

Brussels VII Conference on
'Supporting the future of Syria
and the region' side event

Third-Country Solutions: Resettlement and Complementary Pathways from a Refugee Perspective

Background and session objective

Across the 3RP countries – Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Türkiye – there is renewed urgency for multi-year, predictable solutions to ensure ongoing protection and critical support for Syrian refugees and their host communities. Resettlement is a significant protection tool for many Syrians, and supports strategic advocacy with host countries to maintain asylum space. For 2023, as voluntary repatriation remains elusive and some returns occur in adverse circumstances, and local integration remains a complex and notional solution in the MENA region, it is crucial to maintain similar resettlement numbers from the 3RP countries and expand opportunities for complementary pathways to protect Syrians in the region.

Some 777,800 Syrians are projected to be in need for resettlement in 2023 – a 27 per cent increase compared to 2022. Current confirmed resettlement quotas for Syrians fall well short of the minimum places needed to ensure a baseline level of protection and continued asylum space for Syrians.

The needs of Syrian refugees continue to outstrip available solutions and, in the aftermath of the Syria emergency, the pursuit of 'safe and legal pathways' in the MENA region under the complementary pathways umbrella, in addition to resettlement, emerged as an essential component of the protection response. Since then, a variety of pathway programmes to third countries, ranging from employment and education opportunities to family reunification, have been identified in the

region and resolute efforts have been undertaken to enhance refugee access to them. Existing complementary pathways are, however, not enough to breach the gap, and significant barriers remain for refugees to access such opportunities.

Now in the 13th year of the crisis, refugee families increasingly resort to harmful coping strategies such as meal reduction, child labour and child marriage in an increasingly complex asylum space. Third-country solutions offer a veritable lifeline for refugees and a safe alternative to irregular journeys by sea which expose them to further exploitation by smuggling and trafficking networks, and potential risk of refoulement. In this light, complementary pathways in addition to resettlement are a resource to provide additional long-term safety and security for refugees, while bolstering the protection environment for others who benefit from ongoing stay in the countries of asylum in addition to allowing refugees to harness their own skills, capacities, and relationships in pursuit of their own durable solutions

A new approach to amplify opportunities is required and as part of the 3RP Regional Durable Solutions Working Group, a workstream to explore and develop new advocacy messages to further efforts to seek durable solutions for Syrian refugees. It is further crucial to ensure that the comprehensive solutions strategy for the 3RP countries remains fit for purpose.

Purpose:

The objective is to gain insights on the refugee experience and highlight the impact that third-country solutions have on individual lives. In addition, the session will facilitate a better understanding of existing needs, concerns, barriers and perceptions of refugees seeking to access these solutions.

Chaired by:

Elizabeth Tan,
Director of the Division of International Protection, UNHCR

Date:
Tuesday
12 June 2023

Time: 14:30 – 16:30 (CET)

Event Registration
(click here)