

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Athens, April 12, 2021**

**Promoting successful practices for the integration of migrants in local communities**

Prejudices and stereotypes that prevail in Greek society in relation to migrants and how these can be overcome, as well as stories of successful integration of migrants, were some of the main discussion topics of the Greek Diversity Dialogue Forum. The event titled "Actions for the integration of migrants in the local community: exchange of stories and experiences", took place online on Thursday 8th of April 2021, in the framework of the European project "MAX - Maximising Migrants' Contribution to Society".

The Greek DDF event was an opportunity to improve the public image of migrants, emphasising to their contribution in the local community within the political, economic and social spheres. More than 1,500 people watched the discussion, which was moderated by the journalist Sofia Papadopoulou.

**Sevi Matsakidou**, Communications Manager of El Sistema Greece spoke about music as a means of social integration of migrants and **Manto Baboula**, Communications Manager of the NGO 'We Need Books' referred to how non-formal education changes their lives. **Alexandra Koronaiou**, Dean of the School of Social Sciences at Panteion University, focused on the positive impact of migrants on the local community, and **Philippine Krysmann**, Zaatar Assistant Coordinator, spoke about their absorption into the labour market. **Pepi Marioli**, Head of Employment Service of the Athens Solidarity Center, referred to the employment services of the NGO Solidarity Now, which help the integration of migrants and refugees, while the journalist **Maria Kouzinopoulou** spoke about the role of the media in their public image. **Melina Daskalaki**, President of the Council for the Integration of Immigrants and Refugees of the Municipality of Athens, presented Local Integration Policies that positively affect the evolution of attitudes and perceptions towards migrants and refugees.

The project is funded by the AMIF program of the European Union and includes 20 partners, 15 local organisations from 12 EU Member States as well as five partners at EU level.