

National Seminar “Working with Migrants/ Refugees under Lockdown”, 17th February 2021

Introduction/ Aim of the National Seminar

The National Seminar in Greece was organised on the 17th of February online through zoom. The national seminar was linked to the issue “working with migrants/ refugees under lockdown” where different professionals have presented the ways that themselves and their organisations have coped with the challenges posed by the pandemic. The aim was for the participants to exchange ideas and methods in order to continue working with migrants and refugees under the specific circumstances created by the pandemic. This was connected to the presentation of the model and the discussion on the different aspects of the model as these exist under the situation of the pandemic.

1 Preparation phase of the workshop

The conceptual framework of the program was determined and announced by a newsletter to NGOS, social workers and other stakeholders and it was also announced in the facebook page of Action Synergy and promoted through paid advertisement.

This is a screen shot of the post in the facebook which reached 7.642 people and had 573 interactions and 53 reactions (including 13 shares).



In the following link, you can see also the newsletter sent:

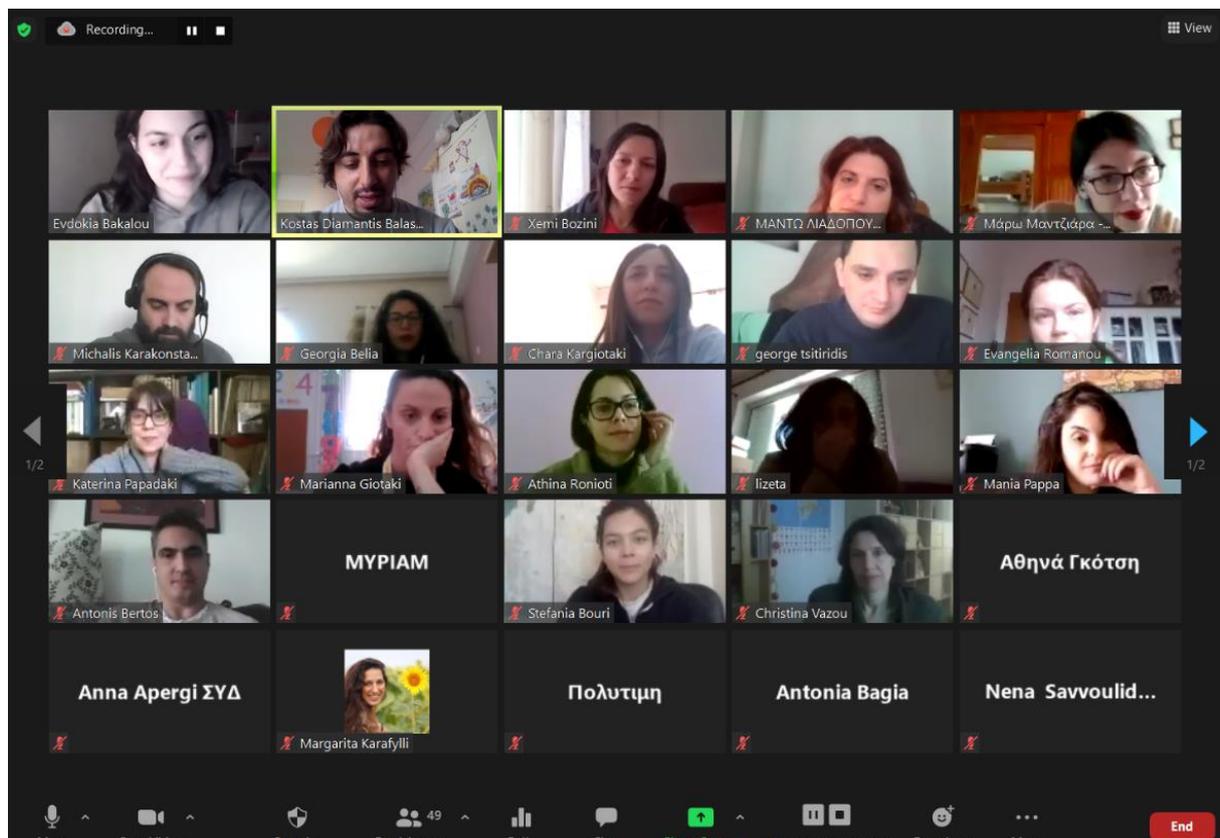
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In the national seminar, several guests were invited to discuss their experience in coping with the challenges posed by the pandemic in the work with migrants and refugees. The following experts were invited:

- Mania Pappa and Manto Liadopoulou, Child Protection Unit, Networks for the Rights of the Child
- Michalis Karakonstantis, ILC Education Team Leader, Greek Council of Refugees
- Evdokia Bakalou, responsible for the project “Step by Step”, Solidarity Now
- Georgia Chalkoutsaki, Child Protection Unit, UNHCR office in Athens

The workshop was facilitated by Kostas Diamantis Balaskas from Action Synergy.

1.3. Delivery of the workshop



Date/Location: 17.2.2021/Digital event via zoom

Number of speakers: 5

Number of registered participants: 142

Number of attended participants: 72

Program content:

10:00 - 10:30	Welcome/ Presentation of the CISOTRA project and the CISOTRA model
10:30 - 11:00	Mania Pappa/ Manto Liadopoulou, Child Protection Unit, Network for the Rights of the Child
11:00 - 11:30	Michalis Karakonstantis, ILC Education Team Leader, Greek Council of Refugees
11:30 - 12:00	Evdokia Bakalou, responsible for the project “Step by Step”, Solidarity Now
12:00 - 12:30	Georgia Chalkoutsaki, Child Protection Unit, UNHCR office in Athens
12:30 – 12:50	Break
12:50 – 14:00	Workshop: Exchange of experiences from participants in small groups (Break Out Rooms)

Description of the content of the presentations:

At the beginning of the National Seminar and after some first activities for introduction and ice breaking between the participants, Kostas Diamantis Balaskas, the moderator of the seminar has introduced the participants to the CISOTRA project and the model. The participants had the chance to see the structure of the model from the website and listen to the relevant video. The main elements of the model were explained in detail. Following this presentation, the guest speakers have started to talk about their own experiences.

Mania Pappa and Manto Liadopoulou have represented the Child Protection Unit of the Network for the Rights of the Child. They have presented how their way of work has changed especially in March 2020 when the first lockdown was imposed and how they have tried to organise the services first through the use of the phone and then through the use of online platforms. They have also explained the specific needs of UAMs that were living in places without the possibility of privacy (in order to talk to the social workers) and with limited GBs in their phones. They have explained all the measures that they have taken in order to continue providing the services to UAMs as well as the current status of their operations. At the end of their presentation, the head of the Mobile Library project has presented how the activities of the mobile library have been adapted in the covid era and how these services continue to be offered online.

The next presentation was made by Michalis Karakonstantis, ILC Education Team Leader in the Greek Council of Refugees. He has explained how they have offered Greek language courses in the framework of the pandemic. He explained the attendance, the educational activities that they have organized, the challenges that they have faced but also the opportunities that were offered by a more systematic use of electronic tools.

Evdokia Bakalou, responsible for the project “Step by Step” of the NGO Solidarity Now has presented the experience they had during the pandemic in the shelter they manage, the

growing dependence of UAMs from their mobile phone, the difficulty to organise activities in order to activate them and the solutions that have been found in cooperation with other NGOs and associations that are working in the field.

Finally, Georgia Chalkoutsaki from the UNHCR Child Protection Office in Athens has explained her experiences at the first days of the pandemic in the camps in Lesvos. She has explained both the practical and psychological problems that the lockdown has provoked to them as well as the unfair situation they have faced when the lockdown was lifted in May for the general population but not for them. She has also explained the cooperation between the different organisations and associations that facilitated the resolution of the various challenges that the pandemic has posed.

Following the last presentation, there was a small break and after that, the participants were divided in small groups through the break-out room function of the zoom platform. The participants were asked to share their own experiences in working with migrants in the framework of the pandemic and also they have been asked to comment on the organisation and coordination between the different organisations and the different aspects of the model in the framework of the pandemic.

As a result of the working groups the participants have identified common challenges such as the issue related with limited data, the non-availability of tablets or laptops, the limited wifi in the camps and the lack of motivation coming from online lessons.

On the other hand, the participants have mentioned positive experiences such as interactive, creative and alternative lessons and increased cooperation with stakeholders all over Greece. It was also mentioned that the use of IT decreases the criticism from the part of the teacher and develops the digital skills of the participants. They have mentioned the importance of institutional support as well as the development of skills in order to be able to organise creative activities that would increase the motivation of the students. It was also mentioned that the cooperation between different organisations is important in order to allow the creative use of technology which many times is used from UAMs only for pass time without real learning results.

The full recording of the National Seminar can be found here:

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/jVUNLu_tYwwZw8bGq0RjAKkgKkWzKaOkzrOvSRk2jb1K9Rw2ixdNdJIGHxmLLdHv.D58OmdPJDHeR3Rv-

Policy Recommendations

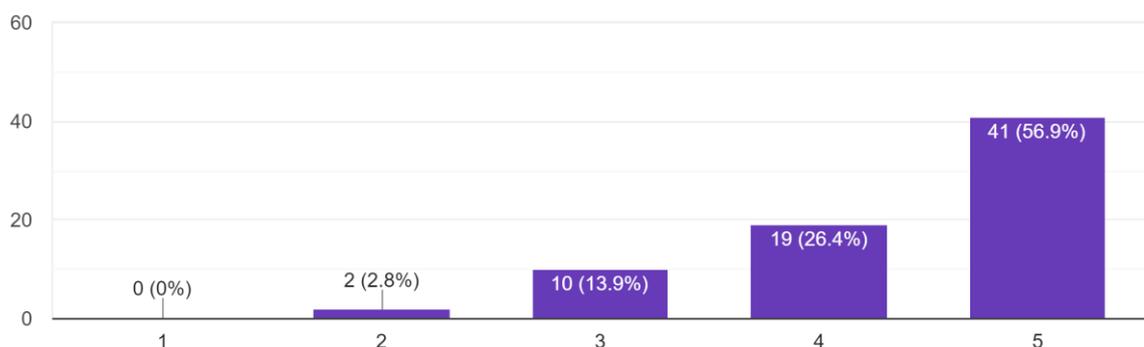
- Peer learning is the most effective way of learning in the sector. The increased contacts and cooperation between professionals that are working in the field should be enhanced and systematised
- Local/ regional authorities should be responsible to provide the necessary infrastructure in order not to stop learning activities in the framework of the lockdown
- Training should be organised related with the creative use of the internet in the sector. This training should be linked also with trainings related with the increase of motivation of migrants/ refugees to participate in learning activities, especially by distance.

1.4 Feedback

The participants were provided with a feedback form. 72 people have completed this evaluation form. The people who have completed the evaluation form have received also a certificate of attendance.

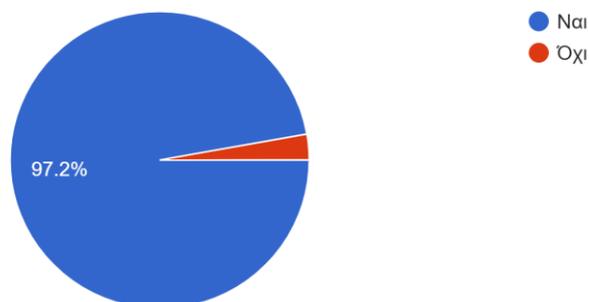
The vast majority of the participants considered that the seminar was useful for their work. 56,9% has mentioned that it was very useful (score 5) while 26,4% has mentioned that it was useful (score 4).

Πόσο χρήσιμη ήταν η ημερίδα που παρακολουθήσατε για την εργασία σας
72 responses



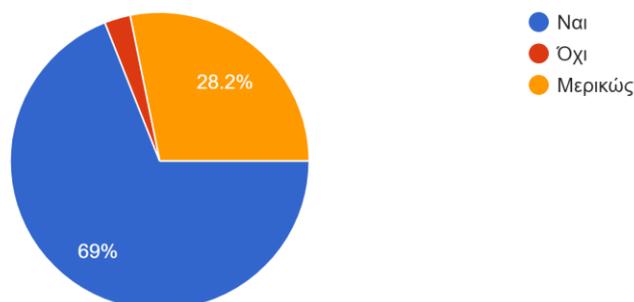
Almost all the participants considered that they had enough chances to express their opinions in the framework of the seminar.

Σας δόθηκαν αρκετές ευκαιρίες να εκφράσετε τις απόψεις σας κατά την διάρκεια της ημερίδας;
71 responses



Also, 69% of the respondents have mentioned that they have acquired new knowledge from the seminar while 28,2% have mentioned “partly”.

Αποκτήσατε καινούριες γνώσεις από την ημερίδα;
71 responses



The next question was open and asked the participants what was useful to them in relation with the seminar. The answers were the following:

- Meeting with new institutions and people from the field and exchange of experiences and good practices.
- Practical ideas about trainings/ applications/ activities
- information about my work in the refugee field in a pandemic
- The bigger picture with different aspects of exclusion and good practices
- The interaction
- The speeches of psychologists and teachers put us in the context of difficulties that different organisations are facing
- The exchange of views and practices used in the shelters
- Comparison of the education of refugees living in camps with the education of children living in structures ...

- I heard about many different ideas for managing and organizing the courses / refugee populations during the lockdown that have been implemented by various organizations in the area.
- The breakrooms and the discussion that took place there. It made the seminar very interactive!
- The speakers were aware of the subject and covered the content very well.
- The discussion in the groups, the overview of things from different organizations and the cooperation possibilities that have risen
- To listen to colleagues who work in structures, their experiences and how they face learning difficulties due to distance learning.
- The personal experiences expressed helped me to understand the prevailing conditions as I do not work in the field. I was particularly pleased with the good practices that were heard. the views exchanged on the experience we have gained in our cooperation with refugee organizations.
- I had the opportunity to meet the experiences of people from other disciplines from my own in the subject
- Valuable information about the refugee field and our work in lockdown conditions
- The fact that I had the opportunity to listen to the experiences of colleagues working in the refugee in other parts of Greece and to rethink my daily life as a worker in this field from a different perspective.
- The topics discussed were of particular interest, especially in distance learning
- That I heard many different perspectives from other organizations and from people from other fields of work.
- Information about the structures that exist. Communicating and getting to know colleagues and sharing the difficulties they face.
- Practical examples and questions and answers from colleagues with similar experiences in dealing with tensions.
- Our shared experiences and ways of case management

The final question was which was their opinion on the seminar and how this could be improved. The answers were the following:

- It would be interesting to see how the issue of care is organized in general and especially when they need hospitalization in a public hospital.
- Excellent and very helpful
- It was fine. I would suggest more opportunities for discussion within the group.
- Webinar for unaccompanied minors
- I have nothing to add as our hope is that we do not need to operate for much longer in this regime although I see it for the next quarter for sure.
- It was very complete
- It was complete and helped me in my work

- Covered the issue. It will be useful to refer to the learning methods.
- It was very interesting.
- Discussion for finding ways and tools to increase the attendance of immigrants and refugees in the educational process. What are the statistics of their participation, but also of the positive results related to the acquisition of all kinds of skills?
- The speeches were very helpful and informative on the topic of the conference.
- Very good idea this seminar! I would suggest that a case study be included in the presentation in order to see in a tangible way any difficulties and how they were addressed.
- I wish I had been informed about the CiSotra program and the seminar earlier. Also workshops would be preferable to be held at the beginning (where to set goals) or in the middle of programs and not just at the end. Of course, I do not know if there were others, because now I have just been informed about CiSotra.
- The only thing I think was a problem is the duration. I think that 4 hours is a lot, because there are many obligations and it is impossible to interrupt for so many hours. Also, I think it would be better to do it in the evening.
- Very good overall, maybe in the next corresponding day more time should be given to the discussion in individual groups.
- We hope for other events as well
- Very interesting initiative, thank you very much for organizing!
- It was very interesting with impeccable organization
- Remarkable seminar! Maybe because it is during working hours it was in two days for more participation
- It needs to be ensured that the presentations really ensure the completeness of the work presented.
- It could involve other professionals dealing with the subject, so that the issue can be discussed from all its aspects.
- Excellent theme
- Updated and comprehensive
- Interacting with other professionals in the field.
- Very good!
- To hold other such seminars. They are useful and helpful.
- Very useful and targeted supply of information. The presentation was coherent and to the point so the participant did not get tired.