

## **“Access to Rights & Civil Dialogue for ALL”**

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### **Transnational Meeting in Barcelona – Minutes**

Thursday 06<sup>th</sup> October 2011 – Friday 7<sup>th</sup> October 2011

Pati Llimona (Regomir 3 – Barcelona)

#### **Attendance list:**

PLS (BE) - Denis STOKKINK and Céline BRANDELEER and Elzbieta KUZMA  
ICOSI (FR) – Arnaud BREUIL and Bruno QUEMADA  
CGM (IT) – Pierluca GHIBELLI and Bruno AMOROZO  
ISI (GR) – Dimitris MICHARIKOPOULOS  
DIESIS (FR) – Federico CAMPORESI  
CEPS (ES) – Juan PEDREGOSA and David DUEÑAS

#### **Day one: Thursday 06/10/2011**

##### Opening

The presentation of the meeting was prepared by PLS (*see ppt presentation for more details on what has been discussed.*)

First of all, the general objectives of the meeting were recalled:

- To discuss on the advancement of the project at national level, and its coordination at European level
- To review the project objectives and planning
- To assess budget and expenses
- To share our research with and between experts
- Evaluation at the end

## 1. Advancement of the project

### Focus groups

**BE:** The first focus group of PLS took place in June on a Wednesday night with a little more than 15 participants. They divided the participants in 2 groups (French/English) in order to cope with the linguistic problem (it is not always easy for everyone to cope with Flemish and French). It was not easy but the outcome was really positive.

**ES:** The first focus group took place in June, during the weekend, and a lot of people attended the meeting. They tried to mix people from municipalities, from integration associations and Romanian people. Language was not a real problem as it seems quite easy for Romanian people to learn Spanish (both Latin languages). As local elections took place a few week earlier, legal aspects were discussed and among them the question of how to defend migrants' rights (for example, through running as candidate). The relationships between foreign communities, or with local authorities, were also discussed. The questions of intercultural relations and of integration in general were heavily discussed too. Next focus group will take place in 3 weeks and will focus on Gipsy's problems and their consequences on local politics and fundamental rights. In plus, they will try to interview someone who ran as candidate at local elections.

**FR:** The first focus group was meant to take place in July but only 4 persons attended... So, they decided to organise 2 focus groups in November, with different groups of people. They will focus their attention on the Portuguese community.

**IT:** The focus group took place the 14<sup>th</sup> of June in Rome. They invited OIM, the Municipality of Rome, Italian associations of migrants, representatives of Romanian associations, a Romanian journalist and Romanian people. The meeting was really dynamic. They decided not to focus on a principal group but to be open... For the second focus group, they will do it in Rome with the same people or will move to Milan which has an important Romanian community too. To increase trust and mutual understanding between Italians and Romanians (in Italy, Romanians are often perceived as criminals), they think to start the next meeting with an intervention of Romanian people working for Italian Institutions, as they could be a "bridge" between divided associations. They also intend to do the lunch debate in a Romanian restaurant.

**GR:** The first focus group was successful but there were not many participants (only 6 came). Therefore, it seems sometimes more convenient to have face to face interviews. However language was not a problem as they have a Bulgarian expert who can translate things if needed. One of the participants was candidate at EU elections: he was the only non-Greek to run as candidate for the Greek socialist party at EU elections. That's a positive signal.

### How to use the results of the focus groups?

The results of the focus groups can be an important first-hand material for the national working paper and can be useful for the organisation of trainings. Training should focus on the involvement of the studied group in the political life as well as in the economic life.

### Problem with Other Communities

In France, the Portuguese community has no particular problems with other communities. They are on the average of statistics for racist crimes. In these statistics we can find out that young Portuguese are sometimes more involved as responsible of crimes than victims. In Belgium, Polish people have no serious problems with other expats communities. In Greece, the problems of immigrants are generalised. The immigrant organisations are far from being advocacy group... they live for themselves and they consider themselves as cultural organisations without any impact on national policies. It seems that Bulgarians are not well informed about the electoral rights they have at EU and local level. In Italy, the Romanians came out from a society in dissolution... this means they don't trust institutions.

## **2. Review of the objectives of the project**

As the project is part of a general framework program, the general objectives of the EU "Fundamental rights and citizenship" program were recalled. With that in mind, we reviewed the specific issues we will try to address in our project and the target groups it aims reaching.

We then cared for a good match between these objectives and our activities.

## **3. Budget review**

In order to guarantee an optimal coordination of the project, we recalled that each partner should hand out a financial and activity report to PLS every four months in order to keep the coordinator up to date with the progress of the project at national level. The objective of these internal reports is to facilitate the coordinator's task for the progress and final reports.

Four months duration (invoices copies, proofs of travel, payslips, timesheet that occurred in this period)	Deadline to send the documents
Report 1	30 <sup>th</sup> May 2011
Report 2	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2011
Report 3	30 <sup>th</sup> December 2011
PROGRESS REPORT (narrative + financial report)	9 <sup>th</sup> January 2012
Report 4	28 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Report 5	28 <sup>th</sup> September 2012
Report 5	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2013
FINAL REPORT (narrative + financial report)	30 <sup>th</sup> January 2013

We checked if the actual expenses fit the provisional budget and if anyone had any administrative problem.

We then reviewed the content of the future progress report to be handed out in January (activities, changes/difficulties, visibility, assessment, future, budget categories,... – see report template)

#### 4. Research results at national level

Each partner explained the research done so far at the national level and the experts discussed on the situation in their respective countries.

**BE:** For the polish community it is somehow difficult to gain confidence in politics (history works as a reminder that politics are not trustworthy and in plus civil society is rather new. Consequently, there is not a vivid or old tradition for participation). They didn't study French or Flemish because at the beginning they thought to stay in Belgium only for a short while. In fact in the beginning it was a temporary migration but now, with EU freedom of movement, this became more stable because it is easy to go back home. Polish immigrants are quite well integrated on an economical point of view. Some even (catholic) trade unions associations. But there is a clear lack of socio-political participation. Therefore, PLS is thinking of ways to link political and economical aspects in order to motivate participation. Another important factor is the organization of the Polish community: the associative organization is more representative of the old migration (1930s) while the new migration waves (2000 and onwards) organize themselves in a very pragmatic way (mainly services – not an extensive associative network).

**FR:** Most Portuguese people are really well integrated. There are several Portuguese associations under the Portuguese law but not under the French law. Only the 15% of the Portuguese have the double nationality... the rest of them don't feel the need of having a French passport... There is a

strong feeling of unity among the members of the Portuguese community. At the beginning of Fifties, in France, there were 50.000 Portuguese. In 10 years this number had increased of 20.000 units. Several aspects of the Portuguese community are taken into consideration. More than others, the Portuguese were looking for some sort of political invisibility.

**IT:** As the Romanian community is rather divided, the focus group was interesting because different attitudes could be observed among the different Romanian participants. The main divide is about the Romanian political party: some find it representative, others not. They also observed that most people participating in associations are more likely to participate in political life. Hence the question: how to improve this? Trust is important as Romanians often feel discriminated, even though their image among the Italian people is slowly improving while Romanian people start to open up to Italian society. Interaction plays its role in the reduction of stereotypes and misunderstandings. They found out that the second generation is mainly thinking of Italy as a country of long term residence and intend to stay there. There is therefore a stronger interest in participating in political life. This is quite a big shift from the first motivation of migration which was only economical... All in all, the research is going fine. They have to change three researchers but they think they can respect the deadline.

**GR:** They focus on the Bulgarian community in Greece. They identified some organisations. The immigration from Bulgaria started 20 years ago. The immigration is especially a female migration and the majority is aged between 40 and 60 without their family, while the men are often younger and come with their family.

We can observe here that we have different historical layers of migration in the project:

- The Portuguese people in France represents a rather old wave of migrants
- The Polish people have been in Belgium for a while but there has been a renewal of the migration since the years 2000.
- The Romanian people are coming in Italy since the last 10-15 years.
- And the Romanian people are coming in Spain since 5-10 years only.

Hence, the history of migration has an impact on the host society. In addition, older migration can act as a “pillow” for newer migration waves, as this can be the case in Belgium.

The history of the European Union has also played an important role in these migrations and their integration in their country of residence.

## 5. trainings

Aim of the training: to empower contact persons and associations representatives, to inform and train them in order to participate actively and to raise awareness among actors of the participatory process

On this base, we had a first discussion on the training phase on how the research done so far can be useful/can be linked to the training curricula.

## Day two: Friday 07/10/2011

## 6. Communication tools

Communication aims at disseminating the project's results and evolutions, mainly through the partners' networks. To ensure the largest dissemination, a dedicated website was set up as well as an electronic platform to share documents for the partners.



We have to make a newsletter on the project activities. We will therefore develop a template and, if we want to promote the project among the stakeholders, we are thinking about translating the information into the spoken language of the target group.

The newsletter should be sent by the end of the year.

## **7. Work calendar**

### **2011**

- **2<sup>nd</sup> focus group and lunch debate**
- **recommendations (November)**
- **Newsletter (November)**
- **national draft of the working paper (15 December)**
- **first draft of the comparative study (December)**
- **first draft of the progress report (December)**

### **2012**

- **Modules of trainings**
- **Transnational meeting in Greece**
- **Curricula of trainings**
- **National raise-awareness campaign**
- **Translational seminar in Belgium**
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Newsletter**
- **Final seminar in Belgium**

### **Discussion and concluding remarks**

Some partners asked extra questions and discussed together on some methodological matters. We then agreed that we should make the next video conference in December and the transnational meeting in Athens should be happen at the end of March/beginning of April.

**Presentation of SOAROMA: Association for equal chances for Roma people (see ppt)**



