



LIVELIHOODS REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides a comprehensive review of JRS Europe's sustainable **Livelihoods Project**, which aims to strengthen the resilience and socio-economic integration of refugees, asylum seekers, and other vulnerable migrants. Drawing on the lived experiences of forcibly displaced people, stakeholders, private-sector partners, and JRS staff, highlights the impact of existing programs while identifying innovative practices for future livelihood interventions.

Supported by the Linsi Foundation, JRS Europe's innovative Livelihoods Project spans eight countries: **Romania, Portugal, Croatia, Greece, Poland, Malta, France, and Germany**. This multi-step approach seeks to enhance program quality and empower migrants and refugees by mapping current services and fostering knowledge exchange. By sharing lessons learned and strengthening partnerships, JRS Europe reaffirms its commitment to effective, participant-centered livelihoods programming.



A Multi-Step Approach to Livelihood Empowerment

JRS's Livelihoods Project empowers refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants by strengthening their socio-economic resilience through targeted, evidence-based interventions. The initiative maps and evaluates existing livelihood programs across eight countries to capture success stories, identify gaps, and tailor sustainable improvements. Additionally, four participant-driven surveys - engaging refugees and migrants, JRS staff, local NGOs and community groups, and private-sector partners - ensure an inclusive, community-driven approach that informs future partnerships and enhances local support. This comprehensive strategy fosters collaborative, context-specific solutions that empower communities and drive lasting change across JRS Europe.

Expanding Livelihood Support Across Europe

JRS Europe's Livelihoods Project is working to empower and give back agency to refugees, asylum seekers, and vulnerable migrants by enhancing socio-economic opportunities through evidence-based, humanitarian interventions. Drawing on self-assessment insights, the project promotes integration through language and skills training, builds strategic partnerships with private, nonprofit, and local organizations, and encourages knowledge sharing across country offices. The comprehensive report covering Portugal, Romania, Malta, Poland, Croatia, France, and Germany highlights the transformative impact of private-sector engagement, collaborative stakeholder efforts, and the invaluable voices of beneficiaries and staff. These findings provide a clear roadmap for advancing socio-economic integration and empowerment across Europe.

The Importance of Social Inclusion in the Future of Europe: Empowering Refugees and Migrants in Europe



Employment & Education Access for Refugees & Migrants in Europe

The European labor market remains complex for refugees and migrants seeking work and education. While skill shortages in key areas, and technology create openings, systemic barriers and personal challenges often impede integration. Refugees frequently struggle to convert their credentials into meaningful employment, hampered by unrecognized qualifications, legal restrictions, and discrimination.

Legal hurdles, unrecognized foreign qualifications, and insufficient language training further restrict access to formal employment. Discrimination—based on nationality, ethnicity, or religion—compounds these challenges, shaping a complex labor landscape. Refugee and migrant women often face lower integration outcomes due to traditional gender roles, limited childcare, and compounded discrimination. The influx of Ukrainian refugees—primarily women with children—highlights the urgent need for targeted support to balance work and family responsibilities. By addressing these barriers, donors can promote self-sufficiency, dignity, and meaningful participation in European labor markets, ultimately fostering sustainable integration.



The Importance of Social Inclusion in the Future of Europe

Social inclusion is vital for a stable, prosperous, and resilient Europe, making it both a moral imperative and a strategic priority. By embracing their diverse talents, Europe benefits from enriched cultural perspectives, strengthened social cohesion, and a bolstered workforce. Through inclusive policies that tap into varied skills, Europe can stimulate economic growth, drive innovation, and reinforce communal solidarity.

Achieving this vision requires a donor-supported, multi-faceted approach that dismantles systemic barriers and nurtures equal opportunities for all. Key strategies include addressing discrimination, promoting language and vocational training, and fostering intercultural dialogue to unite communities. Such initiatives align with JRS Europe's commitment to safeguarding dignity, encouraging holistic integration, and building a society rooted in solidarity and hospitality.

The Importance of Social Inclusion in the Future of Europe: Empowering Refugees and Migrants in Europe

Message from Alberto Ares SJ, JRS Europe Director

The Importance of Livelihood Initiatives for Socio-Economic Integration



Livelihood initiatives are essential for promoting self-reliance, economic resilience, and social cohesion among refugees, migrants, and asylum seekers across Europe. Many of these programs serve both refugees and local populations, recognizing that refugees often reside in underdeveloped areas where communities also face economic challenges. This inclusive approach reduces tensions and fosters social harmony.

European countries employ varied strategies to refugee integration. Germany offers early integration courses for asylum seekers with good prospects, Sweden implements fast-track programs for those with in-demand skills, and Austria emphasizes “qualified” labor market integration, particularly for mid-skilled jobs requiring formal vocational credentials.

JRS Europe’s Commitment to Empowerment

JRS Europe is dedicated to empowering refugees and migrants through a holistic approach centered on skills development, opportunity creation, and meaningful socio-economic integration. Grounded in compassion, solidarity, and social justice, these efforts span diverse programs and initiatives across the continent.

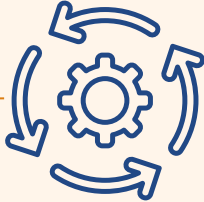
JRS Europe’s support includes comprehensive livelihood assistance— while advocating for inclusive and equitable-based policies. Through public awareness campaigns, educational programs, and stakeholder partnerships, JRS Europe combats discrimination and fosters welcoming communities. Additionally, the organization promotes intercultural dialogue and shared experiences among our beneficiaries. Recognizing women’s unique challenges, JRS Europe prioritizes gender-sensitive programming. Through ongoing efforts, JRS Europe strives for a society where everyone, regardless of background, can thrive and reach their full potential.

JRS Europe: A Hospitality-Driven Model for Reception

JRS Europe advocates for humane, community based reception instead of large, isolated facilities that can resemble detention and limit integration. Recent EU policies emphasizing border control reinforce these models, fostering dependency and stigma while reducing protection prospects. In contrast, JRS’s Hospitality-Driven Reception principles call for privacy, small-scale settings, dignity, comprehensive support, tailored approaches, and community integration. By offering private accommodations, local connections, and legal aid, JRS ensures newcomers are welcomed with dignity. Drawing on firsthand experience, JRS underscores that integration begins the moment people arrive, urging donors and stakeholders to invest in these proven models for lasting impact.

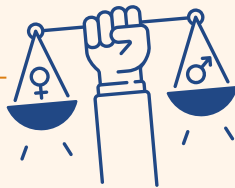
Summary of the Livelihood Report

Methodology



Drawing on qualitative and quantitative data from eight JRS Country Offices, this report examines program impacts, challenges, and best practices. Structured surveys, focus groups, and stakeholder engagement ensured inclusive, gender-disaggregated insights and context-specific analysis.

Gender Dynamics and Persistent Barriers



Initiatives like JRS Greece's Women Day Center foster female empowerment for single mothers and survivors of gender-based violence aged 26 to 45. Despite targeted support, language barriers, childcare gaps, legal uncertainties, and discrimination persist, hindering full workforce integration.

Focus Areas and Achievements



JRS livelihood programs prioritize language, vocational, and cultural orientation training, along with job readiness, aligning with local labor market needs and participant backgrounds. Success stories include JRS Portugal's "Corações que Cuidam," achieving 85% employment for women in elderly care, and JRS Malta's private-sector partnerships, creating jobs for 128 beneficiaries.

Summary of the Livelihood Report

JRS Europe Country Highlights

PT Vocational certifications and stakeholder collaboration to address elderly care gaps

DE Personalized job-search support, language acquisition, and skill recognition

GR Tailored training and employability workshops for vulnerable women

RO IT, beauty, and entrepreneurship training combined with job fairs and networking

MT Holistic approach integrating vocational training, legal aid, and cultural mediation

Diverse Beneficiary Demographics

Beneficiaries come from Ukraine, Syria, Afghanistan, Somalia, and various African and South Asian countries. In Portugal, 79% are women, while in Germany, 80% are men. Thousands have been reached across eight JRS offices, including 893 in Romania and 525 in Greece.

Conclusion

The report underscores the value of tailored support, robust private-sector partnerships, and holistic service delivery in advancing socio-economic integration for refugees and migrants. While strong outcomes are evident, ongoing challenges highlight the need for continued innovation and advocacy to foster more dignified and sustainable livelihoods across Europe.

JRS Europe General Overview: Livelihood Projects

Survey on JRS Livelihood Intervention

Nine JRS offices—Hungary, Portugal, Greece, Romania, Malta, France, Germany, Croatia, and Poland—contributed to a staff survey on Livelihood programs. JRS Hungary focused on informal adult language training, while JRS Portugal reported three initiatives, including “Corações que Cuidam,” the “Talents and Skills Academy,” and other capacity-building efforts. The remaining offices submitted one or two staff responses each, spanning social work, psychosocial support, project coordination, and fundraising.

All offices emphasize education and skills development, particularly language, communication, and specialized modules (e.g., tourism, health, IT, or care). These interventions strengthen employability and socio-economic resilience by integrating soft skills with vocational training delivered by JRS or external partners. Program durations range from short workshops to multi-year engagements, adapting to diverse contexts and beneficiary needs. In-person instruction predominates, while blended or online methods are also used in Romania, Croatia, and occasionally Portugal.

Adaptation to Local Labor Markets

Each JRS office adapts its curriculum to local labor market needs and participant backgrounds, offering training in elderly care (Portugal), hospitality and language (Greece), and “integration focus” (Romania). Program lengths range from short sessions (1 day to 1 week) to multi-year initiatives (2–3 years or more), though 6–12 months is most common



JRS Europe General Overview: Livelihood Projects



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Participant Demographics

- Most participants are 26–35 years old, though 18–25 and 36–45 cohorts also appear frequently.
- Overall participation often skews female, except in JRS Germany.
- About 2–10% of beneficiaries have disabilities.
- Nearly half the offices focus on at-risk groups —such as single mothers, survivors of gender-based violence, or Ukrainian.
- Educational levels range from primary schooling to incomplete tertiary programs and university degrees.

Legal and Employment Status

One-third of participants have pending asylum claims, another third hold refugee or subsidiary protection, and others possess residence permits or remain in transit.

Work authorization differs by country, with many lacking permissions to seek employment, underscoring the need for legal aid and job-readiness support. Before the JRS programs, nearly four in ten were unemployed, while others held temporary or full-time employment.

JRS Europe General Overview: Livelihood Projects

Adapting and Delivering Livelihood Programs

Following humanitarian best practices, JRS Country Offices adapt livelihood programs to a wide array of linguistic, cultural, and psychosocial needs. Cultural mediators (**Greece, Malta**), holistic support (**Portugal**), personalized plans (**Romania, Croatia**), skill recognition (**Germany, France**), and trauma-informed care (**Poland, Romania**) illustrate JRS's tailored approach.

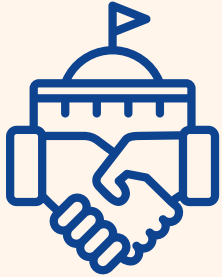
Most offices prioritize paid employment, though some also encourage further education or entrepreneurship. Resource constraints limit the multi-phase Graduation Approach, leading to shorter, direct pathways. About half offer specialized vocational tracks—digital literacy, labor law and cultural adaptation, or mother-tongue translation. With 83% of offices noting reliance on informal work, bridging programs and legal advocacy remain vital. JRS refines partnerships, champions policy reforms, and promotes inclusive, personalized interventions for sustainable socio-economic integration.

Community Engagement and Flexibility

JRS Country Offices adapt and deliver their livelihood programs by including host community members, fostering social cohesion, and reducing potential tensions. Because women participants and multi-person households are common, training schedules often accommodate childcare and domestic responsibilities. JRS staff assist with documentation, clarify local regulations, and liaise with employers to address structural barriers to full-time employment.



JRS Europe Collaboration with the Private Sector



Collaboration with the Private Sector

JRS partners with corporations, faith-based organizations, and NGOs to expand vocational training and job placement opportunities. While these collaborations enhance job prospects and skills development, many beneficiaries still face legal and linguistic hurdles. JRS continues to advocate for policy improvements, cultural inclusion, and capacity-building to achieve durable, dignified livelihood solutions for refugees and migrants across Europe.



JRS Approach to Market Assessments in Europe

Only JRS Portugal and JRS Romania have conducted Market Systems Analysis (MSA) or value-chain assessments, while others rely on local knowledge. JRS Portugal fully adopts “pull” interventions that engage employers. All offices address language, legal, and cultural barriers through training, workshops, and psychosocial support; JRS Malta assists with work permits, and JRS Germany helps navigate bureaucracy. Despite positive outcomes, offices could benefit from broader market analyses and more robust employer engagement to expand formal employment and reduce informal work.



M&E in JRS Livelihood Programs

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is vital for adaptive programming, reinforcing donor confidence. Although only 39% plan end-line evaluations, half do not. Engagement varies: a third involve participants during programs, a fifth before launch, and nearly a third lack formal feedback. Data collection differs from monthly to quarterly. Good practices include end-of-course evaluations and co-created action plans. Strengthening surveys, engagement, and market assessments boosts impact and advocacy.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Croatia



© JRS Croatia

JRS Croatia has developed a comprehensive Livelihood initiative aimed at empowering refugees and migrants to achieve sustainable employment in the Croatian labor market. The program combines vocational training, language support, psychosocial assistance, cultural mediation, and partnerships with private-sector entities. Staff members emphasize a personalized approach that addresses legal and economic barriers, helping participants navigate everything from diploma recognition to in-country employer registration.

JRS Croatia's Employment Empowerment Program primarily focuses on Administration, Education, Tourism/Hospitality, and Communication. The core objectives include improving language skills, learning new technical or soft skills, and facilitating employment. The organization also aims to foster social connections ("meet new people"), guide beneficiaries through job-search processes, and enable them to continue education or vocational training.

Main Livelihood Services

JRS Croatia provides accredited vocational training in caregiving, hospitality, IT, and administration, ensuring recognized qualifications. Language classes and diploma recognition remain vital for stable employment. Workshops build soft skills while personalized assistance—legal aid, psychosocial support, and cultural mediation—benefits refugees. CV building and employer outreach align participants' experiences with local labor demands, and post-employment follow-up fosters ongoing skill growth. Zagreb is the main hub, with centers in Karlovac, Rijeka, and Vrbovec.



Feedback and Evaluation from JRS Croatia Staff



Staff reported consistent job placement for participants who complete language and soft-skills training, particularly in construction, cleaning, caregiving, and tourism. Yet, persistent hurdles include lengthy asylum procedures limiting formal contracts and banking, language deficits complicating group classes, and discontinued pathways if participants lose interest or migrate elsewhere. Lessons underscore cultural mediation, legal advocacy, and beneficiary engagement to adapt personal plans. JRS aims to strengthen project management, expand employer partnerships, introduce advanced modules, and simplify bureaucracy to enhance refugee integration.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Croatia

Participants Profile and Feedback

- Many forcibly displaced people generally aged 18–65.
- Beneficiaries have a diverse educational backgrounds.
- Participants' household sizes ranging from single-person to large families.
- They have spent 1 to 6 years in Croatia after arriving from countries like Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Eritrea, or Burundi.
- Past work spans 0 to 5 years in construction, cleaning, trade, or teaching, but insufficient



Croatian proficiency and unrecognized credentials limit stable employment. Although some now hold part- or full-time positions at minimum wage, participants praise JRS's language courses, psychosocial assistance, and job-search support, while requesting advanced Croatian classes, specialized vocational training, and simpler legal processes. Despite ongoing bureaucratic delays, uncertain legal statuses, and skill mismatches, they regard JRS's holistic approach as vital for integration.

“JRS EUROPE HAS HELPED ME INTEGRATE IN CROATIA BY SOCIALIZING WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY THROUGH ACTIVITIES SUCH AS INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS, HELPING WITH LEARNING WITH VOLUNTEERS.”

Private-Sector and Stakeholder Collaboration



Sanatorij Ćorluka (social care) focuses on multi-year caregiver roles for older adults, offering practical skill-building on site without formal exams or certifications, while Wolt (delivery/logistics) provides short, two-week to one-month trainings in safety regulations, personal security, and job performance, culminating in recognized workplace safety certificates.

Both partners underscore social responsibility and value JRS's assistance in participant documentation, cultural mediation, and referrals. As they work to enhance legal and cultural sensitivity training and boost refugee retention, collaboration costs of EUR 2,000–5,000 per participant underscore the need for thorough coordination and multiannual commitments.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Croatia

Key Observations & Challenges

JRS Croatia integrates language, vocational, job placement, psychosocial, and cultural support. Partnerships with IKEA, Wolt, and Tom Taylor train and employ refugees, though legal complexities and credentials limit integration. Asylum and work authorization processes deter refugees from contributing to Croatian society. Demand for specialized programs and credential recognition is high. Stronger impact assessment, workshops, and streamlined procedures can enhance integration. JRS's approach fosters agency. By strengthening legal advocacy, employer partnerships, and M&E systems, JRS can empower refugees and attract donor support.



Carol's Story – Finding Home Through JRS Croatia Workshops

Carol, a refugee from Syria, now lives in Croatia with her husband and young son. "My country is devastated. I want to learn the Croatian language and live in peace. The JRS Centre is full of friendship and support. This is our home now," she shares.

At the JRS-run SOL Centre, Carol attends Women for Women workshops, which empower refugee women to build independent lives by gaining new skills, knowledge, and connections with the local community. JRS also offers weekly workshops for their children, tailored to their age and language level. Through these programs, JRS helps families like Carol's feel supported, connected, and equipped to start anew.



Surveys Analysis by country: JRS France

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JRS France's core mission is to facilitate refugees' and asylum seekers' access to training and employment. This is accomplished through robust language support and integration of prior qualifications. JRS focuses on soft-skill development—such as orientation for job interviews and professional project planning—to strengthen participant capacity to navigate the French labor market. By focusing on language acquisition, personalized coaching, and specialized pathways (e.g., medical sector), JRS France helps refugees and migrants gain employment, becoming productive members of the society.

Main Livelihood Services

JRS France provides individualized orientation and accompaniment to forcibly displaced people, offering French language classes, credential recognition, and specialized medical-sector guidance for doctors, nurses, and technicians. Core activities include language training for social integration, soft-skills workshops, personalized job-search support, and assistance with French administrative processes. Sessions occur in Paris and other cities like Nice, Grenoble, Lyon, Versailles.



Feedback and Evaluation from JRS France Staff



Many beneficiaries work in care-related roles or need requalification as medical professionals. Main hurdles persist such as administrative delays and limited French proficiency. JRS France uses a flexible, open-door model, referring participants to external programs while offering in-house language and orientation sessions. Partnerships with Galileo Global Education and TENT link refugees to major employers, though multi-year corporate collaborations remain rare. JRS conducts baseline assessments and weekly check-ins, but retention can falter. Lessons highlight timetables, language fluency, and staff dedication for sustained engagement.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS France

Participants Profile and Feedback

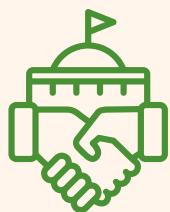
- During the year 2023, JRS supported 195 participants, most participant are men, 128, and 67 women.
- Mostly aged 18–35.
- Participants come mainly from Afghanistan, Syria, and Ukraine.
- The educational background from no formal schooling to partial university.
- Households typically have one to three members.
- Many arrive with uncertain legal status: refugee status, pending asylum, or work-permit applications.
- Previous work includes unemployment, part-time, or self-employment at or below minimum wage. Language barriers and administrative hurdles keep most unemployed.



JRS offers in-person French classes and job-search guidance, emphasizing advanced French for stable work and integration. Although many possess digital or professional skills, unrecognized credentials, few job leads, and limited specialized training impede progress.

“JRS HAS SUPPORTED ME IN MY LANGUAGE LEARNING BY ACCESSING A FRENCH COURSE FOR ASYLUM SEEKERS, SUPPORT IN FINDING TRAINING AND ADMINISTRATIVE HELP”

Private-Sector and Stakeholder Collaboration



Galileo Global Education offers free higher education and vocational courses for forcibly displaced youth through the “ASSF” initiative, awarding recognized certifications in multiple French cities. JRS recruits and refers participants, addressing language, social, and administrative barriers, while Galileo provides curricula in tourism, IT, arts, finance, and communication. Despite language hurdles, both stakeholders plan to expand specialized French instruction and enroll more participants.

Evaneos collaborates with JRS to deliver short workshops introducing refugees and asylum seekers to the French labor market. Participants explore tourism roles, practice interviews, and gain local work-culture insights, though no formal certification is offered.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS France

Key Observations & Challenges

Fluency in French is crucial for accessing educational and job opportunities. However, administrative delays, such as pending asylum claims, often hinder full employment. JRS France supports medical professionals and other skilled workers seeking credential recognition, but short-term initiatives from partners like Evaneos, while useful for orientation, lack robust evaluation. Collaborations with Galileo and TENT yield some refugee employment, yet multi-year corporate engagements are needed for stability. Resource constraints and legal complexities leave many beneficiaries underemployed or unemployed due to unrecognized credentials and limited local job leads.

Nevertheless, JRS France's adaptive, participant-centered model—anchored in language training and individualized accompaniment—provides a strong foundation for socio-economic integration. Strengthening advanced vocational referrals, employer linkages, and specialized credential recognition support can expand opportunities, ensuring forcibly displaced people become meaningful contributors to French society.



Zaker's Story: Education as a Gateway to Belonging

My name is Zaker, and I'm originally from Afghanistan. Attending JRS classes was life-changing. The teachers were exceptional, and their methods helped me quickly learn the language. These courses not only enabled me to gain university admission but also gave me a sense of belonging. JRS became more than just a school, it became like a second family.



Xhemile's Story: From Uncertainty to Stability

My name is Xhemile, originally from Albania, and I arrived in France in March 2021 with subsidiary protection status. With support from JRS, I completed internships that led to stable employment. After working as a caregiver and hotel housekeeper, I found a job I truly enjoy. I recently completed training and signed a permanent contract as a housekeeper at Le Méridien Hotel in Nice. Thank you, JRS.



Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Germany



JRS Germany's livelihood initiatives primarily operate in Berlin, centering on education, communication, and administrative skills. The staff provide language classes (German), communication and administrative skills training, job search, and legal workshops. By enabling refugees and migrants to be fluent in German, help in credential recognition, and understand local labor norms, JRS Germany helps in the socio-economic integration of individuals seeking a better future in Germany after fleeing persecution from their home countries.

Main Livelihood Services

Language courses in German serve as the foundation of JRS Germany's approach, addressing a critical barrier to employment and social integration. Meanwhile, non-formal education enhances soft skills, workplace communication, cultural awareness, and administrative competencies (e.g., document handling, official registration). This is complemented by job-search accompaniment, where personalized counseling guides participants through application processes, interview preparation, and foreign diploma recognition, ensuring their skills align with prospective employers.



Feedback and Evaluation from JRS Germany Staff



One-to-one advisory remains the most effective model, linking each participant to language or training programs based on individual educational backgrounds and tracked progress. While private-sector collaboration is limited, JRS Germany connects participants with external language schools or training institutions and refines interventions by continuously observing job-application outcomes, rather than using a formal market-systems analysis. Key lessons highlight German proficiency as a priority, legal and administrative barriers that can delay job starts, and the value of flexible, individualized follow-up for each participant's qualifications, skill gaps, and challenges.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Germany

Participants Profile and Feedback

- Refugees and asylum seekers in JRS programs range from 25 to 40 years old.
- Mostly men but also women with significant household responsibilities.
- Their education spans primary to incomplete secondary or even bachelor's or master's degrees.
- Nearly all hold refugee or protection statuses, some pending asylum.
- Most arrived within the last three years from countries like Syria, Iran, Ethiopia, or Ukraine.
- While some were unemployed or had low-wage part-time jobs, outcomes post-training vary: a portion secures apprenticeships or full-time roles, while others remain underemployed.
- Many demonstrate digital proficiency, from basic email to advanced graphic design, and some have driving skills suitable for transport-related vocational training.

They consistently cite improved German language skills, digital competence, and psychosocial support as major benefits, yet advanced language requirements, unrecognized credentials, and limited direct job placements remain significant hurdles.



“JRS PROGRAM HAS POSITIVELY IMPACTED ON PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH, THE OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS THE POSSIBILITIES OF DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH IN NEW LIVING CONDITIONS.”

Private-Sector and Stakeholder Collaboration



Loyalpet, a local e-commerce company, partners with JRS Germany to host short-term language immersion activities. For one day to a week, participants practice German in a real-world setting, reinforcing their time management and workplace communication skills. Loyalpet provides tools and resources for these informal sessions, although no formal certification is issued beyond attendance confirmation. Despite the limited scope, this model demonstrates how smaller businesses can offer practical language immersion to refugees and migrants, thereby enhancing their immediate employability.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Germany

Key Observations & Challenges

Due to lengthy asylum or permit processes, immediate job placement is often delayed, and advanced language requirements limit access to specialized roles. Short-term training programs, lacking robust employer partnerships, further prolong the path to stable employment. Resource constraints restrict expansion into advanced vocational training or certifications. Nevertheless, participants report positive psychosocial outcomes.



JRS Germany's people-centered approach provides refugees and migrants a supportive entry point into Berlin's labor market, emphasizing language fluency, personalized counseling, and incremental skill-building. While formal corporate alliances and extended training remain limited, JRS's commitment to bridging linguistic, cultural, and administrative gaps has yielded notable successes, empowering participants with greater confidence and competencies for meaningful employment.

Mena's Story:

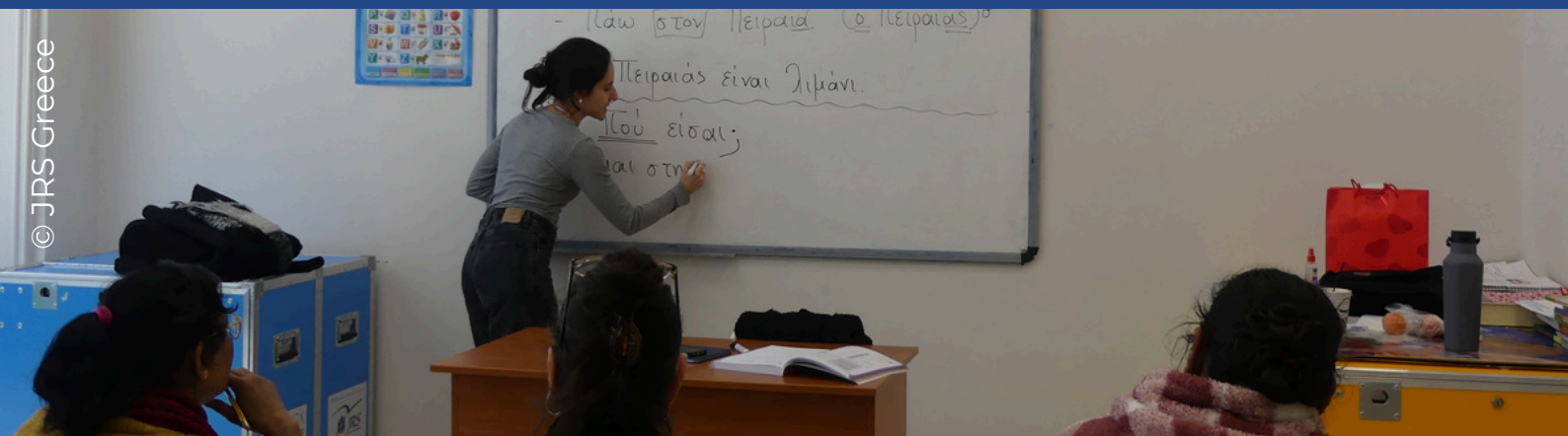
Little Steps: Building a Future Through JRS Germany Training

Born in Syria, Mena moved with his parents across Jordan, Syria, and Egypt without ever finding stability. When his father became seriously ill, the family fled to Germany for urgent medical care. Now, Mena has been granted a tolerated stay for training purposes and is training to become a care assistant—an essential step toward independence and a secure future.

This progress was made possible through the support of Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), which provided individual counselling, legal guidance, and daily life assistance. By helping Mena navigate the system and access training opportunities, JRS played a crucial role in giving him the chance to rebuild his life with dignity and purpose.



Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Greece



JRS Greece provides holistic integration assistance to vulnerable asylum seekers and refugees, particularly single mothers and survivors of gender-based violence. Based in Athens, the organization combines language instruction, soft-skill development, and psychosocial resources to empower beneficiaries. Staff highlight the complex legal and bureaucratic landscape in Greece, yet they underscore JRS Greece's ability to foster a supportive community that strengthens participants' resilience and confidence.

Main Livelihood Services

JRS Greece emphasizes educational support and entry-level job prospects in tourism, hospitality, or cleaning, primarily through two core programs: the Women's Day Center, which offers language classes, informal education, and psychosocial support for at-risk women (often household heads), and the Magistories Program, providing adult learning, Greek (and some English) language lessons, and employability workshops to help participants navigate local labor markets and asylum procedures. Both programs foster language proficiency, personal confidence, and sustainable livelihoods, with flexible classes accommodating childcare and unstable living conditions. Typically, participants undergo an initial language assessment, then enroll in group sessions or one-on-one guidance for Writing and job searching. Services center in Athens, supporting around 525 individuals through personalized or group-based activities.



Feedback and Evaluation from JRS Greece Staff



JRS Greece integrates certain Graduation Approach principles by integrating economic objectives with mental health and psychosocial services (MHPSS). Language instruction remains crucial, supplemented by digital and communication workshops, yet private-sector alliances are limited. Bureaucratic hurdles (e.g., securing essential IDs), childcare shortages, and insufficient Greek proficiency impede formal employment. Staff rely on baseline assessments to set realistic goals, but advanced M&E systems remain scarce due to resource constraints.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Greece

Participants Profile and Feedback

- Forcibly displaced people enrolled in JRS Greece's livelihood programs are between 25 and 44 years old.
- Often they are single mothers serving as primary earners.
- Educational backgrounds range from no formal schooling to partial secondary or vocational training, with most either unemployed or in low-paid informal work.
- Hailing from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Egypt, Afghanistan, or Cameroon, often arriving via Turkey.



JRS provides daily living support (laundry, showers, childcare essentials) alongside Greek/English language and job-readiness classes, yet participants still encounter challenges—such as unrecognized foreign credentials, insufficient childcare, minimal employer outreach, and bureaucratic delays—that hinder their integration and long-term stability.

“MY LIFE HAS IMPROVED BECAUSE WHENEVER I FACE DIFFICULTIES, I KNOW I CAN COME TO JRS GREECE AND EASILY GET THE SUPPORT I NEED”



Private-Sector and Stakeholder Collaboration

One local nonprofit in Greece, specializing in construction-oriented online integration courses (two weeks to one month), informally collaborates with JRS Greece. However, its programs do not specifically target refugees or offer robust language and cultural adaptation. Participants often have limited educational backgrounds, pending asylum applications, and no work permits. While the nonprofit conducts baseline monitoring, it lacks formal end-line evaluations or private-sector recruitment pipelines. Collaboration with JRS Greece remains minimal in scope, with both parties acknowledging a need for ongoing communication and possibly expanded courses to better serve refugee beneficiaries.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Greece

Key Observations & Challenges

JRS Greece adopts a community-centered approach, especially for single mothers, by integrating language classes, social services, and psychosocial care, including cultural mediation and administrative assistance in safe spaces for mothers and children. Nonetheless, participants face critical gaps—such as insufficient childcare, basic or short-term Greek courses, limited private-sector alliances leading to informal or underpaid work, bureaucratic delays in obtaining or updating legal documents, and a lack of advanced vocational training. Despite these hurdles, JRS's psychosocial support and employment-readiness programs significantly improve daily life, helping forcibly displaced people develop language skills, enhance employability, and better integrate into Greek society.



Angele's Story : A Mother's Journey of Resilience in Greece

Angele Biandu, a 40-year-old refugee from Kinshasa, has spent the last nine years in Greece building a life for herself and her son, Alexander, while her two other children remain in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Despite the challenges of single motherhood, learning a new language, and holding an unpredictable job in the fish industry, Angele has shown remarkable resilience. Balancing work, parenting, and household tasks with little rest, Angele remains proud of how far she has come. Thanks to JRS's steady support through access to food baskets, laundry facilities, and clothing through the Magazi project. Angele's story reflects the perseverance of countless refugee women and the essential role that practical, consistent support plays in helping them move forward with dignity.

© JRS Greece



Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Malta

© JRS Malta



JRS Malta focuses on capacity building for refugees and migrants through language acquisition, soft-skills enhancement, and informal educational support. Classes are primarily held at the JRS office in Floriana, easily accessed by public transport. Many participants later pursue specialized skills in IT, construction, or hospitality. By reinforcing foundational competencies, JRS Malta helps beneficiaries secure more stable and dignified work.

Main Livelihood Services

JRS Malta delivers a holistic program that combines language instruction, basic skills development, and ongoing advocacy to overcome systemic barriers such as complex permit and legal documentation requirements. This is accomplished through relationship-building, cultural mediation, and providing flexible support to refugees and migrants. Over 128 forcibly displaced people have been placed in jobs through JRS's innovative private-sector partnership, underlining the effectiveness of personalized profiles, communication mediation, and robust follow-up.



Feedback and Evaluation from JRS Malta Staff



JRS Malta advocates for simpler work-permit procedures and more inclusive hiring. Although formal market analyses are limited, the team regularly gathers and shares feedback with primary stakeholders and adapts services as needed. Lack of resources or urgent legal issues by participants can overshadow sustained training. To address this, JRS will strengthen the Monitoring & Evaluation to improve outcome tracking and beneficiary-led feedback, and Engage Participants in Design & Decision-Making to ensure quick responsiveness to evolving needs of refugees and migrants.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Malta

Participants Profile and Feedback

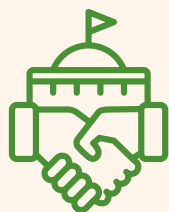
- Many participants in Malta reside in areas such as Zejtun, Msida, Floriana, and Marsa, or camps and transient housing.
- Participants are 87% male aged 18– 34 (though older individuals also participate).
- Household sizes vary from 1 person to groups of 10 or more.
- Over half have been in Malta for 3 to 6 years under uncertain legal status, limiting employability.
- Educational levels are often low, with many holding only primary or incomplete secondary schooling.
- While a third had never worked before JRS and another third held casual roles, 80% now work in construction, cleaning, factory jobs, or hospitality—mostly near minimum wage.

Participants consistently praise language (English/Maltese) and integration courses, along with social and psychosocial programs, as vital for navigating administrative complexities, improving job readiness, and enhancing overall well-being.



“I AM A RESIDENT AT A JRS RUN HOUSE. THIS HAS ALLOWED ME TO GO TO SCHOOL FULL TIME AND ALSO MEANS I GET LOTS OF SUPPORT FROM JRS STAFF WITH MY STUDIES AND NEEDS.”

Private-Sector and Stakeholder Collaboration



Handpicked, a national tourism/hospitality business, collaborated with JRS Malta in 2022 to provide a short-term hospitality course on high-end service. Six participants learned cocktail making, fine dining, and customer service, earning certificates that highlight this model's potential for integrating displaced jobseekers into Malta's tourism sector. However, resource limitations hinder sustained collaboration, and consistent communication remains essential for future programs.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Malta

Key Observations & Challenges

JRS Malta's advocacy for streamlined permit processes and inclusive hiring is essential to stable refugee employment. However, limited formal market analysis leads to ad hoc adaptations, indicating a need for deeper data collection. Urgent legal or material crises often overshadow longer-term capacity building, though trainees display strong motivation and industry-recognized skills. While over 128 beneficiaries have secured jobs, forging multi-year corporate alliances and bridging linguistic and cultural gaps remain priorities. Resource constraints, high living costs, and discrimination also hinder integration. Strengthening M&E, expanding specialized courses, and sustaining multi-year partnerships with NGOs and private-sector actors can further empower refugees and migrants toward dignified, long-term livelihoods.



Ibrahim's Story: A Little Help Goes a Long Way: Ibrahim's Journey to Independence in Malta

Ibrahim arrived in Malta as an asylum seeker in 2020, determined to continue the education he began back home. "I could not go and work in construction. I was a student in my country," he said. With no connections and no English, he turned to JRS Malta for support. Thanks to JRS Malta's Youth Programme, which provides guidance on education and employment and works with employers to improve conditions for asylum seekers, Ibrahim is fulfilling his goals. "If you work hard and are patient, you can make it," he says. For Ibrahim, JRS offered more than assistance: it offered a path toward stability, dignity, and hope.



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Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Poland

© JRS Poland



JRS Poland supports refugees and migrants through direct language training, personal development coaching, and pastoral care for those requiring emotional or spiritual assistance. Unlike the Graduation Approach used by some organizations, JRS Poland focuses on immediate, skills-based interventions—particularly language and basic vocational modules—without a structured multi-phase framework. While formal collaborations with employers are limited, staff emphasize the importance of strategies that help participants transition into formal employment once they complete language and skill-building programs.

Main Livelihood Services

JRS Poland works with partner NGOs and institutions to secure classroom space and teaching materials, using baseline assessments to identify participant needs before launching courses. Nevertheless, many refugees prioritize immediate survival or remain uncertain about staying in Poland long-term, leading to lower participation, while limited resources and enrollment sometimes delay training. Lessons learned underscore the importance of pre-program surveys to gauge genuine interest and language-school partnerships for improved scheduling and teaching quality. Moving forward, JRS aims to expand labor market integration courses, and potentially introduce vocational training in Nowy Sacz, contingent on participant demand and resource availability.



Feedback and Evaluation from JRS Poland Staff



JRS Poland works with partner NGOs and institutions to secure classroom space and teaching materials, using baseline assessments to identify participant needs before launching courses. Nevertheless, many refugees prioritize immediate survival or remain uncertain about staying in Poland long-term, leading to lower participation, while limited resources and enrollment sometimes delay training. Lessons learned underscore the importance of pre-program surveys to gauge genuine interest and language-school partnerships for improved scheduling and teaching quality. Moving forward, JRS aims to expand labor market integration courses, continue Polish classes below B1 level, and potentially introduce vocational training in Nowy Sacz, contingent on participant demand and resource availability.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Poland

Participants Profile and Feedback

- Many participants live in Warsaw or nearby towns, aged 18 to 65.
- Women slightly outnumber men, reflecting conscription rules and family separation.
- Educational backgrounds span primary to incomplete tertiary.
- Households vary from single-person to extended families.
- Most arrived from Ukraine in the past one to three years, holding refugee or subsidiary protection, or awaiting asylum decisions.
- Special regulations often waive separate work permits, yet many remain in precarious jobs.
- They display strong literacy, numeracy, and diverse digital skills, with over 5 years' experience in fields like cooking, childcare, or construction.



While language classes boost confidence, participants seek advanced Polish instruction, recognized certifications, and formal job opportunities.

“PARTICIPATING IN THE JRS PROGRAM ALLOWED ME TO FIND A JOB, MEET NICE PEOPLE, IMPROVE MY POLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS. THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LANGUAGE IMPROVED MY COMMUNICATION AND ENABLE ME TO GET A JOB.”

Private-Sector and Stakeholder Collaboration



Akademia Katolicka w Warszawie–Collegium Bobolanum and Zgromadzenie Najświętszego Serca Jezusa (Sacre Coeur) provide formal education, volunteer-led language lessons, and intercultural sessions, though their Graduation Approach remains unclear. Both partners face language barriers, limited staff, and minimal monitoring, yet collaboration with JRS Poland creates more stable services that help displaced people gain recognized qualifications and integrate into the labor market. Meanwhile, Biuro Turystyczne Bezkresy, DOT Dorota Czerwonka, and Perfect English offer short, in-person language and soft-skills courses, but informal partnerships, inconsistent attendance, and the absence of formal analyses limit direct job placements.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Poland

Key Observations & Challenges

Improved language skills and personal development boost participants' confidence and integration, while cultural adaptation and partial credential recognition help ease entry into the Polish workforce. Despite these gains, limited advanced vocational pathways and ambiguous legal statuses undercut stable employment prospects, leaving many underemployed or reliant on casual roles that hinder socio-economic advancement. Insufficient materials, minimal administrative support, and frequent participant turnover compromise program delivery, raising risks of labor-market exploitation and reducing overall trust. Nonetheless, enhanced psychosocial resilience contributes to better emotional well-being, illustrating both the potential and the challenges in achieving meaningful integration.



Olena's Story : From War to Welcome: Olena's Journey to Opening a Café in Poland

Olena, a former education specialist from Kherson, Ukraine, was forced to flee to Poland with her child when war broke out. Her journey was harrowing, marked by shelling, fear, and a near-death experience that left her clinging to hope and faith. "If we stay alive, it means I have not yet done what I am supposed to," she reflected. Once in Poland, language barriers made it difficult to find a job in her field. That's when she connected with JRS Poland, enrolling in Polish language courses through the One Proposal project, which also provided psychotherapy and community-building support.

Olena started working in a local café, and after a year of learning the trade, she took a leap and opened her own place: SofiLen Café, which she lovingly describes as "a café with a petit soul." With support from JRS and her family, Olena turned her long-held dream into a warm welcome serving students, tourists, and locals with heart and purpose.



Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Portugal

© JRS Portugal



JRS Portugal employs a multifaceted livelihood approach, emphasizing technical and soft-skill development, language instruction, legal support, and holistic assistance for migrants and refugees. Flagship programs like “Corações que Cuidam” and the “Talents and Skills Academy” address educational gaps and employability barriers, leveraging strong private-sector partnerships and volunteer networks.

Main Livelihood Services

JRS Portugal provides comprehensive vocational training in eldercare, office administration, hospitality, cleaning, and store operations, blending technical skills with labor-rights education to enhance participants' employability. Concurrently, intensive Portuguese classes and orientation on local culture, laws, and job protocols foster smoother integration, while the “Talents and Skills Academy” develops CV-writing, job-search techniques, teamwork, and leadership, and “Corações que Cuidam” focuses on caring professions through empathy and specialized knowledge. Staff and volunteers also offer résumé drafting, interview preparation, employer networking, job fairs, and volunteer-led mentorship. Although many participants—especially migrant/refugee women—face language barriers, family obligations, and irregular status, they report improved language skills, job-readiness, and psychosocial well-being.



Feedback and Evaluation from JRS Portugal Staff



JRS Portugal emphasizes robust multi-stakeholder engagement with volunteer mentors, supportive employers, and municipal authorities to enhance employment outcomes. Nonetheless, participants face documentation hurdles, advanced Portuguese requirements, and limited financial support for full-time courses. Corporate partnerships with BNP Paribas, Grupo Trivalor, and Kelly Services remain pivotal —“Corações que Cuidam” achieves an 85% employment rate by linking graduates to care facilities—though only partial market systems analysis informs the “Talents and Skills Academy.” Looking ahead, JRS aims to expand Portuguese training, refine short “micro-courses,” and secure more resources for stipends, enabling beneficiaries to focus on studies rather than informal jobs.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Portugal

Participants Profile and Feedback

- Many participants in or near Lisbon are aged 25–64.
- Education ranging from primary to university attendance.
- Households vary from singles to large families.
- Often living in Portugal for 1 to 3 years after arriving from Europe or Africa.
- Most hold or seek residence permits.
- While about half were unemployed or in precarious work before joining. Many now work in customer service, banking, hospitality, or cleaning, yet language barriers and unrecognized foreign credentials persist.



Portuguese fluency is crucial for higher-skilled roles. Delayed diploma validation, childcare, and precarious living often disrupt training. Feedback remains highly positive: corporate partnerships frequently lead to permanent jobs, and JRS's practical support fosters confidence and integration.

“THE EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAM I PARTICIPATED IN WAS INCREDIBLY HELPFUL DURING MY JOB INTERVIEWS AND WHILE CREATING MY CV. THE SKILLS I GAINED AT JRS ARE THE ONES I NOW APPLY DAILY IN MY WORKPLACE.”

Private-Sector and Stakeholder Collaboration



KEY Training and Consulting and Compassio partner with JRS Portugal, offering culturally sensitive, language-integrated training. KEY runs blended courses awarding certificates in finance and IT, while Compassio hosts short workshops on empathy and self-care. Meanwhile, BNP Paribas Portugal's multiannual “Talent and Skills Academy” enhances language, digital literacy, and finance skills for displaced participants.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Portugal

Key Observations & Challenges

BNP Paribas Portugal's "Talent and Skills Academy," developed in partnership with JRS Portugal, offers a promising pathway for forcibly displaced individuals to gain critical skills in the finance sector despite challenges such as cultural and linguistic barriers, psychological impacts from trauma, and pressing financial needs. Early positive outcomes—reflected in enthusiastic engagement despite the absence of formal exams—justify this donor-supported, CSR-driven initiative, which merges language, technical, and soft-skill development to not only enhance immediate employment prospects but also foster long-term resilience and professional growth. Ongoing refinements in training content and feedback collection underscore the program's commitment to empowering vulnerable communities and ensuring sustainable progress.



Trifina's Story: Joyful Journey from training to making a difference

Trifina, 32, left Guinea-Bissau for Portugal with hope for a better future. Just over a year later, she proudly holds a diploma from the Workup project by JRS Academy and a stable job in elderly care at a home in Calvário.

She completed the Basic Elderly Care training, quickly applying her prior experience and adapting within just one month. Though the work is demanding, Trifina's positivity and dedication shine through. "I often sing and dance with the residents. They ask me to as soon as I arrive," she says with a smile. Thanks to JRS's support, Trifina turned training into opportunity, joyfully transforming both her life and the lives of those she cares for.



Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Romania



JRS Romania adopts a holistic livelihood approach to assist Ukrainian refugees, asylum seekers from Syria, Somalia, and other regions, and vulnerable host-community members. Operating in Bucharest, Constanta, Galati, Brasov, and Medias (Sibiu), JRS integrates vocational and language training with psychosocial support and legal assistance. This comprehensive model aims to enhance socio-economic resilience, cultural adaptation, and self-reliance. Currently, around 75% of participants are women, reflecting the high influx of Ukrainian refugees fleeing conflict.

Main Livelihood Services

JRS Romania's vocational training includes specialized courses in beauty, IT, cleaning, distillery, hospitality, and electrical work, meeting local labor demands and boosting beneficiaries' employability. Dedicated Romanian language classes, translation services, and employer outreach promote linguistic and cultural integration, while legal guidance and psychosocial counseling remove administrative and social barriers. Although a Market Systems Analysis informs job-readiness content, there is no formal "pull intervention"; instead, JRS encourages employers to tap into refugee talent through targeted recruitment drives and specialized language programs, reinforcing community cohesion and reducing vulnerabilities.



Feedback and Evaluation from JRS Romania Staff



Regular baseline assessments and conflict analyses ensure interventions remain context-specific and culturally sensitive, though staff note persistent language barriers, limited recognition of foreign credentials, and few long-term partnerships with local businesses. They emphasize combining vocational, psychosocial, and legal support for better outcomes, and plan to expand digital literacy, entrepreneurial training, and robust monitoring systems to foster continuous improvement and accountability.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Romania

Participants Profile and Feedback

- Participants age vary from 25 to 45 years old.
- JRS Romania's participants come from varied educational and professional backgrounds—some hold advanced degrees, others have minimal formal schooling—and often rely on short-term work.
- While some find part- or full-time roles, many struggle with unrecognized qualifications and limited job-matching.

Their goals include improving Romanian language proficiency, gaining vocational skills suited to local labor needs, and securing stable employment. Beneficiaries highlight the urgency of advanced language courses for meaningful employment, the difficulty of achieving financial stability, and the value of soft skills in boosting confidence and social integration.



“THE JRS LIVELIHOODS PROGRAM HAS SIGNIFICANTLY HELPED ME ACHIEVE MY OBJECTIVES BY PROVIDING ACCOMMODATION FOR A YEAR. THIS SUPPORT ALLOWED ME TO FOCUS ON OTHER IMPORTANT ASPECTS, SUCH AS BUILDING SKILLS AND SEEKING EMPLOYMENT, WITHOUT THE IMMEDIATE PRESSURE OF HOUSING CONCERNS.”



Private-Sector and Stakeholder Collaboration

AFF and Sensiblu advocate multi-year agreements and greater resources to stabilize NGO, government, and employer partnerships. Their complementary employment-focused and GBV-centered models highlight synergy for sustainable livelihoods, urging expanded training, funding, and monitoring. JRS Romania's partnerships vary in duration, yet language barriers, limited budgets, and short-term deals hinder lasting impact for vulnerable groups.

Surveys Analysis by country: JRS Romania

Key Observations & Challenges

JRS Romania's compassionate and donor-supported approach centers on tailored support that meets the educational, professional, and psychosocial needs of refugees. By employing Ukrainian-speaking staff and gathering regular feedback, the organization has enhanced communication, enabled flexible scheduling, and built trust for long-term integration. Although challenges remain in employer outreach and navigating complex bureaucratic processes like diploma recognition, JRS Romania is strengthening partnerships with NGOs, government agencies, local businesses, and healthcare providers to expand educational programs, create employment opportunities, and improve healthcare access. This holistic, empathetic strategy not only delivers immediate relief but also fosters dignity, resilience, and sustainable progress for refugees and migrants.



From Survival to Strength: Iryna's Journey of Healing with JRS Support

After fleeing the war in Kherson and a terrifying escape through 42 checkpoints, Iryna arrived in Romania feeling lost and disconnected. Thanks to the support of JRS Romania, she found stability, rediscovered her passions through art and therapy sessions, and began rebuilding her life. Iryna shares, "JRS didn't just offer services. They offered hope, purpose, and a path forward. I've started walking a path I once only dreamed of. And no matter what lies ahead, I won't stop." Today, Iryna is studying psychology and helping others overcome trauma. Her journey shows how healing and renewal are possible, even after immense loss.

Empowering a Mother's Dream: Antonina's Journey to Independence in Romania

After fleeing Ukraine with her two daughters, Antonina arrived in Bucharest determined to rebuild her life. With the support of JRS Romania, she secured educational opportunities for her children and accessed language courses that allowed her to return to her profession in beauty care. Today, she runs her own business, supports her family, and contributes to her new community. JRS not only offered practical assistance but also restored her confidence and sense of purpose. Antonina's journey shows how, with the right support, displaced mothers can regain their independence and build meaningful, self-sufficient lives.



Key Findings: Promising Practices and Lessons Learned

Challenges in Livelihood Implementation

Complex documentation and bureaucratic hurdles hamper consistent participation and reliable monitoring, while language barriers limit participants' engagement in surveys and staff's capacity to gather accurate data. Many participants endure trauma, precarious living conditions, and frequent relocation, complicating attendance and long-term tracking. Finally, resource constraints like insufficient funding and staffing impede systematic impact assessment.

Conflict Analysis

While JRS Portugal and JRS Romania incorporate conflict analysis to ensure safe, conflict-sensitive programming, other offices lack such formal considerations, hindering risk mitigation and M&E.

Lessons Learned & Successful Strategies

Holistic interventions integrating language, psychosocial support, legal aid, and job placement yield stronger outcomes. Tailored modules—personal development (JRS Portugal), empowerment follow-ups (JRS Greece), and qualification courses (JRS Romania)—foster trust, retention, and measurable job placements. Community-driven methods (JRS Malta) reinforce stakeholder support. Staffing ranges from 2–14 instructional and 2–10 administrative staff, often aided by specialists, enabling robust M&E. Training intensity varies from low to high, with 44% moderate; most sessions occur near refugee communities. Around 39% of offices spend under EUR 100 per participant, another 39% allocate EUR 101–500. For capacity building, 31% seek project management training, 31% financial management, and 24% need none. Many plan to strengthen Livelihood programs by enhancing language, digital literacy, employer outreach, and M&E. Baseline and end-line surveys, dedicated M&E roles, stronger staff competencies drive data-based decisions, build donor confidence, and promote sustainable livelihoods.

Lessons Learned from the JRS Livelihood Program around Europe

Lessons Learned	Description
Flexible and Scalable Program Design	Hybrid training models and personalized learning paths meet diverse needs and can be expanded regionally.
Psychosocial and Trauma-Informed Support	Mental health and trauma support are crucial for beneficiaries' well-being and integration.
Cross-Country Learning and Knowledge Sharing	Sharing best practices across countries enhances program effectiveness and leverages expertise.
Local Labor Market Alignment Enhances Employability	Programs aligned with local labor demands, such as healthcare in Portugal or hospitality in Greece, improve job placements.
Youth-Focused Interventions Unlock Potential	Apprenticeships and internships for young refugees provide a foundation for long-term success.
Integrated Technology Training Is Essential	Digital literacy and IT training equip beneficiaries with necessary skills for modern job markets.
Short-Term and Modular Programs Increase Accessibility	Flexible, modular training helps participants balance job and family responsibilities while gaining skills.
Community-Led Advocacy Strengthens Impact	Collaboration with NGOs, governments, and civil organizations raises awareness and strengthens support networks.



Lessons Learned from the JRS Livelihood Program around Europe

Lessons Learned	Description
Tailored and Holistic Support Is Key	Programs must combine language training, vocational skills, and psychosocial support to address diverse needs.
Language Acquisition as a Foundation	Fluency in the host country's language is critical for employment, education, and social integration.
Importance of Early Legal and Administrative Support	Providing legal guidance and support helps refugees navigate bureaucratic hurdles such as work permits and qualification recognition.
Cultural Mediation Enhances Program Impact	Cultural mediators build trust and foster inclusivity between refugees and local communities.
Gender-Sensitive Programming Yields Better Outcomes	Programs addressing childcare, flexible schedules, and gender-specific barriers improve women's participation.
Private Sector Partnerships Boost Opportunities	Business collaborations enhance employment pathways, particularly in healthcare, IT, and hospitality sectors.
Ongoing Monitoring and Beneficiary Engagement Are Vital	Regular feedback ensures programs remain adaptive and responsive to evolving needs.
Community Inclusion Reduces Tensions	Involving host communities in cultural and training activities fosters social cohesion.
Addressing Systemic Barriers Requires Advocacy	Advocating for streamlined work permits, qualification recognition, and anti-discrimination policies reduces systemic barriers.

Lessons Learned from the JRS Livelihood Program around Europe

The livelihood programs of the JRS Europe have demonstrated significant potential to support socio-economic integration for refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants. However, gaps and challenges revealed through stakeholder feedback underscore the need for enhancements.

Programs must be **tailored** to individual needs, combining language instruction, vocational skills, and psychosocial support. This begins with **comprehensive needs assessments** to map beneficiaries' backgrounds and aspirations, followed by flexible, **modular training** that accommodates varying skill levels and schedules. Strong **language programs** are critical, especially when industry-specific terminology is needed for jobs in sectors like hospitality or healthcare. Equally important is **private-sector engagement**, achieved by cultivating partnerships, aligning training content with labor demands, and running employer awareness campaigns. Meanwhile, **legal and administrative barriers** (e.g., unrecognized qualifications or delayed work permits) require hands-on support, advocacy for policy reforms, and streamlined bureaucratic processes.

To ensure **continuous improvement**, programs must expand monitoring and evaluation through standardized surveys, real-time data analysis, and beneficiary feedback sessions. Cross-country **knowledge sharing**—via online repositories, workshops, and staff exchanges—encourages innovation and scales proven models across different contexts. A **holistic approach** broadens integration by including mental health support, childcare solutions, and community-building initiatives, all of which help transition participants from **informal** to formal employment. These measures can be bolstered by **increased funding** (e.g., from EU grants or private foundations) and collective advocacy that promotes inclusive legislation and anti-discrimination policies.

Finally, **beneficiary participation** is key. Involving participants in program design and feedback fosters ownership, leading to more responsive and relevant services. By incorporating co-design workshops, user-friendly digital tools, and anonymous suggestion systems, organizations can refine curricula and better meet real-world needs. Strengthening all these components—tailored program design, robust language support, legal assistance, private-sector ties, continuous M&E, cross-country learning, holistic services, formal market integration, sustainable funding, and inclusive participation—creates a foundation for effective, dignified livelihoods for refugees and migrants.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, **JRS Europe's 2023-2024 Livelihood Projects aim to strengthen the resilience and socio-economic integration** of refugees, asylum seekers, and other vulnerable migrants by empowering them through targeted, evidence-based interventions that help them build sustainable livelihoods and participate fully in their local communities :

Multinational Implementation: To help realize this goal, eight JRS Country Offices in Romania, Portugal, Croatia, Greece, Poland, Malta, France, and Germany, provided language and vocational classes, as well as psychosocial support, among others, proving that strategic investments results into improving the economic prospects of people who have been forced to flee their homes. As a result, they can successfully integrate and enrich their local communities economically and socially.

Shift from Aid to Self-Reliance: JRS Livelihood Projects have moved forcibly displaced people from aid dependency to self-reliance. In Portugal, 85 percent of mostly migrant women who completed the Corações que Cuidam home-care track secured paid jobs within weeks of graduation, turning previously informal caregiving into formal employment with social-security coverage. Malta's integrated language-plus-vocational model has already channeled 128 refugees into regular positions, with four out of five alumni now earning at least the legal minimum wage.

Social and Economic Integration Outcomes: Integrating refugees and other migrants is not just a moral imperative; it is a pragmatic investment in Europe's future. Results show that mixed-community classes helped lower neighborhood tensions and foster solidarity, while successful job placements contributed to addressing labor shortages in healthcare, hospitality, and construction. When newcomers participate fully in the labor market, they contribute taxes, revitalize ageing workforces, and enrich cultural life, turning their displacement from a perceived burden into a shared opportunity.

Holistic Support Drives Results: Similar pipelines in Croatia, Germany, and Greece demonstrate that when practical training is combined with host-language classes, legal counseling, and psychosocial support, beneficiaries achieve not only employment and higher incomes but also measurable improvements in mental health scores, confidence, and community belonging.

CONCLUSION

High Return on Modest Investment:

Despite limited budgets, the project delivered strong results. Remarkably, 39 percent of offices report spending under €100 per participant while still delivering these outcomes, demonstrating a high social return on investment.

Persistent Structural Barriers:

Despite these gains, several hurdles still limit scale and equity. Upper-intermediate or sector-specific language courses are scarce, trapping qualified participants in low-paid roles. Administrative delays—slow asylum rulings, missing IDs, and lengthy diploma recognition—postpone hiring and prolong reliance on informal work. Women's progress is constrained by inadequate childcare, leading to course dropouts in Athens, Lisbon, and Valletta, while thin staffing and scarce materials limit cohort size and access to advanced courses. Unaddressed trauma continues to sap concentration and job retention, and frequent relocations disrupt attendance, leaving some graduates dependent on casual gigs.

Expanded Impact Beyond

Employment: The project's impact extends far beyond just wages. Germany's integrated model offered legal advice to around 600 people in 2023, with more than 60 obtaining residence permits through hardship procedures, while mentoring workshops continue to promote the integration of young trainees. Poland reports improved psychosocial resilience alongside language skills, highlighting how support for well-being translates into greater confidence in the labor market. Romania's childcare services also allowed Natalia and her mother to take paid work while Natalia's daughter attended kindergarten, illustrating how livelihood programming can eliminate childcare barriers to employment.

Four cross-cutting lessons emerge:

1. Mastering the host language—especially at B1/B2 level—remains the single strongest predictor of skilled employment and social integration.
2. Holistic packages that weave legal aid, psychosocial care, and childcare into vocational courses dramatically boost retention and wellbeing, particularly for women.
3. Lean budgets can still deliver powerful results when programs harness volunteers, micro-courses, and employer cost-sharing.
4. Co-creating curricula with companies such as BNP Paribas Portugal, JobsPlus Malta, and IKEA Croatia ensures market relevance and virtually guarantees job offers.

CONCLUSION

Recommendations for Scaling and Improvement:

This report lays out workable steps to close the remaining gaps: expand flexible, modular courses with embedded trauma-informed counselling; deepen employer partnerships through labor-market analysis and multi-year hiring pipelines; provide sector-specific language tuition alongside continuous legal support; and introduce on-site childcare, digital-literacy modules and gender-sensitive schedules. Strengthening monitoring systems, sharing knowledge across offices, and advocating for faster work-permit and credential procedures will ensure the projects remain adaptive, safe, and scalable.

In summary, the Livelihood Projects demonstrate how strategic partnerships can transform displacement into an opportunity for both forcibly displaced individuals and their host societies. By extending these approaches and removing the remaining barriers, JRS Europe can help ensure that thousands more refugees and migrants move from the margins into meaningful work and civic participation, strengthening the social and economic fabric of Europe as a whole.

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