

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Cultural Mediator - Contingency Roster

In 2013, over 42,000 persons arrived by sea to Italy, marking the second largest mixed migratory flow of the past ten years. Whilst migration movements from Greece arriving at the coasts of Apulia have dropped in numbers, departures from Egypt, especially of Syrian nationals, and Libya increased significantly. Nationals from Syria and Eritrea made up for more than half of the total sea arrivals in 2013, indicative of an increasing number of persons in need of international protection among those arriving in mixed migratory movements by sea. Against this background, the Italian Ministry of Interior decided to authorize the ninth phase of the Praesidium project in 2014.

In the first four months of 2014, the numbers of sea arrivals sharply increased up to 27,000, almost a ten-fold increase compared to 2013, and projections indicate that this trend might continue throughout the year. Nationals from Syria, Somalia and Eritrea continue to represent the largest groups. In particular, as the situation in Syria does not improve and the routes through Turkey, Egypt and Libya remain open, a surge in arrivals of Syrian nationals is expected in the coming months.

In October 2013 two tragic incidents of shipwrecks in the Mediterranean caused the loss of life at sea of more than 360 people, and drew renewed attention of the dangers of sea crossing. In response to these tragedies, the Italian Government set-up a humanitarian operation called Mare Nostrum, whereby Navy vessels are tasked to patrol and rescue migrants trying to reach Europe. The spike in sea arrivals has placed pressure on the initial reception system. Furthermore, the lack of reception capacity for asylum seekers has led to prolonged stay in areas of landings in improvised facilities. The decline in reception standards for asylum-seekers, including unaccompanied children, was heightened by the arrivals in 2014 as emergency facilities have been opened nationwide to respond to increasing reception needs.

UNHCR hence intends to establish a roster comprised of qualified field workers in order to respond to possible emerging protection needs in areas of sea arrivals, in particular in Sicily.

Major Duties and Responsibilities:

- a) organize, directly or in support of the UNHCR Legal Associate/other UNHCR staff, information and counseling sessions (individual and in groups) envisaged for the potential asylum seekers arriving via sea to Lampedusa and Sicily and provide interpretation from the language of the potential asylum seekers into Italian and vice-versa;
- b) secure mutual understanding between the UNHCR Legal Associate/other UNHCR staff and the potential asylum seekers, ensuring that main diversities as regards culture, traditions, religion, age, gender and other diversities are given adequate attention and consideration in order to build necessary trust with the beneficiaries and maximize the effect of the counseling/information activity;
- c) ensure that the overall cultural mediation activity is always carried out in close co-ordination and co-operation with the UNHCR Legal Associate/other UNHCR staff and the competent authorities, in an appropriate manner, taking into account the multicultural environment and the fact that potential asylum seekers may have been victims of trauma/torture or might otherwise be particularly vulnerable;
- d) translate from Italian into the language of the potential asylum seekers the information prepared by UNHCR for dissemination among potential asylum seekers, as well as any other information material necessary to duly inform potential asylum seekers on their rights and obligations in Italy and the European Union;

- e) identify, directly or in support of the UNHCR Legal Associate/other UNHCR staff, and at need also local authorities, vulnerable individuals and potential asylum seekers with special needs;
- f) ensure, directly or in support of the UNHCR Legal Associate/other UNHCR staff, that those who intend to apply for asylum are admitted to the asylum procedure;
- g) be available to support, as appropriate, the staff of IOM, the Red Cross and Save the Children when specific language skills are required in a given situation, in a team spirit and flexible approach and for the ultimate interest of the migrants/potential asylum seekers;
- h) undertake necessary UNHCR training;
- i) respect the confidentiality of any sensitive information and adhere to the UNHCR Code of Conduct;
- j) carry out any other related service, as required.

Qualifications Required:

- Good knowledge of the Italian asylum procedure
- At least 5 years experience in interpretation/cultural mediation
- Good communication skills
- Team working skills
- Languages: Speak, read and write in English and Italian, and one or more of the following languages: Arabic, Somali, Tigrinya, Amharic

Starting Date: possible immediate deployment

Envisaged Duration: 6 months

Envisaged Duty Stations: Sicily, areas of sea arrivals

Remuneration: UNOPS Individual Contractor Agreement (ICA) terms and conditions

How to Apply: Interested candidates are invited to fill in the Personal History Form (P.11) which can be downloaded at www.unhcr.org/recruit/p11new.doc and send the duly completed form, together with a motivation letter, both in English, by e-mail to Ms. Monica Amirfeiz – amirfeiz@unhcr.org.

Closing Date for Applications: 02 June 2014

Please note that:

- Incomplete applications will not be considered.
- Only short-listed candidates will be contacted for an interview.