



City of
P. A. T. R. A. S. *

****People Acting Towards Respect And Solidarity***

Basic information

“C4I: Communication for Integration - social networking for diversity” project
HOME/2012-13/CA/CFP/EIF/4000004190



The current document has been conducted within the implementation of tasks of the project entitled “**C4I: Communication for Integration - social networking for diversity**” coordinated by the “**Council of Europe**” and funded by “*Grant procedure HOME/2012-13/CA/CFP/EIF under "European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals" 2012-2013 - Call for Proposals - Community Action Grants*”. The city of Patras is a partner in the scheme through “**Patras Cultural Organisation-Municipal Library**” as a partner supported by the *Vice-Municipality “Support of Citizens, Volunteerism, Gender Equality & Integration of Migrants”* and “*Patras Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development-ADEP SA*”.

The document includes basic information about the city of Patras, presented below:

Introduction

Patras is a harbor city inhabited by 200,000 people. About 22,000 migrants of different countries live in and in the suburbs of our city.

It is inhabited by various types of population with different origins, languages, religions and cultures. Knowing all these groups of our population is of vital importance for organizing a friendly living environment for all. This is an on-going process facing difficulties and risks.

The citizens of Patras, by living in a harbor city, have been used to foreigners being part of their community for a long time. Patras has always been the gate of Greece to the West and witnessed that being a port is not just a part of a city’s layout but it is mainly a way of communicating messages with all over the world. The city’s modernity has emerged from the coexistence and encounter of differing cultures and mindsets during its long lasting history

It is noteworthy, that the city of Patras during its recent history after the foundation of new Greek state, is a result of a continuous mix of populations.

- In 1922, refugees from Asia Minor found shelter in our city
- after the first and second world wide war, many Italians stayed in Patras, got married and had families. Until today, families of Italian origin are very active in our city and operate their own Catholic church, a very special place that also hosts cultural events e.g. concerts.
- the English community has an active role in Patras – many English people stayed in our city especially since the high development of the commerce of raisins through our port
- the port of Patras is regarded as the gate of Greece to the West and its links, especially with Italy (ports of Bari, Ancona, Brindezi, Venice), are very strong.
- The University of Patras is regarded as one of the best in Greece and attracts many students from other countries especially of the Mediterranean area. More precisely, groups have formed such as of African Students, of Students from Cyprus etc. Furthermore, the University is a favorable place for the operation of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) of students acting at a European level (e.g. BEST, AEGEE), linking various Universities together and hosting missions of foreign students.

In addition, within the last 20 years, Patras is a living place for many people coming from the Balkans such as Albanians, Romanians, Bulgarians as well as people from the East such as Chinese and Indies. All of them have been incorporated in society and their children attend public schools.



Furthermore, there are about 2.500 Roma in the city who are present at the city as many of Roma children do not attend school. Efforts have been paid so that to be integrated in urban social context and culture (counseling services, adult education programs, Health provision programs etc).

Many associations of migrants have been formed and participate to decision-making processes through the operation of Patras “Council for the Inclusion of Migrants-CIM”.

Taking all the above into account, Patras has been an active member of the “**Intercultural Cities**” network since 2008, coordinated by the **Council of Europe-CoE**. This activation is of valuable importance to the city of Patras

The management of intercultural issues is supervised by the *Vice-Municipality of “Support of Citizens, Volunteerism, Gender Equality & Integration of Migrants”* and is supported by “*Patras Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development-ADEP SA*”.

The city of Patras has formed its IC strategy aiming:

To develop Patras as an intercultural meeting point, imbued with a spirit of openness, as a co-creation of the municipality, civil society and the residents of the city.

The consultation on implementing the strategy is intensive, with the involvement of many non-governmental organisations engaged by the municipality, as well as local organisations, even national and international ones and representatives of the social partners (Universities included), as well as officials in Athens (please, refer to “Networking”, below)

This is a strong partnership that has been flourishing through the years by exploiting Patras experience from “**Intercultural Cities – ICC**” network coordinated by the **Council of Europe**. Patras has greatly benefited being an active ICC member, since 2008 and the core-city in Greece.

Networking

Please, note that the activation of the city of Patras in “Intercultural Cities” network has enriched cooperation:

► “Within” the Municipality of Patras:

- Vice-Municipality of “Volunteerism, Gender Equality, NGOs, Integration of Immigrants & Services for Citizens”
- Vice-Municipality of “Education, Transparency & Electronic Consultation”
- Vice Municipality of “Health, Welfare & Social Policy”
- Dpt. of Volunteerism & Equality Policy
- Mediation Office
- Council for the Integration of Migrants (CIM)
- Patras Cultural Organisation
- Patras Municipal Social Organization (KODYP)
- ADEP SA

► “Outside” the Municipality of Patras:

- University of Patras / Dpt. of Education
- Hellenic Open University / Schools of Science & Technology



- Peripheral Educational Directorate of Western Greece
- Communities of Migrants (e.g. Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, Nigeria, Afganistan, Syria, etc.)
- Associations of doctors
- Associations of students
- UNHCR
- International Organization for Migration
- Medicine du Monde
- ESIEPIN (Union of Editors of Daily Newspapers of Epirus, Peloponnese & Islands)
- NGOs e.g.
 - Achaeco Institute of Adult Education
 - Movement "PROTASI"
 - ASTO
 - PRAKSIS
 - Art inProgress
 - CYCLISIS
 - AMKE Support
 - Care for living

There also links with Ministries and organisations in Athens such as Ministry of Interiors, Ministry of Education & Culture, Ministry of Labor, General Secretariat for Equality, National Centre of Social Research, Harokopeio University of Athens, etc.

This networking benefiting interculturalism is a dynamic process, "open" to all those who wish to participate targeting co-creation, synergy and multiple effects.

Solidarity & equality

It is true, that at the moment the rate of poverty is increasing day by day in Patras. Therefore, at this stage emphasis is put on solidarity actions, utilizing volunteering through the operation of the Department of "Volunteerism & Equality Policy" of the Municipality of Patras. The volunteer members who support the work of the Department, numbering about 650 people, constitute Team "Epsilon" and support various social structures of the Municipality of Patras, such as:

- Organization of the Municipal Wardrobe: It is supported by volunteer organizations of the city, shopkeepers and all citizens . It serves over 1200 families every two months.
- Organization of Social Pharmacy in collaboration with the Pharmaceutical Association, which works with the voluntary offer of pharmacists. The supply of medicine by pharmacists, companies, voluntary organizations and citizens is exceptional.
- Organization of Social Clinic, working with the voluntary Medical Association, the Medical Faculty of the University of Patras and the Union of Hospital Physicians of Achaia, so that poor and uninsured residents can be examined for free.
- Organization of Social Pediatric Clinic, working with the voluntary assistance of the Association of Private Pediatricians of Patras.

It is noteworthy that the Vice-Municipality of "Education, Transparency & Electronic Consultation" is networked with the "Directorate of Primary & Secondary Education of Achaia prefecture", the "University of Patras" and "Achaia Association of Teachers" in order to support the students, who



are children from socially vulnerable families for their lessons. This is called "Social Tutorial" which has been organized into four schools of Patras and involves the voluntary teaching of active and retired teachers and students of the University of Patras, who are members of "Team Epsilon" group of volunteers of the Municipality.

The Municipality of Patras and its organizations are very active in projects. By exploiting national funding, the following social structures have established:

- "Social Grocery" with enriched services based on the pre-existing "Bank of Food" and Municipal Wardrobe", books, toys, school supplies and provision of psycho-social support.
- "Providing food" to 140 beneficiaries on a daily basis
- "Time Bank" an alternative trading system for the exchange of products and services, with no use of currency
- "Mediation Office" for providing information and service requests of members of vulnerable groups who wish to exploit the social structures and other actions of the Municipality benefiting them

Currently, the structure of "Municipal Vegetable Gardens" is being designed which will benefit at least 100 poor families, while giving them the possibility of productive activity.

It is also worth referring to the cooperation with "UNHCR" and the "PRAKSIS" NGO for the implementation of the project entitled "Protection of Children on the Move". The aim of the project was to develop measures for the reception and counseling of unaccompanied children with emphasis on those that do not have access to asylum procedures and other protection mechanisms.

In the same context, recognizing the need to create structures for unaccompanied minors in the city, the Municipality of Patras supported operators of «PRAKSIS» NGO, Red Cross and childcare workers with a proposal to create such a structure. The proposal was adopted by the International Organization for Migration and the respective structure has started its operation.

The project on the voluntary return of third country migrants coordinated by International Organisation of Migration has launched in Patras, supported by the Municipality. Related space has been allocated for the needs of implementing the program and direct liaison is maintained with the Vice-Municipality in charge.

Patras "Council for the Integration of Migrants-CIM"

With regard to migrants as target group, a key-role "player" in this effort is the "Council for the Integration of Migrants (CIM)" of Patras, a valuable tool for participation, representation and promotion of the views of migrants at the local level.

- It participated in the public consultation on the draft of "National Strategy for Social Integration of third country nationals 2012-2015", with comments and observations
- It collaborates with the new structure of the open multi-clinic of "Medecins du Monde" in the city of Patras
- It is involved in the distribution of printed material courtesy of the Centre for European Constitutional Law Foundation "Themistocles Tsatsos", regarding the multilingual guide on preventive health care, in order to inform and raise awareness among immigrants.
- It supports actively and participates with presentations to all study-visits of experts of the Council of Europe at Patras



- It works actively in all the activities of European projects on interculturalism
- It supports the learning of Greek language to migrants, through initiatives made by both the municipality and by the organizations-members of the local network for interculturalism in Patras
- It organizes sports activities involving all natives and migrants, in cooperation with voluntary organizations and associations
- It collaborates with cultural institutions to develop innovative actions (such as with the Municipal Theatre of Patras for organizing theatrical performance with true stories of migrant women)
- It interfaces with other CIM of Greek cities to exchange information and experiences, such as with the CIM of the Municipality Korydallos (area of Athens). Networking has been created between the two SEMs due to their participation in a PROGRESS project coordinated by National Secretariat of Gender Equality in Greece, focusing on migrant women. Emphasis is put on joint interventions e.g. at the Greek Ministry of Interior Affairs.
- In the same context, a consortium has been established between CIM Patras and NGO "AMKE Support " for the implementation of a PROGRESS project within the measure of "Support to NGOs WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS" Operation Plan of "2007-2013".

Regarding specific actions, it is worth mentioning the action of providing food and clothes to migrants who have no economic ability. It concerns 250 migrants three times a week who are given bread donated by bakeries at the city of Patras.

Patras actions related to National & European levels

The city of Patras is a very trustful partner for the implementation of common initiatives at national and European level.

The internal networking at municipal level (as described above within "Part B.1.2 Networking") acts as an effective platform for this regard. Based on its role, "Patras Municipal Enterprise for Planning & Development-ADEP SA" is managing the submissions of projects.

Related examples are listed as follows:

1. European Integration Fund for Third Countries Nationals / call for proposals by Ministry of Interiors (submission: 20.9.2013)

The following proposals were submitted with the Municipality of Patras as partner (through ADEP SA) in national different schemes that were formed for each one of these proposals:

1. Programmes for the support of the "Councils for the Integration of Migrants" towards the planning and the development of actions benefiting inclusion, at a local level (measure 1.1.β.)
2. Creation of mixed centres for youth (measure 1.2.b.)
3. Inter-religious dialogue as a means for sensitization of society and inclusion of migrants (measure 1.2.d.)
4. Awareness campaign for the sensitization of youth and their information about trafficking of people (measure 1.2.e.)
5. Sports and recreation actions for Greeks and migrants (measure 1.4.a.)
6. Development of cooperation networks among the representatives of member-states of Mediterranean basin for the exchanges of views and experiences (measure 4.1.a.)



7. Development of cooperation networks among the representatives of “Councils for the Integration of Migrants” and other relative organisations at a European level (measure 4.1.b.)

Please, note that all the above submissions of the Municipality of Patras as partner, were accompanied by:

- Letters of support by CoE / ICC coordinator (Mrs Irena GUIDIKOVA)
- Detailed description of the involvement of Patras in the ICC network and the experience gained
- Letters of support by the respective Vice-Municipality of Patras in charge i.e. “Support of Citizens, Volunteerism, Gender Equality & Integration of Migrants” (Vice-Mayor Mrs Maria ANDRIKOPOULOU-ROUVALI)
- Decisions of support for each one of them made by Patras “Council for the Integration of Migrants”
- Each submission included a variety of type of partners from Greek cities.

These proposals have been evaluated and **two of them have been recently (May 2014) approved** i.e. **“Development of cooperation networks among the representatives of member-states of Mediterranean basin for the exchanges of views and experiences (measure 4.1.a.)”** and **“Development of cooperation networks among the representatives of “Councils for the Integration of Migrants” and other relative organisations at a European level (measure 4.1.b.)”**. It is expected that their implementation will enrich the extrovert character of the city of Patras and will benefit social cohesion through the exchange of experiences and application of best practices designed for Patras.

2. PROGRESS -Antidiscrimination

“Combating Discrimination in the Field of Entrepreneurship: Women and young Roma and muslim immigrants”

The main aim of this project is to disseminate information on the protection against discrimination, but also to contribute to the creation of anti-discrimination reflexes in society. The aim is also to document the existing situation, the current perceptions and attitudes (e.g. discriminations) regarding the position of female and young Roma and Muslim immigrants in the labour market and to draw some conclusions for the facilitation of their access to it, but also their further development.

The project is coordinated by National Centre for Social Research-EKKE and partners are: Greek Ombudsman, Hellenic Manpower Organisation (OAED) and the Municipality of Patras-ADEP SA. It is funded by PROGRESS-Antidiscrimination (JUST/2012/PROG/AG/AD”) and it is currently being implemented.

3. “Support of roma people of Achaia”

Women and young Roma and muslim migrants”: The main aim of the project is to disseminate information on the protection against discrimination, but also to contribute to the creation of anti-discrimination reflexes in society. The aim is also to document the existing situation, the current perceptions and attitudes (e.g. discriminations) regarding the position of female and young Roma and Muslim immigrants in the labour market and to draw some conclusions for the facilitation of their access to it, but also their further development. It is funded by “PROGRESS-Antidiscrimination” EU programme and it is coordinated by National Social Research Centre (EKKE) - the Municipality of Patras is a partner through ADEP SA.



4. “SONETOR: Training of cultural mediators utilizing new Social Networking Software”

The project is coordinated by Hellenic Open University - Educational Content Methodology & Technology Laboratory (e-CoMeT Lab) and is funded by the European lifelong Learning Programme, Leonardo da Vinci. The aim is to identify the profile and needs of education, training and communication of intercultural mediators, reveal good practices on Intercultural Mediation, develop tools with emphasis on web-based training for intercultural mediators (creation of a dedicated platform for this regard: <http://www.culturalmediators.eu/>), and the exchange of views on the role of intercultural mediators within the inclusion process of the migrants. Intercultural mediation is one of the key components of the intercultural integration approach which is founded on the principle that increasing migration and ethnic diversity present a challenge but also a huge opportunity to cities - which they can and must realize. The Municipality of Patras and ADEP SA supported the implementation of the project throughout its duration. Emphasis must be put to the international conference "Improving the skills and enhance the identity of intercultural mediators in a multicultural Europe" (<http://www.sonetor-project.eu/esicm/>) held on 8th & 9th January 2014 in Patras, Greece. The conference participants explored the different forms and approaches to mediation and debated on the pros and cons for the professionalisation of mediation vs. the mainstreaming of intercultural competence among the staff of public administration, services and schools. ICC representatives, coordinated by Mrs Irena GUIDIKOVA (ICC coordinator – Council of Europe), joined the event as speakers and a dedicated internal meeting was hosted at the city hall.

5. “Youth Photography for interculturalism”

Coordinator was the Lewisham Borough of London and the work was supported by the Council of Europe. Along with Patras, partners cities were: Tilburg (Netherlands), Berlin (Germany), Lublin (Poland) and Izefsk (Russia), all being member-cities of the ICC network. The project is based on the idea that successful are those societies that manage to foster innovation and creativity with respect for diversity. In this process, young people play an important role since creativity and innovation characterize their spirit. In this project, photography was the "means" for young people to capture with their camera, how they “interpret” interculturalism in their city. More specifically, Patras organized a seminar on interculturalism, which gave young people the opportunity to address stereotypes, to reflect on basic principles of communication and to apply new forms of outreach. The photos made were exhibited to an Intercultural Centre in Lewisham Borough of London, while the young people within every city and between cities-partners, developed an intensive exchange and cooperation, applying the principles of the project in practice. A respective promotional product was made in Patras based by the photos of Patras youth involved in the project.

6. “C4I: Communication for Integration - social networking for diversity”

The main aim of the project is building and strengthening social mobilisation networks to foster public opinion and debate on migration and diversity and combat unfounded (but widespread) myths and misconceptions which undermine the integration strategies at local level. Emphasis is put on local actions to enhance migrants’ economic, social, cultural and political participation so that to engage receiving communities in interacting with migrants, based on the mutual respect of their



rights, obligations and different cultures. It is funded by grants of DG HOME/European Commission and is coordinated by the Council of Europe (CoE). The project has started being implemented. Patras is a partner city in the scheme – more specifically the “Intercultural Cities-ICC” network is expected to be actively involved in it.

Note: It is noteworthy, that the Municipality of Patras through ADEP SA is a partner in a proposal coordinated by the Municipality of Amadora (member of the ICC national network in Portugal) submitted in December 2013 under the PROGRESS social experimentation European programme (currently, under evaluation).

Patras actions related to “Intercultural Cities” network

- i. Participation in milestone event “**Making Diversity work for Cities**” (6-8.2.2013, **Dublin-IR**): a) A speech was delivered by the Vice-Mayor of “**Support of Citizens, Volunteerism, Gender Equality & Integration of Migrants**” Mrs Maria ANDRIKOPOULOU-ROUVALI presenting the intercultural strategy of Patras and b) participation of Mrs Chrissa GERAGA (ADEP SA-Head of Programming & Networking dpt.-Patras ICC coordinator) in media workshop presenting the effort of the city of Patras in awareness actions.
- ii. Participation in the 24th session of the “Congress of local & regional authorities” (20.3.13, Strasburg): A speech was delivered by the Vice-Mayor of “**Support of Citizens, Volunteerism, Gender Equality & Integration of Migrants**” Mrs Maria ANDRIKOPOULOU-ROUVALI presenting the social structures of the city benefiting vulnerable groups of population (migrants included), linked with the operation of the intercultural approach. A special meeting was organized at that time with the Coordinator of ICC network Mrs Irena GUIDIKOVA and representatives of the Hellenic Open University (HOU) so that to identify the way to cooperate due to the implementation of “SONETOR” EU project (funded by Leonardo da Vinci programme (please, refer below about the outcome of this joint effort).
- iii. Participation in the thematic workshop about the definition of indicators for evaluating the implementation of the IC strategy. It was organized by CoE in cooperation with the city of Pecs that hosted it. Patras was represented by Mrs Chrissa GERAGA who delivered a presentation on the IC strategy of the city as well as by Dr Achilles KAMEAS (Assistant Professor of HOU – member of Patras IC network) who presented “SONETOR” project (funded by Leonardo da Vinci EU programme) targeting the importance of intercultural mediation) (please, refer also to point B.2.4.)
- iv. Participation in the ICC coordinators meeting. It was organized by CoE at its premises in Paris (3 & 4 October 2013). Patras was represented by its local ICC coordinator Mrs Chrissa GERAGA, taking active part in discussions and addressing issues related to Patras situation.
- v. Production of promotional material as an outcome of “Youth photography for interculturalism” project funded by CoE
- vi. Submissions of proposals within calls of European programmes. This is an on-going activity for the city of Patras (ADEP SA is regarded as the “tool” for the Municipality of this regard).



Due to the experience gained as a result of actions at local and European level, the Municipality of Patras is an active partner constantly trying for improvement. It wants to be a very active partner contributing to effective networking and it remains “open” for collaboration and constructive exchange for the benefit of all its citizens.