

Guiding note for preparatory briefings for refugees





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Introduction to this tool

Information presented in this tool is by no means exhaustive but represents a compilation of guidance and practical tips on preparatory briefings for refugees (¹). The objective is to support Member States of the European Union and Associated Countries (EU+) in their operational work with resettlement.

What is the purpose of this tool?

This document provides a template that can be used in briefings with refugees prior to the selection interview. This guiding note can be used in conjunction with the [Practical Guide for Planning and Implementing Selection Missions](#).

Why was it created?

It is a common practice among resettlement states to brief refugees and explain to them what to expect from the resettlement process before the start of the resettlement interview. The content of these briefing sessions differs between states. The length of the briefing can also vary. The time for the delivery of the briefing can also vary. The content of these briefing sessions differs between states as well as the timing for such a brief.

This tool suggests that the briefing for refugees should be held in the morning prior to the start of the selection interview. This is in order to prepare the refugees for the interview in an adequate way and to help reduce the stress induced by waiting

for an interview. This guiding note provides a sample of topics that may be important to highlight in the briefing session.

Who should use this tool?

This tool is intended for the mission staff who plan and conduct information sessions with refugees that are interviewed as part of a selection mission. It could also be of use for preparing for other information or orientation sessions.

Which other training tools and sources can also be used?

This tool should be adapted to national contexts and needs. It is important to consider the timing and method for information delivery, and further reading on these aspects is encouraged.

For more information about what to include in a more in-depth orientation session, please refer to the [Guiding note around preparatory briefings of refugees](#).

(¹) This tool was originally developed within the framework of the *Facilitating Resettlement and Refugee Admission through New Knowledge* (EU-FRANK) project. The project was funded by the European Asylum Migration and Integration Fund lead by the Swedish Migration Agency. As part of the handover process from EU-FRANK, the European Union Agency for Asylum has conducted a quality assurance exercise of the resettlement operational tools developed in this project.





Guiding note for preparatory briefings for refugees

The manuscript below is an example of how a briefing for refugees might be structured. It builds on material shared by different states and should be used as inspiration and guidance. The content should be adjusted to fit the specific national processes and systems. Because these types of briefings are usually provided before the start of the interview, it is important to keep in mind that the refugees may be focused on the interview and may have difficulty in retrieving and remembering what has been communicated to them. Thus, it is important to limit the information and to focus on the most imminent, i.e. the interview itself and the process of selection. This is not the best time to provide detailed information on the country of resettlement. It could, however, be useful to highlight some key messages on the procedure or on the consequences of resettlement (e.g. right to family reunification, etc.).

In light of the above, it is recommended to limit the duration of these types of briefings to a maximum of 30 minutes. During these sessions, refugees should be encouraged to ask questions.

It is recommended to communicate this information verbally and with support from information brochures given to each family/individual, if possible. To make this briefing as efficient as possible, try to organise it in a quiet setting (without small children, if possible) and make sure that the interpreter is well understood.





1. Introduction

I would like to introduce myself and my colleagues from (country).

Today you will be interviewed by a staff member of the (organisation).

The intention of this interview is to assess whether you qualify for possible resettlement to (country of resettlement). We will interview both adults and children, if necessary. Before we start the interviews, we will give you a short description of our mission here in (country of first asylum).

Let me briefly explain what resettlement means:

You are considered by UNHCR to be in a vulnerable situation with little prospect of return to (country of origin) or opportunity to remain in (country of asylum).

..... (country of resettlement) has agreed to accept (number) of refugees to come to... (country) and offer you the necessary protection.

Your case has been submitted to (country of resettlement) by UNHCR. The authorities will decide, based on the interview today, whether you will be accepted to come to (country of resettlement).

If you are selected, you will be transferred to (country of resettlement) and will be allowed to remain there.

You will receive a (type of residence permit), the right to go to school, the right to work, the right to medical care, etc. (to be amended/expanded depending on the law of the country of resettlement).

What will happen today? (If applicable, depending on the national process):

- Your fingerprints will be taken. Fingerprinting means that an image of your fingerprints will be taken, recorded, and used for identification and security screening. This information will be treated with confidentiality. Please stay in the waiting room during the day as someone will call you in for the interview. If you want to be resettled, fingerprinting is obligatory. Passport photographs may also be taken.
- You will be interviewed today.
- You will receive information about the country of resettlement (cultural orientation).
- You will apply for/be processed for a visa (or other relevant formal arrangements).





2. The selection interview

This interview is crucial for the selection process. You must present all important documents for the interview. Bring originals and copies. This includes, for example, (name most important / all relevant documents, see annex for examples). Bring a list of all addresses and phone numbers of any family members living in the resettlement country.

Besides the staff member of the (name of the organisation), an interpreter will also be present during this interview. This interpreter is a neutral intermediary who is only responsible for translating the questions and your answers. The interpreter has no influence at all on the selection process. If you do not understand a question or if you have any problems with the translation, you must indicate this to the person who is interviewing you during the interview.

Whenever you need a break during the interview, you can always ask for one. In principle, adults will be interviewed individually, but if your case requires it, you could also be interviewed briefly together. We would ask that you leave your children in the waiting area where childcare will be provided.

We have already received information on your case from UNHCR. During the interview, we will ask you some additional questions and you will get the opportunity to add to or modify this information.

It is important that you tell the truth during the entire interview and that you do not withhold any information. It is not possible to modify things later. It is also important that you are completely honest and as comprehensive as possible with regard to your family composition. This is because the information provided by you during the interview about your family composition will be the grounds for a possible resettlement of these family members. Only the members of your family who are mentioned in your file, or who are mentioned by you during this selection interview, and who are living with you at this moment will possibly be eligible for resettlement with you. It is important that you provide information about your family composition in order to speed up the process of family reunification to

..... (country of resettlement). The information you give us will be treated with strict confidentiality. The information will not be given to your country of origin. However, in view of maintaining public order and the safety in (country of resettlement), certain elements of this information can be passed on to the authorities in (country of resettlement).

If applicable, at the end of the interview, we will ask you to sign a document in which you declare:

- that you have told the full truth;
- that you are aware of the fact that the intention of this interview is possible resettlement to (country of resettlement);
- that you have understood all the questions during the interview and that you have had the opportunity to add information at the end;





- that you understand that some elements from the information about you can be passed on to the
- authorities in (country of resettlement);
- you agree that fingerprints and/or passport photographs will be taken and will be verified in (country of resettlement) databases.

3. The medical examination

Within the framework of your application for resettlement, medical staff will carry out medical examinations during the course of this week. This is a general examination of your medical situation to determine if you have any specific needs that would need to be considered if you are resettled to

..... (country of resettlement). It is therefore important that you give your full cooperation for this medical examination. This will allow the authorities in (country of resettlement) in charge of your reception to make the necessary preparations to organise your reception under optimal conditions and with the necessary medical services.

This examination will not influence the decision in your resettlement case. The fact that you have had a medical examination does not necessarily mean that you will indeed be resettled to (country of resettlement). Your medical data will be treated with strict confidentiality by the medical staff who will examine you.

4. The decision

A decision in your case will be taken by the relevant authorities of the resettling state once the resettlement case and the supporting documents has been processed fully.

As soon as the (country of resettlement) authorities have made a decision, this decision will be sent to UNHCR in writing. UNHCR will then inform you of the decision concerning your case.

You will be resettled to (country of resettlement) if (country of resettlement) considers you to be a refugee and no new information surfaces prior to your departure to (country of resettlement) that indicates that you have not told the truth to the (country of resettlement) authorities. We will use the information gathered by UNHCR to make a decision, but UNHCR has no influence on the final decision.

The transfer to (country of resettlement) may happen in smaller groups for operational reasons, potentially with different departure dates.





5. The pre-departure orientation mission

During this process you will learn about life in (country of resettlement) and you will be able to ask any questions you like.

6. Other issues of importance

Family reunification: only core family members have the right for family reunification, (husband/wife, minor children) and not sisters/brothers/parents.

If you are accepted for resettlement, it means that you will live in (country of resettlement), and you will not be able to move to another country.

- For example, if you have family in another country you will be able to visit them but not to go and live with them.
- Right to travel: if you have obtained 'refugee status' you will be considered at risk of persecution in your home country and will not be allowed to travel there.





Annex – Examples of documents to ask for

Documentation requirements may differ between states and must be verified by the responsible resettlement authority/mission. You may want to mention/list all required documents in the briefing, or only give a few examples to provide guidance to the refugees on what kind of documents they should present.

- The following documents are typically required:
- Passport or travel document (including expired travel documents)
- Identity documents (national or temporary ID)
- Family booklet, marriage license, divorce documents, adoption documents, birth certificate, death certificates (if relevant to the persecution claim)
- Military booklet, police/military summoning letters
- Religious documents
- Employment documents
- Medical documents (findings and prescriptions), medical form with a due date in case of pregnancy, vaccination cards



