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NEWSLETTER

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Dear Reader,

With the second newsletter of the METIKOS-Project “**Informal Language Learning for Immigrants**”, organized by nine Partner organizations from 6 EU-countries, we want first of all to inform you about the practical part of the project – the training. The aim of the project is to adapt informal learning methodologies that already exist (language café, tandem, virtual language café) to meet the specific needs of the immigrants. After discussions and exchange of experience on methodology and the design of specific materials all partners started to practise language cafes, tandems and cyber cafes.

Please contact us for any comments and recommendations. You can also join us on our website www.metoikos.eu or on Facebook (“Metikos”).

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RETAS LANGUAGE CAFÉ AT MEETING POINT IN LEEDS (UK)

We started our language café at Meeting Point in March 2013 and we have been running it on Monday every week. Meeting Point is a charitable organization which supports refugees and asylum seekers in a friendly and sociable atmosphere. We hold our language café sessions during their drop-in service time where Meeting Point staff members and volunteers provide different services for refugees and asylum seekers such as free food, free internet access, welfare advice, a charity shop and more.





Since the early weeks, many people have been joining the cafe; some of them have attended it on a regular basis while some attend when available. Our language cafe members come from different countries and they speak different languages. Over this period of time, members of the language cafe have discussed many interesting topics and shared many useful ideas and experiences. At the end of every meeting, the members of the language café suggest something they want to discuss or talk about in the next meeting. The topics we have discussed so far have related to many aspects of the members' life. Some of the topics were social such as festivals, holidays, culture, and food while some other topics were vocational such as jobs, visiting the GP, asking for information and using public transportation.

The language cafe has been an interesting and fun-to-join project and the feedback we are getting from the participants is very supportive and positive. In addition, the impact it is making on the members' English skills, confidence level, and motivation is very clear and we hope that this will continue beyond the boundaries of this project.

LANGUAGE-CAFÉ IN MANSLE AND CIVRAY (FRANCE)

The announcement of the opening of a French language cafe in Mansle was a huge success with nearly 50 people (45 British and five French volunteers) attending on the first day at the PMU coffee bar. For reasons of planning and management, we have had to reduce the group to 20 British participants, who were selected based on their application to attend for the remaining time of the pilot.

For each session, a topic is chosen by the facilitator but taken from the favorite subjects already identified by the cafe participants, and documents to be used are sent in advance by email by the facilitator. Other documents related to French culture are also made available at each session (books, pamphlets, drawings). Ice-breaking games are used and work well. The French volunteers are randomly divided into two groups at each session, and the conversation begins in French with a French volunteer or with another British person (but speaking in French) and each session lasts a little more than one hour. At first the British regretted that there are not the same number of French and British, but now in the eighth session they do not seem to worry as much about this. In these sessions, some tandems have been formed, and some participants have now left, but the amazing thing is that new participants continue to report to the Café.





The Language Café in Civray has been operating since the 20th March & we are fast-approaching the end of this extremely successful pilot project. It is not only me who is saying that it has been a great success but also our café participants! From small beginnings in which numbers were low & the British learners of French greatly outnumbered the French learners of English, we have grown steadily to reach a maximum average number of twenty language learners!

The café takes place in a community building rather than a traditional local café & this has allowed the members to take ownership of the café & ensure its success. Discussions vary & greatly depend each week on what everyone feels like chatting about as I prepare a variety of topics & discussion points taken from resources given to me by Lisa & others which I've found myself.

Most of our learners are complete beginners & they have told me that they enjoy the fact that they can just have a go at speaking French with native French people without feeling under pressure to speak perfectly & that they enjoy sharing & learning in a comfortable, relaxed & fun environment.

The French speakers are keen to help & to guide our learners of French & equally receive the same support when having a go at speaking English.

The participants who have more confident language skills tend to group themselves together & can practice at their own more intermediate level. On the whole, most people have appreciated the opportunity to be able to meet & discuss with local, French people. The region of Poitou Charentes in which Civray is situated is extremely rural & meeting local people can prove difficult if language skills are lacking.

The final session of the pilot project will see us sharing a meal together & planning to meet again over the next five weeks as all participants have asked if the café may be extended. This has been arranged & the Civray Language Café will run for a further five weeks & will possibly restart in September if the demand is still there.

ACTIVITIES IN ATHENS (GREECE)

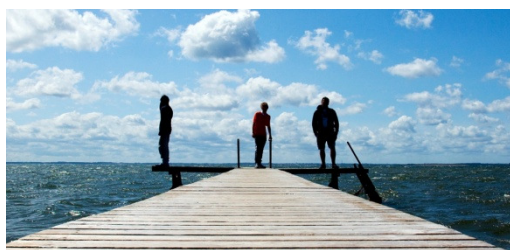


The Hellenic Culture Centre organizes 3 language cafes in two different areas of the city of Athens, which host many migrants. The 1st café is organized in the heart of the city, in the Georgian Community "Kaukasus" and is attended by 8 persons. The other 2 cafes are organized in another region of Athens, Pangrati, and are hosted kindly by the 2nd Primary School of Athens Municipality in their Arts Show Room. These 2 cafes are attended by 15 migrants from Albania, Congo, India, Bulgaria and Egypt. The facilitators in all 3 cafes have

received a very positive feedback so far and are enthusiastic about the experience! We also have a very good feedback from the Tandem sessions organized: among them our tandem couple sharing Greek and German has been very active with 10 meetings already and our Greek-Romanian-Tandem with 2 couples already having done 5 sessions each. They all say it has been a very productive and creative way to learn language which they highly appreciate! Photos from some of our activities can show the enthusiasm and the joy of learning a second language through METIKOS approach!



PARTNERS AND LEGAL INFORMATION



PARTNERS:



UETP Action Link/ Action Synergy S.A. (Greece)



Eurocultura (Italy)



Hellenic Culture Centre (Greece)



Berlin-Brandenburgische Auslandsgesellschaft e.V. (Germany)



TANDEM Fundazioa (Spain)



Refugee Education and Training Advisory Service Leeds (United Kingdom)



MORRIS Association (France)



Cultural House of Albanian Immigrants in Greece (Greece)



LLAS, University of Southampton (United Kingdom)

For further information about the METIKOS project please contact the Coordinator of the project:

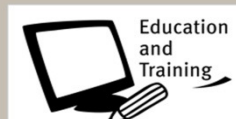
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