



# ETHNIC DIVERSITY GUIDE FOR SMEs

Small Enterprises' Institute of the Hellenic  
Confederation of Professional Craftsmen and  
Merchants (IME/GSEVEE)



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## INTRODUCTION

The erasmus+ project, “**Educating Social Partners towards Ethnic Diversity in SMEs**” (**MigrAID**) addresses ethnic diversity in the workplace of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in order to facilitate the smooth integration of migrant workers. Ethnic diversity, inclusion, workplace diversity, inequality, discrimination and conflict resolution are themes highlighting all activities of the project.

MigrAID ultimate aim is to strengthen the skills and competencies of social partners and migrants to understand, handle and deal better with the above themes. The main project’s deliverables are: two interconnected research studies on Ethnic Diversity in SMEs, two seminars for social partners and immigrants, a five-day training activity for social partners, the development of a training e-platform and the creation of a conflict resolution simulator.

More specifically, the main objective of this Output, the “**Ethnic Diversity Guide for SMEs**”, is to help social partners to better identify the most appropriate principles, tools, and procedures for enabling SMEs to promote ethnic diversity in the workplace. This Guide has been constructed based on the previous work, knowledge, and expertise of the **MigrAID** team work.

**Ethnic Diversity Guide for SMEs** is addressed to Social Partners (employers’ associations and trade unions), SMEs, and Employees in SMEs in order to:

- Improve the understanding of social partners on ethnic diversity.
- Improve their skills on managing conflicts at the workplace.
- Promote migrants' integration.
- Provide existing best practices on ethnic diversity in SMEs and managing conflicts.

Interested individuals can access the Project's web-site for more detailed information at: [www.migraid.eu](http://www.migraid.eu)

## GLOSSARY OF RELEVANT TERMS

|                             |   |
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| <b>Conflict Resolution</b>  | Is the process by which two or more parties engaged in a disagreement, dispute or debate reach an agreement resolving it.   |
| <b>Diversity</b>            | The co-existence of individuals and groups differentiated by the most diverse innate and/or acquired characteristics such as sex, age, personality, skin color, nationality, etc.   |
| <b>Diversity Management</b> | Is a strategic organizational approach that considers people as fundamental resources for business success, recognizing and valuing the particular characteristics by which individuals are considered to be diverse (e.g. age, gender, ethnic background, socio-economic position, etc.).                            |
| <b>Discrimination</b>       | Refers to stereotypes and prejudices, attitudes and behaviors, formal and informal practices and arrangements resulting in a less favorable treatment of individuals or groups of individuals due to some of their characteristics such as race, ethnicity, age, socio-economic class, gender and sexual orientation. |
| <b>Harassment</b>           | Practices, attitudes and behaviors negatively affecting a person, especially when they target a person belonging in a protected group.  |
| <b>Integration</b>          | A long term multidimensional process by which immigrants enter and adapt to the local hosting society. Such process includes several different areas of life: employment, education, language acquisition, etc.   |
| <b>Prejudice</b>            | Refers to those beliefs, thoughts, feelings and attitudes that someone may have regarding a group or an individual without previous real knowledge.   |
| <b>Stereotypes</b>          | Oversimplified generalizations about groups of people based on social categorizations and individuals' characteristics.   |
| <b>Xenophobia</b>           | Those attitudes, prejudices and behavior that reject, exclude and often vilify persons, based on the perception that they are outsiders or foreigners to the community, society or national identity.   |

## CURRENT SITUATION AND CHALLENGES

International migration refers to the boundary crossing of a political or administrative unit for a certain minimum period of time. It does include the movement of different types of migrants, refugees, displaced persons and uprooted people. According to the last Report of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, there are around 258 million international migrants in the world that represent 3.4% of the total world population.

Although this number clearly represents a minority within the total world population, this social phenomenon has steadily become a top priority in the global, regional and national political agendas. Moreover, the continuing internal migration of EU citizens from one member state to the other is an additional factor that made EU societies and the workforce more and more diverse.

Moreover, there are some 21.2 million SMEs in the EU, representing 99.8% of all European businesses, and employing 88.8 million people or 66.8% of the active population in the EU. The contributions of immigrants in the economies of the hosted societies and the value that they added in the businesses and SMEs, in particular, are invaluable.

However, the lack of immigrants' access in the labour market and the restrictions in assistive integrational services (e.g. language courses, job training, counseling) remain the main challenges in the whole Europe, but also in the project's participating countries, as you can see in the following table.

### CYPRUS

1. TCN are excluded from the Employment Equality Directive.
2. Restricted rights for TCN to change jobs and employers.
3. TCN are excluded from labour rights such as unemployment benefit and pension.
4. Failure of the government to conclude bilateral agreements with countries of origin of migrants to facilitate transfer of their pension rights.
5. The labour market is segregated both horizontally and vertically. TCN are concentrated in unskilled labour (i.e., household and farming).

**ITALY**

1. The difficulty for acting against discrimination in both the private and the public sphere.
2. The nature of Italian economy, which is based on SMEs, makes it harder to monitor discrimination.
3. Undeclared work is even more complicated and almost impossible to monitor.
4. Access of employment in the public sector for non-Italians was restricted until recent times.
5. In several economic sectors, cases of discrimination of migrant workers continue to be a common practice.

**DENMARK**

1. The introduction of the directives has given rise to concerns that unskilled Danish workers might be deselected in favour of migrants or refugees.
2. Discrimination in the 'integration benefit' (2015) in particular as it provides that citizens not been residents in Denmark in 7 out of the last 8 years receive reduced benefits having direct effect to immigrants.
3. The governmental bill (2014) for differentiating the demands for working permits based on nationality judging citizens from particular countries as being less suited for integration than others.

**FRANCE**

1. In 2006, an immigration law created a new category of migrants - "skills and talents" for highly qualified foreigners compared to low-skilled foreigners.
2. Immigrants are more likely to have fixed-term contracts and have to ask for a work permit.
3. SMEs consider the employment terms for immigrants as dissuasive, which in turn lead to unequal opportunities.
4. There is no law that obliges companies to adopt Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies. However, the State encourages them to promote it.

**GREECE**

1. The absence of coherent institutional framework and the chronic deficiency of Greek public administration resulted to a miss-regulated immigration flow without link to a specific growth national model.
2. The rise of financial crisis found Greece with a miss-integrated migrant population facing an ever-increasing unemployment.
3. An important participation of immigrant populations into self-employment activities.
4. A chronic understaffing of the relevant public services.



## DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

Discrimination in the workplace is a specific type of discrimination which includes all behaviors, practices and perceptions that promote unequal treatment in the workplace, against one or more people, targeting them on the basis of their particular characteristics (race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, belief, age, disability etc.).

In many cases, the combination of more than one grounds of discrimination leads to multiple discrimination. Multiple discrimination, though difficult to be measured, concerns the majority of workers who are discriminated against. For example, an older migrant woman worker may become a victim of multiple discrimination on the basis of race, gender and age.

Discrimination in workplace can be direct and indirect. Direct discrimination is when a person is treated less favorably than others, on the basis of their background or/ and their characteristics. Indirect discrimination is when a rule, decision, procedure, policy, criterion or practice that appears at first glance neutral, because it applies to all, leads to discrimination in its application, as it negatively affects persons of a particular background/with particular characteristics.

For example, direct discrimination exists in the case of advertisements such as: "a company based in Athens is seeking to recruit a carpenter – furniture-maker, who is Greek and up to 40 years old" or "refreshment shop in Athens is seeking to recruit Greek girls up to 30 years old with a service experience." Both advertisements exclude "non-Greeks" (discrimination based on racial/ ethnic origin) and set age limits (age discrimination).

On the other hand, indirect discrimination is identified in the case of procedures in Greece for the admission process to military schools and security forces, where common minimum thresholds are introduced for women and men for the admission of candidates in these schools. Given the physical characteristics that usually

women and men have concerning their height, this practice works to the detriment of women candidates.

The promotion of workplace diversity is the only effective approach to combat discrimination. Common practices that are considered affective are: (1) the recruitment of individuals with a wide range of characteristics and experiences, (2) the development of a respectful environment in which the characteristics of each individual are accepted and embraced and (3) the provision of equal opportunities to all in order to achieve their full potential.

Beyond the fact that discrimination is illegal and ethically wrong, it has been also proven that diversity increases productivity and provides companies more access to new market segments. The documentation of the link between diversity and productivity led many companies to implement specific programs and policies to encourage the recruitment, integration, promotion and retention of people who belong in socially vulnerable groups.

Moreover, preventing and combating discrimination at work as well as respecting diversity, are viewed as determining factors in assessing quality at work for the employees.

Consequently, quality of work is perceived as a multidimensional concept, which takes into account the wider environment of the workplace and several specific characteristics of the job position including: gender equality, integration, polymorphism and non-discrimination, the individual characteristics of the workers, and the connection between the individual characteristics of the workers and the requirements of the employers in order to achieve the satisfaction of all parties at the workplace.

## DIVERSITY CHARTERS

The Charters of diversity are non-compulsory initiatives aiming to encourage businesses and public organizations to adopt diversity-enhancing practices in the workplace, highlighting their benefits and promoting equal opportunities for their staff. Since 2005, 21 charters of diversity have been established in 18 EU member states.

### **Denmark**

The Danish Charter for Diversity is the unifying body of several regional and local charters in Denmark. The Copenhagen Diversity Charter was launched in 2011 and reached 500 signatories in less than two years. In 2014 the experience from Copenhagen was passed on to the second and third city of Denmark, Aarhus and Odense, which set up diversity charters of their own with 640 signatories between them. For further information: [www.mangfoldighedscharter.dk/](http://www.mangfoldighedscharter.dk/)

### **France**

The French Charter of Diversity, launched on 22 October 2004, was the first document of its kind to be signed in Europe, paving the way for many other initiatives of the same kind. The Charter has been supported by large organizations, corporate networks and government agencies, and focuses on raising awareness among SMEs and micro-enterprises. For further information: [www.chartediversite.com](http://www.chartediversite.com)

### **Italy**

The Charter for Equal Opportunities and Equality at Work was launched on 5 October 2009 after the initiative of the Sodalitas Foundation with the active support of the National Equal Council and the National Equality Council. For further information: [www.cartapariopportunita.it](http://www.cartapariopportunita.it)

In 2010, a **European diversity charters platform\*** was funded by the EU in order to disseminate this practice in other EU member states.

\*[https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/tackling-discrimination/diversity-management/eu-platform-diversity-charters\\_en#platformnewsletter](https://ec.europa.eu/info/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/combating-discrimination/tackling-discrimination/diversity-management/eu-platform-diversity-charters_en#platformnewsletter)

## EU & NATIONAL ANTI - DISCRIMINATION LEGISLATION FRAMEWORKS

The fight against discrimination and the promotion of the principle of equal treatment are at the heart of European employment and industrial relations policy and are promoted through primary law (e.g. founding treaties), and secondary law (e.g. directives). It is considered that the most important legal texts relevant to migrants' employment are the following:

- **Directive 2014/66/EU** defining conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer (UK, Ireland and Denmark do not take part).
- **Directive 2014/36/EU** on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment.
- **Directive 2011/98/EU** on a single application procedure for a single permit to reside and work in the EU and on a common set of rights for third-country workers.
- **Directive 2009/50/EC** concerning the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of highly qualified employment, commonly called the 'Blue Card directive'.
- **Directive 2006/54/EC** the Equal Opportunities Directive, on equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in employment and occupation.
- **Directive 2004/113/EC** prohibiting sex discrimination in access to and supply of goods and services.

- **Directive 2000/78/EC** (also known as “Employment Equality Directive”), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, religion or belief, age and disability in the area of employment and focuses exclusively on the field of employment addressing discrimination more broadly.
- **Directive 2000/43/EC** (also known as "Racial Equality Directive"), prohibiting discrimination on the basis of race or ethnicity in the context of employment.

Furthermore, all EU Member States, including the Migraïd project’s participating states, proceeded to implement the above mentioned European Directives by harmonizing their national institutional frameworks. More specifically:

**Cyprus** In 2004, Cyprus enacted specific legislation in order to transpose the EU antidiscrimination Directives (42(1)/2004, 59(1)/2004 and 58(1)/2004). In addition, in 2011, a new law on the Combat Against Certain forms of Racism and Xenophobia (134(1)/2011) was enacted in order to transpose Council Framework Decision 2008/913/JHA on combating certain forms and expressions of racism and xenophobia by means of criminal law.

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| <b>Denmark</b> | Since 1996 Denmark has had a law against discrimination on the labour market. Besides this the Danish law against discrimination based on ethnicity was introduced in 1971.   |
| <b>France</b>  | The related European Directives have been transposed into French national law from July 2003 to 2008. In the framework of these national laws, the High Authority for Combating Discrimination and Equality (HALDE) was set up. Also, the National Inter-professional Agreement (ANI), adopted in 2006 by trade unions and employers. |
| <b>Greece</b>  | Greece's policies in the field of combating discrimination and promoting equal treatment are inaugurated by the adoption of Law 3304/2005. In 2016, this law was replaced by Law 4443/2016 which improved and strengthened the legislative framework.   |

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| <b>Italy</b> | The main Italian legislation framework refers the following laws: a) Legislative Decree 215/2003 implementing Directive 2000/43/EC, and b) Legislative Decree 216/2003 on the implementation of Directive 2000/78/EC. |
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## OFFICIAL OPINIONS OF EU & NATIONAL SOCIAL PARTNERS ABOUT ETHNIC DIVERSITY & DISCRIMINATION IN THE WORKPLACE

The **European Economic and Social Committee (EESC)** has always showed a great activeness and sensitiveness for Ethnic Diversity & Discrimination Issues by a) delivering a lot of related opinions and decisions (please visit EESC web-site: <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/policies/policy-areas/fundamental-and-citizens-rights/opinions>), and b) organizing different kind of activities aiming at extending debates on those issues to its members but also to the broader public.

Furthermore, social partners in all project's participating countries have delivered and announced related official opinions and reports. More specifically:

### Cyprus

Despite that there is not a shared, recorded opinion of social partners on workplace discrimination, social partners individually embrace diversity in the workplace and call for the elimination of discrimination. Trade unions also undertake significant action against discrimination ranging from awareness raising campaigns, to research studies and the establishment of related offices in their organizational structures.

### Denmark

The main Danish Social Partners have officially proclaimed that Danish education should be free citing that the reductions in funding for training programmes for immigrants will lead to more injuries at work, worse integration and less cohesion. They also promote diversity in the workplace, stating that cultural diversity can help create a better, more dynamic and more attractive workplace.

### **France**

The four main Trade Union Confederations in France are committed in promoting solidarity with foreign workers both on a legal level with the defense of acquired rights and on a social level by avoiding exclusion and exploitation. In April 2018, the trade unions declared their opposition on the asylum and immigration's new law, which will lead in a first place to a new breakdown of immigrant's rights.

### **Greece**

The Economic & Social Committee (ESC) in Greece has so far published five (5) Annual Reports, which include remarks and proposals to the Greek Government and the social partners in order to promote the principle of equal treatment, emphasizing on the significant role of the Greek Ombudsperson.

### **Italy**

Since 2004 the work of the national equality body, named National Office Against Racial Discrimination – UNAR, has been extending its jurisdiction, covering discrimination cases derived from nationality, sex, religion, disability, age or sexual orientation. However, the lack of a Ministry for Integration is still an issue. An important success has been the adoption of the “Charter for equal opportunities and equality at work” leading to the creation of the Diversity Charter in 2011, promoted by various associations with the partnership of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Policy, the Prime Minister's Office and the Minister for Equal Opportunities. In 2017, the three main Trade Union Confederations in Italy, CGIL/CISL/UIL, adopted the report promoted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy concerning immigration policies applied to the workplace.

## ETHNIC DIVERSITY IN THE WORKPLACE AND PARTICULARLY IN SMES

Over the past decades European businesses have experienced greater participation of women, minorities, migrants, older people and different nationalities in the workforce. A gradual changing composition of the workforce is becoming apparent. Ethnic Diversity in the workplace concerns all employees, and thus flows across and around every company.

While it is commonly accepted that large companies are the ones that play the leading role in adopting ethnic diversity management policies, the big challenge is the adoption of such policies by small and medium-sized businesses.

SMEs may each individually have limited staff but together they employ 88.8 million people (66.8% of the active population in the EU). There are some 21.2 million SMEs in the EU-28, (99.8% of all European businesses). SMEs are thus the backbone of EU economy. As such, they represent a powerful, determining lever for change. Moreover, their operating scale renders them more flexible and more open to innovation. Due to their small size and greater flexibility, SMEs can achieve quicker results than larger corporate groups.



As we have also mentioned before, large groups of companies are ahead of the curve on that matter and are more than willing to share their experience, lessons learned and best practices with proactive SMEs. SMEs would greatly benefit from the input of organisations having worked on diversity management for a longer period of time.

On the other hand, we should take into consideration the following specific characteristics of SMEs related to ethnic diversity management policies:

- They employ small workforces (6.8 staff members on average), often including family members,
- They usually have limited or no Human Resource Management processes, means, and time to implement efficient and integrated diversity policies.
- They have more urgent operational concerns and usually fear to commit to diversity because they deem diversity management policies too onerous and also too logistically and strategically demanding.
- They are often characterised by economic insecurity, meaning that they have more urgent operational or even survival concerns than a diversified workforce.
- They often feel discouraged by the size of the challenge. Diversity management is deemed as too intellectually and logistically demanding by SMEs.

Consequently, without the active involvement of SMEs, the drive for ethnic diversity management in the EU will be condemned to remain marginal.

## THE ROLE OF SOCIAL PARTNERS IN PROMOTING ETHNIC DIVERSITY

European trade unions and employers' organizations play an active role in combating discrimination in the workplace either through the signing of 'framework agreements' or through less institutionalized initiatives. The first 'Framework Agreement', which deals with discrimination and equal treatment, is that of parental leave (1995) and became legally valid in 1996, with a vote in favor. In 2009, the European social partners revised the 1995 framework agreement.

Furthermore, the role and involvement of national social partners in each project's participating country is very significant. More specifically:

**CYPRUS:** Most trade unions in Cyprus have clear political statements about combating discrimination on grounds of race and ethnic origin: employers, however, generally tend to pay simple services for non-discrimination other than gender, by establishing supporting structures, organizing awareness-raising campaigns, seminars etc.

**DENMARK:** In Denmark, trade unions, employers' organizations, and local public authorities are all involved in the planning of the integration process. This is done through meetings where representatives of all sectors are trying to identify

obstacles and define solutions to facilitating the process. The involvement of the different organizations is considered important.

**FRANCE:** Employers and trade unions in France perceive migration as a source of wealth creation. At the level of trade unions, the General Confederation of Work (CGT) is committed to promoting solidarity with foreign workers both at the legal level and by defending acquired rights and at the social level to prevent exclusion and exploitation. Also, the French Democratic Confederation of Work (CFDT) presented initiatives to defend "living together" mobilizing the local population about the current status of immigrants.

**GREECE:** The social partners in Greece have incorporated the issue of the social integration of migrants into the social dialogue and often take action in this direction. In some cases, these discussions have led to joint initiatives, such as the common diversity management training program (2015) under the patronage of ILO Athens Liaison Office. Moreover, educational and counselling programs of social partners are the most consistent effort to empower working migrant populations.

**ITALY:** The social partners and regional authorities have signed several agreements on integration and social inclusion over the years, including housing policy and education. The Territorial Councils for Immigration (CTI) in Italy also promoted, with the co-operation of social partners, initiatives for the socio-spatial integration of migrants.

# DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PRINCIPLES & GUIDELINES

Diversity Management is the strategic organizational approach including a) initiatives and actions by businesses and organizations, which are used for creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, and b) the promotion of equal treatment and diversity awareness throughout the work process.

This kind of strategic approach aims at improving the productivity, competitiveness and reputation of the company/organization as a whole, by recognizing (the positive) particularities of the individuals that compose it.

In order to give some order to the initiatives that are already ongoing and to promote the creation and implementation of new ones, some fundamental guidelines were delivered specifically for SMEs through the “**Diversity at work. A guide for SMEs**”:

- 1. Look at your Business:** Take time to consider the strengths, threats, weaknesses and opportunities facing your business. Set some goals about it (e.g. improving customer feedback) and define the steps to follow. You don't need to start with big and complex strategies but also with small initiatives.
- 2. Recruit from a more diverse pool of talent:** One of the key concerns for SMEs is recruitment: either, not being able to get someone or employing the wrong person.

This is because owners mostly use ‘word of mouth’ and make recruitment decisions based on whether they “like” the person (gut-instinct).

**3. Get new customers and access new markets:** To reach a diverse customer base requires employee diversity or at least an understanding of how diverse customers can be. This could be in terms of age, gender, faith, ethnicity, sexual orientation or ability, and an understanding of the changing motivations and lifestyles of the market place.

**4. Plan the business based on demand:** This means essentially putting customer needs at the forefront of any business planning.

**5. Improve communication with employees:** Research shows that whilst most SMEs, and particularly micro business, do benefit from an informal and flexible approach towards how employees are managed, this informal atmosphere can also be a problem for some staff who might not be able to get involved (for various reasons) and therefore become excluded.

**6. Get a better image and reputation:** Use your commitment to “Diversity” (better employer, customer sensitive) as a business tool in terms of reputation and winning business (particularly from larger and public sector firms).

**7. Evaluate what you have done:** As with anything you do that affects the business, it is important to think about what impact it has had and for what cost (time, effort, resources).

**8. Get help and support:** For trusted advice most owners tend to refer to their accountant, financial advisor, solicitor or a close relation. However, there are many other public and private institutions that offer professional help; mostly for no cost or a minimal fee if you want personal support. Here are some examples:

- Municipalities, trade organisations, chambers of commerce, business owner networks, unions and professional associations are very useful sources of information.
- In many cases you will be able to search the internet for the material you need.

- Other business owners and managers are always a useful source of advice in a local community.
- Discuss approaches and issues with employees and friends who can also offer you other insights.

## BENEFITS FOR BOTH EMPLOYEES AND EMPLOYERS IN SMES

In recent decades, significant changes have been made in the composition of the workforce from lower professional hierarchies to higher levels of administration. For example, there is an increase in the participation in the workforce of women, persons of different nationalities, and other socially vulnerable groups. In this context, the question has been asked why a company should be interested in diversity.

Nowadays, companies that apply active policies for diversity consider that respect for diversity within enterprises has the following advantages:

- it strengthens cultural values within the company
- it enhances positive brand image and corporate reputation
- it creates more incentives and therefore, greater efficiency among the existing staff
- it enhances innovation and creativity among workers
- It helps to attract and retain top talents
- It improves responsiveness to clients' needs and expectations
- It supports the access to new markets

- It contributes to the better adaptability of the company to change.

All the above advantages are likely to differentiate the company in the market place and allow it to get ahead of its competitors.

## CONFLICT RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES

Conflict resolution is an important aspect of ethnic diversity management in the workplace. A conflict is a common phenomenon in workplace when the interests, needs, goals or values of involved parties (employers, employees, and immigrants) interfere with one another. However, there are some general actions and personal skills that may be very useful when the employer or the responsible manager is facing a conflict that requires a solution, independently of its nature, (e.g. an open minded orientation able to analyze the different point of views and perspectives involved, an ability to empathize, carefully listen and clearly communicate with all the involved parts).

Moreover, conflict resolution involves a series of techniques that are used depending on the kind of confrontation at stake and the surrounded social and cultural context, such as:

### **Win-Win (Collaborating)**

Collaboration involves an attempt to work with the other person to find a win-win solution to the problem in hand - the one that most satisfies the concerns of both

parties. It includes identifying the underlying concerns of the opponents and finding an alternative which meets each party's concerns.

### **Compromising**

Compromising looks for an expedient and mutually acceptable solution which partially satisfies both parties.

### **Smoothing**

Smoothing is accommodating the concerns of other people first of all, rather than one's own concerns.

### **Representative Example of Conflict Resolution**

Miriam and Elisa work in the catering section of a highly prestige franchising hotel in Venice. Miriam is Peruvian and, although having lived in Italy already for a couple of years, she doesn't perfectly speak Italian language. Nevertheless, Miriam is a very dedicated worker; she arrives early and does everything she is asked for.

Elisa on the other hand has worked several years as a catering room manager, she has a lot of experiences in what she had done but she has always worked only with native workers. Elisa thus, according to Miriam, tends to speak very fast and usually insert many words in the local venetian dialect.

During the moments of high pressure when many clients are expected and the event is particularly important for the hotel the tension between these two women can start to be felt because Elisa thinks that Miriam is not sufficiently experienced and she doesn't understand her, whereas Miriam thinks that Elisa is not particularly polite in the way she speaks, and that she doesn't explain her what she actually has to do so she can do it in a timely way. Miriam is thinking to quit the job, whereas Elisa doesn't want to waste more time going again through the recruitment process.

### **What can be done?**



In this case the coordinator of the area could work on improving diversity management conditions by giving a language instruction training to the immigrant workers on the one hand, and by establishing an appropriate introduction/training session at the very beginning of the employee's recruitment. In this case Miriam can commit herself to improve her language proficiency, which can be also very helpful for her in other areas; whereas Elisa can commit herself to speak slower and try to explain herself better without the need of raising the voice volume. In order to not create a bigger conflict, both employees would need to express their difficulties in an open and timely way to the responsible coordinator or HR personnel.

## GOOD PRACTICES

### **Social Rights for Asylum Seekers – Social Rights for All (Cyprus)**

The aim of the EQUAL project entitled “Social Rights for Asylum Seekers – Social Rights for All” was the development and pilot implementation of actions in order to tackle the problems faced by asylum seekers promoting at the same time their social and employment integration. Orientation, language and vocational training with work placement and the development and operation of a ‘Mediation and Support Mechanism’ were actions affirming the relevance of the objectives and the success of the project.

### **Integration Training – IGU (Denmark)**

In Denmark, ‘Integration Training’ (IGU) is a two-year course that combines a paid internship for recognized refugees at an enterprise and education with training compensation. The enterprise pays the salary to the trainee and receives back a bonus of 20,000 or 40,000 DKK depending on the length of the internship. This is an agreement that has been achieved through the collaboration of important stakeholders in the Danish labour market including the Danish Government, the Confederation of Danish Employers (DA) and the trade union LO.

### **Forum “Égalité des chances” (France)**

CGPME, the French Confederation of SMEs organized a campaign employing media, public events and training in the enterprises to promote diversity awareness, fighting stereotypes and rising employability. This campaign, formed part of the “Tour de France de la Diversité”, brought together enterprises in contact with people from areas with high unemployment and who face enormous difficulties in entering the labour market/finding their first employment. One of the main

objectives was to animate a debate regarding the advantages for a company to take the diversity as one of its organization pillars.

### **Equal Opportunities in Training (Greece)**

The Vocational Training Centre (KEK) of the Hellenic Confederation of Professionals, Craftsmen and Merchants (GSEVEE) in cooperation with INTERSOS and with the support of the UNHCR, designed and implemented an educational programme called “Equal Opportunities in Training” in 2017. In the framework of this Programme, two training seminars designed and implemented to recognized refugees and asylum seekers, titled: a) “Introduction to Hairdressing”, and b) “Basic principles of entrepreneurship”.

### **AHEAD, Accompanying handicraft entrepreneurs against discrimination (Italy).**

Confartigianato, the Italian Confederation of Craft and SMEs, together with various other actors and involving direct beneficiaries (immigrants), implemented this very ambitious initiative focused on supplying SMEs with proper instruments to promote a cultural change so to avoid the arising of discriminatory attitudes or behaviour. The main activities of this Development Partnership are: 1. Training program for employees on the needs and wishes of immigrants who are already tied to the labour market and of those who wish to start their own business, 2. Drafting of business codes of behaviour, 3. Creation of an information desk, 4. Publicity activities, and 5. Training activities for 42 managers and employees.

## CONTACT DETAILS

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