

# General Meeting 2018

*Integration in European cities*

Twinning for successful integration and democratic engagement

**Presentation of the Douzelage town's preparatory work**



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Preparatory work for the General Meeting 2018

## Background

Following an exceptional high migration to some of the municipalities of Douzelage in 2015 and 2016, the issue of immigrant integration into European societies has become increasingly important.

The towns of Douzelage face two closely related and significant problems that make integration difficult and that delay a successful integration of immigrants;

- Immigrants' low participation and influence in local society
- Prejudice and discrimination

In view of this background Oxelösund has, in consultation with the Douzelage presidency, formulated the project *Integration in European cities*. The project is the basis for a granted application for EU co-funding

## Workshops during the general meeting

The work during General meeting 2018 is supposed to be conducted in workshops regarding the issue about strengthened democratically participation and the prevention of prejudices and discrimination.

The workshops will have focus on three main keys to a successful integration;

- **Language**  
Being able to communicate with residents in a new country is one of the main keys to successful integration.
- **Civil society**  
To establish contacts in a new country is an important factor for integration. It's about support and service from the society. But above all it's about what civil society offers in the form of community, culture, political involvement etc.
- **Culture**  
To be orientated about the culture of a new country is an important factor for integration. It is about becoming aware of the social norms typical of the new country, both written and unwritten.

## Preparatory work

About two months before General meeting the delegates has been asked to do some preparatory work. For one of the topics/main keys above they've been asked to make a short documentation on their towns (or country) has been successful and less successful according to immigration (**appendix 1**).

In the following the Douzelage towns preparatory work is being presented.



# Preparatory work

Language

Holstebro



Oxelösund 10 – 13 Maj 2018

## Preparatory work for the General Meeting from Holstebro

### How do immigrants learn language as quickly and efficiently as possible?

#### The successful example:

In Holstebro (and the rest of the country as well) immigrants must frequent a special school for immigrants, a Language Centre.

1. At the Volunteer Centre Holstebro we are 10 volunteers who help those pupils, who need help, with their homework. A pupil should make an appointment with one of the volunteers beforehand. We also help them with other things such as “How do I get a new passport”, “How do I apply for something at the municipal office” etc. We also take them to events and invite them to our own homes.
2. At the town library and at a community centre, a group of volunteers have established a “Talk Danish” group. Once a week both Danes and immigrants drop in and converse with each other. The point is to team up, one on one, and just talk about everything in Danish.
3. Latest news: The Language Centre now offers a special course called Business Danish. This language support is aimed at the individual company / the individual employee’s needs. That makes sense because having a job and to be good at your work is very much linked to how good you are at speaking and understanding the language in your specific area of work.

#### Things that need improving:

1. At the Volunteer Centre it sometimes is a problem when a pupil doesn’t show up and he/she does not give notice about it beforehand.

2. In general, we have problems in some school classes with too many Arabic speaking pupils. Then the language in the schoolyard often is Arabic, and pupils from other countries are not able to understand.
3. Politically it has been decided that every class in Holstebro should reflect the municipality as a whole. This means for example, that if the percentage of Arabic speaking people in the areas is 10 %, the amount of Arabic speaking pupils in a class should not exceed 10 %. However as some parents choose private schools it is a target not easily met.

## **Best Practice: Introduction to Neighbourhood Mothers**

The Neighbourhood Mothers give hope and change the life of other women

The Neighbourhood Mothers are primarily women with an ethnic minority background, who do a voluntary effort in their local area by supporting isolated and vulnerable women. The Neighbourhood Mothers listen, convey important information, and build bridges between the woman and the area in which she lives, which can help the woman further on. The help gives the women strength, so they can help themselves, their children and their family.

Manual for start up:

The manual found by clicking on the link below, contains information and strategies for establishing a local Neighborhood Mother effort, and ensuring anchoring and progress throughout the process. The goal of a Neighborhood Mother group is to become a voluntary social association, but before this can happen, several aspects need to be in place. This manual will guide you through the four phases, which are the crucial steps on the path to success with a local Neighborhood Mother effort.

The manual is free and can be downloaded .

## **A description of the basic education of the Neighborhood Mothers**

The education description is created in the light of best practice knowledge from nationwide courses and didactical methods. The description is structured in 15 modules. Each module is linked to the basic skills which the Neighborhood Mothers will have to cover, through the education.

You can also download the education plan by clicking on the link below.

## **Story from a Neighbourhood Mother**

*I have helped a woman, who was a widow. It was an old Danish couple, who told me about her. She rarely went outside ever since the death of her husband two years ago. I knocked on the door and told her: "I am a Neighbourhood Mother and I am a volunteer, I'm not from the municipality". She started crying and asked: "Where have you been? I need your help". For a year and a half she had not been to the doctor because she had lost her health insurance card. She had just been sitting at home for all this time.*

*So I took her to the Citizen Service and ordered a new health insurance card for her. It took 5 minutes. Then I took her to a café for women and signed her up - so she could find company. Because she had no family, she had no one to talk to. When you do not have anyone to turn to, it can make you feel ill.*

*The women she had met in the café became her friends. I call her once in a while to check up on her. She is doing well! And now she is very proud of herself. She walks all the way to the café even though it is far away from where she lives. Before she would never leave her flat! I am actually very proud of this case. A little help was needed but it made a big difference.*

*People need to feel good. Women need freedom. We just have to catch an eye on those who are in need for help. They only need a little push. All, the woman needed was a little push to go out and explore the world on her own – realise that life did not end after the death of her husband. She can enjoy life now. A little push makes a big difference.”*

[www.bydelsmor.dk](http://www.bydelsmor.dk)

## **What needs to change?**

### **Examples of association that exercises social control.**

We have several examples that ethnic groups form their own cultural association. Often they call it a friendship society, but only their own ethnicity is represented. There are no Danes involved.

In the association they also maintain their own language in the written materials. They create their own sports teams, music groups and cultural events. Sometimes they invite the Danes, but as they only speak in their native language, the Danes feel left outside and the result is, that they do not come back a second time.

By creating their own sports teams or music groups, they prevent their children and young people from joining associations where they meet Danish children and young people. They control who their children and adolescents associates with and maintain traditions and norms in a negative way.

The members of the association who try to adapt to Danish values and traditions, will be punished. It may be in form of bullying on social media and at school. They also expel the person from the community and sometimes it also involves physical punishment.

### **Example of social control:**

In an Arab unification they had a very good president who did very much for the association and its members.

The president was divorced from his Muslim wife and married a Danish woman. He is very well integrated and made many suggestions about activities in which the association should cooperate with Danes. The members of the Arab League could not accept that he was divorced and had married a Danish woman. They thought he was too integrated so they did not choose him again as president. Today he is no longer a member of the association, because they do not want to hear his opinion.

## Preparatory work

Language

Meerssen



### **WORKSHOPS GENERAL MEETING 2018 OXELÖSUND**

#### ***INTEGRATION IN THE NETHERLANDS: MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES***

The Netherlands has a long history of immigration. Both refugees and economic migrants have come to the country in large numbers. Currently more than 20% of the Dutch population are immigrants or children of immigrant parents.

For a long time the Dutch took pride in the fact that many people came to their country because of its relative tolerance towards other cultures and religions. Immigrants who came after the Second World War, as guest workers or from other colonies, were initially encouraged to maintain their own cultures, even after it became clear they would stay in the Netherlands permanently. Access to citizenship was easy, and the pressure to assimilate was low. For immigrants who were not proficient in Dutch, many government services and documents were provided in their mother tongues.

However, it soon became clear that the former guest workers and, to a lesser extent, migrants from the former colonies were economically marginalised. Many policies were enacted to improve their position, but to little avail. With the new century came a very turbulent time for Dutch multiculturalism, which had attempted to accommodate immigrants as cultural distinct groups. Many wonder whether the Netherlands has left the multicultural track and is now pursuing a fierce form of assimilation. During the last 20 years several new immigration and integration laws have been introduced. Without exception they have made Dutch immigration and integration policies stricter. More so than in other European countries, cultural belonging and cultural difference remain important policies and political debates. Immigrants and their descendants continue to be viewed as culturally distinct groups, but whereas early integration policies aimed at maintaining cultural diversity, this diversity is increasingly seen as something that obstructs integration into Dutch society.



## THE IMMIGRANT POPULATION

In contrast to most countries, statistics on the immigrant population in the Netherlands are not based on nationality or country of birth, but on ethnicity. The Dutch government distinguishes between *allochtonen* and *autochtonen*. Allochtonen are officially defined as persons who have at least one parent who was born outside the Netherlands. A further distinction is made between Western and Non-Western allochtonen. Western allochtonen are people from Europe (excluding Turkey), North America, Oceania, Indonesia and Japan; non-Western allochtonen are defined as people from Turkey, Syria, Africa, Latin America and the rest of Asia.

The different statistical categories provide a variety of ways to depict the share of immigrants in the population: appr. 20% of the population is allochtoon (10,6% Non Western), appr. 11% is foreign born and 6,2 % of the population does not possess Dutch citizenship. The impact of the different definitions on determining the most significant countries of origin is relatively small: Indonesia, Suriname, Turkey, Morocco, Syria, Germany, Belgium, the UK, Poland and the former Yugoslavia are well presented in each case.

The immigrant population tends to live in urban areas. A total of 30% of allochtonen (or 40% of all non-western allochtonen) live in the four largest cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, The Rotterdam, allochtonen make up almost half the population. Some smaller municipalities have a high concentration of certain groups as well, mostly as a consequence of the industries that employed guest workers ( in our area the former coal mines). Meerssen has a relatively low number of migrants or refugees in its area.

Non-Western allochtonen groups are generally in a disadvantaged socio-economic position. Of the four largest non-Western groups the Turks and Morroccans (and in the meantime the Syrians as well) are the most disadvantaged: they exhibit low labour market participation, high unemployment and welfare dependency rates and relatively poor school results, even among the second generation.

Although the level of education among second-generation immigrants shows a significant improvement as compared to their parents, it is still behind that of autochtoon Dutch children. The drop-out rate for non Western allochtoon children is twice that of Dutch allochtoon children. In the meantime non Western allochtoon citizens are represented in the Dutch parliament. However, out of the 150 members of parliament only appr. 15 members are of non-Western allochtoon descent.

## CITIZENSHIP

The Dutch law facilitates access to citizenship for second generation descendents of ages of 18 and 25. The 3rd generation (second generation born in the Netherlands) automatically receives Dutch citizenship at birth.

Immigrant scan naturalise after 5 years of legal residence, or three if they are married to a Dutch citizen. Until 2003 the naturalisation requirements were minimal: applicants had to show that they had no serious criminal record and complete a modest oral exam to test their Dutch language ability. This exam usually involved a civil servant asking the candidate to state their name, place of birth, address and year of immigration in Dutch.

In the meantime the government believes foreign nationals must participate in Dutch society, for example by working or receiving an education. A command of the language is a condition for this.

For newcomers the following rules have to be taken into account:

**Compulsory integration and learning Dutch:** If you come to live in the Netherlands for a longer period of time from outside the EEA, Switzerland and Turkey, and are between 18 and state pension age, you are obliged to learn Dutch. This rule also applies to clerics, such as imams and pastors. Learning the language is part of the compulsory integration process. Foreign nationals from the EEA, Switzerland or Turkey are not obliged by law to integrate but it is just as important that they learn Dutch. For non-refugees the compulsory integration begins outside the Netherlands. In their home-country they have to take the civic integration exam before they arrive in the Netherlands. The new integration policy provides Dutch language and culture tests at 138 embassies around the world. The 30-minute computerized exam will determine if new immigrants are prepared for Dutch life. The exam is intended to help people, who plan to spend at least five years in the Netherlands, go to school, get jobs and feel at home in Dutch culture.

Refugees will have to pass this exam in the Netherlands. Also they will be enabled to take training courses to have a better chance of finding work. Newcomers must know, for example: HOW TO FIND WORK - HOW TO MAKE A HOSPITAL APPOINTMENT - WHAT KINDS OF SCHOOLS ARE AVAILABLE (if they have children),

#### **Make an effort to integrate:**

The government consistently monitors the effort migrants make to integrate. If you do not make enough effort, you may lose your residence permit. This will not happen if you have a right to asylum but even then you must still make an effort to integrate.

#### **CAN TOWNTWINNING BE OF HELP IN THE INTEGRATION OF MIGRANTS OR REFUGEES? :**

As you will have noticed after reading the situation and rules in the Netherlands you will have to admit that the circumstances will be completely different in every Douzelage town. Nevertheless it will be very interesting to learn from each other what has been done so far to improve the situation in the area or country of our partner-cities.

## Preparatory work

### Language

#### Sušice

### Sušice

- located in south-west Bohemia
- 30 km away from the boarder to Germany
- 1. 1. 2018 – 10 999 Czech citizens
  - 124 immigrants with permanent residence
  - 115 immigrants with temporary residence
  - 0 refugees

Nationality of immigrants: Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Slovaks, Romanian, German, Dutch

We do not have many immigrants in our town. However the immigrants who are in our town are very well integrated. Most of them are Vietnamese. They do not usually work in Czech companies but own their small business and live in their community. Their children visit Czech schools and belong to the hardest working pupils.

There is another problem with immigrants in our town. A lot of inhabitants travel to work in Germany where they can earn three times more money than in Sušice. This causes a lack of workers in Sušice. Therefore local enterprises are searching for workers from Romania and Ukraine.

Although there are not refugees and only few immigrants in our town, we could see a great example in our partner town Bad Kötzting. We are also looking forward to hear the case studies from other Douzelage towns and we are ready to learn from their experience.

### Language

Czech language can be very difficult for some foreigners. It is quite easy for other Slavonic nationalities e.g. Slovaks, Ukrainian, Polish, Russians.

The older population in the Czech Republic speaks only Czech. The only foreign language they know is Russian because Russian used to be compulsory foreign language in Czech schools until 1989. After The Velvet Revolution in 1989 English has become a compulsory foreign language in Czech schools.

The immigrants can attend the Czech language courses which are taught in local private language school. Some of the teachers from our grammar schools teach Czech privately.

Czech people are very friendly and are willing to communicate with foreigners by all means. We are very pleased when we see the foreigners to make an effort to speak in our language because we know it is hard for them.

Most of the immigrants are Vietnamese living in our town since the 80s. They have always had the possibility to attend Czech courses in the School of Languages in Sušice but only few of them were interested. Vietnamese children attend Czech schools and have fully integrated.

Czech language belongs to the most difficult one among European languages to learn. Another problem is that the older generation cannot speak English and it is sometimes not possible to make oneself understood with English in the offices. Therefore refugees prefer other countries to go to for both language and economic reasons. I do not think it is probable the immigrants will come to our small boarder town in a great number. However if so, the municipality and schools of languages are going to do the best to help their integration.

## **Preparatory work**

### Civil society

Altea

#### WORKSHOP 1.- LANGUAGE

- How do we work in our towns to help immigrants to learn a new language as quickly and efficiently as possible? What is successful and what is to improve?

#### WORKSHOP 2.- CIVIL SOCIETY

- How do we work in our towns to help immigrants to get important contacts in the civil society? What is successful and what is to improve?

**Civil Society: Document a good/ a bad example on how your town has been successful/ less successful according to:**

- **Immigrants` participation in local society.**

#### **A GOOD EXAMPLE IN OUR TOWN**

Altea`s Government allows a global integration of immigrants. One example is the “*Welcome School*”, according to the 15/2008 Law of integration of immigrant people in Valencia`s Community.

#### **What is the “*Welcome School*”?**

It is a volunteer course of integration in order to know the spanish culture, language, history, laws and society. In this course new citizens learn spanish values and cohabitation rules in our town, their rights and owes, the politic structure, commun organization and languages talked in Altea.

## **An Official Certification**

The townhall gives people a Certification valid for their social and legal relationship. It is very useful for all administrative procedures of the Foreign Office.

## **Objectives**

Providing for new Altea's citizens the knowledges about spanish people in general and valencia's people in particularly.

Supplying to new citizens for personal autonomy in order to exercise their citizenship.

## **Who is prepared to?**

New adult people (since 18 years old) who are living in Altea's town.

## **Areas**

The "*Welcome School*" is based in four areas (4 areas):

- 1.- Spanish and valencian's languages.
- 2.- Basic laws: Spanish Constitution, Autonomous Statute, Integration Law, Involvement Law, Organic Law of Rights and Liberties for foreigners in Spain and their social integration.
- 3.- History and geography of Spain and Valencian Community.
- 4.-Practice information about foreigners, employment, homes and health services...

## **How many hours is the course programme?**

The duration of the formative programme is forty hours (40h). It is a free service for everybody. The application form is in the Townhall website.

## **SOMETHING TO IMPROVE IN OUR TOWN**

A bad example of integration in our town makes reference to young inmigrants who haven't got family in Spain. In Altea there is a public residence where young immigrants under eighteen years old live untill they become adults.

This residence is called "*The Castle*" and it's a welcome residence of Alicante and Valencia's young immigrants.

Boys who live there come from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and other african countries. Their culture, customs and laws are very different to ours and when boys arrive they must be familiarized with new people, culture, regulations, social, law, education and healthy system.

Now, our Autonomous Government is in favour of the cultural assimilation theory like in France. This theory means that immigrants have to learn the language, customs, social rights and values of the receiver country relegating their own customs.

Using the assimilation theory we find integration problems because boys are not comfortable and they feel like a stranger in a new world.

In Spain new immigrants arrive every week and we have to be careful with a good integration. They have to learn our language, culture and values but it is a difficult work. Our young immigrants have lot of problems of gender violence, juvenil crimes, vandalism, offenders, complaints against them and smuggles.

On the other hand, we think the multiculturalism, "salad bowl" or the "melting pot" cultural theory, based in reintegrating people and keeping customs from their countries is a better form of integration. In this theory the adaptation of boys in our society is similar to british cities like Liverpool, Bristol or London.

Now, we want to create new groups of students in high schools and give them an adaptation guide before their insertion in usual groups of students in the middle of the school year, making a right social adaptation.



## Preparatory work

Civil society  
Bad Kötzing

EUROPEAN TOWN TWINNING

## Refugees in Bad Kötzing

status March 2018



### Example 1:

#### Collective Accommodation in Bad Kötzing

Facts and Figures:

Bad Kötzing has a collective accommodation in a former hospital. Actually there live 165 persons (male 2/3, 35 children) with nationalities from Syria, Ethiopia, Irak, Iran, Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine, Mali, Eritrea, Somalia, Nigeria and stateless.

60 of them have the status “recognized as having the right of asylum”, 2 of them work.

Only a few “recognized refugees” live in flats in the town.

The children visit open full-time-school or kindergarten and meet playmates.

#### Positive:

- a great refugee support network of active and dedicated volunteers

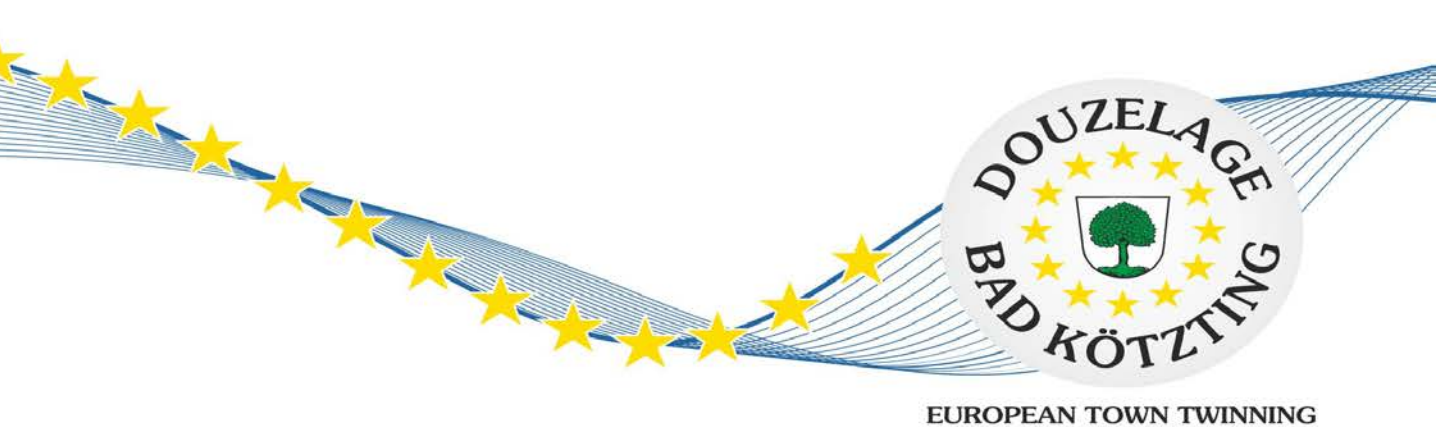
Provides:

- integration in sports clubs
- training self-reliance
- instruction of male refugees: How to behave in contact with women or in the public pool
- language courses for women with babies in the accommodation
- collective cookery courses for Germans and refugees
- bicycle repair workshop, run by refugees
- knitting courses
- children's playroom
- hygiene courses
- food bank and clothing bank open for refugees
- courses in traffic regulations

#### Negative:

- the state largely relies on the work of volunteers
- housing problems for recognized refugees





EUROPEAN TOWN TWINNING

- secluded life in the collective accommodation prevents problems, but doesn't support integration
- In a refugees' accommodation in the county a small boy was killed on the occasion of a fight between his mother and a refugee. Since that the accommodations are guarded by security.

### **Example 2:**

#### **Berufsintegrationsklassen (classes for job integration) for refugees in the vocational school for the Landkreis Cham**

- Actually 11 classes with about 180 students, distributed according to their level
- most of them are willing to learn
- punctuality was a problem in the beginning, but now the students are not less reliable than Germans
- another problem are traumatized juveniles who would need a special school

### **Positive example**

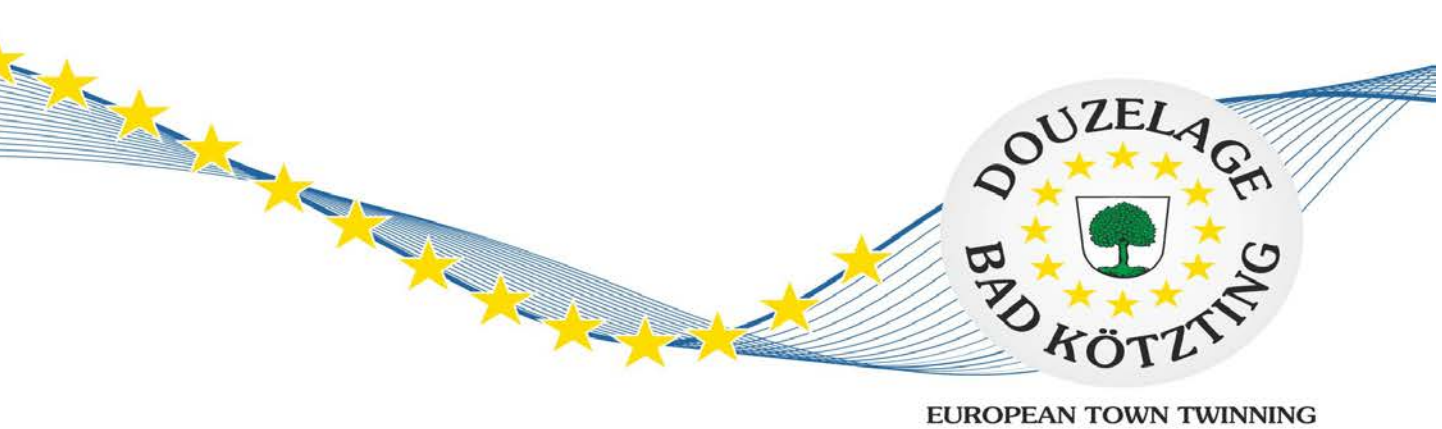
A recognized refugee from Syria (wife and 2 children) who had studied Arabian Literature got involved as an interpreter at the job agency and was employed as a social worker at the vocational school. Meanwhile he is a full-time social worker and placement officer for refugees at the county administration. He is interested in integration; meanwhile also his children speak German.

### **Negative examples:**

A Syrian student, who showed deviant behaviour and didn't follow any rules, even dealt with drugs, had to leave school and has no future in Germany.

The companies in the county are willing to educate and train refugees and employ them after the apprenticeship. They are especially interested in students from Afghanistan. Most of them are interested in learning and integrating and capable. Their chances to stay are minimal, because the Federal Government considers Afghanistan a safe country, which is not undisputed in Germany.

So there is a constant fear of deportation. It even happened that a student was caught by the police right away from a class at school.



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**Summary:**

There is still a long way to integration. The procedure for granting the right of asylum or deny it takes too much time. It is difficult for recognized refugees to find a job or accommodation. The attitude of many Germans towards refugees is not positive so that the anti-refugee-party AfD won seats in the Federal Parliament and will win seats in the Bavarian Parliament at the elections in October this year.

Isolde Emberger & Wolfgang Kerscher

## **Preparatory work**

### **Civil society**

Bundoran

## **Douzelage Preparatory Work**

### **Integration in European Cities**

We do not have too many refugees in Bundoran so there is no specific program of integration here but through our local community centre and community groups, all residents of the town can take part in cultural events that happen in the town -there are no exclusions eg St Patrick's Day Parade, Easter Egg painting, Pumpkin Parade (Halloween).

All school children can be integrated into Irish cultural sports like Gaelic football - while it is not compulsory, it is encouraged. One of our best youth players in Bundoran is not from Ireland! The town is very welcoming to these people. Ireland in general has taken in over 1000 refugees most of them from Syria who have come from Greece - they are being integrated under the government's Irish Refugee Protection Programme. However the Irish government last year failed to meet its original pledge of bringing 4000 asylum seekers into the country by the end of 2017.

The Irish Refugee council (covering the Republic of Ireland) offer the following programmes and services:

- Free & confidential drop in centres - promoting and protecting the rights of refugees in Ireland
- Employment programme for refugee women
- New Arabic drop in centre (see poster attached)

The problems that are evident are that it takes quite some time for the application process to go through the system. These refugees want to integrate as quickly as possible and get on with their new life. In a recent document released by the Irish Refugee Council, this was the information;

“The “length of time” is at the heart of many of the concerns around Direct Provision and the supports available, and the fears of participants that they may not be capable of independent living when they get a final decision on their claim. The concerns raised include:

the uncertainty overshadowing their lives,

the lack of personal autonomy over the most basic aspects of their lives and daily living – cooking, going to the shops, cleaning,

the lack of privacy and the challenges of sharing with strangers,

the boredom and isolation,

the inability to support themselves or their family and contribute to society in a meaningful way,

the impact on children of being born and/or living their formative years in an institutional setting,

the impact on parents' capacity to parent to their full potential and on normal family life,

the loss of skills and the creation of dependency, and the negative impacts on physical, emotional and mental health.”

“People likened living in Direct Provision to being in prison, except that in prison, you know the date of your release and you might be paroled if you behave well. There is no light at the end of the tunnel of Direct Provision. Asylum seekers are warehoused/ segregated/herded into a place outside society. They are stigmatised by the system and this leads to racism.”

At the moment the authorities aim to process cases within 12 months.

1. Good example of integration in general in Ireland:

The Minister of State for Equality, Immigration and Integration at the Department of Justice and Equality, Mr. David Stanton T.D., launched the Communities Integration Fund 2018 at The Ark Children’s Cultural Centre in Dublin on Wednesday 21 March 2018. €500,000 is available from the Office for Promotion of Migrant Integration in 2018 to support community organisations to promote migrant integration, raise inter-cultural awareness and combat racism in their local communities.

2. Bad example of integration in general in Ireland:

An audit of 432 Irish public sector organisations showed that only 5% had specific integration policies in place, despite Ireland having the fourth highest level of inward migrants in the EU, a report published by Maynooth University researchers has found



## New Arabic Drop-In Centre starting 20 March

Starting on Tuesday 20 March we will have an Arabic Drop-In Centre every two weeks at our office, 37 Killarney Street, Dublin 1.

This service offers advice and information about general issues and support needs while in the asylum process or after getting status, including:

- \* Making an asylum application
- \* Documentation
- \* Referral to other support services
- \* Accommodation within Direct Provision
- \* Moving on from Direct Provision – housing, education and employment
- \* Family Reunification
- \* Children and young people’s rights

Office hours: 10 am to 1pm & 2 pm to 4 pm.  
No need to book an appointment.

ابتداءً من يوم الثلاثاء 20/03/2018 ستكون الخدمة باللغة العربية متوفرة مرة كل أسبوعين في مركز الاستقبال بمكتنا ب 37 Killarney Street, Dublin 1.

هذه الخدمة تقدم استشارات ومعلومات عامة بخصوص أي مشاكل أو احتياجات يواجهها طالب اللجوء سواء كان يصدد طلب اللجوء أو بعد الحصول على أوراق اللجوء والحماية بما فيها:

- القيام بتقديم طلب اللجوء والوثائق اللازمة لذلك
- إحالة الأفراد أو القضايا إلى مراكز خدماتية أخرى
- تقديم معلومات بخصوص السكن بالأوتيلات المخصصة للاجئين
- المرحلة الانتقالية من الأماكن المخصصة للاجئين إلى السكن الخاص، الدراسة والعمل.
- لم الشمل
- حقوق الأطفال والشباب.

ساعات العمل : من 10 صباحاً إلى 2 مساءً & من 2 إلى 4 مساءً، و من غير تحديد موعد سابق.

**Working for a fair and inclusive society for  
people seeking protection**

**نعمل لمجتمع عادل وشامل من أجل الناس الباحثين  
عن الحماية**

## Preparatory work

### Civil society

#### Chojna

#### Immigrants in Poland

##### 1. A good example – participation in local society.

During the meeting at the "Aramia" restaurant in Szczecin, Poland, the youth participating in the "Be different be tolerant" project had the opportunity to meet the 17-year-old Ram Zeer immigrant from Syria. A young girl told everyone about her life in her home country before the war and after the incident.

Her life from a peaceful everyday life of an ordinary teenager turned into constant uncertainty and fear - you never knew what the next day would bring, people on the streets were abducted, so after dark nobody could leave the house. That's when the teenager's family decided to move to Poland. Staying in a new country allowed them to find a job, a flat, a school, but the most important - a safe existence and development and gave them the opportunity to plan their own future. The biggest challenge faced by refugees is learning Polish. Without this skill, it was difficult for a teenager to find new friends or to learn in high school. Another problem was the negative attitude of school youth to refugees. This was manifested by the general reluctance to contact, the expression of prejudices, the open expression of negative opinions about the admission of immigrants. After three years of living in Poland, Rama states that her schoolmates changed their attitude towards her, but they did not change their attitude towards the refugees. In her opinion, this is not right, because everyone deserves help from others and safe, peaceful living conditions. The Rama family of Zeer plans to stay in Poland until the end of hostilities in Syria or even longer. The teenager would like to become a doctor in the future. Moving was a harsh necessity for the family, but also the only chance to stabilize life.

##### **2. Description of problems – integration in general.**

The procedures in Poland are complicated and last even several months, and people from several countries are placed in the same center. - There are a lot of people frustrated in one place because they wait a long time for the status decision. And the cultural diversity. This must rise to conflicts. In addition, less than a quarter of refugees want to learn Polish.

The procedure of admitting immigrants and granting them refugee status in Poland is very long. According to the rules, it should last a maximum of six months, in fact it reaches even two years. During this time, foreigners are in special centers. They have a flat, food, medical help, pocket money and learn Polish. As long as they do not have permission for a legal stay, they cannot work or leave the center.

Poland has big problems with integration and preparation of foreigners for independent functioning in society. Although they are applying for refugee status or have already received it, most of them are not interested in learning Polish. According to the data of the Office for Repatriation, currently there are almost four thousand people in the centers. In recent years, only about 100 adults and about 500 children used language classes.

There are no consequences for refusing to participate in classes. - Until now, the sphere of learning Polish in centers has been neglected. And foreigners often want to learn it, but are discouraged by how organized it is. There are no experienced teachers. Maybe the situation will change soon, because it has just been selected one company that will be responsible for education throughout the country - says Piotr Bystrianin, president of the Rescuing Foundation, which helps immigrants to integrate into Polish society. The cultural psychologist also raises the problem of language learning. - Teachers have no preparation for learning foreigners. Men and women from a Muslim country cannot be seated in one bench on a language course or school. This is inconsistent with their beliefs - says prof. Halina Grzymała-Moszczyńska, who has been involved in immigration in Poland for over 20 years.

This is not the only problem. - There are conflicts in the centers. There are a lot of frustrated people in one place because they wait a long time for the status decision. In addition, there are large cultural differences and a language barrier. It is not difficult to get a lot of tension - says Piotr Bystrianin. At the beginning of the year, there was a loud film about a film shot at a refugee center in Góra Kalwaria. It shows how the Chechens attack, among others Ukrainians for not dressing according to the rules of Islam. One of the boys walked in shorts. "Here is the Islamic state," they said.

After receiving refugee status, foreigners may stay in the center for a year. After this time the help ends and they have to become independent. - A year is not enough to recover from the country of war, to learn a language and find a job. After leaving the center, nobody deals with refugees. How are they left to deal with themselves in a completely culturally different society? - says the president of the Rescuing Foundation.

Cultural psychologist agrees. - Time is completely lost in the centers. Social workers do not have knowledge on how to support refugees in the curriculum - says prof. Grzymała-Moszczyńska. And he adds that all the mistakes that Poland is now making can end badly. - We do not learn about the failures of the immigration policy of France or Germany. Negligence there led to the formation of ghettos and many tensions - he emphasizes. The Office for Repatriation ensures that the centers operate efficiently. - It takes several months to stay there. If someone escapes from his country in dramatic circumstances, it is time for him to get accustomed to the new reality, acclimatization. At the beginning it is certainly hard for them, but we try to ensure the best possible conditions - says WP Ewa Piechota, a spokeswoman for the office.

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# GRANVILLE

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## Housing

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Families are given local authority housing, young adults accommodated in hostels for young workers and unaccompanied minors in foster families.

## Subsidies & Assistance

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Refugees with asylum status receive an allowance of €6.80/day/person and €10.20/day/couple from the State. They can work and have the same rights as job seekers.

Those awaiting regularisation of their status have no income.

They may be assisted by the local social welfare authority, have access to a subsidized grocery store (food bank) and to a furniture bank.

Professional from the local social welfare authority (e.g. social workers), assisted by associations, help them with administrative formalities, finding work or traineeships, learning French.

## Overview

There are currently 40 (officially recorded) migrants in Granville, including 4 families with children and 8 unaccompanied minors, the younger being only 13 years old.

They come from Ivory Coast, Afghanistan, Congo, Eritrea, Iraq, Liberia, Chechnya, Sudan, Nigeria and Georgia.

They are either:

- Asylum seekers: 3 families whose requests are in progress and 1 individual whose request has been turned down but cannot be expelled due to sickness. He will be able to resubmit his request next year;
- waiting for regularization of their status (entered France without a visa);
- refugees whose request for asylum has been accepted;

## Integration with local community

Children and adults integrate well in Granville and local surroundings, both at school and at work.

Some local inhabitants are keen to help and have offered housing to supplement authority housing.

A young Sudanese helps out at the food bank and does voluntary work at a sports club.

Mudi is a politically engaged artist from Bagdad in Iraq who had to leave the country after an exhibition of his work was considered insulting to religion. He had been warned by the Iraqi police to give up his painting, and was subsequently attacked, injured and kept in a secure hospital for six months as a virtual prisoner. He came to France in 2014 but he had to leave his wife and their 5-year old son behind.

He has been in Granville since January 2017 and has already held exhibitions of his painting.

He hopes he will be able to bring his family to France soon.



## Mudi, artiste irakien, a trouvé sa place à Granville

Né à Bagdad, il est arrivé en 2014. Aujourd'hui, réfugié, il vit dans la station balnéaire. La crise migratoire occupe une partie du débat présidentiel. Aperçu de la situation dans la Manche.

Présidentielle 2017

### Témoignages

Mudi est né à Bagdad, en Irak, en 1985. Il a grandi et fondé une famille dans cette ville, avant de devoir la quitter le 3 novembre 2014.

En cause ? Son exposition *Âmes perdues*, présentée la même année, début janvier, à l'Institut français d'Irak. À l'époque, « ses toiles témoignent de la violence aveugle, du terrorisme, de l'intolérance et de leur impact négatif sur les droits de l'homme », d'après les mots du directeur.

Diplômé des Beaux-Arts de Bagdad en Arts plastiques en 2010, Mudi est plutôt un artiste engagé, dont le travail est structuré par la mémoire. « La milice est venue me voir pour me dire d'arrêter. Deux peintures posaient vraiment problème », explique-t-il. Le jeune homme est accusé notamment « d'insulte à la religion ».

#### « Vraiment bien intégré »

Une semaine après, « j'ai été attaqué et gravement blessé à la jambe. J'ai été emmené dans un hôpital spécial, comme une prison ». Il en sort seulement six mois après. « Là, l'Institut français m'a invité pour une résidence de trois mois à la Cité internationale des Arts de la Ville de Paris. » Un départ, plus qu'une fuite. « J'ai finalement décidé de rester et de demander l'asile. » Une longue démarche. Aujourd'hui, Mudi a obtenu le sta-

tut de réfugié et poursuit son travail artistique. À Paris, il a rencontré Dominique Gonthier, de Saint-Jean-le-Thomas. « Il voulait tellement venir en Normandie que je lui ai proposé mon aide. » Il met à disposition son gîte. Mudi arrive en janvier.

« Au bout d'un mois, nous avons cherché des appartements, mais quand on est réfugié, même si on a des papiers, ce n'est pas facile de trouver. Alors on s'est mobilisé. »

C'est finalement le Foyer de jeunes travailleurs de Granville qui a trouvé une place pour lui, avec le soutien de l'association Port d'attache, qui accompagne les migrants dans toutes leurs démarches administratives.

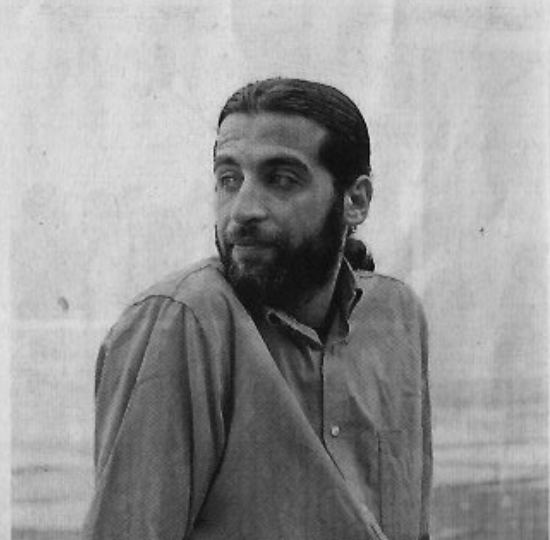
Mudi s'y épanouit. « À peine installé, il réalise une exposition », soutient la présidente Michèle Renoud. En mai, il participera à la Biennale des jeunes créateurs de l'Europe et de la Méditerranée, en Albanie. « J'ai été sélectionné », glisse-t-il, non sans fierté.

Sa prochaine mission ? « Réussir à obtenir un regroupement familial, pour faire venir sa femme, et son fils de 5 ans, poursuit Michèle Renoud. Et trouver un logement. »

#### Des solutions éphémères

Pour elle, Mudi « a eu de la chance dans son malheur. Pour obtenir le statut, il faut prouver que l'on est en danger dans son pays. Lui, il a des preuves de sa persécution. »

Dans d'autres cas, c'est beaucoup plus difficile. « Nous avons un jeune, marié à une Française, avec un contrat de travail effectif à



Mahmoud Ahmed Hachim a quitté Bagdad en 2014. L'artiste, qui se fait appeler Mudi, a demandé l'asile. Aujourd'hui, réfugié, il s'est installé à Granville et espère pouvoir y rester.

temps plein, mais ça ne suffit pas. » Dans le contexte actuel, elle insiste : « Contrairement à ce que l'on peut entendre... Ça ne s'obtient pas comme ça ! Et tous ont vécu des drames. »

La présidente ne cache pas son inquiétude. « Beaucoup de mesures annoncées dans les programmes

des candidats sont déjà effectives. Il y a une méconnaissance des textes actuels. On sait que ça va encore se durcir. »

Heureusement, la solidarité opère. « On arrive toujours à trouver des solutions, mais elles sont éphémères. »

Alix DEMAISON.



## « C'est difficile, mais je n'ai pas baissé les bras »

Demandeur d'asile, Rahman, un jeune Afghan, attend la réponse de l'Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides. En six mois, il a appris le français avec l'association Les Mots bleus.

### L'histoire

En danger dans son pays, Rahman est arrivé en France il y a six mois. Il a quitté l'Afghanistan, en mars 2016, en urgence. Depuis Baighlan, au nord du pays, il a rejoint le Pakistan, puis la Turquie. Pour gagner l'Hexagone, il est passé par l'Italie. Il a débarqué à Paris, un 20 juillet. Seul. Sans un mot de français dans ses valises.

Rapidement, il est pris en charge par France terre d'asile et arrive à Saint-Lô. Son objectif ? Terminer le voyage à Granville, pour retrouver son cousin, pouvant l'héberger le temps que sa demande d'asile soit examinée. « C'est grâce à lui que je suis ici. »

À peine installé, il se rapproche de l'association Les Mots bleus pour apprendre le français. « avec Mme Annick ». Une bénévole qui le prend sous son aile, comme une soixantaine d'autres, des mineurs non accompagnés, des demandeurs d'asile et des personnes francophones, ou non, pour leur enseigner la langue de Molière. « C'est mon 11 ou 12<sup>e</sup> Afghan », glisse-t-elle dans un sourire.

### Détermination et persévérance

Elle se souvient encore de sa première rencontre avec Rahman. « Il était enroulé sur lui-même. On ne voyait même pas ses yeux. On sentait qu'il avait vécu des choses terribles. » Farsi, le jeune homme a dû fuir face à l'avancée des Talibans. Il laisse derrière lui, une mère, deux sœurs mais aussi une épouse. Son père et son frère, eux, sont morts.

« Quand je suis arrivé en France, j'ai été découragé, raconte-t-il. C'était difficile. Mais je n'ai pas baissé les bras. » Cinq fois par semaine, « au minimum », il suit des cours de français. « Pour m'intégrer, je dois apprendre la langue. » Autre objectif ? Défendre son dossier pour l'obtention du droit d'asile, seul et en français. « Dans la vie, il n'y a pas



Rahman a dû quitter son pays. Il a trouvé refuge chez son cousin, à Granville. Un accueil nécessaire le temps que sa demande d'asile soit examinée. En attendant, il apprend le français, sans relâche, avec l'association Les Mots bleus.

toujours quelqu'un pour t'aider. Je ne veux pas de traducteur. »

Le lundi matin, il participe aussi au groupe de conversation, mis en place par l'association. Chez son cousin, il enchaîne les exercices. « Il est très sérieux, confie Annick. C'est un bosseur. On travaille maintenant des points de grammaire très précis. » Avant de reprendre l'épicerie de son père, au pays, Rahman suivait des études.

« Je parle et écris déjà l'anglais. Je ne pensais pas être capable de parler français de cette manière, si rapidement. »

La relation qui lie « Mme Annick », et les autres bénévoles, à leurs élèves

va bien au-delà des mots. « Mme Annick, c'est comme une maman, reconnaît Rahman. Je parle beaucoup avec elle. » Au niveau émotionnel, « ils ont beaucoup emmagasiné. Parfois, ça a besoin de sortir », assure-t-elle. Un repère qui ne doit cependant pas « faire oublier qu'ils ont tout à construire ».

### Une longue attente

Si Rahman est entouré, son statut de demandeur d'asile l'empêche de travailler. « Je m'ennuie beaucoup, j'en ai marre de ne rien faire. » Pour « passer le temps » et « quand la pression est trop forte », il pédale le long des côtes, dans le centre-ville.

Travaille son français, sans relâche « Et donne un coup de main partout où il peut », glisse Annick.

Après avoir longuement attendu, il a été convoqué à l'Office français de protection des réfugiés et apatrides (Ofpra), jeudi dernier. Il connaîtra la décision prochainement. Difficile de se projeter pour le moment. « Quand j'aurais mon papier, j'aurais envie de faire beaucoup de choses. »

Alix DEMAISON

Association Les Mots bleus  
contact, tél. 02 33 79 02 32.

### It is hard, but I'm not giving up

Rahman, a young Afghan refugee, has been waiting for six months for an answer from the French Office for the Protection of Refugees and Stateless persons to his request for asylum in France. In the meantime, he has been learning French with the local volunteer association "Les Mots Bleus", in particular with "Mme Annick", who has already taught French to 11 or 12 other Afghans.

Escaping from the Taliban in Afghanistan, leaving his family behind, Rahman arrived in Granville not speaking a word of French, but the association, currently teaching French to around sixty people, unaccompanied minor asylum seekers, refugees and others, has taken him in hand. He says that Mme Annick has been like a mother to him, helping him through his moments of discouragement. He admits it is frustrating that his status does not allow him to seek work and so when he is fed up with having nothing to do, he works at his French, helps out where he can and goes for long bike rides in the town and along the coast.

He expects a reply to his asylum request very soon.



## **Preparatory work**

### **Civil society**

#### **Rokiski**

### **Material for the Workshop 2 „Civil society“ and workshop 3 „Culture“**

Prepared by Antanas Vagonis, Mayor of Rokiski District Municipality, Lithuania

Vilma Meciukoniene, Chief Officer of Rokiskis District Municipality Administration, Strategic Planning and Investments Department

#### **Topic: INTEGRATION IN GENERAL**

##### **Overview**

Independent Lithuania attracted many new immigrants from poorer and/or war-torn countries. Seeing a darker-skinned, black or Asian face was a very rare experience even in the largest cities of Lithuania in the years up to 2000. In the 1990s, the new immigrants were so unusual that disproportionately large number of non-white immigrants became instant TV or music celebrities precisely because of their “exotic looks”.

Not anymore so, even though the percentage of non-European immigrants and their children is still somewhat lower in Lithuania than in the Western European countries such as France or the UK. After all, in Lithuania, most salaries are significantly lower so it is better to migrate further west. The average NETO salary is about 690 Eur (Statistics, 2017 IV quarter).

Still, the majority of new immigrants come from the former Soviet Union and therefore strengthen the already existing Russian and Russophone communities rather than establishing new ones. They tend to fill the jobs which too few Lithuanians would do at home, such as the construction sector or IT sector. A good command of Russian helps them in Lithuania where Russian is still understood by 70% locals (while an inadequate knowledge of English often precludes from migrating further West). In many cases, they fill the gaps in job market left by emigrated Lithuanians (who are allowed to freely move into Western Europe and have fewer language barriers). Citizens of the former Soviet Union countries make up 1% of Lithuania's permanent residents.

After Lithuania joined the European Union, increasingly many of its key businesses became owned by Western Europeans. Multinational companies would often move into the higher-paid and executive positions. Most of these are Western Europeans as they could freely reside in Lithuania. As the Western social security payments often surpass middle-class Lithuanian salaries, only the higher class Westerners would relocate to Lithuania. Citizens of the other European Union countries make up 0,2% of Lithuania's permanent residents.

Some new immigrants (mainly Asians) work in ethnic businesses, for example, Chinese or Indian restaurants, Turkish kebab kiosks or Thai massage parlors. But even these positions are sometimes held by Lithuanians or the established ethnic minorities.

The most famous foreigners who live in Lithuania are basketball players (mostly South Slavs and African Americans). They are few in numbers, however, and usually move out after several years.

In addition to immigrants, there are large numbers of foreigners temporarily living in Lithuania. Many of them are ERASMUS students. This is a European Union-wide program that allows a university student to spend a semester or two in another EU country.

Not all students are temporary. Lithuania became a popular destination to study medicine and technical sciences among Indians and Arabs, especially the Lebanese. Some of them continue their careers in Lithuania.

### **Situation in Lithuania about refugees integration**

Integration as a process starts before a refugee is granted one or the other status – their first introduction to Lithuania is important to their impression of Lithuanian society and their future prospects.

Once an asylum application has been filed, the asylum seeker can either find private lodgings to support themselves or move to the Foreigners' Registration Centre (FRC). The normal processing time for an asylum application should be no more than three months, with the possibility for another three-month extension in case there is a need to collect more information. Once the person has received either refugee status or subsidiary protection, they will move from the FRC to the Refugee Reception Centre (RRC). The RRC implements the integration process. Under normal circumstances, a refugee will stay at the RRC for three months, but the stay can be extended under certain circumstances. Importantly, only mainstream asylum seekers are accommodated in the FRC. Those arriving under the relocation/resettlement schemes go straight on the RRC to commence the integration programme. Furthermore, the processing time for relocated asylum applications is shorter than the maximum of six months for mainstream asylum seekers.

There is an activity centre in FRC run by Caritas in the village close by, where asylum seekers can participate in activities, run with EU funding on a project basis. Children are enrolled in day care or school. Asylum seekers in the open section can register to leave the centre for up to 24 hours. In terms of the physical environment, there is one section for families and one for single men. Each family has their own room, single men share rooms.

The FRC provides full board and the asylum seekers receive 10 EUR per month for incidentals. The centre also has a health department, with access to medical and psychological assistance. There are no language classes or other systematic training activities at this stage of the asylum process. Representatives from the Lithuanian Red Cross visit the centre once a week and can provide legal assistance when necessary. As mentioned above, when asylum seekers are granted protection, they move to the RRC. Unaccompanied minors and persons arriving under the relocation scheme are also accommodated at the RRC before their applications are processed.

The RRC implements the integration programme, which consists of language training (96 hours) and classes on Lithuanian culture and society (40 hours). During the integration programme, refugees receive €71.4 per month for expenses. The centre also provides in-house medical services to the residents. The standard and physical conditions at the RRC are of a drastically higher quality than those of the FRC. The centre has a library and movie room that is open and staffed for 12 hours per day, a large play room for children, a well-equipped gym, and well-maintained grounds, including sports facilities and a playground for children. Following completion of the integration programme at Rukla, the next step for refugees is to be settled in a municipality. At the moment, the cities of Vilnius (20), Kaunas (28), Jonava (26), Kedainiai (1), Kaisiadorys (4) accommodate asylum seekers. The integration process in the municipalities is implemented by the Lithuanian Red Cross, which signs contracts with refugees and provides support in becoming acquainted with and orienting in Lithuanian society, with Red Cross staff serving as mentors. There are plans for the Association of Local Authorities to become more involved in integration efforts. The government provides financial support for an additional 190 hours of Lithuanian language classes. Refugees receive financial integration support for one year, which consists of €204 per person per month for six months, and €102 per person for the following six months. These rates and the duration of support were reduced in November 2015. Before the relocation and resettlement schemes started, the financial support was twice the amount and could be extended up to five years with a degree of flexibility for vulnerable groups.

### **Integration process-good practise example of Lithuania town called Jonava**

As social inclusion /integration is a difficult two-way process. It is important to prepare not only newcomers (language, vacation training, non-formal cultural education and so on), but also to prepare local community (acceptance of immigrants, features of cross-cultural communication, tolerance). Immigrants come not just to an abstract asylum country, they are coming to the specific municipality. So, the role of the local community is very important.

The case we present shows how the participation in the non-formal short-term social education program and social activities involves both groups – local community and forced migrants – into the integration process and helps to solve immigrants' social exclusion problem. Few years ago Social Services Centre of Jonava district (Social Services Centre), collaborating with Lithuanian Red Cross and Kaunas University of Technology (KTU), implemented refugees' integration project "Bridges to Successful Integration". Applying the concept of two-way process of integration, this project involved two target groups:

1) Representatives of the local community – students from KTU, participating in the project as volunteers.

2) Immigrants (granted asylum in Lithuania), living in Jonava and Kaunas municipalities and participating in the project as volunteers.

Nationality characteristics of the participants – Lithuanians, Afghans, Ukrainians, Syrians, Chechen.

Every target group, taking part in the project, participated in three steps of the project.

The first step focussed on training: KTU students had courses "Multicultural education" and „Socio- educational work with migrants“. Immigrants had a short-term program of non-formal education on multicultural communication skills. The programme has been developed by Social Services Centre.

As a second step, students volunteered in the Lithuanian Red Cross “Migrants’ day centers” in Kaunas and in the Social Services Centre in Jonava. Immigrants provided care help to elderly and disabled Lithuanian people in the Social Services Centre. Also Social Services Centre organised common activities for immigrants and Lithuanian families from social risk group.

As a final step there was evaluation: empirical study that analysed student-volunteers’ reflection about their job experience with newcomers, and immigrants’ reflection about their experience of participating in the non-formal education program and volunteering in the social care area. The results of the students’ evaluation: the majority of respondents noted, that volunteering influenced their values and attitudes towards migrants, minimized some fears and ethnical stereotypes and improved their inter-cultural communication skills. The results of immigrants’ evaluation showed, that project’s activities empowered immigrants to become more active and successful in the integration into a social life and labour market.

Participating in the program activities they got new experience of inter-cultural communication, participated in social activities of Jonava’s local community, and also had an opportunity to work in social care area – it empowered 6 refugees (5 women, 1 men) to get new profession – assistant of social worker and to integrate into labour market in such way. Assisting, as volunteers, to other people, that experienced social exclusion, immigrants not only acquired professional skills (in the social care area), but also perceived themselves as donors (not only as recipients). It enabled immigrants to become self-assured, to understand their benefits and place in a new society.

### **Conclusions**

Integration is like „newborn“. When he borns he knows nothing: how to talk, how to take care of himself and how to act among others. Family helps the child to integrate – to understand the rules, order, language, culture and things which are important to the personality in the society. Integration is the same. You have to know culture, language, rules of the society. It helps to live your life and solve problems. Everyone has to find the place in society and function. Positive attitude of the society towards immigrants could be reached through trainings of both migrants and society and integration activities (social, cultural, etc.).

**Preparatory work**  
Civil society  
Rovinj



**GRAD ROVINJ-CITTÀ DI ROVIGNO**



## **Position and climate**

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South of Rovinj, Istria is cut by the 45th parallel = ideal geographical and temperature place on the northern hemisphere.

Average yearly temperature:  
13.5°C

More than 1/3 days are without wind.

No. of sunny days: 134,  
third sunniest city on the Adriatic

Smallest no. of cloudy days on the Adriatic.





## Political and social peculiarities

Inhabitans: 14 294

Important **autochton Italian minority**:  
right of representation and bilingualism guaranteed by  
the Statute (standards above prescriptions of the national law).

Currently also present/organised:

- Albanian minority
- Bosnian minority
- Serbian minority



## Inhabitans per nationality

**In the last century Rovinj-Rovigno suffered a total shift in the ethnic composition of the population:**

Year	Croats	Bosnians	Germans	Italians	Slovenian	Serbs	Yu	Istrians/ Regional	Others	Total
1900	41	-	201	9.716	16	-	-	-	328	10.302
1910	57	-	320	10.859	63	-	-	-	1.024	12.323
1945	1.306	-	-	7.555	1	-	-	-	9	8.871
1948	3.120	-	3	5.782	183	23	-	-	23	9.134
1953	3.160	-	6	2.181	200	104	15	-	46	5.712
1961	4.630	-	-	1.858	168	282	7	-	210	7.155
1971	5.935	20	16	1.652	192	438	293	-	325	8.871
1981	7.030	69	16	1.275	149	557	1.440	84	651	11.271
1991	7.136	244	16	1.761	140	698	371	1.335	1860	12.910
2001	9.386	257	24	1.628	86	500	-	1.633	720	14.234
2011	9.054	295	17	1.608	76	594	-	1.502	1147	14.294





## Inhabitans per nationality

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### Ethnic composition shift in percentage:

Year	Croats	Italians	Others
1900	0,40	94,31	5,29
1910	0,46	88,12	11,42
1945	14,72	85,17	0,11
1948	34,16	63,30	2,54
1953	55,32	38,18	6,50
1961	64,71	25,98	9,32
1971	66,90	18,62	14,47
1981	62,37	11,31	26,32
1991	55,27	13,64	36,13
2001	65,94	11,44	22,62
2011	63,33	11,25	25,40



## Causes of the ethnic shift

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### 1. The WWII:

the region of Istria, former Italian territory treated as spoils of war, instauration of non-democratic YU, ideology battle

### 2. The Independence war 1991 – 1995:

refugees and immigrants from all over Croatia to the region of Istria, being the only region with no war hostilities



## **Situation today**

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Besides the Italian autochthon minority, a significant number of inhabitants:

- Albanian nationality: arrived from Kosovo mostly in the 70s with the development of tourism
- Bosnian nationality: arrived with the development of tourism
- Serbian nationality: arrived after the WWII with the YU army and politicians



## **Albanians**

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- arrived from Kosovo mostly in 70s
- owners (and workers) of restaurants, pastry shops and jewellery shops (traditional silver filigran)
- difference if they are catholics or muslims
- catholics are more open and integrated, mingle with the native population until they marry, go both to croatian and italian schools
- muslims are a closed community, leave after the tourist season for Kosovo
- leave and work on a family clan basis



## **Bosnians**

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- arrived from Bosnia in the 70-80's, increased needs of developing tourism
- work in the construction industry (bricklayers and plasterers) and restaurant industry (waiters and maids)
- a small no. practicing religion
- open and integrated, mingle with the native population
- started to distinguish only after 1991 (esp. religion basis), before: little national feeling, mostly YU



## **Serbs**

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- arrived after WWII with the army
- power position in army, politics and industry (driven by the Communist party)
- managers (directors), lawyers, judges, doctors, teachers, restaurant owners...
- mingle with local population, but national distinction always present and give precedence to Serbs
- during the Independence war made a lots of money with real estates owned by Serbs (donated empty houses of natives after WWII by the Communist Party)



## Refugees and immigrants of the 90's

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### Refugees:

- from Croatian areas that suffered the Serbian and Montenegro military aggression, mostly children, women and old people
- a peak of 5500 people, afterwards displaced; a stable community of 293 remained longer (mostly from Vukovar)
- majority returned to their homes after war ended

### Immigrants:

- from other YU republics and areas of Croatia with no military operations but suffered business and security
- most of them remained

*Both did not understand the lack of national spirit of Istrians and the peaceful co-habitation of the istrian-croatian and istrian-italian culture!*



## Integration of new inhabitants

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- peculiarity: in spite of the ethnic shift, the istro-venetian culture is still predominant
- all the services and programmes are opened to all, but there is little participation of the „newcomers”
- reasons: nationalism or clan closure
- people tend to close themselves into their community of origin, not brave enough to get involved
- foreigners from EU countries, for ex., that do not have a numerous community, get involved in all the programmes (we have Norwegians, Dutch or Austrians singing in Rovinj dialect, for ex)



## **Integration of new inhabitants**

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### Problems:

- everyday difficulties in explaining and defending the Istrian (Rovinj-Rovigno) peculiarities
- difficulties in making respect the cultural and historical heritage (no respect for the old buildings)
- the Italian language is not known and spoken as before (impossible to learn about the past)



## **Integration of new inhabitants**

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### Solutions:

- heritage educational programme from kindergarten
- guided educational walks through historic centres (with the authorities) for parents and other
- talk, talk, talk....support the preservation of the local heritage and culture ... and continue inviting everybody to join



**Rovinj-Rovigno, a great place to live!**

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## **Preparatory work**

Civil society

Sherborne

### **OXELÖSUND GENERAL MEETING WORKSHOPS**

#### **Civil Society and Culture**

**Michael and Pat Morrell from Sherborne**

#### **Introduction**

In 2015 the Prime Minister David Cameron promised that Britain would take in 20,000 Syrian refugees by 2020. By February 2018 over 10,500 had been accepted mainly in the big cities. Sherborne is in the County of Dorset and as Bournemouth and Poole are a separate authority, there are no towns in Dorset with a population of more than 16,000.

#### **What is good**

Dorset County Council works with many partner agencies.

These agencies include Sherborne Town Council, UNHCR, the Home office, various churches, volunteer groups set up to assist refugees with their needs such as SHARES in Sherborne with contacts with other such groups in different counties. SHARES is registered as a Charity and will be available for Gift Aid tax payments

The potential services available include identifying suitable homes for refugees (not local authority accommodation), matching families, arranging English language tuition, speakers for schools and community groups, using blogs and Facebook and giving advice to refugees on how to integrate in Civil Society.

The Cheap Street Church has also arranged clothes collections, which currently have been distributed in Somerset.

On April 28<sup>th</sup> there was a major meeting at the Gryphon School in Sherborne, organised by SHARES and attended by over 230. This featured Syrian people who came to the U.K. as refugees before the current massacres and understand many of the problems. This was also attended by Stephanie Farr, who is the programme leader of Dorset County Council. The County has pledged to house 30 families and are aiming for 120 people. 9 have been placed so far including 3 in Sherborne and the surrounding villages.

#### **What is bad**

There is an excellent website, but it has not been updated since February.

Currently only 9 families have been offered places in Dorset, although 3 of these are in Sherborne and nearby.

Difficulty in ascertaining how to solve the many reasons why the number is so low.

## Preparatory work

### Civil society

#### Sigulda

##### Introduction

ABOUT SOCIETY "SHELTER "SAFE HOUSE"")

**Society “Shelter “Safe House”” ( Mission: Latvia – A safe home for different people!) was established on August 6, 2007 with the aim to develop support services to legal immigrants, including asylum seekers, refugees and persons, granted subsidiary protection status** by ensuring the individual’s right to receive adequate assistance and protection; promoting rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of human trafficking into the society; creating interactive forms of training, and expanding cooperation with state and local government institutions, public and Christian organizations in Latvia and worldwide.

In 2007, NGO “Shelter “Safe House”” obtained the right to provide state-paid rehabilitation services to the victims of human trafficking and it still continues its work in 2018.

A multidisciplinary team of professionals functions in the organization to support asylum seekers, refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection status.

Society “Shelter "Safe House”” raises awareness of the social field in general society and mass media, actively partnering with other NGOs, the State and local governments.

**DELEGATION OF TASKS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION**  
**Based on the participation agreements on carrying out certain state administration tasks for the integration of third-country nationals\* signed between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia and society “Shelter “Safe House”” , the association launches measures for supporting the integration of third-country nationals, including refugees and persons with alternative status, as of October 1. delegation contracts since 2015.**

Society “Shelter “Safe House”” will provide information and regular consultations to third-country nationals and their family members on topical issues related to integration (education, employment, health care, etc.).

**Free consultations are provided by phone and e-mail**, as well as in person in each of 5 Regional offices. Consultations regarding: employment (labour law), migration (residence permits, visas), rights of tenants (issues related to housing), family law (family reunification, divorce, inheritance matters, etc.), legalization and recognition of education documents, starting a business (issues related to entrepreneurship), etc, psychological consultation.

Information Centre for Newcomers is implemented by society “Shelter “Safe House”” within the framework of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. The project is co-financed by the European Union.

##### BAD EXAMPLE

##### WORKSHOP 2, Civil society

- Immigrant’s participation in local society
- business environment due to language barrier and judicial understanding
- real estate issues



## Preparatory work

Civil society

Siret

### **Civil society – a good example for integration.**

As you know, more or less, in the Second World War, in 28 June 1940, Romania lost two important territories: Basarabia – now Moldavia, and the north of Bukowina – now part of Ukraine. I want to refer to the second one, north of Bukowina, because it was a territory near the actual border, less than 3 km from Siret city. When the Soviet soldiers came, a part of the inhabitants left their homes, took a few valuable things and ran away to the new borders of Romania. The situation of Romanians who did not run was dramatic – many of them were boarded on trains and taken away to Siberia and those who survived have been made part of the population of the Soviet Union. In this condition Romania as a country and also the Romanians as people were confronted with the fact of helping and integrating their own compatriots from the north of Bukowina. It can be said that it was not so difficult this integration because all of them were Romanian, knew the language and supposed to be easy to integrate; in my opinion it was a major advantage but not enough – think that many of them lost everything, the lucky ones had their families and a few clothes. But I have to say that this process of integration continues until today because many of the people from that territory come to Romania to find their families, or want to move now here. And now also then, in 1940, the civil society supported and encouraged the people who wanted to remain in this territory. I consider and history confirm an interesting thing: this education is a particularity for the Romanians from Bukowina territory because from 1775 until 1918 this territory was under Austro-Hungarian occupation and the native population was in contact with many minorities. This part of history was a good teacher for us – insignificant numbers of the population remain sceptical to human cooperation and its advantages.

Now, the discussion is about the refugees who come from the Middle or Far East. The causes that determined them to leave their countries are complex and it can be talked and written about for days without a clear vision. Certainly, Europe is confronted with one of the biggest waves of refugees. In these conditions, each country has to take a number of them – Romania has to take almost 6200 numbers of refugees. Now, in Radauti, at 20 km from Siret, almost 80 refugees live in our area. 50 of them with low possibilities stay in a camp organized by the state and directed for immigrants and 30 of them stay in different locations. All of them but especially the 30s have daily contact with local people – with authorities, with sellers, with doctors, etc. Their presence in society is very real and normal.

And I think that the Council Directive 2003/86/EC of 22 September 2003 on the right to family reunification<sup>1</sup> and COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2005/71/EC of 12 October 2005 on a specific procedure for admitting third-country nationals for the purposes of scientific research and

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<sup>1</sup> Article 2- (d) "family reunification" means the entry into and residence in a Member State by family members of a third country national residing lawfully in that Member State in order to preserve the family unit, whether the family relationship arose before or after the resident's entry;

Article 14

1. The sponsor's family members shall be entitled, in the same way as the sponsor, to:

- (a) access to education;

- (b) access to employment and self-employed activity;
- (c) access to vocational guidance, initial and further training and retraining.

COUNCIL DIRECTIVE 2009/50/EC of 25 May 2009 on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment can be implemented with success.

As a conclusion, I can say that in our part of country – in Siret area the local society is prepared by history to help and know how to cooperate efficient with the refugees and will response positive about their integration.

# Preparatory work

Civil society  
Škofja Loka



OBČINA ŠKOFJA LOKA

Kabinet župana

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April 2018

## Preparation for the GM Workshop 2: Civil society & Workshop 3: Culture

Škofja Loka has a long and rich history on the field of civil society organisations that range from cultural and sport to turistic and historical associations as well as different leisure interests and educational opportunities.

Škofja Loka has also a long-time tradition of open society, solidarity, building a strong and effective social network and giving care for all social groups, including local youth council, elderly clubs and disabled.

And most important: municipality of Škofja Loka during the wartime Bosnia in 90-ties (1991 – 1998) set up one of the best refugee center in Slovenia and Central Europe.

Our refugee center was led by the organisation of Civil Defense with the great help from the volunteers of Red Cross and Caritas.

During the worst war crisis in Bosnia, there were up to 600 people in the camp, most of them were Muslims and Croats.

From 1992 to 1995: there was established a refugee primary school - women were teachers themselves. from 1995: pupils joined the regular Slovenian school system.

There were also: a kindergarten, a school for adults, a library, a sewing room and other hand works activities, a shop, and a place for religious rituals....

Our refugee camp was a good example of professional and human treatment and coexistence.

So we dispose with valuable know-how and experience that we will glad to share with our friends and partners.

In 2015 and 2016 on the peak of the refugee crisis in Europe, refugees did not come to the Škofja Loka.

But we have always been well aware that we need to raise awareness among our citizens about the importance of involving refugees in our society through culture and joint social activities.

Our museum (Loški muzej/ Škofja Loka Museum) included migrants in the preparation of their exhibitions.

In the Loka Museum, they organized an exhibition of Finnish artists Kallet Hamm & Dzamil Kamanger – named "The journey", which in their works, from their point of view, tackle the question of different forms of migration.

In the accompanying program of the exhibition, caled "Mednarodni Štrikeraj" (Inter-ethnic knitting) also included multi-vulnerable groups: immigrants housed in an asylum home, women, children, young people...

"Mednarodni štrikeraj" was prepared in the museum together with the "Zavod Tri" and the Knitting Cooperative "Breja preja", which, through informal knitting meetings, became a regular guest of the Asylum Home Vič, where they are not just about knitting yarn and thread, but also to make new friendships & bonds.

Mednarodn štrikeraj" is a creative gathering, where at the knitting workshops - together with women from Afghanistan, Turkey, Iran, Syria and Slovenia - they shared their (manual) skills & life experiences.

In the program for 2017, the Loški muzej also organized a "Migrant Literature on Voice!" Event at the Slovene cultural holiday, where they collaborated with Kulturno društvo (cultural Society) Gmajna, and residents of the asylum home, from different countries participated in the activities.

So, culture is raly an important activity for the fight against prejudice. But. Perhaps its disadvantage is that it is limited to a (too) narrow (& too hermetic) ciltural circle(s) which are usually the least burdened with prejudice(s)?

So therefore, I find out that a decent number of concrete (international) projects that our students (and our participants of Youth Meeting) are involved in – are far more important.

So just listen to them.

Best regards,

Jernej Tavčar,  
President of Local Committee  
of Douzelage Škofja Loka

## **Preparatory work**

### **Civil society**

#### **Sušice**

#### **Sušice**

- located in south-west Bohemia
- 30 km away from the boarder to Germany
- 1. 1. 2018 – 10 999 Czech citizens
  - 124 immigrants with permanent residence
  - 115 immigrants with temporary residence
  - 0 refugees

Nationality of immigrants: Vietnamese, Ukrainian, Slovaks, Romanian, German, Dutch

We do not have many immigrants in our town. However the immigrants who are in our town are very well integrated. Most of them are Vietnamese. They do not usually work in Czech companies but own their small business and live in their community. Their children visit Czech schools and belong to the hardest working pupils.

There is another problem with immigrants in our town. A lot of inhabitants travel to work in Germany where they can earn three times more money than in Sušice. This causes a lack of workers in Sušice. Therefore local enterprises are searching for workers from Romania and Ukraine.

Although there are not refugees and only few immigrants in our town, we could see a great example in our partner town Bad Kötzting. We are also looking forward to hear the case studies from other Douzelage towns and we are ready to learn from their experience.

know it is hard for them.

#### **Civil society**

Although Sušice is rather small town, it is a town with lovely countryside and very good public amenities. There are two grammar schools, school for children with special needs, secondary schools, vocational school, hospital, old people's house, cinema, swimming pool, ball room, leisure centre, library etc.

We are sure that if anyone from the immigrants would like to join any of our clubs he or she will be more than welcome. Of course it mainly depends on the immigrant and their will to be integrated.

## **Preparatory work**

### **Civil society**

#### **Tryavna**

## **Preparatory work (TRYAVNA, BULGARIA)**

for GM meeting in Oxelösund, Sweden (10-14.05.2018)

Bulgaria is not among the preferred countries where refugees want to stay. The reasons for this are complex and are not the subject of this text. Briefly, what we can say is that, according to Eurostat's latest data in March 2018, the highest number of asylum seekers registered in Bulgaria are from Afghanistan - 1050 people. The second place by number of asylum seekers in Bulgaria was citizens of Iraq - 955, and the third place was the Syrians - 940 people. For the first two months of this year, 224 people sought refuge in Bulgaria, with the largest number of Syrians - 150, followed by citizens of Iraq - 35 and Afghanistan - 20.

Bulgaria, as part of the European family, fulfills its commitments and takes care of refugees who have been asylum-seekers and registered for the first time in our country. Observations show that, for the most part, refugees prefer to illegally cross the territory of Bulgaria and register officially in Europe only after they reach the countries of Western Europe where they expect to receive better social benefits.

Refugee accommodation centers have been established in Bulgaria, but there is no one in the territory of Tryavna municipality. In practice, Tryavna is not directly faced with the challenge of integrating refugees from other countries.

The practice of our country in dealing with refugees is long-standing and dates back more than two decades. In the middle of the 1990s, social contacts and activities zone was established in the Center for registration of the applicants for international protection under the auspices of the State Agency for Refugees. Since then, efforts to integrate refugees have been continually builded on and upgraded.

Particularly good results are observed in the practice of using social mediators. Social mediators play an extremely important role in the cultural orientation and integration of newcomers in the country. They are irreplaceable advisers and consultants in the first integration steps of newly arrived refugees.

The persons who perform this role are chosen from the migrants' environment, among the refugees registered in the country, members of families of mixed marriages, foreigners with permitted residence in the country, Bulgarian citizens who speak the most frequently used languages by the asylum seekers and people familiar with culture of the countries that come from the largest groups applying for refugee status and humanitarian status.

Field of activity of the mediators:

familiarizing asylum-seekers with their rights and obligations;

supporting everyday living activities - familiarization with the internal order of the accommodation, communication in a multicultural environment (in the registration and reception center and beyond), observance of personal hygiene, hygiene in the accommodation and hygiene in public places, visit the shop, use of public transport, banking services, etc .;

medical assistance related to attendance and translation during a visit to a healthcare facility, contact with medical staff, administrative services for the detection of chronic diseases and disabilities, care for pregnant women, young mothers and children, awareness campaigns for the prevention of serious illnesses and in children's immunizations, etc .;

mediation in contacts with institutions - issuance and legalization of documents, registration, etc.

support for enrollment of children in kindergarten and school and mediation of parents' contacts with school authorities and teachers.

Social mediation activities are funded by programs and projects for specific periods of time. This affects the sustainability of the results achieved and the inability of the trained experts to be detained for a longer time in the area of the proposed integration measure.

As a deficiency in efforts to integrate refugees, we can point to the insufficient work to change public attitudes towards refugees. Bulgarian society as a whole experience a sense of social injustice. It is particularly strong against the refugees who receive (in the opinion of the average Bulgarian) greater social benefits than Bulgarian citizens who work and pay taxes. The general opinion is that the benefits received provide a good start for new arrivals but can not encourage them to engage in real life in Bulgaria's social life - to communicate and to look for an effective job.

In July 2017, the government adopted new rules on refugee integration that provide for mayors to decide whether to join the integration program. If they so request, they file an application with the State Agency for Refugees indicating with how many refugees are willing to conclude an agreement, as well as information on the integration measures envisaged by the municipality. Foreigners wishing to benefit from integration programs must state this at the time of applying for status or within 14 days of receipt.

Last year, however, there was no single application from local authorities. This is logical given the public moods that are often shared by local governors themselves and the possibility of such a unpopular decision to practically execute the political career of the mayor in question.

## **Preparatory work**

Civil society

Zvolen

### **GM preparation work Zvolen**

Here I would like to state some good examples on how Zvolen has been successful on immigrants' participation in local society:

There is Immigrants integrating centre situated in Zvolen where these people fleeing their own country coming here to Slovakia can stay for 6 months free of charge. They receive support for living and they also get an job seeking assistance. If they decide to study here they are helped to do so. For most of them this is only a temporarily and they wait for opportunity to move far west to Austria, Germany or Czech Republic.

Integrating young pupils into ordinary school classes to absorb Slovak language after moving to Zvolen with their parents who came to set their businesses in various fields.

Zvolen being a small town in central Slovakia has not been affected by the migration waves so much or not at all.

Slovakia in general is not so attractive country for the latest immigrants waves as the choice for their life

But even all these facts for many years all different nationality come to Zvolen to seek for work opportunities mainly in restaurant industry. Turkish, former Yugoslavian, Chinese, Japanese, Bulgarian, Croatian come and has successfully set up their businesses in food industry. Such as burger shops, a very popular ice-cream, pizza restaurant or kebabs are widely spread across Zvolen and its surrounding.

After the revolution in 1989 much more immigrants came to Zvolen and to Slovakia in general from western countries such as China, Japan. They came with the idea of the clothes shops with cheap clothes less quality clothes Chinese shops with clothing, shoes and others goods.



They live here having a very strong community life. They have learnt to live in different country, learnt the language and has integrated into community.

In my opinion they have very good working and living conditions, they receive some support from the country and the region to start up their business or to set up their lives.

Our country although has not really had immigrants waves it has struggled as a society with integrating gypsies into community, with successful integration of their nature, their specific lifestyle, their way of life understanding and approach. It has been very difficult for some regions and it still is.

Among negative examples which there are not a lot because of the facts mentioned above I can state:

- immigrants passing through our town or country illegally in a trucks or vans in very dangerous way.
- Some of them staying here in doubts or with no hope for other better life







## **Preparatory work**

Culture

Rokiski

### **Material for the Workshop 2 „Civil society“ and workshop 3 „Culture“**

Prepared by Antanas Vagonis, Mayor of Rokiski District Municipality, Lithuania

Vilma Meciukoniene, Chief Officer of Rokiskis District Municipality Administration, Strategic Planning and Investments Department

#### **Topic: INTEGRATION IN GENERAL**

##### **Overview**

Independent Lithuania attracted many new immigrants from poorer and/or war-torn countries. Seeing a darker-skinned, black or Asian face was a very rare experience even in the largest cities of Lithuania in the years up to 2000. In the 1990s, the new immigrants were so unusual that disproportionately large number of non-white immigrants became instant TV or music celebrities precisely because of their “exotic looks”.

Not anymore so, even though the percentage of non-European immigrants and their children is still somewhat lower in Lithuania than in the Western European countries such as France or the UK. After all, in Lithuania, most salaries are significantly lower so it is better to migrate further west. The average NETO salary is about 690 Eur (Statistics, 2017 IV quarter).

Still, the majority of new immigrants come from the former Soviet Union and therefore strengthen the already existing Russian and Russophone communities rather than establishing new ones. They tend to fill the jobs which too few Lithuanians would do at home, such as the construction sector or IT sector. A good command of Russian helps them in Lithuania where Russian is still understood by 70% locals (while an inadequate knowledge of English often precludes from migrating further West). In many cases, they fill the gaps in job market left by emigrated Lithuanians (who are allowed to freely move into Western Europe and have fewer language barriers). Citizens of the former Soviet Union countries make up 1% of Lithuania's permanent residents.

After Lithuania joined the European Union, increasingly many of its key businesses became owned by Western Europeans. Multinational companies would often move into the higher-paid and executive positions. Most of these are Western Europeans as they could freely reside in Lithuania. As the Western social security payments often surpass middle-class Lithuanian salaries, only the higher class Westerners would relocate to Lithuania. Citizens of the other European Union countries make up 0,2% of Lithuania's permanent residents.

Some new immigrants (mainly Asians) work in ethnic businesses, for example, Chinese or Indian restaurants, Turkish kebab kiosks or Thai massage parlors. But even these positions are sometimes held by Lithuanians or the established ethnic minorities.

The most famous foreigners who live in Lithuania are basketball players (mostly South Slavs and African Americans). They are few in numbers, however, and usually move out after several years.

In addition to immigrants, there are large numbers of foreigners temporarily living in Lithuania. Many of them are ERASMUS students. This is a European Union-wide program that allows a university student to spend a semester or two in another EU country.

Not all students are temporary. Lithuania became a popular destination to study medicine and technical sciences among Indians and Arabs, especially the Lebanese. Some of them continue their careers in Lithuania.

### **Situation in Lithuania about refugees integration**

Integration as a process starts before a refugee is granted one or the other status – their first introduction to Lithuania is important to their impression of Lithuanian society and their future prospects.

Once an asylum application has been filed, the asylum seeker can either find private lodgings to support themselves or move to the Foreigners' Registration Centre (FRC). The normal processing time for an asylum application should be no more than three months, with the possibility for another three-month extension in case there is a need to collect more information. Once the person has received either refugee status or subsidiary protection, they will move from the FRC to the Refugee Reception Centre (RRC). The RRC implements the integration process. Under normal circumstances, a refugee will stay at the RRC for three months, but the stay can be extended under certain circumstances. Importantly, only mainstream asylum seekers are accommodated in the FRC. Those arriving under the relocation/resettlement schemes go straight on the RRC to commence the integration programme. Furthermore, the processing time for relocated asylum applications is shorter than the maximum of six months for mainstream asylum seekers.

There is an activity centre in FRC run by Caritas in the village close by, where asylum seekers can participate in activities, run with EU funding on a project basis. Children are enrolled in day care or school. Asylum seekers in the open section can register to leave the centre for up to 24 hours. In terms of the physical environment, there is one section for families and one for single men. Each family has their own room, single men share rooms.

The FRC provides full board and the asylum seekers receive 10 EUR per month for incidentals. The centre also has a health department, with access to medical and psychological assistance. There are no language classes or other systematic training activities at this stage of the asylum process. Representatives from the Lithuanian Red Cross visit the centre once a week and can provide legal assistance when necessary. As mentioned above, when asylum seekers are granted protection, they move to the RRC. Unaccompanied minors and persons arriving under the relocation scheme are also accommodated at the RRC before their applications are processed.

The RRC implements the integration programme, which consists of language training (96 hours) and classes on Lithuanian culture and society (40 hours). During the integration programme, refugees receive €71.4 per month for expenses. The centre also provides in-house medical services to the residents. The standard and physical conditions at the RRC are of a drastically higher quality than those of the FRC. The centre has a library and movie room that is open and staffed for 12 hours per day, a large play room for children, a well-equipped gym, and well-maintained grounds, including sports facilities and a playground for children. Following completion of the integration programme at Rukla, the next step for refugees is to be settled in a municipality. At the moment, the cities of Vilnius (20), Kaunas (28), Jonava (26), Kedainiai (1), Kaisiadorys (4) accommodate asylum seekers. The integration process in the municipalities is implemented by the Lithuanian Red Cross, which signs contracts with refugees and provides support in becoming acquainted with and orienting in Lithuanian society, with Red Cross staff serving as mentors. There are plans for the Association of Local Authorities to become more involved in integration efforts. The government provides financial support for an additional 190 hours of Lithuanian language classes. Refugees receive financial integration support for one year, which consists of €204 per person per month for six months, and €102 per person for the following six months. These rates and the duration of support were reduced in November 2015. Before the relocation and resettlement schemes started, the financial support was twice the amount and could be extended up to five years with a degree of flexibility for vulnerable groups.

### **Integration process-good practise example of Lithuania town called Jonava**

As social inclusion /integration is a difficult two-way process. It is important to prepare not only newcomers (language, vacation training, non-formal cultural education and so on), but also to prepare local community (acceptance of immigrants, features of cross-cultural communication, tolerance). Immigrants come not just to an abstract asylum country, they are coming to the specific municipality. So, the role of the local community is very important.

The case we present shows how the participation in the non-formal short-term social education program and social activities involves both groups – local community and forced migrants – into the integration process and helps to solve immigrants' social exclusion problem. Few years ago Social Services Centre of Jonava district (Social Services Centre), collaborating with Lithuanian Red Cross and Kaunas University of Technology (KTU), implemented refugees' integration project "Bridges to Successful Integration". Applying the concept of two-way process of integration, this project involved two target groups:

1) Representatives of the local community – students from KTU, participating in the project as volunteers.

2) Immigrants (granted asylum in Lithuania), living in Jonava and Kaunas municipalities and participating in the project as volunteers.

Nationality characteristics of the participants – Lithuanians, Afghans, Ukrainians, Syrians, Chechen.

Every target group, taking part in the project, participated in three steps of the project.

The first step focussed on training: KTU students had courses "Multicultural education" and „Socio- educational work with migrants“. Immigrants had a short-term program of non-formal education on multicultural communication skills. The programme has been developed by Social Services Centre.

As a second step, students volunteered in the Lithuanian Red Cross “Migrants’ day centers” in Kaunas and in the Social Services Centre in Jonava. Immigrants provided care help to elderly and disabled Lithuanian people in the Social Services Centre. Also Social Services Centre organised common activities for immigrants and Lithuanian families from social risk group.

As a final step there was evaluation: empirical study that analysed student-volunteers’ reflection about their job experience with newcomers, and immigrants’ reflection about their experience of participating in the non-formal education program and volunteering in the social care area. The results of the students’ evaluation: the majority of respondents noted, that volunteering influenced their values and attitudes towards migrants, minimized some fears and ethnical stereotypes and improved their inter-cultural communication skills. The results of immigrants’ evaluation showed, that project’s activities empowered immigrants to become more active and successful in the integration into a social life and labour market.

Participating in the program activities they got new experience of inter-cultural communication, participated in social activities of Jonava’s local community, and also had an opportunity to work in social care area – it empowered 6 refugees (5 women, 1 men) to get new profession – assistant of social worker and to integrate into labour market in such way. Assisting, as volunteers, to other people, that experienced social exclusion, immigrants not only acquired professional skills (in the social care area), but also perceived themselves as donors (not only as recipients). It enabled immigrants to become self-assured, to understand their benefits and place in a new society.

### **Conclusions**

Integration is like „newborn“. When he borns he knows nothing: how to talk, how to take care of himself and how to act among others. Family helps the child to integrate – to understand the rules, order, language, culture and things which are important to the personality in the society. Integration is the same. You have to know culture, language, rules of the society. It helps to live your life and solve problems. Everyone has to find the place in society and function. Positive attitude of the society towards immigrants could be reached through trainings of both migrants and society and integration activities (social, cultural, etc.).

## **Preparatory work**

Culture

Sherborne

### **OXELÖSUND GENERAL MEETING WORKSHOPS**

#### **Civil Society and Culture**

**Michael and Pat Morrell from Sherborne**

#### **Introduction**

In 2015 the Prime Minister David Cameron promised that Britain would take in 20,000 Syrian refugees by 2020. By February 2018 over 10,500 had been accepted mainly in the big cities. Sherborne is in the County of Dorset and as Bournemouth and Poole are a separate authority, there are no towns in Dorset with a population of more than 16,000.

#### **What is good**

Dorset County Council works with many partner agencies.

These agencies include Sherborne Town Council, UNHCR, the Home office, various churches, volunteer groups set up to assist refugees with their needs such as SHARES in Sherborne with contacts with other such groups in different counties. SHARES is registered as a Charity and will be available for Gift Aid tax payments

The potential services available include identifying suitable homes for refugees (not local authority accommodation), matching families, arranging English language tuition, speakers for schools and community groups, using blogs and Facebook and giving advice to refugees on how to integrate in Civil Society.

The Cheap Street Church has also arranged clothes collections, which currently have been distributed in Somerset.

On April 28<sup>th</sup> there was a major meeting at the Gryphon School in Sherborne, organised by SHARES and attended by over 230. This featured Syrian people who came to the U.K. as refugees before the current massacres and understand many of the problems. This was also attended by Stephanie Farr, who is the programme leader of Dorset County Council. The County has pledged to house 30 families and are aiming for 120 people. 9 have been placed so far including 3 in Sherborne and the surrounding villages.

#### **What is bad**

There is an excellent website, but it has not been updated since February.

Currently only 9 families have been offered places in Dorset, although 3 of these are in Sherborne and nearby.

Difficulty in ascertaining how to solve the many reasons why the number is so low.



## Preparatory work

### Culture

#### Sigulda

##### Introduction

ABOUT SOCIETY "SHELTER "SAFE HOUSE"")

**Society “Shelter “Safe House”” ( Mission: Latvia – A safe home for different people!) was established on August 6, 2007 with the aim to develop support services to legal immigrants, including asylum seekers, refugees and persons, granted subsidiary protection status** by ensuring the individual’s right to receive adequate assistance and protection; promoting rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of human trafficking into the society; creating interactive forms of training, and expanding cooperation with state and local government institutions, public and Christian organizations in Latvia and worldwide.

In 2007, NGO “Shelter “Safe House”” obtained the right to provide state-paid rehabilitation services to the victims of human trafficking and it still continues its work in 2018.

A multidisciplinary team of professionals functions in the organization to support asylum seekers, refugees and persons granted subsidiary protection status.

Society “Shelter "Safe House”” raises awareness of the social field in general society and mass media, actively partnering with other NGOs, the State and local governments.

**DELEGATION OF TASKS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION Based on the participation agreements on carrying out certain state administration tasks for the integration of third-country nationals\* signed between the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia and society “Shelter “Safe House”” , the association launches measures for supporting the integration of third-country nationals, including refugees and persons with alternative status, as of October 1. delegation contracts since 2015.**

Society “Shelter “Safe House”” will provide information and regular consultations to third-country nationals and their family members on topical issues related to integration (education, employment, health care, etc.).

**Free consultations are provided by phone and e-mail**, as well as in person in each of 5 Regional offices. Consultations regarding: employment (labour law), migration (residence permits, visas), rights of tenants (issues related to housing), family law (family reunification, divorce, inheritance matters, etc.), legalization and recognition of education documents, starting a business (issues related to entrepreneurship), etc, psychological consultation.

Information Centre for Newcomers is implemented by society “Shelter “Safe House”” within the framework of the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. The project is co-financed by the European Union.

##### WORKSHOP 3, CULTURE

##### GOOD EXAMPLE

- Immigrant’s participation in local society

Neighboring city Cesis is popular destination for Chinese people. An active migration started after 2010. In 2017 Latvian- Chinese Culture center has been established. Latvian language courses are offered in schools and several training providers. Official visits

Regarding culture, more and more Chinese culture events are celebrated, for example, Big New Year Eve in Cesis

## BAD EXAMPLE

### WORKSHOP 2, Civil society

- Immigrant's participation in local society
  - business environment due to language barrier and judicial understanding
  - real estate issues

## Preparatory work

Culture

Siret

### Culture - a bad example for integration

It's well known that the majority of immigrants are Muslims and that means they have a strong culture, behaviour and habits which are deep-seated in their way of life. We, as Europeans, are fascinated by other cultures – we admire the Asian culture, the Hindu and Indian culture, the African culture with all the savage tribes and their customs, the Indian culture. We admire it, traveling to see them in their “natural habitat”, make different artistic statements being inspired by all of this, or borrow in part in our life for a short or long time. We do all of this without considering an important thing – to know the history and the significance. Why is it so important to know the history and meaning of a habit? Because for us it can be attractive and amazing and we want it more, or do it ourselves but it's possible for them to be an insult or offence.

I started to say that the culture is a bad example for integration because European culture generally, it's a culture of acceptance and tolerance. It can be a paradox at first view. In my opinion it's a dangerous trap because in our acceptance and tolerance our attention for details is low and often with our idea about tolerance considering that all of people must be tolerance and doing concessions. I support my idea with an unhappy event from France – Charlie Hebdo in 2015.

As a solution, I support the idea of information. In this context of wave of immigrants we have to be informed to know how to manage properly our human relations. The Islamic culture is based in huge proportion in religion and that means the majority of their prescription is non-negotiable. Plus than that, how the community is more small the feeling of protection and respect the prescription is bigger.

In my opinion we must know a few things about the Islamic religion – at least like common knowledge.

First of all, **Islam** (Arabic: الإسلام, Al-Islam (Submission)) is a religion that believes in one God (Allah). All of its teachings and beliefs are written out in the Quran (also spelled Qur'an or Koran), the holy scripture of Islam. Believers of Islam are called Muslims. They believe that the Quran was spoken to Muhammad by the angel Gabriel, and that it is the word of Allah. They view Muhammad as a prophet. Other beliefs and rules about what Muslims should do come from reports of what Muhammad taught, or *hadith*. About this, the Muslims are very faithful and don't discuss or joke about this subject. In the next order we must know about the 5 steps or how the Muslims say, the “five pillars”.

1. **Tawheed**: The Testimony (faith in English) is the core of the Muslim belief that there is no god but Allah himself, and that Muhammad is his last messenger.

2. **Salaat:** Muslims pray five times per day, at special times of the day. When they pray, they face Kaaba, a large cubic structure located at the holy city of Mecca. *Salat* is *namaz* in Persian, Turkish and Urdu. Shia Muslims can pray the afternoon and evening prayers right after each other.<sup>[2]</sup>

3. **Zakaat:** Muslims who have money must give 1/40th of their money (*charity* in English) to help people who do not have money or need help.

4. **Sawm or Siyam:** Fasting during Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic year. Muslims do not eat or drink from dawn till sunset for one lunar month. After Ramadan, there is a holiday called *Eid al-Fitr* (which means "festival of end-fast" in English). On Eid al-Fitr, Muslims usually go to the mosque in the morning for a special religious service, and then have a party with families and friends.

5. **Hajj** (Pilgrimage in English): During the month of Zulkaedah, the 12th month of the Islamic Calendar is the pilgrimage season where many Muslims go to Mecca, the holiest city of Islam. However, should a Muslim is financially unable to perform the Hajj, he or she is unnecessary to do so, as those who possess great financial capacity were the most obligated to perform the Hajj.

At first view its not unusual if we compaire with a christian religion but the strigency is most different. They interrupt any activities to do their prayer – in public spaces, on the road or home and its considered a total lack of respect disturbing in any ways the prayer.

As a conclusion, I consider that the subject of culture it's a minus for now because we have two tipes of society: the european acceptance and super conservatory muslims and the second one its very determinated to keep and transmited the same values in the same way their descendants. And another problem is our tolerance – we see on it a good thing but when this tolerance exceed their limit they consider our tolerance a lack of respect. As a final idea, I consider we have to do some fine adjustments in relation with the migrants, its not all to accept them, to feed them, we have to understand them. They are a migratory population in exile and wont give up any letter from their religious, moral and social code.

# Preparatory work

Culture

Škofja Loka



OBČINA ŠKOFJA LOKA

Kabinet župana

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April 2018

## Preparation for the GM Workshop 2: Civil society & Workshop 3: Culture

Škofja Loka has a long and rich history on the field of civil society organisations that range from cultural and sport to turistic and historical associations as well as different leisure interests and educational opportunities.

Škofja Loka has also a long-time tradition of open society, solidarity, building a strong and effective social network and giving care for all social groups, including local youth council, elderly clubs and disabled.

And most important: municipality of Škofja Loka during the wartime Bosnia in 90-ties (1991 – 1998) set up one of the best refugee center in Slovenia and Central Europe.

Our refugee center was led by the organisation of Civil Defense with the great help from the volunteers of Red Cross and Caritas.

During the worst war crisis in Bosnia, there were up to 600 people in the camp, most of them were Muslims and Croats.

From 1992 to 1995: there was established a refugee primary school - women were teachers themselves. from 1995: pupils joined the regular Slovenian school system.

There were also: a kindergarten, a school for adults, a library, a sewing room and other hand works activities, a shop, and a place for religious rituals....

Our refugee camp was a good example of professional and human treatment and coexistence.

So we dispose with valuable know-how and experience that we will glad to share with our friends and partners.

In 2015 and 2016 on the peak of the refugee crisis in Europe, refugees did not come to the Škofja Loka.

But we have always been well aware that we need to raise awareness among our citizens about the importance of involving refugees in our society through culture and joint social activities.

Our museum (Loški muzej/ Škofja Loka Museum) included migrants in the preparation of their exhibitions.

In the Loka Museum, they organized an exhibition of Finnish artists Kallet Hamm & Dzamil Kamanger – named "The journey", which in their works, from their point of view, tackle the question of different forms of migration.

In the accompanying program of the exhibition, caled "Mednarodni Štrikeraj" (Inter-ethnic knitting) also included multi-vulnerable groups: immigrants housed in an asylum home, women, children, young people...

"Mednarodni štrikeraj" was prepared in the museum together with the "Zavod Tri" and the Knitting Cooperative "Breja preja", which, through informal knitting meetings, became a regular guest of the Asylum Home Vič, where they are not just about knitting yarn and thread, but also to make new friendships & bonds.

Mednarodn štrikeraj" is a creative gathering, where at the knitting workshops - together with women from Afghanistan, Turkey, Iran, Syria and Slovenia - they shared their (manual) skills & life experiences.

In the program for 2017, the Loški muzej also organized a "Migrant Literature on Voice!" Event at the Slovene cultural holiday, where they collaborated with Kulturno društvo (cultural Society) Gmajna, and residents of the asylum home, from different countries participated in the activities.

So, culture is raly an important activity for the fight against prejudice. But. Perhaps its disadvantage is that it is limited to a (too) narrow (& too hermetic) ciltural circle(s) which are usually the least burdened with prejudice(s)?

So therefore, I find out that a decent number of concrete (international) projects that our students (and our participants of Youth Meeting) are involved in – are far more important.

So just listen to them.

Best regards,

Jernej Tavčar,  
President of Local Committee  
of Douzelage Škofja Loka



## **Preparatory work**

Culture

Sušice

## **Integration in European Cities - Sušice**

### **Workshop 3 - Culture**

The immigrants are acquainted with Czech social norms on the state level in places determined for them. In Sušice there are lots of cultural and sports facilities accessible for everybody including immigrants. They can learn about Czech culture, way of life, habits etc. in the talks prepared in the local cultural centre. Foreigners staying in Sušice are not very interested in these activities as they are mostly hard working and the Vietnamese have their own closed community. If there are new immigrants coming to Sušice our cultural centres are prepared to offer activities to let them learn more about our country.

Věra Svobodová



Appendix 1  
Newsletter 2, February 2018

## Preparatory work for the General Meeting 2018

### *Integration in European cities*

Twinning for successful integration and democratic engagement

Welcome to the General Meeting in Oxelösund 2018. This year's meeting is being conducted on the theme of integration. As a GM-delegate you need to do some preparatory work, which is to be sent to Oxelösund before the meeting.

### Background

Following an exceptional high migration to some of the municipalities of Douzelage in 2015 and 2016, the issue of immigrant integration into European societies has become increasingly important. The towns of Douzelage face two closely related and significant problems that make integration difficult and that delay a successful integration of immigrants;

- Immigrants' low participation and influence in local society
- Prejudice and discrimination

### The project *Integration in European cities*

In view of the above background Oxelösund has, in consultation with the Douzelage presidency, formulated the project *Integration in European cities*. The project is the basis for a granted application for EU co-funding

The GM work is supposed to be conducted in workshops regarding the issue about strengthened democratically participation and the prevention of prejudices and discrimination.

### Workshops during the general meeting

The workshops will have focus on three main keys/topics to a successful integration:

#### Workshop 1, Language

Being able to communicate with residents in a new country is one of the keys to successful integration. This is especially important when it comes to the labor market and the opportunities for self-sufficiency. But it is also important when it comes to the possibility of becoming a part of the society in general.

How do we work in our towns to help immigrants learning a new language as quickly and efficiently as possible? What is successful and what works less well?

## Workshop 2, Civil society

To establish contacts in a new country is an important factor for integration. It's partly about support and service from the public society. But above all it's about what civil society offers in the form of community, culture, leisure activities, associations and political involvement.

How do we work in our towns to help immigrants to those important contacts in the civil society? What is successful and what works less well?

## Workshop 3, Culture

To be orientated about the culture of a new country is an important factor for integration. It is about becoming aware of the social norms typical of the new country, both written and unwritten.

How do we work in our towns to help immigrants get be oriented in our specific social norms? What is successful and what works less well?

## Your preparatory work in four steps

### 1. Select workshops

We want you to participate in two different workshops, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. Use the attached registration form.

### 2. Document a good example

For one of your chosen workshops/topics we want you to make a short documentation on how your town (or country) has been successful according to:

- immigrants' participation in local society, or
- prevent prejudices or discrimination against immigrants, or
- integration in general

### 3. Document a bad example

For one of your chosen workshops/topics we want you to make a short documentation on how your town (or country) has been *less* successful according to:

- immigrants' participation in local society, or
- prevent prejudices or discrimination against immigrants, or
- integration in general

### 4. Send your registration form and your documentation before April 1st to:

[niklas.telin@oxelosund.se](mailto:niklas.telin@oxelosund.se)

*Best regards*

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*Best regards*

## Preparatory work

Civil society

Asikkala



There were some 250 refugees at the same time staying in our municipality, hotel Tallukka, which was changed to a center for refugees. (2015-2017)

The hotel itself was closed and the owner of Tallukka made a deal with a ministry of foreign affairs of receiving refugees.

In Finland the towns only had responsibility to arrange studying for refugee children.

In Asikkala the children had their school mainly in hotel Tallukka but also partly integrated them to schools in Vääksy.

The ministry on foreign affairs was controlling the welfare and living of refugees in towns.

Asikkala carried the responsibility of refugees quite well but finally there was just one person, who stayed in Asikkala. Most of the immigrant's found their ways to big cities.

## Preparatory work

Culture

Asikkala



We had challenges with the project too. The worst mistake was the lack of information to municipality and inhabitants of Asikkala.

The ministry of foreign affairs made a contract straight with hotel Tallukka's owner. Asikkala town manager got information of the opening center at the same time as the press published it.

It was quite confusing, because Asikkala municipality had the responsibility of arranging the school for all the children and youngsters.

This increased the negative attitude towards the refugees.

We also had no hotel at all in 2015-2017. It was not good for our travelling.

Otherwise the time of refugees was quite peaceful, because there were mostly families here. More than thousand refugees stayed in Asikkala.

Now that the center is closed, hotel Tallukka is renovated to be a hotel again.

Most of You will stay there next year, while Asikkala is arranging the GM.

Welcome!

## Civil Society

En framgångsfaktor för invandrades deltagande i det svenska samhället är kyrkans verksamhet. Även om den svenska kyrkan är kristen samlas människor från olika religioner, och man kan anta att det beror på att den religiösa kulturens natur generellt känns igen. Genom den svenska kyrkan får många människor sina första svenska vänner samt möjlighet att studera och prata svenska.

En annan viktig aktör i det civila samhället är Röda korset som finns över hela världen och består av miljontals frivilliga som bestämt sig för att hjälpa andra människor. De kämpar för att rädda liv och ge hopp, delar ut mat, förebygger katastrofer och bidrar med medmänsklig värme. I Oxelösund har organisationen särskilt arbetat med att lära människor att prata och förstå svenska.

En utmaning för civilsamhället är de olika kulturella bakgrunder och perspektiv som ska samsas bredvid varandra. Sverige är ett relativt jämställt land där exempelvis pojkar och flickor har gemensam simundervisning och idrott, vilket inte är självklart i andra länder.

A success factor for immigrants' participation in Swedish society is the Church's activities. Even though the Swedish church is Christian, people gather from different religions, and one can assume that this is because the nature of religious culture is generally recognized. Through the Swedish Church many people get their first Swedish friends as well as the opportunity to study and speak Swedish.

Another important actor in civil society is the Red Cross, which exists worldwide and consists of millions of volunteers who decided to help other people. They struggle to save lives and give hope, share food, prevent disasters, and contribute with humanity. In Oxelösund, the organization has worked specifically to teach people to speak and understand Swedish.

A challenge for civil society is the different cultural backgrounds and perspectives to be merged side by side. Sweden is a relatively equal country where, for example, boys and girls have a common swimming education and sport, which is not obvious in other countries.