

European Network of Municipalities – International KO Meeting



European Local Authorities have been gradually recognized by policy makers and the EU citizens as one of the primary stakeholders in the fields of migration management and integration. In this context, and with the support of the European Integration Fund and the Republic of Cyprus, a group of organizations and local authorities have established the European Network of Municipalities (MuNet).

MuNet held its first meeting with its members from all over EU on the 16th and 17th February, 2015, at the University of Nicosia, in Cyprus. Participants were representatives from the Network's coordinating organization CARDET, academic institutions, and European municipalities coming from members' states such as Cyprus, Malta, Spain, Greece, Sweden and Latvia.

The objectives of the meeting were the identification of needs and challenges local authorities face in relation to migration and integration..

Some of the challenges, the participants of meeting identified, with regards to the role of local authorities in issues related to migration where:

- Discontinuity of integration programs implemented at the local level
- Absence of a policy and strategy for local authorities' active participation in initiatives related to migration
- Need for clear boundaries in terms of municipalities' and state's duties and responsibilities with regards to migrants' integration
- Absence of secured funding to promote integration initiatives by the local authorities



- Lack of information and expertise on migration and integration issues among local authorities servants
- Limited collaboration among local authorities at the EU level on issues related to migration and integration



Participants through ongoing discussions during the meeting also outline the basic areas where the MuNet should focus to address the challenges and the needs noted above. Such areas include the promotion of awareness raising activities on the role and the potentials of local authorities in managing migration, the provision of capacity building opportunities for the local authorities' servants, the empowerment of local authorities to participate in the decision making process at national and European level, the advancement of collaboration among local

authorities, the identification of funding opportunities and the support for the development of a strategy for the active participation of local authorities in issues related to migration management and integration.

In the next months the MuNet is expected to address the above-mentioned suggestions by the participants of the meeting, and develop an action plan for its future activities and workings, which will share with its members for approval.

Interested representatives from Local Authorities, and organisations dealing with migration issues may join the Network by registering at the online platform www.municipalitiesnet.eu.