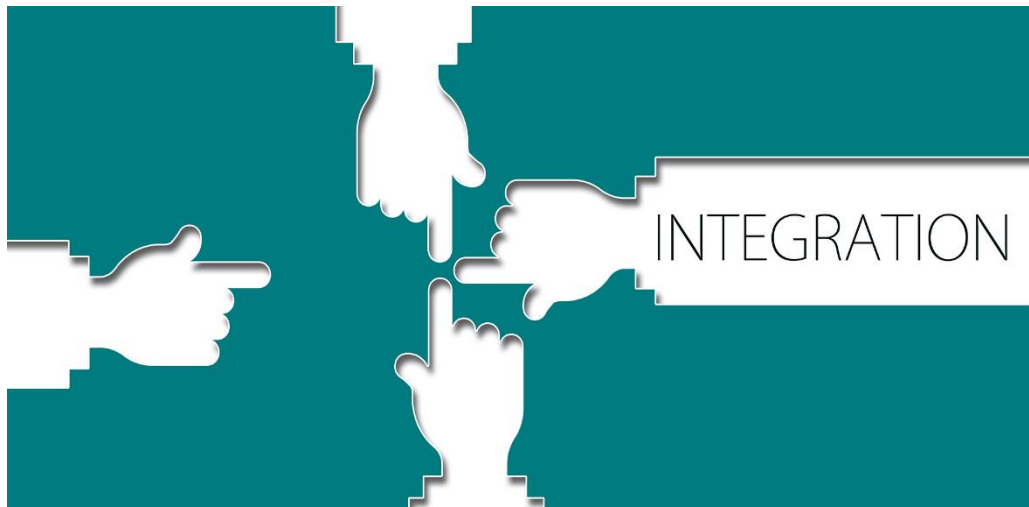




Effective Social Integration of mobile EU citizens - EnVISION
EnVISION



Activity 2.7 Design of 5 Social Inclusion Activities that foster active participation (per participating country)

Work Package 2 (Deliverable 2.7)

REPORT 2: Socioeconomic integration

Helping Hand

Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme

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Disclaimer

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Abstract:	This Report provides an overview of the designing of the Activity dedicated to the socioeconomic integration. It also displays the input our partnership received from the EU mobile citizens.
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Contents

1. Introduction - The EnVision project	4
2. Structure of the deliverable	6
3. Description of the proposed Activity.....	8
3.1 Decision of the most appropriate public consultation process.....	9
3.2 Preparation of Consultation Documents, including:	9
3.3 Establishment of the consultation process with a specific implementation timeline and monitoring of results.....	10
3.4 Finalizing of the content of the proposed Activities	11
Organisation of the Pilot & Facilitators	11
The profile of participants	11
The programme flow	11
4. Provision of feedback from stakeholders.....	13
5. Additional Resources.....	17

Figures

Figure 1 Design of 5 Activities in the areas of:	6
Figure 2 1st Online Pilot, 07/12/2020	12
Figure 3 2 nd Online Pilot, 15.12.2020.....	13
Figure 4 3rd Online Event, 21.12.2020	13



1. Introduction - The EnVision project

The aim of the EnVision project is to introduce mobile EU citizens to the Public Consultation Process, during the formulation of local interventions, emphasizing on educational and social activities, including unrepresented persons such as women and young people. This is going to be achieved through the development of a reasonable, adaptable methodology for the sustainable promotion of active participation of mobile EU citizens in local societies.

The objectives of the EnVision project are established in a wo-way process, aiming to:

- Foster the successful inclusion and participation of mobile EU citizens and their family members in the host EU country's civic and political life, as well as their participation in the democratic life of the EU
- Increase the capacity of the Public Administration Authorities & Experts in local level, in the participating countries to enable and facilitate the participation of mobile EU citizens in their host Member-State
- Improve the availability, awareness and participation of mobile EU citizens in civic activities in their host communities

Expected results of the Envision project:

- Direct involvement of EU mobile citizens to the Public Consultation Process.
- Increased participation of EU mobile citizens in the political and social life of their host communities.
- Increased capacity of experts in local level in the participating countries to enable and facilitate the participation of mobile EU citizens in their host Member State.
- Improved acceptance of mobile EU citizens into activities organized and implemented at a local level.

The project is funded by Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme of the European Commission and is implemented by:



- AKMI S.A (AKMI) – Greece
- Central Union of Greek Municipalities (KEDE) – Greece
- Astiki Mh Kersoskopiki Etareia Helping Hand (HELPING HAND) – Greece
- Union of Cyprus Municipalities (UCM) - Cyprus
- ZEWELEPE Consultants Limited (ZEWELEPE) - Cyprus



2. Structure of the deliverable

The purpose of this report is to test the functionality and effectiveness of our two – way approach methodology using the public consultation. Under the Activity 2.7, the Envision Partnership, with the guidance of Helping Hand, piloted five (5) different educational and social activities encouraging the active participation of mobile EU citizens in local societies. Our pilot included the preparation of local Initiatives that enhanced the active participation. We established 5 groups of Activities, using this new Consultation Methodology, focusing on the following 5 thematic areas:

Figure 1 Design of 5 Activities in the areas of:



This Report provides the documentation for the second activity: ‘Socioeconomic integration into local hosting societies’.

The structure of this deliverable contains the following elements:

Chapter 3 provides a description of the proposed Activity. It describes the Consultation Documents used to support this activity and the documents for the implementation of the consultation process.

Moreover, it provides the specific implementation timeline and the finalization of the content of the proposed Activities are displayed, taking into consideration and including the results of the Public Consultation. Finally the feedback received is presented.

The design of all planned 5 Social Inclusion activities, follows this procedure:



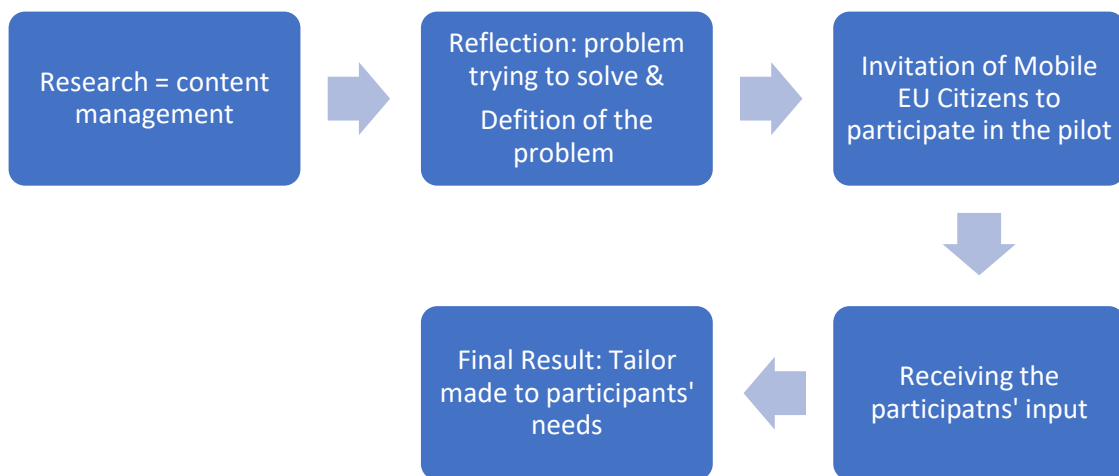
1. Identification of Stakeholders, aiming to prepare the cooperation structures between stakeholders and mobile EU citizens, by establishing an active communication channel among them, during the preparation of the Activities; To this end, the Envision Consortium has concluded a mapping of stakeholders from various categories, which is presented only to the Project Officer, since it contains sensitive and personal data.
2. Decision of the most appropriate public consultation process, related to each proposed Activity;
3. Preparation of Consultation Documents, including i) a detailed description of the planned Activities, that are going to be presented to mobile EU citizens ii) standard documents for the implementation of the consultation process;
4. Establishment of the consultation process with a specific implementation timeline and monitoring of results;
5. Finalizing of the content of the proposed Activities, taking into consideration and including the results of the Public Consultation;
6. Provision of feedback to stakeholders and especially to mobile EU citizens, so that they get assured that their opinion is being valued and included in the designed Activities.

The finalized Educational and Social Activities are going to be input for Activity 2.8.



3. Description of the proposed Activity

The EnVISION project has given attention to achieving EU mobile citizens' integration in the community and society. To this end, this Activity was designed in consultation with mobile EU citizens that have been attending as participants the Activity 2.6 along with the input of the local authorities staff, since the integration is a two-way process. The main steps for the designing phase are presented below:



The main aim of the pilot of this Activity was to design in consultation with the EU mobile citizens and the local authorities an activity that would have a concrete impact on their socioeconomic integration at the local level, through asking for their input. The participants' feedback was requested and for the implementation of the Activity we had asked to share their experience in the host societies. The most visible impact of the development of a joint document with the main issues about the EU mobile citizens integration, which will be further exploited under the Policy recommendations paper.

Helping Hand, acting as the lead partner of this activity, aimed to understand the perception of either newcomers or longer establish citizens, based on their experiences in the host society. Therefore, we carefully proposed some guidelines for the implementation



of the activities, based on the feedback of the interested people. The main rationale of this pilot was to point out the driving factors behind the effective integration at the local level.

3.1 Decision of the most appropriate public consultation process

To achieve the goal of selecting the most appropriate public consultation process, we introduced our participants to each consultation method. A Power Point Presentation was created, with the aim to provide the most important aspects of the public consultation procedures and methods. This Presentation displays the essentials of the consultation methods, as initially found and presented in our Best Practices Report.

3.2 Preparation of Consultation Documents, including:

i) Detailed description of the Activity, that is going to be presented to mobile EU citizens

Our research team prepared a power point presentation with the aim to be displayed to the participants of the pilot. The presentation focused on the main EU mobile citizens' rights that derive from the right to free movement. We emphasized on the 20 key principles set out in European Pillar of Social Rights (2017) in three categories: equal opportunities and access to the labour market, fair working conditions and social protection and inclusion. An important aspect which is related to the integration of newcomers is linked with the political involvement and participation in the elections in the host societies. Moreover, we found essential to provide the participants with useful information about the EU bodies that protect EU citizen's rights and we offered some important websites which provide services to EU mobile citizens in Greece and Cyprus and a helpline. Based on our findings and taking into consideration that the civic engagement in the host society affects the integration of the EU mobile citizens, we had decided that the most suitable consultation should be through the conduction of a public meeting at which the interested parties and groups can comment in person. The aim of this pilot was to receive a feedback and some recommendations of the target group on how the integration process should be effective and based on the real needs of the EU mobile citizens.



So, apart from the theoretical aspect, that was provided to the participants we wanted to identify and list the main socio-economic problems that EU mobile citizens have encountered during their stay in host country, either it is Greece or Cyprus and list solutions to these problems. We also expected that the The representatives of the local authorities could reply to these problems, either by informing them of the available processes or by trying all together to formulate solutions to these problems. The result would be a Joint Document.

Our methodology relied on promoting an innovative approach and since innovation is perceived as a result of a process of actions, which evolve around feedback loops.

ii) Standard documents for the implementation of the consultation process.

We informed our participants that Public Consultation contains the following elements:

1/. Notification: It involves the communication of information on regulatory decisions to the public. Notification does not, itself, constitute consultation, but can be a first step. In this view, prior notification allows stakeholders the time to prepare themselves for upcoming consultations.

2/. Consultation: It involves actively seeking the opinions of interested and affected groups.

3/. Participation: It is the active involvement of interest groups in the formulation of regulatory objectives, policies and approaches, or in the drafting of regulatory texts.¹

Aiming to set a common understanding we also provided an overview of the Consultation methods. Moreover, a detailed briefing on public consultation methods was be given, based on the PPT presentation.

3.3 Establishment of the consultation process with a specific implementation timeline and monitoring of results.

The Envision Consortium, under the leading of Helping Hand, agreed on the following timeframe: The preparatory work should be made by the end of December 2020. The pilots of the Activity in Greece and Cyprus took place on December 2020.

¹ OECD, Background Document on Public Consultation, Retrieved from: <https://www.oecd.org/mena/governance/36785341.pdf>



3.4 Finalizing of the content of the proposed Activities

The most important aim of the pilots of this Activity was to discuss and define the concepts of civic participation and the achievement of the integration in the host community and then through the participant's view and experience sharing the local level to draft a common statement. The most crucial part was to give the space to the EU mobile citizens to share their experiences and in the same time to receive the input from the relevant local authorities.

Organisation of the Pilot & Facilitators

In Greece the pilot was organized on December 2, 2020, whereas in Cyprus three online events were organized. The session in Greece followed the other 2 presentations under A.2.7. and the event was facilitated by AKMI and Helping Hand. The first pilot in Cyprus took place on December, 7, 2020. UCM, with the collaboration of the rest partners, hosted the first virtual meeting, via the Zoom platform. Another meeting followed on 15/12/2020 and a last one was held on 21/12/2020, both via the Zoom platform. The last online event on this topic was organised in collaboration with the Association of Greeks of Limassol. In Cyprus, the online meetings were facilitated from the Central Union of Cyprus Municipalities.

The profile of participants

Among the participants were Representatives of the local authorities and mobile EU citizens representatives, who reside in Cyprus and EU mobile citizens who reside in Greece and who have already participated in the Envision training, which is available in the Moodle platform: <https://elearning.project-envision.eu/>. All of them showed willingness and great interested to discuss the suggested topic.

The programme flow

In Greece the pilot followed the discussions already held about the Envision Course and the discussions about the other two activities under 2.7. We had shared with the participants the relevant Power Point presentations on this topic, and we had asked to send their feedback on the forum about the topic. The feedback given lasted for 15 minutes (18.30pm-18.45pm).



In Cyprus, the first pilot (07/12/2020) started at 19.00pm and lasted for 2 hours. 38 participants attended this event, along whom, they were representatives from AKMI and Helping Hand. The second pilot in Cyprus was held on 15/12/2020 and 12 participants attended it. Finally, the last pilot was organised on 21/12/2020, which was attended by 20 people.

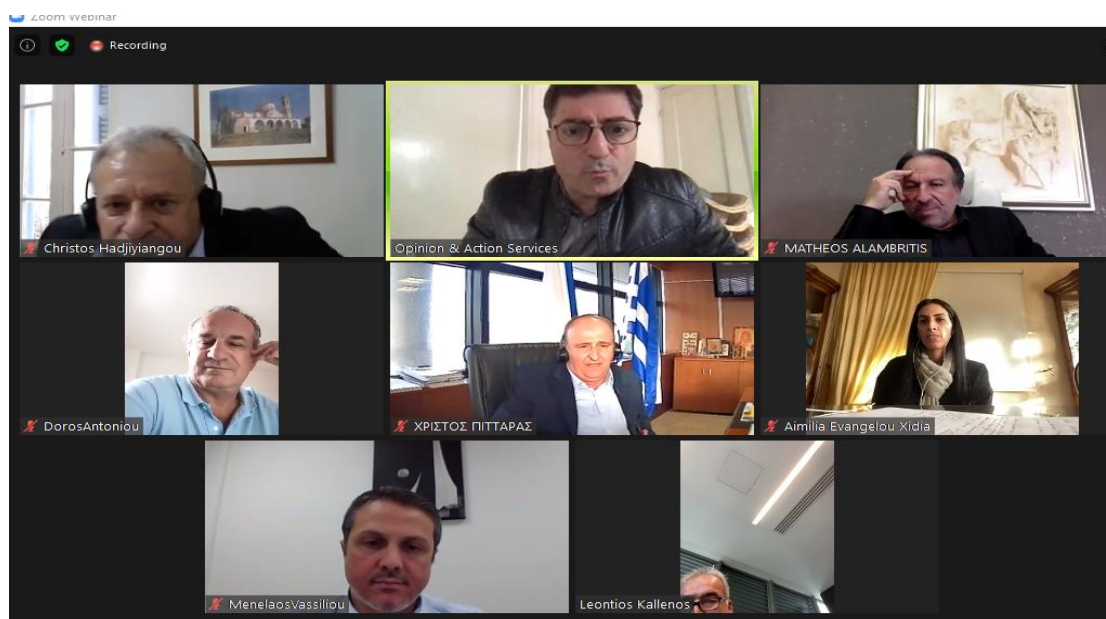


Figure 2 1st Online Pilot, 07/12/2020

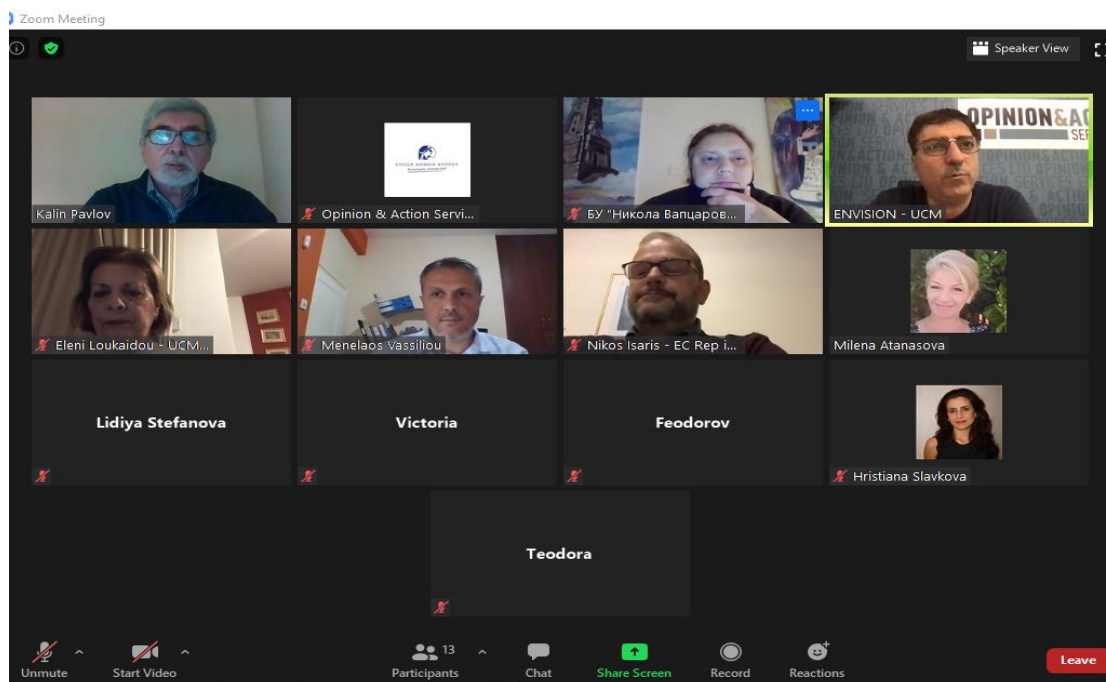




Figure 3 2nd Online Pilot, 15.12.2020

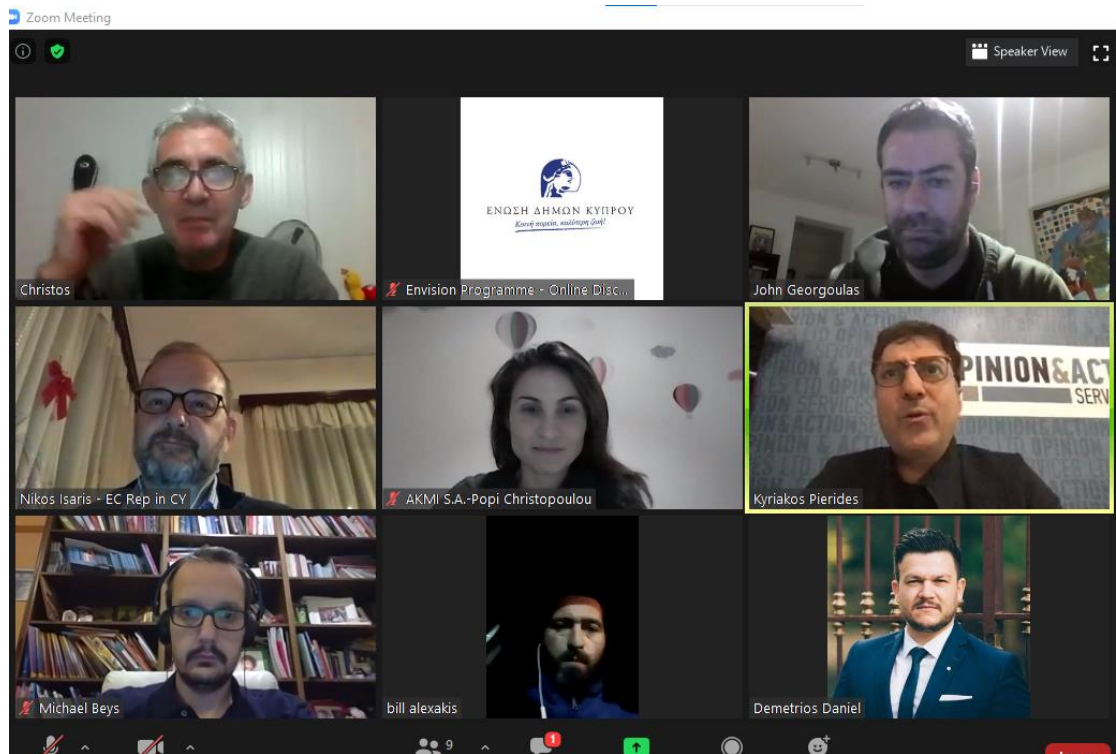


Figure 4 3rd Online Event, 21.12.2020

4. Provision of feedback from stakeholders

All participants agreed that the most preferred public consultation method for this activity should be the consultation, through face-to-face meetings with the public authorities of their region. Receiving the feedback from the interested parties laid on the following parameters:

- Review: Reviewing the current situation, (reflect on questions, such as: How does language learning take place now, what should change at the local level)
- Analysis: Analyse the existing local practices and similar activities they have attended.
- Planning: What activities do they believe are mandatory to take place at the local level?
- Implementation: Co-decision of the appropriate consultation methods and designing of the activity to be implemented at the local level.



The Main Outcomes of the Pilots

The facilitators of the above mentioned online events, based on all the theoretical aspects that presented to the participants and after receiving their first input, moved to asking them to prepare a joint document, with the aim to identify and list the main socio-economic problems that EU mobile citizens have encountered during their stay in host country, either it is Greece or Cyprus and list solutions to these problems. The role of the public authorities was vital in this pilot, since they could have a saying .

The main outcomes of all discussions were the following:

Greece:

- ❖ The Municipalities should use effectively their social media and promote specific posts, translated in the EU mobile citizens about the elections.
- ❖ The local authorities should also take advantage of their websites and promote specific activities that foster the social inclusion of EU mobile citizens
- ❖ The citizens should have a saying and they should be able through local activities to participate in the designing phase.

Cyprus:

- ❖ The Associations of Greek citizens living and working in Cyprus, suggested the organization of informative campaigns and joint cultural actions with the



Municipalities. The purpose was to encourage their participation in the local elections and to support their accession process.

- ❖ In general, the EU mobile citizens' Associations suggest overcoming the language barriers, through communicating the most important rights in the mobile citizens' mother tongue. This process should start by considering the percentages of the population in the host society. (for Cyprus this mostly refers to citizens from Bulgaria and Romania).
- ❖ The access to information should be better reinforced by taking full advantage of the Single Digital Gateway, which has been launched with the aim to provide useful and concrete information to the EU mobile citizens.
- ❖ Moreover, the associations of EU mobile citizens could be better used for the promotion of their rights and the enhancement of the integration of their members at the local level. The need to map their current contribution as regards the promotion of the mother tongue and their culture should be reviewed.

On behalf of the local authorities representatives, we received the following input:

Mr. Doros Antoniou, the Mayor of Mesa Geitonia and Vice President of the Union of Municipalities of Cyprus, supported the development of close relations and joint cultural actions between the Municipalities and the communities of European citizens, noting that problem for the Cypriot citizens as well. Mr. Christos Giannoulis, the President of the Association of Greeks of Limassol, said that the numbers of Greeks in Cyprus have more than doubled due to the economic crisis and stressed the need for an initiative that will bring them closer to the Municipalities to participate in Municipal Councils. Mr. Nikolaos Isaris, the Deputy Head of the European Commission Delegation in Cyprus, conveyed the European experience, emphasizing the need for regular communication between the Municipalities and the European citizens. Furthermore, Mr. Michalis Bey (Officer of the Ministry of Interior - Department of Population and Immigration Archive) proposed the development of a coordinated effort to inform European citizens about their rights and obligations. Moving to Mr. Menelaos Vassiliou (Head of the Central Election Service of the Ministry of Interior) referred to the activation of the Digital Gate, with information to all



citizens about the rights and services offered. It has been launched and will include full information content until 2023.

On behalf of the coordinator of the ENVISION project, Ms Popi Christopoulou, her speech have emphasis to the e-learning platform, which aimed to train the EU mobile citizens, the local authorities staff and the local societies and create a consensus in the communication and participation in social events.

To conclude, all organised events under this topic stressed the high importance of EU mobile citizens participation in all aspects of living in the host societies. The political participation is a proof of their active involvement in the local affairs and proves a way of integration in the host societies. Moreover, the Municipalities should promote the registration of citizens in the electoral rolls and they should provide all the useful information to the citizens, a long time before the elections. Moreover, the Municipalities should establish procedures with the aim to receive the EU mobile citizens' input, such as when municipal councils take place. During such activities the voice of the EU mobile citizens could be heard and their rights would be promoted and respected.

Furthermore, an important issue is that the Municipalities can develop and exploit the different cultural characteristics of the EU mobile citizens. The collaboration between the EU mobile citizens and the local authorities should be established and regular meetings should be held. Finally, the staff of the Municipalities should add the topic of socioeconomic integration of the EU mobile citizens in their daily agenda.

The participants' input and valuable feedback was taken into consideration. We proposed them to interact in the common space, the facebook page: Humans on move. Envision Community. We proposed them to meet, discuss more about any problem or question they might have that relates to this pilot and in general to their participation in the local societies of the host communities.

Our aim was through an online collaboration to promote their views and discuss their ideas on this issue. The goal was to achieve an enhanced participation in the local life of the host society, which will be later exploited via face to face collaboration.



5. Additional Resources

For the Stakeholders identification, the Excel of our network is provided as a supplementary document. The link is available only to the Project Officer and the Envision Consortium, at: <https://www.project-envision.eu/space/index.php/f/1604> .

The PowerPoint Presentations which provide the main theoretical aspects related to this topic are available to any interested person at: <https://www.project-envision.eu/space/index.php/s/B9zc24fE676Hmfs> for Greece and Cyprus.

The invitation to the pilot/event in Greece was sent to the participants, via the Moodle Platform that hosted the Envision Learning.

The invitations about the pilots in Cyprus is available at: <https://www.project-envision.eu/space/index.php/f/1679> .