

REFUGEE INCLUSION The POWER of POTENTIAL

FOUNDED BY CHOBANI CEO HAMDI ULUKAYA IN 2016, THE TENT Partnership for Refugees now includes over 100 large multinational corporations headquartered all over the world. The coalition is dedicated to making the economic case for refugee engagement and reframing the debate—away from victimhood and a societal burden, and toward seeing refugees as entrepreneurs, suppliers, customers and employees, able to be of benefit to businesses and to society as a whole. • Over the last decade, the issue of refugee inclusion has landed in front of business leaders on a number of occasions. The US travel ban on Muslim-majority countries in 2017, in which the US administration reduced the number of refugees it takes in, halted most refugees from Syria, and revoked tens of thousands of visas. The decision prompted 80 CEOs, former CEOs and business leaders from 77 companies to speak out against the policy, highlighting the economic case for immigrants and refugees. However, absent such a dramatic flashpoint, support for refugee populations has often been sidelined as an issue of philanthropy.

Beyond the social impact of supporting refugee communities, an inclusive approach also makes good economic sense. Leaders from the Tent Partnership, a coalition of over 100 multinationals, talk about their work with Brunswick's **TOM MCGIVAN** and **ANN-KATHRIN RICHTER**.



Quasim Jabbar Munshid Aljaberi sold his house in Iraq to pay ransom when his wife was abducted. He and his family came to Berlin as refugees in 2016.



Alan Ramadan, a Syrian refugee who came to Germany in 2012, attends an industrial mechanic training program in Hanover held by US company Johnson Controls International.

PHOTOGRAPH: ALEXANDER KOERNER/GETTY IMAGES

PHOTOGRAPH: CARSTEN KOALL/GETTY IMAGES

The Tent Partnership for Refugees marked its launch with the publication of the report “Refugees Work: A Humanitarian Investment That Yields Economic Dividends.” The report was the first comprehensive, international study of how refugees can contribute to advanced economies. The report found that investing one euro in welcoming refugees can yield nearly two euros in economic benefits within five years.

“Refugees can contribute economically in many ways: as workers of all skill levels, entrepreneurs, innovators, taxpayers, consumers and investors,” the report says. “Their efforts can help create jobs, raise the productivity and wages of local workers, lift capital returns, stimulate international trade and investment, and boost innovation, enterprise and growth.”

Tent’s work with companies has focused on several benefits businesses that hire refugees can realize, which include increased retention and recruitment, increased productivity and innovation, increased employee engagement and growth, and enhanced brand value and reputation. Through research and collective experience, the Tent

Of the world’s
30
million refugees,
only a small percentage can return home any given year. More than half will be displaced for 21 years.

Partnership has consistently demonstrated the economic and broader societal benefits that derive from business engaging with refugees in new and meaningful ways.

Brunswick recently hosted a webinar where three Tent directors laid out how companies can help refugees and the benefits for doing so. Scarlet Cronin is Senior Director of Private Sector Partnerships at Tent, overseeing its global member base. Previously she was Director of the Clinton Global Initiative (which is also where Brunswick, together with over a dozen other organizations, launched Open For Business in 2015).

Ms. Cronin was joined by Andreas Wolter, Director of European Partnerships at Tent, and Noni Rossini, Director of Marketing and Communications. Below is an edited version of their presentation followed by questions from webinar participants.

SCARLET CRONIN: Our founder, Hamdi Ulukaya, is an immigrant to the US who launched an incredibly successful company called Chobani. He made the business decision several years ago, when he was looking for employees at his factory in upstate New

York, to start hiring refugees, who now make up about 30 percent of its workforce and come from nearly 20 different countries. It turned out to be an incredibly sound business decision.

From this personal insight, he launched Tent. We now have more than 100 major multinational companies in this global coalition—companies in all sectors and geographies, including Shell, Philips, Starbucks, Adidas, H&M and more.

We pride ourselves on being able to provide tailored guidance to them, making it as easy as possible for companies to engage. A large part of our focus too is on sharing best practices, examples of what's worked and what hasn't for companies supporting refugees. In addition, we commission research to help inform these businesses in their work to support refugees.

We can also connect companies interested in a specific project to the best-in-class local organizations that they can work with. We have built up an ecosystem of local organizations all around the world that we have vetted. We understand their strengths and what they bring to the table, so that when we introduce them to companies, we are confident that they will be a good partner for our other companies in the network.

We do not ask for any fee from companies; everything we offer is fully funded by our founder. But we do ask companies to be active and to participate in at least one Tent-hosted event a year. This is an opportunity to share new ideas and new opportunities with them, but it also gives companies a platform to talk about their own work.

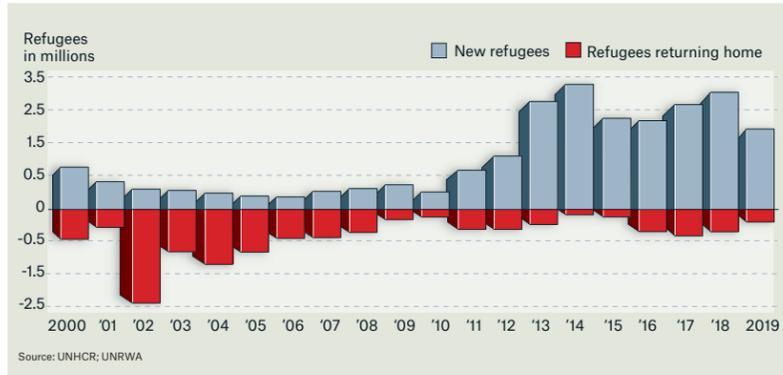
Currently, the number of refugees is at its highest level since World War II, which is when the international community started tracking the numbers. There are almost 30 million refugees worldwide, and at the same time, there are very few opportunities for refugees to be able to return home.

More than half of refugees worldwide are estimated to be displaced for 21 years, so we really are talking about generations of people here. This is why it is so important that we think about not just the short-term or the mid-term, but the long-term impact of refugees. Our work is focused on making the economic case for refugee integration, engaging with businesses to give refugees opportunities to settle and set up new lives in their new communities.

While our work tends to focus on North America, Latin America and Europe, it's important to note that the majority of the world's refugees are not in high-income countries, but in less-developed

SURGING NUMBERS

As the count of new refugees has climbed, the number of them able to return home remains low.



WORKFORCE INCLUSION

Businesses can leverage their core competencies to include refugees in four broad areas.

HIRING + TRAINING
Integrate refugees into your workforce through direct employment programs.

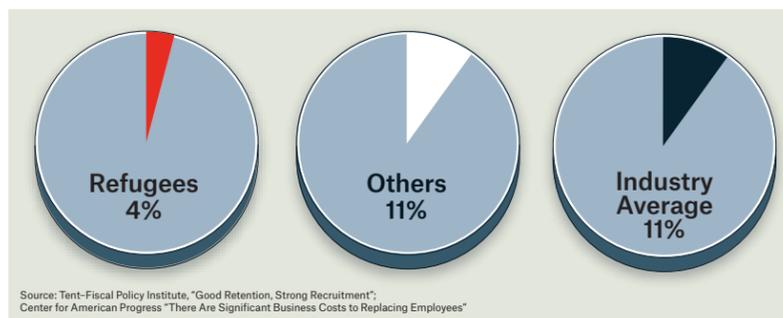
SUPPLY CHAINS
Leverage global supply chain and vendors to include refugees.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Support and enable refugee entrepreneurs and small businesses.

SERVICE DELIVERY
Tailor existing commercial goods and services to better reach refugee populations.

STABILITY BENEFIT

Annual turnover among refugees in US manufacturing jobs is much lower than employees generally.



CHARTS: PETER HOEY

countries. Turkey, Uganda, Ethiopia and Jordan host 8 million refugees with the legal right to work, and there are 3.6 million in Turkey alone.

ANDREAS WOLTER: While a lot of media stories have focused on the hiring of refugees, there are broadly four different areas of work that we focus on. These include hiring and training, supply chains, entrepreneurship, and service delivery.

Hiring and training is where companies directly integrate refugees into their workforce. By training them and bringing them up to speed, they increase their employability. There are several recent examples worth mentioning—to name two, Volkswagen and ABN AMRO. Teleperformance, a French-based company, has committed to hiring 1,000 Venezuelan refugees in Colombia.

In the supply chain area, we ask companies that have significant production operations in various countries to look at their suppliers and try to work together with them on integrating refugees. H&M, the fashion company, has committed to work with its suppliers to integrate and hire refugees in their factories. They have 40-plus suppliers and have agreed to hire 2,000 refugees—around 500 have been hired already. IKEA and Levi Strauss are also interesting examples, as they're actually identifying and using refugees themselves as suppliers.

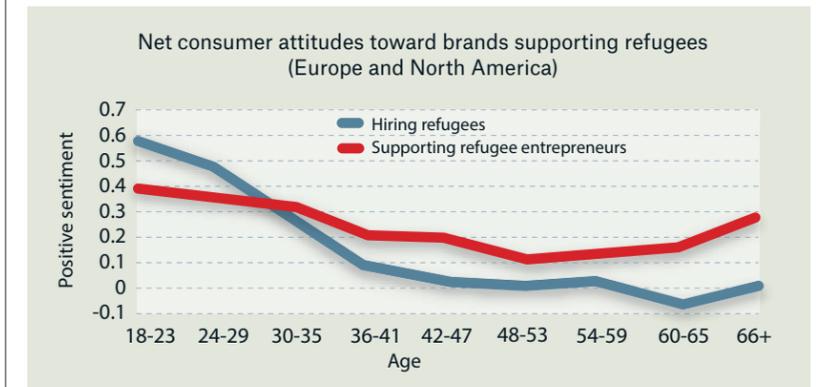
A third area of work concerns encouraging entrepreneurship. Many of the refugees I've worked with come from an entrepreneurial background—maybe their families had a bakery shop or a small garage where they fix cars. Bancamía, for example, is currently providing loans to refugees in Brazil and ING has created over 2,000 new jobs with a similar program in Turkey. Generali, through their foundation, are operating major projects in France and Germany, working together with other non-profit organizations to train refugees to become entrepreneurs.

The fourth area of our work is service delivery. Here we look at refugees as customers and at what companies can do to adapt their product service range to meet refugee customer needs. Turkcell is an outstanding example. The company invests in additional cell phone towers and then hires Arab-speaking agents to reach refugee customers. LinkedIn is another example: They put their mentoring and training features to use in providing support to 5,000 refugees.

We're looking at refugees as entrepreneurs, suppliers, customers or employees in a workforce. What we've found in commissioned research is that

BRAND SUPPORT

By helping refugees, businesses can strengthen their brand and reputation.



The survey, conducted in cooperation with NYU, ranked responses to company actions as -2 for most negative to +2 for most positive; 0 indicates no change in consumer outlook. The average here across age groups skews well into positive territory.

refugee workers are much less likely to leave companies, so there's lower turnover compared to other companies. Refugees are also more willing to relocate if that is what their position in the company requires, sometimes even to another country.

We have also asked consumers how a company working with refugees affects their perception of the brand. In all of the areas where we have done this research—Italy, Germany, France and North America—there is overall support from consumers toward companies that either hire refugees or support refugee entrepreneurs.

An important component of that demographic is millennials. Seventy-eight to 85 percent of respondents in that group say that they are looking for jobs with companies that have a strong set of social and environmental commitments.

And of course, when we talk about the economic case, we cannot lose sight of the impact that these business decisions can have on the lives of these people. Someone from Somalia who is in a desperate situation in a strange country—for that person to get a job or to start a business and be able to support themselves and their family in their new home, the opportunity to work means everything.

How would you advise a company that wants to get involved in this issue?

NONI ROSSINI: Part of what we did in the research about consumer sentiment was to look at what types of actions companies can take that consumers will respond more positively to.

Some more activist companies have called for countries to take in more refugees; Airbnb and Ben

“Someone from Somalia who is in a desperate situation in a strange country—for that person ... the opportunity to work means everything.”

& Jerry's are good examples. On the other hand, a less political position for businesses to take is to support refugees to become entrepreneurs—for this, there is broad support across all ages and political affiliations and far less risk involved for companies.

So what we would say to companies is that, if you're very brave and you want to cut through the noise, and if your consumer base perhaps tends to lean toward being more pro-refugee, there is a place for you to engage in direct public advocacy. But if you're not comfortable going in that general direction there are other actions that you can take that are a lot less divisive and will benefit your brand. Consumers are more likely to purchase from you if you take those actions.

How do you think about your impact—when working with individual businesses and also collectively, through partnership?

SCARLET: We see our role as trying to bring as many smart opportunities as possible to our membership, on an individual basis. What's right for a company in Brazil, for example, may be different for a company in another country.

Within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is a more challenging time to ask companies to think about making big hiring commitments. Companies right now may not want to appear to be preferring hiring refugees over nationals, for instance. So we can bring other opportunities that might feel a little bit easier.

In North America, to give an example of a broader concern, we have an initiative where we're bringing the opportunity to companies to mentor LGBTQ refugees. That's something we've seen a lot of corporate interest in. We're thinking about doing that in Europe or other geographies.

We're constantly trying to look at the landscape and figure out what individual companies need from us. The better the relationships we have with companies, the more we can be useful to them.

NONI: Regarding the collective impact, we do encourage businesses to step up together and make this commitment public, because part of our mission is to encourage companies to come into the Tent fold. But one big thing that we also want to tackle is how do you start to shift the narrative around refugees from being victims to them being empowered, economically productive members of society? Encouraging businesses to make these

“How do you start to shift the narrative around refugees from being victims to them being empowered, economically productive members of society?”

commitments public is a really important way to do that. When the H&Ms and Airbnbs of the world do that, they act as role models. That means that we can encourage a broader cohort of businesses to follow suit and be public about it.

ANDREAS: In addition, it's part of my role to convince companies to roll out their programs to additional countries. We typically start in the country where the company is headquartered, and then either replicate that model in countries B, C and D, or identify models and projects suitable for specific countries. This increases the social impact because we're actually adding countries to the portfolio from one member company.

How can business help shift the narrative around refugees, away from being victims or a burden on society?

NONI: It's not going to happen overnight. For us, what's really important is to get the big brands on board that are willing to speak up, to get involved and to encourage others—and in particular, to hear it beyond the traditionally more liberal and activist companies like Ben & Jerry's or Starbucks. Encouraging other types of companies into the fold, companies that you wouldn't expect to be speaking up for refugees. I think that is what's going to start shifting the dial.

In terms of advocacy itself, that's not really what we do. There are plenty of organizations out there, like the UNHCR and IOCs of the world that do a fantastic job raising the public profile of the issue of the refugee crisis. What we do is actually more focused on the idea of thinking through economic integration, why it's important, and why companies should participate.

There is another strand of our work that is a little bit more advocacy-focused, and that's when it comes to the refugees' right to work. In Malaysia, for example, refugees don't have the right to work and there's a big refugee population, primarily Rohingya, that has fled Myanmar. We put forward the macro business case regarding why companies should allow refugees to work and we will engage governments and try to put forward the case as to why it's really important to give refugees labor market access. ♦

TOM MCGIVAN and **ANN-KATHRIN RICHTER** are Associates with Brunswick's Business & Society offer, helping leaders of companies recognize and cultivate social value at the core of their operations.