

# EU-FRANK

Facilitating Resettlement and Refugee  
Admission through New Knowledge



© UNHCR/Annie Sakkab

## Facilitating State-to-State Cooperation through Peer Learning and New Approaches

Reflections and recommendations  
from the EU-FRANK project



EUROPEAN UNION  
Asylum, Migration  
and Integration Fund

# Content

<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Background .....</b>	<b>5</b>
Objective of the report.....	6
Why state-to-state cooperation? .....	6
<b>Building a structure for collaboration and support.....</b>	<b>8</b>
Measuring needs and interest among Member States .....	10
<b>Different shapes of state-to-state cooperation .....</b>	<b>13</b>
1. Study visits .....	13
2. Small-scale exchanges .....	14
3. Thematic workshops.....	14
Co-creating tools and training: continuous cooperation among states .....	15
The EU-FRANK New Approaches: Innovative Ways for Peer-learning .....	16
Piloting operational collaboration .....	16
Mission coordination and support .....	17
Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) Network & experience exchanges .....	17
Practical cooperation set-ups: three examples .....	18
1. Facilitating experience exchanges and cooperation through sharing information on planned resettlement activities and main features from states' resettlement programmes .....	18
2. Operational experience exchange .....	19
3. Opportunities for peer learning in the field .....	21
Considerations on the work with the pilots .....	21
General reflections.....	23
<b>Evaluations/voices from the participants.....</b>	<b>24</b>
Recommendations for possible future courses of action.....	25
<b>Appendix: Activities.....</b>	<b>26</b>
Study visits.....	26
Small-scale exchanges .....	27
Thematic workshops .....	27

## Summary

A method for State-to-State cooperation is dependent on particular structures and procedures. Such structures and procedures can take different formats and encourage cooperation in different areas. The EU-FRANK project (*The European Union Action on Facilitating Resettlement and Refugee Admission through New Knowledge*) experimented with ways to increase knowledge about resettlement practices, increase quality of resettlement work and make it easier for states to increase the quality of their resettlement process, or to start-up or scale-up their resettlement programmes. To do so the project provided opportunities for states to learn from each other by facilitating activities targeted at exchanging experiences between practitioners through *study visits*, *expert exchanges* and *thematic meetings* (bilateral and multilateral exchange).

The report therefore presents how the EU-FRANK project worked to deliver expert exchange between EU+ Member States. It includes a description of the process from determining the needs and interest of the Member States, choosing the activity formats to match those needs and providing opportunities for exchange and cooperation throughout all phases of resettlement – from selection to post-arrival (excluding long-term integration, however).

The main reasons for presenting EU-FRANK's method and structure for state-to-state Cooperation is to provide an overview of knowledge and reflections to networks of practitioners aiming to establish similar cooperation schemes. This report provides information on the sorts of situations when practitioners can benefit from operational exchange of know-how and what kind of results can be expected. Although resettlement is a state-driven process, it involves many different national and international public and private actors, as well as a variety of interlinked activities. The fact that the systems in the resettling countries look very different as well as the number of different actors at different levels increases the need for established methods and structures for exchange. Drawing on the experience of EU-FRANK could guide future projects/programmes and EASO's (European Asylum Support Office) newly established Resettlement Network in creating these structures. The method and structure for state-to-state cooperation supports the planning and implementation of capacity-building activities.

Thereby, the recommendations in view of further development of state-to-state cooperation through experience exchange are:

- To look into establishing a platform for practitioners on an operational level within resettlement where exchange and discussion can take place. Such a platform could improve communication, information sharing and synergy between the various resettlement actors. Make sure there is a continuity as it would increase their distinct value in the longer term

- To create a solid tool as in a resettlement digital platform for Operational Meeting on Resettlement, which will be useful for the resettlement countries, UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), and other actors involved in the process, eventually resulting in better planning and preparations for missions
- To connect a sort of coordinator/liaison officer to the mapping of planned activities in order to be able to match EU Member States who are flagging a need for support in certain areas, as well as identify opportunities for formal and informal experience exchanges and cooperation between states
- To continue with the development of the resettlement programme overview that has been initiated in cooperation with Migration Policy Institute Europe (MPIE)
- To continue with thematic operational experience exchanges for (operational) selection mission state officials. Issues that have been identified by several project participants to explore further are: age assessments for unaccompanied minors (UAM) in the field, how to interview children (and from which age), remote interviewing/processing, biometrics: routines and logistics and security assessments
- In addition to the above, to organise regular/annual meetings for operational resettlement selection staff/heads of selection missions in order for them to exchange concrete operational experiences and knowledge and build a structure for support between the practitioners.

## Background

The EU-FRANK Project (*European Union Action on Facilitating Resettlement and Refugee Admission through New Knowledge*) aimed to develop new approaches and provide operational support to increase the capacity of EU Member States to resettle persons in need of international protection. The project was led by Sweden in partnership and in consultation with immigration authorities in Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland, as well as the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Migration Policy Institute Europe (MPIE), and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The project was funded by the European Union's Asylum Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) for the period January 2016-December 2020.

The EU-FRANK project was structured around four components:

### **1. Research**

The project oversaw and delivered a number of studies on resettlement programmes and outcomes. The research should help to identify bottlenecks and success factors, in order to inform and guide the project as well as individual states and organisations.

### **2. Tools**

The project produced a register of operational tools and materials that can be used for resettlement purposes by EU+ Member States.

### **3. Training**

The project has developed a resettlement training programme, with a combination of seminars, practical learning opportunities and online sessions, in close consultation with EASO.

### **4. New approaches**

The project piloted and evaluated new approaches to resettlement, based on the outcomes of the research and a needs assessment by participating national administrations. This includes new forms of cooperation between states and structured experience exchange around operational matters.

In addition to these components, the project facilitated experience exchanges between practitioners from different EU+ Member States to enable them to learn from each other. These exchanges take the forms of study visits, small group or bilateral expert exchange meetings and thematic meetings or workshops. The project has also facilitated lending of support from senior colleagues in experienced EU+ Member States to other EU+ countries with less experience in certain areas or around specific issues.

## Objective of the report

Among the objectives of the EU-FRANK project is the development of methods for cooperation between EU+ Member States in the area of resettlement. This report describes how the project approached this task. In doing so, this report will:

- Describe how the EU-FRANK project set up a structure for exchange of experiences between resettlement practitioners from EU+ Member States
- Present and reflect on lessons learned throughout this process
- Reflect on what worked well and what challenges the project faced when facilitating bilateral and multilateral cooperation around resettlement in the European Union.

The report builds on mapping exercises and communication with project participants, documentation and evaluations of project activities, and reflections shared by project staff and partners who have taken part in project activities. It also draws on the results of the Migration Policy Institute Europe (MPIE) study *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, published in 2018, and recommendations given to the project by MPIE based on this study.

## Why state-to-state cooperation?

In the current resettlement context, where resettlement needs outnumber the places made available by national resettlement programmes, states are urged by international organisations such as the UNHCR as well as by the European Commission to provide increased support to those in need, either by starting new programmes or by increasing the capacity of those that are already in place. To succeed in this endeavour, states are depending on both political will and practical knowhow. In its report *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, launched by MPIE under the framework of the EU-FRANK project in 2018, MPIE states that “[W]here operational knowhow and capacity for resettlement are missing, government representatives, civil servants, and civil-society actors have increasingly reached out to their more experienced counterparts.”<sup>1</sup>

While political decisions lay well above the project, bringing experts together to learn from one another on an operational level was a key feature of EU-FRANK. The project acted as a vehicle to share and build on experiences that states have picked up along their way when working with resettlement over many years, or when embarking on this process. Rather than providing answers or solutions to Member States’ questions or problems by itself, the project pointed them in the direction of others who have similar experiences. By doing so, the project acknowledged the valuable expertise that exists within the resettlement community and used the existing competence among EU+ Member States. It also allowed comparison of several different models and approaches, instead of promoting a single solution, which may not suit all. By inviting and helping states to reach out to colleagues across national borders, EU-FRANK also invested in their own capabil-

<sup>1</sup> *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, page 4

ity to find support and to collaborate, in a way that can live on after the conclusion of the project.

EU-FRANK reports all activities that facilitated interaction and experience exchange between two or more resettlement practitioners as ‘expert exchange’. It can be compared to terms such as ‘peer learning’ or ‘peer support’, which are used by MPIE among others. MPIE describes that the most common objectives for exchange activities are:

1. To motivate (old and new) resettlement countries
2. To share critical information
3. To provide operational support
4. To build relationships between stakeholders
5. To foster innovation<sup>2</sup>

The EU-FRANK expert exchange extended across all of these goals, with some activities primarily focusing on sharing information while others focused on innovation or building relationships. The ultimate goal was to facilitate an understanding among project participants of how resettlement can be managed successfully (and in different ways), and consequently to strengthen their capacity and competence in their work.

*“In my opinion, the best way how to learn is on the spot. The practical experience which we can get during the study visit and then practical discussion with experienced colleagues is the best way of exchanging experience.”<sup>3</sup>*

Participant in one of EU-FRANK’s exchange activities

---

<sup>2</sup> *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, page 5–9

<sup>3</sup> EU-FRANK Mid-term evaluation, page 27

## Building a structure for collaboration and support

When planning, delivering and evaluating activities that support exchange and collaboration, the goals for each activity must be taken into consideration. These should be clearly defined and tied to specific actions.<sup>4</sup> MPIE listed five key points to consider when designing exchange activities:

1. Goals must be clearly defined and tied to specific actions.
2. Activities should be designed based on these goals and an understanding of what will maximise the chances of reaching them.
3. The expert actors selected for participation should be chosen based on their affiliations and skills set.
4. Participants must be matched up according to relevant criteria.
5. Peer-support activities must be critically assessed.<sup>5</sup>

Based on the objectives behind peer exchange initiatives, MPIE suggests that the activities can be structured in five different ways.<sup>6</sup> These entail colleagues or peers

- sharing existing information
- co-creating information about how to conduct resettlement
- co-creating tools for resettlement programmes
- providing general training
- mentoring

EU-FRANK's structure for peer learning and support covered several of these aspects. In Components 2 and 3, experts (peers) worked together to co-create information, tools and training, by sharing existing information. In Component 4, efforts were made to create systems similar to mentoring in order to create new forms of cooperation. More on this below.

The project decided early on to use a broad approach, and aimed at providing learning opportunities around all phases of the resettlement process. These were defined according to the picture below, with missions being defined rather than included in a general 'selection phase' that is often the case when the resettlement process is described. The only expressed limitation was that EU-FRANK would not focus on capacity building for longer-term integration, partly because it is such a large area on its own, also because it is not specific to resettlement cases. Other projects and initiatives running in parallel with EU-FRANK, such as for instance

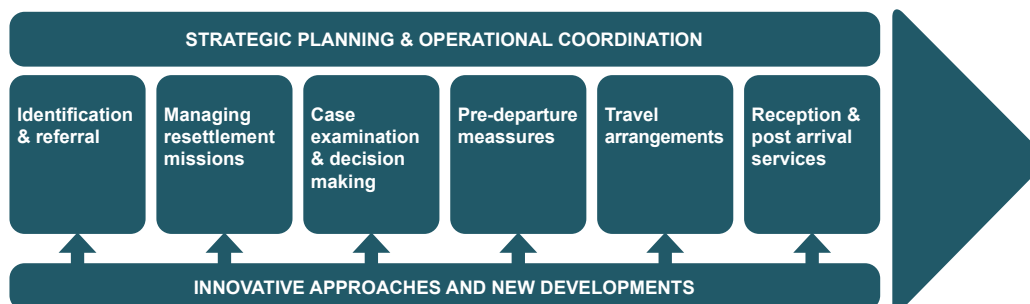
<sup>4</sup> *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, page 1

<sup>5</sup> *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, page 1–2

<sup>6</sup> *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, page 10–13



the EURITA project by the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and the SHARE project by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), focused more specifically on reception and integration. As the phases of the resettlement process are interlinked, it was however decided from the start that EU-FRANK would not exclude the reception and early arrival phase, especially since this often relates to pre-departure measures, an area that stood out as of particular interest to many resettlement practitioners/countries.



The decision to cover the entire resettlement process was taken with the intention of enabling the project to act flexibly according to EU Member States needs. It was supported by initial mapping exercises conducted at the project's first workshop, in February 2017, at which the EU-FRANK project, in collaboration with EASO and UNHCR gathered 35 experts from 17 EU Member States, ICMC, IOM and MPIE. During the workshop, participants worked together to 'deconstruct' the resettlement process into its bits and pieces and to define and discuss questions that were of importance to them throughout all of the phases. During this exercise, it became evident that participants, many of whom represented countries, which were new to resettlement at that time, had questions related to different phases or that bridged over the entire resettlement process. Many participants also stated that they could not identify a single area or question which stood out as most important to them, but rather wanted guidance and opportunity to discuss and learn from other countries around several (sometimes interlinked, sometimes diverse) aspects.

At this inaugural project event, participants provided valuable input to the EU-FRANK project by discussing potential developments in terms of common tools, training, support to field missions, as well as international experience exchange. It was suggested that the conference should be followed up by thematic workshops enabling more in-depth discussions into certain areas of interest (pre-departure orientation, reception and planning and set-up of missions). Participants discussed if and how states with varying degrees of experience in resettlement could be matched together and whether this process should be arranged or happen more naturally. It was advocated that meeting in larger, but limited groups serves a networking purpose apart from the learning aspect around a specific topic. It was also proposed that the project could arrange experience exchange and 'peer learning' as an ongoing process, covering several steps and including different types of meetings. It was considered useful to be able to observe more than one aspect of resettlement,

as well as to learn from several states rather than pairing up with one twinning partner. Participants suggested that they could all actively engage in hosting activities and supporting each other, and showed interest in creating a network to be able to get in touch more frequently as well as ad hoc around specific questions (to share critical information).<sup>7</sup>

## Measuring needs and interest among Member States

To verify and further identify States' needs, the project arranged a mapping exercise via a questionnaire that was sent to 18 EU Member States<sup>8</sup> in December 2017. The questionnaire contained questions about which *areas of the resettlement process* each country would like to learn more about, as well as preferred *methods* and *timing* for peer-exchange or support activities.

The following optional measures or methods were listed:

- Workshops/seminars
- Bi-/multilateral exchange meetings
- Visits from other EU+ MS
- Visits to other EU+ MS
- Study visits within the EU
- Study visits to third countries
- Pilot activities/testing of new approaches

Similar to the first workshop, the responses received signalled interest in different phases as well as different forms of collaboration. While most of the above measures were positively received, what stood out was that no state indicated a preference for having a colleague from another state conduct a 'peer review' or visit to their own country.

Based on the responses, the project formed what was called a 'Framework for Collaboration' spelling out priorities and setting a plan for how the project could support each responding state. This helped complement the broad approach (covering all phases of the resettlement process) with a more targeted approach enabling the project to respond to specific needs.

The Framework for Collaboration also provided a starting point for the project to identify partners and match countries around specific issues. When matching potential partners, MPIE identifies three important steps, first defining the selection criteria, second mapping the landscape of potential actors and third convincing those deemed most appropriate to participate. The matching could also be done along a number of dimensions/criteria, such as governance structures, geopolitical and socioeconomic considerations, legacies of successful cooperation, availability

---

<sup>7</sup> Meeting report, 6 March 2017

<sup>8</sup> Civil servants as representatives for EU Member States that had been taking part in previous EU-FRANK activities

of resources, interest in a particular refugee population, size and structural characteristics of the resettlement programme, reception and integration arrangements and level of experience in a particular area. The country seeking support should have a clear understanding of what phase of the resettlement programme they would like to develop, desired outcome and the timeframe for achieving it. In other words, the countries should identify where they have knowledge gaps and what type of expertise best addresses those needs.<sup>9</sup>

When identifying possibilities for emerging resettlement countries in the EU to learn from those more experienced, EU-FRANK used the information gathered about the learning needs of specific states as a starting point. The project reached out to states that had been specifically mentioned as potentially interesting partners by states responding to the mapping exercise. In addition, the project searched for potential host countries who could share their experiences with others based on their models for resettlement along the resettlement process. The ambition was to identify countries that approached resettlement differently and who could share different experiences and display different models<sup>10</sup>.

To support in this process, EU-FRANK teamed up with its project partners, including UNHCR, IOM, EASO and ICMC<sup>11</sup>. ICMC, which had longstanding experience in building networks around resettlement, for instance within earlier EU-funded projects such as the ERN – European Resettlement Network and the SHARE project (running in parallel with EU-FRANK), took on a specific role as a supporting partner in the coordination of the expert exchange/peer-learning part of the project. ICMC actively contributed to enabling successful exchanges of experts within EU-FRANK. ICMC enabled the access to their network and provided important sub-tuning of dossiers and planning, helped to carry out activities in practice using a survey as an instrument to identify states' needs in this regard. The ICMC assisted as well on a more practical level by lifting the fact that expert exchanges and study visits carried out by EU-FRANK should be even more closely tied to the project. In other words, the arrangement with the host countries was good but needed to be complemented by a closer presence and follow-up by the project secretariat. Thereby, project implementation gradually changed direction and during the project assignments, the activities were resourced so that the project secretariat's participation and closer follow-up were made possible.

While the broad and flexible approach was set up to respond to what states were asking for, it had some initial challenges. The project did not have access to a pool of experts and relied on an 'alignment of the willing'.<sup>12</sup> Luckily, the project could rely on support from project partners (Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland, and Sweden) as well as from its reference partners with longstanding experience within resettlement, and a will to support others by sharing their expertise. As the

<sup>9</sup> *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, page 16–19

<sup>10</sup> The identification process relied on in-house knowledge of resettlement systems, as well as knowledge provided by partners, in particular the ICMC, but also drawing on IOM and UNHCR

<sup>11</sup> International Catholic Migration Commission

<sup>12</sup> *Scaling up Refugee Resettlement in Europe – The Role of Institutional Peer Support*, page 17

project became more established and picked up speed, it became easier to reach out and contact non-project partner countries who were often able to invite observers (for example international organisations) or host a meeting. This support was vital for EU-FRANK and shows how essential the peer-support component was to this project as it opened up for a broader cooperation.

## Different shapes of state-to-state cooperation

This part of the report presents the different formats that the EU-FRANK project used to conduct activities during its implementation period to promote an extensive experience exchange amongst EU+ Member States. It is important to notice that, already in the original project plan, the project set out clear capacity building goals for Components 2 and 3 (develop common tools and a common training program). The activity formats defined as study visits, expert exchange and thematic meetings were the most flexible structures envisioned in the project plan, in line with the assignments in Component 4 (New Approaches). Those structures primarily aimed to be actions that support learning between experts with a goal to enhance capacity building as regards resettlement.

EU-FRANK has facilitated state-to-state cooperation opportunities based on three main categories of activities:

1. **Study visits** within or outside of the EU
2. **Small-scale expert exchange** with participants convening to exchange experiences face-to-face or remotely around a specific topic, or to observe and discuss another country's practices
3. **Thematic workshops** within or outside of the EU

Based on the needs assessment, EU-FRANK organised several activities, cutting across the resettlement spectrum. The main objective of these activities was to share information, but it was also seen as providing training in how to approach different aspects of resettlement. Specific activities, mainly the small-scale expert exchanges, also border on mentoring, when a defined group of practitioners met recurrently to support one another.

### 1. Study visits

EU-FRANK was able to offer practitioners across the EU opportunities to observe and learn from resettlement activities in practice in a study visit format. Those study visits often came as suggestions from the project and various partners/associate states that had something interesting to show or that the project had identified as interesting (e.g., something we wanted to “promote” to states). Study visits were a well-received format, and a good way to build on and share existing expertise. They were hosted both by project partner countries and organisations, and by agencies in other resettlement countries.

The project's ambition was to provide study visits around different aspects of practical resettlement work. There was not always a clear division between study visits and other events such as small-scale exchanges or thematic workshops. Over all, the study visits offered critical information for resettlement practition-

ers, both experienced and inexperienced. The study visits provided know-how in all phases of the resettlement process except in the first phase (identification & referral). States were able to take part in study visits within the EU or to resettlement field locations outside the EU, to observe resettlement activities. Matching of more and less experienced resettlement states, or states with similar models or methods, was done based upon expressed interest, and in consultation with EASO, UNHCR or other actors that can provide an overview of which models/methods and needs exist. A mapping of needs and areas of interest was carried out with a number of EU MS with limited experience of resettlement and the outcome of this mapping was used to influence choices of topics or areas for study visits and similar exchange events.

*A list of study visits can be found in appendix.*

## **2. Small-scale exchanges**

In addition to the study visits, EU-FRANK facilitated peer-learning and information exchange in smaller constellations. These sometimes took the form of a small study visit, and sometimes of a meeting between a few resettlement practitioners who convene to discuss a specific aspect of resettlement more in-depth, or to continue a dialogue or learning process that had been initiated in another setting. The small-scale format permitted states who wanted to learn more and/or have deeper discussions with a specific state about a specific resettlement phase to do so with the EU-FRANK support. For instance, smaller groups of participants of the EU-FRANK Pre-Departure Orientation Network used this format to share more detailed operational knowledge with one another outside larger group events. Another example was when heads of selection missions from different EU+ Member States exchanged operational information connected to a specific host country location.

Both formats, study visits and small-scale exchanges, cover great needs that states have and provide opportunities for learning even though the experts did not know that they needed it since the needs were discovered in the course of the project thus the tailored activities.

*A list of small-scale exchanges can be found in the appendix*

## **3. Thematic workshops**

Throughout the project, there were several opportunities to participate in thematic workshops. The themes of the workshops focused on operational topics and were based on issues identified by participants in project activities and input from project partners. The workshops aimed for participants to learn about other states' procedures and gain a better understanding of which competencies are needed to cover a specific process of resettlement and follow up on issues put forward at workshops. Such workshops were organised to support the implementation of the pilots within Component 4 (more details on those activities will follow). Examples are exchange events between heads of resettlement selection missions, or on topics such as design and follow up of resettlement programmes.

The results from these workshops allowed participants to discover tools, experiment, understand, integrate, exchange, share... and to leave with their own toolbox enabling them to keep on looking into further developing the national resettlement programmes.

*A list of thematic workshops can be found in the appendix.*

### **Co-creating tools and training: continuous cooperation among states**

It became evident to the EU-FRANK project that the guiding principles deriving from the MPI study were already present to some degree in the basic structures of Components 2 and 3 (Tools and Training). Already from the beginning of the project, these components were characterised by their clear capacity-building objectives, to produce a register of operational tools and materials and to develop a resettlement-training programme. The planned activities were crafted with the components' individual objectives in mind. The selected experts (of the working group) represented the participating countries and organisations and were selected based on their individual competence. It was also clear that the most flexibly crafted area was Component 4 (New Approaches) and the activities targeted at exchanging experiences between practitioners through study visits, small-scale expert exchanges and thematic meetings.

The tools working group (Component 2) consisted of a group of Member State experts from Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden with EASO, IOM and UNHCR as reference partners. A component leader from Belgium led the group with the support from the EU-FRANK secretariat. The meetings in the working group resulted in the development of 15 tools covering the different phases of the resettlement process. In the beginning of the process, a mapping of existing supporting materials in different states was carried out by the experts. The result of the mapping was used as a basis for the development of the tools. There was first the idea to make the existing tools available for other states, but one challenge was that they were written in many different languages. Instead, the experts analysed around 80 documents from five states to use as a basis for the development of the new tools. Before publishing the final versions, the tools were tested by the states during missions and practical resettlement work including during missions in the EASO Resettlement Support Facility in Istanbul. All tools were handed over to EASO and will be further developed to be incorporated into their system, as well as in the resettlement-training module developed by EU-FRANK.

The working group for the training component (Component 3) consisted of a group of states experts from Belgium, Italy, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden, as well as experts from the organisations EASO, ICMPD, IOM, and UNHCR. A component leader from Sweden led the group with the support from the EU-FRANK secretariat. The training programme is now part of the European Training Curriculum (ETC) and 62 practitioners have been trained as of June 2020.

The work with both components constituted a slightly different form of cooperation, as states were brought together with a pre-established and specific goal to achieve. Through sharing and cooperation within the expert group, but also in engaging other states and actors, it was possible to achieve goals that were broad in nature and would hardly be as relevant if performed by a single state. This longer-term cooperation demanded a clear structure for cooperation, a clear mandate and clear goals to make such a plural work possible.

### **The EU-FRANK New Approaches: Innovative Ways for Peer-learning**

In addition to the development of concrete products (tools and training) and facilitating multilateral support and exchange of practices between EU+ MS and other stakeholders/partners, the project sought to create opportunities for practical, operational cooperation between states.

EU-FRANK's focus would come to lie on becoming a platform for European experience exchange on a practitioners' level, in an expansion of what had already been going on in the area of peer-support. During 2019, the project's focus was on three pilots, all of which set out to build and evaluate structures and forms for practical experience exchange around resettlement operations.

#### **Piloting operational collaboration**

Building on the experiences and on what had worked well with Components 2 and 3, the aim of the last component of the project was to develop new approaches, to be innovative. Within Component 4, the project strived to increase the number of available methods for structured and coordinated experience exchange and support between EU+ MS. In the work plan for the EU-FRANK pilots, the project underlines that "a key prerequisite /.../ to facilitate cooperation is access to information about states' programmes and areas of expertise". In order for state actors to be able, to reach out to partner countries to build on each other's competence and to increase their operational capacity to resettle, they need contact points and more knowledge about the differences in the national systems. This finding led the project to explore the benefits of two resettlement networks with operational focus, one focusing on selection and the other on pre-departure orientation (PDO). The assignments also explored the format and support mechanisms needed to support such networks. It was envisioned that the use of standardised tools and materials could be developed using web-based platforms. In the work plan, for the EU-FRANK pilots it was anticipated that the project would assess the possibility of using EASO's web-based platform, the Information and Documentation System (IDS). The three pilot areas that were identified were planning and scheduling, mission coordination and support and new approaches in pre-departure orientation. All three pilots aimed at testing and learning if a higher degree of coordination and cooperation between EU+ MS can provide positive effects in terms of efficiency, quality and/or reduced costs for states' resettlement programmes. In this report, there will not be a focus on the experiences from the assignment on new approaches, in pre-departure orientation, as this is thoroughly documented in the project



report *Compilation of Practices on Pre-Departure Programmes- a result of the PDO-network of the EU-FRANK project*.

### **Mission coordination and support**

At the start of the Mission coordination pilot, the project focus was on trying to develop and test operational coordination and cooperation on the ground, in field locations. The project looked into opportunities for joint back office space, shared equipment and field coordinators who, similar to liaison officers, could support several countries. Through an investigatory trip to Lebanon, and close talks with both partner countries, as well as EASO, the UNHCR, and IOM, the project came to two main conclusions, which marked the way forward for the project. These were that states were indeed interested in operational cooperation in terms of shared interviewing facilities or the like, rather than large-scale structures. In addition, there was a surge for practical, hands-on experience exchange and peer-to-peer learning. Since the larger structures were not in the scope of the project, it was decided that EU-FRANK's focus should be on becoming a platform for European experience exchange on a practitioners' level. These types of exchanges were something that had already been ongoing since the beginning of the project with numerous study visits, workshops and other practical learning opportunities as mentioned above. What happened was that Component 4 gradually grew into a continuation and development of the experience exchanges and study visits that had been organised since the upstart of the project.

The project then strived to increase states' knowledge about other states' resettlement activities, under the presumption that access to information about where and when resettlement is happening can foster state-to-state cooperation. The aim was to coordinate and support resettlement states by connecting them to each other for operational interaction and exchange, which followed the structures and forms set for practical experience exchanges specific to the innovative approach of Component 4, and aimed at strengthening coordination and experience exchanges between EU+ Member States around resettlement operations.

### **Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) Network & experience exchanges**

During the project period, EU-FRANK created a network for pre-departure orientation (PDO) trainers and experts. The network consisted of approximately 30 practitioners from 11 countries, as well as experts from IOM and ICMC. Participants were given opportunities to meet both in full-group settings and in smaller constellations. The network meetings rotated between states that also took turns in highlighting their national pre-departure orientation (PDO) procedures. The objective of the programme was to increase EU+ Member States' capacity to provide effective and high-quality pre-departure orientation. This was achieved by deepening the understanding of how pre-departure orientation can be delivered in different ways.

For further experiences and reflections from the PDO-Network, please see the project report *Compilation of Practices on Pre-Departure Programmes- a result of the PDO-Network of the EU-FRANK project*.

## Practical cooperation set-ups: three examples

Based on the work with the pilots, three practical cooperation set-ups are highlighted in the section below:

### 1. Facilitating experience exchanges and cooperation through sharing information on planned resettlement activities and main features from states' resettlement programmes

- How to plan and carry out resettlement activities in an efficient way?
- What do states need to know in order to share experiences and knowledge and thereby support each other? Supporting each other by sharing information would help avoid making the same mistakes, wasting time searching for information already assimilated by other states, starting from scratch unnecessarily, instead devoting all resources to developing successful working methods and routines.

Above are a couple of the key questions that were discussed during the initial phase of Component 4. One way that the project explored was by sharing information about states' resettlement activities through the establishment of a so-called capacity calendar where the capacity of UNHCR in connection to how states plan their resettlement activities was shared in an overview. The idea was that states could see when a host country would start to be "overbooked" and could then decide to plan their activities at that location during another time of the year. The opposite effect was that states could choose to organise a mission in the same location at the same time in order to share resources or exchange experiences. The project designed a test version for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) where UNHCR added information on states' planned activities using colour codes to avoid sharing potentially sensitive information. There was an interest from both states and UNHCR to establish this type of calendar, but in the end it was found to be too complex a task to measure the "capacity" of UNHCR taking into account processing of resettlement submissions as well as logistics, availability of interview premises, etc. Furthermore, it was made clear that this type of calendar could not be a substitute for the contact between the different states and UNHCR on planning issues. However, what was observed after this exercise was that states need to know when and where other states are carrying out their resettlement activities in order to be able to cooperate and share experiences and knowledge. Nevertheless, when gathering information on resettlement activities, some states indicated that they were not able to share exact dates of when and where resettlement activities are planned, but instead information on which quarter of the year and which host countries. A mapping of planned as well as already delivered resettlement activities for states resettling out of MENA and Turkey 2017–2020 (22 states) was carried out and shared as a visualised planning tool with the participating states (17 EU+ Member States replied). Through the mapping, it was possible to identify opportunities for cooperation and experience exchange. The project facilitated for example an experience exchange between two states where one had recently organised a mission to a host country where the other state had little or no experience. They exchanged different types of operational information ranging from logistical support and security to names of restaurants and supermarkets.

During one of EU-FRANK's activities, a participant stated that in order to be able to cooperate, share experiences and support each other, a pre-condition is to know what the resettlement planning looks like for the other states. This strengthened the project's intention to carry out a mapping of delivered and planned resettlement activities and share the result with the participating states. Such a big number of states agreeing to share their planning again shows that there is a willingness and interest to share information between EU+ MS to facilitate cooperation. This willingness is evidence of the trust that exists and is growing in this professional network.

A greater willingness to share information, knowledge and experiences between states has been the way. It is not to be missed that the basis of these exchanges was the individual contacts. It was also a revelation that one could turn to another European colleague for information on specific issues instead of or in addition to asking the colleagues in one's own office. Sharing information, experiences and knowledge, such as procedures, routines, good practices and challenges were the main areas that worked well in the project. This goes as well for the information overview through which states are able to compare resettlement programmes and procedures. When learning about other states' processes and routines through the overview in combination with experience exchanges, states indicated that they can pick bits and pieces in order to develop their own routines and working methods.

Apart from knowing when and where states are planning their resettlement activities, throughout the project states expressed an interest in knowing more about each other's resettlement programmes and national procedures. EU-FRANK therefore decided, in close cooperation with MPIE and EASO, to develop an overview of the main features of EU+ Member States resettlement programmes based on information found in the EASO Information and Documentation System (IDS). The aim behind the overview is for states to be able to seek information and compare procedures and routines in order for instance to contact a state for support around a specific part of the resettlement process as well as to identify possible cooperation partners in the field.

The project also carried out a mapping of delivered and planned pre-departure orientation (PDO) activities in the newly established EU-FRANK PDO-Network. There were fewer replies than for selection missions for which there could be various reasons, one of them being that PDO-activities are dependent on when the selection missions are carried out and another that practitioners in the PDO-network had found other ways to get information about each other's activities.

## **2. Operational experience exchange**

To deepen the opportunities to share experiences and to provide a platform for dialogue between states and relevant operational partners such as UNHCR and IOM the project piloted a so-called operational meeting for resettlement (OMR) in the resettlement host country Jordan. The idea was to explore whether on a yearly basis it would be useful to organise a type of preparatory meeting with a geographical

focus in locations where many states come to resettle in order to share useful operational information as a type of pre-mission for all states together. This would give states the opportunity to profit from other states' experiences and knowledge in that resettlement location as well as allow UNHCR and IOM to save time as they could provide all states with the same information at the same time. Furthermore, it could open up possibilities for cooperation between the states and facilitate peer-to-peer learning opportunities. The ambition was to create, test and evaluate a meeting concept that can be adopted and organised in any location where several states come to resettle in the same calendar year. Although the workshop was well received, the evaluation after the meeting showed that there could have been an even clearer operational focus.

The project together with EASO had already arranged a workshop for coordinators of selection missions from various resettlement countries in 2018. This was a one-off event, but the project noted a large interest in learning from the practicalities of other states' working processes in field. After having evaluated both the heads of mission meeting in 2018 and the OMR in Amman and looking at the recent experiences of the EU-FRANK PDO-Network, EU-FRANK initiated an experience exchange programme focusing on resettlement selection in order to provide a platform for dialogue, information and experience exchange between heads/coordinators of selection missions of European resettlement states. The programme would provide an insight into states' working models, give the participants access to a network of colleagues with expertise within resettlement selection, and identify opportunities for cooperation and support. During the first workshop in Stockholm in December 2019, the participants shared operational practices and challenges during breakout sessions and presentations from states. The group identified a list of issues that they wanted to explore further. Based on the identified issues, the project carried out four thematic workshops during spring 2020 that had to be organised online because of the COVID-19 situation. The topics of the exchanges were ways to approach integration aspects in the selection process, remote interviewing (in close cooperation with EASO), how to organise and manage small-scale missions and the set-up of selection mission team. These very hands-on experience exchanges between states were much appreciated.

When looking at workshops, participants appreciated the operational meeting on resettlement (OMR) that was organised in Jordan, in particular because of the opportunity to meet and share experiences with European colleagues. However, what the project learned through the meeting and from participants' feedback was that there could have been an even stronger focus on concrete operational details and that the main target group should be operational staff.

During the first workshop in the Experience Exchange Programme for Selection Missions, the focus was clearly on operational details and examples from the field, which was highly appreciated by the participants. The main interest was on states' procedures for example when it comes to security indications, age assessments, integration aspects and logistics during selection missions. To allow participants in a workshop setting to themselves identify themes that they would like to learn more

about seems to be an efficient way to get down to the bottom with what is clearly needed within the group. It also gives the participants the opportunity to find out from which state they can learn more about an issue that could be useful and relevant in their national context. One challenge with this brief programme was to build a structure of practitioners who are able to attend several meetings. Many of the heads of missions have additional tasks in their functions and are often unavailable when travelling on missions. The project therefore did not only invite participants who had been present during the first workshop in the selection mission experience exchange programme to the following workshops as had been the initial idea. Thus, the continuity that the project was at first aiming for by having the same group of experts was not reached.

Because of the COVID-19 outbreak, several of the experience exchanges could not be carried out in the way that was planned but instead as shorter online exchanges with limited opportunities for interaction. The outbreak also made it difficult to properly evaluate whether and how the states had used the overview of planned resettlement activities for 2020 among EU+ MS, which was shared right before the major lockdowns. However, the feedback before the outbreak was positive, and several states had shown interest in sharing and receiving operational information and experiences as well as being updated on the resettlement planning of other EU+ Member States. During the first weeks of the outbreak, the project received updates on the planning of resettlement activities with postponed or cancelled selection missions. When it became clear that more or less all resettlement activities had to be cancelled, these updates ceased. The main goal of the platform, however, was to create a way to make key information available in order to make increased cooperation possible. This work is currently being taken forward by EASO.

### **3. Opportunities for peer learning in the field**

As part of the initiatives to strengthen cooperation and peer-to-peer support between states, the project has offered states support in organising so-called embedded missions. This means embedding staff for example in bigger missions with other states when a state wants to select a small amount of refugees. Another initiative was to combine states' missions or "combined states" mission in ways that can enable them to share logistical planning and financial costs, as well as benefit from increased quality or other aspects. The project also looked into the possibility of establishing a buddy-support programme between two dedicated states that allows for structured exchange, with the aim of providing in-depth practical knowledge in a specific area to one of the states based on the other's expertise. These kinds of activities proved to be difficult to carry out, which will be further elaborated below.

### **Considerations on the work with the pilots**

The EU-FRANK project had the intention of testing different forms of cooperation between states and from the start facilitated various forms of experience exchanges ranging from study visits and thematic workshops to bilateral phone calls and

informal meetings. Throughout the project, it was possible to discern that states and individual state officials are open and willing to share their experiences and knowledge with colleagues in other states. These exchanges helped broaden project participants' professional network and platforms for contact between European colleagues, which was particularly important for less experienced resettlement states, but also for more experienced ones who also could be inspired. The work within Component 4 also showed that states were more interested in sharing knowledge and experiences with one another than organising missions together. Some of the reasons behind this had to do with national regulations and security issues. Moreover, during the project period, there did not seem to be enough interest and advantages perceived in organising, for example, a joint mission together with another state compared to the time and effort it would take to arrange it. The same goes for the sharing of resources during missions, which was something that the project had planned to test.

One participant, new to resettlement, particularly appreciated the informal contacts via telephone, since they are easy, quick and require little preparation. Experience exchange between states can in this way serve several purposes which is not only relevant for upcoming resettlement states who are new in the resettlement context, but also for recently employed individual state officials in established resettlement countries. Several states indicated that they are very interested in sharing and receiving knowledge and operational experiences as long as they do not have to invest too much time in it. Additionally, the information has to be in line with the information that they are able to share.

To summarise, as stated in the EU-FRANK recommendations to EASO when establishing their Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Network, the project noted a specific interest in practical learning opportunities and experience exchanges with a hands-on focus and a stronger interest in workshops and group activities. As outlined above, there was not a great interest from states in cooperating and working together during a mission. In the final survey of the activities in the selection mission experience programme, participants indicated that they are interested in continuing with the experience exchanges between states, both formal and informal ones. The result of the survey also showed that there is an interest in continuing with study visits, thematic meetings as well as annual meeting opportunities for heads of selection missions. The project showed that colleagues in the resettlement community are very open to sharing and receiving information. There is a gap to fill when it comes to structures for continued practical exchanges on an operational level, as observed before, including opportunities for innovative solutions to be tested. The work with the pilots confirmed that concrete and practical cooperation opportunities yield positive results on the short and medium term, and that having a structure and concrete goals for cooperation tends to multiply learning opportunities.

*A table presenting the different activities that the EU-FRANK delivered spread out over the resettlement process can be found in the appendix.*

## General reflections

The resettlement process has implications both for the actors that need to be involved and for the spectrum of activities that should be covered when planning, delivering and evaluating expert exchange. It is worth bearing in mind that, even though resettlement is a state-lead activity, it cannot be accomplished without partners, “[...] resettlement is a partnership activity”<sup>13</sup>. The need for what we could call structures, platforms or partnership mechanisms is there and is already institutionalised at the global level through the Annual Tripartite Consultations on Resettlement (ATCR) and the Working Group on Resettlement (WGR). These structures primarily focus on policy issues, pledging and follow-up of such and have therefore been visited mainly by officials at the policy level.

The structures for partnership that EU-FRANK built targeted partnership on the operational level, and in combination with the fact that it is state led, and encompasses the entire resettlement process, makes it unique. Building a structure for partnership at an operational level proved to fill a gap for cooperation and it was rewarding to look at the learning and exchange opportunities provided both to newcomers and experienced resettlement states. The experience of building a structure for state-to-state cooperation at an operational level also showed that the resettlement process is truly a partnership activity. The interest and need to reach outside the regional boundaries broadening the structures for partnership, involving for example Canada and the USA were natural in the area of resettlement. In the course of this task, the project also learned that structures for state-to-state cooperation that aim to cover the entire resettlement process need to involve a variety of local and national actors. The most salient example is PDO that is provided in different ways and involving different actors, state, counties, municipalities, non-governmental organisations and international organisations.

Based on the above, EU-FRANK managed to establish, if not a network, at least platforms for practitioners to be able to contact each other when needed. This was done by taking on the planning, the execution and the follow-up of multilateral support and exchange amongst EU+ Member States and other stakeholders/partners, enabling experts from resettlement states with different experiences to learn from each other. Experts from different resettlement states were able to join colleagues in other EU+ Member States or in field locations, to observe and learn from resettlement activities in practice. This served as support and inspiration in order to facilitate increased resettlement in emerging resettlement states, but it also had a positive impact on the development of already existing resettlement programmes. To finalise this report, we note a statement made at the final conference by Ms. Kerstin Lindblad, Director of the Division for Migration and Asylum Policy at Swedish Ministry of Justice “*Good cooperation and communication will continue to be needed, as well as the expansion of resettlement capacity. The EU-FRANK project has indeed contributed to the important work*”.

---

<sup>13</sup> Welcome to Europe! A comprehensive guide to resettlement [http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.ttp.eu/files/ICMC%20Europe-Welcome%20to%20Europe\\_0.pdf](http://www.resettlement.eu/sites/icmc.ttp.eu/files/ICMC%20Europe-Welcome%20to%20Europe_0.pdf), page 24

## Evaluations/voices from the participants

The project evaluated a great number of the activities that were conducted during the project period. The evaluations were an instrument for follow-up on the planning and organisation of activities during the course of the project. They were used to adapt the activities according to the states' needs/interests to learn new skills, exchange experiences and create possibilities/platforms for cooperation and networking. The evaluation focused on participants' reflections, their general impressions of the activity, e.g. the reason behind their participation, what they hoped to learn/achieve, and the take-aways from the activity; and whether or not they were satisfied with the activity in general. The project judged it important to use the evaluations to bring forward the voices of the participants. In total, the project organised 55 activities: 15-study visits, 20 thematic meetings and 20 small-scale meetings<sup>14</sup>.

When looking into the evaluations, it is noteworthy that participants found that the proposed themes matched their needs. The relevance of the different agendas was much appreciated. Many participants stated that the agenda reflected on national programmes and was result-oriented with efficient group sessions that allowed participants to share their experiences, ask questions and discuss further openly. The discussions revealed many shared challenges. Regardless of the category of activities, the participants' intentions were always to learn about other states' national resettlement programmes. Participants were also interested in sharing information about national procedures and concrete hands-on practical examples that could be relevant or/and of use for other MS. These intentions were similar to the expectations participants had at the beginning of the project.

At some point, through the project activities, it was observed that MS (both experienced and less experienced in the field of resettlement) were able to have extensive valuable knowledge exchanges and experience sharing with each other. The evaluations confirmed the EU-FRANK intention to offer multi-sided learning opportunities for the participants. The expert exchanges increased the MS knowledge about each other's resettlement processes and created uncomplicated paths for a more direct contact with organisations, such as IOM, ICMC and UNHCR and gave them more insight into their work.

The evaluations also showed that the opportunities to exchange experiences, share knowledge, and discuss ideas led the states to be interested in more in-depth learning opportunities within new areas of resettlement. The PDO Network is in this regard an example that stood out since it was very proactive in advancing the ideas and possibilities to cooperate. The participants proposed new themes of interest for many types of activities to learn about procedures in other EU+ Member States and the project responded by facilitating tailored activities in collaboration with participating states.

---

<sup>14</sup> Working group meetings are not included here, e.g. coordination meetings within the framework of Components 2 and 3, respectively



The evaluations showed that states participated in the activities based on two objectives. One of them was to learn and gain knowledge by learning more from innovative practices, gaining a better understanding of the various practical challenges, not only in terms of logistics, but also in terms of existing tools and useful materials, qualitative teachings and feedbacks from other MS. The other was related to the need to undertake a review of a specific process of the national resettlement programme by comparing their process to other countries'. By participating in EU-FRANK's thematic activities or study visits, states hoped to learn more about the content and delivery of a specific phase of the process in practice. Another finding is that the activities allowed the participants to explore new ways to collaborate with all stakeholders in the resettlement process in order to increase resettlement capacity and the effectiveness and quality of resettlement efforts. According to one participant, EU-FRANK made it simple for experts to share good practices, it encouraged and facilitated peer learning and support among states, which helped many states with the building and development of national programmes and enabled other states to take it forward.

### **Recommendations for possible future courses of action**

- To continue with the mapping and sharing of planned resettlement activities for EU+ Member States
- To involve coordinator/liaison officers in the mapping of planned activities in order to be able to match states who are flagging a need for support in certain areas, as well as identify opportunities for formal and informal experience exchanges and cooperation between states
- To continue with the development of the resettlement programme overview that was initiated in cooperation with MPIE.
- To continue with thematic operational experience exchanges for (operational) selection mission state officials. Issues that were identified by several project participants to explore further are: age assessments for unaccompanied minors (UAM) in the field, how to interview children (and from which age), remote interviewing/processing, biometrics: routines and logistics and security assessments
- In addition to the above, to organise regular/annual meetings for operational resettlement selection staff/heads of selection missions in order for them to exchange concrete operational experiences and knowledge and build a structure for support between the practitioners.

Please note that recommendations from the assignment new approaches in pre-departure orientation are to be found in the project report *Compilation of Practices on Pre-Departure Programmes - a result of the PDO-network of the EU-FRANK project*.

## Appendix: Activities

### Study visits

The *first study* visit showcased *phases 2–4* of the resettlement process when Belgium, 9–11 November 2016, hosted the visit in Ankara and state officials (practitioners) from Bulgaria and Lithuania took part.

The *second study* visit presented *phases 5–6* of the resettlement process when a study visit was offered on 20–21 June 2017 to Germany’s centralised reception centre in Friedland and arrival at the Hannover Langenhagen Airport. Several state officials (practitioners) were present from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Italy, Netherlands, and Portugal.

A *third study visit* presented the Netherlands centralised reception & post arrival services *phases 5–6* of the resettlement process showing the arrival of a group of refugees at the Schiphol Airport on 19–21 September 2017. The study visit was offered to state officials from Lithuania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Sweden.

On the 21–22 November 2017, the *fourth study* visit took place. It focused on Switzerland’s selection mission in Amman and was visited by state officials from Estonia, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, and Slovakia.

The *fifth study visit* to Kampala on 12–15 December 2017 highlighted Netherlands’ PDO (*phase 4*) in a field setting. State officials from Slovenia, Luxemburg and Latvia were present during this learning opportunity.

On 24–26 April 2018, EU-FRANK offered EU+ Member States the *sixth study visit* hosted by Norway showcasing their cultural orientation programme (*phase 4*) provided by IOM in Beirut, Lebanon. Participating states were Estonia, Belgium, France, Netherlands, Romania, Slovenia, Slovakia, Sweden, and the United Kingdom.

The *seventh study visit* was co-hosted with ICMC/SHARE network and the Netherlands on the 3–6 May 2018. The activity offered learning activities in the area of PDO at ICMC’s Resettlement Support Centre in Istanbul, Turkey and was offered with a specific opportunity to observe Netherlands PDO (*phase 4*). Participating states and organisations were Canada, Estonia, Luxemburg, Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, United States of America, United Kingdom, EASO, IOM, Jesuit Refugee Service, and Caritas International.

On the 24–25 October 2018, the *eighth study visit* was provided in Malmö, Sweden, showing dossier selection (*phase 3*). The visit had participating state officials from Estonia, Italy, Netherlands, Romania, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

EU-FRANK offered a *ninth study visit* on the 11–15 March 2019 to Nairobi and Kakuma, Kenya. Canada and the United States of America hosted this study visit and displayed *phases 2–4* of the resettlement process. Participating state officials from Estonia, Netherlands, Romania, Sweden, United Kingdom, and representatives from EASO, IOM and UNHCR took part.

The *tenth study visit* was hosted by Germany presenting their selection mission (*phases 2–3*) to Amman, Jordan, on 14–15 August 2019. During this activity, state officials from Canada, Lithuania, Norway, Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, Italy and the United Kingdom were present.

### **Small-scale exchanges**

The small-scale exchange was used twice to *gain critical information* responding to direct requests from Portugal. The first small-scale exchange was conducted when Portugal visited Germany on 10 April 2018. The aim was to learn about local procedures, service delivery and logistics and to gain knowledge about key contacts to be able to perform resettlement missions to Egypt. The second small-scale exchange was completed when Portugal visited France on 17 October 2019. The aim was for Portugal to increase their knowledge and understanding of how to match resettled refugees for placement. Matching was performed based on the specific learning needs of Portugal.

In Component 4, small scale exchanges were used both during smaller thematic workshops, as well as bilaterally between two or more states to exchange operational information. One such example was between Finland and Germany who exchanged operational information in connection to selection missions to Niger as well as Finland and Switzerland who exchanged information on the same topic.

### **Thematic workshops**

#### ***Head of mission, Brussels September 2018***

This meeting focused on operational practicalities that leaders or coordinators of resettlement selection missions face when preparing, delivering and reporting back from field missions. The event hosted by the Mission of Canada to the European Union provided room for exchange between the participants as well as presentations by Iceland, Italy and Norway serving as examples of three different models for conducting selection missions. The meeting offered opportunities for mutual learning, to increase the understanding of challenges connected to resettlement fieldwork, and to identify opportunities for cooperation among states.

#### ***Working group meetings C2 & C3***

- C2 Working Group Meetings (2017–2019)  
Conducted with a group of MS experts from Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden (with EASO, IOM, UNHCR, as reference partners). A component leader from Belgium led the group with the support from the EU-FRANK secretariat. The working group meetings resulted in the development of 15 tools that could easily be shared and used by practitioners.

- 13 C3 Working Group Meetings (2017–2019)  
Conducted with a group of MS experts from Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, Switzerland and Sweden as well as experts from international organisations EASO, ICMC, IOM, and UNHCR. A component leader from Sweden led the group with the support from the EU-FRANK secretariat. The training programme is now part of the European Training Curriculum (ETC).

***Activities Component 4 (assignment mission coordination, support, planning, and scheduling)***

Operational meeting on resettlement (OMR) Amman, Jordan, January 2019  
Bilateral experience exchanges between states

First workshop in the selection mission experience exchange programme, Stockholm December 2019. The objective of the Selection Mission Experience Exchange Programme and this first workshop was to explore differences and similarities in how European states administer resettlement selection missions and to identify good practices that can increase the quality and efficiency of mission leaders' work.

Thematic workshops in the selection mission experience exchange programme (online)

- Ways to approach integration aspects in the selection process, a Swiss example, April 2020  
For participants to learn about different perspectives on how to approach integration in the selection process.
- Remote interviewing in cooperation with EASO, May 2020  
The workshop aimed to assess possible mitigation measures during the current pandemic. In addition, the technical discussions were the occasion to share more broadly on how working with remote interviews can be integrated in the longer term in the resettlement processes.
- Small scale missions, June 2020  
The workshop offered an opportunity to exchange experiences on how to organise small-scale missions. The focus was on the Bulgarian resettlement programme and how they organise their missions. There was also an opportunity for other states to provide their experiences.
- The set-up of a selection mission team, June 2020  
With a focus on different ways to set up a selection mission and team and they were able to share their reflections on the activities in the programme.