



POLITICAL & SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT COMMUNITIES TRAINING CURRICULUM

POLITICAL & SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF MIGRANT COMMUNITIES **TRAINING CURRICULUM**

Publication coordinated by Céline Brandeleer and Federico Camporesi

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Introduction

An important element of migrants' participation is the ability for associations of migrants to train their own staff, members, and community leaders to understand the concept of citizens' participation, the basic understanding of their fundamental rights, and how to plan an awareness-raising campaign on this. This approach can be an important way to increase the stake of migrants in local participation, to provide leadership development for representatives of migrant associations, and to ensure a good dissemination of information among the communities of migrants.

Based on national workshops experience, on the results of national field researches and of training events, five European partners and their experts developed a curriculum of training adapted to the specific issues of the participation of EU migrants.

More generally, this curriculum wants to be a tool for any association willing to encourage EU citizens to take part actively in the democratic life at EU or local level. Therefore the materials in this curriculum gather the tools and methods used during the national training events as well as the description of the content covered and why.

It is important to note that this curriculum was built on activities adapted to four specific communities of migrants. Consequently, the methods are limited in their scope and are certainly not universal. The main objective is to share our experiences so that they can serve as good practices and can provide general guidelines to any actor who would like to reproduce and adapt them to another community of migrants.

PROJECT PRESENTATION

The aim of the European project 'Access to Rights and Civil Dialogue for All' is to examine how European Union (EU) citizens residing in an EU member state other than their own participate in the democratic life of their country of residence and of the EU as a whole. Furthermore, the project aims to increase the information available to European citizens residing in a member state other than their own, provide them with incentives to vote and stand in municipal and European elections, and raise awareness about fundamental rights and the fight against racism and xenophobia. Moreover, as the presence of women in key political decision-making positions is often low, the project seeks to address the cross-cutting issue of the need to strengthen the participation of women's associations of EU citizens residing in member states other than their own.

To reach these goals the project conducted a comparative study that analysed five communities of European immigrants, and set up a number of national training events in the countries involved in the project. The training events were workshops on participatory democracy for associations of EU citizens residing in a member state other than their own. The results of the comparative study were strengthened by working together with experts. This enabled the project's partners to prepare and adapt training modules to the specific needs of a particular community in each participating country. The training events were aimed at representative associations of non-national EU citizens, and especially women's associations, with the intention of strengthening these people's participation in the democratic life of their country of residence and of the European Union.

During participatory workshops, as well as interviews and meetings with researchers and influential members of the communities under study, we identified useful methods of overcoming the barriers to participation, and protecting the

fundamental rights of these communities in their country of residence. This information will be useful to other associations that seek to promote European citizenship.

THE TRAINING EVENTS

The partner organisations used the training events to develop workshops focused on the democratic participation of influential members of the communities in Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and Greece. The events were intended to empower non-national EU citizens living in these countries by raising their awareness of their rights and fostering their participation in the political life of the country in which they live. The events also provided a chance to promote intercultural respect.

The training events provided an important space for presenting and discussing the findings of the comparative study and its recommendations with its target audience. In particular the results needed to reach members of the communities who were most likely to encourage the participation of EU-nationals living in other EU countries, to disseminate information on the protection of their communities' rights, and fight against discrimination and stereotypes, particularly those regarding women. Consequently, it was important to provide these people with the necessary tools to mediate between cultures and help foster participation. In order to do so, we began by creating a map of the relevant major organisations, including the media, and contacted their representatives. In countries such as Belgium we also examined the candidates standing in the municipal elections. In order to select our participants we focused on women's participation due to the important role women play in the communities under study, but also to foster women's participation and strengthen women's rights.

CONTENT COVERED

The training events were held over two days and divided into several sessions. During the first day experts provided an overview of the general framework and content of the project, as well as the general situation of the communities under study with a specific focus on the political and labour rights of European citizens. Organisations that support immigrants or that specifically focus on their communities were given the chance to introduce themselves.

During the second day the partners organised their own activities. The aim of this session was to help them develop the tools they need to strengthen their political and social participation and promote access to rights and employment in their country of residence.

The training sessions involved several associations that represent the communities involved in the project or that deal with citizenship rights. Each partner involved in the project adopted a specific methodology during the development of the training event.

DESCRIPTION OF TRAINING EVENTS ORGANISED DURING THE PROJECT

Prior to the training events, each project partner identified the main problems faced by the different communities of migrants. According to the type of content delivered within each of the trainings and the participants profiles, the

training activities could be divided in four categories: a) training events aimed at promoting information and dialogue on citizenship and fundamental rights among communities of migrants, b) trainings aimed at empowering migrant associations, c) training events aimed at promoting the role of the social economy among migrant communities, and d) training events aimed at developing the capacity of migrants associations to disseminate and broadcast information on migrants political rights.

For example, one of the main issues faced by the Romanian migrants associations in Spain was to receive and be able to disseminate information on fundamental rights and more specifically on the legal status of migrants. This is why the goal of the Spanish training event was how to stimulate discussions and debates on ways of promoting information and dialogue on citizenship and fundamental rights among communities of migrants.

Polish migrants in Belgium encounter problems caused by the lack of information regarding the rights and responsibilities associated to EU citizenship and of contact with the Belgian society. The idea of the Belgian training event was therefore to strengthen the knowledge of representatives of influential Polish associations about the Belgian political system and to help them network up with other Belgian associations and institutions. The event contributed to building up the capacity of these associations to become more involved in local life by giving them tools to disseminate information and to launch new projects with the

support of a network of Belgian actors. Similar topics were covered during the Greek training event for representatives of Bulgarian associations.

In Italy, the local partner decided to take a slightly different approach by strengthening the link between socio-economic integration and participation through social economy. Representatives of the Romanian communities of migrants lacked knowledge on labour laws and on the importance of civil participation at the work place. Therefore, the Italian training event worked on the ways cooperatives and social enterprise can be effective methods of strengthening the participation in civil life and of upholding the right to work.

Finally, the representatives of Portuguese communities in France, that are considered to belong to the oldest migration wave of the project, face a lack of "sustainable citizenship" habits and constant participation in French social and political life. This is why the French training event aimed at building up the capacity of Portuguese associations in France to set up awareness-raising campaigns to strengthen the political and civic involvement of the Portuguese community in France.

Training events aimed at promoting information & dialogue on citizenship & fundamental rights among migrant communities

THE SPANISH TRAINING EVENT

Two training events were held; one in Tarragona on May 31 2012 and another in Barcelona on July 6 2012. The first training session took place at the University Rovira i Virgili and was aimed at academics and professionals who directly or indirectly work with Romanian associations or with issues related to European rights integration. The participants included researchers, PhD students, lawyers and the leaders of migrant associations.

Day one: 31 May 2012

Three sessions were held on the first day of training.

1. **General presentation:** the session began with a presentation of the project 'Access to Rights & Civil Dialogue for All' and the results of the Spanish national study, which provided the basis for further discussion and analysis.
2. **Migrants' participation – good practices and legal aspects:** during the second session a roundtable was held with Angela Hurgoi, a representative of the Romanian Community Association of Catalonia; Enri Aznar, technical representative of the Technical Unit for Migration and Citizenship at Tarragona's town hall; and Diana Marin, a private law professor from Universitat Rovira i Virgili. They presented their work and how it incorporates the active

participation of migrants. The speakers pointed out the weaker and stronger aspects of their work and how they encourage people to integrate into local society. Diana Marin focused on legal aspects that help people in their daily lives, but also those that cause practical difficulties. She also demonstrated numerous aspects that need to be improved if local people's and migrant rights are to be strengthened.

3. **The practical meaning of EU citizenship:** the third session was a group debate on aspects related to the European integration of EU citizens and how rights are used and shared. During the debate, participants discussed the lack of commonalities between different countries' legal systems. The expert on private law explained some examples about legal issues involving privacy – such as marriage and divorce – and the way individuals are affected by and can use common private law. The discussion was conceived as an open debate during which the speakers and the audience discussed these issues and searched for common perspectives.

Day two: 6 July 2012

The second training event was held at the 'Pati Llimona' social centre in Barcelona. This event had a wider focus and was open to professionals, migrants and the public. The methodology it followed was similar to that of the first day, but closer attention was paid to the topic under discussion, as there were more speakers and a wider audience was present.

The second day was also divided into three sessions:

1. **General presentation:** this first session was used to present the project's findings.

2. **Perception of participation and integration:** the second session was dedicated to the discussion of rights, democracy and participation. Fernando Pindado, from the Sub-directorate for the Promotion of Democratic Quality of the autonomous government of Catalonia, and Florin Bojor, the founder of the Iberian Party of Migrants took part in the discussion. The session then continued with a discussion about the realities and stereotypes associated with Romanian migration. Miguel Pajares, a researcher in anthropology specialised in Romanian migration from the University of Barcelona, and Diana Dinu, from the Romanian Intercultural Mediators Association took part in the discussion. The debates consisted of a brief introduction by the guests, a discussion between the speakers, and questions from the audience.

3. **Migrant networks and political participation:** the second day of training was concluded with a round table involving Irina Sipetean, a founder of the Association Saoroma, which is specialised in Roma migration; Xavier Cubells, from the Civil Rights Department of Barcelona's city hall; and Diana Marín, professor of private law from Universitat Rovira i Virgili. During the final round table a very interesting discussion was held about the creation of political parties for migrants as a suitable means of promoting their political participation; however, the participants expressed the view that such parties endanger coexistence. At the same time, interesting experiences were explained, such as the efforts developed by Barcelona's city hall to reduce stereotypes about migrants, and the work developed by Association Saoroma. The issue of legal inequalities was raised once again, and there were both doubts but also a general acceptance of the need to find a practical solution to the problem.

Main issues addressed:

- Promote EU citizenship as a path to integration, despite the difficulties this involves.
- Consolidate common European laws to reduce inequalities between citizens from different countries, and the practical problems these cause.
- Provide information about the legal status of migrants to promote citizenship.
- Promote policies of integration, and work on social and economic inequality.
- Consider migrants' different approaches to political participation to avoid problems of coexistence.
- Integrate policies that support the role of migrants' associations.
- Focus less on integrated migrant minorities.
- Promote European legal integration.

Training event aimed at empowering migrant associations

THE BELGIAN TRAINING EVENT

The Belgian training event was aimed at members of the Polish community who were likely to encourage the political and civil participation of other Polish people; disseminate information on the protection of Polish people's fundamental rights, and the fight against stereotypes and reciprocal discrimination, particularly concerning women. In order to do so, PLS, the organisation responsible for the event, began mapping the major Polish organisations in Belgium, including the Polish media; it then contacted the relevant representatives. Furthermore, PLS were able to reach the Polish candidates standing in the next municipal elections. In selecting participants, the group concentrated on women's participation due to the important role women play in the community but also to encourage women's participation and the promotion of women's rights. Influential local people were also involved.

The training event was divided into six sessions:

Day one: 2 June 2012

1. **General Presentation:** the training sessions began with a presentation of the project's general framework and content, as well as the general situation of non-national EU citizens from the communities under study.
2. **Political Participation:** after a brief presentation of the training objectives and its context, the participants provided an overview of the current situation of their communities and identified the problems they encounter in everyday life

(discrimination, comparisons with the majority society in Belgium, the labour market situation etc.). They then organised themselves into small groups and wrote down the main problems encountered by the Polish community in Belgium before proposing solutions to these problems. The participants were then invited to draw symbols of Belgium and of Belgian life (such as beer, chocolate, apartments in rows etc.) and to explain these symbols. A Belgian trainer also presented her idea of Poland through symbols. The objective of this activity was to deconstruct stereotypes by discussing the realities of Belgian and Polish people's lives. The participants then discussed their understandings of democracy and political participation. The results of these discussions were summarised and shared among the participants.

3. **Good practices:** organisations focusing on civil society and migration presented their activities and results. Different methods of participation were presented in a didactic and practical manner. In order to bring the participants closer to local institutions, the first day of training ended with a visit to the municipality of Saint-Gilles. In particular, Carlo Luyckx, deputy mayor of Saint-Gilles, opened the doors of the municipality's main rooms and explained their function. He also welcomed the group into his office, where he described his daily work as mayor.

Day 2: 9 June 2012

1. **Implementation of the results:** in order to consolidate the work done during the first day, the second day of training started with a reminder of what had been learned the week before. The session was formally opened by the consular officer of Poland in Belgium, who was invited to give a presentation on the services offered by the consulate to Polish associations in terms of funding, contacts and visibility. The presentation by the Polish ambassador

was followed by a talk by Myriem Amrani (social cohesion coordinator of the local mission of Saint-Gilles), who spoke about the importance of associative networks and intercultural contacts between associations at the local level. The aim of this was to provide information on the help and funding possibilities available for new and existing support projects in this field.

2. **Application:** the participants had the opportunity to put their skills in the field of participation into practice through simulations of real situations and specific problems. In particular, the participants were asked to outline a project concerning their community. Small groups were then set the task of identifying and defining a project aimed at improving the integration and participation of Polish people in Belgium, and women in particular. The ideas included theatre courses for children in French and Polish, the organisation of a mixed nursery, and a cooking party for women of different culinary cultures. The participants were then invited to choose a general topic for their project, which was to be related to the problems identified during the first day of training. Once these projects had been chosen, each group presented its project in order to discuss how it could be implemented (objectives, methods, target audience, etc.).
3. **Evaluation:** at the end of the workshop, the participants had the opportunity to comment on the quality of the training. The training was rated highly by all of the participants.

Main issues addressed:

It is mainly language problems, a lack of contacts and networking with Belgian society (particularly among associations), a general lack of information as well as administrative burdens that hamper the active participation of the Polish community in Belgium.

THE GREEK TRAINING EVENT

The Greek training event was organised by the Institute of Social Innovation (ISI) in Athens at the Greek—Bulgarian Association on May 12 and May 13 2012.

To encourage people to participate, a formal announcement and open invitation to the training sessions was drafted by the ISI and distributed to the Bulgarian community in Greece three to four weeks before the workshops were due to begin. This included the following:

- A press release in Bulgarian to all Bulgarian newspapers published in Greece; it was published in the newspaper *Bulgaria today*.
- The ISI's announcement was published on the websites of various groups and associations of Bulgarians living in Greece and on relevant Facebook pages.
- The announcement was also sent to the Bulgarian embassy in Athens with the request to forward it to all Bulgarian associations.
- The Greek—Bulgarian Cultural Association sent personal invitations to its members and friends and to key members of the Bulgarian community in Athens.

The training programme was divided into two parts:

Part one:

1. **The complex political system of the European Union:** this session provided general information on EU institutions, on European citizen's political, social and economic rights, and on the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The role of civil society in EU treaties and in a political context was also raised.

2. **Civil dialogue and participatory democracy:** this session provided information on civil dialogue, and the way it can provide a voice to European citizens. The participants were shown that civil dialogue and participatory democracy are key elements in the EU political model, and that the Lisbon Treaty can be a useful a means of enabling direct participation in decision-making.

Part two

1. **Participation in civil dialogue and in decision-making processes at the national and the European level:** this session presented the meaning and importance of participation regarding the interests of non-national EU citizens residing in member states other than their own. The participants learned various tools and methods of participation and were introduced to the main civil society organisations that operate at the European level.
2. **The participation of Bulgarian citizens in local and European elections in Greece:** this session focused on the participation of the Bulgarian community in local and European elections. The participants identified obstacles that had hindered them from exercising their political rights (institutional framework and procedures, etc.). The role of women in this process was underlined though the sharing of personal experiences.
3. **Bulgarian immigrants in Greece and their associations:** this last session assessed the role of migrant associations in encouraging Bulgarian participation. The participants discussed the role, possibilities and future of such organisations.

It is important to note that the attendees valued the training event and were happy with the methods that were employed. There is strong evidence that the

event has led to increased confidence and knowledge regarding the exercise of rights associated with political and social issues. Although there is less evidence of a direct effect of the event on individuals' own practices and their ability to raise awareness among other Bulgarians living in Greece, future data may demonstrate the contrary. As such, organisers of future related training events might explore, for example, whether the issue of labour rights can be incorporated into a more structured format in training activities aimed at associations belonging to the Bulgarian community.

As far as the content of future events, the Bulgarian associations in Greece and the results of these workshops suggest that training should be combined with the development of strong networking between the people involved. In this way, information about non-national EU citizens could provide new opportunities to enhance social networking and learning, sharing materials and experiences, as well as overcoming individual and organisational barriers that have otherwise limited access to information on political and social rights. Further exploration of how to use the information packages prepared for the workshops, for example, through the internet, are highly recommended. It would also be important to ensure the engagement of influential members of the Bulgarian community from the planning stages of subsequent events.

The participants made the following suggestions of how the appeal and usefulness of the training days could be improved:

- Include more topics related to labour rights and the free movement of people in the EU.
- Discuss and explain the administrative processes of registering non-national EU citizens in the local and European elections.

- Provide information on the national and EU authorities responsible for handling complaints or requests by non-national EU citizens moving to another EU country.

Main issues addressed:

The two training days with members of associations belonging to the Bulgarian community in Greece provided some important findings on opportunities but also the obstacles confronted by non-national EU citizens wishing to exercise their political and social rights in Greece. Furthermore, the events also led to important findings on what is needed to increase their participation in the political life of their host country: more information, and tools to raise awareness.

During the discussions held as part of the training sessions, members of the Bulgarian associations pointed out that the exercise and enjoyment of political and social rights by non-national EU citizens are in most cases not hindered by legal problems, but by subjective reasons such as the lack of appropriate information and low levels of awareness.

More specifically, the participants stated that the main causes for the poor exercise of these rights are:

- Low levels of awareness and information among Bulgarian immigrants living in Greece regarding their political and social rights as EU citizens.
- Low levels of awareness and information among officials in public institutions and civil service regarding the rights of non-national EU citizens living and working in Greece.

- A lack of adequate information in Bulgarian on legal and other issues (labour, social insurance, civil society) concerning Bulgarian citizens who live and work in Greece.
- The abuse of power and the lack of professional competence among key people such as lawyers and civil servants.

Furthermore, the participants made a number of more general recommendations on how to improve overall awareness and levels of information among the Bulgarian community in Greece regarding participation in social and political life. These included:

- Conducting seminars or workshops on a monthly basis about the European Union (structure, institutions, policies for free movement, etc.) and about the social and political life of Greece. Representatives from public bodies should also be involved.
- Developing and running information services as part of the associations belonging to the Bulgarian community so as to provide assistance and mitigation when Bulgarian immigrants' political and social rights are violated.
- Publishing information material (brochures etc.) on the social and political rights of Bulgarians living and working in Greece.
- Cooperating with local authorities in order to disseminate relevant information to non-national EU citizens living in Greece through local authority websites and information desks.

Training events aimed at promoting the role of the social economy among migrant communities

THE ITALIAN TRAINING EVENT

The Italian training event took place in Rome at the Istituto Sacro Cuore on June 16 2012 and July 5 2012. The event was entitled 'Enhancing awareness on access to rights and the civil dialogue of the Romanian community in Italy' aimed to raise awareness among cultural mediators, representatives of associations and people who work directly with the Romanian community in Italy about social, civil, political and labour rights. The overall objective was to empower people who are close to the Romanian community to encourage Romanians to participate more in Italian civil and political life.

The event's contents were discussed and set out during a lunch debate in February 2012. The training event was to focus on two main issues: strengthening the Romanian community in Italy's understanding of civil and political rights; and providing information on their rights to work and participate in civil society through work. A day-long training event was organised on both issues.

Each day of training was divided into three main sessions:

In the first session, experts provided participants with an overview of the project's general framework and content, as well as the Romanian community's situation in Italy with a specific focus on the political and labour rights of European citizens. The second session was used to present tools that could improve the Romanian community's access to social, civil and political rights, and employment. In the

Italian case, these tools included social enterprise, and the social enterprise consortia, associations and trades unions. The third session aimed to demonstrate best practices and useful ways of using the tools that had been presented during the second session. This was done through interviews with Romanian citizens, who are clearly best placed to describe the problems they face.

Day 1: 16 June 2012. Enhancing migrants' rights and participation in political life

The first day of training was dedicated to the situation of Romanian citizens in Italy. The training event was aimed at mediators, representatives of associations, and religious people with close contact to the immigrant communities. During the first day, thirty-seven mediators working in Italy and Romania participated and presented the situation of the Romanian community in Italy. They highlighted the community's main problems and demonstrated possible solutions.

In particular, the first training day covered:

1. **The general situation of the Romanian community in Italy:** this first session was introduced by Antonio Ricci, author of the *dossier statistico immigrazione caritas/migrantes* who explained the situation of the Romanian community in Italy. Simonetta Bormioli, a sociologist responsible for the research project PROCHILD in Rome, described her experiences with the Romanian community in the province of Rome by describing the situation of migrant families and especially the situation of children, their problems and their rights. Mihai Muntean, general secretary of the Romanian Party in Italy, spoke about political participatory rights and the civil rights of European citizens; particular reference was placed on the rights of Romanians as European citizens in Italy.

2. **Tools to improve participation:** Anna Stanescu, president of the cooperative *Risvolti*, started the second session and explained how cooperatives and social enterprise are effective methods of participating in civil life and of upholding the right to work. Miruna Cajvaneanu, a journalist from HotNews.ro/*Gazeta Românească Italia*, provided further background information to Anna Stanescu's experiences by talking about cooperatives that have not been so successful and the reasons why they did not work, including details on the difficult relations with local institutions. She also provided information about associations in general and how they can enhance the civil participation of European citizens. Finally, Dana Mihalache, president of the *Associazione Socio-Culturale Spirit Romanesc*, concluded the day by underlining the importance of the role played by cultural mediators in strengthening Romanian citizens' participation in Italian civil and political life.

Day 2: 5 July 2012. Labour law and the importance of civil participation at work.

The second day of the event was dedicated to the employment situation of Romanian citizens. This training day was aimed at cultural mediators, representatives of associations, as well as trades unionists and potential entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs.

Twenty-two cultural mediators, teachers, and association representatives attended the second training day. It was divided into the following four sessions:

1. **Economic integration and the role of trades unions:** the first session was introduced by Rando Devole, a sociologist, journalist and the national secretary of the FAI – CISL, who talked to the participants about the role of trades unions and the protection of immigrant workers. In particular, he focused on

the role of trades unions and the potential integration paths within regular and legal frameworks. He also underlined the importance of enhancing active citizenship through legal work as a form of social integration. Following Rando Devoles' presentation, Maria Mora, a researcher at *Osservatorio migrazione – CGIL*, spoke about the legal framework for immigrants in Italy with a focus on the role of trades unions and the protection of workers' rights. She provided an overview of the situation of Romanian workers in Italy, their relation to the labour market, contracts, participation and their perceptions of trades unions.

2. **Social enterprises as a tool to enhance participation:** the second session saw Ferdinando Firenze from Connecting People explain how and which tools can successfully be used to sustain employment through the activities led by social enterprise and social consortia. He presented the different ways in which governmental agencies and consortia of social cooperatives can operate to support immigrants on labour issues. He particularly focused on the experiences of his organisation, which is a consortium of social cooperatives and associations set up to welcome, assist, and provide support to immigrants in Italy.
3. **Good practices:** the third session, dedicated to experiences, saw Iulian Braniste, director of *Group Europa Senza Confine* and member of the European Parliament of Enterprises (EPE) in Brussels, explain about his own experience as a Romanian entrepreneur in Italy, including difficulties and successes. As a member of the EPE, he provided an overview of the citizenship status of Romanian workers throughout Europe.
4. **Spread the word:** in the last session, Pierluca Ghibelli, an international project coordinator at CGM, concluded the two days by stressing the importance of labour issues regarding the participation of EU immigrants – in this case

Romanians – in Italian political and civil society. He thanked the cultural mediators for their participation and encouraged them to spread the word among the communities they work using the information they had gathered during the training sessions. He argued that this would encourage Romanian participation and increase awareness among the community of their rights as EU citizens.

The participants greatly appreciated the training sessions. The events were aimed at cultural mediators, associations, trades unionists, entrepreneurs and social entrepreneurs.

The aim of the event was to provide the participants with tools that can strengthen the participation of the Romanian community and raise awareness of their social, civil and political rights in Italy – including the right to employment. The participants included people from social enterprise and the consortia of social enterprise, associations and trades unions. The training sessions were enriched by the presentation of best practices and the use of the tools that had been presented during the second training session to interview Romanian citizens who clearly are best placed to describe the problems we aimed to solve.

Training event aimed at developing the capacity of migrants associations to disseminate & broadcast information on migrants political rights

THE FRENCH TRAINING EVENT

The French training event took place on October 29 and October 30 2012 in Paris.

Day 1: 29 October 2012

The first day of training started with a presentation of the project by Arnaud Breuil, director of ICOSI. Jorge de Portugal Branco, a representative of social services at the Portuguese embassy, then held a presentation on the history of Portuguese immigration to France and the community's integration into the country. This was followed by a discussion about the national study on the Portuguese community, which had been drafted as part of the comparative study. The first day of training ended with a presentation made by the representative of the League of Human Rights (project citizen voting) and a discussion on the concepts of citizenship, civil dialogue and participatory democracy and their practical applications.

Day 2: 30 October 2012

The second day of training started with a presentation by Marie-Hélène Euvrard, vice-president of the CCPF, on time exchange and possible areas of improvement with which to strengthen the political and civic involvement of the Portuguese community in France. This presentation was followed by a discussion among

the participants. These activities were used to plan the awareness campaign developed below.

Guidelines for the awareness-raising campaign

The awareness-raising campaign focuses on citizen participation. In 2014, local and European elections will take place in France. The campaign will begin by concentrating on the local level before moving to the European level.

The following points were made during the training days:

Arguments must be practical:

The conclusions of the study on the Portuguese community in France suggest that we need to develop clear and specific arguments and actions. We need to challenge the Portuguese community and find out what directly affects their everyday lives. This could be done in the following manner:

- Provide five good reasons to vote (for example, what will be done with your taxes).
- Provide the necessary practical information on how to register on the electoral lists (where, when and how).
- Devise a list of the most frequently asked questions and provide answers to them. This information should be accessible to all on a website, or social network.
- Deconstruct the common beliefs and prejudices that Portuguese people have about politics: these points should also be made available on the internet.

Developing the campaign:

- Distribute flyers.
- Provide briefings.
- Have a presence at major community events. Request the schedule of meetings taking place by associations in 2013 from the consulate.
- Provide testimonials.
- Inform training association representatives on how to register to vote and on recurring questions about voting so they can provide accurate and complete information to the Portuguese community.

Strengthening the awareness campaign:

- Through cultural associations, students, teachers, local politicians. 20% (1 million) of Portuguese people are involved in associations. How can we reach other people?
- Use the media: radio spots, round tables (radio stations such as: Clermont, Bordeaux, Lyon, Cergy - RGB).
- Social networks (Facebook, Twitter).
- Young people: non-French speaking Portuguese people are often older than fifty years of age. Young people need to be encouraged to inform their parents about their rights. This means having a presence at events such as concerts and associations involved with youth culture.
- Institutional channels: communities need to be engaged at anchor points that provide the means of disseminating information. Embassies and consulates. Town halls and consulates are often visited by immigrants.
- Education: Portuguese teachers can provide information when they meet with parents; Universities and student networks. It would be useful to establish a national map of places that could be used to provide information about the

campaign. The aim would be to bring together different actors in the same region and maximise the campaign's effectiveness.

These recommendations were established together with all of the participants. Each association shared its experiences and provided its opinion on different ways of raising awareness among the Portuguese community.

The two days of training also provided the opportunity to exchange views on how to plan a successful awareness-raising campaign.

Tips for Trainers

Based on the experience of the organisation of training activities we could propose the following tips for trainers and a general structure to be considered when organising similar training events.

Tips for trainer

Target your action: do not try to be too broad. A well-prepared, specific activity is usually more successful.

Choose the topics: choose them according to the participants you expect to attend.

Be flexible: organise your activities well, but be prepared to modify them.

Inform the participants: informed participants are empowered participants. Clear communication about the practical aspects of the training sessions will reassure the participants. Ensure they know the subject of the training, its location (provide a map if necessary), its duration, schedule, necessary equipment, and the food and drinks that will be available.

Active participation: try to involve the participants in the workshop.

Look for collaboration: involve members of the local community. They can help disseminate information, and act as a strong voice that may widen expectations.

Integrate: apply theoretical knowledge to practical experiences.

Find relevant speakers with relevant information: successful experiences, useful knowledge, practical contacts.

General structure of a training event

OBJECTIVE

Increase the participants' awareness of their EU citizenship rights and foster their participation in the political life of their country of residence, while promoting intercultural respect.

ORGANISATION

In these training examples, activities are organised into sessions spread over two days. Participants are informed in advance about the workshop programme. They are also asked to confirm their participation.

DEVELOPMENT

During the first day, experts provide participants with an overview of the project's general framework and content, as well as the general situation of the respective community with a specific focus on the political and labour rights of European citizens. The first day is also available for the organisations involved in the support of immigrants or with a specific focus on their community to present themselves and their work.

During the second day the activities are more specific and directly related to the underlying objective. The aim is to provide the participants with tools that can improve their political and social participation and promote social, civil and political access to rights and employment in their country of residence.

COMMENTS

Each participant leaves with a set of documents containing the presentations made by the various speakers, information about the associations that were present, a flyer on the municipal elections in their own language (in the case of Belgium, participants received information in Polish), and a list of useful contacts and potential partners to develop further projects or obtain assistance.

Final thoughts

At the end of the training session, the participants expressed their opinions about the quality of the workshops. The reactions were very positive; the participants' only regret was the lack of time compared to the volume of information with which they had been provided. Many participants expressed a wish to spend more time on the activities.

The objective of the training events was to enable participants to understand the electoral and democratic system of their country of residence and promote integration and participation of the communities themselves. Furthermore, the training also aimed to mobilise community networks and transfer knowledge to the communities.

In practice, the training modules encouraged participants

1. To share, compare, and promote social participation.
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2. To question their own prejudices and identify levers of integration and participation in the communities located in their country of residence.
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3. To discover, analyse, identify and implement the most suitable tool for each situation.
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4. To design, plan and describe possible solutions for the problems the communities in question encounter.
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5. To share knowledge within their community in their country of residence.

