

☑ Good Practice Summary

Title of the Good Practice: **GLIA (Avilés Local Group on Immigration)**

Avilés Local Group on Immigration (GLIA) is a permanent local network responsible for the coordination of actions developed in the area regarding immigrants, paying special attention to the elements that make them more vulnerable.

With over 10-years experience since its establishment by the municipal Social Services Department, GLIA has been a plural network composed of different local agents, that either directly or cross-sectionally address assistance and intervention procedures for immigrants. It operates at a local level, in Avilés, a city located in the North of Spain (79,917 people) and an immigration rate of 3.8%.

List of organizations included in GLIA: Avilés City Council; Accem; Africanos Asociados del Principado de Asturias and AMA; APRAMP; Cáritas; CC.OO. Unión Comarcal de Avilés; Centro Municipal de Atención a Personas sin Hogar; Cruz Roja-Asamblea Comarcal de Avilés; Fundación Secretariado Gitano; Grupo Emaús; Sespa; XURTIR.

This practice is related to the thematic objective 9 “**Promoting social inclusion and combating poverty and any discrimination**” as expressed in the EU 2020 Strategy.

As a cooperation group, GLIA seeks to provide an adequate response to immigrants’ vulnerability and/or social exclusion, the latter being one of the major issues European cities are facing today. Multiple factors are related to social exclusion, unemployment being one of the most important ones, as well as education, housing and health-care. There are different circumstances that can make an individual more vulnerable, thus resulting in the emergence of more vulnerable groups among which immigrants are to be found. The economic crisis severely affected this group whose unemployment rate trebled and social exclusion rate increased to: 40.2% for EU-foreign population and 63.9% for non-EU foreigners compared to 25.5% for Spanish population. And not only do economic and unemployment affect their integration into community but social and cultural factors, too.

Social exclusion is such a complex phenomenon that a more comprehensive approach on assistance and intervention is needed. Only by working together and applying cross-sectional intervention will we be able to move towards a responsible and inclusive society.

GLIA helps strengthen social action in next areas:

- **Correct understanding/ Analysis of reality:** 3 studies “*Diagnósticos de la Inmigración en Avilés*” (survey carried out on an average of 200 people interviewed and certified by an average of 15 local organizations).
- **Social awareness:** 2 DVDs “*Avilés se hace contigo*” and “*Avilés Ciudad Acogedora. GLIA*”.
- **Reception and assistance:** Information on available resources guides translated into several languages.
- **Intercultural coexistence workshops:**
- **Intercultural education:** Professional Coordination Workshops on media and civil rights: Intercultural workshops at educational centres.
- **Social assistance and intervention:** information, educational and counselling actions on how to enter the labour market. More than 600 immigrants per year have been assisted by local Social Services and organizations belonging to GLIA.
- **Combating discrimination:** Networking projects in cooperation with other territories and/or organizations: “*Municipios sin racismo. Pueblos por la inclusión*” y “*Escuelas sin Racismo. Escuelas para la Paz y el Desarrollo*”. Active European Citizenship Programme.
- **Communication, dissemination and transferability:** (<http://aviles.es/web/ayuntamiento/observatorio>); Information sessions; Workshops; Good Practices (participation in the UN-habitat international conference on “*Immigrants’ inclusion in cities: Innovative Urban Policies*”); currently participating in the selection process within the framework of the Just & Safer Cities for All, co-financed by European Union; ours has been

identified as a Good Practice at national level (<http://www.fepsu.es/efus/proyectos/listar/>); Media; tenth anniversary of GLIA.

GLIA falls under the covenants signed by the Avilés City Council with the most important social and economic agents in the area as it also does the "*Plan Estratégico de Promoción Social de Avilés, 2016-2020*".

Replicability in other territories is one of the main strengths of GLIA. It is easy to replicate and transfer: it promotes networking at a local level; it helps create partnerships among different local agents sharing common objectives and tackling issues from a participatory approach; it improves assistance, intervention and counselling procedures; the activities carried out have a greater social impact; it can be easily integrated into local social policies; it does not require any economic effort and therefore it is sustainable in the long run.

Cooperation among different local agents is crucial when addressing major social cohesion issues in cities. Any administration can adapt GLIA's structure, regardless of its territorial context