



**DIRECT**  
DIALOGUE FOR INTEGRATION:  
ENGAGING RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES



This project is carried out with  
funding by the European Union.

EU-wide seminar:

**Two-way Integration in Policy and Practice:  
The Role of Migrant Religious Communities in the EU**

9 June 2011, Thon Hotel Brussels City, Brussels, Belgium

***Draft Agenda***

8 June 2011 – arrival of international participants

19:00-21:00 Reception and informal get-together (at Thon Hotel Brussels City)

9 June 2011

9:00-9:30 Arrival of participants, refreshments

**9:30 Opening of the seminar and welcoming remarks**

*Bernd Hemingway, Regional Representative, IOM Brussels*

**9:45 Keynote: The role of Religion in Migration and Integration**

*Professor Kim Knott, University of Leeds*

Questions from the audience

**10:45** coffee break

**11:00 DIRECT project presentation and research results**

*Tobias van Treeck (IOM Helsinki), Agita Misane (University of Latvia)*

**11:45 DIRECT policy recommendations**

*DIRECT project partners: Christine Maurer (BAMF), Stephan Henau (Kom-Pas Gent)*

**12:30-13:45** Lunch break

**13:45 Integration, Religious Diversity and Social Cohesion in the EU**

*Giulia Amaducci, Policy Officer, European Commission, Policy Unit for Immigration and Integration*

**14:15 Panel discussion – Reflections on project recommendations: How to better accommodate religious communities in integration work?**

Chair: *Bernd Hemingway, Regional Representative, IOM Brussels*

Panellists:

- *Giulia Amaducci, Policy Officer, European Commission, Policy Unit for Immigration and Integration*
- *President / Vice President of the European Parliament's Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (tbc)*
- *Charles Braddick-Southgate, Senior Policy Officer (Social Cohesion), Camden Council, London, UK*
- *Doris Peschke, Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe*
- *Şerafettin Pektaş, Intercultural Dialogue Platform (a Muslim-inspired organisation), DIRECT project participant*
- *Mariel Pilois (Seventh-day Adventist Church in Finland), DIRECT project participant*

Comments and questions from the audience

**16:00 Reflections and Closing of the seminar**

*Tobias van Treeck (IOM Helsinki)*

16:30- departure of international participants



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▪ **Background**

Involvement in religious communities is important for many, especially newly-arrived, migrants. They may try to maintain their identities and build up unity, as well as to seek practical support, guidance, and help for everyday life through religious communities. Religious communities and their leaders are in a key position for reaching out to many migrants and can play an important role in the integration of their communities' members into new societies. However, representatives of migrant religious communities in the EU have not received adequate attention as potential integration agents. The European Commission-funded project 'Dialogue for Integration: Engaging Religious Communities' (DIRECT) is built on the assumption that the role of religious communities' representatives in integration could be better utilized to complement existing forms of integration practices in the European Union.

During 2010-2011, the DIRECT project has explored the role and potential of migrant religious communities in integration processes through two major activities. Firstly, research was conducted on the role ascribed to religion in all EU Members States' integration policies, as well as by conducting a survey and focus interviews among migrant religious communities in six DIRECT partner countries: Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Lithuania, and Spain. Secondly, discussion fora were organized in DIRECT partner countries, bringing together representatives of religious communities, relevant national and local authorities, and policy makers. The fora aimed to advance integration by promoting exchanges of ideas and knowledge, building the capacity of religious communities, supporting multi-stakeholder networking, and producing joint recommendations, among others.

▪ **Seminar purpose**

The purpose of the EU-level seminar is to advance knowledge among an EU-wide audience on the role of religion and migrant religious communities in integration processes. In addition to presenting the outcomes and findings of the DIRECT research and national discussion fora, the seminar is meant to provide background knowledge on the EU's historical and policy context at the intersection of immigration, integration, and religion. Lastly, and based on the policy recommendations prepared by the project, the seminar will serve to foster discussions on the opportunities of and conditions for affording migrant religious communities a more prominent role in integration processes throughout the EU.

▪ **Date and Venue**

The seminar will take place on **9 June 2011** in Brussels at **Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre** (Avenue du Boulevard 17, 1210 Brussels).

▪ **Agenda**

The seminar will last for one day. It is composed, among others, of a key note speech, presentations on

EU policies and the DIRECT project, as well as a panel discussion. Please refer to the attached preliminary programme for further details.

▪ **Participants / Target group**

Approximately 60 participants from EU Member States are expected to attend the seminar, including:

- Government officials responsible for migration and/or integration issues from EU member state and the European Commission
- Members of European Parliament
- Civil society representatives
- Academics
- Representatives of religious organizations and communities

▪ **Speakers**

In addition to the project's partners, expert speakers from academia as well as the European Commission will speak at the seminar, among others.

▪ **Host**

International Organization for Migration, Regional Office in Helsinki

▪ **Sponsors**

European Commission: European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals, Community Actions 2008

▪ **Cost of Participation**

Participation is free of charge.

Upon request and subject to the availability of financial resources, the DIRECT project may cover the cost of travel, accommodation and subsistence. Please indicate whether you require financial support for travel and accommodation costs when registering.

▪ **Additional information & Registration**

To obtain more information on the seminar, and to register your participation, please contact:

**IOM Helsinki**

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