

LIKE

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CITY OF ATHENS

OPANDA

Culture, Sports
& Lifelong Learning
for all



IMMERSION VISIT

April 10-12, 2019

Refugees, migrants, how to ensure
their integration through innovative
social and cultural policies?

THE EXEMPLE OF ATHENS

Find the program on :

www.likeculture.eu



IMMERSION VISIT

Based on the needs and challenges that local authorities face in Europe, LIKE - the network of European regions and cities for culture, organizes immersion visits on territories implementing innovative practices on different topics.

The aim is to help local authorities and cultural organisations to find answers to their needs and questions and to build in Europe sustainable cultural policies that are concerned about social, societal and environmental issues.

The purpose of the immersion visits is to learn by first-hand how good practices are being implemented, and to analyse their transferability to other entities, so participants will be able to implement (or be inspired by) the good practices in their organisations.

Furthermore, LIKE would like to increase the possibilities of collaborations at the European level for local authorities. To conclude each immersion visit, local authorities willing to be more involved will be given the opportunity to participate in a cooperation laboratory on the topic, to develop together innovative project ideas.

Transferability being one of the key point of the process, after each immersion visits, case studies will be disseminated to all local authorities and cultural organisations in Europe.



THE EXEMPLE OF ATHENS / Athens integration policy

How to insure a smooth integration of refugees and migrants with the local population through innovative social and cultural policies, when the economic situation constrains you to do more with less ?

Athens has become a point of reference in the perilous and difficult journey of people fleeing conflict zones and people in search of a better and safer life. Indeed, according to the UNHCR, nearly 29000 migrants arrived in Greece by the sea in 2018.

Since the summer of 2015 and despite the ongoing economic crisis, the municipality of Athens has decided to step up, not only offering land and equipment but also insuring cultural integration.

Innovative practices, transversal policies and cooperation with civil society are the key of its success.

On April 10th, 11th and 12th, we will experience the reality of this integration policy in Athens through projects presentations, on-site visits and meetings with elected representatives, cultural organisations and experts.

This immersion visit is organised in partnership with the board of culture, youth and sports at the municipality of Athens (OPANDA).

The study visit in Athens is open to all, with a limit of 20 participants. The participation fee is 190 euros, includes meals and is to be paid in advance.

Registration requests are to be send by email at l.brion@likeculture.eu who will give you more information and invoices.

WEDNESDAY 10, APRIL

Meeting Venue : Victoria Square Project, 13 Elpidos Street

17 :00

Welcome speech by Michaël Moglia, LIKE's chairman

Victoria Square Project, on-site visit

Social sculpture located in the Athenian neighborhood of Kypseli, Victoria Square has become symbolic of the migrant and refugee challenges facing Athens. *Project details page 3*

18 :30

On-site visits : Municipal Market in Kypseli, by Impact Hub Athens Team.

Impact Hub Athens is part of an International Network of social driven professionals and a variety of high impact creative professionals that are dedicated into prototyping the future of business. From social inclusion and social integration to environment and fair trade, the Impact Hub Athens is engaging expertise from its worldwide presence and creating a net of inter-cultural, high impact community that acts locally and internationally. What is the impact on refugees integration ? *Project details page 4*

20 : 30 / Networking dinner

THURSDAY 11, APRIL

Meeting Venue : Athens Town Hall, Athinas Street 63 - Gounaropoulos Chamber

9 :00 / Welcome speech by Mr Konstantinos Bitzanis, President of OPANDA
(board of culture, youth and sports of the municipality of Athens)

9 :30 / Athens' integration policy by Mr Eleftherios Papagiannakis, Vice-Mayor for Migrants, Refugees and Municipal Decentralization

Since the beginning of 2015, with Greece's unprecedented number of migrant and refugee arrivals fleeing conflict, the City of Athens has increasingly adopted a proactive approach towards developing strategies to address the needs of these vulnerable populations. In this context, the City of Athens undertook the initiative to establish the Athens Coordination Center for Migrant and Refugee issues (ACCMR). *Project details page 5*

10 : 30 / Open Schools Project, by Mrs Maria Iliopoulou, Vice-Mayor for the Child, delegated with the exercise of the responsibilities of Directorate of Education and Long Life Learning.

The Open Schools program is an innovative initiative run by the City of Athens, which has grown popular within the local community. Schools are open to the neighbourhood and to the society. After schools hour, the school premises turn into meeting places and centres of action where the local community is invited to take part in recreational, cultural, educational and sports activities suitable for people of all ages. What is the impact on refugees integration ? *Project details page 6*

12:00 / Coffee break

12:30

Curing the Limbo

Syn-athina, Prize of Social Innovation

by Mrs Amalia Zepou, Vice-Mayor for Civil Society and Innovation

* SynAthina is the common space which brings together, supports and facilitates citizens' groups engaged in improving the quality of life in the city. By coordinating the invaluable resource of citizens' groups, the City of Athens actively listens to the needs of its people and is thus revitalized. SynAthina facilitates the exchange of information and resources between the different groups involved in activities for migrants and refugees integration in the City of Athens and thus offers immediate insight into possible gaps in service provision. *Project details page 7*

* Curing the Limbo is a program aiming at implementing a dynamic and innovative model for integration that allows refugees to become socially active. *Project details page 8*

14:00 / Lunch break

15 :30

On-site visits of projects presented previously : Open schools

20:30 / Concert at the Municipal Music Theatre

Free entrance - Optional

Followed by dinner

FRIDAY 12 APRIL

Meeting Venue : Athens Town Hall, Athinas Street 63 - Gounaropoulos Chamber

9:00

Board Meeting, Board members only

10:00

REHAC project, by Fouli Papageorgiou

The REHAC project aims at easing the refugees's transition experienced in settling in a different country and culture, by providing art and culture learning materials to aid the process of work / educational/ cultural integration. *Project details page 9*

11:00

Athens Culture Network and Athens World Book Capital

What role do they play in the refugees participation in cultural activities of the city. *Project details page 10*

12 :30

Lunch break

14: 00

On-site visits of projects presented previously

16: 30

Closing workshop : evaluation of the immersion visit

To conclude the immersion visit, let's start thinking about how to continue working together on this topic, through a cultural laboratory or a cooperation.

VICTORIA SQUARE PROJECT (VSP) is a social sculpture by the artist Rick Lowe in collaboration with the fellow artist Maria Papadimitriou, created within the framework of documenta 14 - the international art exhibition that was hosted in Athens for the first time in 2017. What is social sculpture? It is what people make of it and it implies caring for society, as a collective work of art. Working with various community initiatives, local businesses, institutions, the municipality, artists, and other individuals and groups, VSP seeks to elevate the cultural and historical assets of this vital crossroads in Athens. Each participant helps us better understand the cultural, historical, and political dynamics in this area.

Located in the Athenian neighborhood of Kypseli, Victoria Square has become symbolic of the immigrant and refugee challenges facing Athens. In 2015, when many made their way to Europe through Athens and Greece, the square became a campground for refugees. As an urban symbol of «the problem with refugees», Victoria Square offers a perfect creative platform for catalyzing cultural exchange within a diverse community, raising the estimation of the value that refugees and immigrants can bring to the community. The vision of the Victoria Square Project is to establish a concentrated moment of cultural exchange during the timeframe of documenta 14 in Athens and beyond, while organizing the community and municipality to leverage this moment to further give shape and cultural vibrancy to one of Athens's most diverse neighborhoods. The project acts as a catalyst for establishing a deeper appreciation for the diverse cultures among the Greek population. With support from a number of different sources, Victoria Square Project is continuing its work of building community among residents, business owners, and organizations in the Victoria Square neighborhood.

Impact Hub's mission

Impact Hub Athens is part of an International Network of social driven professionals and a variety of high impact creative professionals that are dedicated into prototyping the future of business. From social inclusion and social integration to environment and fair trade, the Impact Hub Athens is engaging expertise from its worldwide presence and creating a net of intercultural, high impact community that acts locally and internationally.

Refugees' integration

When the country is not equipped for an influx of new immigrants, how does the community react? Those who see the need, have the heart, and are innovative - those whom we call social entrepreneurs - come up with ingenious ways to help migrant communities, not only in providing immediate assistance, but also in creating an environment that allows integrating the newly arrived into the local communities. And where, of course, would you find those social entrepreneurs with the heart and drive to act but at Impact Hubs around the world! In honor of World Refugee Day on June 20th, we highlight the various initiatives across Impact Hubs worldwide to help the refugees.

Greece has seen the bulk of the flow of those fleeing violence in Syria. There are hundreds of new refugee assistance programs by local and foreign agencies to help Greece deal with this crisis.

Impact Hub Athens hosts a few of those initiatives, including:

- ° Solomon Magazine - a magazine written by refugees, immigrants, and Greek citizens. The magazine reports on various aspects of the refugee crises, including integration into Greek society. "Language is the first step on the path of social integration," according to Nonna Daigorodova, who wrote an article entitled No Barriers for Those Who Dare in Solomon Magazine's first Issue.
- ° #HacktheCamp was a creative marathon for the development of solutions to address refugee needs. It was held between October and December 2016. Out of the 250 ideas originally submitted, nine made it to the finals. The three winning projects are currently under development to support the migrant community in Greece.
- ° Skill Up! is a series of social entrepreneurship workshops taking place in Norway and Greece, aiming at introducing the concept of social entrepreneurship to vulnerable groups with the ultimate objective of promoting social integration and equal employment opportunities. Skill Up! aims at introducing these people to entrepreneurial tools which are important for their access into the labor market and at promoting the social impact that a social enterprise can bring to the society

Athens Coordination Center for Migrant and Refugee issues - ACCMR

Since the beginning of 2015, with Greece's unprecedented number of migrant and refugee arrivals fleeing conflict, the City of Athens has increasingly adopted a proactive approach towards developing strategies to address the needs of these vulnerable populations. In this context, the City of Athens established the Athens Coordination Center for Migrant and Refugee issues (ACCMR). The initiative aims at the efficient coordination between the municipal authorities and stakeholders operating within the city, such as national and international NGOs, international organizations, and migrant and refugee community groups.

What they want to achieve

ACCMR functions as a coordination hub for the fruitful exchange of good practices and know-how on issues ranging from temporary accommodation to integration of newcomers. The Center aims mainly to encourage the development of innovative tools and the implementation and initiatives which promote integration, while also liaising with potential donors for funding. The goal is to shape the necessary conditions for the smooth integration of migrants and refugees currently living in the city of Athens, but also for dealing with emergency situations linked with future migration flows. The Center currently counts over 90 member-organizations, while over 300 representatives of the members are actively involved in ACCMR's operations.

The ACCMR has developed a Strategic Action Plan for the smooth integration of migrants and refugees in the city. Importantly, ACCMR in collaboration with key stakeholders has produced the first Guide for the development of a Preparedness and Response Mechanism for effective contingency planning in the event of refugee-related emergencies in Athens'. The Center is liaising with other municipalities nationwide and in Europe in order to exchange and transfer know-how and experience.

How they work

ACCMR's operation is organized around 6 Working Committees with the participation of both municipal and other actors involved in the provision of services to migrants and refugees, each focusing on a specific set of services (housing, employment, health, education, legal support, gender aspects), and all working towards defining a comprehensive service delivery system that takes into consideration the short-term and long-term goals of integration. The Center currently counts over 90 members, while over 300 representatives of the members are actively involved in ACCMR's operations.

The ACCMR Digital Platform

The ACCMR platform enables its members to map their services and activities, with a view to including all initiatives taking place in the broad Athens area in relation to refugees and migrants. The online platform will work towards informing organizations operating in Athens and their professional staff on services and activities and thus facilitate their cooperation. In addition, the Platform enables the organizations to connect with individuals, businesses and other actors who want to support them.

The Athens Coordination Center for Migrant and Refugee issues (ACCMR) has been operating since June 2017 with Stavros Niarchos Foundation as founding donor and with the coordination of the Athens Partnership, under the Vice - Mayor's Office for Migrants and Refugees.

The idea

The Open Schools program is an innovative initiative run by the City of Athens, which has grown popular within the local community. Schools are open to the neighbourhood and to the society.

The school premises turn into meeting places and centres of action where the local community is invited to take part in recreational, cultural, educational and sports activities suitable for people of all ages.

During the week schools remain open with security from the final ring of the school bell until 9.30pm and during the weekends from 10am to 8pm.

«When designing the Open Schools program, we had two main things in mind: the need to convert school buildings into creative meeting points for the citizens of the local communities, as well as the importance of providing a space where one can acquire knowledge, pursue creativity and where innovation and dialogue bloom. A year later, we are truly proud to see that the school environment contributes to a more interesting daily life for the citizens of Athens»

Mayor of Athens, Georgios Kaminis

“By transforming 25 public schools into centers for scientific, creative and sports activities, as well as for language courses for Athenians and refugees, the city of Athens managed to bring together refugee and Greek children ... and offer refugee children a safe environment where they can learn and spend time outside of their accommodation centers”

Council of Europe's Handbook.

synAthina's missions

SynAthina is the common space which brings together, supports and facilitates citizens' groups engaged in improving the quality of life in the city. By coordinating the invaluable resource of citizens' groups, the City of Athens actively listens to the needs of its people and is thus revitalized. By supporting the activities of the citizens the City creates a new perception about the relationship between civic society and local governance and cultivates their dynamic, bidirectional bond. SynAthina is an initiative of the City of Athens. It was created in July 2013 and today comes under the Vice Mayoral Office for Civil Society and Innovation.

synAthina in action

- ° Collecting activities of citizens and through them learn what their priorities are for the city.
 - ° Connecting : To enable the groups and the citizens to actualize their activities and encourage them to cooperate with other groups, sponsors, and institutions.
 - ° Sieving : To pick out the activities which have a greater impact on the city and to explore their potential for use in local governance.
 - ° Incorporating : To activate the City's reflexes so that its services can be improved in relation to the current needs of its citizens.
- The citizens' activities can lead to changes in the City's political priorities, to an upgrading of the regulations and to a simplification of procedures.

synAthina provides

- ° A digital platform that offers citizens' groups the ability to significantly enhance the prominence of their activities and to contact possible sponsors.
- ° A synAthina kiosk which is as an actual meeting point where groups of citizens organize and actualize their activities and collaborate.
- ° Open Mondays and thematic meetings to reinforce the connectivity among different groups of citizens, institutions, sponsors and organizations.

synAthina in the integration of refugees

On this wide network of civil society organizations , many activities promotes the integration of refugees and migrants . synAthina help to support the effective mapping of services and activities concerning migrants and refugees in the City of Athens and thus to facilitate the exchange of information and resources between the different stakeholder groups involved in the provision of services/organization of activities. The detailed mapping of services for migrants and refugees within the geographical boundaries of Athens, offers immediate insight into possible gaps in service provision.

A Pilot project under the Urban Innovative Actions Programme

"Curing the Limbo" is a program aiming to implement a dynamic and innovative model for integration that allows refugees to become socially active. This can be achieved through attending courses in Greek, English, Creative Expression and ICT, gaining access to affordable housing, and receiving professional counseling services tailored to their needs. Refugees are thus integrated in the life of the city, by interacting with active citizen groups and participating in public events held in the neighbourhoods of Athens. In coming together, the refugees and the city exit their "limbo" state, boosting activity, cooperation, and co-existence.

The idea

Refugees and the city in post "limbo" state

The innovation of "Curing the Limbo" lies on collaborative modeling. Refugees who have received asylum but have not yet managed to normalise their lives in Athens by engaging in everyday activities are the main participants of the program, which aims to actively support them to exit the "limbo" state, caused by long-time inactiveness and an overall feeling of uncertainty. "Curing the Limbo" co-formulates a model of action, in order to address this state of inertia through participatory activities and consultation with the refugee population, active citizen groups, owners of vacant properties, and city entities. The innovative action plan ensures a spillover effect and impact spreading on a broad number of beneficiaries, beyond the direct participants. "Curing the Limbo" is founded on the principle of giving back to citizens and the city; this is the added value of the program.

The innovation of "Curing the Limbo" lies on collaborative modeling. The program aims to introduce a dynamic model of action, ensuring that refugees are becoming socially active again, get trained, attend courses in Greek, English and ICT, interconnect with active citizen groups, gain access to affordable housing, while they themselves provide for the neighbourhoods of Athens.

The Capacity Building Lab will provide:

- ° Greek learning courses as a second language, on different proficiency levels, through the use of innovative teaching methods, such as experiential learning, problem-based learning, and literacy development
- ° English learning courses : beginners and advanced ICT courses aiming to promote communication skills and create professional opportunities
- ° Audiovisual expression and creativity workshops (photography, animation, creative recording, video-art, digital-art etc.), enhancing participants' true potential, cultivating their creativity and co-working skills, as well as also helping them express emotionally
- ° Workshops for cultural mediators who will act as ambassadors, bringing together refugees and local communities.

What they aim to achieve

For refugees :

- * To ease the transition experienced in settling in a different country and culture, and start the process of building confidence and personal growth after traumatic life-changing events.
- * To encourage activities that combine cultural experiences and education, leading to individual paths of learning and integration into the host community.
- * To enhance language skills and other non-verbal methods of communication

For trainers and support workers:

- * To become familiar with a methodology that combines art and cultural expression with language learning, work orientation and basic skills development.
- * To benefit from intercultural and peer to peer learning in order to develop their own teaching and care skills
- * To be empowered to lobby policy makers to provide guidance and educational support through innovative methods exploiting culture and hands-on experiences.

Their outcomes will be:

- * Art and cultural learning materials to aid the process of work/educational/cultural integration of refugees
- * A methodology for achieving integration results through cultural experiences and language/basic skills development
- * A training of trainers' course on how to implement the REHAC methodology
- * A final report on the lessons learned during the project, including policy recommendations.

The idea

Athens is the World Book Capital for 2018. The city of Athens was chosen for the quality of its activities, supported by the entire book industry. The proposed activity program includes meetings with writers, translators and illustrators, concerts, thematic exhibitions, poetry readings and workshops for publishing professionals.

The aim of the program is to make books accessible to the city's entire population, including migrants and refugees. Members of the Advisory Committee also praised Athens' cultural infrastructure and its expertise in organizing international events.

In Athens, LIKE's members will focus on initiatives to enhance refugees' participation in the world book capital programme and thus their integration in the society.

The idea

Culture grows through synergies, partnerships and networks. Athens, with its unique heritage from antiquity to contemporaneity, is also growing as a space of inspiration, creativity and dialogue on major issues of our times and becomes a destination point of modern cultural growth. Athens Culture Net, an innovation in itself, is a program of collaborations and networking established by the municipal authority, initiated by Erifili Maroniti and Fivos Sakalis. During the last two years, and for the first time on a Local Government level in Greece more than fifty renowned cultural institutions and organizations, from both civil and public sector, as well as smaller creative groups, work together for the dissemination of culture in the neighborhoods and the promotion of public space as a field of creative expression. Today they initiate synergies and interconnect in order to achieve better communication and visibility of cultural activities for both visitors and residents of the city, while supporting the realization of international activities in Athens, co-hosting the "documenta 14" in 2017, and -more than 550- actions and events of "Athens 2018 - World Book Capital", an international UNESCO distinction that Athens won, implemented under the coordination of Athens Culture Net and it's members.

Athens Culture Net in numbers:

- 2 years of operation
- 51 member organizations
- Partnership with 200 cultural operators
- Cooperation with 11 municipal entities or programs
- 14 members meetings
- 18 working groups
- Coordination or co-organization of 2 international events
- 380,000 attendees
- Over 550 free events