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Further training of multipliers for the integration of immigrants

The **Foundation for Humanism and Democracy** (H+D) has implemented and successfully concluded a project entitled **“Further training of multipliers for the integration of immigrants”**, in collaboration with the European Centre for Workers’ Questions within the adult training programme and financed by the European Commission within the context of promoting the European social dialogue.

The project was made up of four activities: a reflection group (Madrid, 21 and 22 June, 2009), European days offered as seminars (Madrid, 20, 21 and 22 November, 2009), an evaluation group (Madrid, 14 December, 2009) and a group presenting the results (Brussels, 16 and 17 March, 2010). The European policies pay particular attention to employment, the time devoted to the social dialogue as a transverse management tool to tackle the major socio-economic challenges. In this way, the project activities have dealt with one of the most common themes of recent years, the jobs market and the entry of labour from other countries in their many dimensions: impacts on employment, sustainability networks for the pension system given the ageing population, questions of socio-labour integration and processes for managing the phenomenon...

These dimensions are covered by the European Commission, under the auspices of the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, with a defined policy for each area, cross-referenced in relation to the phenomenon of migration.

Humanism and Democracy has compiled guidelines for training adults within the European social dialogue within the context of reflecting on and studying the impacts of the migration phenomenon on European workers: understanding the characteristics of migration (Socio-economic keys of migration, **Murcia**, May 2000); its social and family dimensions (Migrations in Europe: social, economic and other aspects..., **Pamplona**, September 2000); its legal bases in relation to other forms of workers’ mobility (European cross-border working, **Ceuta**, March 2001 and **Melilla**, 2002); its impacts for the European social model (the work of immigrants as a contribution to the social model, **Tenerife**, November 2003); its impacts on the European cultural model (Migrations: social networks and cultural challenges, **Madrid**, November 2004); its most human dimensions (Movements of populations and poverty worldwide: cooperation in development, **Valencia**, November 2005); its impacts on promoting employment (Employment interchanges as a driving-force of development, **Palma de Mallorca**, 2006); and, finally, action paths to allow leaders to integrate immigrants into the labour market (**Madrid**, 2008, 2009).

The project, with a period of execution of ten months, started in June 2009 and ended in March 2010. The specific content of the programme was defined at the meeting of the **Working group** (Madrid, June 2009), with the participation of the Workers’ Trade Union (WTO) and with the participation of some immigrants’ associations. The immigrant workers’ lack of knowledge about methods and the significance of the social dialogue as an instrument, by which the workers participate in the European social model was identified as being in need of an urgent solution. The members of the Working group (18 people from Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Poland) initially analysed the evolving context of European policies relating to admitting and integrating workers from other countries, with specific attention to the relevant annual information from the European Commission.

During the working sessions, they paid particularly attention to the extraordinary regulations managed by some countries, such as Spain, on the one hand, whilst also taking an interest in the specific regulations created by other countries, such as Germany and France. They also studied the relations between regularisation policies in terms of the integration strategies. One of its conclusions was that these strategies should be reinforced and it was accepted that this relationship would be the theme of November’s seminar. Some emphasised the need to strengthen common links between integration policies and methods. Others asked for government manuals regarding good immigration practice to be distributed so that international cooperation at municipal level between public authorities, private companies and civil society could be analysed.

From 20 to 23 November 2009, a seminar was held in Madrid, Spain, entitled **“The Eighth European Day of Migration”**, with reference to “Further training of multipliers for the integration of immigrants”. The main objective was studying the social dialogue as a mechanism to ensure that the immigrant population becomes part of the employment sector and, as a secondary objective, reflecting on European policy in terms of immigration.

The seminar was attended by a total of 44 representatives of workers' groups from Spain, Germany, Portugal, Poland and Rumania. Representatives from Peru, Colombia and Chile were welcomed by the organiser.

Items:

- Ana Pastor Julián, Vice-President of the Congress of Deputies
- Gonzalo Robles Orozco, Deputy for Salamanca and Vice-President of H+D
- Roundtable on the dynamics of representing immigrant workers in the social dialogue and within the context of labour relations with the company
- Lecture by José Luis Fernández Santillana from the Workers' Trade Union (WTU)
- Roundtable on the programmes and experiences of integrating workers from other countries into the jobs market with three immigrant workers at the table, representing different minorities from and social awareness of other countries.
- Roundtable on the future of the contributions made by workers' organisations to the dynamics of integrating groups of immigrants into the jobs market
- Lecture by Jesús Eloy Bedoya Chocán, Director of the H+D Department for social awareness and immigration

Conclusions:

- 1- Integration is a dynamic process, in two directions, of mutual recognition by the local and immigrant populations
- 2- That integration involves respecting the basic values of European society, and respect both for immigrants' customs and for the legislation of the host country
- 3- That employment is the key aspect of the process of integration, on which can be constructed the remainder of the process for ensuring the social participation of immigrants into the host society
- 4- That civil education relating to the host environment is as significant as the recognition of the academic qualifications of the countries of origin, such as reinforcing specific professional training
- 5- The processes of interrelation in any facet of social life are essential to understanding integration in terms of rootlessness, signifying the need to intensify the perception of the immigrant's participation in society
- 6- Involving immigrant workers in the social dialogue procedures require the available information to be reinforced, and specific reinforcement aimed at a group of workers outside the usual social dynamics
- 7- The management of the flows does not have to be a unilateral dynamic, but should reinforce the mechanisms of cooperating with the countries of origin.

The **Evaluation group** (including representatives of workers' groups from Germany, Portugal, Italy and Spain) met to draw up a shared vision with regard to the European policy relating to migrations. In this way, it was evident that a shared vision requires a more coherent method of observation between all the countries in order to develop both data classification mechanisms and shared databases. It was noted that specific national files had to be kept, relating to migrations in order to standardise the information available from the same methodological perspective.

It recommended presenting the seven cardinal points of the seminar's conclusions to the European institutions, aware of the fact that they are not an extraordinary novelty and, therefore, to confirm some of the conclusions of previous years and overcoming the debate, that they are confirmed as a reality of everyday experience.

It also sought to reaffirm proactive methods in ensuring that the experiences of workers' groups' organisations are in tune with specific actions relating to the integration of immigrant groups.

To this end, a group met in Brussels, on 16 and 17 March, to present results, personally translating these conclusions to various European bodies, and agreed to issue the workers and trade union organisations with the EZA network with the final and complete project report, as well as the general lectures, from the European Days seminar and the group meetings. The meeting was attended by representatives from workers' organisations from Germany, Portugal, Spain and Italy.