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IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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Prepared by Lucia Mrazova and Serhii Svyharets (Leibniz Institute for Regional Geography, LP)



Table of Content

1. Introduction	3
2. List of Project Partners	4
3. Concluded Workshops	5
4. Who were the participants?	6
5. What topics were addressed?	10
6. What methods/tools were used?.....	11
8. What were the identified challenges to integration in rural Central Europe? ..	18
9. General plans for improvement.....	20
10. Main findings	22

1. Introduction

As a consequence of demographic change, many rural areas in Central Europe have been affected by depopulation, ageing and brain-drain. In recent years, however, rural areas of Central Europe have emerged as new immigration destinations for both regular (needed workers) and irregular (war refugees) migrants from non-EU states. This new wave of immigration represents for many regions the first major migration movement that brought people to rural areas.

ARRIVAL REGIONS confronts both demographic change and migration-related challenges in rural areas by boosting integration of non-EU nationals. The project therefore aims to develop social innovation approaches in 9 rural areas in form of pilot projects. Project partners understand social innovations mainly as novel approaches to meet social needs of non-EU nationals that are necessary for their successful integration. The experimentation with social innovation approaches is complemented by capacity building workshops. We see integration as a two-sided process without a definite end (Klarenbeek 2019), that needs efforts and behavioural adjustments of both immigrants and receiving societies. In order to strengthen the capacities of local stakeholders to support integration of non-EU nationals in our partner regions, the project partners have organized three thematic workshops dedicated to the topics of Intercultural Dialogue, Social Innovations and Migrants' Economy. In addition to these workshops, each stakeholder received an opportunity to get personal mentoring sessions, during which they could work on their specific questions.

2. List of Project Partners

PP	Partner Name	Abbreviation	Country
PP2	GAL Escartons e Valli Valdesi (LAG Escartons and Waldensians Valleys)	EVV	ITALY
PP3 & PP4	Grad Osijek (City Osijek)	Osijek	CROATIA
	Informativno pravni centar (Information legal centre)	ICL	
PP5	Unione V Montana della valli Mongia Cevetta Langa Cebana Alta Valle Bormida (Mountain Union of Mongia e Cevetta Valley Langa Cebana Alta Valle Bormida)	Unione Montana di Ceva	ITALY
PP7	Západočeská univerzita v Plzni (University of West Bohemia in Pilsen)	Uni Pilsen	CZECH REPUBLIC
PP8	Središče Rotunda, Koper, so.p. (Centre Rotunda Koper)	Rotunda	SLOVENIA
PP9	Občina Postojna (Municipality of Postojna)	Postojna	SLOVENIA
PP10 & PP11	Uniwersytet Szczeciński (University of Szczecin)	Uni Szczecin	POLAND
	Województw o Zachodniopo morskie (Westpomeranian Region)	WZP	
PP12	Burgenlandkreis	Burgenland-kreis	GERMANY
PP13	Województw o Łódzkie (Lodzkie Region)	Lodzkie	POLAND

3. Concluded Workshops

PP	Workshop	Date	Number of participants	Format
PP2	Intercultural dialogue	24 June 2020	16	Online
	Social Innovation	27 October 2020	24	Online
	Migrant Economies	16 December 2020	83	Online
PP3 & PP4	Intercultural dialogue	17 June 2020	23	Offline
	Social Innovation	4 December 2020	18	Online
	Migrant economies	5 March 2021	23	Offline
PP5	Intercultural dialogue	26 November 2020	28	Online
	Social Innovation	6 November 2020	33	Online
	Migrant Economies	19 November 2020	28	Online
PP7	Intercultural dialogue	Delayed due to COVID restrictions	unknown	Unknown
	Social Innovation	Delayed due to COVID restrictions	unknown	Unknown
	Migrant Economies	16 September 2020	32	Offline
PP8	Intercultural dialogue	26 September 2020	10	Offline
	Social Innovation	27 November 2020	9	Online
	Migrant Economies	4 December 2020	10	Online
PP9	Intercultural dialogue	23 June 2020	18	Offline
	Social Innovation	22 September 2020	10	Offline
	Migrant Economies	21 December 2020	18	Online
PP10 & PP11	Intercultural Dialogue	19 October 2020	14	Online
	Social Innovation	12 October 2020	14	Online
	Migrant Economies	16 October 2020	31	Online
PP12	Intercultural Dialogue	2 September 2020	21	Offline
	Social Innovation	28 October 2020	10	Offline
	Migrant Economies	13 January 2021	14	Online
PP13	Intercultural Dialogue	10 February 2020	26	Offline
	Social Innovation	31 August 2020	13	Offline
	Migrant Economies	26 October 2020	8	Online
In total			534	Online (15) Offline (10)

4. Who were the participants?

PP invited representatives from the following stakeholder groups:

- A) Public authorities and public bodies: local public authority (Municipality of Szczecin), regional public authority (West-Pomeranian Governor's Office-Department of Citizenship and Foreigners), national public authority, other public bodies (Provisioning Office, Migration Agency, Job Centre, Immigration Authority, Department of Asylum Seekers Benefits Act, Integration Department, Education Department, Equal Rights Representative)
- B) Business representatives: Small-Medium Enterprises (SME), Business support organisation (West Pomeranian Business School in Szczecin Business), Large enterprises
- C) Civil society actors: Interest groups including NGOs (German Red Cross, Fire Fighters, LAMSA e.V., Migration Department, Sports Associations, Forum for Volunteers)
- D) Educational bodies: Education/training centre and schools (Language School OK Perfect), Higher education and research (University of Łódź, Faculty of International and Political Studies)

Depending on the focus of the workshop, additional actors with particular expertise and interest in the area were invited. For instance, during the intercultural dialogue workshops stakeholders from educational institutions were invited, representatives of the local public services, in particular health and social services, but also sports associations. Social innovation workshops also benefited from the insights of representatives from the cultural industry such as cultural activists, animators and the volunteering sector. In addition, representatives of the migrant community and an ombudsperson also took part in these trainings. Representatives of the local employment centre, trade unions, employers themselves, educational institutions (secondary schools and universities), companies providing services for businesses and management were crucial in the workshops on migrant economies.

INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE		
Partner	Number of participants	Sector
PP2	16	Educational institutions, vocational educational training (VET), public authorities (health, social services and employment offices), NGOs, associations and voluntary sector.
PP3 & PP4	23	NGOs, regional and local administration (Social Services, Employment Office, Police, Ombudsman), SME, academic community (Faculty of Law) and municipality.
PP5	28	NGOs, associations, VET, SME and local public authorities.
PP7		Delayed due to COVID restrictions.
PP8	10	Academic and educational institutions.
PP9	18	Educational institutions (Secondary Schools and Elementary Schools, Library), public authorities (Social Services) and three migrants.
PP10 & PP11	14	Cultural activists and animators between the ages of 20-25.
PP12	21	Lead partner, local public authorities (Department of Asylum Provisioning Office, Integration Department, Coordination Migration Agency, Job Centre), educational institutions, and civil society actors (Volunteering Forum, Sports Associations).
PP13	26	Public authorities (Labour Offices, Social Services, Municipal Police Station, Marshall's Office), educational institutions (University, Centre for Social Innovation, Language Schools), SME and NGOs.
In total	156	

SOCIAL INNOVATION & NETWORKING		
Partner	Number of participants	Sector
PP2	24	Public authorities (Local Employment Office, Social Services), civil society actors (Deacony, Community Animators, Volunteers) and NGOs.
PP3 & PP4	18	Public authorities (Health, Social Services and Defenders Directorate, Employment Office, the Police, the Ombudsman,), educational institutions (Faculty of Law) and NGOs.
PP5	33	NGOs and associations, VET, SME and local public authorities.
PP7		Delayed due to COVID restrictions.
PP8	9	Educational institutions (Elementary Schools and Nurseries) and civil society actors.
PP9	10	Educational institutions (Secondary Schools, Elementary Schools), public authorities (Employment Office, Health Centre) and civil society actors.
PP10 & PP11	12	Management of culture and animation (20-24 years old).
PP12	10	Lead partner, public authorities (Integration Department), educational institutions, civil society actors and educational institutions.
PP13	13	Public authorities, educational institutions, and NGOs.
In total	129	

MIGRANT ECONOMIES		
Partner	Number of participants	Sector
PP2	83	Academic and educational institutions (high schools), civil society actors (Deacony), SME, local and regional authorities (Employment Centre, Social Services, Labour Confederation), local and national NGOs, and 3 migrants who had the role of 'witnesses'.
PP3 & PP4	23	NGOs, local and regional authorities (Social Services, Employment Centre, Police), academic and educational institutions.
PP5	28	NGOs, educational institutions, SME and local public authorities.
PP7	32	NGOs, SME, local public authorities and educational institutions.
PP8	10	Educational institutions (Elementary Schools and Nurseries), civil society actors and local public authorities.
PP9	18	Local and regional authorities, project partners and locals.
PP10 & PP11	31	Young people between the age of 21-24 specialising in management of culture and animation.
PP12	14	Lead partner, public authorities, educational institutions, civil society actors, academic institutions and public authorities.
PP13	8	Public authorities (Marshal's Office, Labour Office), educational institutions, SME and NGOs.
In total	247	

5. What topics were addressed?

Intercultural dialogue

The workshop on intercultural dialogue dealt with topics of racism, xenophobia and other "-isms" and "-phobias". Similarly, ways of addressing these challenges were discussed. For instance, the participants were introduced to the ideas of intolerance prevention and solidarity among humans, the role of language in reproducing stereotypes and how to form a dialogue of equality. The role of the media and the political and economic situation in the respected country were also addressed. The topic of tolerance was dealt with, in particular with respect to integration and how tolerance and acceptance of another culture does not mean assimilation. Lastly, specific challenges regarding the intercultural dialog in a professional context were addressed.

Social Innovation and Networking

The workshop on social innovation and networking addressed a wide range of topics ranging from education, fundraising and mobility, to labour market integration. On top of the agenda of most PP was the education of migrants, integration of children and young people, including the role of extracurricular activities, online education, and migrant's right to healthcare. In this regard, the active participation of migrants was raised and the role of communication campaigns, in other words awareness-raising aimed at both migrants and local communities was discussed. The participants learned practical steps in the realization of socially innovative ideas and discussed how social innovations can support local labour markets, promote mobility and provide new ideas for, and inspire local communities. The importance of communication and the role of networking and connecting stakeholders with the aim of concrete cooperation in the future was raised. One PP introduced the UN Sustainable Development Goals or Agenda 2030 as an overarching goal that each stakeholder could strive for.

Migrant Economies

The workshop on migrant economies focused on entrepreneur behaviours and sustainable development, social responsibility, the economic aspects of migrations, training paths, from school-work turnover to education in developing countries, focusing on the experience of locals and migrants. Furthermore, topics such as language, affordable housing, discrimination on the workplace, lack of networks and presence of cultural barriers were also addressed.

6. What methods/tools were used?

Each PP took a very individual approach in terms of the methods that were used to conduct the workshops. A third of the workshops still took place face to face, whilst the rest of them had to adapt to the current situation and switch to online platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams or Google Meet. It needs to be noted that a few PP stressed that this was the reason why fewer participants participated in their workshops, in particular PP10 and 11.

The PPs hired specialised vocational trainers and intercultural mediators in order to conduct the workshops. Usually each workshop was started with a general overview of the Arrival Regions Interreg CENTRAL EUROPE project which was followed by a theoretical insight into each specific topic. The needs, challenges and practices were also defined at this point of the workshop. The theory was followed by praxis. Trainers shared their personal experiences. For instance, intercultural mediators who themselves were migrants shared their experiences and struggles with integration and gave an insight into their own work. Moreover, PP2 for instance, invited two qualified witnesses, i.e. people with migration background who represented different professional profiles and brought into the workshop their personal experiences. Their insights were particularly valuable since they raised questions and started the discussion. Similarly, participants of the workshops that represented different institutions working directly or indirectly with migrants were able to share their experiences, make observations, share their wishes/fears and give suggestions for improvement in a round of prolific discussion.

This usually took place in smaller groups where through interactive exercises and role plays the participants dealt with certain topics. For instance, the exercise “Four Quadrants of Discrimination” used by PP9 during the workshop on intercultural dialogue evolved around sharing concrete experiences of discriminative behaviour in the local environment and was followed by a discussion on how to specifically address and stop such behaviours. The trainers conducting the online workshops were facing a great challenge, namely to keep all the participants interested in a virtual setting, encourage them to engage in a prolific discussion, and at the same time ensure that each participant has a space for and feels safe to present their views. In order to do this, various online tools such as MS Teams or Mentimeter were used. During the workshop on intercultural dialogue PP8 used online tools such as the narrative map for migrant life stories. It is a form of visual storytelling that helps migrants to tell a story not from a perspective of a data display, but by providing explicit images to places in a sequential narrative. The community building platform and awakened citizens platform were also presented. These are online platforms aimed at building up a community of professionals, institutions and volunteers who work with migrants. Moreover, PP11 used small-group discussion to create a privilege gallery based on the reflection of personal experiences of participants. The results of each group work were later carried into the big plenary.

Arrival Regions

An essential part of each workshop was sharing so-called ‘good practices’, or positive motivational examples that serve as role models and tools for improvement for each participant of the training. These good practices that were presented varied from partner to partner (for more information please visit the appendix). For instance, Mrs Hakima Nacer, a cultural mediator conducting the intercultural dialogue workshop for PP2, introduced two local initiatives working with migrants: “Fratellanza Italia Marocco” (Brotherhood Italy Morocco) supporting migrant women and “Genitori & figli” (Parents & Sons) - a space where Italian and foreign families can meet. PP3 and PP4 presented a short-film about Twana, an ex-unaccompanied minor from Iraq who lives and studies in Osijek for several years. PP8 used more distant examples, namely Sweden and Australia that according to IMPEX (Interstate Migrant Policy Index) have the highest number of migrants in education.

7. Good practices

“Fratellanza Italia Marocco” (Brotherhood Italy Morocco) (Italy), supporting migrant women.

<https://www.facebook.com/Associazione-fratellanza-italia-marocco-204588382889392/>

“Genitori & figli” (Parents & Sons) (Italy), space where Italian and foreign families can meet.

<https://it-it.facebook.com/AbeleGenitorieFigli/>

“ZHISONG” (Italy), improving Chinese-Italian relationship, targets women, children, and disabled people.

<http://www.zhisong.org/>

Abba Mussie Zerai’s (Chairman of Habeshia Agency for Cooperation and Development) (Italy), experience of creating dialogue between refugees and locals in Italy. His focus is on sharing competences to prepare the “hosting” population for the arrival of refugees.

<https://habeshia.blogspot.com/>

“SENASO” (Italy), a project by Pierre Preira who arrived in Italy from Senegal in 1999 and started a business that focused on Italian courses and professional training for other non-EU. He became a reference point and a cultural mediator for other non-EU nationals from Africa.

<https://www.senaso.it/chi-siamo/>

“L’albero delle Mele” (The Apple Tree) (Italy), an initiative promoted by the Waldesian Deacony in collaboration with the Flai trade union (the category of agro-industry workers) CGIL of Turin to combat illegal and grey work practices in agriculture.

<https://www.facebook.com/watch/migrantidiaconia/522675558627384/>

„NO CAP Association- DALLA PROTESTA ALLA PROPOSTA“ (From Protest to Proposal) (Italy), a non-profit association which brings together a network of international

Arrival Regions

activists to combat the phenomenon of illegal hiring. NO CAP aims to promote a new idea of economy based on both natural and human resources of the area, eliminating structural causes of human being exploitation.

<https://www.nocap.it>

“Camminare insieme” (Italy), improving migrant access public health services.

<https://www.camminare-insieme.it/>

“GRISS Piemonte” (Italy), improving migrant access public health services.

<https://www.simmweb.it/gris-piemonte>

“MAMMA+ Project” (Italy), addressing HIV-positive pregnant women, HIV-positive mothers and their children in the first year of life, who live in a condition of social isolation and economic unease.

<https://www.gruppoabele.org/cosa-facciamo/poverta-e-inclusione-sociale/progetto-mamma/>

Short-film about **Twana Murad Rasul** from Iraq who was found in Croatia as an unaccompanied minor and is now living and studying in Osijek for several years.

<https://integra-eu.net/news.html?start=68>

“SOL” (Croatia), Centre for Integration that supports migrants and refugees in all areas of every-day life (language learning, employment, intercultural workshops).

<https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/croatia-sol-a-new-refugee-integration-centre-in-zagreb>

“Korak po korak” (Step by step), a method that provides psychosocial and emotional support for refugee women used by the Jesuit Refugee Service in Croatia.

“Staze” (Paths) (Croatia), a monthly newspaper created by and for asylum seekers and refugees living in Croatia.

Arrival Regions

<https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/news/croatia-staze---first-newspaper-by-and-for-refugees-launched>

“Legal and Economic Clinic of the Josip Juraj Strossmayer” (Croatia), University of Osijek takes a multidisciplinary approach in improving migrant entrepreneurship. Students from different faculties work together with mentors from various backgrounds (professors, lawyers, jurists, judges, accountants, advisors of the Croatian Employers' Association, advisors of entrepreneurial support institutions, alumni). This approach has been so far only used to support local citizens, but the plan is to also support migrants in their integration path in the future.

<https://www.pravos.unios.hr/katedra-trgovackog-prava/about-us>

“Slap” (Croatia) created a system for entrepreneurship and support in the local area of Osijek based on the experiences from dealing with displaced people during the Aggression on Croatia (1991-1992).

<https://slap.hr/>

“La Bolina” (Spain), a sustainable permaculture farming project focused integration of migrants and refugees. It runs education and training programmes, grows ecological veg to sell in veg boxes and to restaurants and eco shops bringing new circular economy to El Valle.

<https://en.labolina.org/>

“Luminary bakery” (United Kingdom), a project aimed at supporting women who have experienced social disadvantage.

<https://luminarybakery.com/>

“Techfugees” (London), a project focused on creating open-source and open-data platforms to identify, list & curate tech-enabled solutions empowering displaced people across the world.

<https://techfugees.com/>

Arrival Regions

“Community Centre Gellerup” (Denmark), a project that aims at developing a new model of cooperation between different social services and the public library of Gellerup in order to better respond to the diverse needs of all communities in the area.

<http://www.aakb.dk/biblioteker/blog/from-library-to-community-centre>

“Kacze Bagno” (Poland), an independent centre of education, animation and culture, created in a building after an old barn , where various groups (youth and adults) come to play and learn together .

<http://kaczebagno.pl/>

“Dom pod cisem” (Poland), a former soap factory that was converted into a social store, hostel, café, tailor’s and carpentry workshop and a social integration centre. The income from the sales is allocated to help local disadvantaged groups.

<https://www.dompodcisem.pl/>

“#WlasniePoTo” (Poland), solving social problems through entrepreneurship and social innovation.

<https://wlasniepoto.biz.pl/>

“Welldone” (Poland), products designed by young designers and people returning to the labour market.

<https://qrator.com/welldone>

“WhatToDoIf” (Poland), supports newly arrived foreigners in acquiring the necessary language skills and information to overcome the basic obstacles to living in a new country.

<http://www.whattodoif.eu/site/>

“Inkubator Innowacji” (Poland), an initiative that provides Polish language courses for people working in transportations and logistics and English language courses for police officers.

Arrival Regions

<https://inkubatorinnowacji.com>

“Atlas of Social Innovation” (Germany), aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the concept of social innovation, by building up a knowledge repository for a growing community of practitioners, policy makers and researchers.

<https://www.socialinnovationatlas.net/>

“The Centre of Human Resources” (Czech Republic), of the Pilsen region provides complex services for qualified foreigners, who come in Pilsen region with their whole families.

8. What were the identified challenges to integration in rural Central Europe?

During the trainings stakeholders have identified a number of specific challenges of integration of non-EU nationals in rural areas of Central Europe. These challenges include:

National migration policies and regulations

- Missing national integration strategy and distrust in the government's ability to create a coordinated national response.
- Outdated national legislative frameworks that do not correspond the needs of migrants or employers (PP8).
- Lack of a joint coordinated response to the needs of labour migrants, asylum seekers, persons with subsidiary protection.
- Lack of networking and coordinated response between local stakeholders and the national government.
- Low participation of governmental organizations in integration related projects, which results in low influence over legislation and policies relevant to systemic change
- Lack of project financing that inhibits the possibility for introducing systemic changes that would in the long run improve integration.

Communication & networking

- Lack of a multilingual information flow for migrants on issues concerning every-day life (integration services, employment opportunities, education, workplace norms).
- Difficulty to reach out to migrants within rural areas (PP13).
- Difficulty to reach the parents of the migrant children, particularly due to language barriers, but also cultural differences (PP8).
- Lack of an existing network that makes it difficult for newcomers to integrate and connect.
- The impact of the pandemic on professional and personal networks of migrant citizens (compared to the Italian ones) (PP2).

Discrimination

- Rising hostility and disrespect towards rights of migrants and other minorities across Europe due to racism.
- Political Instrumentalization and stereotypization of migrants (PP3 and PP4).
- Discriminatory behaviour at schools (prejudice and social exclusion).
- Discrimination and exploitation of migrants on the labour market, due to a lack of awareness of their rights.
- Lack of affordable housing as one of the most challenging barriers to labour market integration (PP7)

Arrival Regions

Representation

- Little presence of social responsibility addressed to integration within firms and businesses.
- Lack of businesses owned and run by migrants in rural areas of Central Europe.

9. General plans for improvement

After having defined the main obstacles to integration, part of the workshops were discussions and exercises on how to tackle these difficulties in the future. The obstacles, same as the solutions, were region specific, yet there are a few suggestions that we can see repeating themselves across nearly all project partners. They can be divided followingly:

1. General everyday-life support

- Encourage the building of mutually supportive communities.
- Improvement of migrants' living conditions, e.g. in Osijek residential buildings were assigned for migrants (PP3 & 4)
- Permanent information & consultation on various everyday-life issues (PP13)
- Legal counselling for migrants (PP13)
- Easy access to important information in different languages, e.g. information pamphlets for foreigners in their own language at the job centre, doctor, school (PP8)
- database of interpreters/translators, hotline and chat, app. (PP13)

2. Better networking/ coordination

- Suggestions to involve the media in the future, in order to promote a positive image of migrants (PP3 & 4)
- Regularity of (in-person) meetings PP8)
- Connect academic and practitioners (PP8)
- Professionalisation of support systems for migrants (PP8)
- Migration needs to be integrated into curricula for people who will be working in the future in the public sector and for local and national authorities
- Support of bottom-up integration initiatives (PP13)
- Involvement of a wide range of demographics into integration activities (PP11)

3. Education

- Support easy access into education for migrants (PP8)
- Create educational platforms where migrants can learn the second language by themselves (PP8)
- Educational staff should acquire specific knowledge on working with diverse groups of students
- Keep encouraging pedagogical staff to develop intercultural skills (PP8)
- Hire more people in schools that will work only with migrant children and offer them needed support (PP8)
- Highlighting local best practices, with communication methods targeting specific age groups, in particular schools (PP2)
- The importance of paying greater attention to existing legislation, so that it can be more protective for weaker citizens. Raising migrants' awareness about rights and

duties (PP2)

- The need to continue disseminating true and real information about the precariousness and poverty situation in which part of the population, both native and migrants, live (PP2)
- 4. Support of various tool and events aiming at creating intercultural skills within communities**
- Online tools: narrative map for migrant life stories, community building platform, awakened citizens platform (PP8)
 - “Guide through a country through the eyes of a child”(PP13)
 - Organise the event ‘Festival of nations’ (PP8)
 - Importance of free language courses (PP13)
 - Migrants becoming educators themselves (PP5)
 - Presentation of good practices
- 5. Migrant economies**
- Motivate local entrepreneurs to employ migrants (PP9)
 - Promote the idea of migration as an economic opportunity.
 - Support self-employment of migrants (PP9).
 - Involve active trade unions in supporting migrant labour integration (PP2).
 - The centrality of “work & quot” as a cornerstone from which a dignified and active life develops. Putting the person at the centre and not profit (PP2)
 - Solicit and raise awareness about the role of employers and companies in terms of social responsibility and responsibility for the well-being of workers (PP2).
- 6. Clear national strategy**
- More clearly define expectations and capabilities of the state and immigrants.
 - Work on more open communication between all parties involved to manage expectations better and smooth out the process of integration into the society (PP8).
 - Bring the integration of migrants on top of the agenda of the local political and public agenda (PP2).
 - Support creation of intercultural competences among both migrants and locals (PP13).

10. Main findings

Summarizing the results of all of the trainings, we ended up with several lessons learned. These lessons should be taken into consideration by any other authority, who will organize similar capacity building activities in their regions.

1) **Thematic variety.**

According to the high number of participants and feedback from the workshops, all three topics were interesting and thematically useful for the work of the local stakeholders. Therefore, the proposed thematical composition can be used by other regions, which want to improve the capacities of local stakeholders in the support of immigrants' integration.

2) **Participants acquisition**

In order to guarantee high participation rates, the project partners needed to use various approaches to promote our trainings. The experience of the partners shows that it is extremely important to use an individual approach towards each stakeholder while promoting a workshop. An ability to present a stakeholder concrete benefits of attending a workshop is also crucial.

3) **Diversity of participants**

The partners have managed to guarantee the participation of the representatives of local authorities, governmental and local non-governmental organizations. The participation rates of local entrepreneurs on the other hand were very low. This can be explained by the fact that this type of stakeholders could not see the direct (financial) benefits of these activities. Nevertheless, the need to involve representatives of local businesses, especially those, who employ big numbers of non-EU nationals needs to be highlighted. Considering the experiences of the partners who have managed to involve participants with migration background, we would highly recommend the involvement of the representatives of local migrant communities in such activities. In our opinion, the representation of both natives and migrants allows participants to have a more productive discussion.

4) **Mode of the workshops**

All of the workshops were conducted in times of COVID-19 Pandemic. This results in the fact, that the absolute majority of the activities were shifted into online mode. While at the beginning of the pandemic a lot of rural stakeholders were resistant to use any digital tools, this hesitation has disappeared as the time has progressed. Moreover, the experience of our partners who have managed to organize both online and offline workshops shows, that online workshop do not have any major disadvantages in comparison to the offline ones. In contrast, an online mode allows participation of those stakeholders, who wouldn't be able to travel to a physical meeting.

5) Structure of the workshop.

All participants of the workshop have appreciated the fact that all three workshops had both theoretical and practical parts. Moreover, we want to motivate the future trainers to create a workshop design that satisfy the needs of the local stakeholders. Additionally, project's experience shows that the duration of 3-4 hours is sufficient for the needs of our workshops.

6) Methods used

The usage of various interactive activities (e.g. group discussion, work in small groups) during the workshops received mainly positive feedback from the workshop participants. Therefore, we would like to stress the need to design the workshops in a way that participants learn new information in a more unconventional and dynamic way. The main role of the trainer under such conditions is to moderate the discussion and navigate the participants towards the correct answers. The interactive aspect of learning is even more essential during online workshops, as it is more challenging to grasp participants' attention under these conditions. In order to conduct an interactive workshop online, we recommend to use various digital tools, (such as Mentimeter or Kaboo for online polls or questionnaires, Mindomo or Miro for the creation of the mind maps, Squarelet for online pin boards, etc.).

7) Maintaining the knowledge

It is important to understand that the participants might forget the new knowledge after a certain period of time. Thus, during the workshop trainers should provide some materials, which participants will be able to use to refresh the newly acquired information once the workshop is finished. Mentoring activities also received some positive feedback as they allowed the participants to work on their case-specific challenges connected to the topic of integration.

To sum up, the capacity building activities suggested by the Joint Training Methodology have shown positive results and can be transferred to other regions with some additional case specific adjustments.