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FACTSHEETS

Asylum, Migration
and Integration Fund
(AMIF)



Migration and
Home Affairs

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DEALING WITH AN EMERGENCY: FINDING BEDS FOR REFUGEES

Project name:
Emergency assistance in order to increase the Swedish reception capacity

Purpose:
Supporting Sweden's capacity to manage the influx of refugees

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
Sweden

Project coordinator:
Migrationsverket – Swedish Migration Agency

Budget:
€ 34 999 990

EU contribution:
90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) / Emergency Assistance (EMAS)

Start date:
December 2015

End date:
March 2016

Overview

First, it was a few hundred. But in the following weeks, thousands more asylum seekers would follow.

In September and October 2015, more than 80 000 refugees applied for asylum in Sweden. In November, several tens of thousands followed. In 2015, Sweden took in 162 877 refugees – nearly 15% of all migrants that reached Europe that year. To put this in perspective, Sweden accounts for 2% of the total population of the European Union.

The most urgent challenge was to find beds where refugees could stay for a short period of time. Then, and equally critical, more suitable longer-term space for the refugees needed to be found, in order to give the Swedish Migration Agency the time it required to process all the asylum applications.

At the height of the crisis, more or less every spare bed in Sweden was needed. The Swedish Migration Agency rented spare rooms, flats and houses, booked bed and breakfast accommodation and reserved entire hotels; it took over gyms and sports halls where, in some cases, refugees slept on mattresses on the floor.

All this put an enormous strain on the agency. "At first we simply tried to cope. We had to find beds for these people, and started to procure accommodation with different private actors that could offer possible solutions. This led to a rapid increase in costs," said John Gunnarsson from the Swedish Migration Agency.



Results

The European Commission (EC) supported the Swedish Migration Agency to help it deal with the unforeseen and extraordinary influx of refugees and the associated high costs, and provided EUR 35 million in emergency assistance. With this money the agency paid for 1 686 728 days of accommodation for 55 123 refugees, between 1 December 2015 and 15 March 2016.

In this way the funds helped to increase Sweden's capacity to manage the situation. Thanks to the EC's contribution, Sweden's reception capacity increased, and asylum seekers had a place to stay. It meant that refugees did not have to sleep on the floor in reception halls or other public facilities, or in tents or in the open air.

Lessons learned

Sweden protects people who come to the country fleeing from war and persecution; their humane asylum procedure with short processing times is the basis of the country's asylum policies.

In 2015, at the onset of the European migrant crisis, Sweden already had a shortage of accommodation for refugees. Since then, the situation has become even more dire as the influx of refugees has had knock-on effects. Already backed up, the asylum procedures have become many months longer and it has also increased Sweden's housing shortage.

"There is no way a country can be totally prepared for such emergencies when 20 000 refugees show up each week. One thing has changed, however. The shared experience between different authorities – civil society, volunteers and private companies, etc. – means that we know how to work together. Today we have more knowledge, experience, routines and are therefore better prepared for such an emergency," said John Gunnarsson.

MUCH-NEEDED SUPPORT

The EUR 35 million was both welcome and much-needed, the Swedish Migration Agency wrote in a short report to the European Commission. 'Sweden is grateful to have received such a large share of the funds available for emergency situations. The money from the Commission helped to cover a smaller part of the extraordinary costs incurred by Sweden for asylum accommodation during the period 1 December 2015 to 15 March 2016.'

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2015/AMIF/AG/EMAS/0025

Title: Emergency assistance in order to increase the Swedish reception capacity

Contact: externfinansieringsenheten@migrationsverket.se



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Courtesy of the project (CITIES GROW)

INTEGRATING MIGRANTS THROUGH WORK

Project name:
Cities integrating refugees and migrants through work – CITIES GROW

Purpose:

Helping immigrants find work and start businesses adds value to city economies

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

12 countries: Belgium, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Spain and the UK

16 cities: Athens, Barcelona, Birmingham, Brighton, Dresden, Gdansk, Ghent, Helsinki, Lisbon, Munich, Nantes, Nicosia, Riga, Rotterdam, Tampere and Utrecht

Project coordinator:

EUROCITIES ASBL

Estimated budget:

€ 648 248

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

February 2017

End date:

January 2019



Overview

In almost every city, newcomers make their mark on the local economy. People with the determination needed to start a new life abroad often have a strong work ethic, and some migrants even want to set up their own businesses.

Yet migrants face obstacles as both employees and entrepreneurs. They may not be familiar with the local language, job market and business culture, for instance, and prejudice is often a problem.

This project worked to help migrants and refugees integrate through work. Working together in pairs and small groups, cities across Europe aimed to create policies that help migrants find work, set up businesses and win contracts.

Cities work together in a broad network

This project was led by [EUROCITIES](#), a network of major cities, with support from the [Migration Policy Group](#), [Migration Work-CIC](#) and the Migration Policy Institute. The project formed part of the continuing EUROCITIES Integrating Cities Charter initiative.

Mayors of cities who signed up to the [Integrating Cities Charter](#) commit to integrating migrants through their role as policy-makers, service providers, employers and buyers of goods and services. The current project continues a series of transnational projects funded by the European Commission ([Implementing - City to City support for migrant integration](#), [Making integration work in Europe's cities](#), [DIVE](#) and [Benchmarking Integration Governance in European Cities](#)) to put the Charter into practice by exchanging information, setting standards and promoting action at local level.

Study visits

Representatives from pairs of cities visited one another to discover what each could learn from the other in terms of helping migrants contribute to the economy. These study visits and other contacts formed the basis for four sets of specific guidance that other cities can use:

- Improving access to public and private contracts;
- Other services for migrant entrepreneurs;
- Ways to fight discrimination in the job market;
- How cities can work with other local partners to improve migrants' access to jobs.

Every city has something to learn

The project yielded a large number of case studies and videos that are presented on the project website, as well as the four formal guidance documents on good practice.

Within the partner cities, maintaining continuity sometimes proved challenging due to personnel changes and local elections.

During the project it became clear that the 'mentor' cities with long histories of immigration could still learn from the newcomers, such as Riga and Athens.

Some of the later visits brought together four cities, rather than the two originally planned. This proved a fruitful approach, since more cities could share their experiences and learn from each other. The organisers say they will continue to work this way in their follow-on project, so that concrete practices can spread more readily.

IMMIGRANTS – AND THEIR LABOUR – WELCOME IN LISBON

Portugal's National Immigrant Support Centre welcomes business-minded immigrants to Lisbon, as representatives from Birmingham, Brighton and Utrecht learned during a visit in June 2018. This 'one-stop shop' and its team of 200 mentors give Arabic-language support to help new entrepreneurs develop business plans and find the services they need.

NEW ARRIVALS KEEP OLD SKILLS ALIVE

Stunning African-influenced dirndls (a dirndl is the name of a traditional feminine dress worn in Austria, Germany and Switzerland) created by designer label Noh Nee – run by two sisters from Cameroon – show how migrants can adapt and update traditions from their host countries, as a delegation from Athens discovered on a visit to Munich in November 2017. The Bavarian capital's Chamber of Crafts thinks migrants can help to fill a huge skills gap in this market, while many other local organisations help newcomers learn German, get education and find work.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2015/AMIF/AG/INTE/9073

Title: Cities integrating refugees and migrants through work – CITIES GROW

Contact: integratingcities@eurocities.eu

Twitter: @EUROCITIESweet, @IntegratingCTs, #CitiesGrow, #IntCities2018

Website: www.integratingcities.eu/integrating-cities/projects/cities-grow

Related projects: www.integratingcities.eu/integrating-cities/projects





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SHARING BEST PRACTICES TO INCLUDE VULNERABLE MIGRANTS

Project name:

Enhancing the integration of women, beneficiaries of international protection by the development and implementation of multifaceted integration training – Integra-train

Purpose:

Supporting the successful integration of refugee and migrant women

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

5 countries: Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, Italy and Malta

Project coordinator:

Centre for the Study of Democracy

Estimated budget:

€ 519 134

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

January 2017

End date:

December 2018

The project ends on 30 April 2019. A 4-month no-cost extension of the project was requested and approved by the European Commission.

Overview

European Union Member States are helping each other to deal with refugees and migrants. Best practices from Spain and Italy, countries with a greater experience of refugee integration, are being used in Malta, Greece and Bulgaria where such efforts are less systematic. The Integra-train project focuses on women, commonly a more vulnerable refugee and migrant group.

The 2-year programme focuses on three countries that have little experience with, or lack orientation on, refugee and migrant women. By filling these gaps, the project fosters the integration of groups that need extra care and protection.

Integra-train has a long-term goal: to make its contribution last. The project trains the trainers and makes its training material openly available. It is also helping to transfer knowledge and build capacity. Ultimately the project will fine-tune the successful and effective integration of refugee and migrant women.

Who benefits?

The project benefits refugee and migrant women, especially those that need extra care and protection. With some 75 000 migrants and refugees having arrived in Europe between January and June 2017 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), and following the arrivals of people seeking asylum in 2015 and 2016, Integra-train’s practical actions are acutely relevant.

The project’s immediate focus is on the public services and refugee organisations in Bulgaria, Italy and Malta. The project includes almost 300 staff members from government organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in these three countries. These are all involved in the exchange of best practices and receive the Integra-train project training materials.

Several groups, including staff and volunteers, government organisations and NGOs, were acquainted with the systems in place in Italy and Spain for refugee reception and integration and were introduced to the training services that these two countries use to include vulnerable groups.



Lessons learned

Refugees and migrants need to find their way, but they also need to find their place. Getting migrants and refugees included in society requires them to understand their host country's language, culture and customs, before finding jobs and accessing social services and education. All these topics are included in the Integra-train training material. It also includes practical ways to work with groups of refugees by building dialogue.

One topic directly impacting refugees and migrants is gender equality and women's rights. This is the particular focus of some of the training modules prepared by the Integra-train project.

Putting this training into practice, the government organisations and NGOs quickly realised that, to be effective, the men from refugee communities must also be included. All of the modules were adapted in order to be useful for both genders.

The second practical lesson learnt midway through the 2018 to 2019 Integra-train projects also involved changes to the training materials.

Some of the government organisations and NGOs involved with refugees and migrants, as well as the refugees themselves, eagerly asked for the training materials, so early versions of the modules were shared and discussed. As a result, the local groups got closely involved in the compilation of the material that explains to refugees how to go to a doctor, or how to use a country's public transport services, and how to fit into their new cultural environment. A few refugee organisations took on the modules to use it for the direct training of refugee women. Their work, their observations and the lessons learned will be taken into account.

This has given the locally involved groups an immediate sense of ownership over the material. Dissemination and transfer of ownership is a key goal for the project; the early release of drafts helps the entire 'train the trainer' project reach its goal faster and more effectively.

What next?

To enable future sharing of knowledge and experience, all of the Integra-train training material will be publicly available on the website of the partner organisations in Bulgaria, Italy and Malta. The modules will be finalised once the training is monitored. The results of the training and the final modules will be shared at conferences in Bulgaria, Greece and Malta to encourage governmental institutions and NGOs to use the material.

The European Commission gave the project 4 additional months to finalise its training materials. This extra period gives the project time to include a review of migrant and refugee workers and psychologists' experiences. The experts will help find the best approach to training, including sensitive approaches to topics such as gender equality, women's rights and gender-based violence.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2015/AMIF/AG/INTE/9113

Title: Enhancing the integration of women, beneficiaries of international protection by the development and implementation of multifaceted integration training – Integra-train

Contact: www.csd.bg

Websites of project partners: www.pfcmalta.org/integra-train.html
www.eliamep.gr/en/project/enhancing-the-integration-of-women-beneficiaries-of-international-protection-by-development-and-implementation-of-multifaceted-integration-trainings-integra-train/
www.ihu.edu.gr/gateway/students-alumni/find-a-job/job000927.html



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Courtesy of the project (WEIP)

EXTRA CARE FOR MIGRANT AND REFUGEE WOMEN

Project name:
Women's empowerment, integration
and participation (WEIP)

Purpose:

Supporting the integration of migrant
and refugee women into European
society

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

4 countries: Italy, Poland, Spain
and the UK

Project coordinator:

Latin American Women's Rights
Service

Estimated budget:

€ 510 576

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the
European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration
Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

January 2017

End date:

January 2019

Overview

Due to the feminisation of poverty in developing regions, women are migrating to Europe in growing numbers, looking for better employment and education opportunities. Migration can open up opportunities for women, but it can also reinforce traditional, restrictive, gender stereotypes and roles, increasing women's lack of decision-making power within their families.

In Europe, refugees and migrants come from many cultures. Their interactions often lead to stereotypes, gender clichés and misunderstandings of cultural differences. Such mix-ups cause serious problems for the refugees and migrants, and make things difficult for healthcare professionals, social workers and police.

Migrant and refugee women, in particular, are at risk of falling victim to such misunderstandings. Arriving with little or no host-country language skills, they do not know how to navigate the system. Many end up trapped in low-skill jobs with low pay, and often fall victim to violence and abuse, including through sexual exploitation. It is therefore important to empower women to take greater control of their lives.

To tackle this problem, the Women's empowerment, integration and participation (WEIP) project supported migrant and refugee women in four countries: Italy, Poland, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Important to increase awareness

The WEIP project realises the importance of increasing the awareness of policy-makers, front-line service providers and professionals in the legal sector working with migrant and refugee women (MRW) to strengthen their understanding of the realities of MRW and the challenges they face. It is also important that professionals working with MRW have the knowledge to better respond to the gender-specific needs of these women and to foster their successful integration in the host country. Social workers have started



to investigate the size and particularities of this group, in an effort to reach them more easily and to avoid misunderstandings and mistakes.

The project had two goals. The first of these was to provide new and recent migrant and refugee women with a better start to life in four EU countries and to improve their chances of integration in the host country by increasing their skills, access to services and employment opportunities. In this way, the project helped migrant and refugee women and girls find their way in unfamiliar societies.

Secondly, the project aimed to transfer knowledge and build capacity on the successful integration of migrant and refugee women with front-line service providers, professionals and organisations working with them at national and EU levels. The project spoke with doctors and nurses who then briefed sociologists and psychologists while the organisations spoke directly with police officers, and informed politicians. Thanks to workshops and conferences, these public services and authorities now have a better understanding of migrant and refugee women.

“When women first come to us, some feel isolated and even depressed as a result of their migration experience. They are far away from their loved ones. They are unable to fully use their qualifications and skills. They don’t feel confident in the local language. Some women and their children face domestic abuse and violence. They don’t know how to talk about this, or how to get help and support,” said project officer Alma Gatica. “It is quite inspiring to see the changes taking place over time. Thanks to our advice, support and participation in this project, these women have regained their self-esteem and confidence.”

WORKSHOPS

The Women’s empowerment, integration and participation project organised close to 100 workshops, which were open to those working with refugee and migrant women. The project organised specialist training for front-line care providers and public services.

The project created posters and leaflets, which were hung in the many buildings of organisations involved with migrant and refugee women, including consulates and embassies.

The project devised and used an advocacy and communications plan. This included the use of social media such as Facebook and Twitter, and the websites of the organisations involved in the project.

Outreach

The project reached out to some of the most vulnerable refugee and migrant women. These are recently arrived women who face language barriers, or who endured abuse at home, or are stricken by poverty.

These women have now made their first steps to adapt to their host country. There have been introductory language courses; the project organised dozens of events on cultural integration; women were shown where and how to look for suitable jobs, how to access healthcare and to find adequate housing. The project helped several dozen women to find volunteer work. There was also specialist care and advice for close to 100 women and girls who had been beaten and abused.

In all these activities, the project made available crèche services, enabling single mothers to participate in the activities and integrate into the wider community.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2015/AMIF/AG/INTE/9155

Title: Women’s empowerment, integration and participation (WEIP)

Contact: lucila@lawrs.org.uk, alma@lawrs.org.uk

Website: www.lawrs.org.uk/empowerment-integration-and-participation



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Courtesy of IOM Bulgaria

SUPPORTING BULGARIA'S ASYLUM AND MIGRATION CAPACITY

Project name:

Strengthening the national capacity of the Republic of Bulgaria in the fields of asylum and migration

Purpose:

Purpose: Helping Bulgaria deal with the influx of migrants and asylum-seekers

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

Bulgaria
7 locations: Pastrogor, Sofia, Lyubimets, Banya, Elhovo, Malko Tarnovo and Harmanli

Project coordinator:

Bulgarian Ministry of Interior

Estimated budget:

€ 18 882 860

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) / Emergency Assistance (EMAS)

Start date:

October 2016

End date:

September 2019

Overview

The refugee crisis generated by the ongoing conflicts in the Middle East, particularly the war in Syria and the instability in Iraq and Afghanistan, has been at the forefront of public attention in recent years. A number of countries in Europe has been disproportionately affected by this problem, in particular Bulgaria. Since 2013, this country, located on the main refugee path from the Middle East to Europe, has seen its capacity for processing and supporting migrants and asylum seekers stretched to the limits as a result of the ongoing instability.

According to Bulgarian statistics, the number of applications for international protection increased to around 12 000 at the end of August 2016, compared to around 7 000 at the end of the same period in 2015. Most of these applications (about 87 %) were submitted by migrants entering Bulgaria from the three countries mentioned above.

Problem addressed

The registration and reception centres run by the Bulgarian State Agency for Refugees were at 89% capacity in September 2016, which is a sharp increase in comparison to the average percentages in July (25 %) and August (52 %). The number of people accommodated at the centres is growing rapidly as a result of the increasing flow of migrants into Bulgaria, together with the increased effectiveness of the controls along the borders with Serbia and the North Macedonia, which have prevented migrants from moving on through these countries.

The capacity of closed centres accommodating migrants who have been detained on various grounds, such as entering the country illegally or overstaying their legal permission to be in the country, is also insufficient. Official Bulgarian figures put the occupancy rate of these centres at 180%.



Project goals

To deal with these issues and with the increasing flow of migrants to Bulgaria, the national migration and asylum system urgently needs to be equipped with spare reception capacity, as well as improved living conditions and services for third-country nationals.

With this goal in mind, the project is working to achieve an overall accommodation capacity of 10 000 places. This includes 1 000 places at Migration Directorate Centres for those awaiting initial processing or to return to their home country; 6 000 places at the State Agency for Refugees for people waiting to have their asylum application processed; and 3 000 places at temporary crisis centres for those awaiting initial processing or for their asylum application to go through.

This project is supported by a second, related project (entitled Further strengthening the national capacity of the Republic of Bulgaria in the field of asylum, migration and return), which is working to increase public awareness of the EU's emergency assistance, its objectives and the impact it has on asylum and migration policies.

Intended impact

By targeting the main weaknesses identified in the fields of asylum and migration, the project will increase Bulgaria's capacity to accommodate people seeking international protection. The project is also providing the main necessities of life, such as food, water, medical assistance, heating, etc. for the people accommodated at all the relevant state centres. In addition, work is being carried out to improve the provision of related services, such as psychological and social assistance, translation services for migrants, and so on.

Another aspect of the project is to encourage the voluntary return of migrants to their countries of origin, by providing sustainable solutions to people wishing to take advantage of these opportunities.

The work carried out so far has already helped improve reception conditions for asylum seekers and has provided specialised assistance to migrants, especially vulnerable migrants. Furthermore, the number of undocumented migrants receiving effective counselling regarding the option to voluntarily return home has increased.

KEY ACTIONS

- Create emergency accommodation with capacity for 3 000 people;
- Modernise transit centre in Pastrogor;
- Cover operating costs for centres of the State Agency for Refugees, Ministry of the Interior and other centres;
- Improve reception, particularly psychosocial assistance;
- Counter-trafficking support to vulnerable migrants and unaccompanied minors;
- Counselling on voluntary return possibilities;
- Implementation of individual voluntary return plans.

MORE INFORMATION

Website: [HOME/2016/AMIF/AG/EMAS/0044](#)

Title: Strengthening the national capacity of the Republic of Bulgaria in the fields of asylum and migration

Contact: IPD: dmp@mvr.bg, IOM: iomsofia@iom.int, Bulgarian Red Cross: www.redcross.bg

Websites: [Министерство на вътрешните работи](#)
www.redcross.bg
www.iom.bg

Report: [World Migration Report](#)

Related project: Further strengthening the national capacity of the Republic of Bulgaria in the field of asylum, migration and return - [HOME/2016/AMIF/AG/EMAS/0046](#)



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GREECE WANTS TO TREAT ASYLUM SEEKERS FAIRLY

Project name:
Ensuring and enhancing access to a fair and efficient asylum process in Greece

Purpose:
Emergency funding for hard-pressed Greek asylum services helps ensure fair and speedy treatment for migrants

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
Greece

Project coordinator:
The Asylum Service of the Greek Ministry of Migration Policy

Estimated budget:
€ 7 250 528

EU contribution:
100%

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) / Emergency Assistance (EMAS)

Start date:
December 2017

End date:
May 2019

Overview

On the Greek islands, thousands of refugees wait to find out if the EU will let them stay. Living conditions are often poor, yet delays can be long as Greece's Asylum Service struggles to keep pace with new arrivals. Resources provided through this project are helping the authorities to process asylum applications more quickly, yet fairly.

The funding allows essential interpreting and translation services to continue. It lets Asylum Service staff travel to cover surges in demand, and provides computers and office furniture for new staff. In the future there will be a dedicated computer system for managing asylum applications. The fund also pays the expenses of 20 police officers working directly with asylum seekers on the islands.

Struggling to keep up

The Asylum Service is expanding rapidly and now has around 800 people working for it. However, the authorities still cannot keep up with the numbers of refugees arriving on Greece's Aegean islands, notably from Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Turkey. In the first half of 2018 the service was processing approximately 4 000 cases per month.

This project is helping the Asylum Service and the police meet basic requirements for staffing, interpretation, equipment and IT. The ultimate aim is to ensure that Greece has the resources to process all asylum applications quickly and fairly.



Interpreters are key

Funding from the project has benefited asylum seekers via three routes: the Asylum Service, the Hellenic Police, and METAdrasi, an independent organisation that provides interpreting and translation services.

Keeping the service going

With budgets stretched thin, meeting even basic travel costs for Asylum Service staff is difficult. Funds from the project allow staff to travel between Athens and local offices on the islands to meet surges in demand, and for training.

To handle growing refugee numbers the Asylum Service has taken on some 200 people in the last year. This project has helped to provide them with the basic office furniture and computers they need to do their jobs.

METAdrasi has been able to continue to provide essential interpreting and translation services, along with the high-level training its staff members need to be able to work in the sensitive area of asylum applications.

EUR 609 000 from the project has funded the deployment of 20 police officers to the islands. They play an essential part in communicating decisions to asylum seekers in the context of the EU-Turkey agreement on returning people to Turkey.

An ongoing endeavour

This project is just one part of a bundle of support measures that help the Greek authorities manage the migration crisis on the EU's southern borders. Ongoing support is essential and the Asylum Service is preparing a similar project application for the year to come.

INTERPRETERS ON THE FRONT LINE

With most migrants speaking little or no Greek, interpreters are vital. The Greek non-governmental organisation METAdrasi plays a key role here, helping asylum seekers to tell their stories and the authorities to gather the facts they need. Without continued funding, METAdrasi's future role was in grave doubt. The bulk of the funding (EUR 3.9 million) has gone to METAdrasi.

AN IT SYSTEM FIT FOR THE JOB

Information technology can help use scarce resources efficiently. Out of the EUR 2.7 million it has received, the Asylum Service plans to use around EUR 1.25 million to commission a purpose-designed IT system that will be rolled out in stages. This project is currently out for tender.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2017/AMIF/AG/EMAS/0057

Title: Ensuring and enhancing access to a fair and efficient asylum process in Greece

Contact: pmi@asylo.gov.gr

Social media accounts: [Facebook Greek-Asylum-Service-Υπηρεσία-ΑσύλουΥπ-Μεταναστευτικής-Πολιτικής-481351218685655](#)
(Asylum Service in general)

Website: <http://asylo.gov.gr/en>



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MOVING TOWARDS A MORE INCLUSIVE EUROPEAN LABOUR MARKET

Project name:
Labour market integration of migrants: a multi-stakeholder approach – LABOUR-INT

Purpose:
Supporting asylum seekers and refugees with labour market integration and sharing best practices

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
3 countries: Belgium, Germany and Italy

Project coordinator:
European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC)

Estimated budget:
€ 648 969

EU contribution:
88 % co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
December 2016

End date:
November 2018



What was the project about?

The purpose of the project was to promote employment as a way of integrating refugees and asylum seekers into European society. To achieve this, LABOUR-INT built on the interest and capacities of trade unions, employers, chambers of commerce, industry and migrants’ associations. This innovative approach, based on cooperation between different stakeholders, allowed recently arrived migrants the opportunity to take part in skills assessment, training and, eventually, job placements. The aim was to not only support a swift integration of the migrants involved in the project into the labour market but also to develop the project partners’ capacities and tools.

The goals

The project aimed to improve the capacities of multiple stakeholders (including trade unions, employers, chambers of industry and commerce, and migrants’ associations) to create a supportive environment for workplace integration, and to carry out detailed skills assessments. This project identified best practices for workplace integration in order to help asylum seekers and refugees gain a foothold in European society.

The project also aimed to highlight the added value of migrant labour for the European workforce, showing that businesses can benefit from the new skills and experiences brought by these workers.

Achievements

To date, in Belgium, more than 40 asylum seekers have completed training in the hotel, catering and construction sectors. In Italy, another 40 asylum seekers studied language and civic education courses, and subsequently took up paid internships and jobs. In Germany, 13 vocational trainers were trained, who then developed training manuals and online tools to help others.

By communicating and exchanging their best practices, the partners involved in the project improved their integration programmes. As a result, a large number of migrants are now involved in work activities. This success is largely due to the willingness of businesses and trade unions to work together with other partners to integrate migrants. This also enabled local authorities to develop common programmes to help the migrants' work integration and social inclusion.

In addition to the provision of language courses, citizenship education and vocational training for migrants, this project has shown the importance of bringing people from different backgrounds into the workforce and developing their skills. The skills and experience that they bring can benefit not only their employers but also the whole of society.

INTEGRATION TOOLBOX

Network building that identifies challenges, policy drivers and common plans;

Capacity building that increases the effectiveness of processes already in place;

Result-oriented actions based on findings in each participating country;

New instruments and tools for assessing skills before placing people in suitable jobs.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2015/AMIF/AG/INTE/9085

Title: Labour market integration of migrants; a multi-stakeholder approach – LABOUR-INT

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Website: [LABOUR-INT](#)

Reports: [Expert Group on Skills and Migration](#)



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FORGING PARTNERSHIPS ON MIGRATION

Project name:
Mobility Partnership Facility - MPF

Purpose:
Promoting political dialogue and cooperation on migration between EU Member States and partner countries

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
EU-wide

Project coordinator:
International Centre for Migration Policy Development – ICMPD

Estimated budget:
€ 5.5 million (MPF I);
€ 12.5 million (MPF II)

EU contribution:
100% funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF), Internal Security Fund - Police (ISFP), Internal Security Fund - Borders and Visa (ISFB)

Start date:
January 2016

End date:
December 2020



Overview

Migration is currently high on the political agenda and is often the subject of highly charged debates. In this environment, Mobility Partnerships (MPs) and Common Agendas on Migration and Mobility (CAMMs) help promote a structured dialogue on migration between Member States of the European Union and partner countries.

The Mobility Partnerships Facility (MPF) offers public authorities in EU Member States a framework for enhanced, tailor-made dialogue to strengthen their cooperation, expand their networks and deepen their understanding of institutional realities within the context of migration.

Building bridges

Since its launch, the MPF has built bridges between EU Member States and partners along four strands. The first of these (Strand A) calls for targeted actions to implement MPs and CAMMs. Over the past 2 years, the project has triggered a total of 18 actions involving authorities from 17 Member States, and from 6 countries with MPs and 2 with CAMMs.

The second strand (Strand B) covers horizontal activities to support MPs and CAMMs by creating a solid knowledge base to enable a more critical review of ongoing activities and policy processes. This includes workshops and conferences and also the development of new tools to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the MPs and CAMMs.

Strand C is dedicated to the 'Prague Process: Data, Analyses and Training in Action', which brings 50 states from Europe and Asia together in an inter-governmental dialogue on migration. Two components of the initiative were set up in 2018: the Prague Process Migration Observatory and the Training Academy. The first of these focuses on producing easy-to-read analysis on a variety of migration policy priorities, while the second provides advanced training for state officials, along with materials for independent training at national level.

Under the fourth strand (Strand D), pilot projects in the area of legal migration are implemented with selected African partner countries.

Results

Since its creation, the MPF has been able to bring together and reinforce bi- and multi-lateral cooperation among the public authorities of EU Member States and partner countries. Over 850 officials have been involved in capacity-building activities in fields ranging from integrated border management and trafficking in human beings to vocational training for labour inclusion, in addition to social economy and asylum procedures. At the same time the MPF has helped support 80 migrants in setting up businesses, seeking better jobs or conducting labour market searches in their home countries, while safely returning over 250 citizens.

Lessons learned

The MPF is not only a funding instrument to implement actions mutually beneficial to EU and partner countries within the framework of the priorities set in the MPs or CAMMs. It is also a tool to promote and enhance dialogue on migration and mobility, and to test out new possibilities for cooperation.

The MPF horizontal components and grants enhance the capacity and institutional development of administration in partner countries, while promoting good practices implemented within the framework of the MPs at high-level meetings, local cooperation platforms and international events. They also create synergies with other projects and programmes funded under other financial instruments, chiefly to address and manage legal migration and mobility, integrated border management, and return and readmission.

The MPF offers a high degree of flexibility that enables bilateral and multilateral initiatives to be accommodated within a well-established political framework. Migration and mobility issues of mutual concern can be addressed while sharing knowledge and building trust between partners in a targeted way. Existing dedicated national coordination structures enable partner countries to engage in a more proactive and effective manner with EU Member States and EU counterparts, while preserving and capitalising on institutional best practices and lessons learned. Ongoing and upcoming evaluations of MPF actions are likely to provide a wealth of valid inputs to inform national and EU policy-makers.

MENTOR: MEDITERRANEAN NETWORK FOR TRAINING ORIENTATION TO REGULAR MIGRATION

This MPF action was implemented in the framework of the MPs with Morocco and Tunisia.

Coordinated by the [City of Milan](#), with other partners including the City of Turin, the action included study visits for civil servants and local authority representatives from youth and training services in Milan and Turin, a selection of young candidates for professional traineeships, and information campaigns on migration for youth in Tunisia and Morocco.

MPS / CAMMS

Mobility Partnership – a cooperation arrangement providing a bilateral framework for dialogue and cooperation to address migration and mobility issues of mutual concern. MPs are mainly targeted at neighbourhood countries.

Countries which signed a Mobility Partnership with the EU: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Cape Verde, Georgia, Jordan, Morocco, Moldova and Tunisia.

Common Agendas for Migration and Mobility – like the MP, a CAMM is a political framework for comprehensive, enhanced and tailor-made dialogue and cooperation with partner countries.

Countries which signed a Common Agenda on Migration and Mobility with the EU: Ethiopia, India and Nigeria.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2014/MULT/IM/ICMP/0001; AMIF/2017/MULT/DA/MPFI

Title: Mobility Partnership Facility

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Social media accounts: [@MPF_ICMPD](#)

Website: www.icmpd.org/mpf

Reports: [Info notes on Actions implemented under the MPF I Call for Proposal](#)



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HELPING VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING RETURN HOME SAFELY

Project name:

Transnational ACtion to support victims of Trafficking returning to priority countries – TACT

Purpose:

Creating conditions for the safe voluntary return and reintegration of victims of trafficking

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

10 cities - Paris, Warsaw, Athens, Madrid, Rome, Rabat and Casablanca, Tirana and Durres, and Kyiv

Project coordinator:

International Organization for Migration – IOM

Budget:

€ 362 460

EU contribution:

95 % co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund - AMIF

Start date:

May 2015

End date:

October 2016

Overview

Trafficking in human beings is a crime where the perpetrators exploit people's vulnerabilities, which are exacerbated by factors such as poverty, gender inequality, lack of access to education, war, and environmental degradation. Trafficking is a global phenomenon that also affects the EU, where there were 20 532 EU and non-EU victims of trafficking registered in 2015 and 2016.

The TACT project worked to create conditions for the safe and sustainable voluntary return and reintegration of victims of trafficking from France, Greece, Italy, Poland and Spain to three priority countries of origin – Albania, Morocco and Ukraine.

The project helped to build the capacities of authorities in these countries to protect and reintegrate victims being returned voluntarily from the EU. It did this by improving national and transnational cooperation and exchange of information between EU Member States and these countries, and by supporting the returning victims of trafficking, in strategic partnership with civil society.

The project launched an online platform featuring a Transnational Referral Mechanism - TRM, developed as a deliverable of the EU strategy towards the eradication of trafficking in human beings 2012-2016.

Who benefits?

The project worked to build the capacities of the relevant authorities in order to protect and reintegrate victims being returned voluntarily from the EU, helping to ensure the safe and sustainable return and reintegration of both children and adult victims of trafficking. It did this by developing a well-coordinated, transnational approach that put the victims at the centre of its efforts. Monitoring the reintegration process was an important element of the project, making it easier to adapt to situations as they arose and helping to ensure the long-term sustainability of the victims' reintegration.



Best practices and lessons learned

A key aim of the project was to support the safe return of victims of trafficking, by putting in place the necessary mechanisms to help identify victims and to refer them to the relevant services.

One of these mechanisms, and an important tool developed by the project, is the Transnational Referral Mechanism (TRM), linking stakeholders from two or more countries involved in identifying, referring, helping and monitoring victims by defining clear roles for each stakeholder, along with procedures to follow to ensure that victims' rights are protected all along their reintegration path.

The TRM is supported by other project deliverables, including a [Counter-Trafficking Directory](#) targeted at embassy and consulate staff who can act as frontline practitioners and, if they are properly trained, detect potential victims of trafficking. Another tool is the TACT website, which is an online platform that gathers together standard operating procedures for each step of the transnational referral process for the voluntary return and reintegration of victims. What's more, the project organised a number of meetings, conferences and training sessions targeted at stakeholders all along the reintegration chain, ensuring that they have all the information needed to identify and assist victims of trafficking. These efforts were supported by leaflets and other informational materials produced by the project team.

Lessons learned and recommendations from the TACT project, and the distinct but complementary Coordinated Approach for the REintegration of victims of trafficking returning voluntarily to any third country (CARE) project, are contained in the report [Enhancing the safety and sustainability of the return and reintegration of victims of trafficking](#), which is available in French, English and Spanish on the project website.

What next?

The tools developed by the project will continue to be disseminated to a wide range of relevant actors to ensure that future actions build on the project's results.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2014/AMIF/AG/THB/01

Title: Transnational ACTION to support victims of Trafficking returning to priority countries – TACT

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Website: www.iomfrance.org/tact

Reports: [Enhancing the Safety and Sustainability of the Return and Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking](#)

Resources [Transnational Referral Mechanism Counter-Trafficking Directory](#)

Related projects: CARE, CARE+

TERESA'S STORY

Teresa was identified as a victim of trafficking by IOM Poland and referred for assistance through the TACT project. She returned to Ukraine and received assistance from IOM Ukraine, which provided transportation and temporary accommodation, and helped her to set up an individual reintegration plan. Following the reintegration process, Teresa considered and received advice on setting up a manicure-pedicure business.

BACK TO SCHOOL

TACT supported six children from the same location in Morocco, who were returning from Greece. The children were referred as potential victims of trafficking to IOM Paris for inclusion in the project. Three of the children used their TACT reintegration allowance to pay for vocational training courses – two in car mechanics and one in carpentry. Two of the other children used their reintegration allowance to restart secondary school. The grant covered school fees for 2 years and the cost of books. Partnership with a local NGO, Association Bayti, made sure that the youths received continuous follow-up even after the TACT project closed.



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A SHARED JOURNEY: PROMOTING INTERCULTURAL MEDIA SPACES

Project name:

New Neighbours: Mobilising media and civil society actors to foster greater intercultural understanding between migrants and host communities in Europe (New Neighbours)

Purpose:

Raising awareness of the positive contribution made by migrants to the economies and cultures of host countries

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

10 countries: Belgium, the Netherlands, Croatia, Slovenia, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Czech Republic and the UK

Project coordinator:

AISBL EBU-UER

Estimated budget:

€ 1 111 018

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) / Emergency Assistance (EMAS)

Start date:

January 2019

End date:

December 2020

New Neighbours: moving forward with understanding

The aim of the New Neighbours project is to highlight migrants' and refugees' positive social and economic contributions to communities across Europe. By promoting direct participation in media production and intercultural dynamics, the project will foster tolerance and acceptance for migrants and refugees in EU Member States.

The project is based on a deep understanding of the needs and interests of migrants and the wider public, including perceptions of local communities towards migrants, and how migrants view their new communities. Knowing how the communities think and feel towards migrants, and hearing from migrants about how they perceive their new homes, makes it possible to shed light on the positive contribution that migrants can make and reach those who currently view migration and integration in a negative light, thus showing them the valuable contributions migrants and refugees can make to their new communities.

How New Neighbours will get the message out

New Neighbours will work with the general public, the community and social media to foster greater tolerance and acceptance for migrants in the EU Member States. It will challenge stereotypes and expose commonly held myths by delivering innovative messaging in order to help promote the integration of migrants into local communities. This will place migrant voices at the heart of the discussion on migration.

New Neighbours will raise awareness through factual programming, social media-based campaigns and community media. In addition, it will build stronger links between media and community organisations, which in turn will improve the flow of information, helping to deliver the message to a wider and more diverse audience.



The goal of New Neighbours

The central aim of the project is to raise awareness, in particular, of the positive contribution made by migrants to the economies and cultures of the countries where they live.

Through a combination of mainstream media and community media together with community advocacy campaigns, the project will highlight the voices and testimonies of migrants, putting them at the very heart of the discussion by speaking for themselves and telling their stories to a wider audience. This will allow for very real and progressive discussions that will help educate communities and help them grow stronger, together.

NEW NEIGHBOURS WILL:

Raise awareness of the positive contribution made by migrants to the economies and cultures of host countries;

Enable public and community media sectors to facilitate inclusive intercultural dialogue;

Forge stronger links between media and community organisations working in this field;

Challenge stereotypes and debunk commonly held myths.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2017-AG-INTE 821710

Title: New Neighbours: Mobilising media and civil society actors to foster greater intercultural understanding between migrants and host communities in Europe (New Neighbours)

Contact: Christel Goossens goossens@ebu.ch

Website: www.newneighbours.eu





Courtesy of the project (Telling the Real Story 2.0)

BUILDING A STORY FOR THOSE WHO FOLLOW: HOW FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES ARE HELPING OTHERS

Project name:
Telling the real story 2.0 - TRS-AVM

Purpose:

Creating awareness of the dangers of migration through first-hand accounts

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

EU-wide, Africa & Middle East

Project coordinator:

UNHCR

Estimated budget:

€ 3 548 786

EU contribution:

85 % co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

July 2018

End date:

March 2020

Overview

In recent years, people have been migrating from across Africa and the Middle East. Their reasons are many and varied: from fleeing persecution and human rights violations to seeking out better education or employment opportunities.

This project has a simple message for those planning to move to Europe irregularly: ‘You must get correct and truthful information before you decide to go. Do not believe what the smugglers tell you. Make an informed decision.’ While communicating this is important, it also needs to be accompanied by information on legal and safer alternatives for those embarking on what is often a dangerous journey. This will help ensure that the people moving have access to objective, factual and first-hand information.

Telling their stories and delivering a message

The project focuses on the stories of those who have made the journey, returned, and what they have experienced. In addition, given the important role social media plays in the project, Telling the real story reaches settled migrant communities and others, including refugees and those who are still on the move. This allows people to hear first-hand accounts from interviews with refugees and migrants of the struggles they faced during their journey to Europe, and how they are finding life in their new host countries.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) conducted many interviews with the diaspora, and the overall response was very positive. When asked what the project’s main strengths were, interviewees responded that most important for them was its positioning as an unbiased platform for refugees to share their stories.



Without the perception of being a deterrence measure or harbouring any political agenda, the Telling the real story platform gives an opportunity to share experiences freely online. Interviewees highlighted the unique power of storytelling as an effective means of communicating the realities of travelling to Europe.

The results so far

Since the beginning of the project, millions of people have been reached through communication channels such as social media and traditional broadcast media like TV, radio and print. But however impressive this number, the impact of the project is that it is increasingly regarded as a trusted platform that goes beyond simply communicating a message. It has become a credible point of reference that stems from its inclusive approach, involving all strands of migrant communities. It is a reality check for those who are thinking of setting out on their own journey. For some, it is a way for them to relay a nightmare journey that they hope others can learn from. As people continue to move, their stories will better prepare those who follow, providing invaluable information and knowledge. And like a community, they are helping one another, regardless of distance or nationality. This is truly an inclusive effort.

MAIN COMMUNICATIONS CHANNELS

- Online interviews
- Storytelling
- Social Media
- TV
- Radio
- Print media

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2017-AG-IBA-UNHC

Title: Telling the real story 2.0 – TRS-AVM

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Social media accounts: [Twitter: @tellingthereal](#)

[Facebook: @tellingtherealstory – Tigrinya – Somali – Nigerian](#)

[Instagram: www.instagram.com/tellingtherealstory](https://www.instagram.com/tellingtherealstory)

Website: www.tellingtherealstory.org



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FACTS AND FIGURES: THE ASYLUM INFORMATION DATABASE

Project name:
Supporting and developing the Asylum Information Database – AIDA

Purpose:
Strengthening the Asylum Information Database as an authoritative and sustainable research and documentation tool in Europe

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
EU-wide

Project coordinator:
ECRE

Budget:
€ 222 202

EU contribution:
90 % co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
August 2017

End date:
July 2020

What is the Asylum Information Database (AIDA)?

Asylum law in the European Union (EU) has become increasingly complex, highlighting the need for a more effective Common European Asylum System (CEAS). That's where the Asylum Information Database (AIDA) comes in. AIDA holds information on asylum procedures, reception conditions, the detention of asylum seekers and the types of international protection provided to asylum seekers. The information comes from 20 EU Member States and three non-EU countries.

The database provides detailed information on national legal frameworks, and on the way the legislative rules are actually implemented. In a nutshell, AIDA gives an overview of how asylum seekers are processed and treated. This yields valuable guidance on how to improve the policies that are already in place.

What was the goal of the project?

The project's aim is to make the Asylum Information Database an authoritative and sustainable research and documentation tool that can be used throughout Europe. In order to achieve this, the project supports activities such as on-going reviews, quality assurance and the monitoring of policies, as well as comparative research carried out by the European Council on Refugees and Exiles.

This support from the Asylum Information Database project means that the European Council on Refugees and Exiles can continue to build data-collecting capacity. The result: the information provided is accurate, and of the highest quality.

The Asylum Information Database also plays an important role by regularly supporting the work of EU institutions, agencies, Member States, practitioners and courts in a number of different ways.



Continued success: project progress

AIDA has continued to provide credible, quality information on asylum systems. The information is used to support the work of EU institutions, asylum law practitioners, civil society organisations in Member States, and the European Council on Refugees and Exiles in Brussels.

Aided by the focused and continued efforts of the European Council on Refugees and Exiles and national experts, the AIDA database has delivered a thorough and comparative analysis of European countries' practice on access to asylum procedures, reception conditions and relocation. The database also provides reporting on asylum-related country developments across the continent.

Thanks to AIDA, the processes and policies already in place have continued to develop. This high-quality database benefits all of its users and outcomes for the asylum-seekers themselves. The project will continue to focus on these values into the future.

WHO IS AIDA FOR?

The European Commission, which relies on AIDA country reports in the context of monitoring activities and visits to specific countries;

The European Asylum Support Office, which draws upon AIDA country reports and related information in the context of its Annual Reports;

The European Parliament, which, identifies shortcomings in the CEAS with support from AIDA;

Legal practitioners and courts invoking AIDA outputs as evidence of the conditions in specific countries;

Civil society organisations using AIDA for information, training and evidence-based advocacy.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2017-AG-IBA-ECRE

Title: Supporting and developing the Asylum Information Database (AIDA)

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Facebook: [@TheECRE](https://www.facebook.com/TheECRE)

Website: www.asylumineurope.org

Reports: [Access to protection in Europe: Border controls and entry into the territory](#)

[Withdrawal of reception conditions of asylum seekers: An appropriate, effective or legal sanction?](#)

[Access to protection in Europe: The registration of asylum applications](#)

[The Dublin system in the first half of 2018: Key figures from selected European countries](#)

[Relocation of asylum seekers in Europe: A view from receiving countries](#)





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WELCOMING MIGRANTS INTO COMMUNITIES

Project name:
Pre and post-arrival schemes to facilitate inclusion and prevent xenophobia and radicalisation – PandPAS

Purpose:
Increasing social cohesion and solidarity through innovative solutions to the inclusion of migrants

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
5 countries: Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Cyprus and Portugal

Project coordinator:
Comune di Bagnoli di Sopra (PD), Italy

Estimated budget:
€ 700 001

EU contribution:
90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
December 2017

End date:
November 2019

Project background

The on-going project PandPAS was conceived by European regions that host large or medium-sized centres for recently arrived third-country nationals. Such ‘hubs’ can provide less than ideal living conditions for hundreds or thousands of refugees and asylum seekers, and provoke fear and resentment in the local population.

The objective of PandPAS is to research, design, implement and disseminate creative and sustainable communitarian models for the reception and integration of migrants, and to contribute to further improving migration policies and practices in Europe. It also aims to provide tools for reaching out to potential migrants before their departure from their countries of origin.

PandPAS advocates a move towards carefully planned medium and long-term policies that view third-country nationals in terms of their potential contribution to society. Consequently, the project seeks to assist migrants in becoming active in their host communities. Collaboratively designed and implemented pilot schemes offer various paths to inclusion from football to IT courses.

A key premise of the project is the participation of the local civil society in welcoming and integration of newcomers. PandPAS is convinced that such a two-way engagement is needed to produce inclusion, to prevent radicalisation and to avoid xenophobia. A greater role played by the local community can also lead to shared, creative solutions and increased well-being, social cohesion and solidarity.



Beneficiaries & goals

PandPAS is expected to promote the empowerment of refugees and to provide capacity building assistance to host institutions and communities. It is expected to increase social cohesion and solidarity, and to reduce the risks of xenophobia and radicalisation.

The project aims to contribute to migration policies and practices across the continent through lobbying and advocacy by local communities towards national and European institutions.

Expected results

The PandPAS project has five sets of activities targeting the periods either before departure or after arrival, or both.

A core part of the project are **local action plans** for the reception and integration of migrants. These pilot schemes designed collaboratively by the migrants and the locals include a wide variety of activities from language courses to free legal aid and social cafés. Towards the end of the project, the partners will evaluate and discuss the impact with the local community.

PandPAS has collected [good practices](#) on reception and integration from across Europe. The collection showcases initiatives that can inspire future actions at local level. The **Permanent Forum of European Local Communities** established by the project is expected to facilitate the exchange of experiences and good practices, as well as advocacy and lobbying from a common position.

The project is also conducting **a survey** into the concerns, needs and expectations of migrants. Besides providing new information and giving the migrants a voice, it can serve to sensitise local host populations and help identify ways to reach potential migrants. The final research report is expected to become an important tool in reorienting migration policies.

The project will also produce **a video documentary** on the experiences of refugees, intended for use by NGOs that operate in third countries. It will aim to discourage trust in people smugglers.

INCLUSION THROUGH SPORT & TACKLING PREJUDICES THROUGH CULTURE

Sport and cultural life can be entry points for participation in society, and the PandPAS action plans reflect this. The partners in Slovenia, for example, organised swimming courses for refugees. One such course enabled 12 children with little knowledge of swimming to overcome their fear of water, to learn proper techniques and to have fun in the pool with new friends. The Slovenes also organised an intercultural dinner in connection with the International Human Library. The mixed event was a huge success, with more than 100 people enjoying Eritrean, Iranian and Syrian cuisine while exchanging thoughts and tackling prejudices.

PERMANENT FORUM OF EUROPEAN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

In February 2019, representatives of about 20 local communities in Europe, active in the rescue, reception and integration of migrants, gathered in Slovenia for the first Forum of European Local Communities. The participants discussed and agreed a manifesto that will be presented and promoted in meetings with decision-makers at national and European level. The manifesto includes analysis and proposals on, for example, the arrival of refugees and the organisation of first aid, relations between refugees and the local population, and the protection of the rights of children and non-accompanied minors.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776029

Title: Pre and post-arrival schemes to facilitate inclusion and prevent xenophobia and radicalisation (PandPAS)

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Social media accounts: Twitter: [@pandpas](#)

Facebook: [@Pandpasproject](#)

Website: www.pandpasproject.eu



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Courtesy of the project (INTEGRA)

TROUBLESHOOTING CITIES' INTEGRATION CHALLENGES

Project name:
Integration of third-country nationals through urban partnerships (INTEGRA)

Purpose:
Getting everyone on board in creating hospitable cities

AT A GLANCE

- Geographical coverage:**
- **5 countries:** Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Croatia and Italy
 - **5 cities:** Sofia, Prague, Kosice, Osijek and Rubano

For certain activities, the project cooperates with international networks such as EUROCITIES, the Red Cross, the International Organisation for Migration and the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees.

Project coordinator:
Sofia Development Association (SDA)

Estimated budget:
€ 540 088

EU contribution:
90 % co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
January 2018

End date:
December 2019



Goals

The INTEGRA project aims to improve the long-term integration of third-country nationals in the European Union through sharing city-to-city knowledge and experiences, and cooperation between public and civic actors.

The project set out to develop, test and promote new models and tools for a participatory assessment of the integration performance of cities. The assessment process is designed to stimulate cooperation between all relevant stakeholders and experts across sectors, cities and countries, and to empower third-country nationals by involving them in civic initiatives and decision-making. The project seeks to improve city integration policies and practices, generate connectedness and mutual understanding between third-country nationals and host communities, and dispel mutual fears and stereotypes.

INTEGRA confronts the rising political discourse that frames migrants and refugees as an economic, demographic, religious or cultural threat to the majority population. Its ultimate objective is to create and ensure a welcoming environment in the participating cities and countries, where third-country nationals do not face discrimination and hostility but can openly engage in public life.

Project summary

The project has developed and trialled an 'integration audit', which provides an up-to-date picture of the successes and challenges of the participating cities in the integration of third-country nationals. The audit is a participatory mapping and assessment activity that engages a wide range of local communities, public bodies and civic experts. People with a migrant background are involved in sharing their experiences, suggesting changes, and in implementing and monitoring improvements.

The project follows up each audit with an integration lab with experts from different sectors (employment, education, urban development, security, etc.). The lab focuses on issues identified by the audit, such as urban security, social cohesion or cultural diversity, and develops scenarios of the future impact of migration on the city. The end result is a City Integration Agenda, which offers the city a conceptual basis for addressing the complex challenges arising from migration.

The project carries out awareness-raising and advocacy activities in each country through the partners' websites, newsletters and Facebook pages. Its results will be publicised during an advocacy conference in Brussels that will bring together national, regional and European experts and public officials.

Results

The project has produced innovative methods for assessing urban integration policies and practices, developing policy recommendations and building awareness. While they also include research and input from experts, these methods – particularly photovoice and city walks with checklists – are especially designed to foster citizen participation.

In March 2019, 1 160 people had already participated in project activities, with many reporting high levels of learning and a change in attitudes. The approach has kept a variety of interest groups focused on integration and ensured that the resulting agendas reflect local needs and resources. At European level, the audits provide a framework for assessing and comparing integration strategies and models, paving the way for more effective responses.

The partners have established a significant number of partnerships with local, regional, national and international bodies. These have helped engage decision-makers and politicians in the development of the integration agendas and thus increased the likelihood of their implementation. The partnerships have also enabled a broad dissemination of outcomes. The city integration toolkit, for example, has already been published on 24 websites, newsletters and media outlets.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776047

Title: Integration of third-country nationals through urban partnerships

Contact: office@sofia-da.eu

Social media accounts:

Kosice: www.facebook.com/etpslovensko

Osijek: www.facebook.com/centarzamir.osijek

Prague: www.facebook.com/ICPraha

Sofia: www.facebook.com/SharingSofia

Website: www.integra-eu.net

Reports: www.integra-eu.net/city-audits/reports-and-agendas.html

INTEGRA CITY INTEGRATION AUDIT TOOLKIT

One of the project outcomes, the [City Audit Toolkit](#), offers inspiration and practical guidance on assessing a city's progress in integrating third-country nationals. It identifies bottlenecks and opportunities, provides recommendations, and contains tools for self-assessment and charting progress. The toolkit, available in several languages, is designed primarily for people working in local authorities.

PHOTOVOICE – AN INNOVATIVE FORM OF COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

One of the innovative methods developed by the project for involving citizens in the city audit, 'photovoice', allows participants to express their point of view or represent their community by photographing scenes that relate to the audit themes. This enables the inclusion of perspectives not often represented in policymaking. It aids the assessment of integration efforts, feeds into the city agendas and facilitates the formulation of key messages.



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SUPPORTING REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

Project name:

SHARE Integration – A network of (small-size) cities, towns and local actors committed to offering protection and welcome for resettled or relocated refugees in Europe

Purpose:

Facilitating the resettlement process for both refugees and hosts

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

9 countries: Belgium, Austria, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Romania, Portugal and United Kingdom

As of January 2019, activities were conducted in 29 municipalities and towns in the partner countries and elsewhere.

Project coordinator:

International Catholic Migration Commission Europe vzw – ICMC

Estimated budget:

€ 802 637

EU contribution:

90 % co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

February 2018

End date:

July 2019



Refugee resettlement challenges

Resettlement and relocation schemes are meant to provide legal and safe pathways to Europe for people in need of international protection. In 2018-2019, European countries pledged to take in 50 000 resettled refugees. This means that governments, local authorities and civil society organisations across Europe need to prepare their communities for refugee arrivals by increasing their capacities.

States increasingly place refugees in smaller cities and municipalities where housing is more available, but many of these have no previous experience in resettlement. They may lack the expertise or capacity to meet the refugees' specific needs in terms of, for example, healthcare, psychosocial assistance or labour market integration.

The resettlement process itself presents challenges to even the most experienced authorities, because it involves several phases and different actors working at various levels. Improving the links between pre-departure and post-arrival processes will make resettlement more fluid.

SHARE Integration

The SHARE Integration project aims to build the capacity of new, emerging and experienced resettlement countries in Europe so as to support the reception, early settlement and integration of resettled and relocated refugees.

Building on the [SHARE Network](#), the project strengthens the preparedness of small-sized cities and towns, and promotes multi-level coordination at every stage of the resettlement and relocation processes. It achieves this through targeted training, by facilitating peer exchange and multilateral stakeholder engagement, and by developing and sharing innovative tools.

Results

To date, the project has held two successful EU exchange events, on [pre-departure cultural orientation](#) in Istanbul and on [refugee placement policies](#). Events on housing, regional coordination, awareness raising and other topics are planned, and the project cooperates with other networks and actors to disseminate tools and research.

The partners have developed a training curriculum 'Preparing Welcoming Communities' for small and medium-sized cities that host resettled and relocated refugees. It includes modules on legal protection, housing and reception, assessing vulnerability and resilience, working with volunteers, and on managing the expectations of refugees and host communities. More than 300 local actors have already been trained during 18 [pilots](#) in eight countries.

To engage different stakeholders on refugee resettlement and inclusion, the partners have so far held six national and regional roundtables with a focus on smaller cities, in France, [Germany](#), Italy and the Netherlands.

The SHARE Network has convened a Working Group on Private Sponsorship that brings together learning and research actors from civil society organisations in five countries.

A publication on practices on receiving refugees in smaller municipalities is to be launched at the Committee of the Regions in June 2019 when the SHARE film *Small Places, Great Hearts* will be screened, highlighting the experiences of refugee integration in small municipalities across Europe. The SHARE network will present its final results at a Skill Share conference in October 2019.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ON REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT AND INCLUSION

During 2018, roundtables and multi-stakeholder meetings were organised in the 9 target countries. For example, in October 2018, SHARE Integration partner [MigrAfrica](#) hosted a roundtable on labour market integration for refugees. The participants, from organisations active in refugee integration in smaller towns and municipalities, exchanged experiences and ideas, discussed best practices and identified successful approaches. They developed a set of objectives and a plan for reaching them. These are now being built on and have also been presented to a wider audience.

SHARE SETTLEMENT & INTEGRATION ROSTER

Many EU countries now taking in resettled refugees have little or no former experience of the process. Other parts of Europe contain a wealth of resettlement experience and expertise but lack methodologies for transferring skills and adapting them to the specific needs and contexts of the countries starting resettlement. The project addresses this gap with a Settlement & Integration Roster, an innovative needs-based framework through which experienced actors address identified training needs in preparing for local integration in emerging resettlement countries on a peer-to-peer basis.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776239

Title: SHARE Integration – A network of (small-size) cities, towns and local actors committed to offering protection and welcome for resettled or relocated refugees in Europe

Contact: boehm@icmc.net
info@resettlement.eu

Social media accounts: Facebook: [@icmc.migration](#)

Twitter: [@ICMC_news](#)

Website: www.resettlement.eu/page/welcome-share-network

Other projects: [LINK IT](#), [EU-FRANK](#)

Resources: www.resettlement.eu/page/share-publications-resources



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GIVING ALL THE FACTS ABOUT MIGRATION



Project name:
Supporting informed migration
decisions in Niger

Purpose:
Helping migrants make informed
choices

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
Niger

Project coordinator:
International Organisation for
Migration – IOM

Estimated budget:
€ 965 847

EU contribution:
95 % co-funded by the European
Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration
Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
December 2014

End date:
May 2016

Overview

This project was set up to help West African migrants make informed decisions about their journeys, acknowledge the risks of irregular migration and think about alternatives. It was based in Niger, a poor and largely desert nation that borders seven countries including Nigeria and Libya. Niger is a natural transit point for West Africans – including Nigeriens themselves – seeking a better life in North Africa or Europe.

Drawing on the knowledge of previous travellers, the project aimed to give migrants a realistic impression of the difficulties of the journey. Armed with better knowledge, they could then decide whether to keep moving or accept help to return to their countries of origin.

Onward, but to where?

Migrants include a wide range of ages and backgrounds. Most are young, unemployed men who are simply looking for work, but there are women and children too. Guinea-Conakry, Niger and especially Mali are the commonest countries of origin. Often poorly educated and without access to proper maps, many of the tens of thousands of migrants who pass through Niger each year have little idea where they are heading. Most are unprepared for the dangers of the desert, the traffickers or even the sheer length of the journey. From Abuja in Nigeria to Tripoli in Libya, for instance, is more than 2 500 km. Before this project, smugglers and rumours were often their only source of information.

In this project, the International Organisation for Migration used its existing strong presence in Niger and a network of local contacts to build trust with the migrants and create credible channels to share information. This person-to-person approach was a key contributor to the project's success. New arrivals were able to hear at first hand from experienced travellers about the realities of the journey, including desert crossings and criminal gangs who prey on migrants. They also learned how hard it can be to start a new life in countries such as war-damaged Libya.



Creating believable conversations

The project's focus on community-level personal engagement meant that its main messages – about the danger of the journey and the availability of help – reached the migrants from people they could trust. Radio programmes, public debates, videos, social media and mobile cinema and theatre performances all helped to reinforce the story.

With clear information and additional help from professional support workers, the would-be travellers were then in a better position to make up their minds on whether to go onward. While some certainly did just that, many others accepted help to return to their countries of origin.

At the time the project began this was an innovative model of migration management and one of the first to work with substantial funding. Since it finished in 2016, the International Organisation for Migration has continued its work in Niger along similar lines, with a network of 50 'community mobilisers' that offer migrants and host communities easy access to objective information on safe migration.

DESERT AND SMUGGLING RISKS

Niger is a migration hotspot, in part because it is a member of the 15-nation Economic Community of West African States, through which people can travel freely. The trouble starts when migrants who reach Niamey, the capital, face hundreds of kilometres of desert before they can cross illegally into Algeria or Libya. Many people die of thirst every year after becoming lost or being abandoned by smugglers. In 2016, for instance, in one incident alone 34 people, including 20 children, perished near the Algerian border.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2014/AMIF/AG/INFO/01

Title: Supporting informed migration decisions in Niger

Contact: www.nigermigrationresponse.org/en/contact

Social media accounts: Twitter: [@oim_niger](https://twitter.com/oim_niger)

Facebook: [@oimniger](https://www.facebook.com/oimniger)

Website: www.nigermigrationresponse.org



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RESPECTING THE RIGHTS OF RETURNEES

Project name:
Forced-Return Monitoring II - FReM II

Purpose:
Setting up an independent and transparent European forced-return monitoring system

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
15 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Sweden and Switzerland. In partnership with the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex) and the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA)

Project coordinator:
International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD)

Budget:
€ 1 102 812 EUR

EU contribution:
90 % co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
September 2016

End date:
October 2018



Overview

In 2008, the European Union introduced an important fundamental rights safeguard for third-country nationals ordered to leave its territory. It [required](#) Member States to set up and implement an effective **forced-return monitoring system**.

Forced-return monitoring means that the removal ('forced return') of a third-country national is observed by independent fundamental rights experts. The monitors' unbiased and neutral reports help to identify and correct possible shortcomings. This safeguards the returnees' fundamental rights.

A 2011 study recommended harmonisation of the monitoring systems and the creation of a common pool of monitors. The project [Forced-Return Monitoring I](#) laid the groundwork by producing monitoring [guidelines](#) and a training [manual](#) and programme. It established a pilot pool of monitors from competent national institutions.

Project summary

Building on these results, **Forced-Return Monitoring II** (FReM II) helped to establish the pool of forced-return monitors ('the Pool') within the structures of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency ([Frontex](#)). The project helped to set European standards for independent and transparent forced-return monitoring and supported Member States in building up and strengthening their national monitoring systems. These standards are feeding into the third edition of the project – FReM III – which is currently underway, building on the success of its predecessors.

While the project directly benefited national monitoring institutions and Frontex, its ultimate objective was to contribute to fundamental rights compliance in forced-return operations.

Results

A sustainable pool of forced-return monitors ('the Pool') was institutionalised within the structures of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency ([Frontex](#)) as [required](#) by a new EU regulation.

The project equipped the Pool with comprehensive reporting and training frameworks. It produced a reporting template, a guide to the reporting process and 15 country factsheets. It worked out a long-term training concept, produced a background reader and a trainer's manual, and organised training for monitors and monitor-trainers. It facilitated the Pool monitors' participation in Frontex's escort leader courses.

Various countries requested and received support from the project through expert consultations, workshops, roundtables, targeted training and analysis of monitoring systems. In particular, Germany and Sweden were supported in setting up monitoring systems. To facilitate the sharing of good practices, FReM II organised annual lessons-learned meetings and other events which formed the basis of a good practice report.

The training offered by the project supported national monitoring institutions to nominate monitors to the Pool: by the end of the project, 21 Member States had contributed with 66 monitors. In the Pool, the monitors acquired knowledge, standards and good practices which they then helped spread across Europe. The overall effect has been to make forced-return monitoring in the EU more coherent, credible and effective, to help the European Border and Coast Guard Agency apply the provision of Article 28(6) of Regulation 2016/1624, and to help ensure respect for the returnees' fundamental rights in forced-return operations.

FINNISH NON-DISCRIMINATION OMBUDSMAN

FReM II gave the Finnish Non-Discrimination Ombudsman significant support in developing a national monitoring system in line with European standards. It offered comprehensive high-quality training not available nationally and a chance to network and exchange experiences and best practices with other institutions. Common guidelines and good cooperation between monitors are crucial to the success of joint missions.

OFFICE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER OF RIGHTS (OMBUDSMAN) OF THE CZECH REPUBLIC

FReM II succeeded in creating a sustainable system of professional development. Members of the Czech monitoring team participated in training for Forced-Return Monitors, in training for Escort Leaders, in return operations as members of the Pool, then became trainers themselves. The Office plans to offer training for Escort Officers in the near future.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2015/AMIF/AG/FRTM/8890

Title: Forced-Return Monitoring II (FReM II)

Contact: icmpd@icmpd.org

Website: www.icmpd.org

Other projects: FReM I, FReM III



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Courtesy of the project (Urbagri4Women)

MIGRANT WOMEN BOOSTING URBAN AREAS (AND THEIR CAREERS)

Project name:

Innovative practices and joint urban initiatives to foster the integration of migrant women in the receiving society within urban agriculture practices – Urbagri4Women

Purpose:

Integrating migrant women in Europe through urban farming

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

7 countries: Austria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal and the UK

7 cities: Perugia, Lisbon, Vienna, Larissa, Nicosia, Strasbourg and Great Yarmouth

Project coordinator:

Tamat

Budget:

€ 641 000

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

December 2016

End date:

December 2018



Overview

Migrant women often find it harder to integrate into European society than migrant men do. This is down to the fact that these women tend to be charged with taking care of the entire family and as a result miss out on finding a job and integrating socially.

There is therefore an urgent need for better measures to improve female migrant integration across the EU. It is a win-win situation as these women have diverse levels of education, some very high indeed, others not so high, and can make a significant contribution to the economy, especially when they are highly educated. Examples of good practice could feed back into government policy, helping to improve their lives in Europe.

Urbagri4Women was a 2-year project that helped integrate migrant women into the labour market and society by encouraging them to participate in various urban farming initiatives. The women's entrepreneurial spirit resulted in urban rehabilitation, which has in turn brought economic, environmental and social benefits.

Innovative Urban Agriculture Labs

The overarching goal of this project was to promote social inclusion and female empowerment through the rehabilitation of abandoned or decaying urban areas.

To reach this objective, the project first identified various unused or decaying plots of land in seven European cities. Interested migrant women worked on these so-called Urban Agriculture Labs, developing a wide variety of urban farming projects. Example of projects included African agri-food production in Italy, fruit and vegetable growing in France, and urban garden decoration in Austria.

The local community actively participated with more than 200 cultural organisations, educational establishments and businesses providing practical support.

The women also received on-the-spot training related to the project they were working on. This training was supplemented with vocational training, study visits and talks from experts in the field. In several cases, men helped in the background, supporting the women in reaching their goals.

The team also developed a number of e-learning tools, which can be accessed via the project's website.

Women on the rise

The project has had a number of positive results. Firstly, women themselves have been inspired and have gained a lot of confidence from their experience of working in the various labs. For example, in Cyprus, the migrant women are planning to host workshops on health and happy living, while those in Italy are hoping to form a collective on producing African food. Meanwhile, in Austria, migrant women are looking at setting up a commercial venture to sell their garden decoration products.

All of the above is helping the women believe that they can develop professionally and become financially independent. Women are also closely collaborating with the partner organisations, bringing them closer to the community in which they are living.

Crucially, the results of this project will feed into future national and European policy designed to help and integrate migrant women. In fact, at the project's final conference in Lisbon, the project coordinator presented a number of recommendations for use at government level.

Last but not least, the environment stands to gain as a number of previously barren urban areas have been regenerated and transformed into areas with economic, environmental and social benefits.

Look to the future

The project may be over but its legacy continues with many of the women setting up their own businesses and initiatives. Meanwhile, the project coordinator plans to share examples of best practice developed during the project with other like-minded organisations across Europe.

GAINING SKILLS FOR A BETTER LIFE

Elisabeth, a young Nigerian woman, was involved in the project in Italy. Thanks to new skills gained in agricultural techniques, practical training in the urban vegetable garden, as well as her improved knowledge of the Italian language and being able to write her own CV, she found a job in the agricultural sector.

INSPIRED RECIPES

In Portugal, the Municipality of Loures was so impressed with the initiative that it donated a space in the local resident's municipal gardens to the women. Showing their appreciation, the women are writing a recipe book inspired by the herbs and vegetables they grew in the garden.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2015/AMIF/AG/INTE/9098

Title: Innovative practices and joint urban initiatives to foster the integration of migrant women in the receiving society within urban agriculture practices – Urbagri4Women

Contact: segreteria@tamat.org

Social media accounts: Facebook: @Urbagri4Women
www.youtube.com/channel/UCE38e9MzHYhXkQmrAjd_72w

Website: www.urbagri4women.com



urbagri4women



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FOSTERING MIGRANTS' ENTREPRENEURIAL SPIRIT



Courtesy of the project

Project name:
Migrant entrepreneurs supported by mentors - MENT

Purpose:

To support migrants in the development of new business initiatives

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

6 countries: Austria, Italy, Germany, Belgium, France and Spain

Project coordinator:

ZSI - Centre For Social Innovation GmbH

Budget:

€ 577 471

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

January 2017

End date:

December 2018

What is the purpose of MENT?

It has long been recognised that migrant entrepreneurship can be a powerful trigger for economic development and social integration. But migrants encounter various difficulties, for example in finding the correct information on how to gain access to financial resources and support.

MENT was created to facilitate, foster and strengthen migrant entrepreneurship with the support of mentors across five EU Member States (Austria, Italy, Germany, Belgium and France). The mentors provided support, knowledge and advice to entrepreneurs from migrant communities throughout Europe, with the relationship between mentors and mentees at the core of the project. The advice and knowledge of experienced entrepreneurs fostered new and emerging business ideas among migrants.

The project set out to design, implement, test and evaluate two cycles of light 'incubation'. This means that the entrepreneurial projects proposed by migrants were grown and nurtured (like a newborn in an incubator) and supported by their tutors and mentors. As well as guiding new entrepreneurs, the mentors were also helping them to build bonds within the business community. These bonds were invaluable to both the emerging entrepreneurs and to their mentors.

How does MENT help?

Migrants have to cope with many obstacles when setting up, maintaining and expanding a business. Barriers include access to credit from financial institutions and limited information on local markets and local business environments. Migrants are not always able to overcome these bureaucratic and administrative burdens, and their legal status can affect the stability of their businesses.



Due to these obstacles, migrant businesses often have low profitability rates, limited growth and lower survival rates than those run by native-born entrepreneurs. There is therefore a risk that starting a business may not actually increase social inclusion, but rather result in social isolation and economic hardship.

MENT plays its part by helping to foster an environment of support and learning while entrepreneurs are maintaining and expanding their businesses. It also fosters individual social inclusion, strengthens social networks and contributes to a more unbiased economic development.

THE AIMS OF MENT

To support economic and social integration of migrants;

To support migrants in the development of new business initiatives;

To involve mentors who will assist migrants with any difficulties they may face;

To select and support the most promising business projects, via light incubation and mentoring programmes.

Helping others helps Europe

Migrant entrepreneurship has traditionally emerged in countries with a long-standing tradition of immigration, which has subsequently been spreading to countries where immigration is more recent. It is in these countries that migrant entrepreneurs need the most support.

What did MENT achieve?

The project aimed to fully develop the opportunities for learning throughout the countries involved in order to gain a deeper understanding of what helped or hindered migrant entrepreneurs. By doing so, the project was able to propose strategies to support the positive factors, while highlighting and addressing the issues hindering migrant entrepreneurial activity.

Importantly, the project set out to encourage more entrepreneurial migrants to move forward and develop their business ideas or to join a team of entrepreneurs. Through the use of short training sessions, tutoring and light incubation programmes it is hoped that up to 50 business ideas will be ready to go to market.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: HOME/2015/AMIF/AG/INTE/9167

Title: Migrant entrepreneurs supported by mentors - MENT

Contact: General enquiries: institut@zsi.at

Social media accounts: [Twitter: @MEnt_EU](#)

[Facebook: @MENTEurope](#)

Website: www.mentproject.eu/

Reports: www.mentproject.eu/ment-light-incubation-toolkit/



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INTEGRATION THROUGH EDUCATION

Project name:
Integrating migrant children at
schools through artistic expression –
ArtsTogether

Purpose:
Helping migrant children integrate
into the European education system

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
5 countries: Austria, Belgium,
Greece, Italy and the UK

Project coordinator:
University of the Peloponnese

Estimated budget:
€ 599 127

EU contribution:
90% co-funded by the
European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration
Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
January 2018

End date:
January 2020

Making education accessible to migrant children

The EU is facing unprecedented migration that has had social and economic impacts. ArtsTogether aims to ensure the continued social integration of migrants. The project will build an inclusive educational project that will integrate migrant and refugee children in schools throughout Greece and Italy by helping teachers, and the children's parents, to prepare migrant children to enter the education system.

Integrating migrants and their children into society has been recognised as crucial for social cohesion and economic growth throughout the EU. Challenges that migrant children face are often complex and include issues such as socio-economic disadvantage, local language knowledge and native cultural bias. This project aims to ease these issues, giving the children the best possible chance for a happy and inclusive future.

How will ArtsTogether help?

Across the EU, statistics show that, on average, migrant children have a significantly lower level of academic achievement than children with two native-born parents. The disadvantaged position of migrant children can be caused by not having access to social and economic resources, and most importantly, because migrant children suffer from a negative image that is sometimes associated with migratory status. Some challenges faced by migrant children result from the characteristics of migrant groups such as low socio-economic status, knowledge of a local language, psychological barriers, potential low expectations from parents and teachers, as well insufficient family and community support.



The ArtsTogether project aims to develop and test a curriculum based on artistic activities and collaborative approaches that will be used to help teachers prepare for dealing with diversity, fostering mutual understanding and respect among their students, and improve the educational performance of migrant students. The activities will directly help children with migrant backgrounds and encourage communication, interaction and collaboration with native children, overcoming linguistic and cultural barriers through these efforts. In addition to this, events with educational organisations and public authorities will be organised that will aim to provide policy recommendations at an educational and schooling level.

IMPORTANT OUTPUTS: THE ARTSTOGETHER STATE-OF-THE-ART REPORT

The curriculum design, which aims to promote inclusive education for migrant and refugee children at school;

The grassroots events that will be held in Greece and Italy inviting migrant organisations and families to mix with native-born families;

The roundtables at policy-making level which will include policy-makers at ministerial and higher ministerial levels.

What are the expected outcomes?

The main objective is to create long-term benefits for migrant communities and their children, as well as migrant organisations and policy-makers.

So far the most important achievements of the project have included the finalisation of the state-of-the-art report of the ArtsTogether project, which includes an assessment and analysis of the needs and problems that migrants and refugees face during their integration process in Greece and Italy. The report includes an analysis of the main findings through interactions between school teachers, policy-makers, social organisations and representatives of migrant organisations, as well as migrant parents.

The next steps of ArtsTogether include defining the learning objectives and outcomes and the finalisation of the training modules' content. Following that, the training material will be pilot tested in schools and migrant communities. As the project continues, the data collected from such interactions will serve to further benefit the children of migrants and European society as a whole.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776022

Title: Integrating migrant children at schools through artistic expression – ArtsTogether

Contact: artstogether@uop.gr

Social media accounts: Twitter: [@ArtsTogether_EU](https://twitter.com/ArtsTogether_EU)

Facebook: [@ArtsTogetherEUProject](https://www.facebook.com/ArtsTogetherEUProject)

Website: www.artstogether.eu

Reports: [ArtsTogether](#)





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MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES WITH DISABILITIES

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Project name:
Access to services for Migrants
with Disabilities - AMiD

Purpose:
Laying the groundwork for a common
approach to migrants with disabilities

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

8 countries: Belgium, Austria,
Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany,
Greece and Italy

Project coordinator:

European Association of Service
Providers for Persons with Disabilities
(EASPD)

Estimated budget:

€ 814 698

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the
European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration
Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

January 2018

End date:

December 2019

Unveiling a hidden reality

Access to services for Migrants with Disabilities (AMiD) is a groundbreaking project that puts the spotlight on asylum-seekers and refugees with disabilities. It aims to inspire a coherent rights-based European approach to their reception and integration.

The topic of migrants and refugees with disabilities has not been properly raised at European level. No information has been collected on how many migrants have physical or mental disabilities, what services they require or what support they are offered, if any. Yet successfully including a person with a disability in society requires understanding and the ability to effectively deal with their needs.

In this project, associations of disabled people, service providers for persons with disabilities and organisations for migrants collect data on migrants with disabilities and exchange expertise. They develop new tools and good practices and disseminate them in a way expected to initiate collaboration between all stakeholders.

The project will directly benefit migrants with disabilities and staff working in the provision of services to migrants and/or persons with disabilities.



Results

The project carried out research in four countries, [Greece](#), [Italy](#), [Austria](#) and [Finland](#), looking at persons with disability and migrants, and at disability in the context of migration.

It developed a **disability-specific Needs Assessment Tool** which makes it possible to assess and address the needs of migrants with disabilities, facilitating their access to appropriate services. By establishing common definitions and indicators, it also enables continent-wide information sharing and coordination.

A Community Advisory Board, with experts and public authorities, supports the project and is expected to form a permanent taskforce for European actions. Meetings with regional representatives determine the different needs of local authorities, fine-tune the tool and help produce a user's manual.

The project has developed teaching material (Guidance Modules) on migrants with disabilities and holds international workshops where professionals exchange knowledge, good practices and consider issues related to dealing with migrants with disabilities.

Lessons learned

Collecting data on migrants with disabilities proved even more challenging than originally envisaged. The national reports explain this: 'There are no specialized protocols for the registration of refugees and asylum seekers with disabilities' and consequently 'there is no reliable national data', from any of the four countries. Migrants with disabilities are still invisible to the administration. This can and does result in their needs not being met, in terms of housing, healthcare, education, entry to the labour market, etc. The Needs Assessment Tool will help ensure access to services and respect for fundamental rights, but it is only the beginning.

INSPIRING A COMMON APPROACH

European local authorities do not share a common approach to migrants and refugees with disabilities or cooperate systematically with other actors. If one actor assesses the mental and physical health of migrants, they do so with their own informal tools. By developing a disability-specific Needs Assessment Tool and launching it with local authorities, NGOs, service providers and other frontline staff, the project seeks to facilitate cooperation and inspire a common approach.

RESOURCES FOR ALL

The project outcomes will be publicly available on www.dlot.eu. Project outcomes include guidance modules on how to better meet the needs of migrants with disabilities. This means explaining the features of the Needs Assessment Tool, illustrating the significance of service integration and user involvement, showcasing promising practices and providing information on policy and legal frameworks.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776055

Title: Access to services for Migrants with Disabilities – AMiD)

Contact: domenico.manente@easpd.eu

Website: www.easpd.eu/en/content/amid
www.dlot.eu



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INCLUSION OF REFUGEES IN CULTURAL HERITAGE AND PRODUCTION

Courtesy of the project (BMPEU)

Project name:

Specially Unknown EU, Cultural contributions of refugees to European cities (BMPEU)

Purpose:

Collecting, saving and presenting the untold stories of refugees and exploring their contribution to the cultural life of European cities

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

Research in 9 countries:

the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Portugal and Sweden

Interviews and artistic productions

in 4 cities: Antwerp, Paris, Bochum and Turin

Project coordinator:

Stichting Bevordering
Maatschappelijke Participatie
(Stichting BMP)

Estimated budget:

€ 813 624

EU contribution:

90 % co-funded by the
European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration
Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

October 2017

End date:

September 2019



Preserving oral history and promoting cultural participation

The Specially Unknown EU project aims to collect 160 life stories from refugees in four European cities: Antwerp, Bochum, Paris and Turin. The stories are recorded on video by interviewers who have been trained in oral history by the project and have a refugee background themselves. After transcription the stories become part of the city archives and museums, and an English version is kept on a European database.

These stories – about the refugees' life in a city and what they could contribute to it, or about their journeys – are meant to inspire creative co-productions by refugees, local artists and cultural institutions for presenting to the local public.

In parallel, the project is carrying out, in nine EU countries, a future-oriented Delphi study into refugees as consumers or producers of culture (cultural participation). The aim is to raise awareness, exchange experiences, challenge expectations and explore ways to promote this participation.

The interviews, artistic productions and study will be presented at the closing conference 'Oracle of Amsterdam' on 28 June 2019. The project hopes the participants will be inspired to include refugee stories in the cultural life and policies of their own city or organisation.

The project will enable the comparison of integration processes and cultural participation of refugees across Europe and produce recommendations to local, national and European policy-makers.

Changing perceptions of migrants

Refugees form a part of the economic, social and cultural fabric of the European cities they live in, but a marginalised and undocumented one. Their experiences are rarely taken into account in the development of policies that concern them, media and politicians often representing them in a negative light.

Specially Unknown wants to change these representations and perceptions. It believes that collecting and creatively sharing refugees' life stories will build compassion and understanding for them, and that involving the newcomers in the production of culture will make them feel more appreciated and welcome. At the same time the project hopes to shine a light on historical migration flows in Europe.

Results

The project is still ongoing but some outcomes have already been published, including a [manual](#) for conducting and transcribing oral history interviews. The partners in Paris are the first to translate the stories into art: the *Cité internationale des arts* will host a [screening/dance performance](#) followed by a debate. The next city to present an artistic production based on the interviews will be Bochum on 6 April. The [Red Star Line Museum](#) in Antwerp is planning interactive workshops and an installation, while in Turin, a fairy tale will be the basis for a story-telling performance in May.

TESTIMONY FROM AN INTERVIEWER IN BOCHUM

"I like to remember the time of the training. We developed a sense of togetherness. I learned a lot about people from different cultures who are also socially committed and stand up for others. I also learned a lot about myself, and at the end of the training I told myself: 'You are not alone'."

TESTIMONY FROM A REFUGEE LIVING IN PARIS

"I have lived in this city for several years now. I try my best to be part of society. But it is only since I was interviewed for Specially Unknown and able to tell my life story in my own words that I feel recognised. Because I know my story will be kept in the city archives, I now feel part of the heritage of Paris."

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776091

Title: Specially Unknown EU, Cultural contributions of refugees to European cities

Contact: info@stichtingbmp.nl

Social media accounts: Facebook: [@speciallyunknown](#)

Website: www.speciallyunknown.eu

Other projects: www.ongekendbijzonder.nl





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CHANGING NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN SOUTHERN EUROPE



Project name:
Towards empowered migrant youth in southern Europe (TandEM)

Purpose:
Creating a bridge between third-country nationals and southern European youths

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
6 countries: Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain

Project coordinator:
International Organisation for Migration

Estimated budget:
€ 638 295

EU contribution:
90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
January 2018

End date:
December 2019



Overview

Southern Europe has become the entry point for many refugees and migrants who cross the Mediterranean in search of a better life. Some of them go on to live in other EU countries such as France and Germany, but others decide to stay in southern Europe and forge new existences.

Starting afresh is often, however, extremely difficult for these new arrivals due to misconceptions, fear and negative attitudes towards them in the media and among local residents.

Organised by the International Organisation for Migration and co-funded by the EU, the Towards empowered migrant youth in southern Europe (TandEM) project has set out to dispel these myths by linking third-country national students with young southern European nationals in Spain, Italy, Malta, Greece, Croatia and Cyprus.

Overcoming hatred

“It was during the height of the migration crisis, when there was an alarming rise in xenophobia on social media. We knew we needed to respond to this hatred by creating a different narrative,” says project coordinator Andrea Pastorelli.

To this end, the project is engaging with young people on social media and in universities in four ways. The first is an expansive regional social media campaign involving third-country nationals and local youths in Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta and Spain. The campaign’s messages highlight such issues as diversity, identity and what it means to be a southern European today. A campaign website has also been set up as part of the project.

In addition, a pilot student mentorship scheme is currently taking place in the universities of Pisa, La Sapienza in Rome and L'Orientale in Naples to help the more than 120 foreign students enrolled there to receive administrative, academic and social support.

Meanwhile, seminars on interreligious dialogue will be organised by the Italian Islamic Religious Community (COREIS) and local partners in Italy, Croatia, Spain and Malta. Overall, the project expects to hold 11 inter-religious seminars involving these four countries.

Finally, the European University Association (EUA) is carrying out an unprecedented cross-country regional study involving 45 universities to identify and compare third-country nationals' needs and barriers to integration and their access to higher education in the project countries.

Policy recommendations for better lives

The project is ongoing but there are already a number of positive impacts. Firstly, the study on third-country nationals' access to higher education will soon be published. This will result in clear policy recommendations for national governments to improve the current situation for migrants and refugee students.

Secondly, the mentorship schemes have been extremely successful, resulting in an environment that supports foreign students with little financial investment. It is hoped that these schemes will spread to universities across all the partner countries and beyond.

Thirdly, hundreds of foreign students have so far received administrative, academic and social support, which has helped them to settle in their new homes. In addition, the mentoring students themselves have grown more confident through the experience.

Finally, the social media campaign is gaining in traction, creating a lively online community. The Facebook pages alone have some 6 000 followers. A photo and video competition portraying these third-country nationals' identity will soon be launched, further expanding this impact. The winner of the competition will be invited to attend the project's closing event in Brussels in December 2019.

Despite the project being due to finish at the end of this year, the mentorship schemes will thrive well into the future, while the burgeoning online community will also continue.

SCARED AND ISOLATED

A scholarship scheme for refugee students has been organised by the interior ministry in Rome. One of the students was unfortunately placed in an accommodation 90 minutes outside of the city. He had a lot of problems getting to the university and missed many classes. He was also attacked and robbed near where he lived. Scared and isolated, he needed help. The mentorship scheme got to work and found him a room in a dormitory near the university, while also resolving a number of other administrative issues – all within 3 months. This student is today much happier and enjoying university.

A MEXICAN SUCCESS STORY

A student from Mexico arrived in Italy to start her PhD programme at La Sapienza University in Rome. She didn't have any contacts in the country and adapting to a new environment was not easy for her. She also faced several challenges in obtaining the documentation needed to enrol in the programme. The TandEM mentors assisted her in the whole process, supporting her in dealing with the translation of documents into Italian, residence permit-related procedures, finding accommodation, opening a bank account and acquiring a tax code. The student expressed her interest in participating in the mentorship programme, so that she too could help other foreign students. After being trained by the Student Committee, she started her experience as a TandEM mentor supporting other students, in particular Spanish-speakers from Central and Latin America.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776119

Title: Towards empowered migrant youth in southern Europe (TandEM)

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Social media: Facebook: @IOMTandEMItalia

www.instagram.com/iom_tandem

Website: www.iomintandem.com





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BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE FOR A MORE INCLUSIVE EUROPE

Project name:
The Welcome Programme

Purpose:

Refugees and asylum seekers integrating into Europe by enhancing their digital skills

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

5 countries: Belgium, Germany, Greece, Italy and Spain

6 cities: Athens, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Foligno and Rome

Project coordinator:

All Digital

Estimated budget:

€ 570 645

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

October 2017

End date:

June 2019

Overview

Europe is struggling to keep up with the digital revolution. The evidence? A [recent European Commission survey](#), which revealed that 43% of the adult population in Europe had limited digital skills, and 37% had no digital skills at all.

Meanwhile, young refugees and asylum seekers are experiencing a crisis of their own in Europe, finding it very difficult to integrate socially and in the workplace.

The Welcome Programme was set up to address both of these issues. The 2-year project has developed an innovative way to better include third-country nationals in educational and social activities, cultural life and volunteering, by offering digital skills and language training.

A varied programme

Project partners, who include digital training organisations and social non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in six European countries, first researched other successful IT and integration programmes across the continent, in order to develop their own bespoke curriculum.

The result comes in four modules: the first is on basic coding using a software called Scratch, while the second focuses on digital storytelling, which involves the youngsters creating a video based on their own personal experiences.

The third module, entitled Digital Journalism, sees the students recording video interviews among themselves and the local community, enhancing social integration. The final phase is more focused on developing soft skills through conflict resolution and team-building exercises.

The young participants are then expected to work as volunteers, each teaching other groups of migrants and European nationals such skills as how to use a computer or create and edit a video.



Migration and
Home Affairs

Trainees become mentors

The project, which will finish in June 2019, has already had a number of successful outcomes.

So far, 52 participants have successfully completed the four modules during the first pilot programme. The second pilot is on-going and some 120 students will have enhanced their digital skills over the two phases.

It is also anticipated that the trained volunteers will teach 40 creative IT workshops, reaching 400 people from groups of third-country nationals and Europeans.

In addition, the digital stories are available on YouTube, helping to motivate other young people to volunteer. These films will also be disseminated to some 500 key actors in the education, social and cultural sectors.

As well as the young people enhancing their skills, the involved organisations also stand to benefit by expanding their contacts and their expertise in the field.

Fear of persecution

Recruiting participants from organisations (such as the Red Cross and reception centres) at times proved difficult. This was due to complex administrative procedures and other mandatory training obligations, which saw some students drop out half-way through.

In addition, some youngsters pulled out of interviewing members of the public for their videos, due to a fear of persecution based on past experiences.

The project may soon finish but the methodology lives on and will be presented to other organisations interested in running similar programmes.

FAMAGA FROM THE IVORY COAST

Famaga participated in the educational activities organised by the Fondazione Mondo Digitale, one of the Italian project partners, in Rome. He will soon teach other foreign citizens what he has learned. Learning, in his words, is the most precious resource. "It's important for me to help others with my new knowledge," he says.

SUCCESSFUL SECOND PHASE PILOT CONCLUDES IN BELGIUM

Twelve enthusiastic young immigrants have successfully finished the second pilot of the Digital Welcome programme in Brussels, Belgium. On 30 January 2019, they received their certificate after 60 hours of training and teaching their knowledge to other immigrants.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776128

Title: The Welcome Programme

Contact: info@all-digital.org

Social media accounts: www.youtube.com/channel/UC_QwcaojJv6Rrhq7Gm_7q0lg/videos

Website: www.digitalwelcome.eu





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Courtesy of the project (IntegratEd)

HELPING CHILDREN FROM THIRD COUNTRIES THROUGH EDUCATION

Project name:

Promoting meaningful integration of third-country national children to education – IntegratEd

Purpose:

Helping children from third countries integrate into the education system of their host countries

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

EU-wide

Project coordinator:

Kentro Merimnas Oikogeneias
Kai Paidiou

Estimated budget:

€ 562 530

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the
European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration
Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

January 2018

End date:

January 2020

How is this project going to help children?

The project aims to strengthen the participation of children who have arrived from third countries¹ in education. The project will also contribute to combatting the discrimination children from third countries can sometimes encounter. This will be carried out using the education systems of Greece, Italy, Spain and the EU in general. To achieve this, an Educational Support Model will be put in place that will support students when it comes to academic matters. In addition to this, it will also help with their integration into the educational system and tackle discrimination.

In order to deal properly with these issues, it is important to identify the educational needs of these children and the training needs of the teachers. It is also important to identify any form of discrimination and the problems these children face in their everyday school life.

How will the project achieve this?

One of the main aims of the research was to find out what the situation was regarding the integration of children into the education system of their host countries, as well as understanding their needs. Information was collected from the students, their families and their teachers and then a national report was produced for each country involved. This report outlined the common issues faced by students and teachers alike. In order to help the students integrate smoothly, teachers also try to adjust the education curriculum and have more interactive elements in their daily lessons. Teachers have also highlighted the need for new educational materials and technology to help the children settle in a little easier, which will, in turn, help them to take to the education system faster. The key to this is the ability to be flexible in the approach to how the children are taught, with more interactive activities and smaller class sizes.

1 A 'third country' is a term used to describe a country that is not a member of the European Union.



Positive actions have positive outcomes

As the project continues, the information learned so far is greatly helping to address any problems faced by the children and teachers. The project will help identify the tools and materials that teachers should have access to in order to teach third-country children. There will also be more teacher training carried out that will help teachers to promote further methods to include all children. In addition to this, involving the student's families will help to make the process that much easier for the children.

As more teachers take part in this training, the easier it will be to build a picture about educational needs that will greatly help not just the students from third countries but also their families and the teachers. This, in turn, will help Europe become a more socially and educationally inclusive community.

WHAT THE TEACHERS NEED:

To know how to handle diversity;

To know how to teach their mother tongue to the children as a second language;

To be able to handle the children's mental and emotional situations in order to get to know them better;

To have an understanding of global topics that may be affecting the children;

Skills to use non-formal educational methods;

Communication, problem resolution and dialogue capabilities.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776143

Title: Promoting meaningful integration of third-country national children to education – IntegratEd

Contact: integrated@kmop.eu

Website: www.integrated-project.eu



Courtesy of the project (BMPEU)

YOUR NEW COUNTRY NEEDS YOU

Project name:
We all need new engagement –
WANNE

Purpose:
Getting migrants involved
in civil society

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:
7 countries: Austria, Croatia, Greece, Italy, Malta, Romania and Slovenia
15 locations: Thessaloniki, Florence, Palermo, Verona, Bucharest, Ljubljana, Valetta and other locations in Malta.

Project coordinator:
Südwind

Estimated budget:
€ 674 774

EU contribution:
90 % co-funded by the
European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration
Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
January 2018

End date:
December 2019

Overview

More than 34 million people now living in the EU were born outside its borders. For their own welfare and dignity these immigrants deserve to play an active part in society beyond simply having jobs and paying their way. Since they make up nearly 7 % of the total EU population, their integration is also key to the success of the Union itself.

Under the slogan 'We all need new engagement', this project is encouraging the recognition of the invaluable contributions of immigrants from outside the EU who engage in civil society across the seven participating countries. This includes educational, cultural and social activities and decision-making frameworks, often among diaspora from the countries where they were born.

An umbrella of partners and activities

The project has around 15 partners, including well-established NGOs, municipalities, diaspora organisations and civil society organisations, who in turn link to more than 120 individual initiatives on migration and development. The coordinator is Südwind, an Austrian association for development policy and global justice. Südwind's core task is to look at all the activities, identify those that work best and promote more of the same.

Besides running their individual activities, the project partners have helped to build a central database, organised partnership fairs, run training sessions for awareness and advocacy, and worked to strengthen organisations representing diaspora and civil society.

Gathering knowledge and training trainers

The umbrella project is organised into three work packages. The first of these studies the situation of non-EU immigrants in each of the seven Member States and highlights good practices. All the partners visited Palermo, Sicily, to learn how local organisations promote social integration.



The second work package has organised six partnership fairs so far. The aim here is to help diaspora organisations establish links with each other and the national NGOs to develop new initiatives. The third work package focuses on building the capacity of the diaspora organisations to become more engaged in their societies through 'training the trainers', and meetings in Austria and other participating countries.

Analysis and best practices

At the end of 2018 the project produced its first Transnational Report. This begins by summarising the situation in Europe in general and in the seven partner countries in particular. It goes on to highlight 35 organisations across all the partner countries whose work helps migrants feel a part of their adopted society. Activities range from art and gardening to education and civil rights.

An updated Transnational Report will be presented to stakeholders and decision-makers when the project finishes at the end of 2019.

ENCOUNTERS IN THE GARDEN

In 2015, at the height of the refugee flow, the Austrian town of Traiskirchen saw thousands of migrants camped in its streets as they waited to apply for asylum. The town decided to create a garden where refugees could grow food, talk and eat alongside the locals.

The Garden of Encounters (*Garten der Begegnung*) opened the following spring. Refugees and volunteers plant fruit trees, grow vegetables and herbs, and get to know visitors, ranging from schoolchildren to pensioners. Surplus produce is sold or given to the community. The garden also partners with a busy sewing project set up by the refugees.

Traiskirchen's Garden of Encounters is just one of 35 examples of successful engagement initiatives highlighted in the project's 2018 Transnational Report on good practices for fostering participation and inclusion.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776195

Title: We all need new engagement – WANNE

Contact: leila.salehiravesh@suedwind.at

Website: diaspora-engagement.eu/projects/www.comide.net/project-description-wanne

Social media: Via national organisations in each partner country

Related projects: AMIF project: Innovative practices and joint urban initiatives to foster the integration of migrant women in the receiving society within urban agriculture practices





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IMPROVING THE LIVES OF MIGRANT WOMEN



Courtesy of the project (WEMIN)

Project name:
Migrant women empowerment
and integration

Purpose:

Giving migrant and refugee women the tools to better inclusion

AT A GLANCE

Geographical coverage:

8 countries: France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain and Sweden

Project coordinator:

Hellenic Open University

Estimated budget:

€ 821 329

EU contribution:

90% co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:

Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:

January 2018

End date:

December 2019

Overview

When it comes to getting a job and being included in society, migrant and refugee women are one of the most disadvantaged groups in Europe, even when they are highly educated. The vast majority of these women have endured horrific ordeals at home, and on arriving in Europe are often the targets of racist and xenophobic political and media campaigns.

Added to the mix is the inadequate response from national and local authorities.

The EU-funded Migrant women empowerment and integration (WEMIN) is a 2-year initiative that is empowering migrant and refugee women in Europe to actively participate in their host countries' sociocultural life. The impact has been remarkable.

Girls leading the way

The project, involving academic institutions, training institutes and civil society organisations in eight EU countries, aims to empower migrant women to play a leading role in their communities and act as multipliers within their families and social circles. By promoting close interaction between women of the host and migrant societies, stereotypes on both sides are being tackled, challenging existing narratives on migration and strengthening the very communities involved.

Over the course of 2018, the team developed a *Good Practice Guide* in all partner languages, which offers advice on how best migrant women can integrate into society.

In addition, a *Short Policy Guide* presenting a number of recommendations on how best to advance social integration, while safeguarding the rights of migrant and refugee women, was created.



A dedicated website has been set up and serves as a permanent point of reference for the women and their host communities. It contains forum discussions, blogposts and announcements related to integration.

A communications and information campaign as well as sociolinguistic courses are also being organised on behalf of the women.

In addition, 2019 will see training courses, empowerment sessions and cultural workshops on co-creation being provided.

It's not just the women who benefit

The immediate beneficiaries are the migrant and refugee women aged between 18 and 60, who arrive in Europe from countries like Kosovo, Mexico, Bolivia, Brazil, Peru, China, Ghana, Sudan, Algeria, Iraq, Iran and Syria. In the longer term, benefits will extend to their families and friends, who will also be supported and empowered.

Meanwhile, the institutions involved in the education and dissemination activities will benefit from experience-sharing, while local partners are receiving new tools, such as the *Guide for Policy Makers*, contributing to migrants' inclusion.

Local communities stand to gain from increased social cohesion and the active participation of the women. And now that the trainers involved understand the needs of migrant women better, their teaching methods have improved.

Growing in confidence

The project has so far resulted in an impressive exchange of good practices among the partner countries, all of which have different integration perspectives and approaches.

The language and cultural courses have been and continue to be a success. The women have truly improved their linguistic skills and learned about local culture. This means they feel more confident when going about their daily lives. Many have made new friends, socialise regularly and are attending other groups and events.

Interestingly, some of the women have expressed a keen interest in the EU. So much so, that some trainers have given sessions on the subject, while a visit was also organised to the Europe Direct Information Center in Stuttgart.

In several countries, the media has taken an interest in the two guides and this has resulted in news articles appearing.

The project may finish at the end of 2019 but its legacy will live on. The teaching methods, website and both guides will continue to be used, helping future migrant women to integrate successfully into their new homes.

FEEDING THE MIND

A student from Nigeria says that when she comes home from class, she teaches her daughter what she has learned. This sees both mother and daughter gaining in knowledge. Meanwhile, after participating in cultural activities as part of her course, another student from Afghanistan says she always explains the details of these activities to her entire family. It's a win-win situation for all.

A GIRL FROM GHANA FINDING HER WAY

A girl arrived in Germany from Ghana. Her family hadn't allowed her to go to school for over 3 years but she was really good at sewing, knitting and cooking. She found the courage to start a group where women meet to knit and cook. Her German soon improved and she now says that she may well start a small business in the future.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776211

Title: Migrant women empowerment and integration

Contact: info@daissy.eap.gr

Social media accounts: Facebook and Twitter: #WEMIN

Website: www.wemin-project.eu

Reports: *The Good Practice Guide* and *The Social Integration of Migrant and Refugee Women: A Guide for Policy Makers* are available on the [project website](http://www.wemin-project.eu).





Courtesy of the project (SMART)

GIVING MIGRANT WOMEN A CHANCE TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVES

Project name:
SMART volunteering for female migrants

Purpose:
Better integration for female migrants into European society

AT A GLANCE

- Geographical coverage:**
- **6 countries:** Belgium, Cyprus, France, Italy, Spain and the UK
 - **7 cities:** Brussels, Nicosia, Paris, Rome and Matera, Seville and Sheffield

Project coordinator:
Chamber of Commerce of Seville

Estimated budget:
€ 623 367

EU contribution:
90 % co-funded by the European Union

Type of funding:
Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF)

Start date:
January 2018

End date:
December 2019

Overview

Third-country-national women often have specific problems settling and integrating in Europe. Despite many being highly educated, the vast majority are underemployed. According to Eurostat, their employment rate is 20 percentage points lower than for EU-national women.

Yet it's more than about having a job – it's also about engaging with the local society and culture.

The SMART¹ volunteering for female migrants project, which involves civil society, the business community and migrant women across six European countries, is using volunteering as a means to better integrate migrant women into European society.

Understanding migrant volunteering

Volunteering greatly benefits the individual and society. However, in the EU there is a distinct lack of data about migrant volunteering.

The first research phase of the project involved establishing what challenges migrant women face in achieving a smooth transition into European society. Various studies on companies' perceptions of engaging migrants as well as NGOs' views on migrant volunteering were also undertaken during this period, although the most significant information was collected thanks to the participation of several migrant women in focus groups and during one-on-one interviews.

Once the content contributions from the partners and the trainers' lessons are completed, the project will then provide so-called 'SMART volunteering awareness training' to partner voluntary organisations, NGOs and social workers, as well as to business advisors and business training organisations. The aim of this 4-month programme will be to recruit trainers across Europe, who would in turn be in a position to guide these migrant women on their journeys.

¹ Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timely.



Currently, the project is running a number of group sessions with the help of an innovative personal development training tool called Circles™, which was developed by one of the partners. These groups bring migrant women together and offer them the opportunity to tell their own stories. “The women learn from each other and have been particularly inspired by cases of other women who have succeeded in their new lives,” says SMART project coordinator Pablo Morales. To spread these experiences and to broaden the perspectives, the diversity circles will be practised with enterprises and NGOs as well.

It is hoped that in the project’s final phase, the women who took part in the focus groups as well as in the circles will themselves go on to inspire their peers, promote social integration, and bring migrants and host communities together.

INTEGRATION SUCCESSES

A woman from Mexico arrived in Seville and had difficulties in finding a job. Despite having excellent qualifications, they were not recognised and she ended up working in low-skilled and low-paid jobs. She came to one of the focus groups and grew in confidence. Today, she has her own company and is a success in society. This example has been very encouraging for other women in the SMART focus groups.

After arriving from Venezuela, a woman was living in poverty and social exclusion and could not see a way out. When she came to the focus group, the other women present felt a sense of solidarity towards her. They stayed in contact and did their best to help her stand on her own two feet.

Changing lives, changing minds

There are a number of expected outcomes from this initiative. The most important is that the project is changing and will continue to change the lives of these migrant women. And, in parallel, it is making companies and business associations aware of the benefits of hiring migrant women.

Another is training the partner organisations, which has improved the skills of those involved.

On a political level, it is hoped that a set of tangible outcomes can be presented to national governments and at EU level so that new policies to protect and encourage these women are introduced.

On lessons learned, Morales points to a need for better communication between the project partners because so many different organisations across the EU are collaborating on the project.

It was also often difficult to engage with the women at first, but once they had attended one of the focus groups, they opened up and were more than willing to share their experiences.

Something else Morales learned is that many of us think that migrants are not open to new societies. He disputes this misconception saying that quite the opposite is true.

Looking ahead, the project looks set to continue past its due date, as there are now trainers and a solid methodology in place, which can easily be transferred and used well into the future.

MORE INFORMATION

Project reference: AMIF-2016-AG-INTE 776238

Title: SMART volunteering for female migrants

Contact: maria.carrillo@camaradesevilla.com

Social media accounts: Facebook: [@smartprojecteu](#)

Website: www.smartvolunteering.eu/en

Reports: [Volunteering: Perceptions, Experience and Barriers among Migrant Women, NGOs and Private Sector](#)