



# Complementary pathways for the Legal Mobility of Refugees: The Role of Skills, VET and Qualifications

Ioannis N. Katsikis

Expert, Dept. for Learning and Employability, Cedefop

The background of the slide is a collage of images. The top half shows modern buildings with glass facades and balconies, with a blue tint on the left and a yellow tint on the right. The bottom half shows people in various settings, including a person sitting on a ledge and others in a public space, with a blue tint on the left and a yellow tint on the right.

# Matching adult refugees' skills with labour market needs for legal and safe pathways to protection in Europe

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# Agenda

## Introduction

- Welcome and introduction to the project

## Review the rationale and concept(s) of complementary pathways

- Traditional solutions vs complementary pathways
- Humanitarian protection vs labour mobility
- Skill-based complementary pathway to protection

## Cedefop's work on complementary pathways

- Project aims and structure
- Design and steps
- Deliverables

## Summary and next steps

- Q&A on the presentation
- Discussion

# European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training - Cedefop

- Decentralised EU agency
  - Based in Thessaloniki, Greece
  - Supports development of European vocational education and training (VET) policies and contributes to their implementation.
- 
- Dpt. for Learning and Employability
  - Dpt. for Skills and Labour Market
  - Dpt. for VET Systems and Institutions
  - [www.cedefop.europa.eu/](http://www.cedefop.europa.eu/)



## Basic Facts (UNHCR, 2017)

- 68.5 million forced displaced worldwide
- 40 million internal displaced
- 25.4 million refugees
- 85% of refugees are hosted in developing regions
- Around 600.000 people ask for asylum in the EU per year around 1% of EU population

20.2 million  
refugees worldwide  
in mid 2018

## SOLUTIONS FOR REFUGEES



Once the situation in the country of origin is considered to be safe, refugees may decide voluntarily to return home. 667,000 refugees (i.e. around 3% of all refugees) did so in 2017 through organised or spontaneous repatriation.

REPATRIATION

DURABLE SOLUTIONS



Local integration happens when refugees settle permanently in the country of asylum. While it is not entirely clear how many refugees benefit from local integration, it is the solution most widely accessible for refugees.

LOCAL INTEGRATION



Resettlement is the voluntary transfer of refugees from one country in which they sought refuge to another country that has agreed to admit them. A tiny fraction of refugees are resettled each year: in 2017 it was only 67,000 refugees (i.e. around 0.3% of refugees worldwide).

RESETTLEMENT

Which solutions are there for refugees?

Traditional solutions

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## COMPLEMENTARY PATHWAYS

HUMANITARIAN

HUMANITARIAN ADMISSION

Humanitarian admission programmes are special programs of states to allow persons with a certain profile a legal access to protection



PRIVATE SPONSORSHIP

Sponsors (individuals, groups, corporations and other entities) are encouraged and empowered to provide a safe and legal means for refugees to reach protection and take over (some) responsibilities for refugees' integration.



OTHER PATHWAYS

There is no concluding number of complementary pathways. Therefore, additional pathways are conceivable that e.g. make use of humanitarian visas or humanitarian corridors.



NON-HUMANITARIAN

LABOUR MOBILITY

Labour market opportunities can be used by refugees as a form of legal pathway to protection, offering win-win-situations for refugees receiving protection and employment, and for local communities in the host countries gaining human capital.



STUDENT MOBILITY

Student visas or scholarships can be used to grant refugees the possibility to live in a safe country, and at the same time pursuing their education, an investment in human capital valuable for the reconstruction of countries in crisis.



FAMILY REUNIFICATION

In the EU, refugees enjoy a right to facilitated access to family reunification compared to other migrants. Adult children and other relatives are usually not covered by family reunification entitlements.



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vs

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Skills-based complementary pathways combine humanitarian protection with labour mobility.

Demographic change, aging population in many EU Member States are obstacles to the growth of European economies. Labour and skills shortages are to be assessed regionally, as they differ across regions and industries.

Refugees are not only vulnerable recipients of protection but possess a variety of skills and can contribute economically to host societies as workers, innovators, entrepreneurs, taxpayers, consumers and investors.

Pre-departure (e.g. orientation programmes) and post-arrival measures (e.g. skills training) can be considered key elements of an initiative implementing a skills-based pathway to protection.

SKILLS ASSESSMENT

SKILLS TRAINING & EDUCATION

SKILLS DEMAND



# Humanitarian protection vs labour mobility

## Past examples

- Matching skill of refugees with labour market demand was a key to address displacement in the after WWII period
  - *The International Refugee Organization (IRO) was tasked with “refugee problem” and in view of lacking prospects for return or local integration, resettled refugees according to needed skill in Europe, Australia and North + South America (Karatani 2005)*

## Present debates

- **UN Global Compact on Refugees**
  - recital 95 on Complementary Pathways for Admission: “Contributions will be sought from States (...) to facilitate (...) labour mobility opportunities for refugees, including through the identification of refugees with skills that are needed in third countries. “
- **EU reference Towards a Reform of the Common European Asylum System**
  - “making existing regular admission schemes for general categories such as students, researchers or workers, more accessible to refugees, (...)”

# Objectives for a complementary pathway

- Show of solidarity and shared responsibility
- Create complementarity to low numbers of resettlement
- Support a durable solution for people in need
- Create advantage for refugees as well as for sending and receiving countries
- Create a purposeful distribution of beneficiaries of International Protection
- Create an incentive for avoiding secondary movements
- Fulfill labor market needs of the host countries
- Allow beneficiaries to better integrate in the local societies
- Allow beneficiaries to use their skills and qualifications

# Cedefop's work on complementary pathways

- **Aim:** create labour mobility opportunities for refugees to legally move from first asylum countries to third countries based on their skills and the labour market needs in latter countries
- **Central element:** matching skills and the labour market needs
- **Starting point for admission:** specific labour market needs (skill-demand approach)
- **Framework of implementation:** country level
  
- **Advisory group:** European social partners, representatives of international organizations, (UNHCR, IOM, ) and experts from the academia
- **Collaboration** with the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD).

# Introduction to the project: Steps

- Step 1: Creating a conceptual framework (concluded)
  - A theoretical and legal framework
  - 4 country reports on **complementary pathways**: Canada, Norway, Germany, The Netherlands
  - 8 Case studies from **EU relocation countries**: Greece, Italy, Ireland, Finland, The Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Portugal
- Step 2: Testing the conceptual framework in a number of European countries
  - and, possibly, developing a country-specific skill-based complementary pathway (ongoing)
  - Country visits
- Step 3: Piloting the pathway
  - Possibly in 2020

# Step 2: Developing a country-specific skill-based complementary pathway

## We seek cooperation with various stakeholders

- Employer organisations and individual employers
- National immigration and asylum authorities
- National public employment agencies
- International and national NGOs
- International organisations (UNHCR, IOM, EC, etc)

## Benefits

1. **Countries** using skill-based complementary pathways will be meeting existing and future skill gaps and also help address a pressing need for fairly shared responsibility,
2. **Refugees** would be offered safe and lawful pathways to protection, and opportunities to realise their potential and expand their skill.

# What is a VET, skill & qualifications based pathway mechanism?

An opportunity based pathway for legal mobility for persons in need of international protection

- **Focus is on enabling refugees to take up opportunities**
- **Meeting protection needs nevertheless central, but not the core rationale of the mechanism.**

Based on employment opportunities and opportunities for (professional) training

Requires

- Identification of relevant legal admission channels allowing such mobility and getting support from relevant national authorities and other stakeholders in that area
- Identification of a cooperation framework for implementing a VET, skill and qualifications based pathway
- Developing instruments and accompanying measures to implement such a scheme
- Identifying resources needed

# Summary and next steps

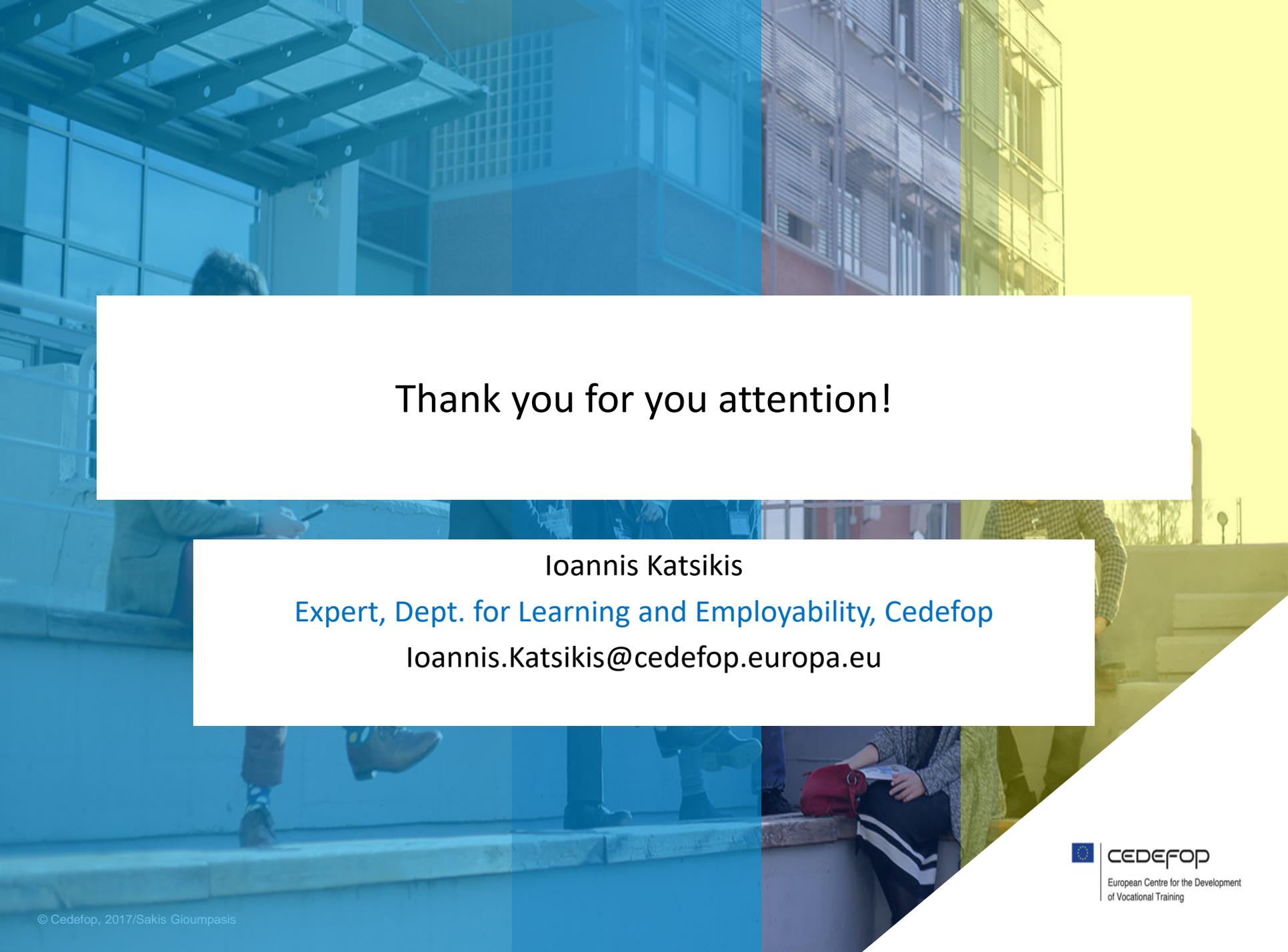
## Approaching sending / receiving countries

- Sweden
  - 9-10 June 2019 / 23 September 2019
- Portugal
  - 18-19 June 2019
- The Netherlands
- Czechia
- Germany
- .....
- Greece / Italy as sending countries

# Q&A on the presentation

From your perspective:

1. What is the potential of such a pathway in your country?
2. Do you see room for involving refugees currently outside of your country to compensate for labour market needs?
3. What are the obstacles in designing and applying such a pathway in the context of your country?
4. Would you further investigate the idea at the level of your organisation?

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Thank you for you attention!

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