

## What the Action is about

# “Network of cooperation between member states on interreligious dialogue and religious practices”

### *Interreligious dialogue and its significance*

The role of religion in societies is of great significance: it provides answers to metaphysical and existential questions, has a key effect on individual and collective attitudes, shapes identities, solidifies moral values and social institutions, and affects economic and cultural progress. Religious practices, ideas and doctrines constitute in other words basic elements of contemporary multicultural societies.

Intolerance is thus a form of discrimination and an obstacle to progress. In a constantly changing world, individuals become victims of unfair treatment, illegal practices and arbitrary political, religious and cultural practices. Respect towards religious beliefs and practices are often put in question. Social progress should thus make sure it takes place in a context that promotes respect, understanding and ensures the coexistence of religious beliefs and practices.

The coexistence of nations, ideologies, cultures and religions is a core element of a European Union promoting and respecting diversity, tolerance and multiculturalism. The coexistence of different religions and tolerance has constituted an important founding principle in the European integration process.

European societies have chosen to support collective efforts for a productive dialogue based on interreligious principles and common experiences aimed at the peaceful coexistence of peoples and nations.



**HELLENIC REPUBLIC**  
**MINISTRY OF INTERIOR AND**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE RECONSTRUCTION**



**EUROPEAN FUND FOR THE**  
**INTEGRATION OF THIRD COUNTRY**  
**NATIONALS**



**EUROPEAN UNION**

Action 4.1/13 «**Network of cooperation between member states on interreligious dialogue and religious practices**» is implemented under the 2013 Annual Programme of the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals and is co-financed by 95% from EU resources and 5% by National Resources.

***The action and its aims***

Action 4.1/13 “Network of cooperation between member states on interreligious dialogue and religious practices” is financed by the European Union and the Ministry of Interior in the framework of the 2013 annual programme of the European fund for the integration of third country nationals. It aims to create the necessary context for the exchange of experiences and ideas on interreligious issues and religious practices. The main tool for achieving this is the development of an e-platform for dialogue that promotes intercultural and interreligious cooperation at all levels.

The action is coordinate by the Municipality of Athens (DAEM AE) in cooperation with the Scientific Society for Social Cohesion and Development (PEKSA) and the Interorthodox Centre of the Church of Greece (DKEE). The network has a pan-European character and comprises immigrant organizations, religious organization, public entities, NGOs and individuals.

The action aims specifically at:

- promoting interreligious dialogue** as a means for the peaceful coexistence of different groups and the enhancement of social cohesion in EU member states
- exchanging best practices** in relation to tackling issues of intolerance and promoting diversity
- actively supporting an educational path** that promotes the peaceful coexistence between different religions, tolerance, mutual understanding and combats intolerance
- exchanging experiences** through the web portal on the necessity of interreligious dialogue and networking among different stakeholders (religious leaders, public officials, immigrants, intercultural mediators)
- **recording** EU member states’ policies on facilitating religious practices
- **formulating policy recommendations** on interreligious dialogue and tolerance in Greece



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## Actions

The following actions are foreseen

- **Development of an interreligious dialogue network**

Participating organizations will seek the active involvement of all interested parties, especially of those engaged in the public dialogue on religious topics such as public entities, NGOs, intercultural mediators, social support networks, immigrant associations and individuals. This will be achieved through networking activities in Greece and 9 European countries. The network formed will thus form the basis for developing further interreligious dialogue, while the exchange of ideas will contribute in the creation of an environment of trust for individuals from different ethnical, social, economic and religious backgrounds.

- **E-portal**

- The e-portal is the basic tool for the promotion of interreligious dialogue. It is the tool through which it will be possible to exchange individual and collective experiences, opinions and ideas. The e-portal is an internet application with many uses. It is called a dialogue portal as it provides access to the dialogue that takes place. Participation is cost-free and gives the opportunity for the exchange of experiences in related matters either from his/ her country of origin, country of current residence (host country). The portal is trilingual (Greek, English, French) and provides translation in 10 languages.

- **Conference**

The dialogue will culminate in the organization of a conference where Greek and foreign representatives of religious organizations, immigrants, politicians and other stakeholders will have the opportunity to engage further in the exchange of experiences and ideas.



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- **Best practices**

Best practices highlighted during the networking activities, the operation of the e-platform, the conference will be recorded, evaluated and will be subsequently presented in a working paper that will be disseminated to public entities, immigrant, religious and scientific organizations.

- **Policy recommendations**

The synthesis report will highlight the key project findings, the benefits arising from interreligious dialogue and on the basis of the above will formulate appropriate policy recommendations targeted to all related stakeholders.



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