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# FACT SHEET **ADDITIONALITY**



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churches' commission for migrants in europe

# SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS

- Additionality in complementary pathways is defined in multiple ways, including additional places or resources for refugee protection, additional actors being involved, additional elements of support being provided or additional groups of refugees profiting from them.
- The importance of additionality is linked to concerns that complementary pathways might politically and practically be used to undermine the right to asylum or the existing state welfare system.
- Examples of promising practice on additionality include: additional places and programmes (e.g. humanitarian corridors), additional offers of support (through mentoring e.g. the NeST project) or additional target groups among refugees (e.g. “academic/university” corridors)

## WHAT IS ADDITIONALITY?

While widely discussed among civil society actors, additionality in the context of complementary pathways has not *a priori* clearly been defined. For UNHCR, the notion of a pathway being complementary already indicates that it is in addition to other means of obtaining protection, such as asylum or UNHCR referred resettlement programmes<sup>1</sup>. Along these lines, the SAFE project of French Forum Réfugiés outlined “. They shouldn’t eliminate the possibility to request asylum on the territory or at the borders. Furthermore, they should be additional to resettlement, and should not compromise States’ commitments.”<sup>2</sup>

Similarly, the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) writes “We advocate that the new and diverse protection and integration opportunities offered by complementary pathways are additional to all current and future resettlement commitments (the principle of ‘additionality’). Those shall not affect that adequate reception standards and safeguards are upheld for asylum seekers.”<sup>3</sup>

While these two contributions clearly underline an understanding of additionality seeing it as an additional mechanism and process, both practically and in legal terms, Dr Nikolas Feith Tan at the CCME conference on community sponsorship in December 2021 added another element. For him, the additionality included the notion that sponsorship, at least, would (in principle) be additional to state resettlement quotas, or start out within state quotas but over time become additional.<sup>4</sup> If true, additionality would include an increase in places available for safe pathways into protection.

While most debates focus on the two aforementioned aspects, a third type of additionality could be providing an additional set of supports or accompaniment for persons in need of international protection – usually in the phase of settlement and integration e.g through mentoring/“buddy” programs..

A last aspect which is common to all the aforementioned points is the hope or ambition to mobilise additional resources. That may first and foremost refer to the resource of time, as individuals or groups not previously involved in refugee support come to do so. In some cases, it might extend to financial resources – humanitarian corridors in Italy, for example, have attracted very considerable funding by the “Otto Per Mille” tax allocation program of the Waldensian and Methodist Church in Italy.

Lastly, additionality might refer to reaching out to/including additional groups of persons in need of international protection, which so far are not covered. This might include persons with different protection needs, groups with a specific profile, or persons in need of international protection holding different status, indeed while resettlement is a durable solution offered only to refugees<sup>5</sup>, complementary pathways can include also asylum seekers.

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1 Cfr; ex multis: UNHCR – Third Country solutions for refugees: 2030 Roadmap, pag. 9; or <https://www.unhcr.org/what-we-do/build-better-futures/long-term-solutions/complementary-pathways>

2 SAFE – foSter cooperAtion For improving access to protection: Ensuring complementary pathways and private sponsorship as a solution for beneficiaries of the international protection and persons in need of Protection. Position paper, p. 2

3 <https://www.share-network.eu/advocacy-briefing-series>

4 CCME/Oisin Desmond/Deborah Romano : Community sponsorship and churches: between opportunities and challenges, p.2

5 UNHCR – Resettlement Handbook (<https://www.unhcr.org/resettlement-handbook/1-refugee-status-and-resettlement/1-1-refugee-status-as-a-requirement-for-resettlement/>)

# WHY IS ADDITIONALITY IMPORTANT?

Many of the organisations underlining the centrality of additionality do so in view of the current climate in relation to asylum/migration policies as well as discussions on social policy. Claire Rimmer for ECRE calls additionality the “gold standard<sup>6</sup>” of (complementary) pathways.

In the context of asylum policies, discussions on complementary pathways have coincided with efforts of European countries to reduce the number of persons arriving to ask for asylum, the so-called “spontaneous” arrivals. One tendency which could be observed among several governments and political parties was the difference in narratives regarding those arriving “illegally”<sup>7</sup> (in this logic, the “bad ones”) and those who wait in countries of origin or first asylum (the “good ones”). In this cynical logic, praise of/support for – among others – complementary pathways was often connected with plans to create or expand such pathways INSTEAD OF maintaining the fundamental right of asylum<sup>8</sup>. Complementary pathways thus would become an excuse for abolishing asylum. Most civil society actors have in this context strongly insisted that their efforts should not be seen as replacing the right to asylum but rather as additional. This, many feel, would best be expressed by giving a clear legal framework to complementary pathways, in addition to the existing legislation on asylum and other more traditional patterns of refugee protection.

A second concern was the context of the scaling back of the welfare state. Clearly, the situation is very different across Europe. Some countries traditionally have a limited state-run social support system for their own citizens, with important parts of the responsibility for citizens’ welfare in the hands of families, charities and churches. Other countries have traditionally been organised as a welfare state, with almost all aspects of social support being organised by the state and its agencies. In the context of the welfare state being cut back in many countries in order to save/reallocate state expenses, charities and churches in these countries are aware that their services may serve as an excuse for reducing the state’s responsibility. In the area of refugee protection, in the worst case, this might mean that the state internationally shows that it is meeting its obligations in respect of refugee protection, whereas civil society is in reality providing finances for it. Discussions at a CCME conference on sponsorship in 2022 noted: “there is a risk that under certain circumstances, the implementation of these (sponsorship) programs could encourage governments to neglect their duties towards asylum seekers and rely solely on private actors for legal pathways and integration.”<sup>9</sup>

Against this background, additionality has become a criterion to ensure that civil society is not assuming tasks which the state should be fulfilling.

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6 ECRE/Claire Rimmer: Pathways to Protection: Mapping visa schemes and other practices enabling people in need of international protection to reach Europe safely, p. 13

7 Labelling entries to seek asylum without prior authorisation as “illegal” clearly violates the spirit of the UN refugee convention which in Art 31 stipulates: The Contracting States shall not impose penalties, on account of their illegal entry or presence, on refugees who, coming directly from a territory where their life or freedom was threatened in the sense of article 1, enter or are present in their territory without authorization, provided they present themselves without delay to the authorities and show good cause for their illegal entry or presence

8 See very recently the European People’s Party manifesto for the European Parliament election: <https://www.epp.eu/papers/epp-manifesto-2024>

9 CCME/Deborah Romano: Community sponsorship and churches: what’s new , p.17

# PROMISING PRACTICES AND EXAMPLES OF ADDITIONALITY

Clearly, identifying good practices of additionality can in reality be somewhat difficult. All complementary pathways programmes have been creating spaces and/or additional support. However, proving that these are in addition to existing programmes is often difficult and can invite speculation as to what would have happened without them – wouldn't similar projects have been started by the state? What if there is a specific complementary pathway in a country but, for example, no clear resettlement programme in that country?<sup>10</sup>

## Places and resources

Humanitarian corridors, most prominently in Italy and France, are probably the clearest examples. Initiated a decade ago, coalitions of civil society partners (among them COMET lead FCEI) have on the basis of several protocols with state authorities brought in an organised manner several thousand persons in need of protection to safety. Most of them had been stranded after having fled conflicts such as those in Afghanistan, Syria or Sudan, mainly to Italy and France. While some observers note that the corridors operated in an increasingly restrictive context for asylum, it is clear that they have created additional space and did not replace the existing protection systems. Furthermore, they mobilised additional resources, both financially and in terms of persons providing more intensive settlement and integration support to the newly arrived. They have in some cases included persons who might have “fallen through the cracks” of traditional refugee protection systems, as wider eligibility criteria were used. The vitality of the corridor model has recently been underlined by a new protocol signed in the context of COMET in December 2023 between the Italian government and partners including FCEI for a corridor to Italy for persons trapped in Libya or Niger. Other COMET partners have been directly involved in identification, preparation, transportation, reception and post-arrival support.<sup>11</sup> An element which has not yet been satisfactorily solved is the specific, permanent legal basis for the corridors: while several protocols have created an *ad hoc* basis, a separate law on corridors or their inclusion in an existing law would be a clear sign that the corridors will be a long-term additional tool of refugee protection.

## More intensive support/mentoring

Additionality takes a somewhat different character in the German NeST programme. This humanitarian admission programme of the German Federal Government focusses on particularly vulnerable refugees in countries of first asylum and is additional in a different sense. While central parts of reception and economic support are organised in the context of the existing state-run system, intensive mentoring of the particularly vulnerable refugees is the central additional aspect of the programme. Civil society partners, including the COMET partner Protestant Church in Westphalia (EKvW), are responsible for recruiting and forming mentoring groups. These groups offer extra and more intensive tailored support to the refugees with their specific needs. Often support is provided by group members with little or no prior experience in refugee support. One of the focus areas is better participation in social life according to the refugees' abilities and wishes. In this sense, the elements of support are additional, but it also enables helps refugee groups, which would otherwise face enormous difficulties, to have a new start.

## Additional target group and support

Additionality in terms of a specific refugee target group is very clearly expressed in “academic/education/university pathways”, in which the prospects of refugees with academic background play a central role. During the lifetime of the COMET project, COMET partner Forum Réfugiés brought a group of ten students to France to study at the Université Clermont Auvergne and Université Jean Monnet Saint-Etienne. This pilot clearly targeted an additional group with a specific profile, which is often overlooked in refugee support and the project also brought on board an additional institutional actor. Similar projects have been implemented or planned in several countries, albeit often still in the pilot phase.

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<sup>10</sup> Cf: ECRE/Rimmer (footnote 1)

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.cometnetwork.eu/signed-protocol-to-facilitate-the-arrival-of-85-comet-beneficiaries/>

## RESOURCES/FURTHER READING:

- CCME/Oisin Desmond/Deborah Romano : Community sponsorship and churches: between opportunities and challenges, 2021 <https://ccme.eu/storage/app/media/images/reports/report-com-sponsorship-3.pdf>
- CCME/Deborah Romano: Community sponsorship and churches: what ´s new, 2022 <https://ccme.eu/storage/app/media/images/reports/Report-Community-Sponsorship-1.pdf>
- ECRE/Claire Rimmer: Pathways to Protection: Mapping visa schemes and other practices enabling people in need of international protection to reach Europe safely , 2024 [https://ecre.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ECRE-Study\\_Pathways-to-Protection.pdf](https://ecre.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/ECRE-Study_Pathways-to-Protection.pdf)
- ERN/IOM/ICMC: Expanding solutions for refugees: complementary pathways of admission to Europe Strategic Assessment, 2018 <https://www.iom.int/resources/expanding-solutions-refugees-complementary-pathways-admission-europe-strategic-assessment>

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