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Humanitarian admission programmes are complementary pathways to international protection through which a country, following a referral from the EUAA, UNHCR or another relevant international body, admits third-country nationals or stateless persons from a third country to which they have been forcibly displaced to the territory of the Member State. They are granted international protection or a humanitarian status under national law, which provides them rights and obligations equivalent to those of beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, which are defined in the recast QD, Articles 20 to 34.1288 Different practices prevail in the implementation of these programmes at the national level.

During 2022, humanitarian admission programmes mainly focused on the arrival of Afghan nationals at risk. While countries continued activities for the evacuation of Afghans through humanitarian visas or other forms of protection, other countries developed new programmes with the support of civil society organisations.

In Ireland, the deadline for applications for the Afghan Admission Programme was extended to March 2022. It is an immigration programme which offers temporary residence to people at risk who have family members in Ireland, whether resident in Afghanistan or neighbouring countries where they fled since 1 August 2021. A total of 528 applications were received, mainly from minors. The programme no longer accepts applications.

In Germany, a new federal admission programme was launched in October 2022 to approve the admittance of around 1,000 vulnerable Afghan nationals per month. Under this programme, submissions are done by authorised agencies and NGOs with experience in Afghanistan, and not by UNCHR.1289 The target group is Afghans who have exposed themselves to a particular risk through their commitment to women’s and human rights or their work in the spheres of justice, politics, the media, education, culture, sport or academia, and are thus vulnerable. The programme also targets persons who are particularly vulnerable due to their gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or their religion. Special focus is placed on serious individual women’s rights violations and homophobic or transphobic human rights violations.1290

A new Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Italian authorities and several institutions, civil society organisations and international bodies, through which a new 2-year humanitarian corridors programme was established to transfer 1,200 Afghans from Iran and Pakistan. Th first group of people was received through this programme in July 2022.1291

Likewise, and based on experience from other countries, the Belgian State Secretary for Migration and Asylum signed a Memorandum of Understanding in December 2021 with the Sant' Egidio community to start a humanitarian corridor during the period 2022-2024. The aim was to resettle 250 vulnerable refugees residing in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Libya and Syria. The quota established for 2022 was 75 people. However, the reception crisis in the country delayed the start of the programme and the first group of refugees, 26 people, arrived only in November 2022. In contrast to the process under resettlement programmes, under this humanitarian corridor, beneficiaries follow the same path as regular applicants for international protection.

In 2022, civil society organisations continued activities in close cooperation with the Italian authorities, UNHCR and the IOM. Under existing humanitarian corridors programmes, they transferred more than 1,200 people from Afghanistan, Libya, Jordan, Lebanon and Niger. A new protocol for humanitarian corridors from Ethiopia, Jordan and Niger was signed by the Italian Ministry of the Interior in October 2022, with the aim to provide 2 years of protection to 600 people in need.

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