

# Templates Awards National Convention 2017

## Award Category

- Best Local Peace Project

### a) Basic Information

**Language:** English

**Project:**

“L’integration des réfugiés dans notre économie – que pouvons-nous faire? “  
“Integration of refugees in our economy – what can we do?”

**Root cause:** Since the political difficulties and the religious differences threaten citizens in the Middle East, Europe is more and more affected by the immigration of refugees from those countries. Within the last 2 years (2015 and 2016), about 26000 foreigners got the status of political refugee in Belgium and the permission to stay in our country. Those 26000 people need to be integrated in the community and economy in order to feel comfortable and to not affect the national balance both financially and socially. But only 3% of all refugees above 25 years are employed. This means financial dependency and hurdle of integration.

**Purpose:** Different reasons were at the origin of this project.

- ✓ Improve the understanding of Walloon Citizens about refugees, their stories, their mentality
- ✓ Give an overview about the current situation in Europe, Belgium and Wallonia
- ✓ Reduce the reluctance of entrepreneurs, CEO to hire refugees

**Start date:** March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**End date:** March 18<sup>th</sup>, 2017

**Target:** all Walloon citizens, but mostly entrepreneurs, CEO

**SDG goal (select 1 out of the 17):** 10 = reduced inequalities

**Development stage:** 2: Education & economic empowerment

### Overview:

#### Community Needs Analysis

- 26000 refugees got a residency permit in 2015 and 2016 to stay in Belgium
- only 3% of all refugees older than 25 years are employed

- We realize that the best integration of refugees in a country and its community goes through economic integration
- Most citizens don't know the fundamental rights of a refugee (access to health care, bank account etc etc)
- Most companies either don't dare or don't know how to hire refugees, this is even more relevant in the French Speaking Part of Belgium

### **Actions taken to overcome the community needs**

- Our idea was to bring on the same table during 1 day experts, refugees, employers and each person interested in the matter of refugees
- The aim of this conference was to
  - give some general informations about the situation in Europe, Belgium and Wallonia and giving a topic on the political, economic and social status
    - For the information session, we were proud to have amongst us
      - The Minister of Employment
      - experts from UNHCR,
      - the head of the "Task Force" in charge to solve the "refugee crises",
      - responsables of the public service for unemployed people and
      - several head of NGO
    - share some stories from refugees coming from Syria and several African Countries
  - exchange about several specific topics with experts and participants to increase awareness of our citizens and company owners
  - coming up with several ideas of project JCI could realize in the future in collaboration with other NGOs and citizens and submit a resolution to our regional Government

### **Project's impact in the community**

- we gathered around 60 people of all sectors (students, employers, academics, JCI Members, politics, experts) to discuss and exchange about the actual topic of the refugees
- we created awareness of the current situation in the community
- we came up with 4 ideas of potentiel projects we could realize during this year
- participants connected with officials to increase the collaboration in the future in order to help the integration of refugees either through trainings or employment
- increase the awareness of JCI in the community through several media presences
- enhance the collaboration between JCI and the Government

## b) Objectives, Planning and Execution

### 1) *What were the objectives of this program?*

- a. 26000 refugees got a residency permission during the years 2015 and 2016 to stay in Belgium; only 3% of all refugees older than 25 years are employed.  
It is evident that best integration of refugees can be won by their integration both in the community and economy but most entrepreneurs are reluctant to hire foreigners, with a for them dubious background.
- b. We wanted to organize a conference to create awareness about the current situation of refugees both on community and economy level in Belgium. To do it most appropriate, our idea was to bring on the same table experts, refugees, entrepreneurs and each interested citizen on this topic. By doing this, we enhanced an exchange about current situation and ideas how to improve understanding, awareness and integration.
- c. One part of the day was planned to be interactive to promote exchanges between refugees, citizens, stakeholders and entrepreneurs in order to create new project ideas

### 2) *How does this program align to the JCI Plan of Action?*

- a. **IMPACT:** gathering people concerned about or interested in the issues of refugee's integration to help them to understand the current situation. By growing the awareness of the issues, they start thinking about how they can change their attitude and help the integration of refugees in their community. At the end of the day, we came up with four ideas of projects helping the integration at different levels  
Refugees were able to get in touch immediately with Head of Departments and politicians working on the solutions of integration and could share their own stories and difficulties
- b. **MOTIVATE:** create the willingness of participants to be involved in projects to help the integration of foreigners in their own community
- c. **INVEST:** we were able to get financial support from the "King Baudouin Foundation" and from the French speaking Parliament to offer this conference for free for all participants; All other NGOs agreed to participate in our event for free;
- d. **COLLABORATE:** we were able to gather a lot of like-minded stakeholders in order to make a relevant and evidence based discussion like
  - i. Minister of Employment, Eliane Tillieux
  - ii. Experts from UNHCR, Frederic Smets
  - iii. The head of the "Task Force" from the Federation of Belgian Enterprises, in charge to solve the "refugee crises", Anton Sabbe
  - iv. Responsibles of the public service for unemployed people (FOREM) Hilde Gillebert, Valéry Hamende
  - v. Several head of NGO, like "Duo For a Job", "Ciré", etc

- e. **CONNECT:** as our participant's spectrum was large, we were able to gather refugees with entrepreneurs, students, academics, citizens; the mutual understanding has grown and will encourage the elaboration of new projects

### **3) Was the budget an effective guide for the financial management of the project?**

As each JCI project, the financial balance is very important. We absolutely wanted to offer this day for free for all our participants. Globally, most of the speakers accepted to come for free to share their knowledge. The Walloon Parliament accepted to host us for free and even support the event financially. We were also able to get a financial support of the "King Baudouin Foundation". The financial outcome was positive (several 100€) and we considered investing the benefit in one of the project ideas.

### **4) How does this project advance the JCI Mission and Vision?**

#### **a. MISSION: To provide development opportunities that empower young people to create positive change**

During the preparation, we were able to engage 2 young ladies to help us with the organization of the project. Both were not yet JCI member at that moment, one of both was a candidate member. They learned a lot about JCI but more so, they learned about the organization of a conference and to get in touch with numerous other organizations and stakeholders. Most of our participants were young citizens who want to create a change in their community by starting a project. We definitely initiated some positive change in the world of our refugees by allowing them to meet people of influence.

#### **b. VISION: to be the leading global network of young active citizens**

This project definitely helped JCI to get better known both at political and of community level and to increase the awareness of our relevance. Several participants wanted to know more about JCI and were interested in joining JCI afterwards.

### **c) Cooperation for the sake of World Peace**

#### **a. How did this project extend the presence of peace in your community?**

Very often, people don't like each other or avoid to get in touch because the unknown makes them feel uncomfortable. By gathering refugees with citizens, entrepreneurs and politicians, we helped to increase the understanding both of cultural differences and political decisions what are often the stone of contention for fear, violation and separatism. Once you reduce the barrier of fear for the unknown, you can easily see how friendships grow because you discover likeminded people from around the world.

#### **b. How was cooperation used to promote peace?**

Gathering people from different cultural, social, economic background on the same table is the best way to meet, exchange and understand each other.

Once you can understand the other, you start like each other and will do everything to make the other feel comfortable. Gathering people is the first step towards sustainable peace.

In addition, all participants went home with new insights and ideas they can implement in their own community what will help the integration of the refugees all over the region.

Integration is a first and important step towards peace.

## **d) Community Impact**

### ***1) What was the intended community impact?***

By organizing this conference, we intended to create awareness in our community about the issues refugees are facing on a daily basis.

Citizens should understand the background of refugees and integrate them in their community.

We wanted entrepreneurs understanding the added value an employee coming from different horizons, cultures and education can bring to their company.

We wanted to offer all citizens to meet people who are working hard every day to make the integration of refugees possible.

### ***2) Describe the actual community impact produced by this project.***

We gathered around 60 people of all sectors (students, employers, academics, JCI Members, politics, experts) to discuss and exchange about the actual topic of the refugees.

We created awareness of the current situation of refugees in the community.

We came up with 4 ideas of potential projects we could realize during this year

Participants connected with officials to increase the collaboration in the future in order to help the integration of refugees either through trainings or employment.

We increased the awareness of JCI in the community through several media presences

We enhanced the collaboration between JCI and the Government

## **e) Impact on Local Organization**

### ***1) How did the Local Organization benefit from running this project***

Above the aspect of perfecting the project management skills, each commission member was able to learn a lot about the issues of refugees, was able to understand where the difficulties are.

They could meet other young, like minded people battling every day for the quality of life of those foreigner stranded in our country.

The organization of the conference strengthened the contacts with local and regional governments and other NGOs.

### ***2) How did the program advance the JCI Mission?***

During the preparation, we were able to engage 2 young ladies to help us with the organization of the project. Both were not yet JCI member at that moment, one of both was a candidate member. They learned a lot about JCI but more so, they learned about the organization of a conference and to get in touch with numerous other organizations and stakeholders.

Most of our participants were young citizens who want to create a change in their community.  
We definitely initiated some positive change in the world of our refugees by allowing them to meet people of influence.

### **3) *How did the project advance the JCI Vision?***

This project definitely helped JCI to get better known and to increase the awareness of our relevance as young active citizen organization. Several participants wanted to know more about JCI and were interested in joining JCI afterwards.

As young active citizens, we took the lead in a very relevant topic during the last years and brought together all sectors of society

## **f) Long-term Impact of the Program**

### **1) *What is the expected long-term impact of this project?***

There was a wish to conclude the day with several ideas, participants could implement in their community in order to make a long lasting change and help the integration of the refugees in Belgium.

To emphasize our intention, we wrote a resolution what was submitted to the regional government.

Some participants reverted to their employers in order to take some ideas of projects over in order to adopt them on their own community.

### **2) *What changes would you make to improve the results of this project?***

The follow-up of the participants and the implementation of their project ideas could have been more intense in order to ensure their implementation and offer our help to do so.

## **g) Images**

Please find in attachment a collection of feedback we got from participants, refugees and keynotes

Samedi 18 mars 2017 | 9h à 17h | Parlement de Wallonie à Namur



# INTÉGRATION DES RÉFUGIÉS DANS NOTRE ÉCONOMIE

## QUE POUVONS-NOUS FAIRE?

Conférences plénières | Ateliers interactifs  
Entrée gratuite | Lunch et drink de clôture offerts

### MATINÉE - SÉANCE PLÉNIÈRE

UNHCR - Frederik SMETS  
Ministre Emploi et Formation - Eliane TILLIEUX  
FEB - Anton SABBE  
FOREM - Hilde GILLEBERT  
DISCRI / CRIC - Thierry TOURNOY

APRÈS-MIDI - ATELIERS THÉMATIQUES ET PARTICIPATIFS AXÉS SUR  
Formations, équivalence des diplômes et compétences linguistiques  
Accès au travail, opportunités professionnelles en Belgique  
Genre et défis de l'intégration sur le marché de l'emploi  
Concrétiser son projet communautaire

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