

Newsletter

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NEWLY ARRIVED IN A COMMON HOME

NEAR aims to foster integration of newly arrived migrants (adults and children) by helping them in settling into their host country. It also aims to support a process of mutual trust, knowledge exchange and intercultural exchange between migrants and local communities, thus creating a sense of belonging under a «new common home»

BENEFICIARIES

Newly arrived migrants (adults, minors and university students), diaspora members, diaspora organizations, volunteering organizations, local communities and authorities, local citizens, European and national organizations

What has been done so far?

Trainings enabling diaspora members to mentor newly-arrived migrants completed

A round of training sessions involving diaspora members was completed in all target countries in the past six months. Training diaspora representatives to act as mentors (or community agents) for newly arrived migrants by imparting knowledge and offering guidance, is one of the main pillars of the NEAR methodology.

The trainings were implemented in Milan, Perugia, Lisbon and Nicosia between October and December 2021 and involved 40 community agents. The trainings were designed to respond to concrete, pressing knowledge gaps expressed by key diaspora stakeholders, who had been previously mapped in the four territories. Knowledge transfer focused on immigration law and access to local services (housing, education, employment and healthcare).

Upon completing the training, community agents gained the necessary knowledge of local actors, services, and procedures in order to provide migrants with accurate and timely information. The maps - orientation devices co-created with community agents - ensured ownership of this work and will be used throughout the rest of the NEAR project to integrate formal venues (e.g. city offices, public/private/non-profit service providers) with informal ones (emotionally and culturally important places).



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What has been done so far ?

Experimentation of training and orientation paths for new arrivals

The specific activities identify tools to assist the integration of asylum seekers and refugees in host countries through a comprehensive experimental training plan. So far, 52 beneficiaries have been identified, and training activities have been carried out in plenary since October, and are still ongoing.

In Perugia, TAMAT has been working with sixteen beneficiaries, thanks to the collaboration with other associations that deal with reception or manage orientation help desks for foreigners. Most of the beneficiaries in the Perugia area are migrants with a pending asylum request or holders of international protection. Their countries of origin are Nigeria, Mali, Senegal, Pakistan and Afghanistan. The activities carried out as part of the NEAR project are focusing on the orientation to services aimed at providing useful tools for working, housing and social autonomy, through:

- free Italian courses for foreigners
- tutoring on digital identity (spid)
- orientation on active housing search
- family reunification and orientation on how to apply for university degree



Reception and orientation of newly arrived children

The activities carried out with the children, monitored within the scope of the NEAR project, aim to promote inclusion and interculturality and contribute to the development of responsible, solidary and aware children, who are in cooperation, dialogue and respect for one another. Activities are taking place in Milan, Perugia, Lisbon and Nicosia.

In Lisbon, AIDGLOBAL has promoted activities since October and with seven newly arrived children with immigrant parents aged between 6 and 12 years old. They seek to enhance their participation in school, increase their affirmation in society, and strengthen their sense of belonging to the new context and community while respecting their origins and culture.

Children were challenged to work as a team and learned that the process is more accessible even if there are challenges and obstacles when they work together.



Universities' strategies for the inclusion of students through access to academic paths

In the first months of the NEAR project, Università Cattolica, Aidglobal, CARDET and Tamat worked on the creation of on-campus maps, not only about the services and academic paths offered to international students, but also about cultural, sport and entertainment opportunities on campus. Alongside Università Cattolica (Milan), three other universities were also involved in the project: KES College Nicosia, the ISCTE-IUL of Lisbon and the University for Foreigners of Perugia. The purpose of this action was to facilitate the integration of international students, especially of those newly arrived in the four cities.

Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan



Iscte-IUL University; Lisbon



KES College, Nicosia



Università per Stranieri, Perugia



What's next?



- **Experimentation of training and orientation paths for new arrivals.** The next activities are about to start and will involve workshops on agriculture in urban gardens, providing specific training on agronomy skills, with a specific focus on horticulture and green education.
- **Orientation of newly arrived children.** In the upcoming months, workshops supporting newly arrived minors will also kick off in Milan, Perugia and Nicosia.
- **Inclusion of students through access to academic paths.** Starting from February 2022, international students will play the main role in NEAR project, taking an active part in the creation of four maps of meeting and aggregation places, cultural centres and leisure opportunities in the cities that host the four universities involved. The creation of the maps will be a networking opportunity for international students who, by sharing their stories and experiences, will be able to learn more about the city and the community they live in.



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