

WP2- D2.4- D12- 2 Study Visits

2nd Study visit in Greece

Date 10/03/2020

Annex A: Agenda

Annex B i: List of participants (morning session)

Annex B ii: List of participants (afternoon session)

Annex C: Screen shots

Main findings

The main findings of the second study visit which took place virtually via Zoom due to the Covid-19 imposed restrictions are represented below.

Topic 1: Awareness about Mobile EU Citizens- Mobile EU citizens in Greece.

The European Union consists of 27-member countries and citizens of these countries have the freedom to entry into Greece using a valid identity card or passport. They do not require an entry visa or other supporting documents, and have an unconditional right to stay in Greece for up to three (3) months. These conditions differ for citizens of third-world countries.

There was a recorded total of 160.703 mobile EU citizens in the recent five (5) years from the 2011 Census and this shows that one (1) out of every nine (9) people living in Greece is a mobile EU citizen. Evidence also indicates that there has been a consistent increase in mobile EU citizens into Greece over the last ten years. This has impacted the Greek economy and brought on social and political integration challenges.

Germans, Bulgarians and Romanians represent the majority of them, but there is a predominance of 5 citizenships. In Greece, these 5 citizenships account for 66.3% (106,543) of the total population of mobile EU citizens (160,703).

Topic 2: Transactions with Mobile EU Citizens.

The European Union consists of 27-member countries and citizens of these countries have the freedom of entry into Greece using a valid identity card or passport. They do not require an entry visa or other supporting documents, and have an unconditional right to stay in Greece for up to three (3) months. These conditions differ for citizens of third-world countries.

In case they wish to stay for a longer period than the three (3) months, they are required to make an application in the Aliens Department of the Police Authority, located in their area of residence. They will be issued with a free certificate of registration.

For the registration, and their legal residence for a period of more than three months, the citizens of the EU countries need to:

- a) be working or engaging in an independent's economic activity;
- (b) be providing sufficient support for themselves and their family members to not stress them during their stay;
- (c) being pupils and students in public or private institutions.

In contrast to nationals of third countries, citizens of the European Union may access Greece with a valid identification card or passport and no requirement for an entry visa or any similar document. They will remain in Greece for up to three months without any limitations or formalities once they arrive.

However, European citizens who plan to remain in Greece for a longer period and receive social benefits must satisfy certain conditions.

European citizens seeking to stay in Greece for longer than three months must complete an application and send it to the Foreigners Department of the Police Authority, which will grant a related certificate of registration, which is free of charge.

For registration and legal residency for more than three years, residents of the EU states must:

- (a) be working or engaging in an independent's economic activity;
- (b) be providing sufficient support for themselves and their family members to not stress them during their stay;
- (c) being pupils and students in public or private relations.

The registration is followed by submitting a photocopy of the valid identification card or passport, and depending on the purpose for which they are registered:

- (a) In the case of work or self-employment: an employer's certificate of employment or other official document proving jobs or self-employment;
- b) If it is an individual with adequate wealth: official documentation that they have sufficient resources so as not to strain the country's social security system, as well as confirmation of full health coverage,

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c) If a pupil of a public or private educational institution: evidence of registration in the educational institution, responsible declaration, or any similar way of acquiring adequate support and proof of complete health coverage.

Topic 3: Social Inclusion.

Some of the Rights of mobile EU citizens are personal liberty, right to legal proceedings, private property asylum and protection of private life and the right to apply a formal complain to the authorities.

The press and speech freedom include social accountability and solidarity, adherence to the constitution and the laws, voting rights and political participation and becoming a civil servant and jury participation.

Their Social Rights include the Right to Education, Work, Health and Environmental Protection, Housing and Social Welfare and Family and Motherhood Protection.

Topic 4: Political participation.

In Greece, mobile EU citizens have the freedom to vote and run for office in European Parliament and local elections, but not in regional elections. Voter registration, however, is not automatic in these forms of elections.

Mobile EU citizens, who have attained 18 years by 31st December of the election year, have the right to vote in Municipal elections. This is on condition that they had not been deprived on their voting rights in their countries or origin, or in Greece.

Voters need to have enrolled in special electoral lists of a municipality of the Greek state at least three (3) months prior to the elections. To register, they need to go to the municipality located in their area of residence, present a valid identity card or passport, and fill out an application, a Solemn Declaration. No other supporting document is required.

Furthermore, mobile EU citizens living in Greece must demonstrate basic knowledge of the Greek language in order to vote, and adequate knowledge of Greek to run for office. In reality, however, there is no monitoring system in place that allows the Greek government to assess the linguistic abilities of electors or candidates in European Parliament and municipal elections.

The electors must have been registered on the special electoral lists of the Greek municipality at least three months before the elections. They must go to the municipality of their residence to register in the special electoral rolls, submit a valid identification certificate (identity card or passport), and fill out the appropriate application, a Solemn Declaration, that they have voting rights in their country of nationality to exercise their right to run for municipal councilor without any other supporting documents.

Mobile EU citizens as voters have the freedom to compete only for the office of local or departmental councilor and not for any other post, such as mayor or chairperson of the municipal council.

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Local authorities should promote the involvement of citizens in political and non-political activities in-between the elections.

Local authorities should encourage mobile EU citizens to participate in the local decision-making, which directly affects their lives, such as participatory budgeting or citizens' councils.

Topic 5: Recommendations for increased participation in Public Consultation.

Mobile EU citizen's inclusion across all aspects of life in host societies is extremely important. Political engagement demonstrates their active participation in local affairs and reveals a path towards integration in host communities.

Mobile EU Citizens civic involvement would facilitate significantly the process of relocating.

Their participation in activities such as learning local languages, educating women and children about fundamental rights and taking part in cultural events, encourage voluntarism could lead to their more active participation and will safeguard their inclusion in practice.