

The ASPIRE project 2008-2010

"ASPIRE " (Assessing and Strengthening Participation In Refugee resettlement to Europe) is a European project, coordinated by the Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (CCME). The project enhances knowledge and political will in EU member states to engage in resettlement - as an additional and integral element of refugee protection. It continues and reinforces work on resettlement across the EU member states and promotes EU wide cooperation and coordination on resettlement.

The project aims at encouraging additional EU member states to formally commit to resettlement, so that a sufficient number of EU resettlement countries is reached in order to explore added value of a European scheme/ a stronger EU coordination in the area of resettlement. ASPIRE takes place in the context of current discussions on new priorities in EU policies on asylum/refugee protection (process towards "Stockholm Programme") as well as in the context of developing the next phase of the Common European Asylum System.

The project works by:

- Analysing in which member states debates suggest an openness towards resettlement
- Promoting existing policies and best practice in these member states (through sharing of materials and knowledge)
- Bringing governmental and non governmental actors in member states, with a recent interest in resettlement into debate with one another on selected issues on resettlement – through debate-events in the capitals of EU member states where key debates on resettlement develop anew (e.g. France, Hungary, Portugal, Romania , the Baltic countries) or where general debates on resettlement are becoming more concrete (Belgium, Germany) –
- Providing continued updated information on resettlement to non-specialised public which is generally interested in refugee protection by providing:
 - * general information as well as communication of findings of previous projects /studies, and
 - * information on current developments to broader public in the context of developing policy debate – through a resettlement newsletter)
- Providing a forum of discussion and exchange for governmental actors, civil society actors and UNHCR to explore the role, structure and added value of a European resettlement scheme at an event during the Swedish EU presidency

The project is primarily carried out by CCME and ECRE and church-related agencies and ECRE members, in connection with the respective European and global networks.

The ongoing co-operation and exchange with and participation of other actors with an interest in refugee protection issues, which has been developed, will be continued and institutionalised: e.g. with NGOs, UNHCR or national governments (e.g. governments in emerging resettlement countries), as well as partners building operational capacity (ICMC), (e.g. through a joint project reference group). Project partners will coordinate input to wider for a, such as the Annual tri-partite consultation on resettlement.

A focus of the debates held in different member states will therefore also be to look at how networks of different actors (e.g. national government, municipality, church, NGO) can contribute to resettlement.

The project builds upon the foundations of the study processes and consultations "Making Resettlement Work", "Resettlement: capacity building for action" and "Resettlement – broadening the basis" which CCME organised since 2003, last years work on practical cooperation of ICMC and the MORE and MOST project. It takes up ECRE's "Way Forward" series of papers on Europe's role in the global refugee protection system, which includes a proposal for why and how a European Resettlement Programme should be established. It enlarges the network created between governmental institutions, UNHCR, Churches and other civil society actors in the field.

The project runs from August 2008 to March 2010.



ERF-CA 2007

The ASPIRE project "Assessing and Strengthening Participation In refugee Resettlement to Europe" project is co-financed by the European Refugee Fund -Centralized Actions 2007 of the European Commission (DG JLS). The views expressed and information provided by the project and the partners involved do not necessarily reflect the point of view of the European Commission and do in no way fall under the responsibility of the European Commission.

More information at:

***CCME, 174 rue Joseph II, B - 1000 Brussels
T. +32 2 234 68 00 F +32 2 231 14 13 e-mail: info@ccme.be***