



## **T.I.P.S for intercultural dialogue – T-learning to Improve Professional Skills for intercultural dialogue**

Proposed by FOR.COM (Italy)  
Together with Auxilium (Austria), Iriv (France), HOU (Greece), TEU (Poland)



Leonardo da Vinci project (Multilateral project) .

in five countries : Italy, Austria, France, Greece, Poland



### **Comparative research report**

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## Introduction

Migration has long been a key issue in most European countries faced to huge migratory flows, due to history (former colonial empires) and geography (close frontiers with emigrating countries). Since the Treaty of Amsterdam, in 1997, migration has become a European competence, integrating the “first pillar”. But the politics of migration still remain a controversial issue among many Members States.

“A thriving Europe needs active citizens, living together in integrated societies”<sup>1</sup>. Immigrants are more and more numerous in Europe. Integration has become a key issue for most of our European countries. As focussed by the European Commission, “Two processes are critical to improving immigrants’ outcomes: the elimination of inequalities, and the acquisition of competences. These challenges are at the heart of integration policies in Europe”<sup>2</sup>.

Migration is to be considered in a macro-level perspective (policy-making processes: legislation, institutionalization of migration policy, strategies of inclusion of immigrants, security concerns, human rights issues) but also in a micro-level perspective (to raise and answer questions about migrants’ everyday life). The European strategy in the field of migration and asylum has focused on two approaches: the security approach (short term strategy focussed on struggle against illegal immigration) and the integration approach (long term strategy, enhancing all the chances for migrants to benefit by the same and equal chances in the host societies). Each member state and the EU as a whole has then to develop skills and professional competences related to immigrants needs focusing on issues as acceptance, both behavioural, historical and cultural, social integration, diversity management.

The profession of cultural mediation plays an emblematic role in this context. Its main mission is to solve or propose alternative solutions to conflicts rising between the national institutions and the migrants. The approach is a very practical and basic one: accompanying migrants in their everyday process of integration. It is both a short term and long term. On one hand, intercultural mediators may be faced to illegal migrants or migrants in a transitory position (waiting for the agreement to stay) or to new legal migrants who deserve to know the national background of the host society. On the other hand, they are working in the long term with migrants to make them become autonomous, independent and free towards institutions to avoid any future conflict through a mutual understanding.

This is the main purpose of the TIPS project, initiated by For.com (Italy)<sup>3</sup> with partners in five countries Auxilium (Austria), Iriv (France), Gruppo Pragma (Italy), HOU (Greece) and TEU (Poland) : to propose a continuous training programme for cultural mediators. After a presentation of the general framework of migration and the population of migrants in each of our five countries, we will focus on the profession of cultural mediation, the main skills and competences required for this brand new profession and the training course already proposed in order to underline the added value brought by the TIPS in developing a pilot training course for cultural mediators.

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<sup>1</sup> Niessen (Jan), Schibel (Yongmi ), MPG, Handbook on Integration for policy-makers and practitioners, European Commission, Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security, Second edition, May 2007

<sup>2</sup> Ibidem

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.forcom.it/tipsproject>

## 1. Overview on the Immigration background in the 5 countries

In the 5 countries partners of the TIPS, the immigration backgrounds are quite different. We might gather Austria and France with a tradition in the field due to their history; Italy and Greece were former emigration countries that have become immigration countries; Poland has met a unique situation after the collapse of communism (1989) from a closed country to an open one. The immigration policy was closely linked to the needs expressed on the labour market. The conditions and legal agreement to come and stay for migrants have been quite open till the beginning of the 1970s where the economic crisis led to close the doors to migrants in many countries (such as Austria and France). But the migrants' workers have already settled and have started gathering their families coming from their native countries; as a consequence the naturalisation process and conditions to obtain the nationality in many countries have become key issues since the 1980s. Numerous laws have been adopted in several European countries. The coming into force of the Amsterdam Treaty (1997) gave a European framework to the migration policies as migration has become a European competence. The 'European Pact on Immigration and Asylum' adopted in October 2008 starts with a preamble, intended to reassure countries that the Union is not becoming a 'Fortress Europe'. It states that the continent needs immigration for economic and demographic reasons. In Austria, Italy and Greece, most of the annual growth of the population comes from immigrants, due to their low birth rate.

	<b>Austria</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>Poland</b>
tradition in migration and immigration	since the Imperial and Royal Monarchy (19 <sup>th</sup> century)	since the colonial Empire (19 <sup>th</sup> century)	since the 1970s (economic crisis)	since the 1980 s (entrance in the EU in 1981)	since the 1990S (end of the communist regime and entrance in the EU in 2004))
impact of migration on population growth	↑	↔	↑	↑	↔
legal basis applied to migrants and migration	several legislation and agreement since the 1960S	several legislation since the ordonnance of 1945	several legislation since 1986	several legislation since 1991	legislation of 1997 (Aliens Act)
last meaningful legislation in the field of migration	Foreigners' Rights Bill of July 2005.	Law n° 2007-1631 of the 20th of November 2007	Law No 189/2002	Law 3386/2005	Law on the protection of Aliens 2003 (amended in 2004 & 2005)

In **Austria**, mass migrations of people from the crown lands of the Imperial and Royal (k. u. k.) Monarchy in particular to the capital Vienna started in the second half of the 19th century. Austrian immigration can be characterized on the one hand by a history of so-called 'guest worker migration' and on the other hand, by the immigration of refugees - mostly from former Eastern European Countries. The so called 'Guest-worker' immigration was promoted by contract labour programmes since the 1960s, and organised by state agencies. The first contract labour programme was established in 1962 implemented with Spain, followed by a labour programme with Turkey in 1964 and with the former Yugoslavia in 1966. By the end of the 1960s, the percentage of foreign workers had noticeably increased ; a first peak was reached in 1973 with 226 thousands foreign nationals working in Austria. As Austrians increasingly found employment in the service sector, the remaining jobs in the production sector were occupied by unskilled immigrant workers <sup>4</sup> and less qualified workers than Germany due to lower rates of income. This was still the case after the abolition of the "guest-worker"-scheme in 1973<sup>5</sup>. The first slump in the Austrian economy led to a drastic reduction in foreign labour between the mid 70s and the early 80s. Austria has experienced a long period of prosperous economic development, highly supported by the 'Austro- Keynesian' policy. The structural problems of Austrian labour market became obvious in the 1980s. While Austrians increasingly found employment in the service sector, the remaining work places in the production sector were occupied by unskilled immigrant workers. The short period of economic progress in the early 90s was mainly induced by immigrants' employment, then followed by predatory competition in the secondary sector and finally by increased unemployment of immigrant workers in the 90s.

The basic idea of the guest-worker system was the rotation principle; immigrants were supposed to stay for a short period of time to cover the specific demand for labour. However, the system never worked as expected: migrants wanted to stay longer because their income had not met their expectations and employers refused to recruit new inexperienced workers. As the predominantly male immigrants decided to stay longer, the immigration of their family members started in the beginning of the 1970s. This phase of immigration profoundly changed the structure of the foreign population. Austria became one of the major immigration countries in Europe albeit this status has never become part of Austria's official self-understanding<sup>6</sup>. The political discourse held on to notions of "Zuwanderung", thus emphasising the transitory state of immigration, as opposed to "Einwanderung", which implies settlement. Integration was considered as the unifying policy objective related to immigrants, which served to distract from the fact of immigration<sup>7</sup>. Following from this perspective, the need for an active immigration policy was not perceived in Austria until the mid 1990s<sup>8</sup>. After the original so-called "Gastarbeiter," new migratory workers have come to Austria since the end of the 1980s from Middle and Eastern Europe and from other parts of the world. Thus, for example, nurses have been brought into Austrian hospitals from the Philippines and other Asian countries<sup>9</sup>. Austria's greatest demographic concern in the 1970s and early 1980s was a shrinking population caused by lower birth rates. To offset the low birth rate, Austria needs a projected net annual growth of approximately 25 thousands people per year in order to maintain population at a stable level ; most of this growth, however, came from immigrants<sup>10</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> Böse/ Haberfellner/ Koldas 2005

<sup>5</sup> Parnreiter 1994

<sup>6</sup> Fassmann, H, Münz, R 1995

<sup>7</sup> Gächter 2001

<sup>8</sup> Böse/Herfellner/Koldas, 2005

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.demokratiezentrum.org/en/cms/knowledge/stations\\_a-z/austria\\_-\\_land\\_of\\_immigration.html](http://www.demokratiezentrum.org/en/cms/knowledge/stations_a-z/austria_-_land_of_immigration.html)

<sup>10</sup> <http://countrystudies.us/austria/64.htm/20-04-2009>.

**France**, like Austria, has been a land of migration and immigration with its Colonial Empire (in the XIXth Century). The Institute for national statistics and economic studies (INSEE) has proposed the following definition for a “foreigner”: “*anyone living in France without the French nationality*”<sup>11</sup>. In 1992, the High Council for Integration (HCI)<sup>12</sup> proposed the following definition for immigrant: “*someone born in a foreign country living at the moment in France*”. It is referring to the notion of “flux” as opposed to the idea of “stock” ; two main criteria are taken into account, the place of birth and the nationality of birth. INSEE adds that any immigrant is not necessarily a stranger, and vice versa. There are three main ways to acquire the French nationality: birth and residence in France ; declarations (marriage, adoption...) ; public decision (decree, naturalisation and reintegration). Immigration policies are linked to the conditions of arrivals and stays in France. They concern the control of migration flux and struggle against irregular (underground) immigration. Integration policies are focussed on the rights for migrants: housing, employment, education, access to social services. Immigrants may come and work on the French territory in a permanent way or for seasonal or temporary reasons under the condition to obtain a work agreement. Since the “Ordonnance”<sup>13</sup> of the 2<sup>nd</sup> of November 1945, conditions to live and work in France have been modified several times. In the meantime was created the National Office National for Immigration (ONI), a public body dedicated to the recruitment of the workforce necessary for the French economic development. It became, in 1988, the Office for International Migrations (OMI) with its competences extended to the employment of French abroad. The needs expressed on the labour market have long been main criteria in matter of immigration policies.

Several legislations have reformed the right for the nationality or the authorisation to stay. They have introduced as mains conditions for being eligible to the French nationality the knowledge of rights and duties for any citizen<sup>14</sup> together with a relevant knowledge in French language. The duration to become French after a marriage has been delayed (4 years). A special service for foreigners has been created (SSAE) and a contract has been proposed since 2006 “Contract for welcome and integration” (CAI). In the asylum field, the French Office for Protection of refugees and stateless (OFPRA) has become the only contact since a law of December 2003. A commission for the legal demand of the refugees (CCR) has been created that delivers more decisions that it has registered demands. A support for the return to the country of origin has been proposed by the Committee for control of immigration (Cici) for the people who have been denied the status of refugee and who stay irregularly in France. The law on Social cohesion of January 2005 created the National Agency for Welcome of Foreigners and Migrations (ANAEM) and enhanced a better coordination on a local level<sup>15</sup>. The law of July 2006 underlined the concept of “chosen immigration” , tried to struggle against illegal immigration and to promote equality of treatment among demanders. A law of November 2007 concerning the control of immigration, integration and asylum has mainly focussed on control of family immigration. Any foreigner has the right to make his/her family come together with his/her children (under 18 years), on the condition that he/she is regularly living in France since at least one year and that all the necessary conditions to welcome them are fulfilled (housing, financial resources).

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<sup>11</sup> As underlined by the Direction for Population and Migrations, “people acquiring the French nationality during their lifetime are called *French through acquisition* as opposed to *French by birth*.”

<sup>12</sup> Directly linked to the Prime Minister

<sup>13</sup> stronger than an ordinary law ; with a legal force just under the Constitution

<sup>14</sup> The ceremony of French citizenship is extended to all the French.

<sup>15</sup> for the policy of integration with the Regional Programme of Integration of Migrants Population (Pipri).

In **Italy**, from 1970 to now, immigrants have increased from less than 10 thousands people to almost three million, an increase of thirty times. There have been several legislative actions (1986, 1990, 1995, 1998, 2002), but the legal situation is not satisfactory compared to the progress of the phenomenon. Three closely related factors influence the increasing presence immigrated to Italy: geographical location, with very extensive borders, in a high migratory pressure, at the confluence of the African continent and the Asian and European ports Europe; a programming flow quantitatively and operationally weak and ineffective; the realistic recovery through regularisation of immigrants lacking for residence permits but already incorporated in the work. To understand the actual dynamism in migration in Italy, we must acknowledge that the "regularization" was the key word of a little impact policy.

According to the "Statistical Immigration Dossier" the foreign population legally resident, respectively 1 million 600 thousands people at the end of 2001, 1 million 850 thousands in 2002, 2 million 600 thousands in 2003, and 2 million 730 thousands at the end of 2004. Irregular presence has a considerable and growing incidence, considering the number of requests submitted at the beginning of the year, much higher than the quota of new workers laid down for 2005; it is difficult however to reach a reliable quantification of their number.

Many factors have made immigration a dimension rooted in the country. First of all is the significant number of immigrants, which puts Italy immediately after the major immigration countries (Germany, France and Great Britain) and impact on the population now close to the European average (5%), still far from the average 9% in Austria and Germany. The rhythm has increased over time, has been accelerated in recent years and higher than other European countries. The distribution of immigrants throughout the country has led to a consequent national visibility, but with some peculiarities: increased presence of immigrants in the North (more than 60% of residents compared to slightly less than 30% in Central and just over 10% in the South) and resizing the attractiveness of the so-called "effect metropolis". The regularization has had a main impact from the demographics point of view with a gender balance, the prevalence of married over unmarried, high incidence of children (one fifth of residents), and number of births by both foreign parents. There is a growing trend of residence stability with about 60% of the foreign population being in Italy from more than 5 years and a great number of immigrants who, over the years, has acquired Italian citizenship. A decisive factor is the high and growing needs of labour force by the Italian employment market with an incidence of immigrant workers that is close to 8% of the labour force. The clearest example is that of domestic assistance where foreigners (500,000 workers), are an essential remedy to poor network coverage of public social services.

The last Italian Law (No 189/2002) implements a wide and organic review on the main legislation concerning foreigners coming from countries outside the European Union. The need to deeply innovate the discipline about immigration is now a necessity among institutions working with civil society, which have been so far unable to provide adequate solutions. The guideline is to justify the entry and the permanence in the national territory of a foreigner lasting only on a legal work, whether temporary or permanent, ensuring adequate working conditions and housing. The elements of legislative initiative concern: international cooperation to encourage the policies of enforcement of criminal exploitation of illegal immigration, integration of non-EU citizens based on real inclusion in the world of work ; duration of the residence permit for work linked with the length of contract; determining the entry for reasons of work, which will be prepared according to data on the effective job application; rationalisation of family reunification; a simplified procedure for the recognition of the right of asylum; coordination of legislation through a special National Committee.

Traditionally **Greece** has been a migrant sending country. After the end of the second World War and the following post-war decades hundreds of thousand of Greeks left their country and went and settled in economically advanced countries of the North of Europe and the new world (U.S.A, Australia, Canada). These migrants found employment in the expanding manufacturing sector of these host countries and became their new working classes. The Greek diaspora is one of the biggest diasporas in the world and some analysts have calculated it at around five to six million people (first, second and third generation of people of Greek origin together).

Greece has been transformed from a migrant sending to a migrant receiving society in a few decades. Processes of economic development in Greece during the 1950s and 1960s redirected migration from the Greek countryside to Greek cities, and Athens in particular, instead of abroad. Internal migration came to take the place of earlier phenomena of international migration of Greeks abroad. At some point in the 1980s, after Greece joined the EU, the net migration of the country became positive meaning that more people were migrating to Greece than the Greeks who were migrating abroad. Almost a decade later, after the collapse of Communist regimes in Central and Eastern Europe, Greece started experiencing phenomena of mass migration. Thousands of migrants entered the country illegally in the pursuit of a better life. These phenomena of migration intensified further all through the 1990s. At the same time, migration became more diversified with migrants coming from different parts of the world. At the moment Greece, is a migrant receiving country with a high percentage of migrants in relation to its total population. Migration pressures continue to build up and new migration pathways are established to take the place of the old ones. Migration in Greece is a totally dynamic phenomenon changing its character and structure and at the same time changing the country as well.

The institutional and legal background for migration, and migration related issues, in Greece has been slowly evolving and is the result of the introduction of the following Laws: law 3386/2005 ‘On the Entry, residence and integration of third country nationals in the Greek territory.’ is the main legislative piece in relation to migration in the country ; law 3284/2004 ‘On the ratification of the code of Greek Citizenship’ refers to processes of naturalisation (obtaining the Greek nationality), while Law 3304/2005 ‘On the application of the principle of equal treatment irrespective of racial or ethnic origin, religious or other beliefs, disability, age or sexual orientation.’ provides a legislative framework against all forms of discrimination.

According to Law 3386/2005, the following types of residence (working) permits exist: Residence permit for employment (Salaried employment or service or work rendering, Seasonal employment ; Company executives, Temporary shift for service provision, Athletes – Trainers, Members of art groups, Intellectual creators, Members of foreign archaeological schools) ; Residence permit for independent financial activity ( Independent financial activity; Development of investment activity).

**In Poland**, the widespread definition of an alien<sup>16</sup> is as follows, “*any person who does not have Polish citizenship shall be regarded as an alien*”. The definition of a foreigner used in is in turn derived from the Polish Great Encyclopedia PWN. A foreigner is thus defined as “*a*

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<sup>16</sup> as conceived by the Act on Aliens of 13 June 2003 (Journal of Laws of 2003, No 128, it. 1175; Chapter 1; Art. 2:



*person inhabiting the territory of a given state, without having its citizenship*". Colloquially, every citizen of a different country, regardless from his legal status is a foreigner.

Compared to other parts of the continent, Poland is lagging behind in the transformation from net emigration to net immigration area. When the Western European countries on other parts of the continent were receiving substantial numbers of foreign workers, Eastern Europe was struggling with redundant labour. Due to historical factors (communism), in the period from the end of the Second World War till the profound political, economic and social transitions in 1989 and the following years, the Polish society was one of the most homogenous in the world. People in its politically isolated Eastern part were barren of moving abroad and the foreigners were effectively discouraged from coming in. The other factor is the communist economies with its planned performance that excluded spontaneous migration flow, which was viewed a potential threat to both economic and political system. Underdeveloped and partly subsistence-type economy offered employment to and fed a large segment of societies, granting its members a stable but meager pay and demanding a little in terms of skill, effort and work culture. Those persons could neither be used productively in other segments nor could they move out. This is why, with the collapse of communism, the economies became subject to the transition and a great migration potential was instantly generated in that region<sup>17</sup>. The changes of 90's did not immediately stimulate the profound changes in the ethnic structure of Poland. The most significant migration stream to be noted is related to the opening of Polish eastern border for tourism. Attractiveness of Poland as a destination point for immigrants from the East was in the 90's directly proportional to the rate of the Polish involvement into the political structure of Western European institutions (NATO, EU).

Polish migration policy is focused on five main trends. The first one is a policy towards the repatriates - there are many people abroad (especially in former USSR) who claim to have Polish roots. The government tries to give them a possibility to return - they are helped to get a job, educate their children and adapt to the new conditions after their arrival to Poland. The Card of the Pole was introduced in accordance with this policy. The second point of the Polish migration policy is creating a wall against illegal immigrants - as Polish border is an eastern border of the whole EU, it is important to provide legal obstacles for non-EU citizens as to getting a job<sup>18</sup>. In the past, Poland was only a transit country for foreigners, nowadays it became a destination country. Apart from the groups of political-economic traditional asylum-seekers (mostly from Chechnya or Vietnam), there is a growing amount of immigrants from Asia and Arab countries. Employers prefer hiring eastern immigrants to public work (such as road construction) and manual work (plumbing, craft, wood processing etc). In some regions of Poland, it is already cheaper to hire a foreigner and ensure the accommodation for him for the duration of a contract, than to employ local workers. The third point is the management of growing immigration from Western Europe (from the EU countries) ; the Polish State expects it to intensify in the future. Immigrants from the West are increasingly getting interested in two main economic activities. First is farming - there is plenty of wastelands, which constitute the attractive grounds for potential farmers ; the cheap, large area of abundant soil attracts especially the farmers from Western Europe (e.g. the Netherlands) who are unable to cultivate crop on the scale they would like. The second is Real estate - it is a beneficial activity for the immigrants from the West as the price of flats, despite the constant rise from the accession of Poland to EU, is still attractive when compared to the prices at the West of Europe. Although the demand for real estate and land is significant, it is nowadays still restricted<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Okólski, 2007

<sup>18</sup> with the exception being Small (cross-) Border Movement regulations

<sup>19</sup> protection periods negotiated when Poland was accessing the EU

## 2. Migrants' population - the public of the cultural mediators in the 5 countries

The third Annual report on Migration and Integration published<sup>20</sup>, gives the new framework for the European policy in the field of Migration and Integration. In January 2006, the third-country nationals residing in the EU were about 18.5 million, i.e. 3.8% of the total population of almost 493 million. Immigration is still the main element in the European Union demographic growth and positive net migration is recorded in most Member States. Net migration, ranging between 0.5 and 1 million per year for most of the 1990s, has increased to levels ranging between 1.5 and 2 million since 2002. The typology of entry differs widely between Member States. While family reunification is important in some countries, like Austria, France or Sweden, other Member States, like Ireland, Spain, Portugal and UK, had a high percentage of work-related immigration. People may migrate in order to improve their economic situation, to escape civil strife, persecution, and environmental disasters. Traditionally, the reasons encouraging an individual to migrate have been categorized as "push" or "pull" factors ; globalization has introduced a third set called "network" factors, which include free flow of information, improved global communication and faster and lower cost transportation. While network factors are not a direct cause of migration they do facilitate it. Civil conflict and oppression create different patterns of migration in the form of refugees and asylum seekers.

	<b>Austria</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Greece</b>	<b>Poland</b>
area	83 858 km <sup>2</sup>	551 500 km <sup>2</sup>	301 323 km <sup>2</sup>	131 957 km <sup>2</sup>	312 685 km <sup>2</sup>
population	8.2 million	60.6 million	58.5 million	11.1 million	38.2 million
migrants population (immigrants)	826,000 (1)	4,900,000 (2)	3.443.000 (3)	950,000 (4)	3 to 5 (5) millions
% of migrants in the total population	10%	8,1 %	5,9%	8,5 %	8 to 13 %
main countries of origins of the migrants	152,000 from Serbia and Montenegro 113 700 from Germany 108 800 from Turkey	671,300 from Algeria 617 400 from Morocco 558 600 from Portugal	624,741 from Romania 401 915 from Albania 365 908 from Morocco	240,000 from Albania 28,000 from Bulgaria 17,000 from Romania	300,000 ex- USSR 10 to 15,000 from EU
main region of settlement of migrants	Vienna Carinthia Burgenland Eastern province	Ile de France Rhone Alpes Provence- Alpes- Côte d'Azur	Latio Campania	Athens (and around) Islands	Warsaw Krakow

(1) National Institute for Statistics, Vienna, 2007

(2) INSEE, France, 2006

(3) ISTAT, Italy, 2008

(4) Martin Baldwin Edwards , Greece, 2004

(5) TEU, Krakow, 2009

<sup>20</sup> Commission of the European Union, **Third Annual Report on Migration and Integration**, Brussels, 11.9.2007, COM(2007) 512 final.

Historically, in **Austria**, minority groups are Croatians (census 1991: 29,596, estimate: 30 thousands – 40 thousands), Slovenes (census 1991: 20,191, estimate 40 thousands – 50 thousands) and Hungarians (census 1991: 19,638, estimate: 25 thousands). Croatians have been living in Burgenland, the very Eastern province of Austria bordering Hungary since the 16th century. Slovenes were the group that originally populated the predecessor of the province of Carinthia in the South of Austria (in the 7th century) and have populated the area since then. Finally, Hungarians are also based in Burgenland. Croatians and Slovene minorities were given sovereignty yet also stipulations on their rights as minority groups in the Austrian Treaty of 1955<sup>21</sup>. According to estimates of the Centre of Ethnic Minorities, there are approximately 10 thousands Romas living in Austria, the Platform for Minorities in Austria estimated their number to be around 40 thousands. The settling of Czechs and Slovaks in Austria has been traced back to the 13th century. Today, their estimated numbers are 15 thousands (Czechs) and 5 thousands (Slovaks) respectively. For four major groups of Eastern refugees Austria represented a transitional stop-over on their way from one of the Eastern European Countries to one of the Western Countries (mostly to the United States) and to Israel. The numbers are as follows: Hungarians (180,000 in 1956), Czechoslovakians (160,000 in 1968), Polish (140,000 in 1981/82 ) and Jews from the former Soviet Union (about 250,000 between 1973 and 1989).

In Austrian official statistics, immigrants are not identified by their ethnic origin, but by their citizenship. Hence, after their naturalization there is no indication of their origin and they disappear in the statistics. The population without Austrian citizenship was estimated to be about 250 thousands in 1999 on annual average out of a total of 8 million. The share of naturalized immigrants is estimated to be by 5% of the population. The statistical figures have to be 'handled with care' since they tend to under-represent immigrants due to the neglect of this group. To get a better overview about foreign population in Austria as well as the foreign population by nationality, a few charts should demonstrate these facts. There were about 826,000 citizens of foreign countries living in Austria at the beginning of 2007. The largest part of the foreign population, 304,000 persons (36.8%) comes from the new states formed from the former Yugoslavia (excluding Slovenia, which has since become a member of the EU). Almost half of them come from Serbia and Montenegro, and at least a quarter from Bosnia and Herzegovina. A fifth of them are Croatians and the remainder comes from Macedonia. 113,700 persons and thus the second largest group of foreigners are Germans. With a total of 108,800, Turkish nationals form the third largest group of people with foreign citizenship<sup>22</sup>.

**In France**, according to the national Institute for Statistics (INSEE, 2006), in 2004-2005, the number of immigrants were 4.959 million (4.310 million in 1999), this represents a proportion of 8.1% of the French population (7,4% in 1999). The foreigners, people living in France without the French nationality, were 3.501 million (3.670 million in 1999), this means a proportion of 5.7% (6,6% in 1999). The proportion of immigrants and foreigners in the French population hasn't much changed since 1975, with the end of the open policy towards migrants in France. Till the beginning of the 1970s, three quarters of the immigrants came from Europe. Between 1960 and 1970, the arrivals of populations from Maghreb, Sub-Saharan Africa and South East Asia have become more numerous. Between 1962 and 1999, the proportion of immigrants coming from Europe decreased from 78.7% to 44.9%.<sup>23</sup> ; the proportion from Africa increased from 14.9% to 39.3% ; from Asia from 2.4% to 12.8%.

<sup>21</sup> Böse/Herfellner/Koldas, 2005

<sup>22</sup> Statistik Austria, 2007

<sup>23</sup> Insee, Recensements de la population, 1962-1999.

In 2004, 13,7% of the immigrants came from Algeria, 12,6% from Morocco, 11,4% from Portugal, 6,8% from Italy and 5,6% from Spain.. The most numerous immigrants then come from Turkey and Tunisia (4.5%). Countries from Sub-Saharan Africa were 6.4%<sup>24</sup>. Between 1999 and 2004, the population of immigrants from Africa has grown ; the proportion of immigrants from Europe has been decreasing for the past 40 years but the general trend has changed recently with the new members countries in the European Union in 2004 and 2007, mostly from Eastern Europe. Between 1995 and 2005, more than 1 300 000 immigrants have become French ; this means an average of 130 000 “new” French citizens per year. 56.1% of this number concern immigrants from Africa in 2000 , mainly from Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia). The third country for the number of new French citizens is Turkey. Asia is ahead Europe with 16,9% versus 11,6%. The European principle of free circulation for European citizens has had a negative impact of the number of naturalisations: it is no more an asset to change your nationality when you are still an European as you benefit by all the rights.

In 2003, the number of immigrants with a permanent status is of 135 395<sup>25</sup>. Most of the foreigners allowed to stay in a permanent way on the territory came from Africa (67%), mostly Algeria and Morocco. The main motivations for asking for a permanent stay are motivated by private and family reasons: family reunification concerns mainly single wives and from Maghreb. The second motivation for asking for a permanent stay is work. Provisory entrance may become a permanent one, for instance asylum seeker may become a refugee. It is also impossible to add the different kinds of temporary stay as the same person may be relevant in different categories, for instance a student may have a temporary authorisation to work. In 2003, there were 10 138 provisory workers and 14 600 seasonal workers. Most of this category of immigrants consists of men with a level of qualification : 34% were qualified workers and employees; 45% managers and engineers ; mainly in the services to firms, hotels and restaurants. Due to agreements signed between their country and France, Moroccans and Poles represent in 2003 most of the temporary workforce, seasonal one, mainly in agriculture. France is still the first country of destination for asylum seekers in Europe, ahead of the United Kingdom and Germany ; the total population of “official” refugees is of 100 838 <sup>26</sup> mainly from Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Vietnam, Turkey, Laos, ex-Yugoslavia<sup>27</sup> and Congo. The demand from International students has strongly increased since 2000 ; Chinese are the most numerous followed by African students (Algerians and Moroccans).

**In Italy**, according to ISTAT, the resident foreign citizens, after an annual increase of half million units are at the beginning of 2008 3.443.000 including European citizens : 62,5 % in the North, 25,0% in the Center and 12,5% in the South. *Caritas and Migrantes* provide a superior number of regular immigrants that vary between 3.800.000 and 4.000.000 units out of a total population of 59.619.290 people with an incidence of 6,7% (slightly over the UE average which in 2006 was 6,0%). These two sources, even if different, they are not contradictory as they talk about different categories of immigrants: The Dossier takes into account also the most recent immigrants waiting for a residence permit which is usually obtained after more than one year.

The first community which has doubled within two years is the Romanian one (624.741 residents and, according to The Dossier, almost 1 million sojourners) followed by the

<sup>24</sup> Sénégal, Mali, Côte d'Ivoire, Cameroun et Congo.

<sup>25</sup> without taking into account the new arrivals from the European Economic Area

<sup>26</sup> INSEE, Paris, 2003

<sup>27</sup> Ex-Yougoslavie : Bosnie, Croatie, Yougoslavie, Macédoine, Slovénie, Serbie et Monténégro.

Albanian (401.915) and the Moroccan (365.908): a little above and a little lower than 150 thousands units come the Chinese community and the Ukrainian one. European citizens come now first (52,0%) while the Africans maintain the percentage (23,2%) and the Asians (16,1%) and the Americans (8,6%) lose at least a percentage point.

In the period 2005-2007 almost 1 million and 500.000 employment requests for foreign workers have been made by Italian family firms: 251.000 in 2005, 520.000 in 2006, and 741.000 in 2007, first with an incidence of 10 %, then 20% and then 25% in 2007 in comparison with already resident foreign population (as high as 33% in comparison with foreign workers already employed). The flows registered during the last decade are the highest in the history of Italy, comparable -if not higher- with the consistent exodus of Italians during post-war period. The demographic transition turns Italy from a country with an advanced average age into one of the oldest countries in the world, while the market – in order to produce wealth – continuously demands labour force. Immigrants are a young population: 80% are under 45 years old while over 55 are very few.

A labour contribution is necessary also in the future. Small firms are responsible for three quarters of employment cases and this due to the peculiar structure of our productive system.. This accounts also for immigrant's spread all over the territory. Their entire activity rate is, on average, equal to 73,2% (of 88% for the male workers only) which is 12 percentage points higher than Italian's rate whereas their unemployment rate is two points higher (8,3% on average and 12,7% for the female workers only), but still having values three times higher in some communities like the Moroccan one. The rates of agriculture workers (7,3%) and services employees (53,8%) in 2005-2007 have increased with 2 percents over industry (35,3%). Insertion typologies reveal the different features of territory. In the north firm employment and self-employment prevail, in the Centre, self-employment and family care and in the South, family care and agriculture work.

Migration **in Greece** intensified very rapidly with migrant populations expanding in size in a very short period of time. As these populations were mostly of an illegal/ irregular status and then some of them became legal through processes of regularization reliable migration data are hard to find. Especially now, that illegal migration waves and mixed migration waves (refugees, economic migrants etc.) are still coming to the country. According to Martin Baldwin Edwards (2004), the immigrant population in Greece by 2004 was around 900.000 non-EU people (Third Country Nationals). If one takes into account EU populations residing in Greece this number goes up to around 950 thousands people ; 8.5% of the total population of the country. This figure is 200 thousands people more than the 2001 Census figures. Accordingly, the migrant population in Greece appears to have increased by 200 thousands people in the years from 2001 to 2004. If one takes into account the ethnic Greeks returnees too, then the immigrant population seems to comprise 10,3% of the total population or 1.15 m people. Illegal migration continues to run high, characterized by mixed waves of migration including asylum seekers, economic migrants etc.. According to the data from the 2001 Census and data from the Ministry of Interiors for the year 2004 (Edwards 2004), the geographical distribution of non-EU migrants in Greece is mainly focussed on the economically advanced areas of Greece and more particularly the metropolitan area of Athens and the economic developed areas of Greece as a result of tourism (islands). 413.000 migrants declared that they had come to Greece to find job and employment.

Albanians constituted the majority with 240.000 people or 58% of the total. They were followed by Bulgarians, 28.000 people, Romanians, 17.000 people and other nationalities.

Certain nationalities were clearly overrepresented in the labour market. In more detail, Albanians, Bulgarians, Romanians, Pakistanis, but also, people from Ukraine, Poland and India. The migrant labour market seems to be gender and ethnic specific. Albanian males dominate the migrant labour market and are over-represented in construction, agriculture, industry and tourism. Bulgarians and Indian male workers are dominating the agricultural industry. Bangladeshis and Pakistanis can be found mostly in manufacturing and Polish and Georgian males in construction. On the other hand, there seems to be a gender division of migrant labour that assigns female migrant workers to domestic work. The biggest groups of female migrant workers are comprised by Albanian, Bulgarian, Ukraine and Georgian female workers. All of these groups mostly find employment in domestic work that constitutes more than 50% of all female migrant employment. However, when we speak about migrant groups in Greece and their participation in the labour market we have to be very careful as migration in Greece is a very dynamic and it changes very fast. New migration waves at the moment mostly come from Asia, Middle East and Africa and enter Greece through Turkey. These new migration waves have not found their place in the job market yet and nobody knows if they see Greece as a destination or a transit country. At the same time, these new migration waves are not just waves of illegal economic migrants that seek employment and a better life; they also include asylum seekers, and people that are on the run for humanitarian reasons. In short, the new migration waves to Greece are 'mixed' migration waves and further perplex the already patchy picture of migration in Greece. Greece at the moment is at least according to some analyst the main entrance point to the EU and as a result experiences increased migration pressures.

In **Poland**, the official data do not reflect the scale of the migration stream, though. The information on the demographic, social and economic status of immigrants is not well-researched. As Polish labour market was not including immigrants till 1989, in the following years the market segment consisting of immigrant-workers (working informally) was created. The new form of international mobility also occurred – incomplete migration (estimations: 3-5 million people annually). Around 20 thousand immigrant workers formalized their status compared to the estimated 200-500 thousand without including immigrants working on the marketplaces (there are even estimations claiming that this number ranges from 0,5 to 1,5 million, but the latter number does not seem to be realistic).

The structure of the immigration from the West is different from the Eastern immigration. Immigration from the West consists of specialized corporate workers and educated professionals who are tempted by the double income compared to their own countries (which they are offered due to their professional status). The cost of life in Poland is sometimes two times lower than in the other EU countries. The western immigration process was largely intensified after the Polish accession to the EU and nowadays there are around 10 – 15 thousands of immigrants from the West registered annually. The immigration from the east consists mainly of the citizens of the former USSR countries (300 000 estimated). There are also recent Ormian and Vietnamese immigrations. Quite visible but not very significant yet when it comes to numbers (less than 1000 annually ) are Turkish immigrants, who establish kebab bars in Polish cities.

### 3. The profession of cultural mediation

Mediation has first and foremost a legal meaning. According to the French Dictionary of Law

*« Mediation is a technical process for the solution of problems in order for people in conflicts to find a solution, through a formal or informal negotiation, without a lawsuit, through a person called the mediator »<sup>28</sup>.*

Mediation is

*« an action accomplished by a third person, between people or groups who freely agree to participate and who will have the final decision, with a view either to create new relationships or to prevent/solve a conflict relation between them ».<sup>29</sup>*

This third person at the heart of the mediation is a key element – no mediation would be possible without this third person. Moreover qualities essential for mediation (impartiality, independence and absence of official power) are often missing. In the practice, the mediator is rarely an external person (« impartial third person ») as it is often appointed by an institution.

We can define mediation as

*“a process of building, repairing social link and managing day to day conflicts, in which a third person, impartial, independent, without any authority but the one freely accepted by partners (institutions and migrants) tries through exchanges between persons and institutions to support either by improving either by establishing relation or solving a conflict”<sup>30</sup>*

Mediation is first dedicated to create a social link, then to solve conflicts. Its four main functions are: “creating, rehabilitating, repairing and solving social link to help solve a conflict”. Intercultural mediation, in the TIPS project perspective, is defined by the Italian social cooperative Onlus, in the framework of its project HELP<sup>31</sup> as follows :

*« a profession whose main objective is to facilitate the relations between natives and foreign people, in order to promote knowledge and reciprocal understanding , to enhance positive relations between people with different backgrounds ».*

Only in France and Italy could we find a professional recognition of cultural mediation: the law 40/1998 introduced the figure of the cultural mediator into the Italian legal system for the first time, reflecting an experimental experience that had begun during the 1990s ; it is part of the profession of culture and social mediation (whose profession adopted a Chart in 2004 – note 30 infra) in France. The concept of cultural mediation has not been officially nor professionally recognised neither in Austria nor in Greece or Poland albeit the professional profile, acting as a mediator between the Institutions (hospitals, school, court of justice...) and the migrants, exists.

<sup>28</sup> Guillaume-Hofnung (Michèle), *La Médiation*, Collection Que sais-je ?, Edition Presses Universitaires de France, Paris, 2005, 127 pages.

<sup>29</sup> Six ( Jean-François), *Le temps des médiateurs*, Edition Seuil, Paris, 1990, 288 pages.

<sup>30</sup> Charte de la Médiation sociale, DIV, Paris, 2004.

<sup>31</sup> Handicap Educazione Lavoro Partecipazione (<http://www.immiweb.org/>).

Intercultural mediation has known a real development in the past twenty years in **France**. Migration has become more and more complex (various geographic and cultural origins of the migrants). The questions of social coeducation (“mixité”) and diversity have become key issues. Intercultural mediation remains an institutions’ demand rather than a migrants’ demand. This is raising the question of recognition.

Mediation may have raised some suspicion among migrants who might see mediators as representatives of institutions. Intercultural mediators have a decisive action in the field of prevention “public safety” and defence of rights. They can better answer the new needs and social demands expressed by migrants. It exists, a general framework for social mediation<sup>32</sup> stating the main principles for the professionals working in this field. They are relevant for intercultural mediators :

- ❖ Neutrality and impartiality : the main goal is to respect both parties (institutions and migrants);
- ❖ Negotiation and dialogue: intercultural mediation is not an authority relation even though the respect of the law and common rules of collective life are important ;
- ❖ Free will and participation of inhabitants: at any time, any party may leave the mediation ; free agreement is the main principle ; mediators should explain also the limits of his/her action ;
- ❖ Good will of institutions: social and cultural mediation encourages a better proximity with inhabitants and a better public service answering people’s needs ;
- ❖ Protection and defence of rights: mediation doesn’t replace institutions ; it is improving social relations without avoiding anyone to defend his/her rights ;
- ❖ Respect of fundamental human rights: rights proclaimed in the European convention for human rights and any reference text such as the Fundamental Social rights.

The average profile for Intercultural mediator in France is mostly a woman (75 %) <sup>33</sup>. This is confirming the profile of “Femmes-relais” for instance in France which is the most emblematic profession of intercultural mediation developed for the past ten years. The average intercultural mediator has had a previous personal or professional experience ; they are mostly over 45 years <sup>34</sup>. The profession is very based on experience and knowledge of the migrants’ problematic. The intercultural mediator has a family (79% is married). This point is important as the mediation has often started among one’s own family. They are highly qualified as 83% have a higher education. They have linguistic skills as most of them speak at least two foreign languages (58%). They have followed mainly a human and social cursus at the University (54%). Intercultural mediators have mostly a migration background as 46% have foreign roots and almost the same proportion was born in another country (42%). They have become cultural mediators mostly after a voluntary experience among an association working with migrants and ethnic minorities (67%). They have mainly become intercultural mediators after a training (29%). The need for professional skills and professionalisation of the intercultural mediation is strong. A huge proportion of cultural mediator is working among an association: 100% (with two mediators working also for a private structure and a public body). Most of them are paid-staff (58%) but the proportion of volunteers is quite important (42%). This is an interesting point: intercultural mediation has been the assessing of

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<sup>32</sup> Charte de la Médiation sociale, DIV, octobre 2004

<sup>33</sup> Consultation made by Iriv for the TIPS project in Ile de France, May 2008, among associations and organisations working with cultural mediators

<sup>34</sup> 55% are aged from 45 and 64 years



skills and competences acquired or developed in the framework of non formal learning (volunteering).

**In Italy**, cultural mediation appeared and asserted itself only recently, on the basis of experiences in other European Countries, thanks both to a new approach of the migratory phenomenon, and to overall political choices favouring integration of the immigrants. The law 40/1998 introduced the figure of the cultural mediator into the Italian legal system for the first time, reflecting an experimental experience that had begun during the 1990s

There is no univocally defined path to follow in order to become a cultural mediator. The first training courses for "linguistic-cultural mediators" has appeared with the arrival of numerous people from Africa, particularly from Maghreb. As time passed the characteristics of the migratory phenomenon changed and many immigrants, taking advantage of the possibilities provided by new legislation (amnesties and Law No. 40), were able to achieve family reunification. Once the emergency phase was over, the nature of mediation intervention also changed, along with the mediators' role. No longer just interpreting, but *support action* to foster social integration by organising encounters with Italian society and facilitating access to the services network through "comprehensive receptivity". The Regional Administrations, to which competency in the matter of professional training has been delegated, are called upon to reflect on the experiences carried out up to now so as to arrive at uniform qualification criteria for the role of cultural mediator, thus overcoming the obstacles currently encountered when mediators move to a Region other than the one which had issued their diploma. And of course the approaches and orientations of a more general nature must be debated and decided upon in the Regions' Coordination Committee on immigration and the State-Regions Conference.

In May 2008, was born in Italy, the Union of intercultural mediators and has launched a platform designed to get the full recognition of the role of intercultural mediators. The so-called "points", at the base of the platform are mainly four: unifying the criteria and methodology of training throughout the country in order to give brokers the opportunity to move from one region to another; providing training sector (schools, health care, prison, branches, local authorities, etc.) to make the profession - all included as between the other profiles ISFOL - a job that would give not only the migrant dignity (visa which is the only possibility for professional growth up when you arrive equivalence of Titles studies), but also a stable profession that can provide a monthly salary without being subject to renewal for projects to be 20 hours; urging the ministries to support projects for the inclusion of the mediators at public facilities; giving priority to immigrants or native mediators and facilitate the integration of Italian students, with excellent knowledge not only of language but also of the uses, customs, the laws of the countries involved.

A proposed law was presented in February 2009. The Italian Government should establish legislative decrees with the "Roll of intercultural mediators" and "register of associations of intercultural mediation" ; they should also harmonize the existing rules for training course, involving institutional as well as social partners and the third sector. After a basic training on communication and employment law, cultural mediators should follow specialized training focussed on different areas (schools, hospitals, courts, etc..). The government should take into account cultural mediators from the public and private institutions and voluntary organizations. The main requirements for being registered as cultural mediator should be: knowledge of the Italian language and culture as well as a language and culture of at least one

foreign country; a degree in humanities, social or language, or, the appropriate and equivalent diploma in the countries of origin.

In **Austria**, there is no standardised profile of a “Cultural Mediator” despite the increasing number of migrants. Therefore, many different organisations and institutions designed their own training measures to cope with the needs that they consider to be relevant. Cultural mediators can have different types of qualification depending on the roles that they have in different kinds of organisations. For Austria, five main domains of activities have been taken into account: health organisations, social organisations, child day care centres and schools, Police headquarters, Prisons, Tribunals.

Communication between health professionals and migrant and ethnic minority patients is not only complicated by language barriers, but also by cultural misunderstandings. The work of hospital staff is based on implicit cultural assumptions – e. g. with regard to the roles of patients and providers and the way to diagnose and treat illness. These roles often do not correspond with the expectations of migrant and ethnic minority patients who may have different conceptions of health and illness, values and beliefs, and frequently are unfamiliar with mainstream European health systems. In this respect, differences in expectations present an obstacle for the professionals in effectively performing their job. On the other hand, migrant and ethnic minority patients’ needs and expectations may not be understood on the part of health professionals – due to language barriers, but also due to an unawareness of values and beliefs related to the patients’ cultural backgrounds. In some instances, explicit expectations of migrant patients, such as the whole family looking after them when in the hospital may not be acceptable for the staff as they cause problems for service routines and the well-being of other patients, and as the context of such expectations (e.g. religious duty to visit ill family members) are not understood.

In social organisations, in order to be able to deal with the increasing number of immigrants, many of the smaller non-profit organisations and associations develop vocational training sessions focusing on the aims of immigrants. The objectives are to encourage employees in both private as well as public organisations to enlarge their cultural expertise and play an active part in developing multicultural processes. The target groups of these initiatives are people who work in social services, administration, integration, school and education.

In the educational sector, the main task of cultural mediators is the facilitating of communication between foreign and Austrian pupils as well as teachers, for instance in child day care centres and schools. A further challenge in this field is the establishing of a structure which allows the communication between parents and the pupil’s teachers. Moreover a mediator provides information for both families and teachers about the different education systems. A further task, which has to be covered by cultural mediators, is the assistance concerning the modalities of registration in schools. An essential work is the preparation of informative material in foreign language about the particular school for the pupil and the pupil’s parents.

In the legal sector – Police headquarters, Prisons, Tribunals - the main tasks to be fulfilled by cultural mediators refer to counselling and assistance regarding getting all kinds of papers from the police. Moreover the cultural mediator has to advise the service staff on the characteristics of the clients’ culture. He/She is a key actor for obtaining the essential documents like residence permit or work permit. Furthermore, the cultural mediator gives instructions due to guidelines on bureaucratic procedures.

**Greece** is not characterised by the existence of a strong welfare state, but instead, family and family ties substitute for the lack of a protective state, all kind of institutional services provided by the welfare state like social work, social housing etc. are not so developed. Nevertheless some sort of social work exists in the country albeit it is not straightforward related to migrants and ethnic minorities.

The concept of cultural mediation has not been officially introduced in the Greek Law. However, it has to be said that Law 3386/2005 refers to the integration of Third Country nationals into the Greek society, but does not specify specific measures for such processes of integration and as a result does not refer to cultural mediation either. The only indirect implication to cultural mediation is the official definition of integration from the part of the Greek state as a two way process where the migrants adapt to the new country while the country adapts to the newcomers, which leaves some space for a future introduction of the concept of cultural mediation.

Cultural mediation in a professional level is not existent apart from a few instances of information centres for migrants that have been set up where some migrants work as interpreters and some programmes that included cultural mediation and were established within the framework of EQUAL (a European funded programme). Apart of these cases, cultural mediation is not yet a paid profession. At the same time, existing social work in Greece is not really related in any significant extent with cultural mediation yet.

However, the Greek Civil Society and the many NGOs (Non Governmental Organisations) that consists of, have been very active with cultural mediation in order to balance the lack of a strong welfare state. Voluntary work is the heart and soul of the civil society in Greece and through myriads NGOs a lot of much needed work is produced. Especially in the field of migration and refugees, there are many NGOs that have been providing services to migrants thanks to volunteering. NGOs in Greece depend mostly on free voluntary work of committed people. The support NGOs provide in relation to migrants and asylum seekers can take many forms from information giving, to education, training, human rights protection, housing, health, legal representation etc. There are not employed by any State institutions but alternatively they offer their services to migrants in need. All these people go the extra mile in order to provide services to these vulnerable groups. For instance, they deal with asylum seekers that they do not speak the language of the host country and try to navigate themselves within the bureaucracy of the Greek state. They deal and try to help minors that are in the country without their parents and papers; they try to keep them stand on their feet (psychologically, mentally and materially).

In **Poland**, the cultural mediator must justify general, specialized and interdisciplinary knowledge on the social behavior and functioning of people from different cultural environments in the conditions that differ substantially from the cultural environment they used to live in.

Mediators' knowledge allows him to tackle the highlighted problems in the broad context, such as: cultural (religious, ethnical, cultural moral etc.) ; psychological (e.g. questions of personality, psychological conditions, capabilities) ; sociological (reasons, directions and intensity of migration, demographical and professional parameters of migrants) ; legal (related to the formal rules concerning offering and obtaining help) ; pedagogical (the correction of behavior, prevention and re-socialization, adaptation and social assimilation).

This knowledge is supposed to allow the professionals employed in the specified institutions of a host country and belonging to the professions such as education managers, social workers, professional advisors and rehabilitants - to solve both individual and group problems regarding culturally different people during their preparation, entering and their presence on the labor market. Cultural mediators should have the broadened specialized knowledge, which would let him take action in the programs aimed at providing help to the culturally different people on the labor market, is well prepared to the independent realization of the tasks in the institutions cooperation in the everyday practice with the culturally different people.

#### **4. Main skills and competences required for cultural mediators in the 5 countries**

Intercultural mediators play a key role to accompany migrants' everyday life as their main duties are to promote integration of foreign citizens ; to facilitate communication and mutual understanding between immigrants and hosting countries ; to provide a consultancy professional service to people, families and associations of immigrants ; to orientate immigrants towards main targeted facilities and services.

Intercultural mediators facilitate and enhance the integration of migrants in the host societies. They play a role of go-between between the institutions and the migrants. The main characteristics required for intercultural mediators are skills and competences in communication, empathy, active listening and knowledge either in the native country or the host country (culture, laws, traditions...).

Intercultural mediation has become a professional activity which requires the following abilities : comprehension (especially inter personal effective communication) ; relational abilities ; emotional balance ; planning abilities ; being able to face and to solve conflicts ; being able to promote self-esteem ; language literacy ; cultural and historical background.

In order to better know the skills and competences developed by cultural mediators, a consultation was made in France and Italy in May 2008, on the basis of a questionnaire dispatched among cultural mediators mainly working in associations. The questionnaire comprehended a list of activities together with the skills and competences attached to fulfil their profession of cultural mediation.

The main activities fulfilled by the intercultural mediators are the following<sup>35</sup>:

- welcome, information among migrants on day to day life in the host country, useful contacts : 18% ;
- a specific accompaniment, the linguistic support : 17% ;
- counselling and information on rights and duties, struggle against discrimination, equality of chances: 13% ;
- go-between with public authorities : 12%.

It is interesting to notice that intercultural mediators are doing this profession without knowing it or calling it with this terminology. This is confirming the need for official recognition of the profession.

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<sup>35</sup> French consultation made among cultural mediators, Iriv, Paris, May 2008.

In **France**, cultural mediators are asked to fulfil a lot of activities and so develop skills linked to it in the framework of their profession<sup>36</sup>.

- the ability to welcome and bring support to migrants :\_to inform migrants on the different administrations and public services they must address ;
- the ability to act as go-between with public authorities:\_cultural mediators provide institutions with information on the cultural context and the understanding of specific behaviours in various areas such as social lodging , school, hospital, police... ;
- the ability to provide a linguistic support:\_in this case, the mediator may play the role of translator in any institution where communication might be a key issue ;
- the ability to inform on rights and duties of migrants : cultural mediators are asked to answer questions on equality of chances, struggle against discriminations ;
- the ability to council and orientate in education and training field : they must provide migrants with information on the education system and access to training ;
- the ability to council and orientate in the employment field as key issue for the migrants integration who are faced to huge difficulties on the labour market ;
- the ability to enhance prevention in health : information on the health system and its financing ; prevention and information on any disease ;
- the ability to inform in social matters : cultural mediators might be able to identify problems of high poverty, extreme precariousness to find a financial support ;
- the ability to organise cultural entertainment:\_mediators may be asked to enhance the positive image of the migrants culture to enhance their self-esteem ;
- the ability to work with family members:\_mediators are often faced to generation and culture gaps between the migrants children and their parents?

Intercultural mediation is a process aiming at enhancing social integration, living together, meeting and gathering people with different backgrounds. Migrants bring with them new customs, new values and traditions that must be respected. Intercultural mediators are revealing, explaining and valuing new ways of thinking and multicultural approaches. They should allow foreign citizens (migrants) to become real actors and to find solutions to solve the difficulties they are facing. The more independent and autonomous they are, the better they can solve their own problems. Autonomy is a key issue for migrants. Intercultural mediation is not a substitute but a support for migrants to reach this autonomy.

The competences the most required for being a cultural mediators are<sup>37</sup>: knowing how to communicate and to adapt to a multicultural context (21%) ; being able to have an active listening and negotiate in a difficult context (21%) ; knowing how to manage a group, to solve conflicts (19%) ; having a good knowledge of the national migration background (19%) ; having a good knowledge of a foreign language or notions of foreign language (17%) ; being able to learn with people with different background (16%). The communication skills and active listening are the key competences required for the intercultural mediators ;the profession is mainly focussed on the ability to listen, understand and explain.

**In Italy**, the confusion regarding the mediator as a professional figure is further increased by the proliferation of definitions. As well as the most widespread "cultural mediator" one also comes across terms such as "linguistic-cultural mediator", "intercultural animator", "intercultural operator» etc. It has become clear that a distinction must be made between the roles of Italian mediators and migrant mediators: both are indispensable but can and do have

<sup>36</sup> consultation among the cultural mediators in Ile de France, Iriv, Paris, May 2008

<sup>37</sup> ibidem

different functions depending on their sector of activities. The profile of cultural mediator is very similar to the one described in France: mostly women, with a background in social sciences or social work.<sup>38</sup>

The role of a mediator in the health sector consists of: receiving foreigners seeking health services; facilitating communication during visits and interviews with foreign patients; advising and providing explanations to the sector's working staff on foreign patients' cultures of origin; provide informative material. Moreover, the mediator offers assistance to foreign patients in acquiring registration to the National Health Services (SSN) and orientation in hospitals present in the foreigner's territory of residence.

In the legal sector, a mediator's role consists of: carrying out sworn translations; providing informative material in foreigner's mother tongue; accompanying foreign nationals to various offices; advising the service staff on the specificities of the clients' cultures of origin; offering guidelines on bureaucratic processes involved in obtaining documents such as permit of stay, foreigner's family admission in the country etc).

In the Social service sector, local community, Local Health Centre (ASL) social services for children, adults and families, a mediator's role consists of receiving foreigners seeking social services; facilitating communication between social workers and service seekers in case of linguistic and cultural comprehension difficulties such as in educational models, religious peculiarities; clarifying to foreign nationals on roles and responsibilities of professional functionaries in the social sector; advising social operators functionaries to facilitate resolution of cases where foreigners seeking the services are involved.

In the working sector, the role of mediator consists of; advising office functionaries in contact with the public; providing informative material; advising foreign nationals on how to write their resume and compilation of forms; creation and management of a data bank or archives to be used for job search; divulging information relative to obtaining an equivalent of their academic titles; illustrating the procedures necessary to obtain the conversion of driving licences; facilitating settlement of bureaucratic practices common in obtaining documents like the permit of stay in Italy, foreigner's family admission in Italy, etc.); fostering contacts with potential employers; facilitating in attainment of job contracts.

In educational sector, mediators role consists of; facilitating communication between foreign pupils and their teachers and between the foreign pupils' families and teachers; to offer temporary assistance to teachers whose pupils have difficulties with Italian language; providing consultancy to teachers to facilitate comprehension of problematic behaviours when found among foreign children; providing instruction in refreshment courses for teachers on intercultural themes; participating in meeting for teachers and foreign pupils' parents. Moreover a mediator provides clarifications to teachers and foreign pupils' families on different educational models; discloses information relative to modalities of registrations for admission in schools; produces informative material in foreign language about the particular school; takes the initiative of rewriting the school admission application forms in the language of the child's country of origin; prepares educational material in the pupil's mother tongue; participates in promotion and valorisation of other cultures; provides advice in multicultural education projects.

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<sup>38</sup> consultation among cultural mediators in Italy on the occasion of the National meeting presenting the TIPS project, For.com, Rome, June 2008

As there is no profile of a “Cultural Mediator” available in **Austria**, people who take up the duties of a mediator usually come from different backgrounds. The only formal programme available in higher education is the Bachelor and Master Programme in Social Work offered at various Austrian Universities of Applied Science. Nevertheless, on the basis of the training programmes proposed, we might identify some skills and competences required.

In health organisations, cultural mediators are offered training with the following objectives: to raise the level of information about socio-cultural backgrounds and religion ; to enlarge the diversity management skills ; to encourage the level of empathy for foreign people ; to reflect on their own cultural practice and traditions as well as enlargement of decision-making and responsibility<sup>39</sup>

In the social field, many vocational trainings in respect to cultural mediation are conducted especially on the following topics: immigration, multicultural society and integration. Despite all the trainings mentioned, "cultural mediator" is not considered as a profession. People from different educational and professional background take over the tasks of cultural mediation, but there is no study programme to get trained in cultural mediation. This variety of trainings offered and the fact that there is no special vocational training for a cultural mediator makes it difficult to describe cultural mediation as a profession. The policy makers in Austria are aware of this problem and the need of trainings for the profession "cultural mediator". As a result, cities with a high level of immigrants – such as Graz - do support projects with the objective of integrating immigrants whose main aims are : to support the interaction and contact of people with different cultural backgrounds; to support the cooperation of these different groups; to raise their level of awareness; to promote the acquisition of language ; to promote vocational training and orientation ; to empower citizens for self-help<sup>40</sup> .

There are many various profiles for cultural mediators but no specific well conceived training for professionals dealing with various aspects of cultural mediation which require interpersonal communication skills and cultural understanding, relational and interpersonal competences, emotional balance, planning skills, cultural and history background.

**In Greece** the profession of cultural mediation does not exist officially at a state level, but at the level of civil society, it is a well established vocation. These people, mostly volunteers, in a way are true cultural mediators with some linguistic skills and huge levels of commitment. Cultural mediation should evolve in Greece into a profession and becomes institutionalised. Cultural mediators needed should come from this pool of committed people that have been doing cultural mediation for a number of years without even knowing the meaning of the term.

These unofficial cultural mediators have exactly the skills needed to do the job. They are culturally sensitive, they have obtained language skills needed through their experiences, they are committed, they know how to deal with different groups of people and most importantly of all they care. These unofficial social workers that deal with migrants and asylum seekers, should be the best candidates to do the job. There are hundreds of even thousands of people that by helping migrants have created and practiced cultural mediation in Greece. In this pool of committed people, they are migrants too. Usually these migrants that work as unofficial cultural mediators were initially helped by NGOs and in the process found interest in helping other co-ethnics or migrants in general. Their own experience in the new country became the

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<sup>39</sup> Further information is available at [www.pv.noe-lak.at](http://www.pv.noe-lak.at)

<sup>40</sup> cf. Köksal 2006 S.1f

base for wanting to help others as they were helped themselves. They are many examples of such migrants that work in civil society institutions. Cultural mediation if ever becomes widespread and state-led (apart of the few embryonic examples that exist at the moment) should definitely also employ migrants as cultural mediators too, especially the ones that have experience in voluntarily work in various NGOs.

The only examples of cultural mediation in Greece at state level exist in relation to the creation of centres of information for migrants and the few instances that cultural mediation was included in programmes funded by Equal (an EU funded programme). The Municipality of Athens has established such a centre in the city centre. The centre provides information to migrants about the issue of residence permits and other related processes. Another example is the information centre for migrants at the port of Piraeus. The employment of cultural mediators there is meant to deal with the ethnically diverse public. They work along with municipality staff and are most of the times old migrants themselves.

The main priority in these information centres is for cultural mediators to be able to communicate with migrants in their language. The municipality usually employs in a freelance way migrants that are able to speak both Greek and other languages. Usually cultural mediators are basically translators and interpreters that come from the same ethnic group as the groups that they are dealing with. For instance, if they deal with Bangladeshi and Pakistanis they have to find people of a Bangladeshi and Pakistani origin because it is extremely difficult to find Greek people speaking these languages. So in practice, the main skills required for cultural mediation in Greece, are basically linguistic skills. At the same time, a certain level of experience of dealing with the public is needed and some levels of efficiency and commitment. These are the main things that are asked for in forms of state led cultural mediation in Greece. The profession of cultural mediation is still in its embryonic stage and is related mainly to provide information. In the future that state-led cultural mediation might grow further and become as sophisticated and advanced as the forms of cultural mediation provided by NGOs and civil society organisations.

**In Poland**, cultural mediators should be able to solve the problems of these persons in the spectrum that would be appropriate for the institutions he or she is representing and in the cooperation with other appropriate institutions dealing with the questions of social adaptation and the prevention of social alienation. The basic perks/traits/skills of the graduate are diagnosis of the problems and the situations problematic and require both immediate and long-term institutional intervention, planning, realizing and evaluating the already-completed programs of integration on the labor market. The graduate should also cooperate with the specialists who are representing different institutions and organizations and to get acquainted with the legal conditions for his professional activities. He should also be able to find and recognize individual problems of the culturally different persons, qualify them, plan and organize work with the persons affected by these problems, He should prevent from the deterioration of social relations that stem from the cultural differences, stimulate the activity of the newcomers, lead the events that would integrate persons and groups culturally different into their new environment

Among the basic practical skills of the graduate are: establishing the communication with the persons and groups culturally different ; applying the basic psychological and social diagnostics ; solving the group conflicts and the critical situations among individuals ; planning the programs of the intervention ; coordination of the support and help offered by many different organizations ; the undertaking of activity in the local governmental structures ;



specification of the legal rules concerning support-giving ; acquaintance with the foreign integration programs.

### 5. Training course already proposed in the cultural mediation field

As the profession of cultural mediator is a very new profession in most European countries, but in France and Italy, only these two countries could propose special trainings dedicated to “Intercultural mediation” (France) or “Cultural mediation” (Italy). Nevertheless some training courses have been proposed in fields very close to the cultural mediation such as “Policing in a multicultural country” or training programme for professionals working with migrants such as officials of the police or professionals in the field of education who have a foreign nationality or migration background (Austria). A training programme is proposed to civil servants working with migrants and people of other ethnic and cultural backgrounds in Greece. A special training has been adapted to the new intercultural trend in Poland such as the one proposed by the Warsaw University.

In proposing a brief overview of the types of training proposed together with the profile of the training bodies, the main idea is to identify existing stakeholders for the pilot course for cultural mediators to be proposed by the TIPS project. The main demands for training expressed by cultural mediators<sup>41</sup> are the following : deepening of knowledge on specific themes-aspects of interest on national policies and European perspective in the field of migration (41%) ; acquisition of specific disciplinary knowledge such as law, psychology (33%) ; knowledge of specific operative or methodological intervention instruments such as alphabetisation (29%).

Unless the lack of educational profile available for the profession of cultural mediator in **Austria**, two initiatives have been found: International Centre for Cultures and Languages ; University of Graz in cooperation with the Intercultural Center, Vienna. Since 1999, the International Centre for Cultures and Languages has been proposing a training course on ‘Policing in a multicultural society’, conducted together with the Security Academy/Federal Ministry of the Interior in Austria<sup>42</sup>. The exchange of opinions and experiences by the participants in the course (officials, experts and migrants) plays an important role, especially in the Interkulturtandem (tandem partnership), the participants learn to put this all into practice. The participants have the opportunity for intensive involvement over a long period with subjects such as intercultural communication, conflict management, diversity, minorities, migration, human rights and discrimination. The participants are senior officials from various branches of the police (Aliens police, State police, Criminal police, border surveillance etc.). The experts or course leaders, some of whom have experience as migrants, come from the universities, adult education, NGOs (e.g Asylum Coordination), and from the Federal Ministry of the Interior<sup>43</sup>. The aims of the course are<sup>44</sup>: to analyse and reflect on personal challenges and stress in everyday police life ; to understand how one communicates and understand one’s own culture with particular reference to everyday police work ; to engage with other cultures and gain awareness of other forms of communication in an intercultural context ; to learn about the political, social, historical and economic backgrounds to migration ; to impart and discuss the fundamental ideas and lines of development of human

<sup>41</sup> underlined in the consultation made in France among cultural mediators, Iriv, May 2008

<sup>42</sup> training course financed by the Security Academy/Federal Ministry of the Interior ; other financial support provided by the Human Rights Coordinator of the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the UNHCR

<sup>43</sup> Hirtenlehner/ Gratzl-Ploteny, 2007

<sup>44</sup> Hirtenlehner/ Gratzl-Ploteny, 2007

rights ; to be made conscious of discrimination mechanisms and prejudices ; to impart knowledge and facts relating to the situation of migrants in Austria ; to develop new approaches and ways of doing things ; personal contact with migrants.

At the University of Graz (Austria) in cooperation with the Intercultural Center in Vienna, focus is made on quite challenging situations for parents, professionals in the field of education and children. For a better handling of such difficult situations intercultural and non-discriminatory competences are required. Due to the necessity of this qualifications and competences the Karl-Franzens University of Graz offers a special training for teachers, professionals in the field of education and members of NGO's working with children and teenagers, who have a foreign nationality or migration background. The training is arranged in cooperation with the "Interkulturelles Zentrum" (Intercultural Centre) in Vienna and supported by the province of Styria. The aims of the training are: to convey knowledge concerning migration in Austria, legal and social situation ; to learn about the requirements of live in a pluralistic society ; to raise the awareness of different values and social backgrounds of migrants living in Austria and in special in Styria ; to gather knowledge concerning the linguistic variety in educational institutions ; to gain practical experience ; to be aware of integration and diversity management issues ; to increase conflict management competences.

Most of the intercultural mediators **in France** have followed training, usually through an external agency, to value the special skills and competences they have to acquire/develop to enhance their professional practice (50%)<sup>45</sup>. The prevalent contents-topics of the training activities followed are: enhancing knowledge in public policies in the field of migration (29%) ; learning a specific knowledge of a technical-professional type (29%) ; learning of specific relational abilities (25%). The training of intercultural mediators is ordinarily handled through specific courses (generally supported by ESF funding) organized by agencies authorized by national or regional authorities, on the basis of specific professional skills and qualification the candidate mediator must possess. Sometimes they are organized by Universities with a specific diploma. Many training bodies propose training in the field of cultural mediation. The **Centre d'Animation et de Ressources de l'Information sur la Formation (CARIF)** is responsible for training sessions in relation with intercultural mediation. Most of them are managed by the National Association for Vocation Training for Adults (AFPA) : Agent of mediation information service (for youngsters of 15 years old), technician for youngsters of 18 years old.

The following training bodies also propose training sessions on topics quite linked to the cultural mediation :

- Universities under the Professional Licences or Master degrees in the field of International Cooperation and Solidarity and Centres for training of apprentice (**Centres de Formation d'Apprentis - CFA**) under the Ministry they are linked to (Employment, Social Affairs...) ;
- Regional Institutes for Social Work (IRTS) : regional Institutes for Social Work (Institut Régional de Travail Social - IRTS) are professional high schools in the social, educative and medico-social field with the agreement of the Ministry for Social Affairs for the training of social workers ; initial and continuous trainings ;

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<sup>45</sup> Consultation made among cultural mediators, Iriv, Paris, May 2009

- private bodies such as OPCA (Organisme Professionnel Collecteur Agree), training bodies which have received an official agreement to propose and deliver trainings to their members, mainly small enterprises and associations.

Several associations are also proposing training sessions for cultural mediators “adultes-relais » and « femmes-relais ». The topics proposed are the following: transcultural mediation, social support, building identities, conflict management... The trainers are professionals in the field of mediation. The training proposed is very linked to their professional experience. This is a lifelong learning approach of training. The first criterion is their field of work, the second is the activities they are assigned, the third one is linked to personal demands on the basis of identified needs.

**In Italy**, it doesn't yet exist any national institutional directives that define the minimum standards for the professional profile and training curriculum of intercultural mediators and the paths for accessing employment. Some Italian Universities have launched a university degree in cultural mediation. This is a problematic choice as it might marginalise the immigrants, and above all the immigrant women, who constitute the largest presence in this profession, as immigrants are in most cases unable to obtain legal recognition (validation) for their educational qualifications in Italy and it is not easy for them to access university courses as they usually have to work full time.

According to the National Coordination Body for Policies to ensure the Social Integration of Foreigners (CNEL), the course of training for a mediator, must develop a basic molecular structure involving the following thematic areas: communication and intercultural relations area ; normative area ; services organisation area. The organisation then suggests that a second-level course of training should be provided foreseeing the further articulation of study modules by sectors, on the basis of the various service areas (e.g.: cultural and linguistic, education and schooling, justice and security, emergency and first reception, labour). A basic course of training should therefore foresee a total of at least 500 hours, including 100 of a sectoral nature, while at least a third should be devoted to practical on-the-job training experience. The specialisation course should instead consist of at least 300 hours, half of which would consist of practical on-the-job training with regard to training, and a level of knowledge necessary to be able to perform a “bridging” function in relation to the administrative structures and various sectors of society. There is a fairly broad consensus on the requisites relative to the mediator's psycho-pedagogical capabilities, interpreting techniques and professional ethics, as is apparent also from the activities carried out before Law 40/1998 came into force. Attention has, in addition, also be drawn to the importance of on-the-job training periods in public structures and with private social organisations, and prospects for permanent training for mediators.

The courses organised by Regional Administrations are amongst the most authoritative. The standard course financed each year by the region of Piedmont lasts exactly 600 hours, and provides a qualification certificate: it has been in existence since 1993, and is the only training course that can assure direct access to employment in the regional area. This solution was adopted to avoid the chaos prevailing elsewhere, where such training is not a compulsory requisite. Another example is the region of Campania, which organised a second-level course last year. To be admitted to this course, the trainees must have already completed a course that issues a regular attestation or qualification, hold at least a professional qualification document, be resident in the region itself and have had an employment relationship lasting for at least a month. The Latium region is instead focussing on a type of training course that can

be followed even at a distance, and to this end it has been promoting Comec, an on-line course for cultural mediators that costs 300 euros and issues an attendance certificate.

Academic institutions too are now providing training for mediators. For more specific preparation the most appropriate university degree courses are Social Sciences, Education Sciences or Psychology with major or specialisation in professional education; it is useful to have a certificate attesting proficiency in a foreign language, or even a degree course in foreign languages, preferably those most widespread amongst immigrants in Italy. Alternatively, it is possible to follow three-year courses of a more specific nature, activated by various Italian universities.

**In Greece**, it does not exist any training for cultural mediators as it is not an established profession in Greece apart of its non-paid character that exists in the Civil society organisations and its part of the voluntary sector. The few instances of state-led cultural mediation are referring to the establishment of information for migrants and usually employ old migrants as interpreters-translators without providing any form of training.

In relation to the existence of training for people working with migrants (not cultural mediators but civil servants) there have been some developments lately. The Minister of Interiors is in the process of designing and implementing a programme for the training of civil servants in order to deal efficiently and culturally competently with people of diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This training programme for civil servants is funded by the Greek Integration Fund that is also co-funded by the EU Integration Fund. The rationale behind this training programme is to offer training to civil servants working with migrants and people of other ethnic and cultural backgrounds and to make them more cultural aware and more interculturally competent. This training involves a number of sub-trainings that refer to different aspects of cultural competence. It is a major breakthrough for Greece as up to this point there was no training of public servants in dealing with migrants.

In relation to the providers of this training, these people could be cultural mediators themselves in order to communicate their knowledge in relation to cultural diversity, intercultural competence, cultural sensitivity etc. These training providers will come from the pool of unofficial cultural mediators of the Civil society sector that we refer above. NGOs and NGOs staff will play the role of trainers by drawing from their own experience of working with diverse publics. These are steps in the right direction and manifest some multicultural sensitivity being ingrained within the Greek State.

**In Poland**, in spite of the growing amount of immigrants and asylum-seekers, the Polish academic circles did not respond properly to the demands of the market. The culture studies (*kulturoznawstwo*) offered by Polish universities are offering mainly theoretical and historical knowledge on the different cultures, but without making students specialized in problem solving – i. e. the pragmatic aspects of the cultural dialogue. The experience to be obtained by students, even if somehow related to what is called here a cultural mediation seems to be insufficient (due to both qualitative and quantitative shortcomings) to provide the sufficient set of skills in the field. The interviews with the social workers related to the area of cultural dialogue show that their professional background in most cases overlap with the market needs only partially or theoretically. Such fields as culturally oriented philology, re-socialization, negotiation, geography etc. do not grasp the required set of skills.

The University of Gdansk offers culture studies, where one of the specializations is cultural communication. The core curriculum consists of such issues like: theory and philosophy of culture, history of literature and arts, practical courses related to the community organization, legislation, analysis of social needs. The academic profile offers the specialization in the following areas: cultural manager, cultural animator, cultural mediator, cultural consulting. The official leaflet promoting studies claims that this specific curriculum can be characterized as the “youngest”, “most popular among the students”, and the one “where everything is new”.

The Warsaw University is also starting to adapt to the new intercultural trends. Some post-graduate (non-degree) trainings are offered, which are driven by the conceptual framework derived from EQUAL Initiative funded through the European Social Fund (ESF). The studies, called: “Supporting the culturally different people on the labour market”, are conducted by the university’s Institute of Social Prevention and Resocialization. The official aim of training is to “prevent” social relations among culturally different people from “breakdown” and to support their integration. The program is officially described as “both practical and theoretical” and dwells upon legal, psychological, pedagogical and sociological issues. The participants typically represent various social institutions.

In accordance with official information the program has three specified aims: . to equip the participants with the intercultural communication skills and to prepare them for stress management ; to transfer the knowledge on the selected cultural systems and to teach participants how to establish effective communication ; to facilitate the inter-group and inter-institutional cooperation by the adequate composition of study groups – i.e. the specified proportion of groups and institutions that already fulfill the task of supporting the culturally different people within the organizational structure of the Polish state.

The studies are conducted in an extramural/non-stationary manner which allows the already working professionals to work during their studies. The specialization is to broaden the qualifications of professionals dealing with the introduction of the culturally different people to the education structures and labour market as well as to support their self-aware, long term and stabilized presence on this market. The curriculum includes issues such as the recognition of legal, social, psychological and pedagogical problems and the principles of “comprehensive and organizationally integrated help”.

## 6. “Practising and Enhancing Cultural Mediation in a Pluralistic Europe” – the TIPS training course

Based upon the needs expressed by the cultural mediators and the existing programmes proposed in the cultural mediation field, the TIPS project has proposed a new approach. This last part is focussed on the content of the training course and the final Learning objects proposed on the three platforms thanks to the t-learning approach (e-learning, m-learning and iptv- learning). It is underlining the process of work: starting from a 17 module training course, ending in a 5 module training course<sup>46</sup>.

### 6.1 First step : a developed training course focussed on the cultural mediators’ needs

A training programme, comprehending 17 modules, has been built thanks to the TIPS project<sup>47</sup> keeping in mind the following issues :

- ❖ being focussed on professionals working with migrants with the emblematic professional figure of the intercultural mediator ;
- ❖ keeping in mind the mediation approach : integrating both migrants’ and institutions’ sides and so remaining as neutral as possible ;
- ❖ insisting on the main specificities of cultural mediation meant to solve conflicts and so proposing a process, some elements of solutions and examples of best practices ;
- ❖ valuing an innovative support of training : the t-learning ;
- ❖ enriching the knowledge on migrants and migration issues and the concrete problems faced on the ground by professionals working with them ;
- ❖ integrating the public approach : cultural mediation may be different when addressing different profiles of migrants (such as women, youngsters, elderly) ;
- ❖ taking into account the different domains in which cultural mediators are mainly asked to work, avoiding the negative approach (justice, police, retention centre...);
- ❖ enhancing the European perspective : some European countries may be more in advance in this field but are eager to lean form the other countries’ experience.

The methodology and pedagogical approach integrates a theoretical approach (based on the literature gathered in the partners’ countries) and a pragmatic approach (needs expressed by cultural mediators met during the consultation and/or national meetings).

**Modules 1 & 2** are focussed on the main innovations of the TIPS project: first, the TIPS project is part of the Life long learning programme (**module 1**); secondly, it is proposing a new learning method, t-learning integrating TV, Internet and mobile (**module 2**).

The first module explains the context of the TIPS project, the Lifelong Learning approach (Leonardo da Vinci project), the role of intercultural mediation in the migration issue, the skills, competences and know-how required for being a cultural mediator, the role of formal training courses for intercultural mediation. (**module 1**).

The t-learning approach is mostly based on communication technologies enhancing the oral communication. As 50% of the World population has now access to a mobile, this device is the most appropriate to reach intercultural mediators used to work with migrants where

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<sup>46</sup> 79 Learning objects on the 3 learning platforms.

<sup>47</sup> Iriv, *Continuous training for the cultural mediators* , Paris, July 2008.

mobility is a key issue. The Internet device will propose a virtual platform whose main issue is to enhance exchanges of best practices between intercultural mediators. The TV learning will present different case studies to help the intercultural mediators solve problems they should be faced to... (**module 2**).

Modules 3 to 5 are dedicated to define challenge and set the “ideal” profile for a cultural mediator in a European perspective.

**Module 3** is precisising the profile of intercultural mediators, on the basis of a consultation realised among intercultural mediators. A questionnaire has been dispatched among them insisting on the skills and competences, the training already followed and the needs for training. Their answers have been a good basis for correcting the proposed training programme meant to answer their demands.

**Module 4** is challenging the different skills and competences to acquire and develop today and those which should be developed in the future. On the basis of a questionnaire built, cultural mediators are asked to express their needs and demands.

**Module 5** is proposing the ideal profile for a European cultural mediator, insisting on the activities already fulfilled and the ones that should be developed ; the skill and competences required and the ones that should be enhanced in a European perspective ; the knowledge to be enriched taking into account the context in which they are working (school, hospital...).

**Modules 6 and 7** are proposing some guidelines for intercultural mediators, somehow a methodology to be applied for solving conflicts (**module 6**) and the professional framework agreed upon for intercultural mediation in some of the countries (**module 7**).

The conflict is the basis of intercultural mediation. It is necessary to provide the mediators with some methodological developments on the typology, the specificity of the discrimination linked to race or ethnic origin, the ways and means to solve them (**module 6**).

It is useful when working in a brand new profession to clearly precise the general framework and the main principles. Principles have been set in France, Greece and Italy. Moreover, a comparative European study has been made on mediation in 2000 by the Délégation interministérielle à la Ville, with a specific focus on intercultural mediation. (**module 7**).

**Modules 8 and 9** are dedicated to the general background of the migration issue and the role played by intercultural mediation in this perspective as they have been main demands expressed by intercultural mediators interviewed.

The first module will be focussed on the public addressing intercultural mediators: the migrants. There are different reasons for leaving ones country (work, family reunification, studies, political asylum...). European societies must cope with new waves of migrants. Most of them come from Turkey (2.3 million 12% of the total), Morocco (1.7 million, 9%), Albania (0.8 million, 4,3%) and Algeria (0.6 million, 3,2%). They have different religions (most of them are Muslims), and different cultural backgrounds. It is raising the issue of multiculturalism, interculturalism and diversity (**module 8**) and how to cope with them.

A better knowledge of migration policies both on European and national levels is crucial for intercultural mediators to give the right references to migrants and sometimes to institutions

themselves that might ignore the European perspective. It is also very useful to present the main actors working in the field of migration and their responsibilities (**module 9**).

**Modules 10 to 14** are very focussed on the everyday life work of the intercultural mediators and the conflicts they have to face: in knowing and defending their rights, in social housing, in education, in employment, in health.

**Module 10** is focussed on the migrants' rights and the idea of citizenship. What is the meaning of being a citizen in a European country? What are the international and European references on citizenship and human rights?

**Modules 11 to 14** are meant to solve problems in several problematic casual situations faced by migrants: in social housing, at school, on the labour market, in a hospital. Each time the conflicts faced by cultural mediators are presented, the main actors playing a role and proposals of solutions with examples of best practice found mostly in the voluntary sector which has played a pioneer role in working with migrants.

The social housing policy (**module 11**) has a European background but it also depends on the national legislation; migrants are one of the first public concerned as the access to social housing has been a main demand expressed by many illegal or legal migrants in the past years in many European countries.

Education (**module 12**) is a key issue for migrants as this is both for adults and their children the only way to be fully integrated in the host societies; alphabetisation and school mentoring are quite important issues in this context, mostly developed by the voluntary sector.

Employment (**module 13**) is the other way to be truly integrated in society even though the access to the "normal" labour market with fair conditions may be a challenge for many migrants.

Health (**module 14**) is the last main domain to be taken into account as it deals with very intimate problems and may be the place of many taboos and cultural habits which could be seen as obstacles to a good integration.

**Modules 15 to 17** are focussed on three specific publics for whom intercultural mediation should be most useful: youngsters faced to the double cultures (host country/native country), women who have different status (mother, wives, working person...) and seniors with the difficult situation at the age of retirement. Each time, it is important to distinguish in the problem faced what is a common issue for this specific public and what is very linked to their migration background.

**Module 15** is dedicated to youngsters and the different types of conflicts cultural mediators may be faced to such as the generation gap, the problem of acculturation and the main issue of volunteering in this context to value their roots.

**Module 16** is dealing with intercultural mediation among women with a focus on the specific education, alphabetisation, social and professional integration and the issue of equality of chance (equal access to professional opportunities).



**Module 17** is developing intercultural mediation among seniors with the discrimination face by migrants' seniors in retirement issue, the generation gap with the younger migrants and a new social identity through volunteering. Each time

## **6.2 Second step : a synthesis through 5 main modules**

On the basis of this 17 module training course, five modules have been proposed developing Learning objects on the three platforms: e-learning (Internet); m-learning (Mobile phone); iptv-learning (Television).

### **Module 1 – Introduction to TIPS course: the cultural mediation in Europe<sup>48</sup>**

The aims of this module are to present the main objectives, analysing the methodology, providing a comprehensive description of the training contents. They are mainly: the framework behind the TIPS project, the needs based on social changes addressed by the TIPS (2008 : the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue, the Impact of immigration in Europe...) ; the objective of the TIPS project (experimentation, pilot course, attendance certificate) , the target group, the partnership, the web site. (This new Module 1 is closely linked to former Modules 1 to 5)

### **Module 2 – Mediation and the profile of the Cultural Mediator<sup>49</sup>**

This module aims at proposing a description of the process of cultural mediation and a summary of the basic theories of culture, reflecting on the profile of the Cultural Mediator and his/her conduct. It also comprehends a presentation of how stereotypes and prejudices usually work in modern societies. It shows the workings of racism, the fighting back racism with antiracism and some aspects of the diversity discourse together with the globalisation and difference perspectives. (This new module 2 refers to former Modules 8 and 9).

### **Module 3 – Psychological basics for cultural mediation<sup>50</sup>**

This module is focussed on the psychological basics for interpersonal communication and intercultural mediation. It presents basic techniques of conversation, active listening, needs observation and dialogue construction together with a comprehensive description of conflict resolving methods. (This new module 3 integrates former Modules 7 and 8)

### **Module 4 – National and European legislation<sup>51</sup>**

This module provides an overview of the European legislation and the national legislations for Austria, France, Greece, Italy and Poland. Furthermore, it is focussing on three legal aspects significant to cultural mediation: registration procedure, work permit, social security. (this new module 4 takes into account the National reports on migration and integration, together with former Module 9)

### **Module 5 – Cultural mediation – fields of application<sup>52</sup>**

This module describes migrants' rights, regarding human rights, social housing, education, healthcare and employment. It is meant to present the role of cultural mediation on these fields of application in order to facilitate the integration of migrants into the host society. (this new module 5 is closely linked to former modules 10 to 14)

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<sup>48</sup> Module 1 - For.com , Italy , March 2009 ;

<sup>49</sup> Module 2 - HOU , Patras, March 2009 ; Iriv, Paris, October 2009

<sup>50</sup> Module 3 - European Tischner University , Warsaw, May 2009 ; Iriv, Paris, October 2009

<sup>51</sup> Module 4- Auxilium , Graz, April 2009 ; Iriv, Paris, October 2009

<sup>52</sup> Module 5 - HOU , Patras, June 2009 ; Iriv, Paris, October 2009

### 6.3 the t-learning approach – a methodology appropriate for the Cultural mediators

Both training courses are available on the t-learning platforms:

- the 17 module training course on the e-learning platform (under a PDF format)
- the 5 modules of the TIPS training course including Learning objects and tools is available on the T-learning platform: e-learning platform (through the Internet), the m-learning platform (through the Mobile phone) and the TV-learning platform (thanks to the IPTV-Internet Protocol Television ). The Report 5 – Proposal of a training programme for cultural mediators including 17 modules is available in PDF format in the Documents and Links section on e-learning platform. <http://77.238.3.46/claroing> (personal ID and password required to log in).

The t-learning approach is quite innovative. Cultural mediator could find difficulties in realizing the “communication bridge” with the migrants needed in a specific situation, due to the language of the migrant, to personal behaviour or negative experiences which have made immigrant less self confident. The classical approach (face to face training, groups of trainees with a trainer giving content...) might be inappropriate to answer their needs.

Intercultural mediators are stimulated by their public (the migrants). Their training requires targeted and customized answers to very specific, sometime individual, problems. Continuous and updated training and information support should be assured to these professionals whenever are needed. Information Communication Technologies could provide these services and support. In particular, t-learning methodology, which balances the use of TV and mobile devices, can allow continuous training and in depth case studies.

Moreover, migration is a moving reality. Cultural mediators must answer as quickly as possible the growing demands of migrants in various fields such as education, legal information, health, justice, specific rights, leisure, employment opportunities... The best way to answer is to share other professionals' experience, to have an easy access to the legal information and to the most updated data in the field. In the training programme proposed in the TIPS project, cultural mediators will be able to join a virtual educative platform with key elements to be downloaded easily.

Mobility is the main characteristic of migration. Intercultural mediators must also be very mobile and flexible. The use of mobile phone (m-learning) proposed in the TIPS approach is most appropriate. If Internet is not so accessible, the mobile device is a technology commonly used by anyone. Intercultural mediation is also based on negotiation, oral communication, television (TV –learning) is better understandable. By watching concrete situations, intercultural mediators can better react to the reality. They will also be able to enrich the different case studies proposed.

Last but not least, migration needs a networking approach as migrants are themselves members of many networks (families, religious or ethnic communities, sometimes professional network). Another issue proposed by the TIPS project is to create a new network between intercultural mediators coming from five different countries (Italy, Greece, France, Austria and Poland)...

## **Conclusion : the TIPS , an opportunity for cultural mediation and migration in Europe**

The Copenhagen process, in the lifelong learning perspective, is meant to value informal and non formal learning. The profession of cultural mediation is typically a new kind of employment that has been developed on the basis of this informal and non formal learning, on personal and professional experience.

Intercultural mediation gives a human dimension to migration as cultural mediators are professionals with a unique background. They have often foreign roots; most of them have experienced the process of integration. They have overcome the main difficulties and have transformed their personal experience in a unique skill.

Training is quite important in this perspective. It is first aiming at identifying and valuing the special skills and competences required when working with migrants. The second main function of training is to share one's experience with other cultural mediators. The third function is to value and develop other skills and competences, such as the European perspective or the knowledge of other field of intervention of cultural mediation (health, justice, defence of rights...).

Intercultural mediators work in a special environment. They need appropriate training support to enhance their professional activity. The content of such a training is a key issue : being aware of the last information on the migration and integration issues (legal issues), knowing how to identify and enhance the competences required (human resources issues) to answer their public's needs (the migrants) but also how to bridge the communication gap with institutions psychology, communication and management of conflicts).

Information Communication Technologies could provide these services and support. In particular, t-learning methodology, which balances the use of Internet, Television and Mobile devices, can allow continuous training and in depth case studies. This is the aim and ambition of the TIPS project to provide this innovative training course, thanks to a comprehensive training content and appropriate Learning objects developed through the e-learning platform (using Internet), the m-learning platform (using Mobile) and the iptv-learning platform (using Television available thanks to a decoder).

Mobility is a key issue for migrants; it is also for professionals working with them, the cultural mediators. Cultural mediation requires professionalism, understanding and empathy. The lifelong learning perspective allows to better understand the needs expressed by these professionals, willing to acquire and develop skills and competences to enhance equality of chance and intercultural dialogue. The training course proposed by the TIPS project, *"Practising and Enhancing Cultural Mediation in a Pluralistic Europe"*, should prepare cultural mediators for tomorrow's challenges in the migration and integration fields in Europe, following Thomas Jefferson 's<sup>53</sup> idea :

*"In matters of style, swim with the current ; in matters of principle, stand like a rock"*.

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<sup>53</sup> Thomas Jefferson, (1743 – 1826), third President of the United States (1801–1809), author of the Declaration of Independence (1776).

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