



## **VOICES: Migration Stories for Inclusive Policies**

(VOICES - 101196241)

### **D3: First Policy Recommendation for the LAPAR**

#### **Background Context:**

*As part of the first international event of the EU co-funded project “VOICES from Migrations”, held in Brussels in May 2025, ten working groups composed of university students from across Europe were tasked with developing policy proposals to support the integration of migrants at the local level, with a particular focus on the town of Rosarno. Each group, after conducting interviews with migrants and gathering first-hand testimonies, drafted recommendations based on identified needs and challenges.*

*Following this collective effort, a selected group of five students - specialising in law, public policy, and international relations - was appointed to review, consolidate, and synthesise the proposals into a single, coherent Policy Recommendation. This final recommendation reflects a participatory, interdisciplinary approach and will be included in the Local Action Plan Against Racism (LAPAR) of Rosarno. The Plan will be adopted by the Municipality of Rosarno, along with other institutional actors from the Calabria Region.*

#### **Policy Recommendation: Establishment of an Intercultural Centre for Orientation, Language Learning, and Community Integration in Rosarno**

##### **Problem Definition**

Rosarno, a town historically marked by emigration, is today one of the main arrival points for migrant workers in southern Italy, particularly during the citrus harvest season. While migrants play a central role in the local economy, their integration remains limited. Barriers include lack of access to legal information, poor language skills, limited knowledge of civic and administrative norms, and social isolation.



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## Strategic Objective

1. **To provide newly arrived migrants with foundational knowledge of their legal rights and obligations in Italy**, including residency procedures, access to public services, and labour protections. At least **80% of participants** should demonstrate improved understanding of these topics through a short knowledge assessment at the end of the training cycle.
2. **To foster basic civic and intercultural competence**, introducing participants to the local cultural, institutional, and administrative landscape of Rosarno, including communication norms, waste disposal, healthcare access, and school enrolment. The goal is for **at least 70% of participants** to report feeling more confident in navigating everyday public life after completing the training.
3. **To support the development of basic language and communication skills in Italian**, with a specific focus on practical vocabulary related to work, health, and public services. The objective is for **at least 60% of participants** to reach CEFR level A1 proficiency or equivalent by the end of a 12-week training cycle.

## Proposed Action: Creation of a Municipal Intercultural Centre

A permanent **Intercultural Centre**, hosted in a municipal facility and coordinated by the Social Services Department, would serve as a one-stop hub for orientation, language training, and social connection for migrants. The Centre would be implemented with the operational support of:

- **Servizio Civile Universale volunteers**, trained and mobilised under municipal coordination.
  - **OASI ODV**, association managing the Villaggio della Solidarietà, a migrant reception area which provides housing and first-level support to hundreds of migrants. and offering legal/bureaucratic support.
  - **Local civil society**, volunteers, schools, and health services.
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## Components of the Action Plan

### A. Orientation Programme (Civic & Legal Literacy)

- Workshops on legal rights and obligations in Italy, residency procedures, labour laws, health access, and school enrolment.



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- Providing accessible guidance on administrative procedures, legal rights, access to health and education, and both regular and irregular migration pathways. According to the EU Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA), limited access to legal information remains one of the primary barriers to migrant integration in Italy (*EU-MIDIS II*, 2018). This information point could be managed not only by the Municipality of Rosarno but also with strong support from the local association OASI ODV, due to its long-standing assistance in the bureaucratic process for migrant people in Rosarno.

## **B. Italian Language Training (12-week cycles, twice/year)**

- Focused on functional language for work, healthcare, and public services.
- Taught by SCU volunteers with linguistic training.
- Language proficiency has a documented positive impact on migrant employability: migrants with strong language skills are 30% more likely to find employment (OECD, *Indicators of Immigrant Integration*, 2019). According to Eurobarometer (2018), over 80% of EU citizens consider language knowledge essential for integration.

## **C. Community Mentoring Network**

- A **Community Mentoring Network**, connecting newcomers with long-term migrant residents and local volunteers, in cooperation with local associations such as OASI ODV. This network will provide informal orientation, emotional support, and access to local services. The practice responds to integration models recognised by the European Migration Network and aligns with principles of participatory governance.

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This initiative aims to strengthen social cohesion, promote mutual understanding among residents, and provide migrant communities with the tools necessary to fully participate in the civic, social, and economic life of Rosarno. The Intercultural Centre will function as a pillar of the Local Action Plan Against Racism and as a model of inclusive governance to be further developed at the regional and European levels.

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