

Accommodation Sharing: Matching Refugees with Homeowners

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Why did we select this case?

In the midst of a global refugee crisis, the influx of refugees into cities especially in Europe, presents major challenges. Managing this fraught situation is of paramount importance. While much public focus has been on the role of national and supranational institutions, it is municipalities who are responsible for planning, delivering, and, in some cases, financing the housing, education, and full integration of new arrivals. Especially, affordable housing for refugees is a challenge for many cities. Online platforms are able to aggregate and activate existing housing capacity from individuals and communities, thereby (partly) reducing the pressure on governmental services and potentially smoothening the integration of new citizens.

About the Case

What?

Online platforms such as **Refugees Welcome** and **Airbnb** are giving locals the opportunity to offer a part of their living space to refugees. Refugees Welcome is a bottom-up initiative that operates as a non-profit organization. Airbnb is a limited company who offers [Airbnb.com/welcome](https://airbnb.com/welcome) at zero financial costs.

How?

Refugees Welcome works with a buddy system that connect home owners to refugees and assist in crowdfunding the rent. [Airbnb.com/welcome](https://airbnb.com/welcome) works with partner NGO's who screen both parties and assist with the matching process.

Why?

Refugees Welcome was founded to help solve the refugees crisis in a way that allows newcomers to live within existing communities. [Airbnb.com/welcome](https://airbnb.com/welcome), according to Airbnb, was launched because existing Airbnb users asked for the possibility, and the company decided to make it possible. People who want to offer a home do have to create an Airbnb profile.

Where?

Refugees Welcome is active in: Germany, Portugal, the Netherlands, Northern-Ireland, Canada, Austria, Spain, Poland, Czech Republic, Australia, Greece, Sweden, Italy and Romania. Airbnb is setting up partnerships with NGO's from the following countries: France, Canada, Greece, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United States. But anyone from any country can offer its home.

Impact of the Idea

- Refugees Welcome has thus far enabled +1000 matches.
- Airbnb.com/welcome has served during 65 emergencies and matched thousands of homes with those in need.

'Why shouldn't refugees be able to live in flatshares or houses instead of camps? We thought so too and found a way to make it happen.' - Refugees Welcome



Want to know more?

- <http://www.refugees-welcome.net/>
- <https://www.airbnb.com/welcome/refugees>
- <https://medium.com/@joegebs/opening-more-homes-to-people-in-need-4e8e975cf14c>

