



No Skills to Waste: Diversity Makes the Difference

Newsletter

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KMOP newsletter, published tri-monthly, contains news on a variety of issues and regions where we are active, including relevant international developments. To subscribe or unsubscribe [click here](#).

KMOP News

Key Highlights

Social Inclusion

New European transnational project

Mental Health

Building bridges to local community: Social exchange between primary school and patients of Group House

Employability

New VET project in Egypt

Summary of Progress

Youth & Education

Professional orientation course for disadvantaged youth

Citizenship

Outcome of Study Day for European project

Upcoming Events

One-day regional conference for the project “Provision of support services for socially vulnerable groups throughout Greece” in Kommotini, Thrace

General News

2008 European Year of Intercultural Dialogue launched
World Day of Social Justice introduced

Did you know that...

The current President of the Council of the European Union is Slovenia – the first of the new EU countries to hold this position.

KMOP News

Key Highlights

Youth & Education

Work has commenced on a transnational project that focuses on the needs of persons with Down Syndrome. Its main goal is to design, develop and implement a new training tool for family members, professionals and volunteers to help stimulate and educate persons with Down Syndrome throughout their lifetime development. The final goal is to improve the quality of life of this community and achieve maximum autonomy. For more information on project objectives and target groups, please visit:

<http://podproject.blogspot.com/>

Mental Health

The patients of KMOP Group Houses regularly visit a local health centre as part of their individual rehabilitation programmes. One patient established particularly good contact with members of staff of the health centre, one of whom also serves on the parental board of a local primary school. Recognising the need to expose children from an early age to social diversity in all its forms, a collaboration between the health centre, primary school and KMOP Group House, resulted in the patients being invited to the school's Christmas celebrations. The children were educated on the issues of mental health and social inclusion by KMOP staff, made to understand that the visiting patients were like small children themselves, and not dangerous creatures to be stigmatized. Presents were exchanged, amidst discussions for a deepening of the collaboration to include other schools in the area.

Employability

KMOP is engaged in an eight-month project that aims to establish two employment agencies in selected regions of north-eastern Egypt. This recently begun initiative will address the serious problem of unemployment in the country through the transfer of technical expertise, which will seek to establish a network between enterprises and the labour market. The employment agencies will also play an important role in empowering jobseekers in order for them to enter and, crucially, remain on the labour market.

Summary of Progress

Youth & Education / Employability

KMOP was during January involved in the implementation of two professional orientation courses for students at a public secondary school in Perama, one of the most deprived areas of Greater Athens. For many years KMOP has been active in this area, particularly with a project that deals with prevention of dropping-out of school. Through its long-established presence and support programmes, KMOP has strong connections with local schools and provided key support for the running of the professional orientation courses. Educators from the Ministry of Education provided a full-day programme, focusing on how the youth themselves can identify opportunities in employment and higher education.

Citizenship

Within the framework of the *Europe for Citizens Programme: Promotion of Active European Citizenship*, KMOP organised a Study Day in November 2007. Titled "Families speak up for active European citizenship", KMOP examined citizens' involvement in public life and affairs, beyond the national arena, seen from the family perspective. Recommendations for action included the introduction of other European models for active engagement, while retaining part of Greek family tradition; the lobbying of media and decision-makers on the value of encouraging the emerging European citizenship in an extended family context; and placing a greater focus on teaching citizenship in school from early ages, influencing the next (male) generation.

Upcoming Events

A conference accounting for the progress made of the nation-wide support services project will be held in the northern Greek town of Kommotini, Thrace region, in early March. Preliminary results will be shared in presentations focusing on developments on the local level. Similar de-centralised conferences are planned around the country throughout the year.

General News

European Institutions

The 2008 *European Year of Intercultural Dialogue* carries the motto "Together in Diversity". The aim of this initiative is to promote the wealth of cultural diversity while fostering the feeling of belonging to the European Union.

Acknowledging the need to promote efforts to tackle issues such as poverty, exclusion and unemployment, the United Nations has selected 20 February as the *World Day of Social Justice*. The UN member states are encouraged to devote the Day to promoting activities at the national level in support of the objectives and goals of the 1995 World Summit for Social Development.