Policy Frames, Delphine Perrin & Frank McNamara (EUI) <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00013>

<sup>66</sup> International Catholic Migration Commission (2008), ‘Welcome to Europe: A Guide to Resettlement’ [http://www.icmc.net/system/files/publication/welcome\\_to\\_europe\\_a\\_guide\\_to\\_resettlement\\_a\\_comp\\_64641.pdf](http://www.icmc.net/system/files/publication/welcome_to_europe_a_guide_to_resettlement_a_comp_64641.pdf)

<sup>67</sup> Know Reset, Netherlands Quantitative report.

<sup>68</sup> Know Reset, Czech Country Profile, 2013 <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00148>

<sup>69</sup> Know Reset, Danish Country Profile 2013, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00149>

availability of EU funds”.<sup>70</sup> For the Czech Republic’s foreign policy, Burma is among the priority countries. Since the approval of its national resettlement programme the Czech Republic has resettled only Burmese refugees from Malaysia and Thailand. Likewise, the Governments of the Nordic countries meet in matters of overall policy for regular consultations within the framework of the Nordic Council for Refugee Affairs (NSHF). Sweden does not set clear priorities for resettlement selection, though in practice priority might be given to candidates with close family already residing in Sweden. Another example is Finland in which a major goal in selecting refugees is the development of communities within Finland, leading to a focus on particular ethnic groups, nationalities or refugee situations over several years. It has also to be noted that the Finnish resettlement program is part of Finland’s humanitarian foreign policy and Finland remain a traditional UN country.<sup>71</sup>

Based on the aforementioned information, in general, we can conclude that certain countries have established their own additional criteria that are taken into account; this includes aspects of their country specific asylum policy and foreign policy, the reception capacity and integration services that are available. Lastly, it is interesting to see that in some member states security issues are also applied as criteria in resettlement procedures. As an example the Finnish Security Intelligence Service as an operative police authority responsible for national security issues, is now part of, amongst other state actors, the preparation of a proposal for the Government on the territorial allocation of the refugee quota<sup>72</sup>. Additionally, security issues are also present in Sweden where bottlenecks occur for not reaching the quotas. As mentioned by Oskar Ekblad (OE), now resettlement from Syria is completely blocked; Kenya is also considered as a critical area since end-2011; recently protest movements in Thailand impeded transfer of quota refugees.

Different member states apply also a sub-system of quota places reserved for medical cases and urgent cases. For example Denmark has 75 places for dossier submissions, which can be either urgent or emergency priority cases.

### *Selection methods and its impact at national level on quotas*

The vast majority of the countries use a dossier-based (on file only with no face-to-face interview) decision process and/ or a personal interview carried out during a selection mission in the country of asylum. In addition to selection missions, the face-to-face interview can take first place locally with the immigration officers based in their respective embassies.

In summary, most of countries in Europe choose refugees by using both methods although preference is given to selection missions. The exceptions are France and Portugal, whose decision-making is based only upon dossier review. In the case of Portugal, the selection process on a dossier or mission basis is not specifically provided for in Portuguese legislation. Portugal has been carrying out resettlement decisions only on a dossier review basis.<sup>73</sup> In France the Asylum Service of the Ministry of International Affairs takes the decision on individual cases after consulting every year with UNHCR. From the interviews with stakeholders it was shown that France refuses half of the dossiers submitted.<sup>74</sup>

In the case of Finland, a limited number of cases are accepted through dossier submissions, while the remaining quota refugees are selected during interview missions, conducted in each location. As an

<sup>70</sup> Know Reset, Belgian Country Profile 2013, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00145>

<sup>71</sup> Interview with Arja Kekkonen, Negotiating Officer, Finish Ministry of the Interior, Migration Department Unit, International Protection Unit.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> Know Reset, Portuguese Country Profile 2013, [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00163\\_20130705130237\\_knowresetcountryprofileportugal.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00163_20130705130237_knowresetcountryprofileportugal.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> Matthieu Tardis, France Terre d’Asile, 31 May 2013.

exception to normal procedures, in emergency and urgent cases, refugees are admitted to Finland without a personal interview on the basis of a written statement by UNHCR. In Sweden, in contrast to other resettlement countries, a small majority of the quota is selected through dossier selection.

From the review of existing resettlement programmes we can make the following conclusions:

- Selection missions are considered important in the resettlement selection process as it had proven difficult to fulfil the quota solely through dossier selection. A large number of rejections are based on the lack of information provided by UNHCR in the dossiers. This was the case in the Netherlands where the selection missions were temporarily suspended from 1999 onwards and resumed in 2005. Now Governments have a more a proactive approach to this, by making use of the selection missions, as they are considered to enhance the gathering of relevant information for a large group at once, as well as on their region of origin.
- *One disadvantage can be that these selection (interview) missions might only be possible in one or two locations and only a few times in a year.* For example, countries like NL, FI and SE usually undertake 4 to 5 selection missions each year.
- The dossier based selection can be quick, and (in theory) relatively inexpensive, as no travel is involved for selectors or for refugees. As explained above, relying solely on the UNHCR submitted dossiers can lead to rejection not only due to the lack of information, but also as the selection officers do not become acquainted with the situation in regions of origin. The challenge for dossier selection is that the information provided should be precise and up-to-date so that the municipality of resettlement is able to organize adequate reception arrangements.
- Video conferencing: Recently some resettlement countries have begun to explore the possibility of using video-conferencing to conduct selection interviews when access to refugees is complicated or impossible. By removing the need to travel to a specific refugee situation and organising the practical aspects of a selection mission, video conferencing may significantly reduce the human and financial resources required for selection interviews.<sup>75</sup> However, the “Welcome to Europe” report indicates that conducting interviews via video conferencing present new challenges such as: not being equipped with the right technical equipment, refugees unfamiliar with this type of technology.<sup>76</sup> In addition to this, video conferencing is considered not such an appropriate method for sensitive cases<sup>77</sup>.

In the UK, all applicants are interviewed by UK Home Office officials (in the UK Border Agency, UKBA) based on the UNHCR submissions. Where there is a pressing need for the resettlement of a particular group and where it may not be appropriate for the UKBA staff to travel to a host country to carry out the selection mission, the UKBA can conduct dossier selections. Dossiers can be prepared containing details of cases which UKBA can accept without conducting a resettlement interview. In future, some interviews may be conducted using remote video conferencing facilities.<sup>78</sup> The UK has begun to explore the possibility of using video-conferencing to conduct selection interviews when access to refugees is complicated or impossible. Moreover, selection interviews through video conferencing (in theory) could be less expensive.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> International Catholic Migration Commission, ‘Welcome to Europe: A Guide to Resettlement’ 2013  
[http://www.icmc.net/system/files/publication/welcome\\_to\\_europe\\_a\\_guide\\_to\\_resettlement\\_a\\_comp\\_64641.pdf](http://www.icmc.net/system/files/publication/welcome_to_europe_a_guide_to_resettlement_a_comp_64641.pdf)

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Know Reset UK Country Profile 2013, [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00170\\_20130919160801\\_knowresetcountryprofileunitedkingdom.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00170_20130919160801_knowresetcountryprofileunitedkingdom.pdf)

<sup>79</sup> Know Reset, Uk country Report, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00170>

While considering the methods used, it should be also noted that although a number of very important steps have been taken over recent years and the elements of the Joint Resettlement Programme are now in place, the current lack of joint activities and practical cooperation between Member States increases the financial costs of resettlement in each country. A costly initial infrastructure for resettlement was cited as a constraint for several Member states to engage in resettlement. The latter has impacted upon the decisions of Member States like Portugal or Czech Republic to introduce small resettlement quotas. Some of the activities like selection missions for example, could be carried out jointly by, or in close cooperation with other Member States. The example of the Netherlands is crucial to this process. The Netherlands has conducted a number of joint missions in the past, assisting in the momentum leading up to the JEURP. These have taken place with Czech Republic (2007) Belgium, Luxembourg, and Romania (2008), as well as Bulgaria and Slovakia (2009). This gave those Member States the opportunity to learn and observe how to conduct resettlement, and what is needed in order to carry out resettlement, including the use of quotas and the importance of reception conditions.<sup>80</sup>

As described above, selection missions are usually carried out by government officials, often from the Ministry of Interior or Home Affairs. Participation of civil society and municipalities is still very limited in the selection of refugees for resettlement.<sup>81</sup> It is **increasingly apparent that other actors should be involved**, in order to ensure that the information gathered about refugees can be of benefit to the preparations for reception, before arrival in the resettlement country.

The following Recommendations were drawn up on the basis of a comparative overview from the Know Reset Country Profile data.

- The effectiveness of quota fulfilment can be improved by strategically planning the whole process of resettlement (as all the actors involved have to know exactly what to do in specific situations that occur). More specifically, this could include:

At EU level:

- Twinning projects with experienced countries and new/potential resettlement countries
- The EU should coordinate member states resettlement programmes when it comes to the priorities and the selection process
- “Twinning arrangements” between EU Member States would continue to allow for sharing lessons learned from many years of experience. Practical cooperation in resettlement should continue to be promoted by the European authorities. For example new resettlement Member States would learn from traditional resettlement countries and could advise other European countries that are starting resettlement programmes. At the same time, NGOs and UNCHR should not address resettlement issues without taking into consideration national policies towards asylum seekers.
- The EU should do more to stimulate national governments to focus on the integration issues of resettlement rather than on its selection process and criteria.

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<sup>80</sup> Know Reset, Netherlands Country Profile, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00161>

<sup>81</sup> See Chapter B “Capacity in terms of actors”.

### C. Capacity in terms of actors

Although national governments are responsible for the selection of refugees in carrying out pre-departure activities, regional and local authorities and NGOs play an important role in the post-arrival stage, primarily in offering reception and integration support once refugees have arrived.

Every resettlement programme involves a variety of stakeholders. The quality of refugee resettlement relies also, amongst other things, on the capacity for Member States to address the needs and concerns of the stakeholders in the process: UNHCR, IOM, NGOs, Local Authorities, Government Ministries, and finally Refugees themselves. This section will assess the level of cooperation between these actors, the services they provide and the extent of their involvement on the effectiveness of resettlement.

The Know-Reset findings have shown that collaboration between stakeholders varies at different stages (pre-arrival and post arrival) of the Resettlement process. In most of the Member States the government body responsible for the pre-arrival phase (selection of refugees and their transfer) is not responsible for the post arrival phase (including here reception and integration). *In the Pre-arrival phase (i) refugee resettlement primarily involves UNHCR, IOM and the various ministries of the Member State, whilst in the post-arrival phase (ii) resettlement involves local actors such as Municipalities/Local Authorities, NGOs and in some occasions<sup>82</sup> Refugee Community Organisations (RCOs).*

Before discussing the actors involved in the two phases of resettlement (pre-arrival and post-arrival), it is worth mentioning the partnership mechanism of the resettlement process called the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR). This is held by UNHCR and brings together States, NGOs and UNHCR to discuss global refugee resettlement planning. It provides the opportunity to raise awareness among states<sup>83</sup> regarding resettlement, and gives a space for all three stakeholders to work together and interact. UNHCR has also encouraged the “twinning” of establishment and emerging resettlement states to develop and strengthen resettlement and integration programmes. Twinning in the context of resettlement can be described as any partnership activity between states, NGOs, services providing organizations, international organizations and/or UNHCR which aims to encourage a new(er) resettlement state to develop or strengthen its resettlement programme. Twinning partnerships have ranged widely in their focus and duration, and while most are funded by states, some have attracted external funding, including EU support, for example under the ERF.<sup>84</sup>

It is also worth briefly mentioning the emerging role of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), which will be fully explored in the last section. Currently assessing its role in the resettlement process, it has been suggested that EASO could contribute by establishing criteria for quality resettlement. Its exact role is not clear among the stakeholders interviewed, however, suggestions include providing and maintaining a space and coordination for the tripartite character (NGOs, UNHCR, and governments)<sup>85</sup> described above. Some Eastern states would welcome the organisational and logistical support of EASO<sup>86</sup> but at this time EASO is seen as not having enough presence in the area of resettlement.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> For example, in the Czech Republic these include the Association of Citizens Assisting Emigrants and the Burma Centre Prague.

<sup>83</sup> International Catholic Migration Commission, ‘Welcome to Europe: A Guide to Resettlement’ 2013  
[http://www.icmc.net/system/files/publication/welcome\\_to\\_europe\\_a\\_guide\\_to\\_resettlement\\_a\\_comp\\_64641.pdf](http://www.icmc.net/system/files/publication/welcome_to_europe_a_guide_to_resettlement_a_comp_64641.pdf)

<sup>84</sup> European Parliament, Comparative Study on the best practices for the integration of resettled refugees in the EU Member States, 2012.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

<sup>86</sup> Know Reset 2013, Czech Republic Country Profile 2013.

**(i) Pre-arrival Phase**

The main actors in the pre-arrival phase in all cases are UNHCR and the Member State ministry dealing with resettlement, which is mainly the Home Affairs department also known as the Ministry of the Interior (MoI). For example the Swedish Migration Board acts on behalf of the Swedish government and works in close cooperation with UNHCR to draw up guidelines for the resettlement programme. In this case, and most others, trained members of staff are needed. This is also the case in Portugal where the national reports show that better national capacity would be needed to conduct pre-arrival planning.<sup>88</sup> For Portugal and in most other cases, this requires a firmer and more structured commitment on the part of all relevant public authorities and Ministries – not just the Ministry of Interior but also the Ministry of Economy and Employment/Institute of Employment, and the Ministry of Education, as there has to be a structured and coherent policy at all levels of administration.

Working with the national governmental administration are international organisations, notably UNHCR and IOM who play important roles in the pre-arrival stages. UNHCR<sup>89</sup> collaborates with the governmental ministries during the selection process<sup>90</sup> whilst in most occasions IOM provides medical screening and arranges travel documentation. Rarely are NGOs or Local Authorities involved in these early stages.

An exception to this is in Denmark where the Danish Refugee Council, an international NGO, works closely with the government to select refugees, which are ultimately decided by the governing body within the ministry.

In most cases the findings have shown willingness for NGOs and Local Authorities to be more involved at this stage of the resettlement process. In addition to this, there should be a level of collaboration between all actors and pooling their expertise would allow for better identification of the integration needs of the groups to be resettled.

Collaboration was also a key concern for NGOs in the UK, which suggests that collaborating with Local Authorities is important particularly in the planning of support for refugee arrival. In addition to this, much like Denmark, their inclusion in the pre-arrival phase would be welcome, as they are currently only involved at the post arrival phase (see below). In Germany meetings at the local level are attempted but this is limited, and collaboration is often unequal. An example of collaboration can be found in Belgium, which runs stakeholder meetings three times a year allowing for evaluation and planning. Local Authorities and municipalities are however, still not involved to the fullest.

A rare example of Local Authorities or municipalities being involved in the pre-arrival phase is Finland where, in the recent years, they are involved in the selection missions. By including municipalities in the selection mission, Finland hopes to resolve some difficulties at the local level, such as integration into society.<sup>91</sup>

(Contd.)

[http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00148\\_20130705130024\\_knowresetcountryprofileczechrepublic.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00148_20130705130024_knowresetcountryprofileczechrepublic.pdf),  
Hungary Country Profile [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00155\\_20130729172455\\_knowresetcountryprofilehungary.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00155_20130729172455_knowresetcountryprofilehungary.pdf),  
Finland Country Profile [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00151\\_20130705130136\\_knowresetcountryprofilefinland.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00151_20130705130136_knowresetcountryprofilefinland.pdf)

<sup>87</sup> Know Reset, Spain Country Profile 2013,

[http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00168\\_20130705130432\\_knowresetcountryprofilesain.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00168_20130705130432_knowresetcountryprofilesain.pdf)

<sup>88</sup> Portugal quantitative and qualitative reports, João Côrte Real Vasconcelos (ECRE).

<sup>89</sup> In the case of non-resettlement countries who have had some experience in resettlement (Austria, Luxemburg, Poland), only Austria and has had no relationship with UNHCR regarding resettlement. From the resettling countries, Hungary has not had a relationship with UNHCR.

<sup>90</sup> This is not the extent to which UNHCR plays a role. They will have negotiated with the member states previously, and worked with them in an advisory role to ensure resettlement can take place. These include meetings such as the ATCR.

<sup>91</sup> Finish country profile.

Similarly, Cultural Orientation (CO) in the pre-arrival phase is a crucial aspect of refugee integration; it assists in the expectation of refugees and has potential for local actors to meet refugees before they arrive in the territory. In this instance, Local Authorities or local NGOs would be well placed to provide this, as in many cases they deal with the integration of the resettled refugees in the post arrival phase. Despite this added benefit, CO is hardly present in the pre-arrival phase of resettlement. Where it does appear it is often conducted by IOM in the case of Finland, France,<sup>92</sup> Spain. In the case of Finland the arrangement with IOM was established in 2001 and ran until the termination of the contract in 2010. The orientation was not arranged in 2011 and the contract for 2012 is currently being negotiated.

As with the above, refugees themselves in this phase play no active role, and are passive recipients to the decisions of Member States. Member States decide who are settled and where they can resettle. Being aware of the new host country before arrival is crucial for the refugee. The Netherlands conducts integration interviews to ensure that refugees will align with Dutch society. This however should not replace the role of actors in the preparation of refugees for resettlement. Knowledge of the local surroundings would also be beneficial and require delivery from local actors not necessarily government or international organisations. On the whole, cultural orientation and integration screenings can be a tool for refugees also, to avoid misinformation or high expectations. This relies on resources at the local level, as well as at the national level. This is not always possible, as in Hungary where the stakeholders cannot see the possibility for NGOs to be involved at all in any stage due to political and economic reasons.

There is a need for a certain level of expertise to conduct effective preparation in the pre-arrival phase, which requires training and time. Czech NGOs for example, state that the governmental group charged with conducting resettlement is only composed of representatives from ministries and does not include other stakeholders who also have expertise in resettlement, affecting the quality of the decision-making. For the Czech Republic, as with all Member States that resettle, there is room for improvement in the pre-departure activities in particular the selection of people in need of resettlement and the quality of information for the host country provided to those people. Consequently, there is only a little knowledge about the pre-arrival activities among the stakeholders interviewed.

Many aspects of the resettlement processes should be addressed by Member States, starting with a proper and strategic planning of activities, deep coordination of all stakeholders involved and a stronger involvement of NGOs, local groups and Local Authorities. Moreover, the current development at the EU level offers some instruments including financial incentives, which would help to use resettlement in a more strategic way, which will be discussed in the section C. “Capacity in terms of funding”. This is particularly the case in the Czech Republic, but can be said for many if not all of the resettling countries.

## **(ii) Post Arrival Phase**

In the post-arrival phase, NGOs and Local Authorities emerge as main players, providing essential services, as well as ensuring refugee integration.<sup>93</sup> The roles and functions of Municipalities and NGOs vary from country to country. They usually have different and complementary roles in the reception and integration process. During this process it is essential that they are provided with relevant information on the refugee’s backgrounds and needs.

NGOs in Spain for example have a very active role once the refugee arrives in the territory: CO and integration sessions are carried out, and municipalities are involved once refugees have been

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<sup>92</sup> Pre/Post Arrival Table: Know Reset, [http://www.knowreset.eu/files/texts/00717\\_20131106153806\\_countrycomparison-preandpostdeparture.pdf](http://www.knowreset.eu/files/texts/00717_20131106153806_countrycomparison-preandpostdeparture.pdf)

<sup>93</sup> For more details please read each country profile section « Rights granted ».

welcomed into the reception centres. In most Member States, CO is often conducted in reception centres, where refugees are placed as soon as they enter the territory. CO in the post-arrival phase is considered equally important as the one in pre-arrival as it is the first step in the integration process. Most of the Member States provides CO in the post-arrival phase but they apply their own model.

Due to diversity in the numerous models applied for the CO in European Resettlement countries the body delivering CO also varies: from Government to municipalities, NGOs, and in a few cases IOM. On occasion previous resettled refugees have also been involved in cultural orientation for example in Berlin, the Iraqi cultural association 'El Rafedein' was officially incorporated into the integration process of newly arrived resettled Iraqis. Refugees already established in Belgium were invited for knowledge-sharing during cultural orientation, in addition to representatives from external organizations/institutions. Another example is the Burma Centre in the Czech Republic.

Similarly, refugee communities generally do not have much of a role in the Netherlands. Their involvement in resettlement is quite limited but a number of communities were mentioned as being involved in providing support to resettled refugees, in particular to the Bhutanese Community. Further, IOM involves the Somali community in family reunion cases (mainly in the framework of a CO project targeting this specific caseload) and the Burmese community is actively involved supporting refugees on arrival.<sup>94</sup>

Likewise, in Denmark, especially the resettled refugees from Burma have organized themselves all over Denmark through the local churches and have established new churches, which is very important for their role in society. One of the stakeholders interviewed sees a clear connection between which groups are selected for resettlement and their prospects of integrating into Danish society. The Chin community from Burma and the Congolese refugees have, due to their cultural background, which is similar to the Danish, been able to integrate well. Also the Burmese refugees who fought for democracy at home feel more at ease in a democracy such as the Danish.<sup>95</sup>

**Preparing the receiving community** for the arrival of refugees is another important part of resettlement process. Preparation of the local community is conducted by both municipalities and NGOs, as is the case for Finland. In other cases it is conducted by NGOs like in Portugal<sup>96</sup> or by municipalities in the case of Denmark. In the Netherlands, this is mainly done by means of information provision through local media in advance of refugees' arrival to a municipality. The Dutch Council for Refugees (together with the municipality) also informs the relevant stakeholders (like schools, family doctors, social services, etc).<sup>97</sup> The case of Germany is also important to be mentioned: in some places a working group was established especially for Iraqi refugees at Länder and at local level with all crucial stakeholders (local state authorities and NGOs) involved. Here, all relevant information was shared and it proved to be very efficient. **However, this was more the exception than the rule.** It also depended on the Länder and on how fast they would transfer information to the local level. Information on special needs, e.g. housing or medical needs, was not always communicated.<sup>98</sup>

Similarly the **training by local providers** is very important too but even in this case it varies from country to country. In the case of Finland, training falls within the competence of different relevant ministries. Training is also organized by NGOs and associations such as: the Finnish Refugee Council, the Family Federation of Finland, the Finnish Red Cross, and the Finnish Association for Mental

<sup>94</sup> Netherlands Quantitative Report.

<sup>95</sup> Interview with Hans Henrik Lund, Churches Integration Ministry (abbreviated KIT in Danish),

<sup>96</sup> As in the case for Portugal. Know Reset, Portugal Country Profile 2013, [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00163\\_20130705130237\\_knowresetcountryprofileportugal.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00163_20130705130237_knowresetcountryprofileportugal.pdf)

<sup>97</sup> The Netherlands Country Profile.

<sup>98</sup> Germany Country Profile.

Health. For the UK the current funding available for integration services is not sufficient to allow for the delivery of much training to local service providers. In addition, information received by NGOs about refugees before they arrive is not always sufficiently accurate and thorough to plan reception services that fully meet the needs.<sup>99</sup>

Likewise, responsibility for the resettled refugees once in the local setting is hard to identify as each Member State operates differently. Again, in the example of Finland, refugees are placed directly in the municipalities, rather than in a reception centre, leaving responsibility for the resettlement with the municipalities from the start. A similar case is found in Sweden where the municipality is fully responsible for refugee settlement and integration, and will prepare an individual introduction plan for each refugee in cooperation with the local employment office.

In the Netherlands, placement of refugees has emerged as being not entirely satisfactory. This is partly a result of the government policy (the Housing Allocation Act) which obliges every municipality in the Netherlands to make part of their housing stock available each year for the accommodation of permit holders and the Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA) 's housing arrangements for resettled refugees are determined by the municipal supply of available living accommodation. Resettled refugees are, therefore, placed in small towns and villages which can lack facilities to support integration. For example, there is no adequate public transport, individuals are far away from their family members, education and employment opportunities might be limited and also the opportunities to meet refugees' mental health needs are limited. It was noted that there were some improvements with the new reception system. COA is now more flexible concerning the needs of refugees allowing them to be housed closer to their family members. Some progress has also been noted by University Assistance Fund (UAF) with regard to housing arrangements and the education needs of resettled refugees. Following developments in the new reception system, referrals to the UAF education and careers support services are now being made by COA in advance of refugees' arrival and the scope of UAF in housing arrangements has been widened.<sup>100</sup> A recent change has taken place in the Dutch resettlement policy, aimed at the direct placement of refugees in the municipalities. New changes in the policy in the short term are not expected.<sup>101</sup>

Likewise, the lack of planning and the lack of any specific reception and integration scheme are seen as a crucial issue in France. Agencies and NGOs in France who are working on reception and integration need better information about resettlement and the profiles and needs of resettlement refugees in order to organize the reception conditions accordingly, especially for medical cases. So far, NGOs have received this information at the very last minute and there have been quite dramatic situations in many cases as a result when refugees have needed serious and urgent treatment upon arrival.

Upon arrival, housing and access to French language have been identified as the main problems by the refugees themselves. Indeed, **the lack of planning by the authorities has an impact on the reception conditions.** France believed that its reception and asylum system was good enough for resettled refugees and the government did not even consider the possibility to design a specific reception system for them. Obviously, this was not the case and it created unfairness within the national reception system.<sup>102</sup>

Education and language learning programmes for resettled refugees is another important pillar of the integration processes. Language courses are run by municipalities or/and other contractors, NGOs and volunteers in most countries. For example in NL, UAF cooperates with municipalities with regard to negotiating joint arrangement for refugees' education pathways. However, many Member States fail

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<sup>99</sup> UK Country Profile

<sup>100</sup> Ariane Den Uyl (ECRE) National Report, February 2012

<sup>101</sup> Interview with Janneke van Etten, Senior Policy Officer at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Migration Policy Department, Asylum, Reception and Return,

<sup>102</sup> Matthieu Tardis,( ECRE) national quantitative national report, April 2012

to provide adequate translator services and/ or language classes as they face many challenges. Amongst these challenges the lack of capacity of human resources and the failure of the service providers<sup>103</sup> remains quite similar factor in most European resettlement countries. There is a need for more funding and training to deliver language classes, as seen in the UK, where there is a clear gap in the national resettlement programme. As integration is seen as a two-way process in the European Union,<sup>104</sup> both the refugees and the Member States need to be prepared.

The lack of interest of the French authorities in resettlement has been remarkable. Interestingly, in France some civil society actors are also reluctant to participate in resettlement operations, which can be attributed to a particular ideological and political logic. Indeed, several NGOs working for the promotion of immigrants' rights do not participate in such operations in principle on the grounds that they see them as "downgrading" refugee law. Resettlement is viewed as a way to circumvent France's international responsibility and as such may constitute a tool for 'externalising' its immigration policy, by creating a double process of refugee selection.<sup>105</sup>

In general, as with the pre-arrival phase, different stakeholders involved in resettlement process **need specific training in resettlement as a necessary tool to better understand resettlement**. In some cases problems occurred when staff members of the municipalities and/or immigration authorities were uninformed or insufficiently informed about the arrival of resettled persons and/or the legal status of the refugees. Sometimes there was no clear division of tasks between involved services, authorities and institutions. In addition to this, training for public sector staff on the local level is needed especially when a municipality is starting resettlement. The local actors need extensive training to improve, adapt and increase structures that are necessary to meet the challenges of a multicultural society.<sup>106</sup>

Cooperation with different stakeholders is essential, as there are many facets associated with successful integration, providing housing, medical care, employment, and training. Each of these aspects can often be the responsibility of different actors, NGOs, Local Authorities or State level officials. This cooperation varies greatly throughout the Member States. For example, in Finland, Denmark and the Czech Republic, the cooperation between municipalities and NGOs is viewed as being successful, however in Belgium for example, NGOs and State level cooperation appears to work well, with the exception of the local municipalities. For all resettlement member states, ensuring better cooperation amongst the central government, local authorities, NGOs and refugees involved in resettlement will only improve the process of refugee integration.

In some Member States, there is an **absence of a government led coordination structures involving all relevant stakeholders** (Government, Municipalities, UNHCR, IOM, NGOs, refugees) offering on-going policy and operational guidance that impacts on the overall consistency and quality of the reception and integration system. In addition to this, **collaboration between state authorities and NGOs differs from place to place**.

Furthermore, in a few Member States carrying out resettlement, **civil society has no influence on the selection of the overall groups to be resettled**, and often lacks basic information about the government's and the Ministry's decisions and activities regarding resettlement. Whereas, especially in the Member States new to resettlement, there is **limited involvement of municipalities in core reception and integration services** such as accommodation, language training, and professional training or job placement/provision.

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<sup>103</sup> Other factors, could capacity in time, lack of funding, place of residing etc.

<sup>104</sup> See European Union Common Basic Principles, Principle No.1 [http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/EU\\_actions\\_integration.cfm](http://ec.europa.eu/ewsi/en/EU_actions_integration.cfm)

<sup>105</sup> Interview of Matthieu Tardis with Claire Rodier. On the position of GISTI, see especially: La réinstallation des réfugiés, instrument européen de l'externalisation des procédures d'asile, Note de travail, November 2005, available at: [http://www.gisti.org/IMG/pdf/nt\\_reinstallation-des-refugiés\\_2005.pdf](http://www.gisti.org/IMG/pdf/nt_reinstallation-des-refugiés_2005.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> Finland country profile , [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00151\\_20130705130136\\_knowresetcountryprofilefinland.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00151_20130705130136_knowresetcountryprofilefinland.pdf)

**Translators are not often available and authorities in general do not cover expenses for translation.** In addition to this, volunteers, especially native speakers, were found to be overburdened by the great need of complex and time-consuming accompanying and counselling assistance

The following Recommendations were drawn up on the basis of a comparative overview from the Know Reset Country Profile data.

- There needs to be more **collaboration between state authorities and other stakeholders throughout the resettlement process.** This could include sharing good practices and experiences from other EU countries; In addition to this, the cooperation between local authorities and NGOs providing integration assistance it is viewed as very important.
- **All relevant stakeholders** should be provided with the necessary information about the refugees, and the responsibilities of different stakeholders should become regulated. UNHCR Dossiers could also be shared in advance with NGOS and Municipalities to plan integration measures. This will allow stakeholders to respond adequately to the needs of Refugees.
- **NGOs and Local Authorities need to be involved the pre-arrival phase,** this could include the selection process or cultural orientation. NGOs and local authorities have a role to play in creating a welcoming society and States should value the expertise and experiences of NGOs to prepare the local communities to welcome refugees and to help in the process of integration.
- **Training for stakeholders is needed:** this could be organised with topics such as: the resettlement procedure, competences of stakeholders, cultural background, specifics of providing assistance to resettled people, as well as resettlement and national procedures.
- In the EU member States that have recently established resettlement programmes it has been suggested that there should be training prior to the start of the implementation of resettlement programmes; This must include twinning projects, sharing of good practices with more experienced countries;
- Trainings could be organised for service providers in municipalities (communes) and public welfare office to explain resettlement and national procedures.
- **Cultural Orientation** for resettled refugees is very important prior to departure, focusing on the host society and resettlement services provision. This will better manage people's expectations and avoid prejudicial frustrations upon arrival. Cooperation with local authorities or local NGOs can ensure this.
- **Translation services for refugees** and cultural training for all stakeholders dealing with refugees is important to ensure efficient integration.
- **Promotion of resettlement policy and practice within the society** in order to receive as strong as possible support from the host society.
- **Resettled refugees could have a major role** during the post-arrival phase in the facilitation of the resettlement process.

#### **D. Capacity in terms of funding**

In order to encourage resettlement financial incentives will continue to play an important role. Furthermore, funding remains crucial to any service delivery by including the costs incurred at all levels. **Identifying sustainable funding has also an impact in programme planning and using the available resources as well as possible.**

The financing of resettlement remains still very complex. From several interviews with government and non-government officials and research, it can be concluded that there is a need to know **the cost of refugee resettlement programme** although, in reality, serious data limitations preclude a full

estimation of costs of resettlement activities. As a result it is not possible to make a meaningful cross-country comparison but only to identify the current national and EU funds available in each member state. Due to the lack of possibilities to access the specific budget line in national public budgets, it was not possible to obtain the following data in each country:

- a) Cost related to pre – arrival activities,<sup>107</sup> including staff costs.
- b) Cost related to post –arrival activities,<sup>108</sup> including staff costs and the costs of integration and reception.<sup>109</sup>
- c) Fixed costs per refugee or fixed levels of compensation to local authorities.
- d) Other related costs impacting the whole resettlement process.<sup>110</sup>

The research indicates that although the refugee resettlement programmes should be essentially funded by Member States, many of them still rely mostly on the European Refugee Fund (ERF).<sup>111</sup> An exception to this is Denmark, which relies on its own national fund as it has opted out from ERF.

Amongst many other factors examined in this paper and which have contributed in creating the momentum for resettlement, the possibility to obtain funding for resettlement through the ERF has played an important role. In general, the ERF with a budget of 630 million for the period 2008-2013 has supported EU countries to cover diverse activities related to resettlement, such as the selection of refugees as well as reception and integration programmes for resettled refugees.<sup>112</sup>

ERF funding for resettlement is allocated through three channels:

- 1) National Programmes- the major parts ERF funds are allocated to national programmes (where Member States include refugee resettlement in national ERF programmes<sup>113</sup>). An ERF contribution normally cannot exceed 50% of the total costs of the specific action.<sup>114</sup>
- 2) The ERF provides Member States with a lump sum of 4000 Euros for each resettled refugee.
- 3) A small percentage of the ERF (amounting to 4% of available ERF resources) is centrally managed by the European Commission and is used to build knowledge, promote practical cooperation and political support for resettlement between Member States through the transnational projects mentioned earlier in pg.30.

Some states finance their own structures and activities, while other Member States fund other actors (mainly from civil society). While going through each country profile, the research indicates that in most countries the budget covering resettlement activities is part of the general budget for

<sup>107</sup> For more details refer to the country profiles section III 3 “Resettlement implementation”<http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00003>

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Regional and municipal budgets need also to be examined.

<sup>110</sup> Joanne van Selm, Tamara Woroby, Erin Patrick and Monica Matts, Study on The Feasibility of setting up resettlement schemes in EU Member States or at EU Level, against the background of the Common European Asylum system and the goal of a Common Asylum Procedure. 2003  
[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/elibrary/docs/pdf/resettlement\\_study\\_full\\_2003\\_en\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/elibrary/docs/pdf/resettlement_study_full_2003_en_en.pdf),

<sup>111</sup> [http://europa.eu/legislation\\_summaries/justice\\_freedom\\_security/free\\_movement\\_of\\_persons\\_asylum\\_immigration/114567\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/justice_freedom_security/free_movement_of_persons_asylum_immigration/114567_en.htm)

<sup>112</sup> For more information : The ERF for the period 2008-2013 established by Decision NO 573/2007/EC enables the financing and actions related to resettlement under the article 3(9) and 3(7). In addition article 13(3) provides for additional financial allocations of 4000 euros per refugee in case of the resettlement of certain vulnerable categories or persons from Regional Protection Programmes (RPPs).

<sup>113</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/pdf/allocations\\_eu\\_state\\_for\\_each\\_fund\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/financing/fundings/pdf/allocations_eu_state_for_each_fund_en.pdf)

<sup>114</sup> Under specific conditions (for Cohesion Fund countries and actions falling within specific priorities), the EU co-financing can reach 75 %. In each beneficiary State, the national authority responsible for the management of the Funds provides information on programme implementation, on the National Programmes and on the beneficiaries of the Fund.

migration and asylum. It is mixed with/ indistinguishable from the whole budget of the relevant department or institution in charge of migration and asylum. For example, the Dutch resettlement programme is financed from the budget of the Ministry of the Interior, including the funds that are available to the Immigration and Naturalisation Service and the Central Body for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA).<sup>115</sup> The COA is granted a budget of €250.000 for all resettled refugees. In Sweden each year the Government allocates funds, in a separate budget line, to the resettlement of refugees.<sup>116</sup> Due to this clear budget line it was possible to gather some data regarding the cost per refugee, which may vary on the basis of refugee category.<sup>117</sup>

ERF funds are also “poured into this budget” and no data could be gathered if they are strictly used for resettled refugees. In addition to this, some programmes and projects have been directly financed through ERF and central governments. For example the Gateway Protection Programme is match funded by the UK government (the UK Border Agency) and the European Refugee Fund.<sup>118</sup> The project for support and reception of resettled refugees (run by Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen) in Belgium was similar: It cost 308.405,32 euros of which 154.193,43 were from the ERF.<sup>119</sup> The contribution Finland currently receives from the European Refugee Fund is directed to the HAAPA project<sup>120</sup> that supports the education of social and health personnel in municipalities. Money has been distributed to 11 municipalities.<sup>121</sup>

It should be noted that the above-mentioned projects could not exist without the financial support of the ERF (national actions).

While Member States like Netherland, Sweden, Finland, Denmark have a significant national budget to finance resettlement programmes, data shows that EU Member States that have recently established resettlement programmes will continue to rely heavily upon EU funds. In the case of Bulgaria and Portugal the national funds allocated for restatement activities represents 25 % of the national funds and 75% are from ERF contributions.

Furthermore, no national budget is foreseen for resettlement in Belgium, which means that it will rely completely on what is available on EU funds.<sup>122</sup> The same goes for Hungary: The Office of Immigration and Nationality does not plan to complement the ERF support by matching funds additional to the basic support provided to all refugees in the country.<sup>123</sup> Resettlement to Romania is also funded only through ERF.

Though Resettlement in France is State-funded, the government is already applying for the dedicated funds available under the ERF.<sup>124</sup> However, there is no information about how this money is used bearing in mind that vulnerable refugees do not benefit from extra-services.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Interview with Janneke van Etten, Senior Policy Officer at the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Migration Policy Department, Asylum, Reception and Return, NL, February 2012.

<sup>116</sup> Netherland country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00161>

<sup>117</sup> Sweden country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00169>

<sup>118</sup> Interview with UK Borders Agency, Dave Atkinson, Refugee Team (May 2012)

<sup>119</sup> Fedasil, Jaarverslag 2009 (Annual Report 2009), <http://www.fedasil.be/home/attachment/i/19890>, at pg.29

<sup>120</sup> [http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.ttp.eu/files/Creating%20Welcoming%20Communities\\_HAAPA%20Finland.pdf](http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.ttp.eu/files/Creating%20Welcoming%20Communities_HAAPA%20Finland.pdf)

<sup>121</sup> Interview Arja Kekkonen, Negotiating Officer, Finish Ministry of the Interior, Migration Department Unit, (January 2012)

<sup>122</sup> Interview with Claudia Bonamini Project Coordinator at Vluchtelingenwerk Vlaanderen, March 2012.

<sup>123</sup> Hungary country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00155>

<sup>124</sup> Moreover, 90 % of the EU relocation programme was funded by ERF.

<sup>125</sup> Interview with Matthieu Tardis, France terre d’asile, April 2012, National report, Matthieu Tardis, France terre d’asile ( ECRE ) April 2012, France country profile, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00152>

Likewise, Bulgaria is carrying out its first resettlement activities in 2013, which also include the development of administrative capacity. These should/are to be fully funded by the 2012 annual programme of the ERF and by the state budget. In the course of the research it was not possible to secure concrete figures for the amount funded from the state budget line. It has to be noted also that the financial stimulus of 6000 Euros for every resettled refugee, provided by ERF, is considered an important aspect of Bulgaria's ambition for small -scale resettlement in 2014.<sup>126</sup>

ERF funds are also important to Germany, more than half of them are distributed to the Länder.<sup>127</sup> At National level, the Federal State also finances resettlement activities mainly to cover the selection and transport costs of the refugees from the countries of first asylum, the selection missions and as well as integration courses and other costs mentioned in the country profile<sup>128</sup>. As mentioned above, **funds are also distributed at the local level**. Municipalities in each Länder cover costs related to integration support packages like housing, etc.<sup>129</sup> Even in the case of Germany it is impossible to give precise costs of resettlement activities as there is no separate budget line on resettlement.

In general, funding for activities are public funds and there are not enough available for specific projects. As pointed out also above, the central government allocates funds at the local level to municipalities to cover some of the costs related to the post -arrival phase activities. For example in Sweden the Migration Board distributes financial resources to the municipalities who are responsible for the organization and implementation of introduction programme. In the case of France, authorities are co-financing reception and integration projects run by NGOs such as France Terre D'Asile, Forum Réfugiés with ERF funds.<sup>130</sup> In other cases like in Finland and the Netherlands, most of the refugee cases are shouldered by the municipalities that receive the financial quota per refugee. In the Netherland NGOs are dependent on municipalities for funding their work with resettled refugees. The central government has recently made additional funding available for municipalities but this is currently only a temporary measure covering the period of two years: €2,000 is allocated to a municipality for each resettled refugees with an additional €1,000 for a child. The only funding for NGOs from the central government is the national ERF programme.<sup>131</sup>

In UK, the UKBA meets the full costs of resettlement in the first year. Costs include an integration support package, which covers housing, healthcare, education, language classes and casework support services. NGOs work closely with the participating local authorities and provide many of these services to resettled refugees. NGOs are currently funded to provide resettled refugees with a twelve month package of integration support. Local Authorities participate on a voluntary basis and after the initial twelve months, the relevant local authority and government department are responsible for any further costs.<sup>132</sup>

However, the research also indicated that in most country profiles it was not possible to gather information about the funds distributed to the local authorities.

**Stakeholders interviewed are largely positive about the achievements of the ERF, in particular for its support for resettlement infrastructure. We can conclude that ERF III funding has not only improved the existing resettlement activities but it has also increased the number of refugees resettled.**

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<sup>126</sup> Bulgaria country profile

Antoaneta Dedikova, National report summary of interviews, pg. 5

<sup>127</sup> Written Interview with Daniel Stübel Innenministerium Baden-Württemberg, January 2012.

<sup>128</sup> <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00153>

<sup>129</sup> For more information please read German country profile.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with Matthieu Tardis, France terre d'asile, April 2012.

<sup>131</sup> Interview with Ariane den Uyl, Policy Officer, Dutch Refugee Council, (March 2012).

<sup>132</sup> UK Country Chapter, p. 3. Available at <http://www.unhcr.org/40ee6fc04.html> (Last visited 31 May 2012).

Nevertheless, **the lack of allocation of the necessary financial resources makes it difficult to accomplish the objectives of the integration process.** For example, for the UK the current funding available for integration services is not sufficient to allow for the delivery of much training to local service providers.

Likewise, **for most of the EU non- resettling countries the financial incentives remain crucial in their decision to pursue resettlement or not.** For example, the public institutions of Latvia are still in the process of further optimizing and decreasing their budget due to the economic crisis of 2008-2012. These budgetary cuts make the introduction of any resettlement programme extremely unlikely.<sup>133</sup>

The following Recommendations were drawn up on the basis of a comparative overview from the Know Reset Country Profile data.

- A more detailed and more controlled budgeting of the funds allocated by the ERF for each resettled person could contribute to the improvement of the reception and integration services and a better functioning of the system itself. This is especially true because of the fact that while ERF funding represents one of the biggest incentives to carry out resettlement, it is questionable whether the free handling of the sums in question is necessarily a positive element. As the UNHCR warned, this can result in discrimination among refugees.<sup>134</sup> Is it better to have the funds used for the improvement of refugee reception as a whole or for resettled refugees specifically (which could be discriminatory).
- Sources of funding for resettlement need to be diversified and there should be an adequate structural base for funding municipalities so that they can allocate sufficient funds to local NGOs or funding for NGOs needs to be allocated directly from the central government
- Less bureaucracy around ERF funding would be helpful – as would increased funding.

### E. Capacity in terms of political will

The difficult economic situation and the growth of negative attitudes towards foreigners have prompted stricter policies towards migrants, including the flow of refugees. Economic difficulties have also cut into the availability of State services for the integration of resettled refugees. In addition, the recent popular support for restrictive policies, demonstrated in several countries, can be seen to undermine political support for efforts to establish any responsibility sharing mechanism for resettlement.

This section will provide a picture of the political willingness of Member States to provide more and better quality resettlement by assessing the following aspects: the political debate; the effect of socio-economic factors; the influence of public opinion and media. Each of these aspects is a cross-cutting theme in the political reasoning for resettlement, which will be apparent throughout this section.

Over the course of the Know Reset project, the overall political discourse and decisions in the EU Member States shifted the view of immigration towards more restrictive policies.<sup>135</sup> This can be also seen through the tendency to decrease the number of protection statuses granted in comparison to the increased numbers of asylum applicants in a number of Member States.<sup>136</sup>

Despite this shift in restrictive immigration policies, Member States have continued to commit to resettlement. During 2007 in France, for example, a decrease in asylum applications may have

<sup>133</sup> Article “Finance Minister: Latvia has consolidated 2.3 billion lats in three years”, December 5, 2011, available at <http://bnn-news.com/finance-minister-latvia-consolidated-2-3-billion-lats-years-42711> (last time checked on February 16, 2012). Interview with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Interior, op.cit.

<sup>134</sup> Interview with Zsuzsanna Puskás, UNHCR office in Hungary, April 2012.

<sup>135</sup> See Country Profiles for France, Italy, UK and Netherlands.

<sup>136</sup> Data gathered from the know reset statistics for the year 2010/2011.

prompted the government to overcome the reluctance for other forms of protection, such as resettlement. Though only the government can provide the real reasons for its commitment to resettlement and they could be influenced by many different factors,<sup>137</sup> a year later, France, (along with other Member States) committed to its first resettlement experience. Another example is in Denmark. When the elections prompted a change in political governance in 2011, there was a shift in the immigration perspective as the new Government in office pledged to ease up previously strict regulations towards asylum seekers. Though Denmark has been reputed to be particularly strict in terms of its immigration law and policy, when we look at refugees, Denmark has contributed to finding durable solutions through resettlement for many years.<sup>138</sup>

Meanwhile, in Germany, after observing an extreme rise in the number of the asylum seekers from Serbia and Macedonia in September 2012, Germany's interior minister called for tighter rules for processing their applications. Nevertheless, as far as resettlement is concerned, Germany has practiced ad hoc resettlement for many years without ever committing to an official annual quota. The adoption of a permanent resettlement programme, in December 2011, was an unexpected breakthrough after years of lobbying for a permanent resettlement programme by different stakeholders. It seems that the most important factors in leading the German government to rethink its position were the mainly positive experiences of the ad hoc resettlement of Iraqi refugees in 2009/2010 at the local level, and the developments at the European level with the campaign for resettlement to Europe.<sup>139</sup>

According to the stakeholders interviewed, Swedish immigration policy is characterized by a broad political consensus. Curiously, the far-right party the Swedish Democrats is positive towards resettlement; basically they want to restrict the reception of refugees only to Convention refugees and quota refugees.<sup>140</sup> Generally, the party wants to reduce overall immigration to Sweden by 90 percent.<sup>141</sup>

On an inter-state level, the JEURP, goes much further than to offer a financial incentive, more importantly it determines a common EU resettlement priority, as well as fostering political will through cooperation - eventually allowing the EU to pool resources for resettlement, and encouraging joint missions based on successful previous ventures. It is worth **highlighting the importance of twinning projects and joint selection missions between Member States**, which have provided another method for knowledge exchange on resettlement, and have encouraged Member States who were not conducting resettlement to begin the process. For example Hungarian government officials participated in a Hungarian-Finnish twinning project and visited the evacuation Emergency center in Timisoara several times. In her interview, Ms. Árpád Szép,<sup>142</sup> stated that the twinning project paved the way for the Hungarian government to be prepared to actually carry out a resettlement programme. By learning from the Finnish experience she highlighted that: "A positive Finnish experience was not to try integration in the capital, but in a smaller place, where the local community can take a part in the integration. This seems to be working. The families or groups really integrate in society this way and not in their local diaspora, from which they might have wanted to detach anyways."

Throughout this report references are made to relevant national practice in which the complexity and diversity of resettlement at national level is clearly demonstrated. This leads us to conclude that **we cannot talk about a uniform EU policy tendency yet**. It underlines the fact that the **selection criteria** discussed earlier in this paper have been **driven not only by UNHCR and ERF/JEURP**

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<sup>137</sup> Interview with Matthieu Tardis, (ECRE) France Terre D'asile, March 2012.

<sup>138</sup> Eva Singer, Danish Refugee Council (ECRE) National Report, April 2012.

<sup>139</sup> Margarete Misselwitz (ECRE) Qualitative national report, March 2012 - Interview with Kerstin Becker (German Red Cross), March 2012.

<sup>140</sup> Swedish country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00169>

<sup>141</sup> Parliamentary Protocol (2011/12:44). Dated 8 December 2011, retrieved at: [http://beta.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Kammaren/Protokoll/Riksdagens-protokoll-2011124\\_GZ0944/](http://beta.riksdagen.se/sv/Dokument-Lagar/Kammaren/Protokoll/Riksdagens-protokoll-2011124_GZ0944/)

<sup>142</sup> Office of Immigration and Nationality in Hungary, April 2012.

**criteria but also by the criteria and political will at national level.** In many cases, this can lead to a positive decision such as accepting medical cases,<sup>143</sup> the elderly or unaccompanied children.

As illustrated in several national practices, some States expect refugees to have a certain capacity to integrate<sup>144</sup> in the new host country. Nevertheless, the traditional EU resettlement countries all have quotas for emergency cases and it can even be considered a flagship policy for the Nordic countries. It shows their willingness to take persons in particularly vulnerable positions.<sup>145</sup> In the case of Finland, vulnerability criteria are often taken into account already in the allocation decision. UNHCR is informed so that they are able to propose certain groups (for example, women-at-risk). The elderly are usually not taken alone but as part of a family. Individual children without a caregiver have been admitted if the need for international protection has been very strong, although as a main rule this does not happen.<sup>146</sup>

The same goes for Sweden. While there is no specified sub-quota, Sweden accepts limited numbers of unaccompanied children within the resettlement programme. Nevertheless, this category remains problematic. Their number has increased dramatically in recent years and they need very particular help. The Swedish state offers large sums of money for the resettlement of these children but this type of resettlement is often hard to organise as a lot of planning and local resources are needed. This category can also ‘compete’ with unaccompanied minor asylum seekers.<sup>147</sup>

Contrary to the above examples, in general, cases of people with serious mental health issues are not accepted in Ireland. This is due to difficulties accessing appropriate services in the Irish Mental Health sector. Issues arise as many of the cases referred through resettlement speak minority languages and it can be difficult to provide services through an interpreter that is not specifically trained to interpret in a mental health environment. In an interview, the resettlement officer in Ireland stated that “*Therefore, in the best interests of the applicant we do not accept persons with serious mental health issues*”.<sup>148</sup>

Additionally, few Member States have been known to make their choice on the basis of a particular religious background or a particular ethnicity. Where the latter is mostly justified by having previously resettled a group of the same ethnicity, the former (selecting particular religions) is seen as discriminatory. An example can be found in the German national practice. The German decision to give priority to members of the Christian minority for resettlement provoked discussion in the countries of first asylum as well as in Germany. Also, the ‘ability to integrate’ in Germany has been criticised by different stakeholders. As resettlement is intended for the most vulnerable refugees, the humanitarian purpose should have absolute priority.<sup>149</sup>

The graphs below illustrate the selection criteria based on two target groups: women at risk and religion.

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<sup>143</sup> Swedish Country Profile, <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00169>

<sup>144</sup> Please see also the subsection “Capacity in terms of methods and tools”, pg 25

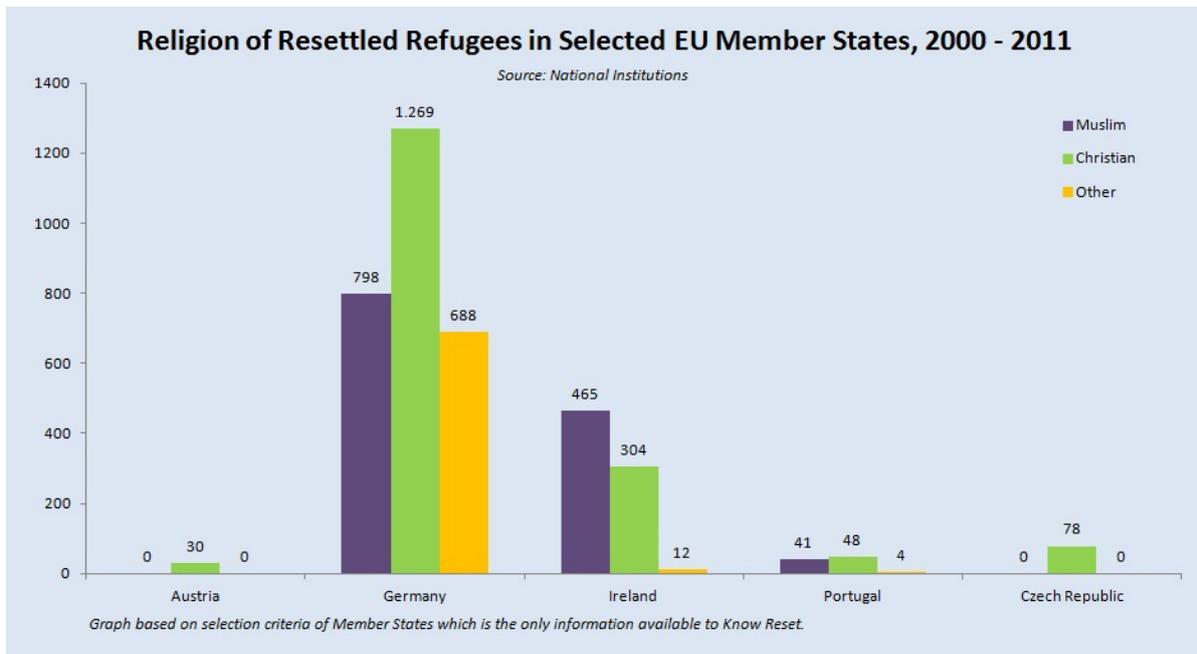
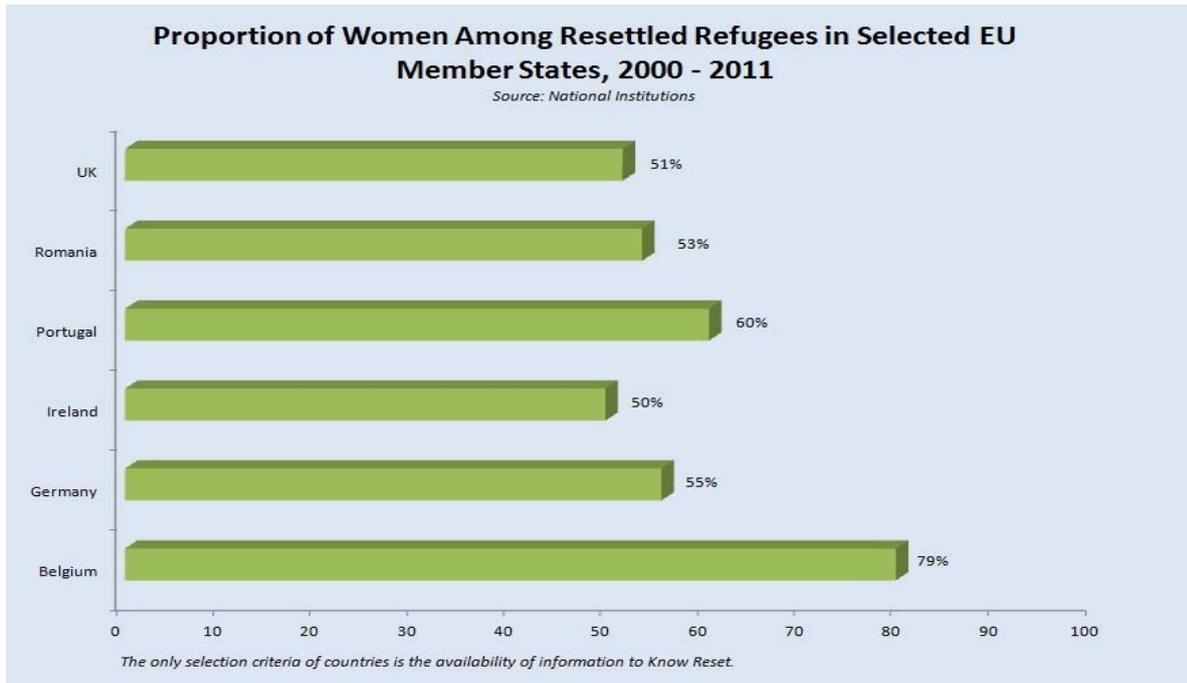
<sup>145</sup> Collated information from interviews in Finland, Sweden and Denmark.

<sup>146</sup> Interview with Monica Harju, Senior Adviser, Asylum Unit, Finish Immigration Service.

<sup>147</sup> Interview with Oskar Ekblad (OE), Head of Unit, Swedish Migration Board.

<sup>148</sup> Interview with Martina Glennon (“MG”) (Assistant Principal Officer) and Elaine Houlihan (“EH”) (Executive Officer), Resettlement Unit, Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration.

<sup>149</sup> German country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00153>



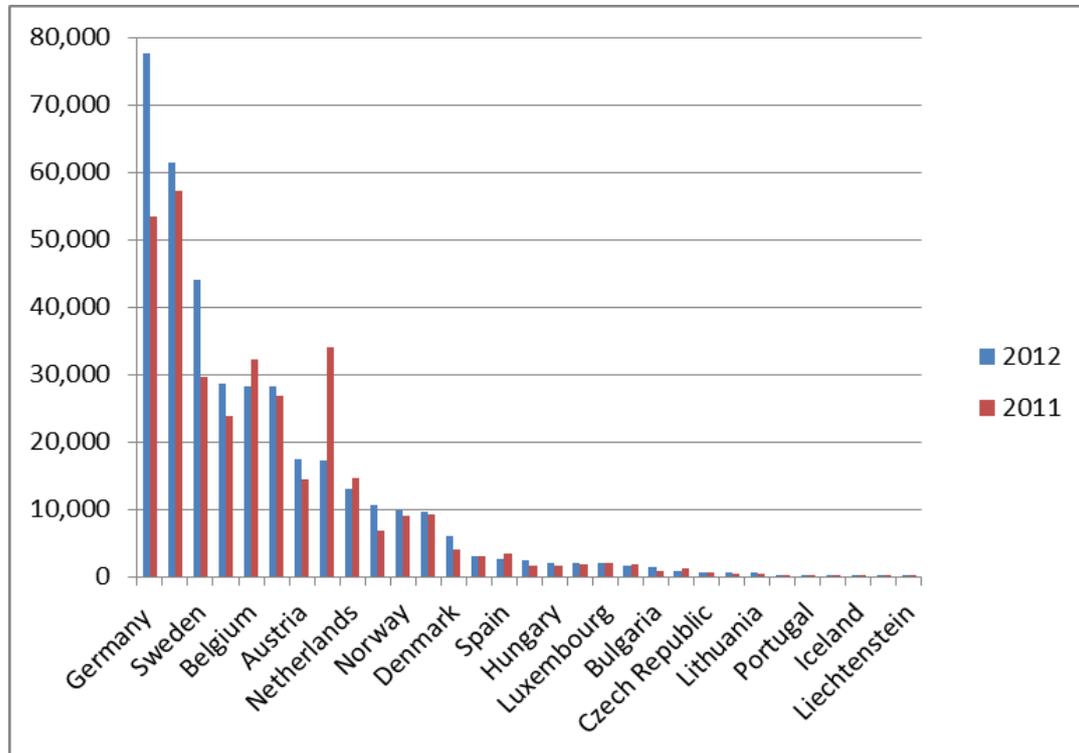
The **worsening economic situation across Europe** has had a detrimental effect on political willingness to engage in pressing asylum and refugee issues, such as resettlement. Several Member States, who have been affected by the crisis, clearly stated that they are relying on an improvement in the economic stability of their country to assess what progress can be made in resettlement, but that they at least have the political will to continue.

Members States like Cyprus, Greece and Malta and are not viewing resettlement as an immediate option, **not only due to the severe financial crisis** but especially **because of the large number of asylum applications they receive.**<sup>150</sup>

<sup>150</sup> Collated information from interviews and country profiles in those Member States

Likewise, flows of asylum seekers to Luxembourg have risen sharply since 2011 (mainly Roma from Serbia). Given this situation and the high percentage of foreign residents already present in the country, Luxembourg is not considering an increase of its capacities for resettlement.<sup>151</sup>

The graph below shows that the number of people seeking asylum in the European Union is on the rise – and that refugees continue to be confronted with widely diverging standards in the member states, be it in terms of reception conditions or regarding the asylum procedure.<sup>152</sup>



Source: Eurostat, Asylum and new asylum applicants by citizenship, age and sex Annual aggregated data (rounded), migr\_asyappctza, extracted on 30 July 2013

In fact, as we will see, public and media opinion are strongly linked to the economic factors that states refer to when adopting a more cautious approach to resettlement. In Belgium for example, there was a very visible problem for the reception of asylum seekers who could be found sleeping on the streets. Public opinion was that Belgium was too generous in granting asylum and this made it too difficult for a political decision to accept more refugees through resettlement.<sup>153</sup>

Despite this example, in many Member States resettlement itself and efforts to resettle refugees are relatively unknown to the general public. In Germany, the public has little knowledge of resettlement, but during the resettlement of Iraqis were surprisingly welcoming.<sup>154</sup> Similarly, in Denmark, although the public is generally not aware of the difference between resettled refugees and other refugees, this is not seen as a problem. When people are explained there is a generally positive attitude, because it is easier to understand why refugees living in camps in some countries need to come to Denmark for better protection. The national media do not write very much about resettlement but sometimes local

<sup>151</sup> Interview with Mrs Welter (OLAI), 14 May 2012 and Caritas-Luxembourg, Interview of 14 March 2012.

<sup>152</sup> European Refugee Policy Pathways to Fairer Burden-Sharing For additional information, please visit: [www.svr-migration.de/Research-Unit](http://www.svr-migration.de/Research-Unit)

<sup>153</sup> Salomé Phillmann (ECRE) Belgium Qualitative National Report, February 2012.

<sup>154</sup> Margarete Misselwitz (ECRE) Qualitative national report, March 2012.

media may report about the activities of the local volunteer groups.<sup>155</sup> Likewise, most people in the Netherlands do not know that their country has a resettlement programme. Those who do know about it consider it to be something positive. Resettlement is hardly present in the mainstream media and is usually covered only by local media when, for instance, a group of resettled refugees arrive to a municipality.<sup>156</sup>

In the case of Portugal, since it has a small number of asylum seekers and an even smaller number of refugees benefiting from international protection, this issue does not really attract the attention of public opinion and media.<sup>157</sup>

Additionally, when resettlement is acknowledged by the public as asylum in general (as in Hungary below), or a clear distinction is made between refugees (as in Finland below), with both scenarios being potentially harmful to increase political will. In Hungary, when asylum seekers cross the border they are reported by the media as criminals and not as potential refugees. To this effect, the Hungarian Government has considered asylum matters primarily in the context of the fight against irregular migration and the protection needs of refugees have been given lesser priority than security and law enforcement objectives.<sup>158</sup> Yet, when it comes to the public discussing a case of resettlement, the Hungarian state could be seen by the public as having acted on a humanitarian basis, generously offering help and participating in global burden sharing.

The Finnish public is less hostile to quota refugees than other beneficiaries of international protection since it is widely considered that those persons come from serious conflict situations and have been individually chosen by Finland. However, with more immigration into Finland over the last few years, this distinction is becoming less clear as there is confusion between refugees and immigrants.<sup>159</sup>

Resettled refugees are often bound to be more readily accepted by the general public than their spontaneously arriving peers, although the situations from which they flee may not be different. As such, resettled refugees can bring positive connotations to the term “refugee” which could also benefit asylum seekers.

If relations with the regional media are fostered accurately, local opinion can be favourable to resettlement, as in the case of the Czech Republic. When it comes to public opinion in Czech Republic, we need to separate the general opinion with the local one. The local community can be open towards resettlement and resettled families. No xenophobic behaviour seems to be noticed, although there is a difference in reactions towards refugees from well-educated communities and less-educated ones. People seem to be more sceptical towards those from less-educated communities. Nevertheless, relations seem to improve once people get to know each other. The regional media has been quite involved in promoting stories of resettled families. Furthermore cooperation with the regional and local media is considered excellent.<sup>160</sup>

It is difficult to define whether political reluctance to migration across Europe has encouraged negative media opinions towards asylum seekers or *vice versa*, or to what extent the economic crisis has provided an umbrella excuse to reduce efforts in this area. In both cases, resettlement is difficult to justify to the public to a certain extent. In the non-resettling states, such as the Baltic region for example,

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<sup>155</sup> Eva Singer, Danish Refugee Council (ECRE) National Report, April 2012.

<sup>156</sup> Ariane den Uyl, Policy Officer, DRC, April 2012.

<sup>157</sup> João Vasconcelos, (CPR) Qualitative national report, April 2012.

<sup>158</sup> Mária Barna (ECRE) National Report for Hungary. April, 2012.

<sup>159</sup> Ann-Charlotte Sirén-Borrego, (ECRE ) Qualitative National report for Finland , May 2012.

<sup>160</sup> Pavla Merhautova (ECRE) National Qualitative report, April 2012.

capacity in terms of financing<sup>161</sup> plays a role in this process, as does public opinion.<sup>162</sup> There is no political will to increase even knowledge on the topic, and a dearth of reliable information as to what resettlement is and what it entails remains, proving a legal and social challenge. These challenges are not confined to the Baltic region and feature to greater and lesser extents in other non-resettling states.

Thus, political will for resettlement is dependent on all of the above- mentioned cross-cutting factors. However, despite these cross cutting aspects, there is a commitment to resettlement. The final decision rests on the capacity of the Member State and its commitment to humanitarian protection.

For the new MS engaging in resettlement like Bulgaria, Romania, Belgium and Hungary for example, the national Governments<sup>163</sup> have demonstrated their political will by deciding to take part in the EU resettlement programme, confirming the importance of establishing a mechanism for responsibility sharing with other EU Member States and third countries unable to provide adequate protection for refugees and to integrate them. In the case of Romania, there is a more specific reason because the decision to resettle was influenced by the political will to strengthen Romania's status as a partner in the area of refugee protection. Since resettlement plays an important role in the EU's external policies on asylum, the involvement of Romania was also driven by the desire to assume more responsibility as an EU Member State.<sup>164</sup> For other countries like Germany or the Czech Republic- already mentioned earlier- the main reasons to commit resettlement were based on previous experiences successful experiences.<sup>165</sup>

During the course of the research several challenges were highlighted from different stakeholders interviewed. In many countries the general public is not informed about resettlement allowing for misunderstandings about the need for resettlement. There is a huge lack of knowledge about resettlement. Most people cannot distinguish between labour migrants, quota refugees and reunified family members, for example. These categories are all mixed up in discussions and people feel that migrants (independently of their type) are taking their jobs. However, when you start explaining the difference, people can show great compassion for refugees and a willingness to help. Additionally, the media can confuse resettlement with migration further increasing the confusion of the public. In several cases, the local media have not promoted resettlement leading to an absence of local support. Likewise, the economic crisis has meant that the issue of refugee resettlement is pushed further down the political agenda. In terms of the allocation of places, refugees can be selected on the basis of their religion, age or medical condition. Where this can be a sign of generosity of Member States, it can also be seen as discriminatory. In addition, migration is seen by some Member States through a lens of security. Non-resettlement states may know little about the process or the challenges.

In conclusion, the following Recommendations were drawn up on the basis of a comparative overview from the Know Reset Country Profile data:

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<sup>161</sup> Interview with the State Secretary of the Ministry of Interior<sup>161</sup>, Republic of Latvia, Mrs. Ilze Pētersonē-Godmane, January 2012.

<sup>162</sup> Interview with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, February 2012.

<sup>163</sup> Collated information from interviews, country profiles.

<sup>164</sup> Information provided by the Romanian Office of immigration formal reply to the Know Reset questionnaire, op.cit.

<sup>165</sup> Collated information from interviews, country profiles for Germany and Czech Republic.

- All stakeholders need to devise a media strategy, to ensure that the public is aware of resettlement.
- This strategy must be carefully worded as not to confuse the public on other asylum issues, and should avoid creating a division between types of refugee (resettled or otherwise)
- The local media should be informed of the situation in order to promote resettlement at a local level
- Relations with journalists should be built and nurtured
- Refugees should engage with the press.
- Civil society and governments need to work together with the media to ensure that the political debate shifts towards protection and humanitarian responsibility rather than security and border control. This will increase the public's positive perception of resettled refugees and refugees in general
- The security aspects of migration and irregular migration should be removed from discussions on resettlement.

## II. The future of resettlement in Europe

How resettlement will evolve in the future still remains unclear both for resettling and non-resettling EU member states. **Issues still to be addressed include whether there will be an increase in the number of places for resettling MS and if more MS will engage in resettlement or not.** Depending on the different circumstances at national level, the research indicates that even the governments from the traditional resettlement countries may be cautious about increasing the number of places they offer and may continue to resettle along the lines of numbers to date. The reasons for that vary from country to country. The few examples examined below describe the challenges in increasing the capacity in numbers. The Netherlands will maintain their 4-yearly quotas of 2000 resettled refugees (500/year) for the foreseeable future.<sup>166</sup> In the case of Finland, due to the constant challenge in reaching the annual quota, it seems that the government will address this issue first.<sup>167</sup> As also highlighted in pg 17, the UK aspires to an increased quota of 1000 per year when this will be considered affordable.<sup>168</sup>

For other Member States recently engaged in resettlement programmes, reception capacity and the lack of financial resources might impede their governments from maintaining their commitments or further committing to increasing quotas for resettlement.

In some Member States, contrary to the governmental view, stakeholders believe that more can be done, be it higher numbers or within the process itself, and the aim of being more proactively involved.<sup>169</sup> Furthermore, public understanding and support, including in the media, will remain a factor leading to more political will for resettlement.<sup>170</sup>

For non-resettling countries, resettlement does not currently seem high on the political agenda and this might continue to be the case for the near future.<sup>171</sup> The impact of the JEURP and the possibilities it brings along may still be a push factor towards resettlement for some non-resettling Member States. However, countries like Malta or Cyprus not only have no plans for resettlement but are actively

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<sup>166</sup>The Netherland country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00161>, pg. 12

<sup>167</sup> Finland country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00161>, pg. 15

<sup>168</sup> UK country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00170>

<sup>169</sup> For more information see other sections.

<sup>170</sup> For more information, please see the section on political will.

<sup>171</sup> Please note that the time frame for conducting the interviews was between the end of 2011 till mid-March 2012.

engaged in negotiations with the EU regarding the relocation of refugees from their territory.<sup>172</sup> Likewise Greece and Italy will continue to struggle to manage refugee arrivals and develop their reception and protection capacity while dealing with the economic crisis.

**(i) Quality vs. Quantity: how to increase quantity and enhance quality?**

Drawing on the analyses of Member States policies and practices presented in each country profiles and on their capacities in different terms, this chapter seeks to highlight the national directions and steps taken at national level that could also be taken at EU level.

The policy developments and the legal frameworks examined in EU comparative reports shows an evolution of the framework for resettlement at both EU level and national level for MS engaged in resettlement.

The primary focus of EU policy has until now been to mobilize more Member States to engage in resettlement as well as to increase the number of resettled refugees per country and as a total in Europe. As demonstrated in sub-section D “Capacity in terms of funding”, the financial contribution made available by the EU through the ERF, had also an impact on increasing the numbers and to the sustainability of resettlement. At the same time the analysis shows that the quality of resettlement has been emphasised less at the EU level but not necessarily at the national level.

***A successful programme?***

Taking into consideration the EP argument<sup>173</sup> that the success of resettlement programmes should be measured not only on the basis of the number of persons resettled but also on the implementation of measures to support their integration, the research tried to evaluate how successful resettlement has been in each MS engaged in it. However, **it has not been possible to come to any firm conclusion as to the success of past resettlement experiences.** The experience varied widely from one country to another and depended also **how success is defined, and there were no standard agreed indicators in place.**

In most of the Member States engaged in resettlement, different policies have been pursued in the last few decades with various level of success. Most of the stakeholders interviewed confirm that there is a need to evaluate past resettlement experiences and develop “follow-up measures” at every stage. **National resettlement evaluations can lead the different stakeholders to initiate new projects or policies.** A good example of this is the Netherlands. Findings from the 2008 WODC report (Dutch Ministry of Justice Research and Documentation Centre on the policy and social position of resettled refugees from a national and international perspective) demonstrated that resettled refugees were underrepresented in the higher levels of education and that their participation in the labour market was low. The report findings were one of the reasons for UAF to initiate the project on resettlement of refugee students.<sup>174</sup>

Hungary illustrates a different scenario. There have been criticisms of the integration system that can be even more crucial for resettled refugees.<sup>175</sup> Recent commitments and measures adopted by Hungary in the past few months in order to participate in resettlement programmes are a promising

<sup>172</sup> <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00147>, pg. 4

<sup>173</sup> *ibid*, European Parliament (2010 a).

<sup>174</sup> Jasminka Rogic and Ariane Den Uyl, Dutch Refugee Council, (ECRE) National Report “ Resettlement in Netherlands” April 2012.

<sup>175</sup> Maria Barna, (ECRE) MENEDÉK – HUNGARIAN ASSOCIATION FOR MIGRANTS

start to improve integration across the board. Hungary is now entering a critical period to see how resettlement will evolve and how its programme will become more established.<sup>176</sup>

When it comes to the Danish example, it is not only the national stakeholders<sup>177</sup> who consider the Danish refugee resettlement programme successful but also other countries who have referred to it as a good model, especially the three-year quota. Similarly, all Swedish stakeholders strongly agreed that resettlement is a success by stating that it has helped to protect thousands of people. Paradoxically, Romania has the only resettlement programme considered successful by all the actors involved, with the exception of the resettled refugees.<sup>178</sup> Resettled refugees were in general disappointed by the integration system in Romania.<sup>179</sup>

Likewise, the failure to successfully resettle refugees convinced the Government of Bulgaria after sharing expertise with first-time resettlement countries in Europe. Bulgaria took a decision to postpone a pilot resettlement programme after learning about the unsuccessful resettlement of Bhutanese and Burmese refugees in countries resettling for the first time in Central Europe. The failure was arguably due to culture and language barriers and led to an inability to effectively integrate the newly resettled refugees in these countries.<sup>180</sup> Therefore, officials from the State Agency for Refugees are seeking to accumulate knowledge and acquire the necessary expertise.<sup>181</sup>

Even though the capacity of integrating resettled persons is beyond the scope of this paper, several examples from different Member States show clearly that in order for resettlement *to be a truly durable solution, states should focus on strengthening their integration capacity and the receptiveness of receiving communities to improve outcomes.* As Ewout Adriaens from CGRS-FEDASIL<sup>182</sup> said in his interview “Resettlement can only be considered successful when the resettled refugee is integrated in the resettlement country.” Successful positive experience of past ad hoc resettlement programmes can lead to a decision to adopt a permanent programme as happened in Germany.

### *Capacity to resettle more?*

As mentioned above, in some Member States, contrary to the governmental view, other stakeholders believe that more can be done, be it higher numbers or within the process itself, and aim to be more proactively involved (pg. 51). The shared opinion is that the current resettlement quota in several countries like the Netherlands, Denmark, Finland and Germany, could be increased and that, on the whole, all EU countries should do more to contribute to 'burden-sharing'. NGOs engaged in resettlement across EU Member states have been active in lobbying governments to expand the number of resettlement places. However, the political will to do so is often lacking. When asked if a country had the capacity to resettle, several respondents from the national authorities answered that this was a budgetary issue and one of reception/integration capacity.

Views have also been expressed that, given the current political and economic climate in different EU Member States, it may even be preferable at present to keep the current quotas and (at least) ensure that the existing resettlement activities will continue.

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<sup>176</sup> Hungary country profile [http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00155\\_20130729172455\\_knowresetcountryprofilehungary.pdf](http://www.know-reset.eu/files/texts/00155_20130729172455_knowresetcountryprofilehungary.pdf)

<sup>177</sup> Different sources, interviews with the stakeholders, danish national reports, country profiles.

<sup>178</sup> Romanian country profile; <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00165>

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Interview with Mrs. Anna Andreeva, op.cit.

<sup>181</sup> Bulgaria Country profile <http://www.know-reset.eu/?c=00146>

<sup>182</sup> Written interview with Ewout Adriaens, CGRS-FEDASIL, 4 May 2012.

**What is vital to emphasise in any resettlement discussions and possible further developments is that resettlement must not impact negatively on other systems of refugee protection.**

**Furthermore, the EU definitely has a capacity to resettle more than it does.**

### *Role of the EU and EASO*

The research also examined the role the EU could play to help member states to resettle refugees. In addition, stakeholders were asked to share their views about the role that the EASO could play in encouraging more states to engage.

Besides providing essential funding, it was thought that the EU could also undertake policy work, exchange of information on different practices and take on the role of informing governments in any future annual programme. The Joint EU Resettlement Programme was also viewed favourably, as a chance for countries to work together, to focus on certain groups of refugees, and again, to share or exchange practices. MS are eager to share the responsibility of resettling refugees.

It was felt that the EU should have a role in improving the quality of reception and integration programmes. It was observed that **national governments are very focused on the selection process and not enough on the integration processes for resettled refugees. The EU could do more to stimulate national governments to focus on the integration aspects of resettlement.**

The creation of a platform for the exchange of good practices and practical cooperation, involving all relevant stakeholders that would be helpful. Certain misgivings were raised about the possibility of the EU having any other role than providing funding as there is too much economic and social disunity within the EU Member States. The adoption of a common EU resettlement programme was generally seen as an important incentive to motivate member states. Likewise, by establishing priorities at EU-level, the strategic use of resettlement is strengthened. Additionally, interviewees felt the EU could “buddy up” actors in resettlement across different EU states and facilitate skills sharing.

**At the same time both UNHCR and NGOs raised their concern that the EU should not establish its own resettlement system parallel to UNHCR’s one.**

Denmark is not part of ERF and since the Danish programme has run independently for many years, the Danish civil society generally thought that the EU should play a role in promoting resettlement in the member states, but that NGOs should not focus on the EU but on national plans.

With regards to the EASO, the interviewees felt that EASO could have a role in advocating for more resettlement – particularly advocating for EU states not currently involved in resettlement to consider it. And, also to co-ordinate and push for more resettlement from the ‘Regional Protection Programme’ priority groups – possibly using mechanisms linked to funding.

EASO was largely seen as not having enough presence in the area of resettlement at the moment. Potentially they could also have a role in the co-ordination and logistical aspects of resettlement and support implementation of resettlement programmes at the local level. EASO can finally play a very important coordinating role in the future in the fields of collecting best practices, organising workshops/seminars, doing of studies and reports, drawing up training and preparing a module of the European Asylum Curriculum concerning resettlement, as well as evaluating operations at EU level. It was also noted that EASO is underfunded, which affects its capacity for practical involvement in resettlement. It was stressed that its role and policy should not conflict with those of UNHCR and the positive achievements so far in resettlement.

***Future funds: The Asylum and Migration Fund (henceforth AMF) 2014-2020***

EU resettlement policy post-2013 is being negotiated and soon to be approved within the framework of the Asylum and Migration Fund (AMF) 2014-2020.<sup>183</sup> In November 2011, the Commission issued a proposal for a regulation establishing the AMF for the period 2014-2020, which will replace the current funds in the area of migration and asylum (the ERF and the EIF and the European Return Fund).<sup>184</sup> It also aims to cover more comprehensively different aspects of the common Union asylum and immigration policy, including actions in or in relation to third countries.<sup>185</sup>

The AMF proposal, which is still under negotiation at the time of writing this report, foresees a system providing a fixed amount to Member states for each person they resettle (€6000, instead of €4000 currently). A higher amount of €10 000 will be allocated for each person resettled according to common Union resettlement priorities as well as for some categories of vulnerable refugees, such as women and children at risk, separated children and persons with medical needs or in need of emergency resettlement. These sums will be allocated to the Member States every two years on the basis of a pledging exercise and following the establishment of common EU resettlement priorities. To encourage the resettlement efforts of Member States, the fund also foresees financial support for a wide range of resettlement activities, such as the development of infrastructures and services - including transit and processing centres (See Annex 2 of the AMF) - and the conduct of selection missions (Article 7 AMF).<sup>186</sup>

Article 17 of the AMF describes the elements of a Union Resettlement Programme which is foreseen and whose aim will be to increase the current figures, to strengthen resettlement systems and to enhance resettlement where the EU has an added value. The fund will support the establishment of appropriate infrastructure and services, training of staff, joint missions and pre-departure measures and post-arrivals assistance. The Commission will establish Common EU resettlement priorities on the basis of set categories; the regions for 2014-2015 eligible for extra allocations have already been identified.

The Asylum and Migration fund needs to be attractive to Member States in order for them to increase their resettlement capacities and the number of people they resettle. In August 2012, ECRE published a policy paper, which provided comments and recommendations on the Commission Proposals on the future EU funding in the area of migration and asylum. With regard to resettlement, ECRE stated that the AMF will only reach this goal effectively if the administrative burden for Member States is minimal, and if specific incentives are put in place for Member States that are new to resettlement. A system similar to the recently amended European Refugee Fund, which foresees higher financial incentives for such Member States, could be adopted in the AMF.<sup>187</sup> Instead of taking the form of higher lump sums, these incentives could take the form of a higher EU contribution (90%) for resettlement activities carried out by Member States that are starting resettlement.

The AMF proposal also foresees funding for Union Actions (see Art. 21), i.e. transnational actions or actions of particular interest to the Union, and that these actions could deal with resettlement.

From informal information received it seems that the AMF negotiations are in their possibly last stages. The discussions will deal among other things with Resettlement (including probably a decrease

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<sup>183</sup> Com (2011) 751, Proposal for a REGULATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL establishing the Asylum and Migration Fund.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> ECRE Policy paper (August 2012) COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS on the Commission Proposals on the future EU funding in the area of migration and asylum.

<sup>187</sup> Decision No 281/2012/EU of the European Parliament and the Council amending the European Refugee Fund, 29 March 2012.

in funding for resettlement, family members and resettlement, and resettlement vs. humanitarian admission). It is quite likely that funding for resettlement and external dimension will be significantly decreased. Funding for resettlement would probably decrease by 50 %.

Additionally, it is noteworthy to mention that initially 3,9 million € were foreseen for the AMF. This amount will be reduced following the reductions in the EU's long term budget 2014-2020 (Multi-Annual Financial framework).

### ***Public opinion and the role of media***

Another important cross cutting issue already examined in the sub-section "Capacity in terms of political will" is the role of public opinion and the media. As mentioned earlier there is a general lack of knowledge of resettlement programmes and what they entail amongst the general public in all EU resettlement Member States. This is in contrast to the predominantly negative public attitudes towards asylum and immigration in general. Evidence collected during our research suggested that while taking decisions to increase support for resettlement and/or expand the number of resettlement places or simply to engage in resettlement, national politicians take into consideration the public opinion. **Therefore, it is also important to have awareness-raising activities and positive media coverage of the issue.**

Despite the important role of the media, as highlighted above, the opinion differed in MS as to how much they should be engaged. Some were of the view that there should be more media attention to inform the public about resettlement and that raising awareness about this group of refugees has the potential to also increase public awareness of refugee issues in general. On the other hand, doubts were raised because more awareness might actually have a negative impact. Non-compulsory programmes, such as resettlement, might be viewed by the public as an economic burden and as a result be affected by the current budget cuts by governments. In order to promote resettlement, **any discussions and media attention on resettlement need to make sure that the right messages and information is given out to general public, making clear distinctions between resettlement (and what this exactly involves) and other mechanisms for the protection of refugees. Both the protection and durable solution aspects of resettlement need to be clearly explained.**

### **III. Conclusions and recommendation**

The research has shown that that socio –economic factors remain an influential part of the decision process on behalf of Member states and that any national public discussion does not take place in vacuum but it is entangled with other migration issues. Going back to the 2005 ECRE paper<sup>188</sup> "Towards a European resettlement Programme", you can find a number of interesting recommendations with regard of the current resettlement capacity that still hold today such as, for example, the confusion between resettlement and asylum in general by the public and media. In view of the attention given to asylum numbers in Europe, including by the public, the number of refugees resettled to Europe under any expanded resettlement activities will likely be of significant concern to European states. For resettlement to fulfil its functions as a meaningful demonstration of solidarity with countries of first asylum and as a useful component of a comprehensive durable solutions strategy, resettlement numbers need to be significant, and proportional to Europe's prosperity relative to countries of first asylum. At the same time, however, for resettlement to be well managed, reasoned consideration needs to be given to the number of refugees that current structures can resettle in a given

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<sup>188</sup> ECRE paper, 2005 "Towards a European Resettlement Programme" <http://www.ecre.org/topics/areas-of-work/resettlement/103-the-way-forward-towards-a-european-resettlement-programme.html>

year, how these structures need to be developed to accommodate additional numbers, and the process whereby the level of resettlement commitment should be determined<sup>189</sup>.

The EU has become an important player here and the EU resettlement programme is an important incentive to motivate all member states to engage. Likewise, by establishing priorities at EU-level, the strategic use of resettlement is strengthened. Recommendations from the EU to resettle should be stronger in order to implicate Member States further and remind them their responsibility to provide protection to refugees. Similarly, EASO should become an important actor in contributing to the increase of the quality and quantity of resettlement.

As reflected also in the ECRE paper, 2005 “Towards a European Resettlement Programme” at this stage, it does not seem possible to answer the question how many refugees Europe should resettle. The research indicates that there is no implementable guideline in determining a ‘natural limit’ to the number of refugees that a country can resettle. Resettlement commitments have, historically, been limited only by the political will to commit the necessary resources. So, an increase in the number of resettled refugees might be difficult (but not impossible) to be achieved both practically and politically; but any increase in European resettlement activities should be progressive, with multi-year programmes, in order to ensure the establishment of the necessary structures.<sup>190</sup> Views have also been expressed that, given the current political and economic climate in different EU Member States, it may even be preferable at present to keep and fill the current quotas effectively and (at least) ensure that existing resettlement activities will continue.

From the review of existing resettlement programmes we can conclude that there is great diversity in approach towards resettlement. Unsurprisingly, there also seems to be a disparity in numbers between the established quotas and the number of refugees actually resettled in each Member State. The way the number of resettled refugees is calculated is crucial as it impacts what we actually know concerning the total number of refugees resettled. Despite different methods of calculation, the research clearly indicates that the numbers of resettlement places available has not increased in parallel with the expansion of the number of EU resettlement countries. New resettlement countries are initially able to offer only a very limited number of places, as they require time and resources to build their resettlement capacity. Furthermore it appears that the available specified numbers of resettlement places within a defined period are rarely fully filled in most of the countries. Lastly, it is important to remember that resettlement should only be used to complement existing European and/or national refugee protection systems and not undermine them.

A number of different measures have been identified as necessary or desirable in order to increase support for resettlement: better and faster cooperation between EU countries, transfer of knowledge and experiences in resettlement involving all the relevant stakeholders, awareness that resettled refugees have many different needs, involvement of municipalities in lobbying for increased support, setting up of private or joined sponsorship schemes, and more funding opportunities for NGOs and municipalities receiving resettled refugees.

An essential component of any resettlement programme remains, still, the political will to actively engage in this process. Additionally, funding at both European and national levels will continue to remain an important incentive. In order for resettlement to be a truly durable solution, states should focus on strengthening their integration capacity and the receptiveness of receiving communities to improve outcomes.

NGOs involvement at the decision-making stage should be considered in all Member States engaged in resettlement. Moreover an active role should be given to NGOs in facilitating pre-

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

departure activities. The decision-making process should also involve refugee communities to make Members states more aware and sensitive to the many issues faced by refugees in need.

In answer to the still open question “how many refugees Europe should resettle” we can only say: with strong public support and demonstrable political will, European resettlement activities may be sufficiently generous to better respond to the resettlement needs existing in regions of refugee origin. We can and should do more.

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