



Tuning of AMiD Outcomes to European Local Authorities

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This paper was prepared by AER Secretariat in close collaboration with the AER members who participated to the AMiD targeted events.

What is Disability?

“Disability is an evolving concept, and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinders full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”

~ CRPD

Who is a migrant?

At the international level, no universally accepted definition for “migrant” exists. This description was developed by IOM-International Organisation for Migration

“Migrant” is an umbrella term, not defined under international law, reflecting the common lay understanding of a person who moves away from his or her place of usual residence, whether within a country or across an international border, temporarily or permanently, and for a variety of reasons.

1 THE STARTING POINT and the AMiD PROPOSALS

Local and regional governments are called on to adopt a set of approaches that aim an **intercultural model of inclusion and diversity**.

The call for a social vision of Europe that would combat discrimination in order to ensure that all people have access to “a freedom not from society, but through society” is what the voice for local authorities says.

When it comes to **migrants and refugees with disabilities**, the [European Council and Parliament Directive 2013/33/EU](#) states that “the reception of persons with special needs should be a primary concern for national authorities in order to ensure that such reception is specifically designed to meet their special reception needs.”

To achieve these objectives, AMiD project spotted two important issues:

- lack of a common approach among European Local Authorities
- lack of cooperation among Non-Governmental Organisations, Local Authorities and European Union Agencies. A common strategy is missing

The potential solutions that regional and local authorities saw as valuable during the implementation of the project are the following:

- to overcome the lack of a common approach: to adopt and set a common tool, the NAT-Need Assessment Tool
- to overcome the lack of cooperation: to work on a common shared methodology, as experienced in the CAB-Community Advisory Board

2 THE AMiD RESOURCES: a CLOSER LOOK

To overcome the issues linked to the common approach or a better cooperation the potential valuable solutions could have been several. Here we want to share the ones elaborated, set and experienced over the duration of the AMiD project. Simply because it showed that those solutions worked.

In short, each of these products correspond to a different aspect or step of the process:

- the CAB, as a space to gather different points of views, shaped as a way to work together
- the NAT is a tool, that aims to align way of doing of different actors within the fields of migration and disability
- the TRAINING MODULES, as a support, to assure the knowledge regarding disability and migration along with the know-how for the AMiD tools
- the NATIONAL REPORTS, to make available a deeper insight on the phenomenon of migration and disabilities in four European countries

In the following paragraphs the presentation of a closer look of each of them.

2.1 The AMiD CAB-Community Advisory Board

Let us be honest. The CAB itself is not something totally new. Neither a full and complete methodology to follow. What we want to share here is the concept. The CAB is based on a common interest: find solutions for a better cooperation among different actors working on the same topic. It can be considered somehow in between of a group of interest and a group of advisors.

The NAT is the concrete implementation of the multistakeholder approach within AMiD project. Local authorities, organisations from the field of disability, others from the migration area, and associations fighting poverty all were sit at the same table.

What was important in the setting of the group is to fix a precise and specific objective. The second key factor was the choice of the authorities, organisations and associations to take part in. Adding a good facilitator and some informal but benefiting chats among the people involved, that did the rest.

The CAB brought a clear added value to the project. While working on a concrete tool, the NAT, the CAB members helped to take into account the points of interests of each representative in the group. That assured to get a tool already improved before the testing phase.

Other positive effect of the CAB was the sense of ownership showed by the members. Once you have shared, contributed, input, exchanged and discussed on something (tool, activity, objective) that become fully “yours”. It was clearly seen in occasion of CAB members as speakers or advocates toward EU high level officials. They became the best ambassadors of the cause of migrants with disabilities.

2.2 The NAT-Need Assessment Tool

The [NAT-Needs Assessment Tool](#) aims to support all type of authorities, organisations, and professionals to improve the efficient management of the reception and integration of asylum seekers and migrants with disabilities.

To introduce the NAT in a nutshell is important to know that:

- It is based on a human-rights approach
- It is designed and developed in the most accessible and user-friendly way possible
- The questions included in the NAT are phrased in an open-ended way. This gives the possibility to the migrant to express his/her needs and wishes without feeling the pressure of responding to a more ‘direct’ type of questions.
- An optional printable report, to summarise the identified information and outlines
- The precious collection of data on migrants with disabilities
- The 14 languages (from all over the world) versions

An important specificity was building the NAT on a self-assessment approach. That is to overcome any cultural difference based on personal or cultural perception but also to assure sustainable and inclusive solutions that fit the migrant first.

It is important to say that there is no need to be an expert in the areas of medicine, psychology, disability or migration and other related fields.

The NAT fits different professional profiles as: registration officers, reception officers, social workers, case officers of the determining authority, front-line staff working directly with migrants, managers/administrators of Non-Governmental Organisations, civil servants, volunteers, ...

A specific training was developed anyway to assure public authorities and civil society organisations can make the most of it (see part on the training for more information).

The NAT is free and available to everyone at this address:
<https://amidproject.eu/en/about>.

2.3 The AMiD TRAINING

The aim of the training is to empower and set the legal frame and essential knowledge to personnel involved in the migration process.

These modules structure the AMiD training:

Module I - Disability & Migration: policy & legal frameworks at European and International level

- Focusing on human rights, EU policy and legal frameworks for disability and migration

Module II - Disability & Migration: Promising practices from the field

- Presenting promising practices on the fields of migration and the one of disabilities

Module III - Towards personalised & integrated services

- Presentation of the principles of the person centered-planning, services integration and user integration

Module IV - Needs Assessment Tool and effective communication

- Everything about the NAT: how to use, how to communicate while submitting the NAT and the data collection

The training are [available online](#), in English, French, German, Greek and Italian.

2.4 THE NATIONAL REPORTS

Only a national report could give a more comprehensive picture on a phenomenon that shine for lack of data. A closer look to identify and analyse gaps and challenges in the existing disability sector and the services available to the migrants with disabilities. The reports focused on Austria, Greece, Finland and Italy.

A cross-country report sums up all the main findings from the different analysis. All the mentioned reports and a cross-country digest are [available on line](#), in the English version.

3 MULTILEVEL and MULTISTAKEHOLDER METHODOLOGY

In the migration context, cooperation and coordination between governments, local and regional authorities, civil society and other relevant stakeholders is very much needed.

This approach has assured the creation of a social capital, fundamental for a cohesive society. Inclusion policies aim to reducing current inequality levels to favor highly cohesive societies.

Governments and local and regional authorities are the ones that can set the frame. Either legal or concerning policies. Local and Regional authorities assure the respect of the human dignity assure the access to service as set in the policies. Services can be provided in different ways, by the authorities, civil society or both.

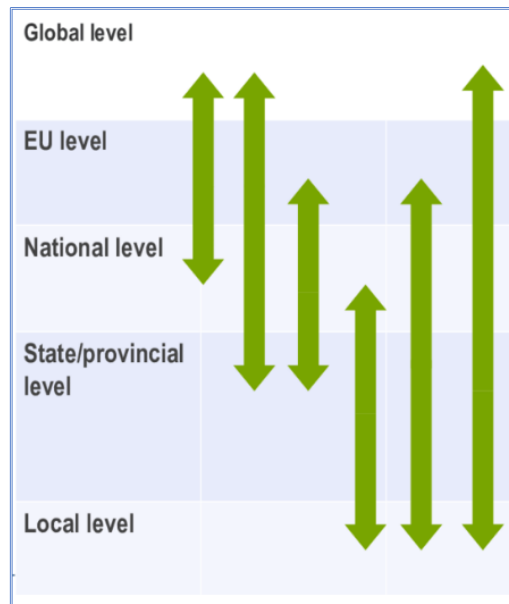
Civil society organisations have been playing a significant role in providing services for those reaching Europe, promoting the participation of migrants in the life of the society, increasing awareness of diversity and the benefits of migration, promoting intercultural dialogue and also advocating for a human-rights based governance of migration.

Public authorities face the challenge of bringing together people of different walks of life, while also helping them to overcome the obstacles to participation and social inclusion specific to subgroups within the broad categories of migrants and asylum-seekers.

The goals of reception and integration processes of migrants or refugees are the achievement of personal autonomy and the participation in host societies, within a framework that allows these people to build a sense of belonging and to exercising a full citizenship.

A multistakeholders and multilevel approach is enough comprehensive to embrace transparent, open and inclusive policy-making process to policy efficiency, policy coherence and promoting budget synergies.

How it works in practice? Here a picture to give an idea of the links between the different levels and actors.



Source: Horizontal and Vertical Reinforcement by Martin Janicke

It is not the aim of this paper to fully present this methodology. For a closer view on how to apply and what implies the multistakeholders and multilevel methodology here some references to handbooks for public authorities available online like:

- [“Multi-stakeholder governance model”](#)
- [“Handbook for Multilevel Urban Governance in Europe”](#)

4 EXAMPLES from the LOCAL AUTHORITIES

European regions have been playing a fundamental role in the reception and integration of migrants and refugees. Regions and cities have been also pushing for greater coordination across different levels of governance in managing migration, especially when national governments are neglecting the benefits of involving regional and local authorities in migration policy-making and implementation.

European regions emphasize that the migrant status is a transient condition in the life of any person and should never suspension of one’s rights or human dignity.

People who have migrated and who have arrived in our countries as in our Europe are no longer immigrants; they become citizens who add value to the collective life of our towns, neighborhoods and cities. Challenges that European regions facing go beyond the management of migration flows. The greatest challenge is ensuring inclusion in a society that is and understands itself to be plural and diverse. And it is this challenge that administrations close to the citizen find themselves dealing with, occupying much greater space in day-to-day governance. The following examples show what local authorities, in this case regions, are already doing. Hopefully those examples will inspire other local and regional authorities to take the same path.

Moreover, the examples listed below play the role of evidences that the multi-stakeholder and multilevel methodologies work.

4.1 What European regions are already doing: some experiences

- [“Integra” project](#) by Murcia region (ES)
“Integra” focuses on the labour integration as a way of social inclusion of refugees in the Region of Murcia. The project is carried on in close collaboration with civil society organisations. This is the only way to put in place an individualised service. The collaboration was set via a protocol.
- [Second Language and Intercultural mediation](#), by Emilia-Romagna Region (IT)
For Emilia-Romagna this is as pillars for the inclusion of migrants in the society. Region works together with public schools, non-profit sector, municipalities, other public bodies and the local communities. This is a way to manage the increase of migrants and refugees from 2% to more than 10% in less than ten years. The collaboration with civil society and cooperative was set via a partnership.
- Programme to support young refugees, their empowerment and participation, different landers in Germany.
This was a programme aimed to offer young refugees perspectives for their future in Germany. The support covered the access to welfare, education and training, and set a successful transition from school to work. The programme was developed by a non-profit organisation in cooperation with local and regional authorities.
- [Action Plan Against Racism and Discrimination 2018-2020](#), by Brussels Capital (BE).
The Action Plan is an example of a comprehensive and multi-perspective plan based on 29 concrete measures aimed to fight racism and discrimination and promote the respect, tolerance and solidarity within the society. Several civil society organisations are involved in the project via an advisory platform.
- Autonomous Province of Vojvodina - [Project: "Supporting the adequate and sustainable housing of Roma in Odžaci - Every Roma to have a home"](#). co-funded by the European Union and the national government. The project aimed to contribution to sustainable social inclusion policies and enabling opportunities for a higher standard of living of the multiple vulnerable Roma population. This project is a clear example of multilevel cooperation.

One of the most interesting finding is that the frame of the coordination among different level of governance and different organization can take endless formulas: official agreements, protocols, partnerships, white books, open consultation, etc.

But why local and regional authorities go or should go for this methodology? For several reasons. Often the civil society option was mentioned by local authorities to make possible personalised services for migrants. And those type of services are known to be an effective way to have positive effects to migrants. And often was heard this simple answer “Regions go stakeholders because...it has an impact!”

5 TO GO DEEPER: the FRAME for LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The integration of migrants has become one of the most salient topics in the European political agenda. And one causing strong tensions among Member States.

In May 2015, the European Commission (EC) proposed a strategy to respond to the crisis situation in the Mediterranean and better manage migration in the medium and long term in the areas of irregular migration, borders, asylum and legal migration, through the [European Agenda on Migration](#). However, full implementation on the ground was lacking so the EC proposed a political roadmap to reach a comprehensive deal by June 2018 on how to pursue a sustainable migration policy, including the reform of the Common European Asylum System and revision of the Dublin Regulation.

Taking the debate on migration forward, the [European Council on 28 June 2018](#) adopted conclusions on the future EU migration policy, where EU leaders pledged to continue work on the Dublin regulation and the asylum procedures proposal (Background information on the [reform of EU asylum rules](#) and [migration response](#)).

Migration has also been central to the agenda of the EU's assembly of local and regional representatives, the Committee of Regions (CoR). In an opinion adopted in March 2018, entitled "[Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration](#)", the CoR expressed concern about the challenges faced by islands and coastal regions in the Mediterranean and called for greater support for cities and regions and border countries that are on the front line of receiving, managing and integrating migrants and refugees. The CoR had previously adopted an opinion on the [European Agenda on Migration](#) in 2015 and recommendations for the reform of the [Common European Asylum System](#) (2016), [legal migration](#) (2016), and the [Action plan on the integration of third country nationals](#) (2016).

Migration and integration have also been at the heart of the work of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe. A number of texts have been adopted by the Institution, such as the Declaration on "[The reception of refugees in Europe](#)" (2015) and the resolutions on "[Unaccompanied refugee children : the role and responsibilities of local and regional authorities](#)" (2018), "[Regional and minority languages in Europe today](#)" (2017). More reference texts can be found [here](#).

The United Nations (UN), in its turn, agreed on the first-ever [Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#) to address all dimensions of international migration in a holistic and comprehensive manner in July 2018. With this agreement, and taking a whole-of-government approach to ensure horizontal and vertical policy coherence across all sectors and levels of **government**, Member States expect to create conditions that enable migrants to enrich societies and facilitate their contributions to sustainable development at the local, national, regional and global levels, leveraging the potential of migration for the fulfilment of the [2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

Ensuring equal opportunities for persons with disabilities is considered as an important facilitator of participation and inclusion in society. In these terms, both the

United Nations [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (UNCRPD) and the [Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023](#) address equality and equalisation of opportunities for persons with disabilities. Article 5 of the UNCRPD requires States to adopt positive measures aimed at ensuring equality across the substantive rights adopted in the CRPD Convention.

The challenges around migration, disability and integration are complex. European regions and local authorities have been instrumental in promoting the integration of migrants and refugees, contributing to their social, economic and civic inclusion. However, EU and national governments should make the multilevel migration governance system work and enhance their support to regions and local authorities to undertake their fundamental role in integrating new arrivals and creating inclusive communities, to achieve the benefits of diversity and build cohesive societies.

Article 13

“Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.

Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country”.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

References (with hyperlinks)

References are listed as mentioned in the paper

The AMiD [NAT-Needs Assessment Tool](#)

The four [AMiD Training modules](#)

The four [national reports and the cross-country AMiD reports](#).

[European Council and Parliament Directive 2013/32/EU](#)

[Horizontal and Vertical Reinforcement in Global Climate Governance by Martin Janicke](#)

[Multi-stakeholder governance model](#)

[Handbook for Multilevel Urban Governance in Europe](#)

[“Integra” project](#) by Murcia region (ES)

[Second Language and Intercultural mediation](#), by Emilia-Romagna Region (IT)

[Action Plan Against Racism and Discrimination 2018-2020](#), by Brussels Capital (BE).

[Project description “Supporting adequate and sustainable housing of Roma in Odzaci”](#)

News [“Supporting the adequate and sustainable housing of Roma in Odžaci - Every Roma to have a home”](#).

[European Agenda on Migration](#)

[European Council on 28 June 2018](#)

[reform of EU asylum rules](#) and [migration response](#) (2016)

Committee of Regions : [Implementation of the European Agenda on Migration](#)

[Common European Asylum System](#)

[Action plan on the integration of third country nationals](#)

[“The reception of refugees in Europe”](#) (2015)

[“Unaccompanied refugee children : the role and responsibilities of local and regional authorities”](#) (2018)

[“Regional and minority languages in Europe today”](#) (2017). More reference texts on the same topic can be found [here](#).

[Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration](#)

[2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

[Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities](#) (UNCRPD)

[Council of Europe Disability Strategy 2017-2023](#)



The [AMiD-Access to services for Migrants with Disabilities](#) project aims to support an efficient management of the reception and integration of asylum seekers and migrants with disabilities in the EU.

Local authorities are an important partner in the consortium. Timis County (RO), Värmland Region (SE) and Comunitat Valenciana (ES) had an active role in the AMiD CAB-Community Advisory Board. The AMiD CAB gathered partnership members, European Regions and external experts from service providers.

Partners

