

Adaptation of guidelines for rainbow buddies' schemes



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@nclusion

Fostering inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants at local level

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Work Package 4: Implementation of rainbow buddies' schemes for newly arrived LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees

D4.1 Adaptation of guidelines for rainbow buddies' schemes

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INTRODUCTION

The Rainbow Buddies Scheme functions as a mentoring and peer-support mechanism, aiming to foster both social inclusion and individual empowerment. The scheme has been informed by extensive preparatory research conducted across partner countries alongside insights drawn from prior initiatives mentioned by partners in Spain (Alzira), Poland (FU), Greece (GFM and SYMPLEXIS), Cyprus (CSI), and Germany (NEST). These experiences have shaped both the conceptual and practical framework of the Rainbow Buddies Scheme, allowing for a methodology that is both evidence-informed and responsive to local realities. It is intended as a practical framework for local implementation, providing partners and other interested organisations with the steps to follow, suggested approaches, and guidance for effective implementation, while maintaining flexibility to adapt to the local context.

To properly contextualise these considerations, reference should be made to the findings of the transnational report developed under WP2, “[Professionals’ attitudes and knowledge on the specific needs of LGBTQI+ migrants & refugees](#)”, which provided the empirical and methodological foundation for subsequent project phases.

1. The @nclusion project

The project “@nclusion: Fostering inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants at local level”, funded by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (2021-2027) of European Commission, will be implemented in **Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain and Germany** from **01/04/2024 to 31/3/2027** (36 months).

The @nclusion consortium consists of 10 organisations, representing 6 countries:

1. Nicosia Development Agency (ANEL) – Cyprus (project coordinator)
2. Center for Social Innovation (CSI) – Cyprus
3. SYMPLEXIS – Greece
4. Greek Forum of Migrants (GFM) – Greece
5. Association of Sicilian Municipalities (ANCI Sicilia) – Italy
6. CESIE ETS – Italy
7. Municipality of Wrocław - Wrocław Center for Social Development (MoW) – Poland
8. Foundation Ukraine (FUA) – Poland
9. Alzira City Council – Spain
10. NGO NEST Berlin (NEST) – Germany

The @nclusion project aims to **build cooperation and coordination among local authorities, migrant organizations and communities, LGBTQI+ organizations and other CSOs supporting the rights of migrants and LGBTQI+ persons** in order to support the implementation of local integration strategies that promote LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees' inclusion in Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Poland, Spain & Germany. In this regard, the objectives of the project are the following:

- To increase awareness and know-how of local authorities on challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background, as well as existing good and bad integration practices
- To enhance the understanding & sensitization of migrant organizations and communities & LGBTQI+ organizations on including LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background.
- To increase synergy and cooperation between LGBTQI+ organizations, migrant organizations & communities and local authorities.
- To develop and implement local integration strategies for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.
- To increase access to information LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant and refugee backgrounds about practices and services in the host countries.

The project's objectives will be achieved through the of the following main activities:

- Identification of the needs for changes in attitudes and processes towards LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee backgrounds.
- Capacity building and sensitization programme for (a) 300 staff, volunteers, members of migrant organizations and communities, (b) 300 staff, volunteers, members of LGBTQI+ organizations, and (c) 300 staff of local authorities.
- Implementation of rainbow buddies' schemes for 300 newly arrived migrants and refugees.
- Cooperation between local authorities, LGBTQI+ organizations, migrant organizations and communities and other CSOs in local action planning.
- Information portal on local services for LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background in several languages.
- Dissemination and awareness raising actions.

The main results expected from the implementation of the @nclusion project are:

- at least **300 staff, volunteers, members of migrant organizations and communities** (and other CSOs supporting migrants) with increased understanding of challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant and refugee background and increased acceptance;
- at least **150 staff, volunteers, members of migrant organizations and communities** (and other CSOs supporting migrants) with knowledge and

- experience in supporting newly arrived LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background as mentors ('rainbow buddies');
- at least **300 staff, volunteers, members of LGBTQI+ organizations** with increased understanding of challenges faced by LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background and increased acceptance;
- at least **150 staff, volunteers, members of LGBTQI+ organizations** with knowledge and experience in supporting newly arrived LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background as mentors ('rainbow buddies');
- at least **300 staff of local authorities** with new awareness and know-how on the challenges faced by LGBTQI+ migrants, and good and bad practices for their integration, as well as decreased stereotypes, increased understanding and acceptance of LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background;
- **6 local authorities** with enhanced cooperation with LGBTQI+ organizations, migrant organizations & communities and other relevant CSOs for integrated approach towards LGBTQI+ migrants and refugees;
- at least **6 new or revised local integration strategies, action** plans, policies, measures addressing the needs of LGBTQI+ migrants developed and implementation initiated
- at least **300 newly arrived LGBTQI+ individuals with migrant or refugee background** supported on integration issues and processes (through rainbow buddies' schemes);
- at least **40.000 persons** reached through all dissemination activities, materials & digital tools.

2. Methodological approach

The methodological approach for the Rainbow Buddy scheme is as follows:

- **Horizontal and reciprocal relationships** form another cornerstone of the methodology. Participants are encouraged to adopt titles such as "companions," "co-learners," or "facilitators" rather than hierarchical labels. Germany (NEST) has shown that this terminology fosters equitable peer interactions, reduces power imbalances, and promotes collaboration between mentors and mentees.
- **Intersectionality** is explicitly acknowledged in the Rainbow Buddies Scheme. Identities and experiences intersect across sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnicity, migration status, disability, age, and socio-economic conditions. Partners in Poland (FU) and Cyprus (CSI) reported that participants with multiple vulnerabilities face unique barriers that require tailored mentoring and

support strategies. Recognizing and responding to these overlapping challenges is essential to ensure inclusivity and meaningful participation.

- **Ethical and trauma-informed practice** is fundamental to the scheme. Confidentiality, participant autonomy, and emotional safety are non-negotiable. Experiences from Cyprus (CSI) have demonstrated that participants are more likely to engage and sustain participation when the program is perceived as ethically grounded and sensitive to potential trauma. Ethical facilitation involves creating safe spaces, protecting participants' privacy, and ensuring that all interactions are respectful and supportive.

3. General principles

The Rainbow Buddies Scheme rests on several general principles that should inform all aspects of planning and implementation.

- **Flexibility and adaptation** - the program effectiveness depends on a methodology capable of adapting to diverse local contexts, while preserving coherence with the overarching project objectives and European ethical standards. All partner organisations shall adhere to the common methodological guidelines while ensuring their application is tailored to the specific national, social and institutional contexts in which they operate.
- **Quality and ethical practice** relational quality takes precedence over quantitative metrics. While undoubtedly, indicators are essential to ensure a wide reach of the Buddy Scheme, partner shall make sure the quality of activities is always guaranteed and ethical considerations are taken into account.

4. Rainbow buddies' scheme objectives

The Rainbow Buddies Scheme has been designed to create meaningful connections, support, and empowerment for newly arrived migrants, with a particular attention to SOGIESC communities. Its objectives are rooted in fostering access to local services, building community, facilitating language learning, and providing practical support for people navigating life in a new country. Each activity within the Scheme is carefully aligned to these goals, ensuring that participation is not only enjoyable but transformative. The objectives are:

- **To enhance access to local services.** Activities such as the *Participatory Workshop* and the *"How-To" simulations* are directly aimed at equipping mentees with practical knowledge and confidence in interacting with public offices, service providers, and other local institutions. Through collective mapping exercises and real-life simulations, mentees learn how to navigate

essential services, while mentors provide guidance tailored to individual needs, including the unique challenges faced by SOGIESC groups.

- **To emphasize community building**, fostering a sense of reciprocity and solidarity between mentors and mentees. This objective is particularly visible in the *Community Circle and Buddy Picnic activities*, which offer spaces for sharing, collective reflection, and informal socialization. In these environments, mentees are encouraged to exchange personal experiences, celebrate milestones, and support each other, cultivating a wider network of relationships that strengthens the sense of belonging within the local community.
- **To promote language learning**. Mentors and mentees engage in dialogue during activities such as *Walk and Talk, participatory workshops, and practical simulations*, allowing both parties to practice and expand their language skills in meaningful, real-world contexts. This mutual learning process not only facilitates communication but also encourages deeper cultural understanding and integration.
- **To provide support for newly arrived people**, helping them gain confidence, independence, and orientation in an unfamiliar environment. Activities like the “How-To” simulations and Walk and Talk ensure that mentees receive practical guidance on daily life tasks, from navigating public offices to accessing services, attending training opportunities, and exploring neighborhood resources. Mentors serve as both guides and supportive peers, helping mentees to build autonomy while maintaining a sense of security and encouragement.

Taken together, the Rainbow Buddies Scheme objectives create a coherent framework for action. Each activity is designed to complement and reinforce the others, ensuring that mentees benefit from a comprehensive support system that addresses practical needs, emotional well-being, social integration, and personal growth. The participatory nature of the Scheme ensures that these objectives are not abstract aspirations but lived experiences that manifest in meaningful relationships, community engagement, and enhanced confidence in navigating a new environment.

5. Language utilized

Language shapes both perception and participation. Within the Rainbow Buddies Scheme, it is encouraged to adopt practices that are

- inclusive
- non-hierarchical
- participant-centered terminology
- empathetic, culturally sensitive communication

- trauma-informed

For the purposes of consistency, clarity and alignment with the project's conceptual framework, all official project documentation, reporting tools and communication materials will systematically use the terms **"Mentors"** and **"Mentees"** to refer to the individuals involved in the mentoring scheme. These terms are adopted to ensure coherence, facilitate monitoring and evaluation processes, and maintain a shared terminology at European level, as required by the programme's formal and administrative standards.

At the same time, in internal, non-official communication and in direct interactions with the individuals involved, partners may use the terms **"Facilitators"** and **"Participants"**. This linguistic choice supports the creation of a more horizontal, inclusive and participatory dynamic, reducing perceptions of hierarchy and fostering mutual exchange, empowerment and trust. Such an approach is fully aligned with the project's values and does not affect the formal structure or objectives of the mentoring scheme, but rather enhances engagement and ownership among those involved.

- a) In practical terms, mentors should ensure that
- b) multilingual support is available whenever possible
- c) avoid bureaucratic or overly technical vocabulary.
- d) written and spoken communication must be inclusive, translated when necessary, and adapted to participants' literacy and linguistic levels.

They provide explanations of roles, ethical safeguards, and participant rights at the outset, fostering transparency and trust.

6. Adaptation to local context

Those intended to put forward the Rainbow Buddies Scheme are encouraged to do so flexibly, adapting both activities and evaluation processes to local realities while maintaining alignment with the overarching project framework. Local adaptation encompasses participant recruitment, activity design, facilitation, partnership development, and evaluation, with attention to context-specific challenges and opportunities.

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT AND ENGAGEMENT

Building trust is a precondition for meaningful participation, particularly given the legal insecurity and potential prior discrimination faced by LGBTQI+ migrant and refugee people. Successful engagement strategies include leveraging local networks of civil society organizations, community centers, and trusted informal connections. Germany

(NEST) demonstrated that referrals through local LGBTQI+ organizations significantly increase engagement rates. Specifically:

- ✓ Orientation sessions for participants should clarify program objectives, ethical safeguards, and roles, ensuring that participants understand their rights and responsibilities.
- ✓ Providing multilingual materials and support is strongly recommended.
- ✓ Engage with local stakeholders active in the fields of migration and LGBTQI+ rights. This engagement is strongly influenced by the legal, social and political context at national and local level. In some countries, such as Greece, civil society organisations working on these issues are currently facing increased pressure and constraints from public authorities, which may affect outreach strategies and access to potential participants.

All in all, recruitment approaches must be designed with careful consideration of contextual risks, legal frameworks and protection needs, ensuring that all activities remain compliant, safe and ethically sound while safeguarding the rights and well-being of all individuals involved.

DESIGNING CONTEXTUALIZED ACTIVITIES

Activities and agendas should be co-created with mentees to ensure relevance and motivation as well as agency. Suggested activity types include

- workshops for language and cultural exchange,
- peer mentoring,
- creative expression through arts or storytelling,
- facilitated access to services such as healthcare or housing, and
- community dialogue sessions aimed at fostering social cohesion.

While indicative, these suggestions should not be treated as rigid requirements; local mentors may adjust content, duration, or focus areas in response to mentee interests and capacities.

SAFE SPACES AND ETHICAL FACILITATION

The creation of safe spaces is a fundamental responsibility of local supervisors as well as mentors themselves. These includes ensuring:

- **Confidentiality** which must be rigorously maintained, respecting mentees' legal status and privacy.

- **Trauma-informed facilitation practices**, as highlighted in Poland (FU), include recognizing stress indicators, explicitly discussing consent and safety norms, and offering emotional support where needed.
- Activities consistently prioritize **participant agency**, giving individuals meaningful control over their engagement and ensuring that interactions remain respectful and empowering.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Local partnerships strengthen program impact and sustainability. Civil society organizations can provide culturally sensitive support, assist in navigating local services, and extend the reach of the Rainbow Buddies Scheme. It has been demonstrated that sustained partnerships enhance program outcomes beyond pilot phases, supporting continuity of peer networks and ongoing mentorship. It is encouraged to foster informal and voluntary continuation of support relationships after the formal program period, recognizing that long-term inclusion requires consistent engagement.

ACCESSIBILITY

It is considered a fundamental dimension of inclusivity. As highlighted in the analysis of the FAITH – Feeling Safe to Transact Online in the Third Age project (Greece), inclusive design must consider health, disability, and access to care as structural components of participation.

Drawing inspiration from the Cy Checkpoint initiative, the model embraces community-based voluntary counselling and testing (CBVCT) as an adaptable good practice, promoting community-led health and prevention approaches. These principles can extend to other dimensions of well-being and access. Creating a truly **inclusive Rainbow Buddies Scheme** means designing and adapting environments, activities, and materials so that all individuals—regardless of physical, cognitive, linguistic, or social barriers—can participate fully and safely.

Similarly, the PITCH project (Greece) underlined that **physical and linguistic accessibility** are key. Locating activities in accessible venues, using social cafés, neighborhood walks, or community hubs, and simplifying communication materials helps participants engage comfortably and confidently.

In some contexts, there might be specific challenges, such as limited healthcare access for migrants or insufficient public funding for community-led services. Implementing the model in these contexts requires:

- Contextual evaluation of national laws and policies,
- Partnership with NGOs and advocacy groups,
- Cooperation with public health authorities,
- Emphasis on confidentiality and anonymity to mitigate potential risks for participants.

IMPLEMENTING A RAINBOW BUDDIES' SCHEME

1. Purpose and Vision

The *Rainbow Buddies Scheme* approach aims to strengthen community bonds and enhance access to rights, services, and opportunities by fostering reciprocal learning environments. Rather than focusing on one-directional mentoring, this model prioritizes dialogue, co-learning, and intercultural exchange as the foundation for empowerment and social cohesion.

Each organization is invited to develop a **national set of guidelines** to support the implementation of these pathways. These guidelines should serve as a **living, adaptable framework** rather than a fixed protocol—encouraging experimentation, responsiveness to community needs, and respect for local realities. The shared goal is to promote meaningful inclusion, equality, and solidarity among LGBTQI+ individuals, migrants, and refugees.

The development of the Local Implementation Plan should take into account each country's unique **cultural, social, and legal frameworks**, while remaining aligned with the overarching values of the transnational partnership. It is encouraged to engage a diverse range of stakeholders—including migrant-led groups, LGBTQI+ associations, local authorities, educational institutions, and social service providers—in a **collaborative co-creation process**.

Through participatory design workshops, focus groups, and open consultations, the guidelines will reflect the lived experiences and perspectives of the communities involved. This ensures that the resulting framework is both representative and grounded in real needs rather than abstract assumptions.

2. Profiles involved in this action

The *Rainbow Buddies* framework acknowledges multiple layers of participation, each contributing to mutual empowerment. Every role—whether organizational or individual—is part of a **horizontal ecosystem** of learning and care.

2.1 LOCAL SUPERVISORS

They play a pivotal role in ensuring ethical integrity, coherence, and responsiveness, serving as the main point of contact for all mentors and mentees.

Preferred background

- Social work,
- migration support,
- LGBTQI+ advocacy, or
- community engagement.

Supervisors should demonstrate empathy, mediation capacity, and a commitment to non-discriminatory, inclusive facilitation.

Core responsibilities

- **Coordination and guidance:** Managing the local implementation of activities, ensuring that actions align with agreed ethical and operational standards.
- **Ongoing support:** Providing accompaniment to facilitators through regular meetings, reflective sessions, and peer exchanges.
- **Monitoring and documentation:** Reviewing key materials such as meeting summaries, self-assessments, and feedback forms to identify emerging needs.
- **Crisis and care management:** Activating referral mechanisms or reassignments in cases of discomfort, incompatibility, or risk.
- **Capacity development:** Suggesting follow-up training or resources based on observed needs.
- **Liaison function:** Acting as a bridge between local teams and the WP4 coordination (CESIE ETS), ensuring consistent communication and sharing of lessons learned.

Involvement in Activities:

Local Supervisors coordinate the activities, ensuring ethical implementation and alignment with the Rainbow Buddies objectives.

- For the *Participatory Workshop and Community Circle*, they oversee planning, facilitate discussion frameworks, and monitor group dynamics.
- During *Walk and Talk sessions and “How-To” Simulations*, they ensure logistical arrangements and safety considerations are in place.
- At *Buddy Picnic – Guided Activities and the Buddy Info Desk*, they support mentors, monitor mentee engagement, and provide real-time guidance for any challenges or special needs that arise.

Their role is primarily oversight, ensuring both mentees and mentors are supported and empowered throughout all activities.

2.2 MENTORS

Mentors (or *facilitators*) are individuals with lived experience in the host community who accompany LGBTQI+ migrants, refugees, and people under international or subsidiary protection in their adaptation journey. They serve as **peer references** and **companions**, combining emotional support with practical guidance while fostering autonomy and mutual trust.

Within the framework of this inclusion-focused Action, the role of *Mentor* may be fulfilled by individuals holding different legal statuses, including *International Protection (IP) holders* and *Refugees*, provided that they are able to reasonably ensure continuity of participation in the mentoring scheme for a sufficient period of time.

This approach reflects the project's commitment to recognising lived experience, peer knowledge and community-based expertise as key assets in mentoring processes. Enabling persons with protection status to act as Mentors contributes to more inclusive, empowering and representative support pathways, while avoiding exclusion based solely on legal status.

It is essential to nevertheless ensure that participation conditions are compatible with national legal frameworks and that adequate safeguards are in place to support sustained and meaningful engagement throughout the duration of the scheme.

Particular attention will be paid to the protection of personal data and confidentiality, in line with applicable data protection regulations. Each partner organisation remains responsible for implementing appropriate safety measures to ensure a secure and respectful environment for all participants, especially those holding legal statuses that may expose them to additional vulnerabilities.

Key Qualities and Skills

- Empathy and active listening;
- Cultural humility and intersectional awareness;
- Emotional stability and reliability;
- Respect for confidentiality;
- Commitment to empowerment without direction or control.

Recommended background

- Experience in migration,
- LGBTQI+ issues, or

- participation in community-based or peer-support initiatives is beneficial but not required.

Main responsibilities

- Provide emotional and practical support in daily life situations (e.g., paperwork, services, navigation).
- Offer reliable, non-judgmental information and guidance.
- Encourage participation in local networks and cultural or civic spaces.
- Accompany mentees to relevant services or community events if mutually agreed.
- Promote confidence, agency, and well-being without enforcing assimilation.

Involvement in activities:

Mentors are key components of the activities.

- In *the Participatory Workshop*, they co-lead exercises, support dialogue, and ensure mentees' voices are heard.
- During *Community Circles*, they foster trust, encourage sharing, and model peer-to-peer support.
- In *Walk and Talk sessions*, mentors provide practical guidance, accompany mentees to services or public spaces, and practice language skills together.
- For "*How-To*" *Simulations*, they guide mentees step-by-step through procedures, demonstrating processes while allowing mentees to gain confidence.
- At *Buddy Picnic – Guided Activities*, mentors create inclusive, engaging experiences that promote connection, while
- at the *Buddy Info Desk*, they provide accurate, accessible information and ensure mentees can navigate resources safely and effectively.

2.3 MENTEES

Mentees (or Participants) are individuals— LGBTQI+ migrants, refugees, or holders of international/subsidiary protection—who wish to engage in a process of empowerment and connection within their new environment.

As observed by CSI in the *HelpRefugeesWork* project, integration and inclusion depend on factors such as the recognition of qualifications, employment regulations, or administrative barriers. Legal status often shapes access to opportunities and engagement capacity, influencing motivation and participation.

The program explicitly recognizes this diversity of contexts and supports individuals across different phases of resettlement and self-identification—whether open about their LGBTQI+ identity or still exploring it privately.

Mentees are invited to:

- Take an active role in defining and pursuing their goals;
- Attend regular meetings with their mentors;
- Participate in collective activities and peer exchanges;
- Provide feedback on their experience to improve practices;
- Sign informed consent and confidentiality agreements, ensuring privacy protection (It is essential to manage pseudonymized lists of mentees).

Involvement in activities:

Mentees actively engage in all six activities as co-creators of their experience.

- In *Participatory Workshops*, they share needs, learn new skills, and collaborate on exercises that enhance autonomy.
- During *Community Circles*, mentees exchange experiences, reflect on challenges, and build supportive networks.
- In *Walk and Talk*, they practice language, navigate services, and gain confidence in real-world contexts.
- *“How-To” Simulations* allow mentees to rehearse administrative procedures safely, while
- *Buddy Picnic – Guided Activities* combine learning with informal socialization.
- At the *Buddy Info Desk*, mentees access information, ask questions, and develop self-advocacy skills, learning to navigate local services independently while receiving ongoing support from mentors.

Narrative examples of mentees

These profiles are not fixed categories but **narrative examples** to help understand different needs and possible approaches to support.

2.3.1. Newly Arrived Person

Individuals who have recently completed the reception phase and face immediate challenges—language barriers, access to services, or legal and health procedures.

Main needs: orientation, basic service access, emotional stability.

Mentor’s approach: practical guidance, gentle accompaniment, respect for learning pace.

Activity engagement: In Participatory Workshops and Community Circles, newly arrived persons receive structured support and can voice immediate challenges. Walk and Talk and “How-To” Simulations focus on practical skills for daily navigation. Picnic

activities provide social integration opportunities, while the Info Desk offers direct guidance and tailored resources.

2.3.2. Person Exposed to systemic discrimination

Individuals facing marginalization or trauma linked to migration, gender identity, or social exclusion.

Main needs: safety, trust, access to safe queer spaces, psychological or legal support.

Mentor's approach: empathetic validation, trauma-sensitive interaction, mediating access to support without pressure.

Activity engagement: These mentees benefit from the trust-building aspects of Community Circles and Participatory Workshops. Mentors accompany them through Walk and Talk and “How-To” Simulations to reduce stress and ensure comprehension. Buddy Picnics offer low-pressure socialization, and the Info Desk ensures confidential access to resources.

2.3.3. Active Person seeking networks

People with higher autonomy, often eager to contribute, volunteer, or engage in activism.

Main needs: connection to networks, opportunities for civic engagement, recognition of skills.

Mentor's approach: collaborative relationship, exchange of opportunities, empowerment through co-participation.

Activity engagement: These mentees take an active role in co-facilitating Participatory Workshops, contribute to Community Circle discussions, and may lead aspects of Buddy Picnic – Guided Activities. They benefit from peer interaction in Walk and Talk sessions and support other mentees at the Buddy Info Desk, fostering leadership and network-building.

Each person's story is unique. The *Rainbow Buddies Scheme* approach prioritizes **care, respect, and contextual sensitivity**, avoiding re-traumatization or over-generalization.

3. Operational structure of the Rainbow Buddies' Scheme

PHASE 1 – INITIATION AND PARTICIPANTS ENGAGEMENT

Duration: approximately 3 months

The initial phase focuses on introducing the Rainbow Buddies Scheme to local communities and engaging participants interested in peer-to-peer learning, mutual support, and inclusive community participation. Partner organizations will **conduct outreach campaigns** through social media, community events, and collaboration with local organizations to invite participation from potential mentors and community members.

Interested participants can express their motivation through open calls (Google registrations Forms) or direct contact with partner organizations. The relation between mentors and mentees could either develop in a 1-to-1 dynamic, or in a group horizontal support dynamic, in which a mentor interacts with multiple mentees.

To ensure ethical, voluntary participation, mentors and mentees will receive a brief **induction session** covering project principles, intercultural communication, confidentiality, and informed consent.

In place of formal MoUs, **Statements of Collaboration** will acknowledge each mentee's voluntary involvement and shared commitment to mutual learning. Personal data will be **pseudonymized** for privacy protection, reflecting the original "list of mentors and mentees" and "list of peers matched" in a more inclusive and horizontal format.

Means of Verification: Statements of Collaboration (**MoUs – Annex 1 and 2**), pseudonymized Mentees list (Mentors and Mentees)

PHASE 2 – MENTORS TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Duration: 2 days

An important aspect of the processed host a two-day participatory training workshop for selected mentors. The sessions will provide a shared foundation for collaboration, intercultural understanding, and inclusive peer facilitation across national contexts.

Workshops will include:

- Clarification of the Rainbow Buddies Scheme principles and objectives;
- Activities on inclusive facilitation, cultural awareness, and emotional intelligence;
- Exercises in active listening, boundary-setting, and conflict sensitivity;

- Discussion spaces to identify community needs and co-design flexible activity plans.
- Code of Ethics

It is possible to adapt participation numbers (originally suggested as a maximum of 25 participants per day) according to local capacity, ensuring accessibility and inclusiveness. Lessons from previous projects, such as challenges in overloading mentors or rigid workshop structures (e.g., Alzira, Igualat), inform the need for flexibility and mentee-centered planning.

Means of Verification: Workshop agenda (Annex 3), Attendance lists for capacity-building workshops

PHASE 3 – PEERS MATCHING

Duration: approximately 1 month

This phase centers on connecting mentees into meaningful peer relationships. Rather than hierarchical “mentor–mentee pairs,” the Rainbow Buddies Scheme supports **peer learning partnerships or small learning constellations**, formed according to shared interests, availability, and community priorities.

The relation between mentors and mentees could either be **1-to-1 or open**, with a single mentor supporting and communicating with more than one mentee. This specific project foresees the recruitment of 50 Mentors and 50 Mentees, with variations possible depending on national context and population size. Matching criteria are adapted to local realities and may include language skills, cultural background, gender identity, lived experiences, personal goals, and availability.

It is suggested to facilitate a participatory matching process, combining mentee self-selection, guidance from mentors, and collective input to ensure comfort, safety, and compatibility. Pseudonymized records of participant connections (“List of Peers matched”) shall be maintained for internal coordination, evaluation, and quality monitoring while preserving confidentiality. Previous projects highlighted challenges in pairing across languages and cultures; the flexible approach ensures inclusivity and adaptation to local needs.

Means of Verification: Pseudonymized connection list, matching logs.

PHASE 4 – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RAINBOW BUDDIES ACTIVITIES

Duration: 6 months

This six-month implementation phase represents the core of the Rainbow Buddies Scheme. Activities are **co-designed and co-facilitated by mentees**, drawing upon their interests, skills, and needs. Examples of activities include:

- Language exchange and cultural storytelling sessions;
- Orientation to public and community services;
- Collaborative workshops in arts, education, or well-being;
- Informal gatherings promoting dialogue and inclusion.

Mentors act as **co-learners and connectors**, supporting group dynamics and emotional safety rather than instructing mentees. Each partner organization will adapt rhythm, content, and format of activities to their local context, ensuring that all mentees feel valued and included.

It is suggested to design and implement various activities each month (either online or in presence, depending on the availability of Mentors and Mentees). Challenges from previous projects, such as maintaining participation engagement while respecting voluntary involvement and balancing quality with numerical targets, inform the flexible and mentee-centered design.

Means of Verification: Pseudonymized attendance lists, activity logs

Proposed Activities

A list of activities has been prepared willing to function as effective practices that can be adapted and applied within each local context. A table can be found below.

PARTICIPATORY WORKSHOP

Description	The Participatory Workshop represents a fundamental moment of sharing and collaboration between mentor and mentee, an opportunity to explore the territory together through the creation of a collective map that identifies the welcoming services and spaces available in the community. During the activity, each mentor-mentee works on a specific section of the map, pooling knowledge, personal experiences, and subjective impressions. This process not only helps outline a concrete picture of local resources but also fosters an intimate and meaningful exchange about each person's urban experience, strengthening the bond between the buddies.
Main objectives	Increase awareness regarding available services in the area, providing practical information and encouraging active knowledge of resources.

	Stimulate personal exchange between mentor and mentee, creating an environment where sharing experiences and individual perceptions becomes an integral part of the mentoring process.
Target participants	The activity is aimed at mixed groups composed of 8 to 12 people, organized in mentor-mentee. Each person maintains autonomy over the portion of the map assigned, thus promoting a dual dynamic: individuals work and participate in the larger group.
Duration and frequency	The workshop lasts about two hours and is organized monthly to ensure continuity and the possibility of constantly updating the map based on new experiences and reports.
Materials and environment	The activity takes place in a welcoming and functional space, such as a coworking room or a Training Room, equipped with materials that stimulate creativity and participation: A3 maps, colored stickers, post-its, pens, and emotional legends to represent different sensations and perceptions.
Organizational notes	It is important to encourage mentors to facilitate the mentee's personal storytelling during the workshop, creating a space of active listening and respect. This aspect is essential to consolidate the trust bond and make the experience more meaningful.
Costs	The main costs concern the rental of the coworking space and the organization of small coffee breaks, designed to make the meeting more convivial and relaxed.
Monitoring and evaluation	At the end of the workshop, the completed maps and the participants' comments are collected to evaluate the level of participation, the quality of exchanges, and to gather useful insights for improving future activities.
Motivation and promotion	This collaborative experience is designed to create a visual and relational connection among participants, strengthening the support network and collective awareness. The promotion of the activity takes place through a personal invitation from mentors to their mentees, encouraging a direct and motivating approach.

COMMUNITY CIRCLE

Description	The Community Circle is a safe and welcoming space dedicated exclusively to mentees, where they can share experiences, emotions, and doubts within a peer support context. This sharing moment is facilitated by specially trained mentors who guide the group, maintaining a respectful and inclusive environment. Before and after the group meeting, the mentor takes care of the mentee through brief moments of individual preparation and reflection, helping them process emotions or thoughts that arose during the circle. This personal support encourages deeper processing and continuous assistance, strengthening the one-to-one relationship.
Main objectives	Reduce feelings of isolation by creating a space where mentees feel heard and understood, recognizing they are not alone in their experiences. Promote empowerment and emotional communication by encouraging the authentic expression of feelings and constructive peer dialogue.
Target participants	The activity involves small groups of mentees, consisting of 6 to 8 people, to ensure a climate of trust and active participation. Mentors are present to offer individual support and, if requested by the mentee, can also take part directly in the circle to further facilitate the dialogue.
Duration and frequency	The Community Circle is held monthly and lasts about two hours, sufficient time to allow each participant to share and listen calmly.
Materials and environment	The meeting takes place in a protected and quiet space where participants can feel comfortable. To make the atmosphere cosier and stimulate focus, simple but functional materials are used: cushions to sit comfortably, a timer to manage speaking times, and a shared journal to note reflections, emotions, and insights emerging during the circle.
Organizational notes	Mentor participation in the circle is optional and occurs only if explicitly requested by the mentee, respecting each participant's willingness and comfort.
Costs	The associated costs are modest and mainly involve organizing small coffee breaks to create informal social moments before or after the meeting.

Monitoring and evaluation	To assess the effectiveness of the activity, an anonymous journal is used where participants can freely express their impressions, along with a brief reflection questionnaire completed by the mentor-mentee at the end of the circle.
Motivation and promotion	This activity arises from the need to create continuity and synergy between the group's collective dimension and the more intimate personal relationship between mentor and mentee, thereby strengthening the support network. Promotion of the initiative takes place through individual invitations from mentors to their mentees, encouraging conscious and motivated participation.

WALK AND TALK

Description	The Walk and Talk is a personalized experience that directly involves the mentor-mentee through a guided visit to their neighborhood. During this walk, the mentor accompanies the mentee to discover useful and meaningful places such as public offices, libraries, places of worship, and social spaces, offering a concrete opportunity to explore the territory in a direct and informal way. As it is mentioned in many practices, "learning local language" as one of the main expected results of the local implementations, this activity could represent a great chance to learn the local language in a rather practical and impactful way. This activity aims to foster greater familiarity with the surrounding environment, providing the mentee with practical tools to navigate and access available resources, while also promoting spontaneous and relaxed dialogue that strengthens the trust relationship between participants.
Main objectives	Increase the mentee's knowledge and familiarity with the neighborhood and the services available, making the orientation experience more concrete and accessible. Encourage informal and relational dialogue in a less structured context compared to traditional meetings, allowing for more spontaneous and authentic interactions.
Target participants	This activity is designed to be carried out exclusively in mentor-mentee pairs or, in special cases, in small groups of up to three people, to maintain an intimate atmosphere and personalized attention.

Duration and frequency	The walk lasts approximately two hours and can be organized monthly or with a more flexible frequency, depending on the needs and availability of the pairs.
Materials and environment	To support the activity, simple and practical materials are used, such as neighborhood maps, checklists of points of interest, and digital orientation apps, helping mentees and mentors move confidently and consciously.
Organizational notes	This experience is characterized by strong relational value and an informal atmosphere, elements that contribute to creating a situated learning space where the mentee feels welcomed and free to express themselves without fear or judgment.
Costs	The associated costs are very low, possibly limited to printing maps or paper materials, making this proposal easily feasible even with limited resources.
Monitoring and evaluation	At the end of the walk, the mentee is invited to complete a reflective journal noting impressions, discoveries, and feelings experienced, while the mentor keeps a log of the route and elements that emerged during the experience, to facilitate precise and constructive monitoring.
Motivation and promotion	The Walk and Talk is conceived as a moment of situated learning that values direct experience and contact with the territory, offering a non-judgmental dialogue space and trust-building opportunity. Promotion of this activity can also take place through social networks, spreading images and stories that highlight its relational and participatory dimension.

“How to” simulations

Description	The “How-To” simulations represent a practical and focused moment within the mentoring process, designed to support mentees in acquiring concrete skills necessary for accessing services. During these sessions, the mentor proposes short, simulated exercises that replicate real-life situations, such as making a phone call to book an appointment, filling out a form, presenting oneself at a public office, or a simulation of a job interview. Many of the good practices proposed by @nclusion partners from other mentoring projects - the HRW project mentioned by CSI for example- referred to the job interview to be a main focus of some implementation
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	activities; this could be done by providing hands-on support and guidance to IP holders, employers and training providers - ranging from assistance to register on the platform to securing successful matches. One goal of these sessions could be facilitating job and training matches across the implementing country. The innovative feature of this type of activity could be sharing wide range of occupational fields and professions available in the local work sector - for example, administrative, management, and scientific roles; catering, food, and beverage; construction and engineering; craftsmen and skilled labor; housekeeping and building caretaking; IT and internet services; office support, customer service, and accounting; tourism and travel; trade, sales, and promotions. When conducted in groups, participants work separately on their own simulations while observing and supporting each other, thus creating a collective learning environment that values each participant's experience.
Main objectives	Increase the mentee's autonomy and confidence in interactions with services, providing practical tools to approach everyday situations with greater ease. Make preparation concrete and personalized, adapting each simulation to the specific needs and real demands of the mentee.
Target participants	This activity is primarily aimed at mentor-mentee but can also be conducted in small groups, provided each one works independently on their own simulation.
Duration and frequency	Simulations last between 1 and 1.5 hours and can be organized monthly or on demand, depending on the emerging needs of the mentees.
Materials and environment	To ensure an effective and realistic experience, materials such as mock forms, dialogue cards, and phones (including simulated ones) are used. The activity takes place in a quiet and private space to foster concentration and comfort.
Organizational notes	The mentor is responsible for customizing the simulation according to the specific needs of the mentee, selecting the most relevant scenarios and calibrating the difficulty to encourage progressive and confident learning.

Costs	Associated costs include space rental and organizing coffee breaks, aimed at creating a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere during the activity.
Monitoring and evaluation	The learning process is monitored through mentee self-assessments completed before and after the simulation, to measure progress, difficulties, and areas needing further development.
Motivation and promotion	This practical activity is designed to encourage experiential and direct learning, putting the mentee in a position to face daily challenges with greater confidence. Promotion can take place through social channels by sharing stories and feedback that highlight the importance of concrete preparation.

"How to" simulations

Description	The Buddy Picnic is a collective event held in a park or an accessible public space, designed to bring together all mentor-mentee in an informal and friendly atmosphere. During the picnic, participants could take part in various "relationship stations" — playful activities such as games, challenges, and quizzes — specifically designed to strengthen the bond and complicity between mentor and mentee. GFM mentioned that on weekends they organised educational trips to different Greek cities, where participants learned about Greek history and culture and engaged in group discussions afterwards. If the implementing actors manage to create such a strong bond with Mentors and Mentees, this activity could be a great achievement for the Scheme. This meeting moment not only celebrates the one-to-one relationship built during the mentoring journey but also helps create a broader sense of community among all participants, making visible and recognized the work done by each individual.
Main objectives	Build community by fostering socialization and mutual knowledge among all people involved. Make the work and commitment of each buddy visible, valuing the mentoring process as a shared and participatory experience.

Target participants	The event is open to all mentor-mentee and may also include friends and close acquaintances, thus expanding the network of relationships and support.
Duration and frequency	The Buddy Picnic lasts about three hours and is organized monthly, to create regular opportunities for meeting and strengthening bonds.
Materials and environment	The activity requires simple but essential materials to ensure comfort and active participation: picnic food, relationship games, informational info points, and graphic materials to animate the activities. The choice of an accessible public park is intended to guarantee a relaxed and inclusive environment.
Organizational notes	It is important to involve mentees in the preparation of the event, fostering a sense of belonging and responsibility, as well as making the experience even more participatory and meaningful.
Costs	Estimated costs for the organization range between 300 and 400 euros, mainly covering materials, food, and any permits for the use of public space
Monitoring and evaluation	To assess the success of the event, participation is monitored, photographs are collected as visual evidence, and a satisfaction survey is administered to participants to gather feedback and suggestions for future improvements.
Motivation and promotion	The relaxed atmosphere of the picnic aims to celebrate the one-to-one relationship, creating a moment of lightness and fun that strengthens personal bonds. Promotion of the event is done through personalized invitations sent by mentors to their mentees, encouraging a direct and motivating approach.

Buddy info desk

Description	The Buddy Info Desk is a mobile information point managed on a rotating basis by mentor-mentee, held in busy places such as markets, squares, or public events. Each person has the opportunity to actively participate by providing basic information about the program, sharing their personal experience, or distributing dedicated informational materials. This activity represents an important moment of visibility and protagonism for the buddies already involved, who
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	become spokespersons and faces of the project, reaching out to potential new mentees and strengthening their sense of belonging to the community.
Main objectives	Reach new mentees by promoting the program and creating opportunities for direct meetings and information exchange with the public. Give an active and recognized role to already formed buddies, valuing their experience and contribution as direct witnesses.
Target participants	The activity is mainly aimed at the external public interested in learning about the project, while the mentor-mentee participate in turns, ensuring widespread and shared involvement.
Duration and frequency	The desk lasts about two hours per session and is held monthly, maintaining a constant and recognizable presence in the area.
Materials and environment	To organize the Buddy Info Desk, simple but essential materials are needed: a small table, informational kits, identification badges for the buddies, and forms to collect contacts and registrations. The chosen location is always a high-traffic public space, capable of ensuring good visibility.
Organizational notes	The mentor involves the mentee even in preparatory phases, strengthening the sense of responsibility and active participation, as well as facilitating a shared growth experience.
Costs	Costs are low and mainly concern informational materials and transportation needed to set up the desk at various locations.
Monitoring and evaluation	The activity is monitored through the collection of interested contacts, via forms and brief testimonials gathered directly at the desk, useful to assess the impact and effectiveness of the presence in the area.
Motivation and promotion	This activity offers an important opportunity for visible recognition and empowerment for the buddies, highlighting the value of their active role. Also, as mentioned by GFM with their initiative with ALEF School, with their information desk, GFM staff guided

participants toward the organizations and public services best suited to their needs. In addition, they offered IT training and job counseling to foster participants' digital growth and career development, proving the initiative to be particularly effective. Promotion is a crucial part of this promotion and is carried out through social media, local events, and collaboration with local partners, to expand the network and involve more people.

Proposed involvement of profile in activities design and implementation

Profile / Role	Participatory Workshop	Community Circle	Walk and Talk	“How-To” Simulations	Buddy Picnic	Buddy Info Desk
Local Supervisors	Facilitate overall structure, ensure ethical and inclusive participation, provide materials	Ensure safe environment, advise mentors, support optional participation	Suggests local spots, ensure safety, provide logistics support	Suggests realistic scenarios and learning goals	Oversee logistics: accessibility and inclusivity	Oversee Info Desk logistics, ensure materials and public engagement
Mentors	Co-design map content with mentees, facilitate storytelling, guide peers exchanges	Facilitate circle only if requested, encourage sharing, help mentees reflect	Lead walk with mentee, introduce key locations, encourage dialogue	Adapt simulations to mentee needs, guide exercises, provide feedback	Involve mentees in planning, support Mentees in food preparation, if foreseen	Co-manage desk with mentees, guide interactions with the public, provide information
Mentees	Co-design and contribute to map, share experiences and perceptions, collaborate with mentors	Participate actively, share emotions, support peer dialogue	Explore neighborhood, identify meaningful places, practice communication	Take active role in simulations, apply skills, provide peer support	Contribution with sharing alimentary habits and food preparation, if foreseen	Co-create the space sharing their needs

– Newly Arrived Person	Contribute personal knowledge of local needs, share initial experiences, co-create small sections of map	Express emotions, reflect on personal experiences	Create a communicative environment, learn key locations, practice local language	Participate in simulations, gain confidence in service interactions	Engage socially	Learn info desk procedures, assist in support tasks
– Person exposed to systemic discrimination	Share insights about barriers, help mentor adapt exercises for inclusivity	Contribute personal perspective, support other mentees, optionally engage mentors	Navigate neighborhood with mentor, suggest adaptations to route or content	Co-test simulations, highlight accessibility issues, gradually guide peers	Participate in activities, help ensure inclusivity, co-lead group tasks	Support info desk with inclusive communication, mentor peers
– Active Person Seeking Networks	Lead portions of map creation, propose local services/safe spaces, mentor peers	Co-facilitate circle, encourage engagement	Lead walks, support less experienced mentees, introduce points of interest	Assist in simulations, mentor newer participants	Encourage social interactions	Actively manage desk, mentor newer buddies, share contacts

PHASE 5 – REFLECTION, CLOSURE, AND EVALUATION PREPARATION

Duration: 1 month

The final month of the cycle emphasizes collective reflection and preparation for evaluation. These steps will be described in D4.2 - Rainbow Buddies Scheme Evaluation Plan.

It is proposed to organize closing sessions or community gatherings to:

- Review shared experiences and outcomes;
- Gather qualitative feedback through storytelling, group dialogue, or surveys;
- Celebrate achievements and identify lessons learned;
- Explore opportunities for continued, informal peer connections beyond the project timeframe.

This phase ensures that participants' voices are central, and that insights inform both national and transnational evaluation processes. Lessons from prior projects (e.g., difficulties in consolidating learning outcomes or capturing qualitative impact) guide structured reflection practices and documentation.

Means of Verification: Qualitative feedback reports, reflection session summaries.

PHASE 6 – EVALUATION AND KNOWLEDGE CONSOLIDATION

Duration: approximately 3 months

The concluding phase transforms participant experiences and implementors' reflections into structured evaluation outputs. In the context of this project, each organization will summarize outcomes, challenges, and emerging good practices in a **National Evaluation Report (D4.6)**, contributing to a **Transnational Report (D4.7)**. These reports will provide valuable feedback for other organisations intending to put forward similar actions in their respective contexts.

Means of Verification: National Evaluation Reports, participant testimonials, pseudonymized connection lists.

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LIST OF ANNEXES

These Annexes serve as templates and shall be adapted and if necessary, translated to each local context's needs.

ANNEX 1 – Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) , Code of ethics for Mentors and Participation form

The following document (to be signed by Mentors) contains:

The Memorandum of Understanding and Code of Ethics for Mentors of the Rainbow Buddy Schemes under the project: @nclusion - Fostering inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants at local level (num. 101141076), co-financing by the European Union.

The Participation Form to formalize the involvement in the Mentoring programme

Being a mentor under the Rainbow Buddy Scheme

You are invited to take part as a Mentor in the Rainbow Buddies Programme, a peer mentoring initiative designed to support LGBTQI+ migrant people and SOGIESC refugees. The project brings together partners across **Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain** to develop local strategies, strengthen community networks, and improve access to information and services in order to favour inclusion processes. A Mentor in the Rainbow Buddies Scheme is a person who lives in the local context, is sensitive to LGBTQIA+ identities, migration pathways, and intersecting vulnerabilities and can offer social and practical support.

Expected engagement

Mentors are expected to take part in initial training sessions, meet regularly with the Mentee(s) to support the access to local services and resources and finally to provide an evaluation of the mentoring programme. The hours of engagement and types of activities are to be co-designed between Mentors and Mentees.

Duration

The duration of the Mentoring programme is 6 months, following Mentors' Training and activities implementation

Code of Ethics

All activities within the Rainbow Buddies Scheme are guided by the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and fully comply with relevant

international, EU, and national legislation. The project upholds the highest ethical standards in line with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, ensuring:

Reliability in methods, design, and implementation.

Honesty in communication and reporting.

Respect for all participants, communities, and environments.

Accountability throughout the entire lifecycle of the activity.

4.1. Participation Principles

Participation in both research and mentoring is entirely voluntary, based on informed consent, and carried out with full respect for human dignity, privacy, and safety. Participants may withdraw at any time without consequence.

All data collected is handled confidentially and anonymously, in line with GDPR (EU 2016/679) and EU Directive 2002/58/EC on electronic communications. Personal and sensitive data is only collected where necessary and never shared without explicit consent.

4.2. Ethical Mentoring Practice

Mentors play a central role in fostering safe, respectful, and empowering relationships. To this end, each mentor signs a Code of Ethics, which affirms the following principles:

Confidentiality: Personal information shared by mentees must remain strictly confidential.

Non-judgment: Mentors must avoid discrimination, moralizing, or imposing personal beliefs.

Do No Harm and Survivor-Centered Approach: All activities prioritize the safety, autonomy, and well-being of the mentee, avoiding any form of harm or retraumatization.

Respect for Autonomy: Mentors support, but do not take over, the mentee's decision-making. They do not act as counselors, social workers, or legal advisors.

Balanced Relationships: Although roles differ, the relationship is built on mutual respect and recognition of the mentee's agency and lived experience.

Duty to Report: In cases of suspected violence, exploitation, or serious distress, mentors are required to report to the coordination team through confidential channels.

Empowerment Focus: Activities should enhance confidence, self-determination, rights awareness, and social inclusion.

4.3. Monitoring and Ethical Oversight

A confidential reporting system and direct contact with designated support staff ensure that any issues can be raised and resolved swiftly and safely. Incompatibilities between mentor-mentee are managed through a transparent reassignment process.

With the present I declare

to have read and understood what my role as a mentor for the Rainbow Buddy Scheme entails

to participate as a mentor under the Rainbow Buddy Scheme

to abide by the Code of Conduct during my activity as a mentor for the Rainbow Buddy Scheme

Voluntary Participation:

Participation to the Programme is free of charge and on a voluntary basis. You are free to withdraw at any time.

Consent Statement:

I understand and consent to participate in the Rainbow Buddies Programme from _____ to _____.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

ANNEX 2 - Participation Declaration and Informed Consent for Mentees

Dear Participant,

You are invited to take part in the Rainbow Buddies Programme, a peer mentoring initiative designed to support LGBTQI+ migrant people and refugees. The project brings together partners across **Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, and Spain** to develop local strategies, strengthen community networks, and improve access to information and services.

The Programme has been developed under the project @nclusion - Fostering inclusion of LGBTQI+ migrants at local level, num. 101141076 and co-financed by the European Union.

Purpose of the Programme:

To provide emotional and practical support through a structured mentoring relationship.

Activities foreseen:

The activities will be co-designed by Mentees together with Mentors to provide mutual emotional and practical support – the focus will be the access to local services and practicing one or multiple languages.

Your Participation Involves:

Regular meetings with a mentor

Joint activities

Optional feedback and evaluation

Confidentiality:

Your identity will be protected through pseudonymization. All data collected will be anonymized and used only for evaluation and improvement of the programme.

Voluntary Participation:

Participation to the Programme is free of charge and on a voluntary basis. You can withdraw at any time without any consequences.

Contact:

For any questions, contact _____

Consent Statement: I have read and understood this form. I voluntarily agree to participate.

Initials: _____

Date: _____

ANNEX 3 - Capacity building for Mentors - Agenda Proposal

Training Objectives

By the end of the workshop, participants should be able to:

- Fully understand the role and boundaries of a mentor within the context of LGBTQI+ migrant integration.
- Recognize and apply key relational skills (active listening, empathetic communication, respecting boundaries).
- Become familiar with relevant local services for mentees.
- Reflect on their own lived experience and motivation in relation to the mentor role.
- Build a supportive peer network among mentors.
- Assess their own availability and suitability before committing to the role.

Proposed Training Agenda

Time	Activity
9:30 – 10:00	Welcome and Introduction The workshop opens with a welcome to all participants, followed by personal introductions. The objectives of the training are presented together with a shared discussion on expectations, the values of the programme, and the importance of trust and safety within mentoring relationships.
10:00 – 11:00	Being a Rainbow Buddies Mentor: Role, peer relationships, and confidentiality This session introduces the role of the Rainbow Buddies mentor and explains why the programme is based on peer relationships rather than traditional mentoring models. Particular attention is given to ethical principles and responsibilities, with a strong focus on confidentiality as a core commitment throughout the entire programme. Mentors are asked to reflect on the importance of not sharing or disclosing any personal information, stories, or experiences shared by mentees, except in clearly defined situations related to safeguarding. Boundaries and accountability are discussed as essential elements for building trust and ensuring a safe mentoring space.

11:00 – 11:15	Break
11:15 – 12:30	Working with LGBTQI+ migrant people - intersectionalities This session explores the lived experiences and vulnerabilities of LGBTQI+ migrants, highlighting the impact of discrimination, legal precarity, and social marginalization. Participants are invited to reflect on stereotypes and assumptions and how these can influence mentoring relationships. The session continues with practical exercises focused on empathy and active listening, allowing participants to practice presence, non-judgment, and respectful communication in pairs and small groups.
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch break
13:30 – 15:00	Supporting practices through Mentoring and Service mapping This session focuses on practical mentoring situations and common requests that may arise, with attention to managing boundaries and avoiding the “saviour syndrome”. A central part of the session is dedicated to supporting mentees in identifying, understanding, and mapping local services related to healthcare, legal support, social services, housing, and LGBTQI+ community resources. Rather than providing solutions, mentors reflect on how to accompany mentees in building their own personalised service map, strengthening autonomy, informed decision-making, and access to rights within the local context.
15:00 – 15:15	Break
15:15 – 16:30	Confidentiality in Practice, Emotional Management, and Reflection Through role-play and group discussion, participants work on concrete situations related to confidentiality, including how to respond to questions from third parties, how to manage information shared within the mentoring relationship, and how to protect the privacy and safety of mentees. The session also addresses emotional management, helping mentors recognise their own limits and emotional responses. Time is dedicated to individual and group reflection on personal motivation and on how participants feel in the role of a mentor, as well as to an

	overview of ongoing support tools such as supervision, support spaces, and peer networks.
16:30 – 17:00	Feedback and Closing The workshop concludes with the completion of a feedback questionnaire and a moment of group sharing. Final remarks are offered, followed by the closing of the day and the distribution of certificates for those who choose to continue in the programme.

Documents and Materials suggested for the Training:

1. Training Methodology
 - a. Participatory and experiential approach
 - b. Small group activities and plenary discussions
 - c. Case studies / role-play scenarios
 - d. Role-play, simulations, and individual reflection
 - e. Peer learning and shared experiences
 - f. Non-directive yet structured facilitation style
2. Workshop agenda/programme (printed and/or digital versions)
3. Presentations (PowerPoint or PDF) covering:
 - a) The mentor role
 - b) LGBTQI+ migrants and their experiences
 - c) Local service mapping
 - d) Core relational skills
 - e)
4. Feedback questionnaires (daily or final)
5. Evaluation report (compiled after the training)
6. Mentor mini-kit (optional): important contacts, service map, guiding principles