



SUPPORTING THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT WOMEN, REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS

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MIGRATION AND SECURITY FUNDS UNION ACTIONS



Annex 6 - The Cyprus Migrant Women's Model Forum under the Integro Project by KISA

1.1. What problem does the practice seek to resolve?

Cyprus Migrant Women's Forum, under the INTEGRO Project - "Effective integration of migrants in the local communities": Issues of integration of third country nationals and more specifically, self-organisation of migrant women in Cyprus.

In the context of the INTEGRO Transnational Project, KISA first prepared a mapping of the situation concerning the integration of migrants in the society of Cyprus and then organised two round-table discussions and two stakeholders' meetings calling all stakeholders (migrant women, women's organisations, migrant organisations, trade unions, ministries, etc.) to discuss the issues of integration of migrants in Cyprus. These meetings and discussions had concluded that there was an urgent need for migrant women in Cyprus to self-organise. Therefore, KISA decided and organised, in the framework of INTEGRO, a migrant women's forum with the aim that it would contribute in the integration of migrants and especially migrant women in Cyprus.

NICeR – New approach to Enforce the cultural integration of the young refugees: Gaps and inadequacies in the integration of young refugees in host countries.

KISA's experience with organising art and social events with migrant communities: More often than not, migrants are invisible in the social, artistic, and cultural events organised in Cyprus. Locals usually do not allow space for migrants and do not acknowledge their culture and contribution.

Migrant and Refugee Centre: Racism, discrimination, trafficking, and exploitation of migrants and refugees.

1.2. What solution does the practice offer?

Cyprus Migrant Women's Forum, under the INTEGRO Project - "Effective integration of migrants in the local communities": Among the aims of KISA's pilot project were the self-representation and empowerment of migrant women to actively participate in all spheres of public life, including full and equal participation in the labour market, education, and political participation, especially in the formulation and implementation of integration measures and policies. Also, the pilot project aspires to support migrant women in becoming aware of and claiming their rights and raise awareness about and fight to stop multiple discrimination against migrant women. The ultimate goal of the pilot project is creating and sustaining an empowering community for migrant women.

NICeR – New approach to Enforce the cultural integration of the young refugees: The main aim of Nicer project is to enforce the social and cultural integration of refugee children



through the performing arts approach and awareness campaign and to integrate them in the local community through performing arts workshops and awareness of the population.

KISA's experience with organising art and social events with migrant communities: KISA is supporting migrants and their communities for over a decade in staging their own productions, organising their own events, and giving publicity to their own art and culture. Such events are often co-organised with locals/ local organisations/ communities, so that to bring migrants and locals together through art and culture. The Rainbow brings together Cypriots and non-Cypriots, with the active and colourful participation of migrant and refugee communities, organisations and groups, as well as human rights and cultural organisations, in mutual respect for each other and under a common theme, such as "Open Borders – Welcoming Societies" (last theme).

Migrant and Refugee Centre: Provision of free information, support, advocacy, and mediation services to migrants, refugees, victims of trafficking/ racism/ discrimination and ethnic minorities in general. Furthermore, KISA's Migrant and Refugee Centre promotes the integration, empowerment, and self-organisation of migrants and refugees. The combination of activities of social intervention and the operation of services as well as the strong ties with the migrant and refugee communities enable KISA to have a very accurate and updated picture about the realities in the areas of its mandate.

1.3. How does it work?

Cyprus Migrant Women's Forum, under the INTEGRO Project - "Effective integration of migrants in the local communities": KISA moved on setting up the Cyprus Migrant Women's Forum, working to establish new bonds and maintain the already existing bonds with the migrant communities, organising meetings with migrant women, and organising the First Annual Assembly of the Cyprus Migrant Women's Forum together with the migrant women, who became actively involved in the forum. The forum accommodated different working groups, since migrant women in Cyprus have different backgrounds and therefore different needs and desires. The working groups focused on the following core areas: social and labour rights; family; and violence, including racism and discrimination.

NICeR – New approach to Enforce the cultural integration of the young refugees: The project focuses on increasing the integration of young refugees and non-refugees in various fields, in education through the writing of a pedagogical guide on how to effectively manage the theme of refugees and integration in the classroom context, intercultural and language ateliers for refugee and non-refugee youths et cetera. Refugee and non-refugee children came together in workshops on drama and in the final stage, their play was staged in public.

KISA's experience with organising art and social events with migrant communities: In this framework, KISA has supported and supports social, cultural, and art events, such as poetry



nights, theatre performances, and book publications. Annually, KISA organises the Rainbow festival together with migrant and refugee communities. For the last 17 years, KISA has been organising the Rainbow Festival, which is the largest anti-racist multicultural event in Cyprus. The Rainbow festival usually takes place in October – November and the entrance is free. Music, songs and dances, exhibitions and information stands, children’s corner, bazaar, food from all over the world, and much more are included in the festival activities.

Migrant and Refugee Centre: Migrants and refugees visit the Centre and discuss any issue that concerns them with a counsellor. The counsellor provides them information, mediation, support, advocacy, and strategic litigation as appropriated and agreed.