



European Union

Global Compact on Refugees - Second thematic session

Second panel: Supporting the inclusion of refugees in national systems and services

EU Statement

Geneva, 17 October 2017

– CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY –

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Mr./Ms. Chairperson,

The EU and its Member States would like to mention that since June 2016, the EU has in place an Action Plan on Integration of Third Country Nationals. The Action Plan assists Member States with concrete measures in five areas that are crucial for integration: pre-departure measures; education and training; access to basic services; labour market integration and vocational training.

We would like to reiterate that socio-economic integration and inclusion are key to improve refugees' lives. They also create conditions for mutual benefits for host communities as well, irrespective of ultimate durable solutions. The implementation of inclusion policies should be made in a multi-stakeholder and integrated approach and take into account national competencies. We would also highlight that the socio-economic inclusion of refugees in host societies may imply measures addressing access to language training, education, housing, health-care and the labour market as a holistic approach., the identification and validation of skills and recognition of qualifications of refugees should be facilitated. Learning opportunities should be expanded. Language, vocational and skills training including on financial management are essential aspects.

Furthermore, for refugees to fully seize employment opportunities, regulatory frameworks should provide for work permits, freedom of movement, documentation, the possibility to register a business and acquire property, as well as financial inclusion, including access to credit and deposits, as appropriate.

Early integration and inclusion of children is crucial to support their development into adulthood. It is a social investment and essential factor contributing to societal cohesion. Mainstreamed and targeted measures, such as early access to education in safe learning environments, should be provided, as appropriate. Efforts in this respect also to minimise risks of exploitation and child labour as well as possible criminal activity and exposure to radicalisation should be enhanced. This should also include promoting a positive approach to diversity, as well as to combating racism, xenophobia and in particular hate speech against children in migration.

We recommend to systematically including forcibly displaced persons and their host communities in the design, programming and implementation of assistance interventions.

We should strengthen local responses and avoid encampment wherever possible since it prevents integrated and efficient responses to the benefit of both refugees and host communities, and, following registration, provide access of refugees to the labour market as appropriate, to boost self-reliance. Building on preparedness measures, such as long-term local area planning which helps anticipate population growth and expansion of services we recommend, as appropriate, prioritizing

investments already foreseen in local development plans and promote connections to national social protection mechanisms.

The response should focus on supporting the response capacities of national and local authorities. This could include developing predictable systemic responses and ensure funding to develop appropriate planning and management of interventions, building the capacity in line with local development needs, designing parallel systems in a way that facilitates as much as possible local take-over (e.g. shadowing national systems) and providing access based on need rather than status. Moreover, we should support dialogue mechanisms between local and national authorities and refugee populations and develop and/or scale up cash assistance, preferably multipurpose, wherever conditions allow.

It is necessary to pay particular attention both to the specific vulnerabilities and agency of refugees in designing and implementing integration measures and programmes. The most vulnerable persons require social protection assistance to become more self-reliant.

We recommend assessing how forced displacement affects service delivery, and how interventions can enhance access and be sustainable even if demand fluctuates. Scenario planning.

Thank you Mr./Ms. Chairperson.