



## ETHNIC INCLUSION INTERVIEW WITH AN EXPERT

### Video : Ethnic Inclusion in Cyprus interview with an expert

#### Theme Ethnic

#### Module Introduction

#### Territory Cyprus

#### Subject Interview with an expert

#### Text transcription of the video

Hello, my name is Menelaos. I'm from Cyprus, and I'm an expert in migration. I work with European-funded projects and programs, especially focused on migration and inclusion.

Q: How do you define inclusion in terms of migration?

First of all, migration is about feeling safe. It's about creating an environment where everyone—regardless of their background and their religion—feels safe. And for migrants, this extends beyond legal rights; it's about acceptance by the society, access to equal education, fair employment, and also contributing meaningfully without facing discrimination.

Q: What are the main challenges you have observed or encountered when trying to promote or achieve inclusion related to migration?

Usually, related to migration, the biggest and major challenges that people face—either as migrants or people who work with migrants—are systemic barriers. There are things you can find in institutions, like when trying to get the "yellow slip," as we call it in Cyprus, in order to remain on the island. But we also have social stigma, which is very common. And even if the government or any government decides to eliminate this, social stigma still remains—and it's up to the society to eliminate it.

Q: How do you think these challenges can be addressed or overcome?

As I said earlier, one major thing that has an impact on society is the government and the social policies that institutions can create to overcome these barriers. But we also need community engagement to raise awareness for the struggles migrants go through—not just when they first arrive in a country, but even after years of trying to get involved and be one with the society.



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And we also need representation—not only in education and the work environment, but also in parliament, for example. People who not only identify as allies to these communities but who also represent them directly.

Q: What advice would you give to a professional working in the migration sector?

My advice to someone working with migrants as a professional is to be open to learning and listening—not only from people who know more about the sector but also from migrants themselves. Try to recognize that inclusion is an ongoing process, not a checklist. So even if you think you've achieved inclusion, there's still a long way to go. Build a strong network—not only to support yourself as a professional but also to support migrants—and use your position to amplify the voices of marginalized people.

Q: What advice would you give to someone who has experienced discrimination?

First of all, know your rights. Get to know what legal rights you have in the country that welcomes you, and use those rights to your benefit. Accept help from professionals and their strong networks, because they can support you a lot. And also, try not to internalize the discrimination you receive from others. What other people believe about you says more about them than it does about you.