



EU-PASSWORLD

WIDENING COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS LINKED TO
COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP

EU-PASSWORLD WORKING GROUP ON IDENTIFICATION, REFERRAL & MATCHING



Fourth Meeting of the Working Group on Identification, Referral, and Matching: (Extended) Family Reunification and Humanitarian Admission Programs

Thursday 19th of October 2023

CONCEPT NOTE

1. BACKGROUND TO THE WORKING GROUP

EU-PASSWORLD is a three-year project to enhance the links between community sponsorship and complementary pathways of admission for refugees, and explore options to scale the numbers of refugees received via these pathways. The project is implemented in 2022-24 by a consortium of 11 state, civil society and faith-based partners¹ and implements specific activities to expand labour and education complementary pathways in Belgium, Ireland and Italy.

Within this framework, the **EU-PASSWORLD Working Group on Identification, Referral & Matching** will:

- Facilitate exchange, discussion and reflection amongst key stakeholders working on identification, referral, and matching in the context of third country solutions and community sponsorship.
- Define a comparative framework for identification, referral and matching practice in the context of complementary pathways linked to sponsorship, including identifying best practices and their outcomes.
- Publish a report on identification, referral and matching best practices on complementary

¹ Caritas Italia, Caritas International, Consorzio Communitas, ICMC Europe, Diaconia Valdese, UNHCR, Refugee Hub, University of Bologna, NASC Ireland, Catholic University of Belgium, Fedasil (Belgium).



pathways, linked to sponsorship.

The Working Group is led by ICMC Europe and the SHARE Network, working with consultant Alessia Perricone, in collaboration with Refuge Point and Caritas Italy.

2. FOURTH MEETING OF THE WORKING GROUP: (EXTENDED) FAMILY REUNIFICATION (FR) AND HUMANITARIAN ADMISSION PROGRAMS (HAPs)

The fourth meeting of the Working Group, to be held online on October 10, 2023 will focus on the practical and technical aspects of identification, referral and matching for Family Reunification and HAPs.

- **Thematic Focus:**

Family Reunification (FR) is a right-based and relationship-based pathway, grounded in the right to family protection and unity under international and regional refugee and human rights law². It involves a family member legally residing in the destination country, acting as a sponsor, and “naming” the relative(s) for family reunification. In this regard FR may involve nuclear family members with whom they have a legal right to reunite according to the existing legal framework; as well as the reunion of refugees with extended family members, who act as sponsors, and commit to housing and financially supporting the family member after they arrive. Extended family may also include people who are emotionally or financially dependent upon the refugee with whom they are reuniting, thus introducing in the debate around FR, a broader definition of family, and the principle of dependency³. According to different experiences and contexts, family reunification can be achieved through a specific family reunification visa, or through other third-country solutions when the first option is not pursuable. Within this framework, different challenges have been experienced, and best practices developed on identification, referral and matching, in various operational contexts, to achieve family reunification, both in terms of tools developed and pathways explored, thus making family reunification a standalone pathway as well as a cross cutting one in the form of family unity.

HAPs are needs-based pathways, normally implemented by third countries in situations of crisis entailing large displacement, which require a quick response for people in need of protection. The eligibility criteria established (often more flexible), and the type and length of visa granted to beneficiaries might vary and be tailored across programs and third countries, thus leading to different and multifaceted approaches on identification, referral and matching, sometimes linked to community sponsorship. Normally HAPs do not include more specialized complementary pathways, such as education and labor. Nevertheless, in many cases they involve family reunification, as (nuclear or extended) family links with relatives already residing in the third country (who name/sponsor the family member) are often the basis for eligibility under certain conditions.

As such, although Family Reunification and HAPs have their own specific features and implementation modalities, they present some common and multifaceted features that make a hybrid agenda focusing on both pathways of value.

² See Background Note for the Agenda Item: Family Reunification in The Context of Resettlement and Integration, Protecting the Family: Challenges in Implementing Policy in the Resettlement Context, Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, UNHCR Geneva, 20-21 June 2001, available at <https://www.unhcr.org/3b30baa04.pdf>. Notably in the EU context, the main legal instrument is represented by the EU Directive 86/2003 on the right to family reunification: Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification, available at, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32003L0086>

³ See Background Note for the Agenda Item: Family Reunification in The Context of Resettlement and Integration, Protecting the Family: Challenges in Implementing Policy in the Resettlement Context, Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement, UNHCR Geneva, 20-21 June 2001, paras. 10-27, supra note 1. See also Frances Nicholson, “The “Essential Right” to Family Unity of Refugees and Others in Need of International Protection in the Context of Family Reunification”, UNHCR Legal and Protection Policy Research Series, UNHCR January 2018, pp. 34-36.



- **Meeting Objectives:**

The objectives of the meeting are to:

- Highlight challenges in identification, referral, and matching for family reunification and humanitarian admissions, both in countries of asylum and third countries.
- Highlight key approaches, best practices, partnerships and tools developed on identification, referral and matching for these pathways, including naming.
- Explore how successful practices and approaches can be adapted across these pathways, including regarding eligibility criteria and visa schemes.
- Assess options to expand and scale up identification, referral and matching activities, and strengthen the principle of additionality for these pathways.
- Explore the current and potential future role of community sponsorship in expanding identification, referral and matching for these pathways.

- **Participants**

The meeting will approximately host up to 50 participants drawn from those working on identification, referral, and matching, in Family Reunification and Humanitarian Admission Programs, both in countries of asylum and third countries.

3. WORKING GROUP PROGRAMME OF WORK (2022-24)

WG	Date	Topic
1(A)	20-21 October 2022 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20.10 pm (14.00-17.00) • 21.10 am (10.00-12.30) 	Setting the Scene (online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Group Terms of Reference and programme of work • Joint expert reflection (key concepts and pathways) • Challenges and opportunities in the current EU policy context • Overview of EU national programmes
1(B)	30 January 2023 (14.00-17.30)	Workshop on Identification, Referral, and Matching & Pre-departure Preparation, within the Framework of Complementary Pathways and Community Sponsorship: Focus on Lebanon Hosted by the Share Network
2	14 February 2023 (12.30-17.00)	Education & Labor Mobility in Focus (online) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics and practicalities • Outreach in countries of asylum • Eligibility criteria (flexibility) • Visa approaches • Opportunities to scale up/expand
3	27-30 March 2023	Technical Session in Kenya (in-person) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The refugee context • Pathways and partnerships • Operational implementation • Civil society advocacy



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training • Community engagement
4	September/October 2023	<p>(Extended) Family Reunification and Humanitarian Admission Programs (HAP) in Focus (online)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification, referral and outreach • Eligibility criteria (flexibility) • Matching (alternative available pathways), Naming, Additionality • Logistics and practicalities • Visa approaches • Opportunities to scale up/expand
5	February/March 2024	<p>Final Report and Recommendations: Presentation to the Working Group (in-person - Brussels)</p>

The Working Group hosts a series of thematic online and in-person meetings and one technical visit to Kenya during 2022-24:

To date the Working Group has:

- Published the [Working Group Terms of Reference](#).
- Launched a [short online survey](#) in September 2022 for completion by stakeholders working on any aspect of identification, referral and matching for complementary pathways.
- Held a first meeting of the Working Group ('Setting the Scene', held online on 20-21 October 2022) to introduce the Working Group and explore best practices, tools and common issues for identification, referral and matching for complementary pathways (view the [meeting agenda](#)).
- Held a second meeting of the Working Group ('Identification, Referral, and Matching in the Context of Labour and Education Pathways', held online on 14 February 2023) to analyze and explore best practices, tools developed and challenges on identification, referral and matching related to education and labor mobility (view the [concept note](#) and [meeting agenda](#)).
- Held a third meeting of the Working Group in Kenya ('Technical Session in Kenya', held in-person on 27-30 March 2023), which represented an in-depth exploration of pathways and programs currently being implemented in Kenya, as an opportunity to gain a fuller understanding of the many activities that collectively comprise the identification, referral, and matching of refugees for complementary pathways, as well as pre-departure and post-arrival ones (view the [concept note](#) and [meeting agenda](#)).

