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EMBRACIN - Enhancing Migrants' Bottom-up, Responsive and Citizen-led Integration in Europe

Pilot actions

Europe, for different reasons, is likely to remain a likely destination for asylum-seekers and migrants. This requires administrations at different levels in Member States to work together and find innovative solutions to create effective policy to promote integration of migrants and social cohesion, also relying on the strengths of local networks and active communities. One of these efforts was made by Antonio Calò in Italy, where he became a host of migrants and developed the scheme called “6+6X6” that was awarded by the European Parliament in 2018. This foresees integration policies of migrants avoiding big hosting centres: 6 migrants/refugees every 5,000 with a personalized approach and individual support to each person, in order to allow them a complete path to social and economic integration in 24 months.

To move from a spontaneous action of a committed citizen to a local integration policy, EMBRACIN developed a core network of 4 Municipalities and 2 networks of municipalities from 6 different countries (Italy, Slovenia, Greece, Cyprus, Spain, Sweden) willing to share and scale-up this experience, developing and testing a European model of integration, starting from the assumptions of 6+6x6.

Each Municipality has adapted and developed a local plan, based on the cornerstones of the EMBRACIN model, and is experimenting it with beneficiaries and promoters that will help them with the integration process.

In Cyprus, the pilot phase started in July 2021. Following a tender published in June 2021, the Municipality of Engomi appointed a subcontractor to implement the pilot action. Hence, in late July 2021 Municipality of Engomi signed the contract with CODECA (Center for Social Cohesion, Development and Care) which is based in the municipality's area of intervention. A Local Steering Committee (LSC), constituted by a representative of the Municipality of Engomi, of the Nicosia Developing Agency - ANEL and of CODECA, was established to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the pilot action. The LSC held several coordinating meetings for the selection of the beneficiaries and control group members. Although the initially foreseen number of participants

per beneficiaries' group was six, the LSC decided to recruit eight people per group to make sure that at least six will complete the pilot phase. The final selection was made in the first days of September. Eight young people, asylum seekers and newcomers were selected as beneficiaries, all of them from Africa (3 women and 5 men). At the same time, a group of the same number and characteristics was selected as a control group. In terms of housing, all of them live at their own houses with a grant by the government.

In September 2021, a social worker, acting also as a cultural mediator, initiated the sessions with the participants (one by one or in a group) and compiled the beneficiaries' social and individual historical profiles. A few weeks later, psychological and legal support was provided to the beneficiaries as well, to help them deal with some personal issues and to be integrated into the local society.

Regarding access to health services and COVID-19 vaccination, the beneficiaries have full access to the General Health System, so most of them take advantage of this opportunity and have already complete the COVID-19 vaccination.

The beneficiaries participated in several activities and events (e.g. International coastal clean-up day at Larnaka and Limassol, Career fair at Nicosia center, First Aid Seminars at Engomi Town Hall). We are planning to offer Greek language lessons and quality free time activities such as day trips to the town center and other places outside town, cinema / theater, visits to museums and exhibitions, participation to sports (soccer and bowling) and other public cultural events.



Photo 1: International coastal cleanup day, 19/9/2021



Photo 2: First Aid Seminars, 1/11/2021 & 8/11/2021

To learn more about the actions in Cyprus, please contact the national partner:

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For more information, visit the project's website <http://embracin.eu/> , and follow the project on social media:

Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/embracin.eu> ,

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