



SDRUŽENÍ ASSOCIATION
PRO INTEGRACI FOR INTEGRATION
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EIF Community Actions

SIMI encourages foreigners in active citizenship in their locations

Association for Integration and Migration

News release

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A considerable part of migrants living in the Czech Republic is moving and fulfilling themselves in their working environment and in the family or close friends circle. Their lives are missing an important dimension of active participation in social, cultural, economical and political events. Some of them have difficulties with orientation in public spaces. They are not able to express themselves appropriately and consciously. Others are not motivated or they miss the awareness of principles of the function of civil society. The new project INTEGRO Association for Integration and Migration (SIMI) endeavours to change this situation. Full integration of foreigners does not end at the door of their homes or workplaces.

The SIMI directress Magda Faltová specifies: *“We perceive the need and the interest of foreigners to be able to orientate themselves better in their direct surroundings or to be able to influence events in their localities. Their consciousness about current opportunities is often insufficient. On the other hand, certain aspects of life of foreigners are often hidden to municipal office workers. We see a suitable solution in a development of concrete local arrangements which enable conforming of integrative policy to local conditions and its realization in the environment, where real interaction between migrants and receiving society takes place. It means right there, where the most significant impacts of migration can be seen.”*

The project Integration on the Ground – INTEGRO represents a new view of problems with integration of foreigners at a local level, when SIMI started to cooperate with partner organizations in Great Britain (*Northern Ireland Council for Ethnic Minority – NICEM*), in Germany (*Citizens for Europe - CFE*), in Austria (*Radio Africa*) and in Cyprus (*KISA – Action for Equality, Support, Antiracism*). International cooperation should simplify the exchange of knowledge, information and good practices during the creation of five integrative projects across Europe. Project partners will proceed in the preparation of national activities in a uniform way, whereas they will also take into account the methodology of the European Network Against Racism (ERNAR) so called “Working on integration at local level”.

SIMI invites not only partner organizations, but also foreigners and different institutions which come into contact with foreigners at the national, regional and local level, to seek for effective and successful ways to increase participation of migrants in public life. *“In four partner countries as well as in the Czech Republic, this informal platform of various participants will meet on two round tables where we will be thinking about possibilities of active involvement of foreigners into the life and events in the place of their residence. We will also seek for and train foreigners who are interested in working as intercultural workers, so-called mediators. All those things will be supplemented by an informative campaign for foreigners and for general public which will take place in a chosen locality,”* says Eva Čech Valentová, the coordinator of integration activities in the project, and explains the plans of SIMI. The result of the teamwork will be a pilot project and a creation of a new integrative activity at the local level by mid-2015.

All interested are invited to cooperate with us!

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