

**Urban Regeneration: European Network of Towns**

# Handbook

**OVERCOMING STEREOTYPES ABOUT  
IMMIGRANTS AND BUILDING COUNTER  
NARRATIVES**



Urban Regeneration: European Network of Towns

Co-funded by the  
Europe for Citizens Programme  
of the European Union



## BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

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This handbook is part of the URGENT project co-financed by the Europe for Citizens Programme of the European Union. URGENT is a two-year project led by ALDA – the European Association for Local Democracy (France) and 12 other European partners. The aim of this handbook is to build on the activities implemented during the project in order to extract lessons learnt that will inform future initiatives on how to improve the quality of life in marginalised neighbourhoods, increase social inclusion, fight stereotypes and facilitate intercultural dialogue. Bringing together three local authorities, four associations of local authorities, four civil society organisations, an academic institution and a foundation, the main objective of the URGENT project is to improve social cohesion in local communities by promoting migrants' integration through the development of urban policies which foster intercultural dialogue and the use of common spaces. Implemented from September 2016 to August 2018, the project focused on “local paths” implemented in one city per each partner country (with an exception to Italy, where activities took place in two cities). During these local paths the stakeholders of each city became familiar with migration issues at the local level in order to then elaborate on pilot project ideas for intercultural dialogue in deprived and conflicting areas. After this the pilot projects were finally implemented on the ground. In between the three phases of the local paths, international events were organised in different countries as a tool for partner organisations to compare the situation of their cities, share problems and potential solutions.

There are four main objectives in the URGENT project:

Objective 1: To create spaces of discussion and mutual learning among citizens from different socio-cultural backgrounds and from different countries of Europe.

Objective 2: To foster active citizenship and co-creation of policies and services in local societies, particularly for citizens who are often excluded from the decision-making processes.

Objective 3: To enhance the capacity of local institutions to be “multipliers” in their own communities in order to engage a wide range of stakeholders.

Objective 4: To provide a new impetus to the EU enlargement process, contributing to the establishment of a long-lasting thematic network of cities that are strongly active and committed as key players in Europe.

**Leading partner:** ALDA, the European Association for Local Democracy – France

**Project partners:**

SSIIM Unesco Chair, Iuav University of Venice – Italy

Local Democracy Agency Mostar – Bosnia and Herzegovina

Association of Albanian Municipalities – Albania

SPES – Associazione Promozione e Solidarietà – Italy

SOS Malta – Solidarity Overseas Service – Malta

Fundación Privada Indera – Spain

Municipality of Kumanovo – Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Amphictyony – Greece

Kallipolis – Italy

Rede DLBC Lisboa – Portugal

City of Strasbourg – France

Municipality of Novo Mesto – Slovenia

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## INTRODUCTION

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Europe is currently experiencing an alarming level of urban fragmentation, inequality and structural socio-spatial divisions within its cities. The most vulnerable part of the population is often bound to be concentrated in the disadvantaged areas where social exclusion and deprivation usually overlap with high levels of cultural, linguistic and ethnical diversity. The inhabitants of these areas predominantly consist of a high number of migrant inhabitants. These increasingly marginalised and stigmatized areas often fall into a vicious circle of poverty and discrimination which regularly feeds into the development of extremism and radicalism. The URGENT consortium aims to focus on the paradigm of intercultural cities in 12 different countries within Europe, in order to establish new intercultural connections amongst the inhabitants of the marginalised areas and those not living in a marginalised area.

The intercultural approach of urban regenerations was *de facto* institutionalized at the beginning of 2008 when, on the eve of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue, the Council of Europe and European Commission launched their joint initiative, the 'Intercultural City Programme'. This initiative explicitly encourages local governments to take an intercultural approach to migration, integration and social cohesion, as well as to develop comprehensive intercultural strategies to manage urban diversity. In a survey conducted by the URGENT consortium, designed specifically to address the main actors dealing with migration issues at the local level, it was found that the local actors' approach towards migration was largely based on emergency, security and assimilation. Only 15% of the 100 respondents mentioned the intercultural approach encouraged by the aforementioned initiative. In light of these findings, there is a desperate need to shift the focus from the development of security policies to safety policies and social policies. Policies such as ensuring the adequate provision and equality of access to urban facilities, infrastructures and services should be viewed as a mechanism to encourage intercultural connection.

Additionally, migrants and members of other disadvantaged groups of citizens who contribute to the socio-economic life of their communities are usually excluded from the official decision-making process. The lack of representation further segregates them from the community and enforces discrimination. Therefore, local governments must establish a way to work more closely with their migrant members of the community and the disadvantaged civil society in general. The creation and enhancement of cooperation with urban stakeholders is the key element in establishing a network of resources and knowledge. Moreover, local governments should be encouraged to use, create and promote its available tools such as its public spaces within the city, as these micro intercultural initiatives help further shift the city towards a more intercultural paradigm. The rethinking of way the integration process of migrants is managed at the local level is at the very basis of the strategy used to tackle the growing fear of immigration and overcome misleading stereotypes which feed into Euroscepticism's that undermines the fragile state of European cohesion. The objective of the URGENT consortium will be best addressed by promoting and raising local awareness of the vital need to establish a bottom-up approach to new intercultural connections amongst the inhabitants of marginalised areas and those not living in a marginalised area.

## METHODOLOGY

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Since its conception, URGENT project had the ambitious goal of gathering together a large variety of European local stakeholders (including local authorities, NGOs of different nature, CBOs, local development agencies), actively engaged in fostering urban inclusion in 10 very different European contexts, to promote dialogue among them, accommodate diversities, foster a shared understanding and principles of action for facing the challenges posed by socio-spatially excluded neighbourhoods in their cities and towns.

The project was thus articulated into a set of interlinked activities alternating international meetings (4 in total) with three-phase local paths which took place in all the targeted countries in cities and towns selected by the partners for the complexity of their hyper-diverse neighbourhoods. International meetings were conceived as the backbone in order to exchange experiences, build coherence in approaches, frame and guide the analysis and actions to be carried out at the local level. Each meeting lasted 2/3 working days included a closed-doors participative session coordinated and facilitated by researchers of the *SSIIM UNESCO Chair on the Social and Spatial Inclusion of International Migrants – Urban Policies and Practices* of Luav University of Venice and ALDA staff. As well as a public conference on specific topics to which urban policymakers and practitioners from other cities, in addition to, renewed scholars, were invited to present successful inclusive policies and practices carried out at the urban level. This was done in order to provide further ‘food for thought’ to the project partners and raise awareness among civil society at large on the need to work towards inclusive cities. Field visits to problematic neighbourhoods and innovative practices to tackle socio-spatial exclusion and urban fragmentation were also organised in each of the 4 cities hosting the international meetings. This was done in order to ensure that partners are aware of challenges and possible ‘solutions’ within the cities.

Although the 10 local contexts of action were different in terms of size, legislative framework (national and local), migration flows and stocks, specific challenges tackled, target populations and type of activities carried out for the project. The information and tools shared among the partners’ delegations during international meetings allowed to transfer common principles and ideas to the local level, where they have been deepened, elaborated and adapted. This approach ensured that the local and European level build a cooperation by using a bottom-up approach whilst constructing a European network using a common framework.

**The first international meeting** “*Restarting (from) European Cities: immigration and intercultural dialogue, from the global to the local*” was held in Strasbourg on the 28/29th of November 2016. The aim of this opening event was to share a common language and understanding of the different topics addressed by the project. The first part of the meeting led to the objective which made all participants aware of:

- migration/refugees’ processes at the EU level
- the causes and effects of stigmatisation processes and radicalisation patterns at the local level
- conflicts, xenophobia, intolerance and discrimination aroused by the presence of migration/refugees in their cities

- common challenges about migration at EU level that have different outcomes at the national level
- the presence and the main features of conflicting areas due to the presence of migration in the city

Starting with the sharing of participants' expectations, the project steps and rationale/methodology were discussed. This was done by using the working groups, terminology and concepts which were shared and debated upon. In order to promote mutual knowledge and understanding, specific working groups were organized to share on topics concerning: i) immigration in your country/city: facts and figures (who) ii) spatial concentration of immigrants in your city (where) iii) main urban narratives on the issue (perception) iv) your projects/expertise (action).

In the second session, a more specific training session was facilitated on how to organize the start-up of the local path, mainly dedicated to territorial analysis in target cities. The Fact Sheet (presented below and prepared by SSIIM UNESCO Chair researchers, University Luav of Venice) was presented and discussed in a plenary session. Group discussions were organized to discuss and select target areas in partners' cities and share doubts on how to use the tools of urban analysis. The Fact Sheet was shared as a possible guideline to lead project partners to a common understanding of the challenges to respond with the local pilot projects.

Fact sheet for pilot projects - delegations working in the field of migration and/or refugees/asylum seekers (R&AS)	
<b>To do list:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Please select an area where to focus the pilot project</li> <li>- Please fill the chart with requested data</li> <li>- If you like, please attach a max 3 pages of narrative description of the target area</li> </ul>	
<b>Position</b>	Map of the city showing where the area is + larger map of the area + two significant images/pictures
<b>Context/the city</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Total population of the city</li> <li>○ % of migrants on the total population and top 10 nationalities</li> <li>○ N° of refugees/asylum seekers (R&amp;AS) and main nationalities</li> </ul> <p>Describe in max 10 lines the main transformation in the last decade related to populations that populated the city. This is needed to understand the main changes in population dynamics in the last 10 years.</p>
<b>Please from now on refer to your target area</b> <b>Description of the target area</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dimension (squared meters)</li> <li>○ Total population</li> <li>○ % of migrants on the total population</li> <li>○ N° of R&amp;AS</li> <li>○ Please list the more relevant national groups for both categories (migrants and R&amp;AS)</li> </ul>
<b>Migrant population</b>	<p>Please provide data/estimations for the most relevant national groups on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gender ratio</li> <li>○ Ageing index (The ageing index is calculated as the number of persons 60 years old or over per hundred persons under age 15)</li> <li>○ Legal status (how many regular, estimation of irregular, other legal status)</li> <li>○ Main religious groups</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Households composition</li> <li>○ N° of unaccompanied minor</li> </ul>
<b>R&amp;AS population</b>	<p>Please provide data/estimations for the most relevant national groups on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gender ratio</li> <li>○ Ageing index (The ageing index is calculated as the number of persons 60 years old or over per hundred persons under age 15)</li> <li>○ Legal status (how many regular, estimation of irregular, other legal status)</li> <li>○ Main religious groups</li> <li>○ Households composition</li> <li>○ N° of unaccompanied minor</li> </ul>
<b>Natives</b>	<p>Please provide data/estimations on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Gender ratio</li> <li>○ Ageing index</li> <li>○ Main religious groups</li> <li>○ Households composition</li> </ul>
<b>Interactions and mutual perception</b>	<p>From a qualitative point of view please describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If and how natives and migrant groups relate to each other</li> <li>○ If and how different migrant groups relate to each other</li> </ul> <p>Reciprocal representations/narratives/prejudice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Main conflicts/problems</li> <li>○ Main bridges/points of contact</li> </ul>
<b>Social and health services</b> Please localize facilities on a map (you can also draw it). If relevant and used by population of the area, localize on the map also facilities outside the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Public social services (detail)</li> <li>○ Health centers</li> <li>○ Hospitals</li> <li>○ Associations, migrant associations, CBOs, NGOs, social enterprises and informal groups working in the social and health field</li> <li>○ Public kitchen</li> <li>○ Public showers</li> <li>○ Outreach services/activities</li> <li>○ Other (please specify)</li> </ul> <p>From a qualitative point of view please describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Services delivered, i.e opening days/times, specific service provided, target population (service for all or specific for migrants R&amp;AS?), how many users for week or month, etc.</li> <li>○ Key actors involved to collaborate with</li> </ul> <p>Please analyze:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If services delivered are responding to local needs</li> </ul>
<b>Cultural, education and religious services</b> Please localize on a map (you can also draw it). If relevant and used by population of the area, localize on the map also facilities outside the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Parks, squares, public space</li> <li>○ Transportation hubs</li> <li>○ Cultural centers (library, other cultural spaces, neighborhood centers)</li> <li>○ Churches and religious spaces</li> <li>○ Schools</li> <li>○ Other spaces (please specify)</li> </ul> <p>From a qualitative point of view please understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ How different populations interact in more relevant public spaces</li> <li>○ Main conflicts/bridges</li> <li>○ If main public spaces are perceived safe or unsecure and by whom</li> <li>○ Possible areas to perform some activities related to the project</li> </ul>



<b>Commercial services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Shopping mall</li> <li>○ Markets</li> <li>○ Ethnic shops</li> <li>○ Street vending</li> <li>○ Other (please specify)</li> </ul> <p>From a qualitative point of view please analyze:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If the target area is an ethnic oriented area concerning the commercial activities</li> </ul>
<b>Housing</b> Please localize on a map (you can also draw it)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ N° of public houses</li> <li>○ Social housing projects</li> <li>○ Reception centers</li> <li>○ Residential care</li> <li>○ Temporary private apartments for reception</li> <li>○ Squatting</li> <li>○ Others</li> </ul> <p>From a qualitative point of view please understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Key actors providing help in access to housing</li> <li>○ If services delivered are responding to local needs</li> <li>○ If there are vacant spaces/buildings (not necessarily houses) where to anchor some future activities</li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility to/from your target area</b> Please localize on a map (you can also draw it)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Physical barriers isolating the area (i.e. railways track, big streets etc)</li> <li>○ List of public transport serving the area</li> <li>○ Frequency of main public transportation lines</li> </ul> <p>From a qualitative point of view please specify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ If it is a peripheral area of central one</li> <li>○ If and how your area is connected to other neighborhoods</li> </ul>

**The second international meeting “Reframing Urban cohesion in European cities: the diversity advantage”** was held in Venice on the 6-8 June 2017 with the aim to exchange the local paths implemented after the first meeting in Strasbourg and to share lessons learnt in thematic focus groups. The main outcome of the meeting was the development of common guidelines for the establishment of local pilot projects.

The meeting started with each delegation presenting the territorial analysis carried out after Strasbourg conference using a common framework. Each delegation presented: i) the selected area (es: localization in the city, accessibility, map of the area, pictures etc) ii) the inhabitants and social relations/conflicts (es: total population of the area, locals/migrants R&AS and eventually other relevant demographic issues; Interactions/conflicts and mutual perception among different groups etc) iii) Main challenges (strengths/weaknesses of the neighbourhood) iv) Services/stakeholders relevant for the pilot project implementation v) (if ready) the pilot idea.

After the presentations, a plenary SWOT analysis on “strength/weaknesses-opportunities/threats of promoting participative pilot projects in marginal neighbourhoods” was organized. This was due to the facilitation of SSIIM UNESCO Chair researchers. A group discussion was held to support the definition of an effective pilot project for target areas. In order to support the pilot project activities in the target cities, a training session was held on practical tools to promote participative projects/initiatives and active citizenship at the local level. This specific training session was delivered by Mr. Fabrizio Urettini, an expert in the field of participative communication and social activation. At the end of the session,



each delegation discussed their pilot project idea according to the information acquired during the meeting and this information was then shared in a plenary session.

At the end of the meeting, a walk and talk session was organized in Padua to visit and discuss some examples of local activation: i) visit Est Cooperative and its regeneration projects in Gasparotto Square ii) visit Fondazione La Casa Onlus and its “colourful houses”, social housing good practice.

As a result of the second international meeting, project partners acquired:

- Specific competences in conflict management, intercultural dialogue, active citizenship promotion
- Competences in pilot project design and implementation
- Possible tools to reduce the radicalised behaviour, xenophobia, discrimination at a local level through the use of participatory tools and promoting active citizenship

The knowledge exchange and mutual understanding among partners was facilitated in order to develop common strategies for the design of effective pilot projects but within a common framework in each target city.

**The third international meeting** *“Reconstructing bridges within European cities: civic participation against socio-spatial stigmatisation and boundaries”* was held in Mostar (Bosnia and Herzegovina) on the 27-29 November 2017. The meeting aimed to prepare URGENT partners to carry out the third phase of local paths, i.e. the implementation of projects. During closed-doors session the 10 delegations from partner cities, were invited to discuss the pilot projects ideas developed during the second phase of local paths. In particular they were asked to follow a common track for their presentations, including: i) WHAT (Project idea, objectives and expected results); ii) WHO (Local stakeholders involved and ‘missed’ - i.e. who they were not able to involve and why- in the ‘project design’ phase; iii) HOW (Methodology adopted, i.e. which participative activities/processes have been used to elaborate the project idea together with local stakeholders and/or residents; iv)-STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES (CRITICALITIES) of the process. This format was conceived to facilitate comparison among the different cases and share lessons learned on the promotion of participative pilot projects in marginal neighbourhoods as those presented. A second important activity carried out with the delegations was functional to a collective building of the implementation phase: to come out with a framework of common guidance and quality criteria for implementing the respective local paths. Among the main common commitments and principles for implementation, it did emerge: i) to involve in local activities as many local stakeholders as possible (also those not reached in the planning phase) with particular attention to local authorities and institutions (i.e schools, universities, city councils etc.) and Civil Society Organizations, including migrants’ associations where existing; ii) to consider migrants’ and minorities not just as a target group of local activities but co-developers of them; iii) to give as much as possible visibility to local actions in order to raise awareness about potentials of marginal neighbourhoods and to build counter-narratives hampering integration and mutual understanding in targeted areas.

Last activity carried out in Mostar was designed to start reasoning on policy recommendations emerging from partners’ cases/projects, starting from the debate on 3 key areas: 1) Promotion of active participation of migrants; 2) Marginal neighbourhoods/stigmatization; 3) Spaces for intercultural dialogue. Delegations divided into three groups were invited to carry out a SWOT analysis

on these topics which provided the first inputs for the 'City Manifesto' to be completed on the next meeting.

**The final international meeting** called *'Reactivating European Urban Citizenship: A Network of Inclusive Towns'* was held in Athens (Greece) from 30 of May to 1st of June 2018. The first session was dedicated to the sharing of the intermediate results of the pilot project that were being implemented at the city level. Also, in this case, a common track for presentations was provided to partners before the meeting, to facilitate a comparison and analysis of differences. The scheme included: i) a brief recall of the context/localization of the intervention; ii) objectives of the action implemented; iii) activities carried out up to then iv) in intermediate results; iv) good and bad lessons learned considering not only the results achieved vs objectives, but also the process which led to the definition of the project and its implementation, i.e.: involvement (or lack of involvement) of local population in the identification of issues to tackle; involvement (or lack of involvement) of other key stakeholders in the definition/implementation of the project; factors which facilitated/hindered planning and implementation etc. Based on the presentations, partners were then invited to work in small groups of 5-6 people to reflect on the positive and negative practical aspects of the pilot projects, taking in consideration the entire local process. In these groups, partners discussed how the challenges emerged could be prevented and proposed concrete actions to be taken when implementing the next activities (or how to improve the respective local processes). The plenary session followed to present the outcomes of each group.

A further working session was dedicated to developing a City Manifesto on urban inclusion and the right to the city for all, to be presented at UE level. In plenary participants were invited to collectively identify 3/4 thematic areas for further discussion in smaller groups of interest. The 4 relevant topics on which participants decided to work on were the following: i) building spaces for intercultural dialogue; ii) combating socio-spatial stigmatisation; iii) creating conditions for active participation; iv) ensuring equal access to urban services and assets. The session intended continue the work started in Mostar by identifying common principles for each topic; developing realistic commitments about the contribution partners can provide to the achievement of them; elaborating concrete recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders.

The activities described in the next chapter are the outcomes of this long participative process of exchange, dialogue, mutual learning and experimentation on the field. Each of them has a different background, specific objectives, target populations (from asylum seekers to economic migrants, migrant women, migrant children and their families etc.), methodology of implementation and impact. However, they all reflect a common understanding of the challenges increasingly diverse urban societies are posing to urban governance and, most of all, they reflect the shared knowledge matured along the project that, in order to make our cities and towns more inclusive and just, all urban actors have and can contribute, on a micro and/or macro scale, according to their human and economic resources. These small local activities are all based on the principle that we have and can concretely work for the right to the city for all. These Pilot projects in marginal areas of the cities and towns involved exemplify a way to work against xenophobia and intolerance.

## INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

### 1. “Restarting (from) European Cities: immigration and intercultural dialogue, from the global to the local” – Strasbourg, France (28-30 November 2016)

More than 100 representatives of local authorities, civil society organisations, European institutions, experts and ordinary citizens gathered together on 28-30 November in Strasbourg. The gathering was an opportunity to share their knowledge, experience and good practices on how to promote intercultural dialogue and build bridges in fragmented European urban communities. The event was a unique opportunity to promote a multi-stakeholder debate by bringing together experiences from 12 different countries on a key topic affecting today's Europe: intercultural dialogue and migrants' integration. The initiative, through a bottom-up approach, aims to raise local awareness on the urgent need to establish new connections among inhabitants of marginalized neighbourhoods and those of central areas. In addition to tackling the growing fear of immigration, which feeds into Euroscepticism.



The event has been co-organised in cooperation with the City of Strasbourg as an opportunity to share the “Club de Strasbourg” initiative with the international participants. Ms Nawel Rafik-Elmrini, in her role of Deputy Mayor of the City of Strasbourg and first Vice-Chair of the Current Affairs Committee of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, opened the international seminar with Ms Antonella Valmorbida, the Secretary-General of ALDA. Ms Valmorbida's final statement was “Our message is that civil society actions - as for the integration of migrants and cohesive communities - are more constructive when local governments are a partner of the projects and processes. It is a community approach and response engaging all the spectrum of the local stakeholders, local authorities, CSOs, education and private sector, that we need to bring forward”.

Ms Giovanna Marconi who is the SSIIM UNESCO Chair at the University of Venice introduced the context of today's challenges in order to tackle stigmas against migrants. Mr Michaël Moglia, the President of the Network LIKE – European Cities and Regions for Culture and Mr Marco Cremaschi representing the “Cycle d'Urbanisme de Sciences Po Paris, Urban Planning and Design” then shared their key experiences. During his speech, Mr Marco Cremaschi presented the relationship between the global and local community by using an example of the island of Lampedusa for context. Overall, the Strasbourg community and its active civil society strongly contributed to the event and key experiences were shared by the University of Strasbourg and the associations Alsace Terre d'Accueil and Alsace-Syrie.

The three-day activity at the prestigious Salle des Mariages in Strasbourg was also the occasion to define the methodology of the local procedure planned within the project. During this event, partners identified relevant areas in their cities and learnt new techniques for territorial analysis. As a result, the local paths have been launched in 10 local pilot projects.

## 2. “Reframing Urban cohesion in European cities: the diversity advantage” – Venice, Italy (6-8 June 2017)



The event was an occasion to exchange creative solutions in order to bring positive change at the local level. Local authorities, civil society associations, academics and ordinary citizens shared their expertise while acknowledging the need for action through a multi-stakeholder approach. This was done in order to consolidate resources and knowledge that already exist in the community. International and local stakeholders had an opportunity to exchange information within the framework of the public seminar held on

7 June. The opening session was moderated by Laura Fregolent from IUAV University of Venice. The contributors to the session include Véronique Daugent the Head of Culture Unit of UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences and Culture in Europe, Luisella Pavan-Woolfe the Head of Office of the Council of Europe Programme Office in Venice, Giuseppe Aiello the Representative of Veneto Region, and Aldo Xhani ALDAs’ European Citizenship programme Coordinator. During the event, it was further stressed that there is a crucial need to work on a governance model as it is a fundamental element to the successful integration of migrants into the community.

Josefina Perez Espino, from RECFronteras, provided the conference with interesting input on the perception of migration by presenting the similarities and differences between the US-Mexico and European migration process. Additionally, the second conference panel was moderated by Elena Ostanel who is the SSIIM UNESCO Chair of IUAV University of Venice. The contributors to the second panel discussion were Marcello Balbo the Director of SSIIM UNESCO Chair from IUAV University of Venice, Lorna Muscat the Representative from SOS Malta and Chair of the Migration Path of LADDER project, and Francesca Lionetti the Representative of the Intercultural Cities Programme of the Council of Europe.

The last session was chaired by Giovanna Marconi who is the SSIIM UNESCO Chair from IUAV University of Venice. The session was dedicated to showcasing concrete local policies labelled as good practice. Natalia Maramotti, who is the Councillor for Security, Culture of Legality, and Historic City of Reggio Emilia Municipality, Gianfranco Bonesso who is the Representative of Venice Municipality, Jean-François Maljean who is the Project Manager of the Municipality of Etterbeek (Belgium), and Alexander Van Leuven who is Project Officer in charge of Positive Identity and Society Education from the Municipality of Mechelen (Belgium) presented key examples of their successful experiences with good practices to the conference.



### 3. “Reconstructing bridges within European cities: civic participation against socio-spatial stigmatisation and boundaries” – Mostar, Bosnia & Herzegovina (28-29 November 2017)

The first day consisted of two sessions, the first session held at the Culture Centre Mostar was dedicated to the sharing of the design and implementation process used during the local paths pilot projects. This was the first step towards building a common implementation procedure. The implementation procedure was based on the framework of common guidance and the quality criteria used for implementing the local paths. The afternoon session was held at the Hrvatski dom Herceg Stjepan Kosaca amphitheatre. This session consisted of a



public conference which was conducted in English. The conference allowed local authorities from across Europe to share their experiences in their roles and responsibilities during a migratory crisis. The conference started off with a welcome speech by the representative of the City of Mostar, a representative of UNHCR and an ALDA project manager and was moderated by a professional journalist. The conference was then split up into two panels discussions;

- **Panel I** was on *the role of local authorities in time of crisis: the link between socio-spatial stigmatisation, social exclusion, and Euro-scepticism*. The panel speakers consisted of Mr Ermin Krehic from Sorfold Municipality in Norway, Mr Thomas Grau from Charlottenburg-Wilmersdorf Municipality in the City of Berlin and Ms Senada Demirovic Habibija a member of the Urban planning Department in the City of Mostar
- **Panel II** was on *the role of the community-based organisation in building intercultural dialogue and fostering social inclusion: reconstructing bridges*. The panel was facilitated by Ms Giovanna Marconi, a researcher and SSIIM UNESCO Chair from University IUAV of Venice. The panel speakers consisted of Ms Tamanna Sharmeen from GasparOrto and the University of Padua, Ms Dzenana Dedic on behalf of the Local Democracy Agency Mostar, Ms Sarah Stafrace from SOS Malta and Ms Raluca Colacel from SOS Malta and Migrant Women Association project.

Overall, the panel discussion and the conference were a success as it gathered a lot of media interests and helped facilitate active discussions between the participants.

The second day of the event was used to further work on the creation of the implementation framework. There was also a field visit to see presentations by young local tradition keepers such as “Copper Art AbrakaBakra” and “Caffe Story @Caffe de Alma” as well as a visit to the Old town and the Old Bridge. The Steering Committee meeting was held at the end of the second day in order to conclude the event and plan the further activities.

The outcomes of the two day event are the following: the pilot projects were discussed, evaluated and further elaborated according to common guidelines; the role of local authorities in time of crisis was discussed and shared among different EU cities; the role of community-based organisation with regards to building a platform for intercultural dialogue was discussed and shared; the link between social exclusion and Euroscepticism was discussed among different EU cities and countries' in light of their past experiences and finally there was the successful fostering of knowledge exchange and mutual understanding among partners.

#### 4. “Reactivating European urban citizenship: a network of inclusive towns” – Athens, Greece (30 May-1 June 2018)



Between 30th of May till the 1st of June, the URGENT project consortium met in Athens, Greece to share the results of the local activities and to conclude the project during the final conference “Reactivating European urban citizenship: a network of inclusive towns”.

During the last international seminar, the partners developed a city manifesto in order to establish a common understanding on interculturalism,

social inclusion, integration of migrants. The project results are to be valorised in a Handbook by collecting the experiences of the enactment which have overcome stereotype on immigrants and help build counter narratives in the past. Equally, during the seminar, ALDA in cooperation with European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation Amphictyony (EGTCA) and the Municipality of Agia Varvara, organised a half-day conference where the project outcomes were presented to the local stakeholders and partners shared their pilot projects. A dedicated space for interaction and exchange of experience was then provided during the URGENT Inclusion Fair. The 35 international participants who were present at the conference had the opportunity to learn about the current situations in Greece with regards to the obstacles they face with urban inclusions for newcomers and migrants. Mr Georgios Alexopoulos who is the General Manager at Symplexis shared with the public the challenges civil society organisations in Greece are facing, such as institutional barriers, financial or operational ones. Mrs Chrissa Geraga who is the Local coordinator for international city-networks from the municipality of Patras shared their experience within the ARRIVAL CITIES EU project and Patras local action plan for migrants’ inclusion. Equally, Mr George Krikri who is the Vice-Mayor of the municipality Nea Smyrni, a southern suburb of Athens, stressed their commitment in creating more inclusive urban spaces. The local reality and activities taking place in Athens were present also by Mrs Giouli Gonou from the Hellenic Agency for Local Development and Local Government.

The URGENT project is financed by the Europe for Citizens programme of the European Union. The programme offers multiple opportunities to both civil society organisations and local authorities to partner together for European projects. Mr Antonios Karvounis from the Europe for Citizens programme in Greece also shared with the participants the contribution by programme with regards to tackling the migration issue and as well as the opportunities that lay ahead. The 3 days seminar concluded with a session on the future of the URGENT project where partners explored different funding opportunities available in order to continue the work started.

## LOCAL PATH ACTIVITIES

### 1. Albania – Albanian Association of Municipalities (Tirana)

#### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

The Albanian Association of Municipalities conducted a territorial analysis of Tirana, Albania in 2016. It was found that the number of foreigners with a residence permit in Albania had increased by 18.5% in comparison to 2015. The number of foreign residents in Albania are made up of 8,324 males and 4,195 females. The number of asylum seekers in Albania - referring to the Asylum Directorate of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, had increased by 126% from 2015 to 2016. The two most prominent country of origin of the asylum seekers in Albania were found to be Syria, with approximately 130 asylum seekers, and Afghanistan, with approximately 60 asylum seekers. In 2016, there was a further increase in the number of asylum seekers from Afghanistan and Iraq. Additionally, in recent years there has been an increase in the flow of immigration to Albania. Foreigners residing in Albania usually consist of economic migrants and students, their family members, employees from humanitarian and religious services, refugees, and asylum seekers. Migrants mainly settle in Tirana and other big cities such as Durrës, Shkodër, and Vlorë. It was found that many of the migrants in these cities are employed in either construction and trade industry.

The Law on Foreigners ensures that EU citizens have “access to the labour market” and should be treated “the same as Albanian citizens in terms of employment, employment conditions, remuneration, studies, vocational training, and organisation in workers' organisations”. The improvements in social protection for foreigners has forbidden any form of discrimination against foreign employees. This projection is specifically addressed towards highly-qualified foreign workers who carry out work in specialities missing among the Albanian workers.

Whether it is physical or psychological, direct or indirect challenges can be seen in Albania. For example, with regards to human rights; asylum seekers coming from war-torn countries or people fleeing direct and open persecution are assigned the status of refugee. However, asylum seekers leaving their country to escape other human rights violations which are deemed as less *drastic* obstacles are usually refused protection. Moreover, the escalating influx of asylum seekers heading to Europe and consequently to Albania in the past three years raised unprecedented debate among scholars, policymakers and other national and international stakeholders on how to deal with this issue.

#### b. Objectives and target population

The main objective of the local path in Albania is to provide policy recommendations at the national level based on the main features vulnerable groups, the needs identified for the reintegration of returning migrants and the integration of refugees and asylum seekers in Albania.

Albania is party to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol since 1992. In 2003, Albania acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. Under national law there is the national asylum legislation consists of the 1998 Asylum Law (amended in 2009) and the 2003 Law on Integration and Family Reunion of Persons Granted Asylum. The Albanian legislation and legal protection towards migrants is completed by other legal acts, such as the Law on Foreigners, the Law on Data Protection, the Law on the Guarding and Control of the State Borders, and the Laws on Citizenship.



The Republic of Albania, in order to harmonise its legislation with the EU Directive, has drafted the Law no. 121/2014 "On asylum in the Republic of Albania" which stipulates:

- conditions and procedures for the granting and cancelling of refugee status;
- supplementary protection and temporary protection in the Republic of Albania;
- rights and obligations of asylum-seekers, refugees and persons under temporary and supplementary protection;
- right to family reunification;
- definition of conditions for integration of refugees and persons under supplementary protection in the Republic of Albania;
- the principle of non-refoulement.

### c. Activities carried out

As a partner in the URGENT project, AAM organised a regional workshop together with LDA VLORE in Vlore. The participants were LGU and other organisations such as Vlora Patos, Roskovec, LDA region, RDA Vlora and Youth Association, Environment Association. The main goals of this event were to present ALDA and the URGENT project and share local and international experiences. The event was also an opportunity to learn about the good practices established and the lessons learnt from past projects. Moreover, the challenges for the social and economic impact of migrant integration and central policies in Albania was critically assessed. Furthermore, a partnership between CSOs and municipalities was created in order to develop an action plan at the local level as a means of promoting intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding of diversity. Finally, the event was also an opportunity to present and explore further cooperation opportunities.

The outcomes of the event were the following:

- Participants were updated about the current situation regarding migration, and the role of LGU as a service provider.
- Good practices presented by LGU in Italy were considered to be implemented locally.
- The Albanian National Strategy and other documents related to this topic were introduced as a possible baseline for social employees and other municipality staff, as well for local councils.
- The social and economic impact of migrants' integration on central policies in Albania was presented and discussed.
- It was found that managing the integration of migrants requires partnerships between CSOs and municipalities in order to develop an action plan at the local level promoting intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding in diversity



**Seminar: Local Stakeholders Involvement in Migrants' Inclusion, Vlora, Albania, 9th March 2018**

#### d. Lessons learned

There are still several issues to be addressed which were not covered by the current legislative draft "On asylum in the Republic of Albania":

- Pre-screening, detention and access to asylum;
- Quality of asylum decisions;
- Rights of refugees and other persons granted asylum;
- The identification and protection of stateless persons;
- The reduction of statelessness.

To overcome these issues, the AAM has drafted a set of recommendations in order to ensure the fair and decent treatment of migrants and asylum seeker. The draft includes recommendations to ensure individual procedural guarantees to detained asylum-seekers; to ensure that refugees are not required to bring or produce information from their country of origin; to effectively facilitate the naturalisation and integration of refugees and those receiving subsidiary protection.

## 2. Belgium – ALDA (Brussels)

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

On 22-23 March in Brussels, ALDA, GEA Coop Sociale and ICEI – Istituto Cooperazione Economica Internazionale joined forces in order to organise an event aimed at exchanging and promoting cross-fertilisation on the topic of migrant integration. The seminar “Employment, Culture, Participation: Re-shape European cities and communities for the effective inclusion of migrants” is part of ALDA’s initiative to promote URGENT project ad to reinforce the Europe for Citizens programme. The “Europe for Citizens - One programme, 500 million voices” is a campaign that recalls EU citizens and institutions on the importance of dialogue and exchange in the process of policy-making at EU level.

### b. Objectives and target population

The event brought together the experiences of 3 Europe for Citizens funded projects, with findings on employment, intercultural dialogue and participation: “URGENT: Urban Re-Generation: European Network of Towns” (lead by ALDA), “BY-ME – Boosting young Migrants’ participation in European cities” (lead by ICEI), and “The Network European Citizens – lights and shadows of the European Union’s future through the eyes of the present and future young citizens” (lead by GEA). The activity was also a unique occasion to create synergy among beneficiaries of the programme and reflect on its added value for the European integration process by putting citizens at the centre of the action.

### c. Activities carried out

The two-day event kicked off at the European Parliament with the support of MEP Gimenez Barbant. There over 40 participants who had the opportunity to learn about the findings of the URGENT project, BY-ME and the New European Citizens. Ideas and opinions from local authorities and civil society association representatives were also collected and debated with MEP Gimenez Barbant and Mr Gilles Pelayo who is the Head of Unit for the Europe for Citizens Programme.

The second day opened the floor for a further discussion on the inclusion of migrants by taking into consideration the input raised at the European Parliament. Three working groups were held at the Representation of the Friuli Venezia Giulia Region in Brussels in order to develop recommendations on migrants’ integration through employment, culture and participation. The participants were committed to further elaborate the first draft, following an inclusive online debate in order to hand over the recommendations to EU institutions.

The in-field visit to the Municipality of Etterbeek concluded the event. The occasion was used to analyse a set of good practices in a community particularly active in the migrant integration, as 40% of the Etterbeek population is originally born in Belgium. Participants had the opportunity to exchange experiences of the Cultural Centre ‘Le Senghor’, its programme “alpha/FLE”, the “living together” activities and other intercultural initiatives as well as on Etterbeek’s CPAS and “Corner of Regions” project.



Seminar “Employment, Culture, Participation: re-shape European cities and communities for the effective inclusion of migrants”, Brussels, Belgium, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2017

#### d. Lessons learned

Through the reflection conducted during the 3 multi-level and multi-professional working groups composed of projects’ participants of URGENT, BY-ME and The New European Citizens, many similarities emerged with regard to the problems and challenges encountered by civil society organisations working on inclusion at the local level.

It was also found that if the challenges have similar characteristics, the solutions for it cannot merely be transferred directly from one city to another. This is because the make-up of a city and the relationship between its different neighbourhoods and communities are inherent to each local environment. That is why the inclusion of grassroots organisations in any initiative aiming at strengthening inclusivity and interculturality is essential.

Moreover, the visit at the European Parliament highlighted the importance of involving policy makers at EU level in order to pass on evidence-based recommendations related to the inclusions of migrants and newcomers in urban areas.

### 3. Bosnia & Herzegovina – LDA Mostar (Mostar)

#### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

The culture and traditions of the city of Mostar are the results of a mixture of urban culture and the culture of its surrounding areas. The large migration of various different populations during the war in the 1990s led to the city of Mostar having significantly more inhabitants who are not originally born there. This has had a great influence on the culture and preservation of the city's traditions.

#### b. Objectives and target population

The main objective of the activities implemented in the framework of the local path were to preserve the culture and tradition of the city of Mostar as well as to transfer the knowledge to the new generation.

#### c. Activities carried out

##### **Focus group meeting**

A focus group meeting was organized within the project in order to evaluate the impact of migration towards the culture and traditions of the city and its inhabitants. The members of the focus group were individuals and representatives of organisations or institutions who have the knowledge, information, data or documentation that could help preserve the culture and traditions of Mostar. The main task given to the focus groups were to brainstorm ideas on how to preserve the culture and traditions of the city and its citizen and to propose how they could contribute to this process. The ideas and solutions gathered from the discussion helped create activities that contribute to preserving the traditions and culture of the city of Mostar.

##### **The interactive performance of the book “Mostar Jokes”**

This activity was developed as a result of the cooperation between the URGENT project by the Local Democracy Agency Mostar, the Documentation and Information Centre CIDOM Mostar and Mostar Youth Theatre. The activity was based on their contribution to the ideas discussed during the focus group meeting.

The Documentation and Information Centre CIDOM Mostar started as a Facebook group collecting documents, photos and information about the city of Mostar. It was initiated by a number of Mostarians' who live in Mostar or abroad. The Facebook group currently has almost 7.000 members, an official website and has published several books. One of their published books, “Mostar Jokes”, was formally promoted during the Mostar Summer Festival 2017 by the Mostar Youth Theatre.

This theatre group is one of the leading youth arts organisations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Established in 1974 as the first youth theatre in Mostar it has, over the past 38 years, played a huge role in the education and nurturing of theatre within the area. The young actors from this group presented an interesting and funny interactive performance at the ceremonial promotion of the book “Mostar jokes” which was well received by the public.



### **#AšikMostar workshop and performance**

The art performance and exhibition #AšikMostar was presented as part of the Mostar Summer Festival 2017 programme. More than 50 visitors attended the event at the Yunus Emre Enstitüsü in Mostar. The project #AšikMostar depicted the topic of love through playwright, costume design and scenography. The project was tailored for children aged 12 to 17 and was implemented by an informal group of young people aged 16 to 30. The performance brought 20 young children and 5 members of a youth group in order to work together in a 6-day workshop in preparation for the performance and exhibition. After a month of work, preparation, and cooperation between the different age groups, the performance was presented in front of the audience.

This activity was organized by Local Democracy Agency Mostar in cooperation with its Centre for Architecture, Dialogue and Art - ADA Mostar. The project was financed through the local youth fund programme for young people of the city of Mostar, which is the part of the Balkan regional platform for youth participation and dialogue, co-financed by the EU in cooperation with project URGENT.

### **Monuments in Motion and #AšikMostar at The New Hopes festival**

Two other activities created within the URGENT project were presented during the international community theatre festival called "The New Hopes". The festival which took place in Mostar from 4th to 8th of September 2017 was created as part of the Caravan Next project and was co-financed by the EU. The main partners of the festival programme in Mostar were the Local Democracy Agency Mostar and the Mostar Youth Theatre. Moreover, the festival was well-received as an innovative and socially oriented event due to its large number of interactive workshops and performances in order to successfully promote the traditions and the culture of the city of Mostar.

The first activity was a cultural tour called "Monuments in Motion" which was held on the third day of the festival. The tour was organised by the Local Democracy Agency Mostar, Centre for Architecture, Dialogue and Art ADA Mostar, in cooperation with the URGENT project. During the tour, participants of the festival visited Partisan Memorial Cemetery (Partizansko Groblje), Civil Cemetery (Liska Park) and various monuments dedicated to the fallen soldiers. The aim of the cultural tour was to review the history and role of the monuments in relation to society and vice versa. Participants were also encouraged to critically think about history, urbanism, culture and art, and had the opportunity to suggest their own visions and interpretations of their "ideal" monument for Mostar.

The second action was held on the fourth day of the festival under the motto "My City - Youth City", at the Yunus Emre Institute. A group of young people performed a play based on a five-act drama piece, which was the result of the workshop # AšikMostar they previously participated. Originally prepared in Bosnian, the exhibition and performance were translated, displayed and performed in English for an international audience. The audience had the chance to see the exhibition which chronologically showed the work of the workshop and the materials derived from it in the form of posters.



Cultural tour “Monuments in Motion”, Mostar, Bosnia & Herzegovina, 6<sup>th</sup> September 2017

#### d. Lessons learned

##### **Focus group meeting:**

With consideration to the drastic demographic changes in the relatively short period of time of such a small area that resulted with the physical division of the city, it is vital to give the same opportunity to all citizens, those born and not born in Mostar. Having the same opportunity, even if only to talk about the city from different perspective, serves as a great platform to create a unified urban space that will further develop a sense of belonging to the city. The concept of urban citizenship here serves as an extraordinary alternative to the national concept of a divided city.

##### **The interactive performance of the book “Mostar Jokes”**

This was another confirmation of the importance of the concept of urban citizenship in transforming the dialogue towards active citizenship and the people’s engagement in their urban space and its content.

##### **#AsikMostar workshop and performance**

This action portrayed the importance of adapting the learning methods in the process of preserving culture and tradition.

##### **Monuments in Motion and #AšikMostar at The New Hopes festival**

This portrayed that a wide spectrum of tools can be used to facilitate and develop different perspectives whilst trying to teach, preserve and share the history and future vision of the city.



## 4. Greece – EGTC Amphictyony (Aghia Varvara)

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

The URGENT local action in Greece was titled ‘Town Against Discrimination’. The action intended to capitalise the work which was produced during a six-month period by 14 volunteers from the area of Aghia Varvara. Aghia Varvara is an urban suburb of Attica, an ancient region of east-central Greece in Athens with at least 26,500 inhabitants, 30% of whom live in conditions of unemployment and poverty, facing all the ensuing social problems. The area has been historically been referred as a refugee destination and a location for migrants to establish their new homes. Today the area is composed with a diverse population of residents from different ethnic and cultural groups.

### b. Objectives and target population

The overall purpose of the event and its activities was to change the local community’s perception of migrants through their *sense* in order to create a new cohesive community which includes citizens from different origins, languages and cultures. The target population of the event were member of the local community of Municipality of Aghia Varvara and its surroundings areas.

### c. Activities carried out

The action took place in an event on 6 May 2018 which was created with the aim to promote diversity and non-discrimination towards migrants within the area. The action was organised, coordinated and supported by three organisations; EGTC Amphictyony, the Municipality of Aghia Varvara and the Hellenic Organisation for Local Authorities and Development – EETAA. Together they organised a day full of multicultural activities offering an interactive experience of various groups and associations in order to highlight positive aspects of the cultural diversity found in the area. The event included a photographic exhibition, the reading of poems and short stories, a gastronomy corner with traditional dishes, the projection of a documentary created for the purposes of the URGENT project, as well as music and dance performances. These interactive activities and presentations were designed to encourage participants to reflect on how social stigmatisation and prejudices to migrants can be reduce, to develop new ideas and suggestions on how to further develop and facilitate intercultural dialogue and to support social cohesion in modern cities. Overall the event was very well received and many members of the community attended the event.



**Town Against Discrimination Event, Aghia Varvara, Greece, 6 May 2018**

#### d. Lessons learned

- A common space for intercultural open dialogue has been established. By doing so a new methodology used to generate ideas for a better process for implementing migrants into the community has been designed.
- Social events like the Town Against Discrimination is a good way to ensure that ideas and work on a sustainable model of citizenship which have been designed and developed through working groups are being put into force group.
- A vivid liaison between the citizens' groups and the local authorities and their respective partners has also been developed.
- EGTC and EETAA has been identified for future joint activities and for the further provision of essential everyday living and prosperity facilities.

## 5. Italy – SPES (Rome)

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

The project is implemented in the Esquilino district of the 1st Municipality of Rome, where 26% of its population is made up of foreign migrants. The area is synonymous for its multiculturality and has the Piazza Vittorio Emanuele II as the main focal point. The multicultural development of the city started at the end of 1960 when a small Chinese community began to settle down in the Piazza Vittorio. Now the Piazza Vittorio square is bustling with ethnic trade and its' famous multicultural food market to which migrants from Asia, Africa and South America come for the exotic spices and specific cuts, in addition, an opportunity to exchange information. A total of 140 languages are spoken around the square daily with the most predominate residences coming from Bangladesh, Philippines, Romania, China, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Somalia, India and Cote d'Ivoire.

Within the Esquilino district is a comprehensive school called Daniele Manin-Plexus Di Donato which hosts the Polo Intermundia, and acts as a place of aggregation and cultural integration. The Di Donato School is the fulcrum of a multi-stakeholder collaboration where the public school involves in its governance third sector associations, informal groups of volunteers and public authorities. "Di Donato" is also one of the first school which started working on an intercultural integration approach during the first wave of substantial immigration of residence. The school is open to the entire neighbourhood and is particularly attentive to the needs and constraints of migrant women and children. The schools also often engages in activities between the students, the elderly, refugees, professional associations, the public health system and artists.

In recent years, schools in multicultural peripheries of Rome have looked at the "Di Donato" model to organise school-community activities based on active participation of families. At the same time, its success renders it visible and vulnerable to racist attacks from the far right, which also has important traditional stronghold in the Esquilino district. During the starting months of the URGENT project, the school was subject to an arson attack that destroyed part of its facilities.

### b. Objectives and target population

- Include both migrants and Italians in active citizenship experiences, socialisation events and neighbourhood-level decision-making processes.
- Enhance intercultural knowledge and communication skills, with a focus on both migrants and Italian parents
- Promote the inclusion of the marginalized homeless community and daily dwellers within the area
- Build positive relations between residents and migrants within the targeted area.

### c. Activities carried out

#### **Children club 0 – 6**

A parents group was created to design a joint project based on their needs and experience within the community. Morning activities were set up with the main focus on the needs of the children who are excluded from public kindergartens. Activities were organised with the help of the parents and relied heavily on the community network. The team approached groups of women and mothers, in an attempt to encourage and educate them about self-empowerment and offered parental guidance as a means to help them acquire the necessary skills for the children to be more included in the existing social and educational services.

The local stakeholders involved in this project were; the comprehensive school Daniele Manin-Plexus Di Donato and its parents' association, Celio Azzurro Società Cooperativa Sociale, the Municipality of Rome, Slow Food Condotta di Roma, Roma Tre University and Evaluator: Human Foundation Giving and innovating Onlus.

#### **Intercultural Laboratories**

The intercultural laboratories targeted a group of 240 children from kindergarten and primary school classes, as well as their teachers and family members. The laboratories offered activities such as; theatre and African dance workshops, children's choir of Piazza Vittorio, innovative art workshops on the English-Chinese language and a one-day public event called Good Deeds Day 2018



Good Deeds Day 2018, Rome, Italy, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2018

### **Italian and Arabic language courses**

The projects created Italian and Arabic language courses which were offered to Italian and migrant mothers and children. The course was developed and organised through a cooperative effort of Italian and non-Italian women who shared the responsibility of decision making between themselves. The activity was funded by the City of Rome – Municipality I Roma Centre.

### **Integration actions for marginalized day-dwellers**

This activity involved the homeless community and those who are bivouacking in Piazza Vittorio and its surrounding streets. It was found that most of them were 19-39 years old individuals had come out from one of the Protection System for Asylum Seekers and Refugees centres or family homes within the country. It was also found that they usually had possession of regular documentation.

The aim of this activity was to include them in socialisation events, to support and promote small self-organised activities for the neighbourhood, such as park maintenance and environment cleaning, and to orient them to public and third sector services, training and job placement opportunities.

#### **d. Lessons learned**

- The community welfare created in a participative manner was a truly inclusive structure for people in a state of marginalisation: *"I do something WITH you and I do not decide for you."*
- Active citizenship and the collective care of public spaces was an important path for social inclusion: *"I do something for this neighbourhood, I feel a part of this neighbourhood, it's MY community."*
- Migration needs to be considered as a resource for the host country, which should then be seen as activate resources to integrate diversity: *"We live in the same place, we have the same problems, we are all parents. When I see this, I understand we are not so different."*



## 6. Italy – Kallipolis (Trieste)

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

Trieste is the capital of the autonomous region of Friuli Venezia Giulia in North-Eastern Italy, situated towards the end of a narrow strip of Italian territory lying between the Adriatic Sea and Slovenia. The area consisting of a city and a seaport has the total population of 204.234 inhabitants, the percentage of asylum seekers and refugees in relations to the total population of the city is 0,52%. Trieste, due to its unique position, receives migrants using the Balkan route. It was found that 80% of those migrants are Asylum seekers and refugees from Pakistan and Afghanistan

The URGENT local activity is named ROHBA and it is co-funded by Waldensian Church and the ICS - Italian Consortium of Solidarity. ICS is an NGO based in Trieste and is in charge of managing the SPRAR in town. The project is focused on a building located in Via dei Bonomo, an urbanized area at the intersection of several neighbourhoods which is fully connected by public transportation, shops, a park and other services. The building is currently being run by ICS and has 1 office and 14 apartments where approximately 50 people live. The ground floor of the building is host to a centre for community activities addressing certain needs such as creating a new narrative in the storytelling of migrations; increasing the access to cultural activities within the local area; creating a sharing space for refugees, asylum seekers and residents. The project mention has been implemented in partnership with ICS - Italian Consortium of Solidarity, Cassiopea Social Cooperative, Laboratorio degli In-perfetti and EDILMASTER school, the professional school for masonry in Trieste which hosts the trainings.

### b. Objectives and target population

The project directly targeted 30 migrants and indirectly benefit 80 migrants who are frequent or housed at the ICS centre. The objectives of the project are the following:

- Promoting the integration of migrants in the Italian context, by facilitating their participation in light of the definition of the habitat in which they live.
- Increase the sense of belonging of migrants to the certain areas of their daily life, through a participatory process which leads to the rethinking of spaces based on functional necessities and cultural needs.
- Improve or provide migrants with technical skills in carpentry and tailoring in order to help facilitate their entrance into the labour market.

### c. Activities carried out

In coordination with ICS, the project managed to increase the number of activities and services dedicated to the reception of refugees in order to promote their integration and developing their personal skills. The idea that was proposed to participants was to make improvements to the common and private spaces they live in by self-producing furniture and textile furnishings. By working on the spaces of Via dei Bonomo, refugees, asylum seekers and residents had the opportunity to actively participate in language classes. In addition to being actively involved in the shaping of the common space they use as a means to further enhance their sense of ownership and belonging, they also had the opportunity to upgrade the community space with high quality and tailored made furniture.

ROHBA made an open call among the those hosted in ICS-managed centres and apartment and found approximately 30 people who expressed interest in participating in the activity. On the 21st February 2017, the Diurnal centre managed by ICS in Via Bonomo, organised a collective meeting between the ICS operators and its guests. The centre had been identified as the place of the intervention as it currently hosts most of the activities and the ICS guests. Guests were asked what their needs for furniture in order to further encourage collective activities. The purpose of the day was to gather ideas, suggestions and proposals, directly from those who daily use the spaces in order to create a flexible and comfortable space. This was done as a means to guarantee various multiple uses of the facility such as the presentation of a book, organization of exhibitions, Italian lessons, children's reading corner, tailoring corner and a computer corner to be accessible to all citizens. The meeting was conducted using brainstorming techniques and community planning methodology in order to ensure participants can actively work to together in producing shared plans of action.

### **Carpentry workshop**

After having decided which kind of space they wanted for Via Bonomo Community Center, participants moved to the participatory design phase with the help of Laboratorio degli In-perfetti e Cooperativa Cassiapea. The carpentry workshop "ROHBAlab Not just a woodworking workshop" was coordinated by Sandro Battistella - Laboratorio degli In-perfetti. Participants designed the pieces of furniture they wanted in consideration to the tailoring workshop mentioned before. During the 180 hours of workshop an interactive hands-on approach was used. This resulted in the following items being created by participants; modules to be used as benches/bookcases, folding tables, square tables, container cubes with wheels for the storage of children's games, custom-made brackets and lamps. Furthermore, all the shelves of the desks and tables in the centre have been replaced.

### **Tailoring workshop**

The "Archipelago ROHBA" laboratory has been proposed and presented as an open and flexible space to meet the needs and commitments of the beneficiaries, including women and families. The workshop here has been facilitated by Cooperativa Cassiopea. The practical element began with 120 hours of interactive hands-on workshops with an explanation and instruction of how to use sartorial tools, the machine and hand stitching techniques. The notions were to prepare a prototype of a pincushion for each participant and the furnishings for the Diurnal centre of Via Bonomo. The participants made cushions for benches, large oval cushions for children, curtains and pockets of cloth to hang objects to the walls. The two workshops were also focused on the use of high-quality material such as wood or fabrics in order to produce new objects for the centre. This was also a successful attempt to contribute to the storytelling of migration.





The "ROHBALab Not just a woodworking workshop", Trieste, Italy, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017 – 14<sup>th</sup> September 2017

#### d. Lessons learned

- The project contributed to setting up a network of stakeholders from different sectors who have a complementary vision. This network contributed to improvement of mutual knowledge.
- Involving women in the project gave them the opportunity to explore the city. The classes were also an opportunity to meet other people and relax in a safe environment.
- There is a need to accept the fact that we move in fluid situations. Asylum seekers do not intend to settle in Italy. Therefore, it is important to give them the opportunity to know the city better and to create connections to the local community.
- The interactions amongst people within the neighbourhood and the community centre has been limited until now. Therefore, it is necessary to boost activities in order further encourage local residence to attend the community centre.

## 7. Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia – Municipality of Kumanovo

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

During the territorial analysis, the Municipality of Kumanovo chose a camp on the border between Macedonia and Serbia, near the village of Tabanovce as its target. At the time of the analysis, the number of international migrants continued to grow at an unprecedented rate which led to a state of emergency being declared in the Republic of Macedonia. All access to camps by non-authorized personnel was forbidden and under strict oversight by the police and the Centre for Crisis Management. As a result of this, URGENT discovered a new pressing concern; the local population surrounding the camp had begun responding to a large number of migrants with resentments and xenophobia. Therefore, the Municipality of Kumanovo shifted the projects main focus from awareness-building to combating stigmas through building counter-narratives.

### b. Objectives and target population

Since the state of emergency, Kumanovo was the hotbed of migration in Macedonia. Due to it being just 15km from the Serbian border, the influx of transiting migrants was drastic. Therefore, the objective of the activities of the projects was to rouse the sense of understanding and compassion within the local population and facilitate the process of integration of the refugees and migrants in the immediate vicinity of the camp and throughout the Municipality.

### c. Activities carried out

On the path to realization of the URGENT goals, the approach was to intertwine the different sectors which constitute the corpus of the Municipality. This was done in an attempt to try to rally them behind the deeply held beliefs and values of both the Municipality and the URGENT project shared.

The first part of the activity was designed to introduce the local population to the context of the situation in order to make a clear distinction between their role and the role of the applicable institutions. Local leaders were gathered together on the premises of the Municipality and through presentations were able to facilitate and moderate a discussion. The intention of the project was well received by the participants. Immediately after the activity, the local population began to understand that their Municipality was aware of the challenges they face and was working towards creating a remedy which will suit both sides. This, in turn, created a sense of security and instilled the perception that the local population was not left to their own devices, thus they became the “multipliers”. By doing this the project organisers saw an increase in acceptance, acts of generosity and compassion from the local population towards the migrants.

#### **Conference on decreasing stigmatisation in times of migrant crisis**

The second part of the project was designed to gather relevant stakeholders and key players on the administrative side of the crisis and engage them on this topic. The idea was to further stress the importance of discussion and active participation in order to create a long-term solution in collaboration with the citizens and more specifically, the marginalized groups. This came to materialisation with the conference organized by the URGENT project team.

Members of the public showed great interest in it the conference. All of the key speakers gave a very exhaustive and descriptive presentations, representing both their institutions as well as their own point-of-view. Covering multiple facets of the administrative structure, the key speakers were from the governmental sector (Director of the Centre for Crisis Management), the local government sector (the Mayor of the Municipality), the international community (Professor at the Faculty for Security and current President of the “European Movement”), and the NGO sector (Head of border team of the Red Cross and Director of NGO “Legis”). The conference overall produced successful results, instigating the sense of reflecting on the current achievements, re-evaluation of the current approach, in addition to strengthening and furthering cooperation for future initiatives.



Conference on decreasing stigmatisation in times of migrant crisis, Kumanovo, Macedonia, 26<sup>th</sup> June 2018

#### d. Lessons learned

- By gathering a group of people, the community was able to acknowledge and understand the problem they face. This was a way to create a barrier between the them and propaganda they face through media platforms.
- The lack of coordination in such a chaotic circumstance can cause many of the relevant institutional stakeholders to inadvertently turn a blind eye towards their role in addressing the problem.
- Each concerned party faces the same challenges with regards to the issue, the will and mechanisms of these different groups must be coordinated and utilised in order to create a solution which benefits all

## 8. Malta – SOS Malta (Valletta)

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

Malta is a small country with a fluid population of people move from town to town between their everyday commute from home to work. The main hub of the country is the capital city of Valletta. The total population of Valletta is small, with approximately 5000. Regardless, Valletta is considered a reference point as it is the countries cultural and commercial hub. The city is a location in which different populations living in Malta mix and interact together daily. It is for this reason the project was chosen to take place in the Triton Fountain. This location is symbolic as it sits at the city gate used to enter and exit Valletta.

In Malta there are at least 19,000 Non-EU and 12,000 EU registered residents. The main nationalities found include the UK, Italy, Serbia and Russia. With regards to the population of refugees and asylum seekers, there has been a significant change in its demographics over the last 2-3 years. It was found that there had been a shift from Somalian and Eritrea refugees and asylum seekers to Libyan and Syrian refugees and asylum seeker as the most prominent country of origin. In contrast to prior years, there has also been an increasing number of women and children coming to Malta instead of young males. This change brings with it different challenges and needs which must be addressed by the local community.

Through studies conducted on behalf of the projects, it was found that hate speech is highly prevalent in Malta, particularly in an online form. Moreover, there is a need to enhance interaction between the Maltese population and the migrant population in order to break down prejudices and stereotypes. In addition to increasing the understanding and promotion of the more positive aspects of diversity.

### b. Objectives and target population

The main objective of the event was to raise awareness of the positive aspects of diversity and to counter racism and discrimination. The event targeted the general population and was focused on getting people talking to each other in order to spark their interest in the topic and promote solidarity. The concept used was to create a human chain to represent solidarity within the diverse community. The chain offered to signify as a powerful and highly memorable symbol of kindness, inclusivity and connectedness. The chain also emphasised that diversity is something which is beautiful and valuable to the Maltese society.

Moreover, the project called upon the Government of Malta to take comprehensive, concrete and coherent action in order to tackle racial discrimination in Malta. The invitation to participate was extended to and accepted by the Minister for European Affairs and Equality together with the Director of the Human Rights and Integration Directorate. The activity was also endorsed by the Mayor of Valletta Local Council. Furthermore, the project targeted schools by asking them to participate in the human chain within the classroom thereby creating a multiplier effect and ensuring a dialogue and discussion on diversity within the classroom.

### c. Activities carried out

SOS Malta, together with other NGOs, organised a human chain around the Triton Fountain in Valletta, in a display of solidarity against discrimination. The event took place as part of the European Action Week against Racism to focus on what we have in common rather than what separates us. The event attracted more participants that it originally invited, as many individuals passing by joined the chain as



a way to stand in solidarity against racial discrimination. Overall; at least 60 people participated in the event.

The event also gained a lot of media attention. It was covered by national news stations and national papers which highlighted the positive elements of diversity and generated further visibility for the project. In parallel to the event, many schools around the Maltese island who could not be physically present in Valletta supported SOS Malta in their celebration of diversity within their respective school. In order to do so, the project organisers provided them with a 'classroom activity guide' as a way to start a discussion on diversity and understanding with the students.



**The Human Chain for Diversity, Valletta, Malta, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2018**

#### d. Lessons learned

##### **Positive lessons learnt:**

- Engaging people in one-off short public activities can be successful.
- A partnership is the key to ensuring an impact within the community.
- Visual and symbolic actions ensure press coverage and therefore, a wider awareness.
- The public event reached a wider audience than the usual conference audience.
- Engaging schools enables wider impact and providing tools to carry out activities is a successful option.

##### **Negative lessons learnt:**

- The timing of the activity was an issue. There were some members of the public who complained they could not attend as it was during working hours whilst others complained when such activities were held after working hours.
- It would have been interesting to further explore and reach out to more schools.
- It could have been good to attract more local councils; members of government or organisations in order to create a more symbolic chains across the island.

## 9. Portugal – Rede DLBC Lisboa (Lisbon)

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

DLBC Lisbon Network is a non-profit organisation created in 2015 following an application for the Portugal 2020 funding, a strategy for Local Community-Based Development which primarily aims to promote strategic and functional cooperation between partners, focusing on entrepreneurship, employment, education, training and social integration in certain areas. In accordance to the Portugal 2020 Partnership Agreement and the aims of the Europe 2020 strategy, DLBC Lisbon Network was created with the intention of implementing an innovative model of co-governance in the city of Lisbon through the creation of local development plans. Furthermore, Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) is a scheme developed by the European Union and aims to identify complex problems as well as implement solutions in order to improve to the quality of life of the most vulnerable communities within Europe. The scheme aims to actively engage with citizens in a transparent and democratic process as a means to help find solutions to the issues affecting the community. As a consequence of this DLBC helped established the Urgent activities in Lisbon at a city level by taking into considerations the past actions various partners have created.

The main challenges the project faced was how effectively promote collaboration and cooperation between the various institutions that worked separately with migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Based on the territorial analysis done prior to the development of the activities it was found that at least 15 organisations within the Lisbon work with migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. Many of these organisations have little to no forms of communication or collaboration between themselves. In order to successfully help the vulnerable communities, the DLBC had to first facilitate a meeting between the various organisations in order to exchange experiences, resources and begin to prepare activities together.

### b. Objectives and target population

- To promote active citizenship, mutual learning and the inclusion of citizens from different socio-cultural backgrounds and different countries in the discussion and development of local policies, measures and services.
- To ensure that citizens who are often excluded from the decisions making process are represented.
- To establish a place of gathering where different stakeholders and institutions can come together to discuss issues and concerns.
- To establish a closer relationship between the various organisations and institutions that work with migrants, asylum seekers and refugees in order to create collaborative activities together.

### c. Activities carried out

The activities planned and carried out in association with the URGENT project were due to a collaborative effort involving 7 different organisations. The project covered 3 neighbourhoods in Lisbon which benefited approximately 100 individuals.

In order to develop a collaborative program, the first step was to establish communication between the organisations within the area based on the findings of the territorial analysis. A number of stakeholder meetings were created in order to encourage the involvement of all the institution and organisations working with citizens from different socio-cultural backgrounds or specifically with migrants, asylum seekers and refugees. During this meeting, the project was explained and the brainstorming process of optional policies and activities to be implemented within the city began. The second step taken was the development of a focus group called “*Tertúlia*” and “Talking about migrants and refugees” which was created in order to have a reflective discussion on the theme of the project and its target population. This was done in order to ensure that the needs of the migrant, asylum seekers and refugee community were appropriately met.

#### **Pilot Project: The whole world in Lisbon**

The final step taken was the implementation of various activities based on the common grounds found between the organisations. These activities took place under the pilot project called “*The whole world in Lisbon*”. Within the pilot project, there were three main activities; the “Wheel of Joy” which was a *Capoeira* activity involving both locals and migrants; “Diversity Blanket” and various sports activities.

Diversity Blanket was a 3-day activity in which a selected group of individuals from the intercultural Ameixoeira Municipality, sew blankets using different types of fabric gathered from multiple sources in order to create a symbolic common piece of work by using different materials. During the workshop participants had the freedom to choose different materials, colours and patterns to sew together during several sessions. The workshop gathered a lot of interest within the community due to its empowering message: *each personal contribution helped create an outcome which was shared and benefited by the group as a whole*. The association ALCC was responsible for this activity as they are one of the currently active associations behind the development of projects within this specific neighbourhood.

In addition to the handcraft activity, the project also used sports and physical exercise as a way of celebrating integration within the community. The sports activities included a table football tournament, a *Capoeira* session, a football match and a yoga session. These activities were open to everyone who wanted to participate and meet people from other different cultures. The activity provided the opportunity to learn about the different values of different cultures in order to improve the integration between the participants of different backgrounds. This activity was developed by partners from Ameixoeira and various organizations that work mainly with refugees in Lisbon. It should be noted that CATR-Centro de Acolhimento Temporário de Refugiados was one of the key agents in mobilizing the refugee community to attend and supplying various resources.



The results of the pilot projects are the following; the activities successfully provided an interaction between the different target groups as well as the integration of people from different cultures within the diverse community of the area. This in turn helped establish a relationship between the citizens from different cultures and nationalities and promoted a space for an intercultural dialogue. Moreover, the sports activities were used as a tool for the promotion of integration through non-verbal communication which provided inclusion for those who did not speak sufficient Portuguese. The projects overall also created a network of partners who share the same concerns in order to further produce collaborative projects.



Building a Diversity Blanket, Lisbon, Portugal, 20<sup>th</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup> February

#### d. Lessons learned

**The main lessons learnt can be reflected by the African proverb “if you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together”**

- Involvement of partners and target groups within the local population through these kinds of sustainable activities can help create a lasting relationship between different groups of people.
- The initial actions plan was challenging to implement due to the renunciations of some of the partner and the lack of financial resources for the development of the pilot project.
- The management of partnerships within Lisbon is fairly weak as there is often lack of involvement between the partners, this issue needs to be further addressed.

## 10. Slovenia – DRPD Novo Mesto

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

Migrants make up 18 % of the total population of Slovenia. It was found that there are approximately 600 refugees and 216 asylum seekers in the country. Slovenia is known to be very strict when giving refugee status to asylum seekers. Therefore, refugees and asylum seekers travelling through the Balkan route tend to avoid situating in there.

The project originally considered several locations and events for possible activities. The aim was to search for an interesting and new solution in order to enhance the production of knowledge and understanding of migration. The Novo Mesto stood out as an interesting urban area which offered a degree of support for the inclusion of working migrants and the Roma community. However, as a result of a policy introduced by the state after the 2015 migration crisis associated with the use of the Balkan Route, the state declared that of asylum seekers and refugees were obliged to stay only within Ljubljana. Making the Novo Mesto inaccessible for asylum seekers or other individuals with international protection. As a consequence of this, it was found that most of the knowledge production concerning the inclusion of asylum seekers and refugees were concentrated in Ljubljana. The project then began to shift its focus towards the city of Ljubljana where research could best be conducted in support part of the dynamic process of inclusion through the development of an event.

The first location choice was Rakova Jelša, an area in Ljubljana which has a large population of migrants from ex-Yugoslavia. This area is separated from the rest of Ljubljana by a highway and the lack of public transportation and services. The area houses an asylum home and a school attended by many children with refugee status. The project believes that potential knowledge production here would be vibrant and innovative. However, upon further research, it was found that Rakova Jelša is made up of a number of relatively closed communities which were not interested or ready to be included with the rest of the city through the project. Moreover, the asylum home situated there was set up with a rigid closed organizational structure, governed by the police and private security company. Therefore, it was not possible to organise an activity which would substantially influence or benefit those in need. In addition, the school was reluctant to organise an event with the URGENT project as they were obliged to follow an official curriculum.

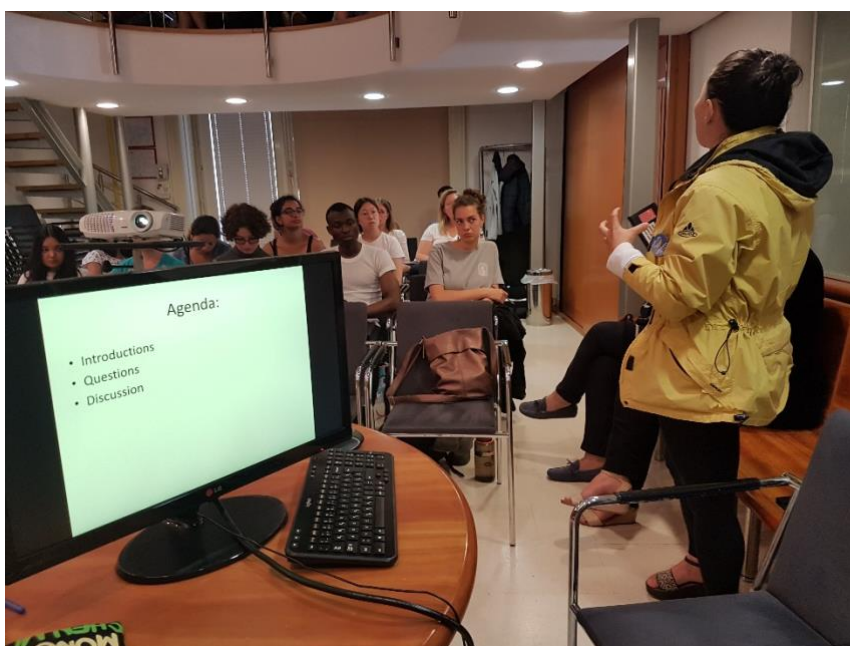
### b. Objectives and target population

The objective was to look for possibilities within the centre of Ljubljana, thus, the autonomous space in the Factory of Rog came to surface. This location houses a social centre which was working with groups and other organisations on several projects focusing on the “acts of citizenships”. An example of one is a project which concerned *invisible workers* found during the refugee crisis in 2015. This project focused on several new and innovative “acts of citizenship” towards undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees against the razor wire at the borders, EU border regime, moral panic, produced by the media and supported by the government, online and offline hate speech and xenophobic gatherings in front of the asylum home.

A self-organised centre called the “Second Home” also played an important role as it housed a number of activists who worked on promoting political engagement with other activities such as legal help, language and dances lessons, workshop and assistance on the how to be included in the labour market. Second Home strongly believes that migration would lead to social transformation. In order to ensure social transformation, they believe that there is a constant need for new knowledge, experiences and practices. Therefore, collaborative learning from others is imperative.

### c. Activities carried out

The projects organized a workshop with the activists from Second home, researchers from the Institute, DRPD, NGOs, professors and international students from Vienna University involved in European master in Urban studies. The main goal of the workshop was to research, conceptualise and develop various innovative interdisciplinary practice and ideas from around the globe. Students from all over the globe such as Spain, Ghana, Netherlands, South Korea, Austria, Belgium, Egypt, Colombia, Uruguay, India and Nepal shared their knowledge and experience from their home countries. Additionally, students also shared their own migratory paths and experiences in Europe.



**Communicate your activity Workshop, Ljubljana, Slovakia 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018**

### d. Lessons learned

The project ended with a set of interesting conclusions and possible actions. One of the activists stated that “We all have to do a little revolution sometimes, a little here and a little there” in order to change the world for the better. The most important results from the event were the knowledge production of different practices in the field of inclusion of undocumented migrants, asylum seekers and refugees at a local city level from around the globe. The information gathered will help researchers, activists and NGOs address certain challenges that were either not identified yet or were identified as challenges and obstacles.

## 11. Spain – Fundación Privada Indera (Barcelona)

### a. Context & localisation of the intervention and main challenges addressed

The Barrio del Raval is a quarter with a high population density located within the district of Ciutat Vella. This area was widely known as a typical immigrant neighbourhood of Barcelona due to many of its inhabitants being of Asian or African origin. The area is often associated with being a dangerous and troubled quarter based on the negative social image of immigrants. In the past the area is perceived as one which lacks harmony and coexistence between the various communities that live there. In recent years the Raval has been promoted by the city council as a cosmopolitan and multicultural neighbourhood in order to boost tourism and investments. As a result of the new image of the area, the urban space is now characterised by two main aspects; the establishment of community networks by migrant groups and the proliferation of urban reforms which was promoted by the city council. The establishment of community networks by migrant groups has modified the urban area by determining the type of shops and business, the proliferation of migrant associations and religious sites, among others. These networks and their material expressions are widely spread throughout the neighbourhood, avoiding processes of “ghettoisation”. Additionally, the proliferation of urban reforms was promoted by the city council and aimed to revitalise and secure certain areas of the Raval which were viewed as dangerous. This was due to its past interaction with immigration, prostitution, poverty, drugs and crime. In order to revert this image, the city council started a series of urban reforms based on the demolition of old residential buildings and the construction of wider public spaces and new buildings dedicated to art and culture. This has completely changed the urban landscape.

Traditionally migration has been associated with the male gender, however, it was found in Raval that there had been a slight increase in the number of women immigrating to the area. The migrant women of the Raval, particularly those who have followed their husbands to Barcelona, often assume an invisible role in the society. This condition comes from the fact that migrant women are mostly relegated to the reproductive sphere, acting as the main caregivers for the family and generally have a very low presence in the labour market. This implies that women are less present in the public space and, therefore, they become less visible to the eyes of the local citizens. This trend varies depending on the nationality of the women. However, when a migrant woman manages to enter the labour market, she often suffers a high level of precarity and a complete lack of labour rights. In addition, these women are more likely to be exposed to the daily expressions of systemic gender oppression, which results in discriminations, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, stigmatization and gender violence. Moreover, it was found that these women are usually not taken into considerations during the development and implementation of policies.

### b. Objectives and target population

The project created two activities focusing on two different target groups. The first activity targeted migrant women of diverse origins, public institutions, civil servants, social workers and the general public interested in migration and human rights. The objective of the first activity was the following:

- Exchanging and sharing of experiences and needs between migrant women and member of civil society
- Giving a voice to migrant women who participated in integration projects and, as far as possible, those who have not yet done so, to talk about strengths, weaknesses, limits and potential of the projects that are underway in the Raval and in other neighbourhoods.



- To promote the enlargement of the participation of migrant women in the designing of projects and policies.
- To offer a space for reflection on social cohesion from the point of view of migrant women as builders of new bounds and relations among citizens, which makes them essential contributors to the goal.
- To appeal to the role of local society as a whole and the need for a change of mentality and relational dynamics as the basis of interculturality.

The second activity targeted 60 teenagers between the ages of 12-18 and three of their teachers in a workshop. The objective of the workshop was to raise awareness on the reality of migration and how gender affects it. This was done in hopes to provide an intercultural perspective to help future generations ensure a change of mentality regarding migration, sexism and gender violence as a basis to build a true intercultural society in the medium-term future.

### c. Activities carried out

#### **Seminar on “Migrant women as builders of social cohesion: bodies, relations and jobs”**

Taking into account that women and men do not experience migration in the same manner, the Seminar "Migrated Women, builders of Social Cohesion" was born and held in Barcelona on March 12 2018. The seminar was focused on social cohesion, integration, diversity and interculturality from the point of view of migrant women. This seminar aimed to place a spotlight on the understanding of the migrant female perspective as a fundamental axis in the construction of authentically intercultural societies. The participants of the seminar include various organisations, collectives and unions concerned with the interests of migrant women as well as the migrant women themselves.

The seminar consisted of three tables. The first table was called "Bodies" and was focused on exploring new means and strategies in designing public policies and social projects related to the body and physical experience as the main axis. The second table was called "Relationships", here the public and speakers reflected on how the migratory experience is articulated with personal and institutional relations at the individual and collective level, and how this impacts the integration of migrated communities, migrated women and social cohesion. Finally, in the third table, which was called “jobs”, issues related to the nature of the work of migrant women, the feminization of migrations and their impact on the labour market and labour rights were addressed, with a special emphasis on care-giving and reproductive work.

Overall the results of the seminar are the following: migrant women had the opportunity to explain for themselves their experiences, interests and needs without the need for intermediaries; the actions of different parties attending the seminar were made visible to the public; representatives of civil society and public institutions have been sensitized on the role of migrant women in the construction of social cohesion and finally, the new empowering initiatives for migrant women have been shared.

#### **Workshops in public schools**

The workshops took place in secondary schools in different areas of Barcelona. The aim was to sensitize students with more knowledge and understanding of active citizenship and rights. As well as clarify concepts such as racism, stereotypes, xenophobia. The objective was to help inspire them in the construction of an inclusive society. It was found that the workshop was positive in helping students become reflective towards the fundamental issues of today's society.





**Seminar on “Migrant women as builders of social cohesion: bodies, relations and jobs”, Barcelona, Spain, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

#### d. Lessons learned

It was found that working in a network with other entities improves the achievement of the result. The collaboration between civil society and public institutions is a key factor and must be enhanced as it is fundamental to make visible and be aware of gender differences in the migratory experience of men and women. Moreover, it is vital to take into considerations the intersection of the migratory process with other factors such as inequality when it comes to the design and implementation of projects and public policies.

Furthermore, new links have been generated between the event organiser INDERA Foundation and the speakers who attended. This provides for new opportunities for collaboration in order to further work with migrants. Finally, the volunteer team of INDERA Foundation has been strengthened in addition to the role of European projects as articulators of social cohesion

## LESSONS-LEARNED

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The general goal of the URGENT consortium is to improve social cohesion in local communities by promoting integration through the development of urban policies fostering intercultural dialogue and the use of common spaces. The results of the 'Local Paths' activities implemented by the URGENT project partners at a local level portrayed the various dimensions and objectives of the projects as well as its issues and necessary steps for the future. It was found that the four objectives of the project go hand in hand, the success of one objective often cascades into the potential achievement of another.

Overall, there are a few recurring themes presented in the lessons learnt through the local paths. Firstly, there is a consensus among the project partners that collaboration is necessary in order to establish a bottom-up approach to promoting intercultural connections amongst the inhabitants of a marginalised area and those not living in a marginalised area. There is a constant need for new knowledge, experiences and practices. Therefore, collaborative learning from others is imperative in ensuring the development of the available tools and resources as a means to further shift the community towards a more intercultural city paradigm. Collaboration is done in a two-tier approach by many partners; the first tier consists of encouraging better communication and collusion between both, the inhabitants of a marginalised area and those not living in a marginalised area as well as between the various marginalised communities themselves. An example of this can best be found in the Barcelona project which focused on the exchanging and sharing of experiences and needs between migrant women and member of civil society, or the Mostar project and the Rome project which established a dialogue towards active citizenship through innovative and participative events aimed at to promoting cross-fertilisations in urban spaces within the cities various communities. The second tier consists of the promotion of better coordination between the various stakeholders and key actors concerned with the issue. As learnt through the Brussels project, the inclusion of grassroots organisations in any initiative aiming at strengthening inclusivity and interculturality is essential. The project in the Municipality of Kumanovo and Lisbon brought up concerns over how the lack of coordination and management between relevant institution stakeholders can directly hinder the development of socially cohesive and open society. The development of a network as displayed by the Trieste and the Barcelona project further portrayed how teamwork between various stakeholders lead to a better achievement of objectives.

Secondly, in line with collaboration, the exchange of knowledge and awareness of migratory issues through education and informative workshop is seen as a necessary first step towards establishing more cohesive intercultural connections. Local governments and organisations should be encouraged to use, create and promote its available tools such as its public space, local institutions, and the skills of its migrant community, in order to promote the exchange of knowledge. The project in the Valletta found that engaging in schools ensures a concrete impact for the future development of society. Therefore, encouraging the use of schools as an outreach should be further investigated upon. Furthermore, emphasising on the use of public spaces, the project in Trieste found that the interaction among the diverse communities within the neighbourhood had been limited until activities such as carpentry workshops encouraged the local community to attend the community centre and learn from one another. In addition, the project in Novo Mesto focused on the production of knowledge through research on the various innovative interdisciplinary practice and ideas available as a tool to help address the diverse challenges of urban regeneration. As stated by the project in Rome, migration

needs to be considered as a resource for the host country and local institutions must stake advantage of the available knowledge they bring.

Thirdly, it was found that there has been a general shift towards safety and social policies rather than security policies as a means to safeguard those who are vulnerable on a local level. The main focus was on the enforcement of rights and representation, as well as the focus on protection of female migrants. This is best presented in the Tirana project which drafted a set of recommendation in order to ensure the fair and decent treatment of migrant and asylum seekers. Likewise, the Mostar and the Municipality of Kumanovo project both emphasised that providing inclusion and the same opportunity to all citizens is fundamental in creating a unified urban community. Additionally, both the project in Barcelona and in Trieste specifically addressed the protection and rights of female migrants by emphasising that migratory experience for men and women are different and should be taken into considerations during the design and implementation of the project and public policies.

The final common theme concerns the acknowledgement that the obstacle the local paths faced were both issues created at a local and at a national level. Therefore, these obstacles should be addressed at both levels. The Lisbon projects' initial action plan was challenging to implement due to the renunciation of some of the partners as well as an issue with the lack of financial resources for the development of the pilot project. The weak coordination between the various stakeholders often resulted in the lack of involvement between stakeholders towards the activities. This issue is one which most local partners can experience. For this reason, the development of a framework for cooperation on a local level is necessary for the achievement of the URGENT project objectives. Furthermore, the project in Brussels and Tirana both pointed out obstacles which should be addressed on a national level such as the protection of human rights and the challenges of implementing migrant policies. The Tirana project looked at the challenges of the social and economic impact of migrant policies. The project in Tirana stressed that the managing of integration requires more partnership between organisations and municipalities in order to ensure the sufficient degree of intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding of diversity. Additionally, the project in Brussels emphasised that despite the similar challenges the solution to the issue cannot be merely transferred from one area directly to another. Each local community is distinct, the solution and policies created by local institutions and governments must be made in a way which is adaptable and flexible. In accordance with the Rome project, local and national institutions should not neglect to remember that these diverse communities are vulnerable to racist attacks and a degree of safeguard are necessary to be implemented. Government policies which were introduced as a consequence of a large number of migrants entering a country can at times act as a barrier between the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and their access to the available facilities which could help them.

In line with the common themes mentioned above, many of local paths activities have successfully managed to touch upon the four objectives of the URGENT project. In general, it was found that at a local level, the creation and use of public spaces as a tool to encourage mutual learning among citizens from different socio-cultural backgrounds from different countries of Europe is already being implemented and is regarded as a highly popular tool. However, many local societies and institution are still struggling to ensure the representation and co-creation of policies and services with the members of their marginalised community. In order to ensure the successful integration and the development of urban policies fostering intercultural dialogue, it is vital that this obstacle is addressed. In conclusion, the results of the URGENT project are an exceptional first step towards a more socially cohesive Europe.

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