



# SANT'EGIDIO'S HUMANITARIAN CORRIDOR

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## URSULA VON DER LEYEN, PRESIDENT EU COMMISSION:

- In her speech of 16 July 2019 to the European Parliament, Mrs Ursula von der Leyen, president of the EU Commission, mentioned the ‘humanitarian corridors’: “The European Union needs humane borders. We must save, but saving alone is not enough. We must reduce irregular migration, we must fight smugglers and traffickers – it is organised crime – we must preserve the right to asylum and improve the situation of refugees, for example through humanitarian corridors in close cooperation with the UNHCR. We need empathy and decisive action.”

## WHAT ARE THE 'HUMANITARIAN CORRIDORS'?

- AN ANSWER TO THE HUMANITARIAN TRAGEDIES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS AND WAR ZONES (Esp. Syria)
- A CONCRETE PROJECT OF SAFE AND LEGAL PATHWAYS FOR REFUGEES TO COME TO EUROPE AND APPLY FOR ASYLUM (legal basis: art 25 of EC-regulation 810/2009)
- COMPLEMENTARY TO RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS
- SINCE 2015
- FIRST IN ITALY, LATER EXPANDED TO OTHER COUNTRIES (EU and OTHERS)
- FAITH BASED INITIATIVE (Sant'Egidio, Federation of Protestant Churches in Italy, Waldensian Church)
- INITIALLY MAINLY SYRIAN REFUGEES FROM LEBANON (later also from TURKEY, and Eritreans from ETHIOPIA)

# FIRST STEP (IN HOSTING COUNTRY)

- FINDING PARTNERS (Waldensian Church, Protestant Churches, Catholic bishops Conference, Caritas, other faith based organizations, secular organizations) – ECUMENICAL, INTERFAITH, INTERCONVICTIONAL
- NEGOTIATING AN AGREEMENT WITH AUTHORITIES (HOME AFFAIRS, FOREIGN AFFAIRS) WITH THE SIGNING OF AN OFFICIAL PROTOCOL (COLLABORATION BETWEEN PRIVATE SECTOR AND STATE)
  - NUMBER OF REFUGEES INVOLVED
  - ORIGIN OF REFUGEES
  - PROCEDURE
  - HELP FOR INTEGRATION
  - FINANCIAL ASPECTS (PRIVATE SPONSORED INITIATIVE: VISA, TRAVEL COSTS, ACCOMODATION AND FOOD DURING ASYLUM APPLICATION, INTEGRATION ASSISTANCE DURING 1 OR 2 YEARS)

## SECOND STEP (IN COUNTRY OF TRANSITION)

- - IN TRANSITION COUNTRY (LEBANON, ETHIOPIA, TURKEY,...)
- - MEETING INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (mainly UNHCR, local authorities,...)
- - MEETING LOCAL PARTNERS WITH KNOWLEDGE OF HUMANITARIAN SITUATION OF REFUGEES (Faith based, secular, human rights organizations,...)
- - MEETING ELEGIBLE FAMILIES/INDIVIDUALS: at least three interviews, one visit in their place, ...
  - - criteria: vulnerability (minors, health, gender, children, age, belonging to a threatened group; not religion as such ...)
  - - connections with country of destination (family, friends,...)
  - - expectation management (willingness and ability to integrate in new country?)
- - MAKING LIST WITH ELIGIBLE FAMILIES/INDIVIDUALS
- SUBMITTING CANDIDATES TO AUTHORITIES FOR SECURITY CHECK

## THIRD STEP (THE JOURNEY)

- - ONCE THE NAMES HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED, PREPARE THE HUMANITARIAN VISA WITH THE EMBASSY
- - BOOK THE PLANES
- - HELPING TO ORGANIZE THE FAMILIES FOR THE TRAVEL
- - FLIGHT
- - ORGANIZING ARRIVAL IN EU COUNTRY (Welcome Committee, press conference, ...)
- - DISPATCHING FAMILIES TO HOSTS

## FOURTH STEP: WELCOME AND INTEGRATION

- - Host offers (and pays for) first welcome: accommodation, food, health check, schools for children, ...
- - Accompanies the refugees for introduction asylum file
- - After being granted Refugee status (which is sure for almost 100%, timing is unknown), family starts to receive State money and other help from the State
- Host organization continues to sustain family on its way to integration (language courses, education, job,...) for at least 1 or 2 years
- After this time, the family should be ready to be self-reliant, can proceed also to other countries

## RESULTS (2015-2020)

- ITALY: 2 x 1000 REFUGEES FROM LEBANON
- ITALY: 2 x 500 REFUGEES FROM ETHIOPIA
- FRANCE: 2 x 500 REFUGEES FROM LEBANON
- BELGIUM: 1 x 150 REFUGEES FROM LEBANON/TURKEY
- VATICAN CITY, SAN MARINO, ANDORRA: SEVERAL FAMILIES AND INDIVIDUALS FROM LESBOS
  
- UNTIL NOW, MORE THAN 3500 HAVE ARRIVED (BEFORE COVID-19)
- REPLICABLE MODEL: MORE PARTNER, GOVERNMENTS, GROUPS (quid Universities, schools, companies, city administration?)
- INTEGRATION FACTOR IS CRITICAL ASPECT OF THE SUCCESS (further Research is necessary)



# WELCOME CEREMONY AT FIUMICINO AIRPORT

