

Migration flows and integration policies: data evidence and best practices in the EU

22-23 November 2018

Electra Metropolis Hotel, 15 Mitropoleos Str,
Athens, Greece

1. Targeted audience

National policy makers and practitioners, authorities implementing ESIF programmes, regional and local policymakers, university academics and scientists, private sector, national, regional and local media and other knowledge multipliers.

Stakeholders involved in cross-border and transnational cooperation (under the European Territorial Cooperation goal for Regional and Urban Policy) and European networks, such as: European Migration Network (EMN); Mediterranean Migration Observatory; European Network of Migrant Women; initiatives launched in the framework of last year EU calls on migrant entrepreneurship, European Migrant Entrepreneurship Network.

Members of Committee of the Regions international cooperation initiatives: ARLEM (Euro-Mediterranean Regional and Local Assembly) and CORLEAP (Conference of the Regional and Local Authorities for the Eastern Partnership). European Economic and Social Committee members and members of the Urban agenda for the EU – Inclusion of migrants and refugees.

Adriatic-Ionian and Danube macro-regions and their respective strategies, EUSAIR and EUSDR, as the areas targeted by the new ESPON targeted analysis 'Territorial and Urban Potentials Connected to Migration and Refugee Flow', and the stakeholders involved in the analysis.

2. Outline

The humanitarian refugee crisis has led to heated debates in most EU countries and at the European level as well as deep concerns among the public at large. Countries in the Mediterranean area have had to deal with an influx of refugees on a local day-to-day manner.

But like climate change, it can be argued that migration is a global issue that needs to be addressed both locally and internationally. The recent inflow of Syrian asylum seekers in Europe forced upon EU leaders and citizens a brutal awareness regarding the global refugee crisis that is mostly unfolding in the global south

Many believe that the current European crisis is exacerbated by the confusion of short- and long-term policy issues, of asylum and migration regulation, of debates around rights, politics and economics and cannot be solely addressed at the national level.

In understanding the impact of immigration, analyses that are both context-specific and connected to global dynamics are crucial to determine the effects of migration. Recent concern has been formulated about the lack or unreliable quality of migration data. Beyond data, robust and clear analytical premises of policymaking are the key to an understanding of the problems and possible solutions. One-size-fits-all and ideology-based policies rarely work over the long term.

The emergence or entrenchment of political crises around migration and asylum issues calls for an urgent reaction of all stakeholders. Scientists, civil society organisations, activists, concerned citizens and policymakers should join forces to bring about a better understanding of migration, both forced and voluntary, of its determinants and consequences for host societies and countries of origin. Such debates provide grounds for evidence-based policymaking and sound practices beyond ideological constructions and discourses that tend to obfuscate debates in the media and political arena today.

Therefore, territorial evidence on the flows of asylum seekers and refugees, their distribution between and within EU countries, regions and cities, the impact on socio-economic development as well as information on crisis management and integration is in high demand. The ESPON applied research activity "Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe" <https://www.espon.eu/refugee> addresses these issues and aims to provide relevant territorial evidence and policy recommendations. A more focused ESPON targeted analysis examines the territorial impact of migration and refugee flows in the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube macro-regions <https://www.espon.eu/migration>.

This joint ESPON / Interact conference over two days will focus on migratory flows and integration and will shed light on the distribution of asylum seekers and refugees at regional and urban levels and how has this been changing over time as a result of European and national policy decisions in recent decades. This analysis will show how different European regions and cities located in arrival, transit and destination countries are responding to the refugee crisis in terms of providing humanitarian aid, services, community building, internal distribution of refugees and medium and long-term integration.

The conference will also examine the skills and qualifications that refugees possess and how does the influx of refugees impact the recipient countries' regional and local labour markets and demographic imbalances.

The Conference will explore the main challenges and identify good policy responses and the best practices for successful integration of refugees into the local communities, societies and labour markets at regional and local levels. It will indicate the kind of support they need and evaluate the success of previous integration measures and how to improve the use of existing funding opportunities such as Cohesion Policy and Interreg projects.

ESPON and Interact therefore consider this joint conference as a means of both informing participants of the state of the art of current research and empirical knowledge and to take advantage of the current knowledge of third-sector organisations and practitioners to better focus the relevance of interventions and projects on the ground.

3. Research input (from ESPON projects)

Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe

<https://www.espon.eu/refugee>

The refugee crisis is one of the hottest topics on the EU agenda. The recent events related to the Syrian civil war, political turmoil in Libya and the subsequent influx of refugees towards Europe as well as perceptions caused by internal migration that led to 'Brexit' have had a polarising effect on Europe. Therefore, territorial evidence on the flows of asylum seekers and refugees, their distribution between and within EU countries, regions and cities, impact on socio-economic development as well as information on crisis management and integration is in high demand. The ESPON applied research activity "Impacts of refugee flows to territorial development in Europe" addresses these issues and aims to provide relevant territorial evidence and policy recommendations.

The ESPON project examines the distribution of asylum seekers and refugees at the regional and urban level and how has this been changing over time because of European and national policy decisions in recent decade. It sheds light on how different European regions and cities located in arrival, transit and destination countries are responding to the refugee crisis in terms of providing humanitarian aid, services (accommodation, material support, healthcare provision, education, language courses, labour market programmes), community building, internal distribution of refugees and medium- and long-term integration.

The project looks at the skills and qualifications that the refugees possess and how the influx of refugees has impacted on the recipient countries' regional and local labour markets and demographic imbalances (especially concerning regions which are facing the challenges of losing population and ageing. Do the skills and qualifications meet the needs of local labour markets and how do they compete with local population and regular migrants?

The project investigates the diversity within Europe in terms of integration policies at regional and local levels and identifies the main challenges and policy responses and the best practices for successful integration of refugees into the local communities, societies and labour markets at regional and local levels. This raises questions on what kind of support do they need? How successful have the integration measures been in the past? How to improve the use of existing funding opportunities? Is there a need to improve the legislation? What kind of impacts would the implementation of the proposal of European relocation scheme generate to European countries regions and cities? How are countries redistributing refugees internally? What are the main concerns for the host countries and communities?

Territorial and Urban Potentials Connected to Migration and Refugee Flows

<https://www.espon.eu/migration>

The 'targeted support' project contract contributes to raising knowledge on the territorial impact of migration and refugee flows in the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube macro-regions in order to take these aspects into account in the framework of the EUSAIR and EUSDR strategy and the ETC programmes. Both the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube macro-regions face substantial inflows of migrants and refugees coming from outside the EU due to their geographical location. Some regions, like North Aegean and Puglia, have become the main landing points. Others, like Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg, are regions

facing the highest influx of migrants as points of final destination. Therefore, both macro-regions are characterized by strong interdependencies and similar challenges in this matter.

The project gives a comprehensive overview of the recent migration and refugee flows in the Adriatic-Ionian and Danube macro-regions from a qualitative and quantitative point of view looking at the main driving forces affecting the geographical distribution of the migrants (e.g. attractiveness of specific regions and cities to migrants and refugees). In addition, the territorial impacts of migration will be investigated seeking to explain how migration affect the current socioeconomic challenges and possibly provide opportunities as well.

The recommendations will focus on how different territories can overcome challenges of unpredictable and large-scale inflows, manage integration and enhance the potentials in their endeavours to cope with the current migration and refugee inflows within their strategic policy and development objectives.

4. Agenda

Day 1 – Migration flows and challenges of southern Europe: data evidence and best practices in the EU

Objectives:

- Understanding the challenges of southern Europe in terms of migratory flows and integration
- Making available relevant research and data from ESPON projects to better understand the topic in the EU context and sharing examples of integration policies and practices among the stakeholders and Interreg programmes
- Input from specific initiatives and organisations
- Outlining possible solution and next steps related to migration challenges

Moderator: Maria Nikoltsiou – Journalist

09:00	Registration and welcome coffee	
10:00	<p>Welcome to the event and presentation of the Greece National Strategy on Integration</p> <p>Welcome from Ministry of Economy and Development</p> <p>Welcome from ESPON</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Ilias Miltiadis Klapas, Secretary General of the Ministry of Immigration Policy, Greece • Mr Ioannis Firbas, General Director, National Coordination Authority for ESIF, Ministry of Economy and Development • Dr Laurent Frideres, Head of Unit Evidence and Outreach, ESPON EGTC
10:30	<p>Migration and refugee flows – challenges for southern Europe</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr D. Mermiris, Representative, Deputy Director of Reception and Identification Service, Ministry of Migration Policy, Greece • Ms Inmaculada Carda Isach, DG for Social Inclusion, Valencia Region, Spain
11:15	Coffee break	

ESPON territorial evidence of the impact of migration and refugee flows and Horizon 2020 Future ICT Solutions

11:45	MIGRARE - Impacts of Refugee Flows to Territorial Development in Europe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Laura Todaro, Principal Consultant, VVA
12:15	Territorial and urban potentials connected to migration and refugee flows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prof. Stefano Bianchini and Dr Marco Zoppi, Research Assistant, University of Bologna
12:45	Developing digital tools to assess the skills of migrants and refugees (NADINE, Horizon 2020)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Elissavet Lykogianni, Associate Director, VVA
13:00	Lunch	

Effective migration management: which practices can we extrapolate in post-2020 public support schemes? Panel discussion

14:00	Best practices in Sicily	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Roberta Lo Bianco, Coordinator of the Migration Unit, CESIE
	Strengthening Municipal Structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Konstantinos Kousaxidis, International Organisation for Migration
	Best Practices of Integration actions- The case of Social Integration Centre of Athens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Lefteris Papayannakis, Deputy Mayor of Athens for Migration and Refugee Issues
	Urban Innovative Actions programme "Curing the Limbo", Athens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms Amalia Zepou, Vice-Mayor for Civil Society and Innovation of the City of Athens
	Local dimension of integration policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Athanasios Vitsentzatos, Director of Social Integration Department, Athens: Local dimension of integration policies

	The Housing Programme ESTIA - the experience of Livadia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs Giota Poulou, Mayor of the Municipality of Livadia
16.15	Coffee break	

Reflection on policy recommendations

16.35	<p>Overview of key points from each session and looking forward to Day 2:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Pavel Trantina, European Economic and Social Committee, • Mr Panagiotis Exarchos, Urban Partnership on Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees • Ms Maria Koutatzi, Head of Social Policy & Advocacy, Caritas, Greece • Mr Michele Colavito, Italian Agency for Territorial Cohesion • Mr Ivano Magazzu, Project Manager, Interact
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Conclusions

17:30	Representative of the Ministry of Economy and Development
17.45	Networking Cocktail

Day 2 - Meeting of the Network “Interreg response to migration-related challenges”

Objectives:

- Exchanging and networking on the current policy trends and tools available for Interreg programmes to tackle migration issues, also in the light of the proposals of the priorities for 2021-2027 Cohesion policy.
- Identifying possible type of actions and projects to be undertaken by Interreg programmes in the future programming period to better tackle migration issues throughout European territorial co-operation.

09:30	Registration and welcome coffee	
10:00	Introduction and main conclusions from Day 1	Interact and ESPON
Migration and refugee flows – challenges for southern Europe		
10:30	New Policies developments in the EU in tackling integration of people with migrant background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs Evangelia Georgitsi and Mrs Antonia Psyrra, European Commission DG HOME
11:00	Future Perspectives: EC Proposal for the Cohesion Policy 2021-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mrs Maria Soumela, European Commission DG REGIO
11:30	Coffee break	
12:00	Data and evidence in support to Integration Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Michele Vespe, European Commission DG JRC
12:30	Who do you think is the migrant?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Testimony from Mr Abou Tagourla (Mauritania/France)
13:00	Lunch	
Best practices from programmes		
14:00	Interreg Mediterranean Programme - Panoramed Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Michele Colavito, Agency for territorial cohesion, Italy

	Interreg Greece-Cyprus - PAIONAS Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr Lykoudis Andreas, Lieutenant Commander HCG, Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy
	Interreg Italy-Austria - EUMINT Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs Anna-Kira Pirhofer, EURAC
	Interreg Danube - DRIM Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs Sanja Cukut Krilic
	URBACT - Arrival Cities Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs Laura Colini
15:15	Coffee break	

Panel discussion:

15:30	Possible types of activities and projects to better tackle migration challenges in Interreg	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mrs Katerina Themeli, Interreg MA Greece Mr Stefano Bianchini, University of Bologna, Adrion/ESPON projects Mrs Ourania Tzoraki, University of Aegean, inHere project Horizon 2020 Interreg Projects
16:30	Open debate, wrap-up of the meeting and future steps/activities	
17:00	End of the meeting and closure of the Conference	

5. Registration information

Please register at

<http://www.interact-eu.net/#o=events/conference-migration-flows-and-integration-policies>

Contacts

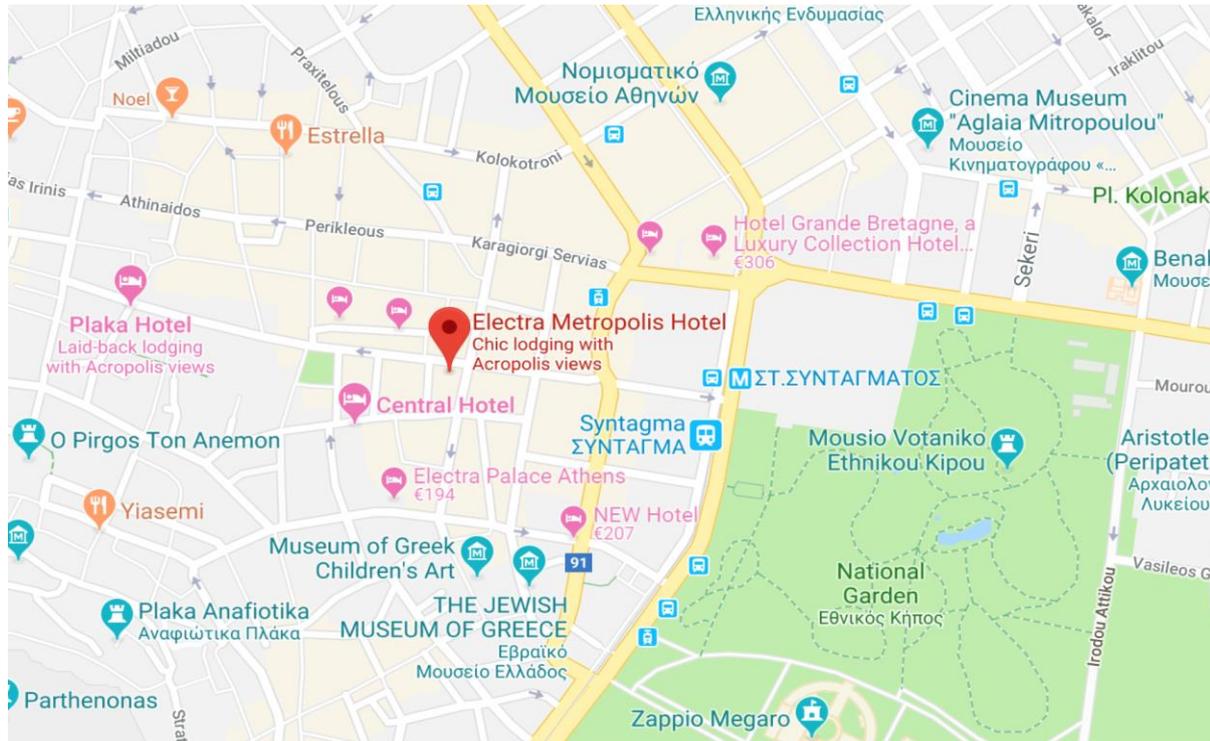
Richard Tuffs - **ERRIN (ESPON Programme)**
 Tel: +32 2 486 4765 - Mob: +32 496 305 436
richard.tuffs@errin.eu

Vassilen Iotzov - **ESPON EGTC**
 Tel: +352 20 600 280 04
vassilen.iotzov@espon.eu

Ivano Magazzu, **Interact Programme**
 Tel: +34 96 353 10 84
ivano.magazzu@interact-eu.net

Inspire Policy Making with Territorial Evidence

6. Map of Location



7. Directions



Connections from the airport

<https://www.aia.gr/traveler/>

Metro

airport is accessible via Metro Line 3 "Aghia Marina - Athens International Airport"

Nearest metro stop for venue is 'Syntagma'

Suburban Rail

Athens International Airport is connected via the Suburban Rail with:

Athens Central Railway Station (Larissa Station)

SKA (Rail centre of Acharnes)

Bus Services (OSY)

Four bus routes connect directly Athens and Piraeus with the airport. All buses set down passengers at the Departures Level and depart from the Arrivals Level, between Exits 4 and 5.

<https://www.athensairportbus.com/en/>

Taxi services

Taxis cost around €40 to Athens centre

<https://www.welcomepickups.com/athens/airport-transfer-to-city/>

8. Hotels nearby

Venue:

Electra Metropolis Hotel

15 Mitropoleos Str., 105 57 Athens, Greece – Tel: (+30) 214 100 6200

<https://www.electrahotels.gr/en/athens/electra-metropolis-athens/>

Hotel	Category	Distance from Metro	Address & website	How to book
Electra Hotel Athens	5 stars	100m from Syntagma Metro station	5, Ermou Str., 105 63 Athens	At your discretion
Electra Palace Hotel Athens	5 stars	50m from Syntagma Metro station	18-20, N. Nikodimou Str., 105 57 Athens	At your discretion
Amalia Hotel Athens	4 stars	100m from Syntagma Metro station	10, Amalias Ave., 105 57 Athens	At your discretion
Electra Metropolis Athens	5 stars	50m from Syntagma Metro station	15, Mitropoleos Str., 105 57 Athens	At your discretion
NJV Athens Plaza	5 stars	50m from Syntagma Metro station	2, Vas. Georgiou Ave., 105 64 Athens	At your discretion
New Hotel	5 stars	250m from Syntagma Metro station	16, Filellinon Str., 105 57 Athens	At your discretion
Titania Hotel	3 stars	300m from Panepistimio. Metro station	52, Panepistimiou Str., 105 57 Athens	At your discretion