



CEB – OECD HIGH-LEVEL SEMINAR

“THE REFUGEE CRISIS: CHALLENGES AND RESPONSES FOR SOCIAL INVESTMENT”

Paris, 17 May 2016

Final programme

1. Background

In 2015, more than 1.1 million persons sought asylum in OECD-Europe – the highest number ever recorded. Since then, the ongoing refugee crisis has been pushed to the top of Europe's political and policy agenda. In the face of this massive influx, immediate responses are needed from top political level down to hands-on level, before long-term solutions can be found for the settlement and integration of refugees in accordance with humanitarian standards.

Hosting communities are facing a range of challenges in responding to the current humanitarian crisis and have different histories with respect to asylum-seekers and refugees. Some have a long tradition of hosting large numbers of asylum-seekers and refugees, and have, over many years, developed integrated systems to provide support to them. While these communities are certainly better placed to manage the required response, they are still experiencing difficulties in adapting and scaling up their social infrastructure (housing, health, education, etc.) to respond to the increased demands. The visible pressures that the established social infrastructure systems and associated programmes are enduring reveal their weaknesses and shortcomings.

These difficulties are even greater for those countries and communities that have not traditionally hosted large numbers of asylum-seekers and refugees and, therefore, lack experience in dealing with such situations. Some of these have been typically perceived as “transit” areas for people on the move. In these locations, it is important to quickly establish basic and efficient reception facilities so as to offer dignified living conditions.

2. Synergies between the co-organisers of the seminar

The Council of Europe Development Bank (CEB) has longstanding experience in financing projects in the field of migration and migrant integration and can bring practical evidence from operational experience to this seminar. In effect, the Bank was set up in 1956 as a “Resettlement Fund” with a mandate to tackle the problems of refugees and persons displaced during the Second World War and its aftermath. Today, sixty years later, improving the situation of refugees and migrants is still very much central to the CEB's work. As a first response to the massive influx of refugees into Europe, the CEB created a new grant facility, named the Migrant and Refugee Fund (MRF), to assist affected CEB member states in setting up and operating reception and transit centres.

The OECD, in its turn, has longstanding experience in comparative analysis and policy advice in the field of migration and integration, including on refugees, with a specific focus on the economic and social aspects. Through its numerous country studies and related work on integration, it has gained significant expertise on the different challenges posed and policies in place.

3. The objective of the seminar

The CEB works in most of the main European receiving countries, which are also OECD members, as well as in other transit countries. The resulting different perspectives regarding challenges and policy responses will be discussed at the seminar, with a view to coming forward with priority actions at regional and local level.

This seminar will also be a welcome opportunity to explore and further develop synergies between the two organising institutions (CEB and OECD).

4. Timing, venue and participation

The half-day event will take place on 17 May 2016 at the CEB's premises, in Paris. Fifty high-level participants from OECD and CEB member countries are expected to attend.

8:30-9:00	Registration
9:00-9:15	Welcome addresses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rolf Wenzel, Governor, CEB - Angel Gurría, Secretary-General, OECD
9:15-9:30	Opening statement by Dominique Versini, Deputy Mayor of Paris in charge of solidarity, family, children, child protection, social inclusion and elderly people
9:30-10:00	Setting the scene - The refugee crisis and the need for social investment
	<p><i>This session will provide an overview of recent developments with respect to the European refugee crisis and the challenges it raises in terms of access to education, labour markets, housing and public services.</i></p> <p>Presentations by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stefano Scarpetta, Director for Employment, Labour and Social Affairs, OECD - Carlo Monticelli, Vice-Governor, CEB
10:00-11:15	Session I - Challenges for social infrastructure : some local examples
	<p><i>This session will discuss some concrete local challenges on reception and integration systems posed by the refugee crisis and highlight specific projects financed by the CEB.</i></p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Liane Buchholz, Executive Managing Director, Association of German Public Banks, Germany - Michele Dau, Secretary-General of the CNEL (National Council for Economy and Labour), Italy - Osmund Kaldheim, Chief Administrative Officer in Drammen municipality, Norway - Erdem Vardar, Director, Yuva Association, Turkey <p>Moderator: Eugenio Ambrosi, Regional Director for the EU, Norway and Switzerland, IOM</p>
11:15-11:30	Coffee break
11:30-12:45	Session II - Policy responses
	<p><i>This session will discuss local, national and European policy responses to overcome the challenges for social infrastructure posed by the refugee crisis, both in terms of initial reception and in terms of longer-term investment.</i></p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Alain Scriban, Refugee crisis coordinator, European Commission - Raphaël Sodini, Director of asylum, Ministry of the Interior, France - Michail Kosmidis, Head of Migration Policy Unit, Secretariat General for Migration Policy of the Ministry of Interior & Administrative Reconstruction, Greece - Metin Çorabatir, President of IGAM (Research Centre on Asylum and Migration), Turkey <p>Moderator: Ralf Gruenert, Representative to France, UNHCR</p>
12:45-13:00	Concluding remarks by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gabriela Ramos, Special Counsellor to the Secretary-General and Chief of Staff, OECD - Carlo Monticelli, Vice-Governor, CEB
13:00-14:30	Lunch hosted by the CEB