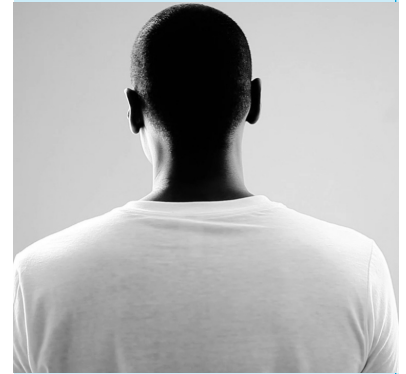




„Improving the Integration of Low-Skilled Adults Through Developing Mathematical Skills and Community Support“
No. 2017-1-LT01-KA204-035219



People's support was key in helping me settle and integrate

ABOUT ME

My name is Adama. Originally from The Gambia, I've been living in Cyprus for the past two years. Over the past two years that I've been here, I was involved in various projects for integration and volunteering work. I have also been writing short biographical stories, one of which has been published, and have participated in filming crews shooting documentaries and films in Cyprus. I have just started studies at a local college to get a high school degree which I wish to follow up with a university degree in film studies.

SUCCESSFULLY INTEGRATING INTO THE COMMUNITY

THE FIRST STEPS INTO MY NEW HOME

As soon as I arrived in Cyprus I tried to learn as much as I could about the island and its people so that I could get a 'feeling' of the place, researching online for articles, videos and any other info I could find. I was also asking the officers of the Migrant Centre I was first living at about any facts they could share with me. They also helped me start learning Greek, by teaching me the alphabet before I enrolled in regular lessons upon moving at the Hope for Children's shelter in Nicosia. Aside from the support I received from the local civil society organizations, I am very grateful to the help I was given by the rest of the members of the immigrant community in Cyprus, who advised me and guided me during my first steps in the island.

SETTLING INTO CYPRUS

I was very fortunate in not facing any formidable obstacles in integrating into the Cypriot society, something that I attribute to both the support I received by the officers and educators of the local organizations and to some extent my willingness to learn and be active. I immediately started taking lessons to learn Greek and attended numerous integration workshops, international project meetings and seminars.

Additionally, I followed up on my interest in writing and film production to express myself and find my peers, people with similar passions and interests. This has allowed me to make friends who, I feel, are always there for me; to help me, advise me and, being older than me, mentor me. I have now managed to get a scholarship at a local college which will allow me to get a high school degree that I hope that will open the door for me to study in one of the local universities, preferably film studies.

Adama from
The Gambia,
currently living
in Cyprus



FEELING AT HOME

Ever since I first came here, I have been actively participating in Erasmus+ youth exchanges and projects and various other workshops organized by the local Civil Society Organizations and other community groups. These projects and workshops allow me to both comprehend the realities of Cyprus but most importantly develop a group of friends who are supporting me in anything I need.

Moreover, I have a passion with writing and film production, and during the time that I have been here, I have worked in various video and film production but also write and publish my stories, fictional and biographical laying out my journey and experiences. Consequently, I've managed to get involved in activity and issues that I am passionate about and create a group of friends that I respect and know I can rely on. All these make me feel and consider Cyprus as my home.

In the time that I have been here, I've received a lot of support by a great number of people who have helped me settle in and played a key role in making my life better allowing me to feel comfortable in Cyprus. My wish is to continue with my studies, persist with my work and actions here so that I can be in a position to give back to the community and Cyprus.

“My wish is to continue with my studies, persist with my work and actions here so that I can be in a position to give back to the community”

ADVISING OTHERS LIKE ME

For migrants, or people who are trying to enter a new society the most important thing is to be confident and open. They should be ready to learn and understand the realities of your new community and be prepared to actively pursue being a part of it. They should not close up to themselves but instead try to learn new things, acquaint themselves with the realities of the local society and build a social circle. To do so, they should show appreciation to the people who support them and are trying to help them and to the things you are learning.

In regards to local organizations, educators and the local society as a whole, my suggestion would be to enhance the efforts to raise awareness. Unfortunately, most people do not know much about migration, and this affects the way they sometimes approach migrants or refugees. Finally, they should work towards designing and organizing workshops and events that are more ethnically mixed so that both the local community and migrants have the opportunity to interact and socialize with each other.



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