

EU Consultation on the integration and inclusion of migrants and people with a migrant background

Background and Context

[Inspireurope](#) is a 3-year Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) funded project aimed at promoting and supporting cooperation across Europe in support of researchers at risk. These are researchers who are at risk in their countries of origin (due to discrimination, persecution, suffering and/or violence) and are seeking refuge out of these reasons or have recently found refuge in Europe. While some researchers at risk have recognised refugee status, asylum status, or similar protection status, a more significant proportion of those seeking the assistance of NGOs specialising in the field of scholar protection are *outside* the refugee process, seeking or holding temporary visas/work permits through visiting research/scholar positions at host universities in Europe or elsewhere, outside their home countries. Based on a forthcoming (November 2020) Inspireurope report; [Researchers at Risk: Mapping Europe's Response](#), the top two obstacles facing researchers at risk seeking refuge positions in Europe, which also impede efforts towards their integration and inclusion, relate to employment and professional development; (1) shortage of funding for dedicated fellowships; and (2) competitiveness of the academic labour market in Europe.

Proposed new actions that could be taken at EU level to promote the integration and social inclusion of researchers at risk with a migrant background

1. **Establish a dedicated EU fellowship scheme for researchers at risk** with three track options; 1) for refugee researchers, 2) those who are outside the refugee process and 3) establishment of co-funded national fellowship programmes. These tracks will address the current challenges faced by researchers at risk in accessing current EU funded research fellowships. These relate to mobility, inflexible timelines for applications, and competitiveness and are detailed in the forthcoming Inspireurope report; '[Researchers at Risk: Mapping Europe's Response](#)'. Therefore, it is recommended that this proposed scheme have 3 or 4 application deadlines per year, the fellowship period be a minimum of 2-3 years and the recruitment, vetting, evaluation and placement structure be agreed in advance. The scheme should also be open to candidates seeking to transition from the academic to the non-academic sector.
2. **Placement schemes for researchers at risk and other highly-skilled migrants within companies:** While the EU is currently supporting numerous initiatives to support labour market integration of refugees and migrants, including [Employers together for integration](#), the skills and attributes of researchers at risk have yet to be fully utilised within the private and public administration sectors and remain an untapped resource in Europe. The Inspireurope project recommends the development of placements and employment programmes with the private sector in areas for highly skilled and experienced researchers.

