

Building structures for Intercultural Integration in Cyprus

Welcome Policies

Paphos District Intercultural Network



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Overview

The key actions proposed in the welcome policies, explore their potential to facilitate integration, enhance social cohesion, and contribute to the creation of a more inclusive city. By prioritizing these actions, Paphos is not only continuing its historical tradition of welcoming new populations but also building a forward-looking framework for sustainable integration in the context of contemporary global migration trends. The following sections detail the practical steps and initiatives that will guide the district's commitment to inclusivity, drawing on both historical values and contemporary best practices in intercultural integration.

Introduction

Paphos is dedicated to cultivating an inclusive, supportive, and welcoming environment for all residents, with particular emphasis on newcomers. The welcome policies developed by the Paphos Regional Intercultural Network, with the valuable input of the ad hoc groups, represent a strategic approach to fostering integration and social cohesion. The policies offer a framework for local authorities, community organizations, businesses, and residents to collaboratively ensure that newcomers are treated with respect, provided with adequate support, and successfully integrated into the fabric of local society.

The policies are firmly aligned with the principles outlined in the Intercultural Cities (ICC) Action Plan for Paphos, which seeks to promote diversity, equal participation in civic life, and a sense of belonging for all residents, regardless of their cultural or national backgrounds. These principles are reinforced by Paphos' historical context as a crossroads of civilizations, where cultural exchange and inclusivity have long been integral to the region's identity.

Paphos' multicultural heritage provides a strong foundation for the city's current commitment to creating an inclusive environment. Historically, Paphos has been a port of welcome, attracting diverse populations due to its strategic geographical location. Today, this legacy of hospitality continues to inform the district's integration policies, with a focus on ensuring that cultural diversity is embraced as a strength. The district's rich cultural heritage, rooted in ancient traditions and cosmopolitan exchanges, continues to guide its approach to contemporary challenges in fostering social cohesion.

The welcome policies are designed to reflect Paphos' multicultural past while addressing the current needs of its diverse population. They aim to create an environment where all residents—newcomers and long-term residents—feel supported and included in social, economic, and civic life. By integrating practical strategies with the cultural values that have historically defined the area, the policies seek to build a resilient community that is both diverse and unified.

Key Actions for an inclusive and supportive environment

1. **Clear and consistent communication, "We speak your language"**

- Ensure that local services, rights, and opportunities are communicated in accessible formats and multiple languages. This includes providing printed materials, online resources, and guides that address the most common needs and questions of newcomers. By ensuring clear, consistent communication, we help newcomers navigate essential services and understand their rights.

2. **Cultural awareness and sensitivity, "Everyone is welcome and valued"**

- Develop training for municipal staff, teachers, healthcare providers, police officers, and other local service providers in cultural sensitivity. This ensures that diverse populations are served respectfully and effectively.

- Promote cultural awareness programs for both locals and newcomers to foster mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation across different cultural groups.

3. **Social and civic engagement, "Your voice matters"**

- Develop programs that encourage social inclusion, such as language courses, cultural exchanges, community meet-ups, and local events. These programs create opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to connect, learn from one another, and engage with the local community.
- Establish community hubs that serve as spaces where individuals from all cultures can meet, share experiences, support each other, and build a stronger sense of belonging.

4. **Support services for newcomers, "We are here to help you settle in"**

- Offer practical support services that assist newcomers in finding housing, registering with local authorities, understanding their rights and responsibilities, and accessing healthcare.
- Provide guidance on integrating into the community, including advice on local customs, cultural norms, and opportunities for social participation.

5. **Encouraging intercultural dialogue, "Let's get to know each other"**

- Host community events that celebrate cultural diversity, including international festivals, art exhibitions, cooking classes, and musical performances. These events provide newcomers and locals alike with opportunities to interact and learn from one another, fostering mutual understanding.
- Support the creation of **Intercultural Ambassadors**, who can serve as bridges between different cultural communities and help promote ongoing dialogue and cooperation.

6. **Welcoming local businesses and employers, "Diversity makes us stronger"**

- Encourage local businesses and employers to adopt diversity-friendly hiring practices, ensuring that newcomers have equal access to job opportunities.
- Support training programs for local businesses to highlight the benefits of a diverse workforce and offer guidance on creating inclusive work environments that reflect the multicultural nature of the community.

7. Monitoring and evaluation, "We're always improving"

- Establish clear channels for newcomers to provide feedback on their experiences and challenges, ensuring that their voices are heard and their concerns addressed.
- Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of welcome policies and programs to ensure continuous improvement, making adjustments based on feedback from newcomers and the broader community.

Paphos' cultural values and heritage as a foundation for welcoming all

Paphos' rich cultural history serves as a guiding force for the district's modern commitment to inclusivity and integration. Paphos has always been a place where different cultures intersect, where new ideas and traditions are shared, and where people from all over the world have felt welcomed. This history of cultural exchange and hospitality continues to shape our approach to welcoming newcomers today.

1. Paphos embraces heritage, welcomes all

- Paphos has long been a crossroads of civilizations, and this tradition of cultural exchange continues today. We embrace a future where diverse cultural groups live together in mutual respect and understanding, strengthening the social fabric of our community.

2. Language of connections

- Throughout history, Paphos has connected different cultures through trade, communication, and collaboration. Today, we continue this legacy by bridging language barriers, ensuring that both newcomers and locals can engage meaningfully with one another through language courses, translation services, and multilingual community resources.

3. Cultural mosaic

- Like the famous mosaics of Paphos, our community is made up of many different cultural pieces, each adding its unique beauty and value. We celebrate this diversity by encouraging individuals from all backgrounds to contribute to the district's growth, creativity, and prosperity.

4. Community forum

- Paphos has always been a place of open dialogue, much like the ancient agoras where citizens gathered to share ideas and engage in civic life. Today, we continue this tradition by creating spaces where residents, regardless of their background, can come together to discuss important issues, share experiences, and learn from one another.

5. Settling with care

- The city has historically been a port of welcome, offering shelter and support to travelers from across the Mediterranean. Today, we extend the same hospitality to newcomers by providing the necessary resources and support to help them settle into their new community and feel a sense of belonging.

6. Cultural celebration

- Paphos has always celebrated cultural diversity through festivals, public events, and artistic expressions. We continue this tradition by hosting community events that showcase the traditions and customs of all cultural groups, allowing everyone to celebrate their heritage and contribute to the multicultural fabric of the district.

7. Opportunities for all

- As a historic center of trade and opportunity, the city has always provided pathways for people to thrive. We continue to create opportunities for newcomers to contribute their skills, talents, and ideas to the district's social and economic life, ensuring that everyone has the chance to succeed and make a positive impact on the community.

Conclusion

Paphos District strives to being a community where every resident feels welcomed, valued, and supported. The welcome policies, inspired by the district's rich cultural heritage, guide the integration of newcomers and promote the active participation of all residents in civic life. By creating an inclusive and supportive environment, fostering intercultural dialogue, and celebrating diversity, Paphos continues to honor its legacy as a crossroads of civilizations. Together, we can build a stronger, more cohesive community where everyone has the opportunity to thrive, contribute, and become an integral part of our shared future.

Gallery



**Paphos embraces
heritage
Welcomes all**

**A tapestry of
cultures, rooted
in ancient
wisdom**



**LANGUAGE OF
CONNECTIONS**

Just as ancient Paphos
was a crossroads of
civilizations, **BRIDGE**
languages and cultures,
ensuring every voice is
understood and valued.

Cultural Mosaic

Drawing inspiration from
Paphos' rich multicultural
history, **CELEBRATE** diversity
as our greatest strength, just
like the mosaics of Paphos.

Settling with Care

GUIDE newcomers with the
same hospitality that made
Paphos a legendary port of
WELCOME throughout
centuries of maritime history.

Community Forum

Like the ancient agoras where
citizens gathered, **CREATE**
spaces for dialogue, learning,
and mutual understanding
across cultures.

Cultural Celebration

Inspired by the festivals of
Aphrodite, **HOST** events that
honor the traditions of every
culture, creating a living,
breathing cultural exchange.

**Opportunities for All - Every Story is Our Shared Heritage
Share Our Living History**

References

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