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03_NEWSLETTER



IOM International Organization for Migration
ΔΟΜ Διεθνής Οργανισμός Μεταναστεύσεως

Supporting Organizations that Assist Migrant asylum seeking population in Greece

The International Organization for Migration in Greece is the Fund Operator for the Programme "***Supporting Organizations that Assist Migrant Asylum Seeking Population in Greece***" (***SOAM***) under the framework of the European Economic Area Grants (EEA Grants).

The **SOAM Programme** aims at increasing the quantity and the quality of the reception centres, managed by NGOs, to the migrant asylum seeking population in Greece. Based on the current situation in Greece, civil society is increasingly called upon to provide asylum seekers with shelter, primary and secondary care. SOAM's primary goal is to support NGOs to operate reception centres for vulnerable asylum seekers, especially unaccompanied minors in Greece.

The direct beneficiaries of the **Programme** are Non-governmental, non-profit organizations (NGOs), with at least 2 year - experience working with asylum seekers and providing services such as medical and psycho-social care and legal counselling. Also, beneficiaries of the **Programme** are asylum seekers with emphasis on unaccompanied minors and other vulnerable groups such as single-parent families, people with disabilities, people with chronic health problems and the elderly.

Newsletters' Scope and Content

The purpose of the SOAM Newsletters is to share information on the operation of the funded reception centres, identify and promote good practices and raise awareness on issues concerning the asylum seeking population in Greece.

The content of the newsletters refers to the work of the three SOAM consortiums, funded by EEA Grants:

- ***Reception Centre for vulnerable 70 asylum seekers in the center of Athens***, coordinated by Medecins du Monde - Greece in partnership with the Greek Council for Refugees.
- ***STEGI PLUS (+)***, coordinated by PRAKSIS in partnership with the Hellenic Red Cross. The consortium operates 2 centres, one in Athens for 30 unaccompanied minors and one in Patras for 30 unaccompanied minors and 40 other vulnerable asylum seekers.
- ***MELLON (FUTURE)***, coordinated by NOSTOS in partnership with the organizations EADAP, IASIS and Ergoerevnikiki. The centre is located in Moschato (Attica) and its capacity is 102 spaces, 60 for unaccompanied minors and 42 for mothers with children.



The four reception centres funded through SOAM Programme have been operating for almost 2 years assuring 120 spaces for unaccompanied minors (UAMs) and 152 for other vulnerable asylum seekers (OVAS) in Greece.

More specifically for the period April 2014 – March 2015, twelve months of full operation for all SOAM reception centres, 761 UAMs and 288 OVAS benefited from the Programme's services. Beneficiaries have come from 33 different states, while the majority is from Afghanistan, Syria, Somalia, Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

During the same period 39 UAMs and 29 OVAS received decisions on their application for international protection from the 1st instance committees

while 5 UAMs and 5 OVAS received a negative decision from the appeals' committees.

Furthermore, 91 beneficiaries were reunited with their family members through the enforcement of DUBLIN III. Germany, Sweden and Switzerland are the countries where the most family reunifications took place while the Netherlands, Norway and Belgium follow.

With regards the runaways of UAMs, during 12 months, 543 of them run away from the centres before lodging an asylum application. On the other hand, 78 UAMs runaway after lodging an application. More specifically, 47 UAMs and 2 OVAS left within 48 hours from their placement.

According to the information that beneficiaries disclose to the centres' personnel they drop out in order to continue their trip to another European country in irregular manner. It emerges that the most popular countries of destination are Germany, Switzerland, Sweden and Norway.

Finally, 33 UAMs were registered for returning voluntary to their countries of origin.



On Monday, March 30th 2015 a special event took place in the room “Europe Direct” of the Municipality of Athens, under the title “Reception and Healthcare for International Protection & Asylum Seekers”. The event was organized by Médecins du Monde in cooperation with the Greek Council for Refugees, in the framework of implementation of the SOAM Programme. Special guests were the students of the postgraduate program of the Medical School of Athens, “Health Crisis Management - International Medicine”.

The main objective of the workshop was to raise awareness and inform students and all stakeholders on the major survival issues that asylum seekers face in Greece and the ongoing challenges in the field of human rights and protection to vulnerable cases of asylum seekers. The content of the event was divided into two themes, the first concerned access to the asylum procedure and the second access to health care and social protection.

The event was introduced by the Chairman of the Board of MdM, Dr. Nikitas Kanakis, with introductory speeches and greetings addressed by the Ambassador of Norway in Greece, Mr. Sjur Larsen, the Head Officer of IOM in Greece, Mr. Daniel Esdras, the Assoc. Professor of Surgery, Scientific Director of the Postgraduate Program "Health Crisis Management - International Medicine", Dr. Theophilos Rosenberg and the Chairman of the Board GCR, Ms. Angeliki Chrysochoidis - Argyropoulou. In the first panel speakers were the UNHCR protection Officer, Mr. Petros Mastakas, the Deputy Ombudsman, Ms Chryssa Hajji, the Lawyer - representative of GCR, Ms. Cleo Nikolopoulou and the Professor in the Department of Sociology at Panteion University of Athens, Anne Lidakis.

The discussion in the first panel was moderated by Ms. Natassa Arapidou from I.O.M. In the second panel speakers were the pediatrician and Director of Studies of the Postgraduate Program "Management of Health Crisis - International Medicine", Dr. Agis Terzidis, the Social Worker of the Reception Centre for Vulnerable Asylum Seekers of MdM, Mr. Anastasios Yfantis and the Sociologist of PRAKSIS, Ms. Sissy Levanti. The second panel discussion was moderated by the Second Vice President of MdM, Ms. Iro Varsami.





In April 2015, at Europe Direct – Municipality of Athens, took place the workshop “Reception of asylum seekers: Multiple identities and Interculturalism” that was organized by NOSTOS in cooperation with the IASIS, EADAP and ERGOEREVNITIKI in the frame of the project “Asylum Seekers Shelter - FUTURE”.

During the first part of the Event the Project Partners presented their work in the MELLON Shelter in relation to the various activities organized in it. After this, the partners invited the participants –mostly social sciences and pedagogies students, young professionals and volunteers-, to take part in three parallel workshops.

The aim of the workshops was to involve the participants in a simulation of the everyday activities of the Shelter in order to explore in a creative and interactive way the methodologies used in the Shelter’s everyday work.

According to the Project's philosophy, the Shelter provides to its young guests the framework that will initiate and support their first steps into the new social and cultural reality they are found in. There are other factors too, that define the everyday work in the Shelter, such as preserving individuality while living in a multicultural environment, and/or age. For instance, the "teens" is a well-established age category in the western world but it does not necessarily have the same connotations in other cultures. Furthermore, living in the Shelter means that you live with others and they are not your chosen ones.

So, the Workshops explored the ways that MELLON Shelter addresses the challenge of processing the point where the above factors converge to. The topics touched upon different aspects of cultural integration in relation to (i) age [Planning an intercultural Project (EADAP), Diversity as a tool in Unaccompanied Minors' Shelters (IASIS)] and (ii) adjustment and personal development while living in an organized environment [Boundaries, rules, safety and personal rights: adolescent asylum seekers living in Shelters (NOSTOS)]. Interacting and communicating with the participants gave staff the opportunity to reflect on their own work and broaden up their perceptions.





PRAKSIS, in collaboration with Hellenic Red Cross, organized on Tuesday 26th May 2015 in Athens an event titled UNACCOMPANIED MINORS – PROTECTION-ACCOMMODATION-INCLUSION. The event was organized within the framework of the implementation of the SOAM Programme, funded by EEA Grants (Norway, Lichtenstein and Island) and the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) - Greece as Fund Operator.

The event consisted of two parts: The first part included greetings, speeches and interventions by Mr. Sjur Larsen, Ambassador of Norway in Greece; Mr. Daniel Esdras, IOM-Greece Head of Mission; Mr. Tzanetos Antypas, Chairman of the Board, PRAKSIS; Ms Zefi Thanousoula, Head of Social Welfare of Red Cross and Ms Dina Vardaramatou, Project Coordinator. The participants were mostly students of Social Work and Social Scientists.

The second part consisted of two workshops which focused on protection and

inclusion titled Intercultural Activities Aiming at the Inclusion of Unaccompanied Minors in Greek Reality – Particularities and Challenges (conducted by Hellenic Red Cross) and The Adjustment and Inclusion of Unaccompanied Minors: The Example of STEGI PLUS (+) Accommodation Centre at Patras (conducted by PRAKSIS).

During the events, the participants had the chance to visit the exhibition of 33 pieces of work of young people which was the outcome of the competition Cannes Young Lions Greece. The completion had as a theme for 2014, PRAKSIS and anti-trafficking.

A documentary was shown, presenting the community and outreach work taking place at STEGI PLUS (+) Accommodation Centre at Patras.





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