

‘Active Citizens Together’ (ACT) Project – Update for EELGA Bulletin Aug 2017

The Strategic Migration Partnership’s ‘Active Citizens Together’ Project has been running across the region since 1st October 2015, and ends on 30th September this year. It was set up as part of the European Commission’s ‘Rights, Equality and Citizenship Programme 2014-2020’.

So what has happened in practice?

The small project team has provided workshops, learning materials and mentoring opportunities on active citizenship for a wide range of Migrant European Citizens over this two year period. A region-wide network of active citizens has been developed, and a series of network events are planned to end the project as a way of sharing good practice and agreeing next steps for migrant citizens who wish to continue to develop as ‘active citizens’.

Activity	Targets	Delivered
Workshops	20	24
Workshop Participants	200	256
ESOL Classes	20	47
ESOL Class Participants	200	280
Mentoring Meetings	20	23
Numbers involved in Mentoring	40	58
Network Members	50	111

These figures tell a good news story. Many busy Migrant Europeans we have met have shown genuine interest in acting to improve the quality of life and wellbeing of their fellow citizens, whether from the same cultural background or not.

The professionally qualified are often keen to recommence their careers, such as teaching. Taking part in the project’s mentoring programme has created opportunities for people to do voluntary work in schools, for example, as a step in this direction.

The few Migrant Europeans who have made it to the role of local councillor across the region might well be joined by others as a result of this project. Five of our politicians took part in the project as mentors. What is happening in your area to promote European councillor development?

Views in the news

After reading our newsletter, one migrant support organisation said: “Thank you for the newsletter – it was a very interesting read. We’ve seen a huge increase in hate crime since Brexit and it’s interesting to hear the views of a migrant so embedded in British life who has clearly contributed a lot to the country since moving here.”

And another (own words): “It’s really lovely to read so many inspiring stories and I am happy to see one of our ex- volunteers in this newsletter. What I have noticed in your news is that most of those stories come from enthusiast, hard driven, ambitious migrants who try hard to get themselves to the right professional level. I love all these as they are very inspiring but also I would love to see your newsletter capture the story of what represents the majority of migrant force – those working in farms, factories, care homes in very difficult conditions, I think that represent the picture of a real migrant life in UK.”

For more information about the project, please visit our website <http://smp.eelga.gov.uk/migrant-workers/act-project.aspx>.