

# LION

## Local Alliance for Integration

### NEWSLETTER #1



During the last two years, Europe and particularly Greece have faced the largest refugee and migrant influx in their recent history. The need to integrate Third Country Nationals (TCNs) into society and promote their active participation in the Greek socio-political fabric (i.e. education, sociability, employment and access to health), becomes urgent than ever.

The general objective of the LION project is to promote the active participation of third-country nationals (TCNs) in important aspects of local community and societal life and also enhance the capacities of local authorities in order to effectively address factors that lead to marginalisation and socio-economic exclusion of third-country nationals.



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Let's all work together towards a peaceful coexistence and inclusive society

Let's all form the basis for mutual trust and common responsibilities

Let's bring change and hope to our societies



## EXPECTED IMPACT

The expected impact of the actions implemented by the project is to effectively address the ongoing socio-economic disadvantages third-country nationals often face while living in the host society, and ultimately reduce the existing disparities between locals and migrant populations and secure an inclusive and cohesive society.

The creation of cooperation networks at the local community-level, where collaboration and reciprocity between the involved stakeholders will be accomplished, will play a pivotal role first in ensuring a smooth integration process, attaining the long-term impact of the actions undertaken.

## OUR APPROACH

The project will propose and implement a holistic cooperative framework for social integration through active participation, creation of alliances and networking opportunities through the following steps:

- A thorough research will be conducted in the EU and National level in order to identify the Best Practices.
- Needs analysis in the city of Thessaloniki through desk research and interviews with key players will be conducted.
- Capacity building to the host society. Specifically, workshops/trainings will be organised for Frontline practitioners, hospital staff and police officers. The aim is to cultivate intercultural competences and prepare the preconditions for the development of common activities with TCNs. Additionally, a multidisciplinary team will be also established which will provide psychosocial and legal support to TCNs.
- The development of a physical platform where key stakeholders and third country nationals will participate in a series of consultation meetings. The platform will act as a tool of networking and as a promoter of open dialogue.

## FUTURE COMMON ACTIVITIES

1. Get to know my city: TCNs along with members of the local community will visit basic points of the city (public services, historical monuments, museums, libraries etc.).
2. Consultation meetings between TCNs and healthcare professionals, representatives from healthcare services and relevant public health officers on topics related to problems/challenges of migrants accessing healthcare, sanitation issues of migrants living in camps and child and mother health.





## WHY THESSALONIKI?

The project has chosen the city of Thessaloniki to implement its actions for several reasons.

- Firstly, a large number of the migrants within mainland Greece are found in Northern Greece and especially in and around the city of Thessaloniki. According to UNHCR Data, 16 sites remain opened in northern Greece (Macedonia and Thrace regions) and in these sites, over 6,762 asylum-seekers are hosted.
- The existence of the "Immigrant Integration Council".
- The urgent needs of the city for a more coordinated approach.

The Platform will represent a wider range of TCNs which in close cooperation with the Municipality of Thessaloniki will enhance and support common activities. Before the platform establishment, necessary capacity building activities (trainings and workshops) will take place as well as dissemination actions, so as to prepare the ground of both groups for a fruitful cooperation. These activities and actions will be designed in line with the findings of a thorough research on best practices at EU and National level that will have been conducted.

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## NEXT STEPS

- The project team will conduct a thorough research at the EU and National level in order to identify Best Practices in terms of integration of Third Country Nationals. A needs analysis in the city of Thessaloniki through desk research and interviews with key social actors will also be conducted
- In line with the findings of this research, capacity building activities (trainings and workshops) will be designed, so as to prepare the ground of both groups for a fruitful cooperation between third country nationals and the local community.



## KICK OFF MEETING

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The kick-off meeting of LION project (Local Alliance for Integration) was successfully completed in Athens, Greece on 22 January 2018. The meeting took place at the National School of Public Health, with the presence of the Project Coordinator and host, Dr. George Koulirakis, along with the WP leaders and their delegations.



After a welcome note by Dr. George Koulirakis, LION's partners introduced themselves and had a thorough discussion regarding the activities of the project. The aim of the meeting was for all WP leaders to present their work, scope and objective of each WP micro-activity, including the outputs and deliverables. In addition, the meeting focused upon the coordination tools to be used, financial issues, and the establishment of the Scientific Committee.

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