

Past Projects

Project Name: Access to Protection

Funder: FAI

Partners: aditus & ASGI

Aim: The aim of the project is that asylum seekers are able to seek protection in Malta, and that they are received with dignity, and provided with the information, assistance and support they need from the moment of their arrival.

This project has the following specific objectives:

- To develop the capacity of JRS Malta to provide information and legal services to asylum seekers, by strengthening the JRS team and developing materials for staff to use in drop-in and outreach sessions, in order to provide a more effective service in the current context of large-scale arrivals;
- To make information about the asylum procedure and legal assistance more available and accessible to asylum seekers, through the direct provision of services and by building the capacity of other agencies to provide these services;
- To advocate for the development of a reception system that is in accordance with Malta's legal obligations, while engaging in strategic litigation to challenge treatment that is a violation of human rights.

This project also aims to address the ever-increasing obstacles refugees face when seeking to access protection. These obstacles include both measures intended to stop asylum seekers from reaching EU territory, and the legal and practical barriers in accessing the protection to which they are entitled once they reach Malta.

We will do this by:

- (1) Direct provision of services (primarily information and legal assistance) to asylum seekers in Malta.
- (2) Strengthening the capacity of agencies working in the sector, by producing and disseminating informational materials for use and providing training.
- (3) Developing strategic partnerships to strengthen local capacity to advocate effectively on issues affecting asylum seekers' access to protection, both nationally and at European level.
- (4) Advocating for the development of a reception system that is in accordance with Malta's legal obligations, with a focus on unaccompanied minors.
- (5) Engaging in strategic litigation, to challenge: the use of arbitrary detention treatment that is a violation of human rights, and systems that fail to live up to Malta's legal obligations.

Project Name: CHANGE

Funder: Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Partners: Lead Partner – JRS Europe

Aim: This project seeks to make meaningful connections between refugees and young people. Through a 6-stage educational course facilitated by teachers, students learn how to think critically and to make their own value judgements about topics of migration and society. By giving students meaningful knowledge, experiences, encounters, and new perspectives, CHANGE seeks to form young people who are ready to face and embody their role in building a society in which everyone is welcome and has the opportunity to participate.

CHANGE provides a platform for refugees to share their stories directly with students, enabling refugees to speak in classrooms, and to share their experience of living in Europe, as well as their hopes and dreams for the future. Through this platform, CHANGE will provide an opportunity for encounter between refugees and young people, with the goal to foster a sense of understanding and connection. The project also seeks to encourage students to get more involved through its student ambassador programme, and to engage in a minimum of two concrete actions, such as small-scale events, campaigns or service projects, to share what they have learned with their school or local communities.

Project Name: Project to support asylum seekers to attain economic self-sufficiency and earn their living with dignity

Funder: Julia Taft Refugee Fund (US Embassy)

Partners: None

Aim: This project builds on the foundations of the current employment program being implemented by JRS Malta, which is working to address the barriers faced by asylum seekers to find and retain legal and stable employment. This project will further extend the employment services currently being provided, while also strengthening the network of stakeholders we have brought together in the field of employment, in the process of building an effective system of support for refugees and asylum seekers seeking fair and steady employment.

This project will also explore the possibility of setting up cooperatives, and will work on developing training tools on the necessary legal, administrative, and educational requirements of running a co-operative, as a first step towards potentially setting up these structures at a later date.

The term asylum seeker is here used in its broadest sense to refer to all who have been through the asylum procedure, regardless of the outcome. It therefore includes applicants for asylum who are awaiting the outcome of their asylum application, beneficiaries of national protection (THP, THPN and SRA) and international protection (refugee status and subsidiary protection), and rejected asylum seekers with tolerated stay, who have a right to work in Malta.

Project Name: Learning human stories: Countering misinformation and fostering inclusion and citizenship

Funder: The Active Citizens Fund 2014-2021

Partners: No formal partners, but liaising with the Justice and Peace Commission and the Emigrants' Commission

Aim: The project aims to counter misinformation, foster social inclusion through encounter, and promote active citizenship by engaging members of local communities to think critically about forced migration, creating spaces for dialogue and encounter with refugees, and supporting members of local communities to become agents of change within their localities. We will be working with the Justice and Peace Commission of the diocese to engage parishes and local communities in the organisation of awareness-raising programmes.

Project Name: Combating poverty by facilitating asylum seekers' access to dignified employment and basic services

Funder: European Structural and Investment Funds – ESF Call 4

Partners: None

Aim: This project aims to ensure that asylum seekers are able to access the support and services they need to actively participate in the labour market and attain self-sufficiency, so that they are able to live with dignity and realise their potential. It was developed in response to the obstacles asylum seekers face when seeking to access basic services, achieve self-sufficiency, and find and retain legal and stable employment.

We will do this by:

- Consolidating and strengthening JRS Malta's basic integration support services, by bringing them together into one coordinated service and increasing our capacity to provide these services in a more consistent and systematic manner, putting in place the necessary structures to make the service more sustainable.
- Improving the coordination and standardising the content of the NGO integration support services that are currently provided, by further developing and formalising the NGO network that currently exists, with a view to working together to coordinate and improve our services, through training and sharing of resources.
- Setting up a service hub, in an accessible, welcoming space in a central location where asylum seekers can come for services or support, where we can provide multiple services concurrently in a safe environment. We will go beyond the provision of basic services with a view to:
- Working to combat abuse and discrimination at the workplace, through sustained advocacy for improved protection and support for migrant workers generally, and for the creation of a more inclusive culture at the workplace, in collaboration with migrant organisations, trade unions, civil society actors, and employers and employers' associations.
- Exploring the possibility of setting up cooperatives to understand whether this is indeed a viable option for at least some asylum seekers, by identifying the legal, administrative and educational requirements for asylum seekers to set up a cooperative, and working with a group of beneficiaries to set up, register, and operate their own co-operative as a pilot project.

Throughout the duration of the project we will continue to provide targeted services, with a view to supporting individual asylum seekers to meet their basic needs for food, shelter and support, and to achieve their more long term goal to integrate into society and achieve self-sufficiency.

Project Name: Educational Support Programme 2020-2021

Funder: 1Run + UNHCR

Partners: KOPIN

Aim: The Educational Support Programme (ESP) 2020-2021, funded through the 1RUN initiative with the support of UNHCR, aims at ensuring that refugees and asylum seekers in Malta are provided with the personalised support they require to pursue their education.

Previously known as the Integration Priority Track (IPT), the programme was initially developed through Project Integrated, a UNHCR-funded project aimed at promoting the inclusion of refugees. In 2020-2021 the programme will be implemented by JRS Malta and Kopin, in collaboration with Integra and Aditus Foundation, thanks to funds from the 1Run initiative.

The programme offers a number of packages, designed as 'stepping stones', aimed at enabling children, young people and adults to continue and complete secondary education or sixth form, access Higher Educational institutions or improve their employability. The support provided could include: the provision of educational hardware or software (tablets, laptops, educational and vocational software) and/or educational materials, and the payment for courses and training fees. Other related costs may be considered as required. Selected individuals will be followed up by programme staff, who will monitor progress and provide the necessary support.

Project Name: Acting on the Margins: Arts as Social Sculpture (AMASS)

Funder: Horizon 2020

Partners: Lead partner – University of Malta

Aim: The project is a research study that examines the social impact of arts on various societal challenges, by focusing on the participation of immigrants in the arts, and raising awareness about social issues pertaining to immigrants in Malta. Our role is to assist with the recruitment of participants for a series of art workshops, to take place in the art studio of the University of Malta.

The workshops will focus on training of the participants in artistic techniques required for screen printing, photography and fashion. JRS will assist in pre- and post-project structured individual interviews, and a focus group with the project participants. JRS will also assist in the recruitment of local participants that will use the items made in the workshops, and will assist in structured individual interviews with these local participants.

Project Name: FA.B! Family based care for children in migration

Funder: AMIF

Partners: AWAS (2nd tier partner)

Aim: FA.B! Family Based care for children in migration is a project aimed at supporting the improvement and expansion of alternative family-based care system for unaccompanied migrant children in 5 European frontline Mediterranean Countries: Italy, Greece, Spain, Malta and Cyprus. Family based care is commonly recognized as the best way to facilitate integration and promote the well-being of children, yet only a minority of unaccompanied migrant children benefit from foster-based care. FA.B! focuses on addressing this gap through awareness and advocacy, intervening on the critical aspects of the process of establishing a foster based care system as an alternative to reception centres. FA.B! lines of action are:

- (1) transfer of know-how and instruments for the implementation of foster-based practices and tailored services;
- (2) enhancement of competences of key actors and professionals;
- (3) awareness-raising among civil society and stakeholders;
- (4) qualification of local systems.

Under this project JRS, as the national partner for Malta, will be coordinating field visits, workshops and training for various professionals, to share knowledge and learn about good practices and methodology in this area. Locally, in light of the recent Minor Protection Act 2019, it provides an opportune moment to bring stakeholders from different sectors and fields together, and consider how the recent law may impact decisions on quality care for unaccompanied minors.