



MiMi
Migrants' microintegration



O1 - Migrants' Microintegration into work life - microintegration practice set for recipient labour representatives

Developed by LoPe

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1. Introduction

An integration process can be a personal burden for a newcomer or minority member. At the same time, weakly integrated immigrants can represent a significant social and economic burden for a society. Research has shown that -for migrants themselves- slow or ineffective integration often causes an experience of hopelessness and frustration, leading to mental illness, unemployment and further problems. In society, these negative processes can lead to prejudice, discrimination and xenophobia. In Norway, Austria and Greece, i.e. the partner countries of the MiMi - Migrants' microintegration into work and social life - project, many organisations and government agencies are working on different aspects of the integration process. They often lack, however, actual consideration of migrants' concrete life situation and real concerns (micro level) and, at the same time, do not consider integration as a "two way process", i.e. a give and take of both, migrants and the members of society individuals move into. In Norway, there is an official agreement and policy that successful integration of

migrants is determined by people's personal surroundings, i.e. labour and community integration: The Norwegian Ministry of Education declared in its 2019-2022 integration strategy "Integration through knowledge" that one of the government's main projects is to implement an integration lift. The goal is that immigrants should participate more actively in working and social life. All who are living in Norway must be part of our community. The main objective of the integration strategy is that more immigrants get out into work, so that they can support themselves and their families. (Regjeringens integreringsstrategi) Greece has faced enormous migration waves since 2015, with flows continuing (UNHCR, 2020). The 2019 integration strategy identifies the promotion of integration into education, labour market and access to public services as important components for immigrants' integration (EUROPEAN WEBSITE ON INTEGRATION, 2020). The Austrian government has initiated refugees'/ asylum title holders' integration into the education system, providing a variety of training possibilities. A crucial aspect about integrating well into

society is entering the labour market (in official jobs), necessary for staying in Austria. And, it is particularly Afghani, Syrians, Iraqi showing the lowest labour force participation (employment rate 2018:36% vs 7.7% overall unemployment Statistik Austria/ 4.9% acc. to ILO). Still, "it is necessary to further intensify efforts to integrate migrants. A decrease in the number of asylum applications does not mean a decrease in the number of migrants to be integrated. The economic and cultural integration of people who have recently migrated is a process that is currently taking place intensively, but it is far from completed." (ÖIF, 2020).

The partners of the Mimi project are aware that every country in Europe has its own national challenges with the integration process. In particular these regions, which are considered the "first country of entry" according to the Dublin III regulation: that the first Member State where finger prints are stored or an asylum claim is lodged is responsible for a person's asylum claim.

The Mimi partnership represents a good average of different regions in Europe, all of which deal with the integration process in their own way. This is helpful for other

institutions working with integration to identify with one of our examples and adapted them to their own country. For example, Denmark and Sweden compare well with Norway. Or Italy with Greece etc.

1.1. What is microintegration

What is microintegration and what are the benefits of such an approach?

Many organizations and government agencies are working on different parts of the integration process: language, work, family protection, etc. However, there are a number of individual challenges that are large enough to paralyze other parts of integration process as they require a lot of attention and energy from the individual. Microintegration encompasses those areas that lie between several levels - or are in danger of becoming a dead end between the fast-moving and incomprehensible community. It is in everyone's interest to make the integration process as efficient and flexible as possible. Microintegration sees every single person and concentrates on individual everyday problems. Microintegration will later lead to a side effect that contributes to more and better integration at the macro level.

Microintegration prevents parallelism, exclusion and extremism.

This output shall help recipient labour Representatives - from guidance counsellors to HR managers - see and implement “microintegration” as an important offer for refugees and immigrants who struggle to find their place in a new society, like in Norway, Austria, Greece.

Microintegration aims at closing gaps in the integration process, which the authorities are not always able to do. These gaps and deficits can be the reason why many refugees and immigrants don't succeed in

their integration. Through this and similar work, Microintegration contributes to faster and easier integration, as well as training and connection to the labour market, which will lead to public savings and a meaningful life for the concerned target group.

Microintegration



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1.2 Target group/ beneficiary

Who is the target group for this project?

The target group for this are "recipient labour representatives" - teachers, coaches, but also HR counsellors/managers at companies. Final beneficiaries are migrants (but also the society in general) with better social inclusion, higher numbers in labour market inclusion and lower social benefit needs.

2. Methodology: Microintegration as a pedagogical concept

2.1. Dialog on -on one

The importance of one-on-one dialogue and how this method affects the result of the training:

We need look deeply into the individual to see the barriers that hinder the enjoyment of life, participation in working life and local communities. To achieve this, we must spend time building relationships and trust. We do this by making each participant feel seen and heard. They need to feel that someone is taking the time and is genuinely interested. Building the

relationship and trust is key. We must see the importance of qualified personnel who have the same frame of reference as the learners and therefore can relate to the learner on a more personal level. Group conversations, one-on-one dialogues, and various coaching exercises will be used as methods, but meeting face -to-face is what is most valuable.

2.2. Co-determination

Focus on co-determination, ownership and responsibility:

Within the given guidelines, the methods are developed together with the learners. They will, from day one, participate in choosing focus areas and designing the content. This will contribute to a sense of responsibility and ownership. Participants are accountable from day one. Instructors with the same cultural and religious background as the participants are in such a position that they will have a completely different influence than an ethnic Norwegian instructor. There is greater acceptance in being direct and setting clear requirements. At the same time, a Norwegian instructor will be able to convey

the basic values of Norwegian society, and to convey the necessary knowledge and understanding of our society. This composition of instructor teams will be a decisive success factor towards the goal of getting the participants to work. From the first day the participants will help to design the content of the course. How can I best use these weeks and available resources?

2.3 Recognizing Negative Patterns – thoughts

How to recognize negative patterns and thoughts:

We want to help learners recognize the negative and self-destructive thought patterns of their own mind. Through meditation and mindfulness, the learners can start to observe their own mind, and see that it can be quite deceiving.

2.4 "My life" - my responsibility,

The victim role and its impact.

Self-pity is paralyzing. We must choose to focus on opportunities and solutions. The victim role itself is unfortunate. To over-identify as a victim, you see yourself as broken and wounded. It involves a general feeling of being unfairly treated. The victim

role has varying degrees of self-pity, self-righteousness and self-sacrifice. Taking the victim's role implies a perception of yourself as a victim in relation to the world, to events that one cannot influence or have any responsibility for. It is a role that affects several areas of life - the whole person becomes a victim. The perception of being a victim usually applies to past events, but the perception of oneself as a victim persists - often for decades. It therefore becomes an important task for the trainer to help the learner see that such a role is "paralyzing" and prevents constructive change.

2.5 My own role in society

The importance of contribution:

When working with microintegration it is important to look at our own role in society. Hopefully we can awaken a desire to contribute to our local community as well as awaken an interest in, and knowledge about, politics. The trainer must make sure that the learners are equipped with knowledge about the different channels of influence that the target group can use to make themselves heard. The learners will have to reflect upon common

values like human rights and freedom of speech. It is important to secure basic insight into, and understanding of, the mechanics of our democratic political system. What thoughts and ideas do I have about people from other cultures that I meet every day? Are these beliefs based on facts? It is important that we take a critical look at our own, as well as others', culture. We must encourage debates and invite young people to speak up against current developments across Europe, like the increase in populism and extreme political choices. Knowledge removes prejudice! How can I contribute in my local community? It is important to reflect on how much energy we put into "me and my life" compared to the energy we spend on helping others. Let the learners themselves choose ways and areas in their community where they can contribute actively. They might set up their own initiative, fundraising or more traditional volunteer work. Focusing on helping other people is empowering. We see directly that our contribution is needed, which increases our sense of self-worth.

2.6 The language

The importance of language in daily life:

The host country's language in everyday life (as well as in employment) context as crucial to get in contact with residents and become part of the community. We often observe that despite a certain certified language level, the factual knowledge is inadequate because of a lack of relevant contacts to practice which can help reduce prejudices and foster mutual understanding. This also brings a practical background to basic values taught theoretically in a course.

2.7 Integrative Therapies

This is a holistic approach to mental health implemented by Hestia Hellas in Greece. It aims to help vulnerable populations cope with their current situation. Strong mental health is the first step to helping them strengthen their position in society.

Many beneficiaries have experienced traumatic events including sexual abuse, violence and natural disasters. Depending on their trauma, they can seek the help of a specialist, either an acupuncturist (who uses acupuncture or acupressure) or an occupational therapist. These therapies

focus on having a long-term effect on mental health and position in society.

There is a whole team that collaborates in order to ensure that the program is working. The social workers review the cases and keeps files in an internal document that every therapist fills in after their session. This helps to monitor whether the program is helping the beneficiaries or not. Usually, the results are seen after the second or third session, as opposed to traditional psychotherapy programs that require at least 10 sessions for the results to be visible. Similarly, the occupational therapist sees results after 3 or 4 sessions. A lot of refugees and migrants have numerous somatic trauma that has bothered them for years, and after 2 or 3 sessions they don't feel it any more. Consequently, their psychological mood is also improved.

The success of this program lies in the fact that the results are a lot faster than in traditional programs, and the average session lasts 30' to 1h (traditional psychotherapy: 1h -1,5h). This allows the specialists to see and help a lot more people in a specific amount of time.

So far, no one else in Greece offers a complete integrative therapies program. The other providers are still focused on psychotherapy, CBT (Cognitive behavioural therapy) and talking therapy. Through its program, Hestia Hellas also focuses on art therapy that allows the specialists to work directly with the individual without the presence of a translator. It appears to have more and longer impact on the beneficiaries. Finally, the art therapy can also be done in groups of 10-20 people even from different countries, again without needing different translators.

The program also includes martial arts, reflexology, music therapy and dance therapy. In the future, more therapies will be included in the program.

2. 8 Livelihoods

This is another program implemented by Hestia Hellas in Greece. Through it, migrants and refugees are provided with sustainable tools and a skill set necessary to participate in daily life and thrive in times of financial difficulty. This includes language classes, women's empowerment training and sewing classes.

Hestia Hellas collaborates with many organisations (e.g. Teleperformance), looks for jobs and offers the necessary training to the beneficiaries. The program helps them to prepare their CV, and get ready and feel comfortable for the interviews with employers (mock interviews), either in 1-1 or group sessions.

Contrary to other providers, Hestia Hellas offers tailor-made CV and interview skills, makes all jobs offered available to the beneficiaries, and offers them a space to work remotely (use of the Internet connection, computers, etc.). Finally, it allows them to come back to Hestia Hellas for any question or anything they may need. This is achieved because of the good relationship between the migrants and the organisation, and it reassures them that they are not alone

3. Good practice – a guideline

"If I want to be a good microintegrater, I have to do some efforts" Alessandro Carbone

In the following, various examples of the partners are listed who are intended to help, as "best practice", to incorporate microintegration into everyday training.

3.1. LoPe: 1st Good Practice: a good one-by-one dialog

With the institution Voksnopplæring, the municipality of Skien has a starter package for all newly arriving refugees and migrants. This program lasts three years and essentially covers learning the Norwegian language and Norwegian social studies. LoPe contributes to a higher learning effect in the voluntary organization sector with the concept of microintegration. With this concept, obstacles (such as everyday problems) are removed in biographical one-to-one work in order to keep the head free for learning.

Step 1: The selection of trainers, the human resources, is decisive for the success of a training course. In biographical work, the interpersonal level is the most important factor. In concrete terms, this

means that there should be no personal dependency and that in the case of interpersonal challenges between coach and learner, a change of trainer is recommended. Instructors with a similar cultural and religious background as the participants are in a position where they will have a completely different influence than one with another ethnic background.

At LoPe, most of our trainers have a similar past to the people in our target group. This is not only an advantage when building a basis of trust, it is almost inevitable.

Step 2: Choosing the location: A spatial situation and a horizontal atmosphere:

From an organizational point of view, this requires a PC and a quiet room. The survey can take several hours and should take place in a relaxed atmosphere. In general, we prefer a spatial situation in our one-by-one dialog meetings. That allows for a horizontal discussion atmosphere. This means that we leave the traditional classroom with its hierarchical structures.

Step 3: A good assessment at the beginning of the collaboration is crucial for a successful biographical work with the

users. There are various tools on the market (for example VIP24).

Step 4: Evaluating the situation: There are different risks and challenges when working with biographic and self-reflection and refugees. If the trainer observes that the learner has challenges with mental health, the training must be discontinued and the participant referred to a medical psychological service. Biographic and self-reflection work does not replace therapy. Another challenge is the choice of the trainer. A good connection between teacher and learner is crucial for success. A trainer team with people from different ethnic backgrounds is recommended. Social value arises in complex processes. They involve many different contributors. The effects of such efforts occur in different areas and levels, both for the individual, his family and for society as a whole. It might be difficult to find specific indicators to measure an increased involvement in personal growth and community. The most relevant aspect will be to monitor the obstacles we overcome. When negative consequences, like feelings of hopelessness, lack of self-esteem and alienation are eliminated, the motivation

for greater participation in work and community life will be able to flourish. Our success can thus be measured by the absence of energy-sapping everyday problems. This leads to a greater sense of individual responsibility for one's own life.

3.2 LoPe: 2nd Good Practice: Co-determination

Together with Skien Kommune, LoPe works with participants who are clearly in favour of a job. That is, those who have already successfully learned the language. Here, in collaboration with the participant, a plan is being developed for how life will continue after the "Introduksjonsprogram". It is important that the candidate gets the feeling that he is essentially determining this process himself.

Step 1: What do I want?

Unfortunately, it is often the case that different rumors spread in the respective ethnic community that one only has a chance to find work in a single professional field. E.g. : Many Iraqi women want to become nurses. In the end, this means an oversupply of workers in this field. With the co-

determination we find out what the individual career or training desire is.

Step 2: strategy

Together with the participant, we work out a strategy on how this wish mentioned above can be realistically implemented. And what the outside participant needs to persevere.

Step 3. Independence

Together with the participant, in cooperation with Skien Kommune, we set the process in motion by asking our respective networks about training positions and / or vacancies. Here the candidate is always involved and encouraged to contact the proposed institutions or volunteers. We serve as referrals but do not do this important step for the participant. A feeling of independence should develop.

3.3 BEST: 1st Good Practice: Starter package integration and competence check

Step 1 – Objectives

To assess the already existing skills, knowledges and competences of migrants and refugees, the Austrian Integration Fund¹ and the Austrian Labour Market Service have established in cooperation with private training institutes like BEST Institut für berufsbezogene Weiterbildung und Personaltraining GmbH in Vienna a starter package for integration, including, professional, social and language skills. In addition to the acquisition and knowledge of the national language, the recognition and assessment of foreign vocational and professional qualifications and skills are particularly important steps, as well as fundamental respect for our value system. After all, integration into the labour market is crucial for successful integration into the community and the European society; migrants and refugees not only need to be conveyed clear perspectives, but also clear

rules, considering that integration is not a one-way street.

Step 2: Approach

The starter package is based on a personalised and holistic approach, taking into consideration that every migrant and refugee has individual background, history and experience. This also includes the designing of a tailored action plan for each of them, according to individual needs, and the establishment of a mentoring system in order to ensure continuous and comprehensive guiding and support. Another focus lies on the societal and personal attitudes reflecting the values and responsibilities of our society like equality, diversity and civic rights and the providing of relevant information for different fields of living and working in Austria.

Step 3: Implementation of the programme

In addition to checking the language skills of the participants, the focus at the beginning is on identifying their existing professional skills. The procedure is such that a professional expert checks them by

¹ The Austrian Integration Fund (ÖIF) is a partner of the Federal Chancellor of Austria along with many responsible authorities on integration and

migration in Austria. It focuses on integration, social affairs and educations, as well as on Austrian society.

conducting an interview with the participant, followed by the participant performing typical tasks in the profession. Finally, the results are assessed jointly by the professional expert and the participant.

In a next step, the participant is introduced to a job coach who arranges a “micro-internship” in a company of her/his network. Upon the completion of the job training, the results of the preceding activities are evaluated together with the participant, the job coach and a responsible person of the company.

This method enables a targeted planning of further steps needed to reach the (counselling/ training) programme objectives. An individual action plan for each migrant / refugee is made, based on these competence check results and her/his personal needs to improve the employability (e. g. further on the job training, vocational education and training or similar).

The process is accompanied by mentors, e.g. social educators, who support participants in their daily life and foster their societal integration into the community.

In terms of a holistic approach, trainers, professional experts, job coaches and mentors work together on implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the integration starter package.

Step 4: Team

A multi-cultural and multilingual team of trainers, facilitators and professional experts are involved in this integration process, many of them with migrant or refugee background themselves. They not only work on the labour market integration but also on socio economic interventions to bridge gaps and differences between migrants / refugees and residents that may exist. A key role among the team members has the job coach who establishes the connection between the participants and the labour market.

Step 5: Location

The programme is carried out in non-formal settings like training centers and companies (for workplace-based trainings), but also in informal settings, with job coaches and social educators who foster the exploring of new contacts and job opportunities and offer outreach guidance if

necessary. In terms of personalised training, coaching and guidance, it is crucial not to confine the related activities to a classic classroom setting, but to include other locations and contexts typical to cover all types of social inclusion environment.

Step 6: Assessment

This good practice supports migrants and refugees individually in their efforts to enter the Austrian labour market and to build up a sustainable integration in society. It focuses not only on the development of professional and language skills, but fosters the civic integration, in many cases in an ongoing process. In addition, it addresses concerns of the Austrian population that migrants and refugees lack the necessary skills and competences to integrate in the labour market. The coming together of companies and their employees and migrants or refugees is helpful to break down prejudices and to bring about more togetherness and understanding.

3.4. BEST: 2nd Good Practice: Civic activities in a diverse society

Step 1: Objective

The network of the Minority Contacts Unit of Vienna Police Department, the private associations *Inclusion24* and *Assistenz24* which both focus on the inclusion of impaired people, *Kids Power* which is an initiative aiming at bringing together different groups of people living in Vienna by organising street festivals and events for children, and BEST has designed and implemented a series of workshops for young people in Vienna, addressing the awareness of being part of a diverse society and of better understanding what each of them can contribute to the community, in terms of a civic engagement.

Step 2: Approach

The workshops aim at fostering the encounters and the reflection of values and beliefs between different groups, i.e. people with and without migrant or refugee background or impairments, with different religious, political and/ or sexual orientation. The approach is a highly practice-oriented one, with

representatives from the partner network providing guidance for different activities related to the topics with their experience and expertise, and facilitating participants' engagement with the issues.

Step 3: Implementation

In the workshop series held in intervals of 1-2 months for a period of about one and a half year, experts of the network provide background information, legal conditions and different case stories of difficult or emergency situations from everyday life in Vienna, enriched by active participation in typical situations where civic competence is needed. Participants are encouraged to discuss the issues, find solutions, present them and also to engage with the issues in practice. Each workshop closes with a reflexion process.

For example, a wheel chair driver from the network once directed four participants on how to lift him out of the wheelchair and carry him around, expressing his needs and concerns. This activity was linked to situations where impaired people need help, i.e. in case an elevator in a train

station was out of order. Another example was the encounter of a Muslima with a young man demonstrating how to greet her when she would refuse a hand shake. Another focus was on the correct and appropriate behaviour in emergency situations, for example if one witnessed an act of sexual harassment, acts of discrimination or violence in public or private context.

It was interesting for participants to learn about how and for what reasons such situations may emerge and what it means to show civic competence and responsibility. These activities were impressive for the participants and contributed to a mutual understanding of other persons' needs and situations, as well as raising the awareness of one's responsibility in society.

In addition, the video "Blue-Eyed-Experiment"² would be shown through which the participants could learn to empathise with excluded, marginalised, discriminated and/ or disadvantaged people. The audience can experience how

² www.migranttales.net/jane-elliotts-blue-eyes-and-brown-eyes-experiment-in-racism/.

it feels to show solidarity and civil courage. The film experiment was conceived by the American teacher and anti-racism activist Jane Elliott aiming at teaching her students the basics of racist behaviour. In the filmed experiment she declared all children with blue eyes to be "inferior" and wanted to show that the characteristic for discrimination can be chosen arbitrarily (<https://www.migranttales.net/jane-elliotts-blue-eyes-and-brown-eyes-experiment-in-racism/>).

Step 4: Team

The workshops are held by representatives from the Vienna Police Department in charge of minority issues and associations for inclusion, integration and a peaceful coexistence of all population groups. These experts work hand-in-hand with a multilingual and multi-cultural team of trainers who provide e.g. more didactic material like quizzes, handouts and theoretical input on the various issues.

Step 5: Location

The workshops take place in facilities for larger groups (like for 20-30 young people plus trainers and mentors of the young

learners) in a BEST training centre offering in addition enough space for break out rooms performing some tasks and activities like the supporting of a wheel chair driver.

Step 6: Assessment

The described activities are monitored and evaluated by facilitators who also offer guidance for reflections and conclusions to the people involved.

For example, participants of a workshop built up a relation with the wheelchair driver and supported him during the period of COVID-19 restrictions in Vienna. From this development, a number of benefits emerged: migrants and refugees were able to improve their knowledge of the German language by using it in everyday contexts, they met other people of the community, were invited to their homes and in return invited them to their homes when the COVID-19 restrictions had been reduced. This has led to a better integration and more mutual understanding and trust of participants.

3.5 AKEP: 1st Good Practice

KETHEA MOSAIC

KETHEA is a Greek Therapy Centre for Dependant Individuals that helps, free of charge, people who have problems with use of drugs, alcohol, gambling or the Internet. There are many treatment programmes according to the individual's needs. One of these programmes is [KETHEA MOSAIC](#) which started in 2003 and it addresses migrants and refugees with addictions.

Step 1: Approach

KETHEA MOSAIC's intercultural approach is underpinned by the principle and values of self-help within therapeutic communities (mutual assistance, self-management, development and change, peer groups, etc.). It also serves as a 'bridge' facilitating communication with refugee and immigrant communities, widening the scope of their social networks, and encouraging their multifaceted emotional integration.

The values that inspire these principles concern respect for diversity, the right to information, health, legal support, treatment, equal opportunities for education and vocational rehabilitation, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, social class and political beliefs.

Neither knowledge of Greek nor documents proving their legal status are required of the immigrants/refugees who use KETHEA MOSAIC's services.

Step 2: Services

KETHEA MOSAIC is based in Athens and provides information, counselling, psychological support and relapse prevention services to immigrants and refugees with addictions. It also prepares those who want to embark on a process of full recovery.

Its services relate to social care, health care, hygiene and the provision of information of a legal nature and are delivered through its network, which includes state services and networks. KETHEA MOSAIC also delivers Greek lessons and creative/artistic activities.

This combination of intercultural counselling services and psychosocial mobilization for treatment and training creates a warm, safe and supportive reception environment which is well-suited to the particular needs of migrants and refugees. The families, partners and friends of migrants and refugees who are addicts can participate in groups that provide information and counselling on addiction-related issues.

The programme also provides psychological support in the context of actions aimed at secondary prevention and early intervention for refugees who are minors (both unaccompanied and otherwise), as well as for immigrants and their families. These measures seek to reduce the factors that lead to addiction and impede social integration, and thereby to facilitate social inclusion and encourage personal development. In this context, KETHEA MOSAIC provides information and

counselling relating to relationships within the family, delinquency, emotional difficulties, social exclusion, etc. KETHEA has formed partnerships with hostels for unaccompanied minors to facilitate its actions.

Step 3: Team

The team is multicultural, an element that enriches both the intervention and the approach of the population, as well as the dynamics of the team. The participation of volunteers from the immigrant/refugee communities and their cooperation with Greek volunteers of the programme, is a basic principle of KETHEA Mosaic. Through roles they undertake (creative team coordinators, interpreters, etc.), volunteer migrants/refugees are positive models of behaviour for their fellow citizens, while at the same time, they are trained, empowered, and socially active.

Step 4: Location

KETHEA MOSAIC, apart from the main centre of operation, also runs intervention programmes in refugee reception centres. The programmes are coordinated by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) as part of a joint initiative aimed at the prevention and treatment of problems relating to drug and alcohol use within this population.

It also stages awareness raising and training seminars relating to addiction and intercultural counselling for mental health and social care professionals who work with refugees and immigrants.

Step 5: Assessment

According to a recent report by the European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), KETHEA MOSAIC is one of the good practices Greece has to demonstrate in supporting refugees.

This good practice is based on helping each migrant and refugee individually, and it also addresses a topic that is still considered as taboo in our society. It is easier to say that we are unemployed than say that we have an addiction. When it comes to migrants and refugees, we focus on them having to leave their countries in search for better living conditions, but not on the fact that these people may have addiction issues or that they may develop this kind of issues in the host country.

3.6 Akep: 2nd Good Practice

Bridging Rainbow

Step 1: Objective

The project '[Bridging Rainbow](#)' (December 2018 - June 2019) aimed to raise awareness concerning the protection of the LGBTQ refugee community rights and to facilitate the pathway towards social inclusion and integration in Greece.

The project was implemented by SolidarityNow (Greece) and supported by the Municipality of Barcelona and the foundation ACSAR.

Step 2: Output

SolidarityNow created a 'bridge' of awareness, sensitisation and respect of the diversity for the LGBTQ refugee community living in Greece. This bridge was the pilot program 'Bridging Rainbow' that was implemented by the organisation since the beginning of December 2018 and was completed in June 2019.

9 educational seminars about the legal framework and the asylum procedure for LGBTQ people, counselling services, employment sessions, and professional skills development workshops were organised.

155 people in total participated: members of the LGBTQ refugee community, and others such as representatives from 32 NGOs, various communities, refugee accommodation programs, public institutions, human rights defenders, and other stakeholders.

Emphasizing professional empowerment, the participants and members of the LGBTQ refugee community had the chance to learn, through the career counselling workshops, about how to write their CVs, how to prepare for a job interview, how to look for and apply to jobs and their rights as employees. They also gained, through the skills development workshops, expertise in cooking, make-up and hair styling in cooperation with the Greek Institute of Vocational Training (IEK AKMI).

The LGBTQ refugees had the opportunity to participate in vocational activities that, not only provided them with valuable labour market skills, but also help towards

a smoother, gradual integration, initially into a small community and then into the wider society.

Moreover, as part of this program, SolidarityNow created a short [video](#) that provides answers to 10+1 myths about members of LGBTQ communities, refugees or not. Busting myths and stereotypes that are against fundamental human rights is a key step to the path for awareness and respect.

Step 3: Assessment

Through a series of information, awareness, and empowerment actions, the program contributed in strengthening cooperation between all stakeholders, and stimulating social change for respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights.

This good practice addresses a specific group of migrants who, apart from all the difficulties in their home countries, had to face a lot of violence and discrimination, so many are traumatized. Sometimes, they experience loneliness and abuse in reception and accommodation camps due to homo/trans-phobia even in the host countries. The project contains both individual and group activities for the migrants.

4. Microintegration as a change maker for trainer/teacher/coaches/ employees in labour services *Micro integration- a way of change.*

Microintegration *is* a changemaker. This has been proven by the results of piloting this practice set: Following the completion of IO1 (Migrants' Microintegration into work life - practice set for "recipient labour representatives"), all partners conducted a pilot activity in their country to validate the content of the practice set and receive feedback which allows us to conclude that microintegration is an effective way to successfully integrate people with an immigrant background into the workforce and to accelerate this process.

The participants of the piloting considered the practice set to be innovative as, among other features, it includes the way the perspective of microintegration takes form practically in different countries, it is well presented and shows the reality of how integration can work, and it considers the concrete life situations and needs of migrants, thus offering more individuality for training contents.

To quote some participants:

'The practice set presents methodologies that truly facilitate microintegration and, at the same time, they empower the migrant.'

'It shows that integration is a multi-level process where different parties can contribute.' *'The approach fosters sustainable integration in labour and society.'*

'The approach beyond institutional level, showing that integration happens in different contexts.'

And this is the key point why microintegration is a changemaker: microintegration puts the main focus of the existing target group on individuality and not on the quantity of a group size participating in a labor market course. Microintegration requires from every labor market consultant the effort to rethink: it takes more effort to engage with each person individually, but the effort will pay off in the long run and lead to better numbers.

Biographical work requires a commitment from both sides, but the narrowing of

personal problems of the job seeker will help to make him ready for the labor market. When health and economic challenges are addressed as a team effort, it leads to motivation to work and to actively participate in the job search. This would already eliminate one of the challenges, which is the personalization of the jobseeker. Thus, with microintegration, we have minimised most of the challenges for the employee. But this is only possible if co-determination and one-by-one dialog - at least as part of a general labor market course - takes place through coaches, trainers and consultants. With the positive results, it is now possible to counter stereotypes and prejudices against refugees and migrants in the labor market and in society.

The second part of micro-integration is to facilitate the application and hiring process for the target group by convincing HR managers that a multicultural workplace is an asset and not a burden for the company and the existing team.

Annex

Additional good practices

1) Society for the Care of Minors

The Society for the Care of Minors (SMAN) is a recognised charitable association founded in 1924 with Emmanuel Benaki as its main donor. Over the years, the work of SMAN has been adapted and called upon to meet the social needs of the time, always through specialised, modern and high-quality service provision with respect to human rights and family-type care as its main characteristics. The main purpose of SMAN is the protection of minors and young people at risk and in a situation of need, regardless of their ethnic/racial origin, religious beliefs and sexual orientation.

<https://www.sman-athens.org/>

The website is available only in Greek.

2) Wind of Renewal: Social Cooperative Enterprise for Social and Green Economy, Innovation and Culture

Social Cooperative 'Wind of Renewal' ('Anemos Ananeosis') was created by socially active people in order to play a strategic, synthetic and scientific role in the promotion of:

Social – cooperative and responsible economy, Sustainable, effective, innovative social enterprises
Green – circular economy
Social and environmental innovation
Employment in green, social and cultural sectors
Incorporation of democracy and human rights in financial and social life.