



# LOCAL RESPONSES TO REFUGEE CRISIS: FROM INITIAL RECEPTION TO LONGER TERM INTEGRATION

26<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**Venue:**

OECD Headquarters, 2 rue André Pascal, Paris 75016

**ROOM: MARSHALL BUILDING MB6122**

## AGENDA & ISSUES PAPERS

Much attention has been paid to how the current wave of refugees will be distributed across European countries and the national policies, initiatives and programmes that will need to be put in place to facilitate their integration. Yet the refugee crisis has an equally important local dimension. Local authorities and a range of local organisations are at the forefront of reception and integration efforts, including community-based organisations, NGOs and social enterprises, employment services, and education and training institutions. They must provide a rapid response, often in the context of reduced resources and political tensions.

As part of the OECD's efforts to assist member countries in responding to the refugee crisis, the OECD LEED Programme is organising a round table to extract what local authorities and other actors know works, what the new scenario is demanding and how equipped they are to respond. The discussions will be based on the examples of projects and programmes collected through a "Call for Initiatives" in the following fields:

- Strategic responses by local governments
- Integrated services/ one stop shops
- Housing and access to health services
- Labour market integration
- Education and training
- Business start-up support
- Raising awareness and public participation

The round table will gather representatives of local authorities, policy makers and practitioners in the field employment, social inclusion, education and economic development, OECD experts and academics. The objective of the round table is to: 1) inform and support mutual learning among policy makers and practitioners; 2) develop guidance that helps local stakeholders to provide an effective response, while also advising national governments on how to best support local actors in this process.

Lunch is not provided by the organisers, participants can access the OECD canteen and cafeteria. Coffee will be served in the rooms. The meeting will be held in English. For further information, please contact [Nathalie.Gosselin@oecd.org](mailto:Nathalie.Gosselin@oecd.org).

*The OECD LEED Forum on Partnerships and Local Development is led by the OECD LEED Programme with the support of the European Commission, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection (BMASK), Pobal (Ireland), the Australian National Employment Services Association (NESAs), the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SALAR-SLK) and the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES)*



# AGENDA

## MORNING - 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015

**09.00-13.00** **SESSION I: UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT AND HOW TO SUPPORT LOCAL ACTORS IN PUTTING IN PLACE RESPONSES THAT WORK**

**09.00-09.15** **Opening/welcome by the chair**

**09.15-10.15** **UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT**

**Chair:** *Sylvain Giguère*, Head of LEED Division, OECD

**Introduction by** *Thomas Liebig*, Senior Economist, International Migration Division, OECD

**Tour de table:** comments from participants on the situation in their localities, what tools they have to understand the situation, discussion launched by:

- *Michael Kegel*, Director – FEDASIL, Belgium
- *Christine Malecka*, Consultant Region MENA, World Association of Public Employment Services, WAPES

**10.15-11.30** **READINESS TO RESPOND: RECEPTION**

**Chair:** *Antonella Noya*, Senior Policy Analyst, OECD LEED

**Introduction by** *Francesca Froy*, OECD Consultant

**Tour de table:** based on examples of good practices and initiatives, participants are invited to provide a reflection on key issues they are faced with and framework conditions needed to provide adequate responses. Discussion launched by:

- *Jan Braat* and *Oepkes Niene*, Utrecht Municipality, Netherlands
- *Pierre Chevalier*, Responsable Programmes Internationaux, Libraries Without Borders, France
- *Federico Tscualas*, Coordinator, Camelot Ferrara/Bologna, Italy

**Moderated discussion**

**11.30-11.45** **Coffee break**

**11.45-13.00** **READINESS TO RESPOND: PREPARING FOR THE LONGER TERM**

**Chair:** *Claire Charbit*, Senior Project Manager, Dialogue with Sub-National Governments, OECD

**Introduction by** *Thomas Liebig*, Senior Economist, International Migration Division, OECD (TBC)

**Tour de table:** based on examples of good practices and initiatives put in place, participants are invited to provide a reflection on key issues they are faced with and framework conditions needed to provide adequate response.

- *Miquel Peromingo*, Consultant Region Americas, WAPES
- *Regina Schmidt-Roßleben*, Chief of Department European and Pilot Projects, Kiezküchen gmbh, Germany & *Margret Zauner*, Berlin Senate, Germany
- *Simona Mattia*, Project Manager Migration and Diversity, Enda Europe

**Wrap up by** *Anna Rubin*, Policy Analyst, LEED Division, OECD

**13.00-14.30** *Lunch - Lunch is not provided by the organisers, participants can access the OECD canteen and cafeteria*

## AFTERNOON - 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015

### 14.30-18.00 SESSION II: ENSURING LABOUR MARKET INTEGRATION AND PUTTING IN PLACE STRATEGIC RESPONSES

#### 14.30-15.00 Overview of the objectives for group work

By *Ekaterina Travkina*, Policy Analyst, OECD LEED

#### 15.00-16.30 GROUP WORK

##### WORKING GROUP 1

##### Ensuring labour market integration and supporting social inclusion

Practitioners who submitted applications through the LEED call are invited to share lessons from their work and reflect on the framework conditions needed in order to facilitate refugee reception and integration.

**Moderated by** *Francesca Froy*, OECD Consultant

*Nicoletta Basili*, Integra, Italy

*Suad Abdullahi*, Training Manager, Ashely Community Housing, Bristol & *David Jepson*, Civil Euro Perspective

*Gerald Braun*, Chairman of the Managing Board of the Institute – HIE-RO University of Rostock, Germany

**Rapporteur:** OECD LEED

##### WORKING GROUP 2

##### Strategic responses by cities

Practitioners who submitted applications through the LEED call are invited to share lessons from their work and reflect on the framework conditions needed in order to facilitate refugee reception and integration.

**Moderated by** *Claire Charbit*, Senior Project Manager, Dialogue with Sub-National Governments, OECD

*Jan Braat* and *Oepkes Niene*, Utrecht Municipality, Netherlands

*Margret Zauner*, Head of Department, Berlin Senate, Germany

**Rapporteur:** *Anna Rubin*, OECD LEED

#### 16.30-17.45 REPORT BACK

**Chair:** *Ekaterina Travkina*, Policy Analyst, OECD LEED

Report back by rapporteurs on key messages on policy action needed to facilitate refugee reception and integration at the local level

#### 17.45-18.00 Closing



## BACKGROUND AND ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

### READINESS TO WELCOME NEW REFUGEES: ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

- What factors are key to an effective welcome for humanitarian migrants?
- How can humanitarian migrants be better signposted between services?
- How to address resource shortfalls such as a lack of housing accommodation and school places?
- How to seamlessly integrate short-term emergency support into longer-term integration schemes?
- How can the role of non-profit organisations and social enterprises be enhanced in a 'management of change' perspective?

### PREPARING FOR LONGER-TERM INTEGRATION: ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

- How to create positive integration pathways while avoiding long-term exclusion?
- How can the process of labour market integration be accelerated?
- Can education and training systems be better adapted to the needs of refugees?
- Is a 'work-first' or a 'skills –first' approach more appropriate?

### CITY LEVEL STRATEGIES AND GOVERNANCE: ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

- What role can city leaders and politicians play?
- What factors lead to effective coordination between the national and local level to support the reception and integration of humanitarian refugees?
- Should humanitarian migrants be targeted separately from other types of migrant?
- What indicators should be used to measure the success of refugee reception and integration?

## ISSUES PAPER 1: READINESS TO WELCOME NEW REFUGEES

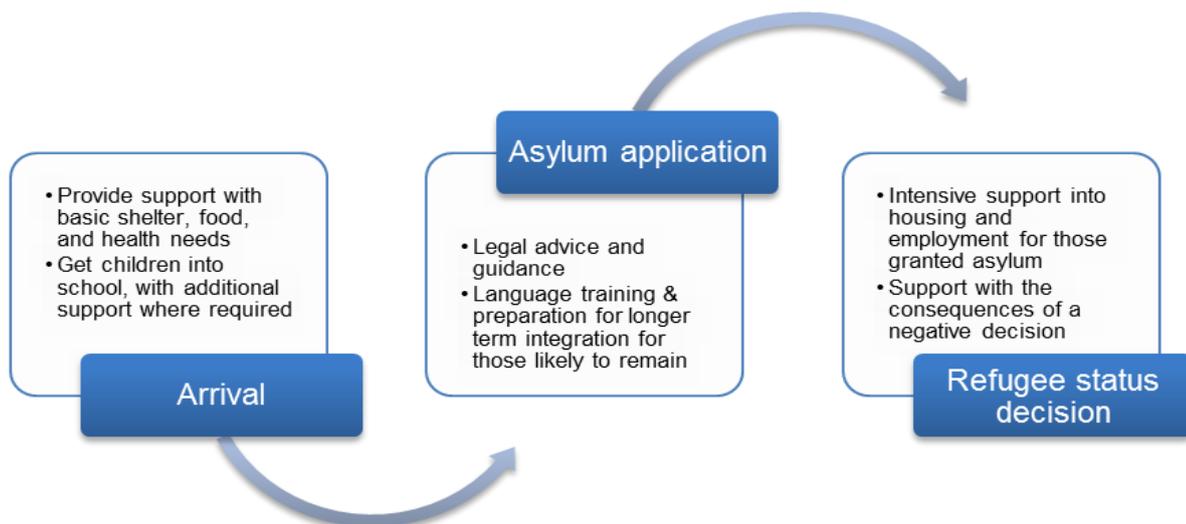
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- How can the role of non-profit organisations and social enterprises be enhanced in a ‘management of change’ perspective?

### Provide holistic forms of support, and use a ‘management of change’ perspective

**Why?** Refugees often arrive with very few resources, and need access to various forms of support to be safe and sheltered; and to start regularising their situation

Local policy makers, politicians, non-profit organisations and social enterprises, have been in the front line of providing a rapid response to the recent increase in the flows of humanitarian migrants, ensuring that people are safe, have food and shelter, health care, schooling for children and other support services whilst both in transit and seeking asylum (see Box 1). For some localities this will be the first time that they have had to deliver such services, but it will probably not be the last. While generally individuals will only migrate once or twice during their lifetime, local areas need to become quickly adept at receiving on-going flows of newcomers, developing ‘**reception competence**’<sup>1</sup>. There are particular pressure points in the resettlement process where more support is needed. For example when a refugee is granted asylum they need to rapidly find housing and employment. This means that a ‘**management of change**’ approach can be necessary, building continuity from reception to integration (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1. A management of change perspective to welcoming and supporting asylum seekers**



<sup>1</sup> A term coined by August Gächter - see British Council (2010) Managing Diversity, Integration and Inclusion in OPEN Cities.



**Table 1. Examples of initiatives at local level in the field of reception**

<b>Information and administrative support</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The province of Trento Information Centre for Immigration (CINFORMI) was created back in 2001 to facilitate the issue and renewal of permits for immigrants and refugees. It provides a one-stop shop for entry procedures.</li> <li>• 'Libraries without borders', a not-for-profit association based in New Orleans, has developed an 'Ideas Box' incorporating a portable media centre, which is being placed in libraries to provide information and internet access to humanitarian migrants. It has already been implemented in countries such as in Burundi and Ethiopia, and is being rolled out in OECD countries.</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In Trieste, the sheer scale of recent arrivals means that particular support has to be given to refugees finding themselves homeless because they have not been absorbed into the Protection System for Refugees and Asylum Seekers (SPRAR). Trieste has launched an emergency reception scheme to secure accommodation while also providing additional supports including food, telephone cards, pocket money, support for personal hygiene, mediation and accompaniment to hospital at a daily cost of € 35,00 per person.</li> <li>• In London the charity Homeless Link was commissioned by the Greater London Authority to produce a special online refugee directory showing over 250 service points, as well as details of suitable private accommodation and other assistance.</li> <li>• In Berlin, local residents are hosting humanitarian migrants in their own homes through the not-for-profit Berlin 'Refugees Welcome' Scheme.</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As humanitarian migrants have often experienced persecution and trauma, psychological support is often important. Sheffield in the UK has developed mental health support for refugees, while in Paris the Primo Levi centre (a not-for-profit association) helps to advise victims of torture.</li> <li>• Health Communicators are active in a number of different Swedish municipalities including Stockholm. They meet with newly arrived refugees and provide information on the Swedish healthcare system. Attempts are made to match people with communicators from the same cultural background. Their health expertise includes a six-month course in healthcare at the Karolinska University Hospital in Stockholm.</li> </ul>
<b>School-age education</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children of refugees and unaccompanied minors are particularly at risk of experiencing extended periods out of school, with potential significant impacts by school leaving age. The Smart School (SchlaU-schule) project in Munich helps 16-24 year olds to complete German secondary school through a fast track programme with additional language training and psychological support. Classes are small, with a maximum of 16 students. 98% of participants graduate.</li> <li>• In London, a flagship project under the London Enriched strategy is the 'English – Key to Integration' programme launched in October 2013 with a £2 million budget to teach English as a second language in primary and secondary schools. Language training is also provided to parents to encourage their involvement in the school community.</li> </ul>

## Create one-stop shops and other forms of joined up service using existing resources and processes

**Why?** Navigating the complex webs of policies and programmes in a new country can be a significant challenge for refugees and migrants.

One-stop shops can help to bring many different services under one roof, helping humanitarian migrants to navigate between different forms of support available. In 2004, in Portugal, the High Commission for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue (ACIDI) developed two One Stop Shops, called **National Immigrant Support Centres** (CNAIs), in Lisbon and Porto which bring together under the same roof a number of services related to immigration, including branches of various Ministries (Foreigners and Borders Service, Working Conditions Authority, Social Security, Central Registry Office, Health and Education). The centres also provide legal advice and support with family reunification and labour market integration. Over eighty cultural mediators from different immigrant communities help to make services accessible. **In Trieste**, Italy, a non-governmental network was developed back in 1993 to coordinate the reception of refugees coming from the Balkan conflict. In 2001 the positive experience acquired by local organisations was used as a basis for establishing a similar approach in 63 other Italian towns, while the network continues to be active in supporting new waves of migrants today.

It is also important to **ease accessibility to more mainstream services**. Cities engaged in the **City of Sanctuary** movement in the UK seeks to create a culture of welcome. This movement began in Sheffield in 2007, with the support of the City Council and over 70 local community organisations. Local groups work to build coalitions involving actors from many different sectors, who make a public commitment to welcome and include refugees and people seeking sanctuary in their usual activities. Some local initiatives are helping to build the physical mobility of humanitarian migrants to make services more accessible. A community interest company called the **Bristol Bicycle Project** repairs bicycles donated by the local community and passes them on to humanitarian migrants, increasing ease of access to services across the city, and ultimately to jobs and training should asylum applications be successful. A similar scheme has been developed in Copenhagen.

## ISSUES PAPER 2: PREPARING FOR LONGER-TERM INTEGRATION

- How to create positive integration pathways while avoiding long-term exclusion?
- How can the process of labour market integration be accelerated?
- Can education and training systems be better adapted to the needs of refugees?
- Is a 'work-first' or a 'skills –first' approach more appropriate?

OECD research indicates that activation and integration services need to start as soon as possible after arrival in order to be successful, including for asylum seekers with high prospects to remain<sup>2</sup>. To achieve longer-term integration into local communities, humanitarian migrants may need help with building social networks, with accessing education and training and with finding a job or launching a business (see Table 2).

### Start integration processes early, taking into account the diversity of humanitarian migrant backgrounds

**Why? Accessing education, training or employment quickly is important to reducing 'scarring' effects that can lead to longer-term poverty and exclusion**

This means:

- **Helping people onto positive pathways towards integration from reception onwards**, for example linking reception centres to schools, adult education providers and public employment services. It is important that longer term integration pathways are considered when making more urgent short-term decisions – for example OECD research finds that humanitarian migrants are best housed in places where there are jobs as opposed to cheaper housing<sup>3</sup>.
- **Providing choice in housing and location decisions** has been found by some researchers to promote better long-term outcomes, through increasing access to jobs and to the support of compatriots.
- **Developing customised approaches** - this is important given that humanitarian migrants are coming from increasingly diverse backgrounds, and have diverse skills levels. In Fort Wayne in the United States, for example, targeted approaches have been developed for particular communities such as the Burmese.

### Support labour market integration through recognising and adapting skills, and supporting networking

**Why? Humanitarian migrants often bring useful skills to local economies that go unrecognised, or which are not effectively adapted to the local labour market context**

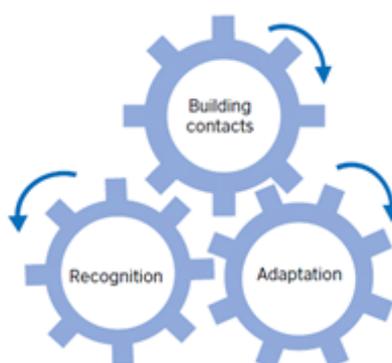
The priority of many humanitarian migrants on settlement is to find employment and again become financially independent. However humanitarian migrants are particularly likely to remain either unemployed or underemployed - the Europe Labour Force Survey (2008) found that on average it takes 5-6 years for them to find a job. In order to accelerate this process, local actors can help humanitarian migrants to i. to have their skills assessed and recognised (including those gained informally), ii. to adapt skills to local labour market needs and iii. to become better networked with local employers (see Figure 2). Higher-level language training is often particularly important to labour market success. In order to carry out these tasks effectively, local actors need to develop a strong understanding of the structure of the local labour market. In developing their London Enriched strategy, for example (a strategy for the integration of refugees and other migrants), the Greater London Authority has linked closely to the work of the London Enterprise Panel Jobs and Growth team.

<sup>2</sup> OECD (2015) The Integration of Humanitarian Migrants, Policy Orientated Booklet, DELSA/ELSA(2015)22.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.



Figure 2. Key steps to labour market integration



Source: OECD (2014) Job Creation and Local Economic Development.

Table 2. Investing in longer term integration: examples of local initiatives

<b>Building social capital</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Humanitarian migrants are particularly likely to lack social networks as compared with other migrants. Building such networks is therefore an important prerequisite to ensuring other forms of integration. Auckland in New Zealand has recognised this in a project called 'Refugees as Survivors' that uses sports as a vehicle for connecting refugees with each other, and with local residents.</li> </ul>
<b>Building language skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In Stockholm, municipalities have grouped together to offer vocational language training in a series of different fields such as engineering, law, teaching and healthcare. In Israel, the project 'Eshet Chayil - Women of Valor' provides vocational training to female migrants in their native language, whilst at the same time helping to translate professional terminology.</li> </ul>
<b>Opening up access to education and training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project Integ.r.a, funded by the Italian Ministry of Labour and involving six municipalities (Bergamo, Forlì, Genova, Ancona, Rome and Bitonto) has helped asylum seekers into apprenticeships to support initial integration into the local labour market while they await asylum decisions, reducing periods of inactivity.</li> <li>Some universities are opening up their courses for free to humanitarian migrants. The Refugee Bridging Programme at the Leuphana University in Lüneburg, Germany offers free language courses and guest student status. A number of other universities (such as the Kiron university) are developing MOOCs 'massive online open courses' aimed at humanitarian alongside traditional learning methods.</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting labour market integration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In France, the 'Key to France' scheme run with France Terre d'Asile has been helping humanitarian migrants into skills shortage areas across the country to improve long-term chances of economic success.</li> <li>The Federal Employment Agency and the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees has launched a project called 'Early Intervention' in six pilot regions. A team of specialised job 'matchmakers' are centrally trained in language skills and inter-cultural competences and then placed in local labour agencies.</li> <li>The City of Erlangen has helped to harness business leadership through partnering with Siemens to offer internships for refugees. For each intern a 'buddy' is identified from another department. Siemens has now rolled out the scheme to 10 locations nationally.</li> <li>In France, the FACE Foundation (Fondation Agir Contre l'Exclusion) provides social and economic accompaniment for refugees through involving 63 employers' associations across 15 different territories, working in close partnership with other state actors. Skills diagnostics lead to work placements and other forms of support.</li> <li>Social enterprises are often particularly responsive to the needs of refugee employees. Macken, a recycling social enterprise in Växjö, Sweden offers practice-oriented language training to its workers in addition to other forms of training and support.</li> </ul>
<b>Supporting entrepreneurship</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Re-LAB project in Italy (2012-14) was established in 7 locations across Italy, providing training for refugee entrepreneurs, support with business models and financial assistance for new start-ups.</li> </ul>

## ISSUES PAPER 3: CITY LEVEL STRATEGIES AND GOVERNANCE

- What role can city leaders and politicians play?
- What factors lead to effective coordination between the national and local level to support the reception and integration of humanitarian refugees?
- Should humanitarian migrants be targeted separately from other types of migrant?
- What indicators should be used to measure the success of refugee reception and integration?

### Ensuring vertical and horizontal coordination and strategic political leadership

**Why? Local institutions supporting humanitarian migrants can find themselves relatively isolated and lacking in resources, and actions can be undermined by fear and xenophobia** Start integration processes early, taking into account the diversity of humanitarian migrant backgrounds

Managing the reception and integration of humanitarian migrants requires strong vertical coordination between national and regional governments, and good horizontal coordination across the different local actors involved. Certain localities receive disproportionate numbers of humanitarian migrants and therefore require greater resources and more responsive national policies in order to be able to act rapidly and strategically. This is particularly the case for localities near borders and crossing points, such as local authorities in Turkey that are currently receiving very large inflows of humanitarian migrants from Syria. At the same time political and strategic leadership is important in dispelling myths and fears around migration flows and harnessing the potential of local institutions, and the local population, to support integration efforts for the longer-term (see Table 3).

**Table 3. Ensuring good governance and political leadership: examples of local initiatives**

<b>Building political and strategic leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Mayor of Nickelsdorf in Austria has been proactive in mobilising local people to support the wave of refugees coming into the country at a nearby border, that have sometimes numbered 10,000 in a single day. Elsewhere the Mayor of Bristol in the UK has urged people to find a spare room in their homes for refugees, while also leading by example.</li> <li>• City networks are playing an important role in creating a common positive approach to receiving and integrating humanitarian migrants. The City of Sanctuary movement in the UK (involving 14 cities) and the Sanctuary Cities in the US (involving 36 cities) ensure a welcome for refugees and more open access to municipal services.</li> <li>• A number of cities are now part of an 'Anti-Rumours' movement, aiming to reduce stereotypes, prejudices and false rumours amongst their citizens. This means identifying and documenting rumours, building a network of anti-rumour 'agents' and implementing a communication campaign. The approach was first implemented by Barcelona and has since been taken up by 10 European cities as part of the C4i project in association with the Open Society Network and the Council of Europe. I</li> </ul>
<b>Developing city strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Greater London Authority launched the 'London Enriched' strategy in 2009. The strategy was first only focused on refugees, but it was then broadened out to include other migrant populations. It is linked into to other GLA strategies such as the London Enterprise Panel's Jobs and Growth Plan. In addition London has established a London Strategic Migration Partnership and also a Migrant and Refugee Advisory Panel which has brought community perspective to the delivery of the strategy.</li> <li>• The city of Bilbao in Spain has developed an Intercultural City strategy to recognise diversity, build interaction and tackle discrimination. The impact of the strategy is monitored through a barometer of perceptions and the Basque Tolerance Index.</li> </ul>
<b>Involving the not-for-profit sector and social enterprise to build self-efficacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CUCULA, an association in Berlin aims to work "with" humanitarian migrants and not simply "for them" – building their capacity to plan their own future while offering an educational programme, including German language classes, entrepreneurship skills and legal advice.</li> <li>• In Italy the Cooperativa Sociale Camelot has worked to host asylum seekers and refugees in the provinces of Ferrara and Bologna since 1999. One recent project in Bologna involved assisting unaccompanied minors through day and night tutoring, language courses and psychological support</li> <li>• Not-for-profit associations are also often particularly effective at engaging 'big society', capitalising on public support and generating movements of solidarity. For example the Like at home 'Comme chez toi' scheme in France and the Berlin Refugees Welcome scheme both help people to lodge refugees and asylum seekers in their own homes.</li> </ul>

## Ensuring more personalised forms of support and building agency

### Why? Humanitarian migrants come from diverse backgrounds and often face multiple and complex issues

There is debate as to whether support for humanitarian migrants should be integrated into broader support for other types of migrant (see Table 4). While refugee-specific problems may be less effectively targeted by general schemes to support migrants, such schemes may be able to achieve greater economies of scale and better connectedness to the labour market. However, a customised and personalised approach is often helpful in tackling the complex challenges faced by humanitarian migrants. Social enterprises and NGOs can often provide a more customised and flexible form of support while helping to rebuild people’s confidence and sense of agency. Self-efficacy can also be boosted when people are given choices, and where humanitarian migrants are themselves employed to help provide services.

**Table 4. Should services to refugees be mainstreamed into services for other migrants?**

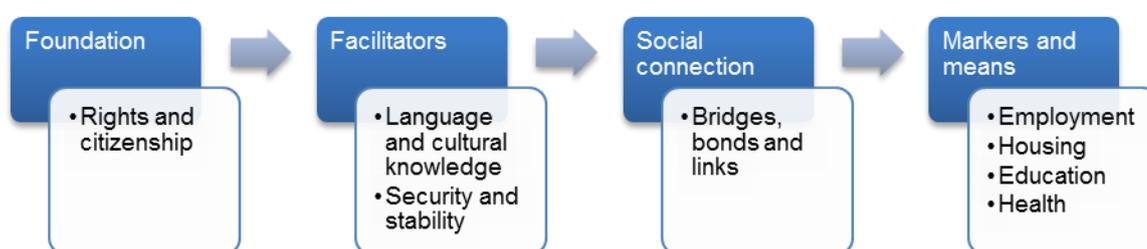
Positive	Negative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoids stigma</li> <li>• Builds economies of scale which may enable better connectedness to other institutions and to the local labour market</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of refugee specific expertise</li> <li>• Problems (e.g. trauma, and a lack of access to documentation) specific to refugee population may not be effectively prioritised</li> </ul>

## Collecting data and evidence

### Why? More needs to be known about refugees needs and the effectiveness of different approaches

There is increasing concern about ensuring that strategies for integration are based on a thorough understanding of needs and clear indicators of success that can be evaluated. The work of the London Strategic Migration Partnership, for example, is informed by an in-depth refugee survey that established a baseline for monitoring future progress on integration. Academic research on potential indicators of integration stress the importance of measuring not only ‘hard factors’ such as employment rates and housing, but also ‘soft’ social capital factors such as the degree to which people have connections that ‘bridge’ into broader social networks. Ager and Strang (2008) have developed an indicators of integration framework which have been adapted for use by policy makers in a number of countries:

**Figure 3. Indicators of Integration Framework**



Source: Ager and Strang (2008).