



Press release, 16 March 2022

EU-funded project FOCUS releases new research and guidance on what matters and what works in refugee integration

With millions of refugees currently leaving their homes to flee escalating war in Ukraine, forced displacement, refugee-host solidarity and integration become again urgent issues in Europe. New research and guidance now show governments and support organisations the key practices required for long-term integration success.

The EU-funded research project FOCUS, led by the Red Cross (IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support), has released the *Living Well Together Resource*, an **online guide to help policy makers, civil society organisations and communities understand important dimensions of refugee integration** and how to implement them in integration practice and programming.

The FOCUS Approach: towards sustainable, dynamic integration

Working with a wide range of stakeholders, FOCUS has identified four core principles that maximise the potential for sustainable and dynamic two-way integration, making sure both arriving and receiving communities are equally engaged:

- Incorporating **mental health and psychosocial support** to broadly reduce distress and improve wellbeing in society as a whole;
- Establishing and reinforcing continuous social bonds and bridges between **arriving and receiving community** members, in particular **quality intergroup contact** which is often lacking;
- Actively involving both arriving and receiving communities in integration practices via **co-creative and participatory approaches**;
- Making institutions, NGOs and communities work together through **multi-stakeholder partnerships and coordination**.

FOCUS illustrates this practical framework through five case studies providing examples for how these principles might be implemented in practice, from co-created podcasts with refugees to staff workshops to raise awareness on racism and unconscious biases.

To dive deeper into the four principles and case studies, the *Living Well Together Resource* links to selected references and hands-on guidance produced both within and outside of FOCUS.

What's new about this approach?

During the past two years, FOCUS has explored acceptance and reality of two-way dynamic integration which the EU has defined as its objective. Through extensive empirical research, mapping exercises, a literature review and key informant interviews, the project team has **taken stock of integration in**



Europe in the past decade and identified the key socioeconomic and sociopsychological enabling factors for integration.

The qualitative and quantitative research conducted by the FOCUS scientific team suggests that integration is going well. Despite what has often been qualified a “strong influx” of refugees since the outbreak of the Syrian war in 2015, and notwithstanding significant differences between countries, **the acceptance of integration as the objective is high among the population and effectively at normative level**. The five case studies conducted within FOCUS show a dynamic European integration sector eager to work with communities in the spirit of ongoing dynamic integration.

But this sector needs support through the development of accessible resources and evidence-based guidelines such as the FOCUS *Living Well Together Resource*. Besides, applying for funding and evaluating past work are important drivers for this sector, and this new resource can have a great impact in refocusing these drivers.

Implementing the FOCUS Approach in integration practice as well as in policymaking and programming is likely to enable European societies to transform the current welcoming atmosphere into **a long-term path to living well together for arriving and receiving communities**.

The full findings from the FOCUS quantitative and qualitative research on how integration has been going in the EU and Jordan since 2015 are currently being summarised and will be made accessible in April 2022.

Learn more here: <http://www.focus-refugees.eu/resource>

Contact us: contact@focus-refugees.eu

Follow us on our Social Media channels:

[FOCUS on Twitter](#)

[FOCUS on LinkedIn](#)



NOTES TO THE EDITOR

FOCUS Consortium partners:

International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support (PS Centre), Copenhagen, Denmark
AND Consulting Group, Brussels, Belgium
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, Croatia
Malmö University, Sweden
Center for Strategic Studies, University of Jordan
Charité Universitätsmedizin, Berlin, Germany
Humboldt University, Berlin, Germany
ARTTIC SAS, Paris, France
Q4 Public Relations, Dublin, Ireland

FOCUS Implementing Partners (case studies):

Danish Red Cross
Austrian Red Cross
German Association of Psychosocial Centres for Refugees and Victims of Torture (BAfF)
Partnership Skåne (PS) Regional Integration Partnership
British Red Cross

Project duration: 01/01/2019 - 30/06/2022
EU financial contribution: 2.999.859,25 €
RIA - Research and Innovation action
Programme: H2020-SC6-MIGRATION-2018
Topic: MIGRATION-08-2018 Addressing the challenge of forced displacement

Media enquiries:

Karin Rosenits, ARTTIC Innovation GmbH, +49 89 248 830 342, rosenits@arttic-innovation.de



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement no 822401.

ARTTIC Innovation GmbH has been advising research and innovation projects for more than 33 years. As project management and communication partner, we make sure that our projects run successfully, and that project results and events are disseminated in the best possible way. ARTTIC is a subsidiary of the PNO Group, one of the largest consultancies for publicly funded projects in research and development. For more information, please visit <http://www.arttic-innovation.de>.

We take your privacy seriously. Click [here](#) to read our privacy policy. If you no longer wish to receive emails from us, please email press@arttic-innovation.de.