



## **Annual report on the activities of 'Multi Kulti Collective' association, 2013**

### **1. General objects and aims**

'Multi Kulti Collective' association, set up and incorporated in line with the laws of the Republic of Bulgaria, registered by Sofia City Court with company case № 782/2012, BULSTAT 176440569, registered office and address 67 Ivan Susanin Str., apt . 9, Sofia, is a legal charitable association for carrying out activities for the public benefit.

The main objectives of the Association are to: a) support the integration (social, cultural, etc.) of EU citizens and third country nationals, refugees and ethnic minorities in the Republic of Bulgaria; b) raise public awareness of foreign cultures and ethnic minorities in the Republic of Bulgaria; c) enhance social susceptibility with the aim of overcoming discrimination and xenophobia in the Republic of Bulgaria; d) promote respect for fundamental human rights of all foreigners and ethnic minorities in the Republic of Bulgaria; e) exchange good integration practices at international and national level.

### **2. Governing bodies**

The Association's collective governing body is the General Assembly and its management body is the Management Board. The Management Board consists of 3 persons as follows: Zvezda Dimitrova Vankova (Chair), Bistra Petrova Ivanova (Vice-Chair) and Casey Dennis Angelova.

The Association can be represented by the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Management Board, either separately or together.

### **3. Activities**

3.1. '**Multi Kulti Kitchen**'– through its longest standing initiative, the thematic events, the Association presents foreign cuisines and cultures, each hosted by people from the respective country. The purpose of these events is two-fold: on one hand, to support foreigners' integration in Bulgaria by giving them the opportunity to present their country through the medium of cooking and arts; on the other hand, to raise awareness about migrants amongst Bulgarians and to develop a welcoming society which is positive towards these new minorities.

Usually, 'Multi Kulti Kitchen' events are organised by volunteers and their cost is covered by donations from the participants. However, sometimes these are organised for special

occasions or at the request of other organisations who cover the cost and/or make a donation to the Association.

The 'Multi Kulti Kitchen' initiative is acknowledged as an example of good practice by the European Commission Website on Integration.

During 2013, the following 'Multi Kulti Kitchen' events were held in Sofia:

**3.1.1. 'Multi Kulti Kitchen' within TEDxBG** – the Association organised an event for 50 participants in the "Tea House" in Sofia as part of the largest TEDx conference in Bulgaria on 12 January 2013. The event introduced them to information about asylum seekers and refugees, encouraged them to relate to the experience of seeking asylum through role play, introduced them to refugees and their stories through the "Council of Refugee Women in Bulgaria", and gave them the opportunity to taste different dishes from the Middle East and North Africa.

**3.1.2. 'Multi Kulti Kitchen': Middle East within "Menard Film Fest"** – the Association presented Middle Eastern cuisine and culture to 80 participants as part of the festival of Middle Eastern and North African cinema "Menard Film Fest" on 3 February 2013, in DADA Cultural Bar, followed by a screening of short films from the region.

**3.1.3. 'Multi Kulti Kitchen': Middle East, for Open Society Institute – Sofia** – the Association presented the culture and cuisine of the Middle East at a special event on 15 February 2013 in Sofia. The event was by request of the Roma programme of Open Society Institute – Sofia, to mark the completion of training for 20 Roma medics.

**3.1.4. 'Multi Kulti Kitchen': Peru** – the Association organised a thematic event for 50 participants, dedicated to the culture and cuisine of Peru, on 10 March 2013 at the Peruvian restaurant 'Lomo' in Sofia.

**3.1.5. Multi Kulti dinner for the British Council**- the Association organised a multi-cultural dinner at betahaus in Sofia on 13 March 2013, with European and Middle Eastern hosts, for 120 pupils from 6 countries participating in the project 'Connecting Classrooms' of the British Council.

**3.1.6. 'Multi Kulti Kitchen': Vietnam**- the Association organised a Vietnam-themed cultural and culinary event for 70 participants on 14 April 2013 at 'Photosynthesis' in Sofia.

**3.1.7. 'Multi Kulti Kitchen': Middle East for 'Social Sofia'** – the Association organised a special invitation-only event at 'Tea House' in Sofia for 40 members of the social club 'Social Sofia', presenting the culture and cuisine of countries in the Middle East.

**3.2. Free Sofia walking tours for refugees and asylum seekers** – the first free walking tour of Sofia for refugees and asylum seekers, in Arabic, took place on 26 January 2013 in partnership with 'Association 365' (then Association 'Free Sofia Tour') and the State Agency for Refugees. The tours aim to introduce the history and architecture of Sofia to refugees and asylum seekers in their own languages – Arabic and French – and therefore to support their cultural orientation and integration. Several pilot free tours took place in the winter and spring of 2013, attracting around 40 participants.

**3.3. Culinary courses taught by refugees and migrants** – the Association held its first culinary course, taught by refugees and migrants, on 27 February 2013, in partnership with Culinary School 'Amuse Bouche'. It was dedicated to Dominican cuisine and taught by

Johanna Alcantara. The culinary courses are aimed at food lovers and give Bulgarians an opportunity to experience authentic foreign cuisine and learn more about the respective country of origin. Additionally, the courses support migrants' integration too, because they give them the opportunity to talk about their country, history and culture, in addition to authentic cooking.

**3.4. Forum theatre for refugee and asylum-seeking women** – taking inspiration by the Theatre of the Oppressed, the Association started a Forum Theatre Group in the spring of 2013, in partnership with the Council of Refugee Women. This form of theatre is used across the world for social and political activism, conflict resolution, community building and therapy. The main aim is to analyse, rather than to seek answers; to act, rather than to just talk. Through Theatre of the Oppressed, women often reach solutions which empower them to overcome their challenges. The Association uses theatre as a laboratory to explore alternatives to social constructs of gender and other power imbalances. The Group met over the course of 1–2 months, as the participating women got their asylum applications refused, or travelled abroad.

**3.5. Monitoring of the National Programme for Integration of Refugees in Bulgaria** – the monitoring is on behalf of the Bulgarian Council for Refugees and Migrants, and is funded by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Chair of the Association, Zvezda Vankova, is the author of the monitoring report, which is based on group and one-to-one interviews with refugees, people with humanitarian protection and professionals. Zvezda and the Association's team carried out the interviews between June and November 2013, and analysed the implementation of the National Programme for Integration of Refugees in Bulgaria in 2013. The monitoring report's recommendations, based on the challenges and good practices identified, was presented on 2 December 2013 at a round table event in Sofia for 40 experts and stakeholders.

**3.6. Project "Share the delicious multicultural Sofia"** – the Association created "Multi Kulti Map" of Sofia featuring 26 sites – authentic foreign and Bulgarian restaurants, shops, bakeries, pastry shops. The profile of each site contains general information, photos, interview with the owner/chef and their portrait painted by partners "Compote Collective". The Map was created between September and November 2013, and launched on 30 November 2013 in "Vivacom Art Hall" in Sofia in front of over 150 people, alongside an exhibition of the portraits and food samples from over 10 countries. The map has both a web-based and a paper version (20 000 copies) and it is distributed for free. On the one hand, it increases the visibility of migrants and refugees in Sofia and highlights the cultural and culinary variety the city, and on the other, it contributes to their economic and cultural integration. The project is co-financed by "Giving Circle" of Foundation "Workshop for Civic Initiatives" and Sofia Municipality. It is being delivered in support of Sofia and the South-Western region bid for European Capital of Culture – 2019.

**3.7. National Coordinator of the European Website for Integration (EWSI)** – in October 2013 the Association was selected to be the national coordinator of the European Commission's Website for Integration. The role of the national coordinator involves the collection, analysis and dissemination of information about the integration of migrants and

refugees in Bulgaria, including reports, events, funding opportunities, examples of good practice, etc.

**3.8. Other initiatives** that are worth mentioning, include:

**3.8.1. Organising a meeting between 20 children from Bulgaria and England** at the State Agency for Refugees, where they performed a musical programme of refugee children on 30 March 2013. The Association supported the British Council to deliver one of their international projects.

**3.8.2. Participating in the festival “East in the Park”** on 7 September 2013 and presenting Middle and Far Eastern cuisines represented by Iraq and Vietnam.

**3.8.3. Catering for a meeting with Doris Pack** – the Association organised for Middle Eastern catering, at the request of “Association for the Development of Sofia”, on the occasion of the visit of Doris Pack in Bulgaria.

**3.8.4. Организиране на посещение за 40 деца бежанци в Британски съвет** за един културно-образователен следобед. Екипът на Британски съвет организира няколко образователни игри с децата на английски и български език. Посещението стана възможно чрез партньорството на „Си Ви Ес – България“ и техните доброволци.

#### **4. Nominations and Awards**

“Multi Kulti Kitchen” initiative was nominated for “Project of the Year” of Foundation “Tulip”.

#### **5. Media Coverage**

The work of the Association was covered by over 30 national and regional media, including Bulgarian National Television Channels 1 and 2, bTV, NOVA TV, TV7, radio stations “Horizon” and “Hristo Botev”, Radio Sofia, Radio Binar, Darik Radio, BBC Goodfood, Bacchus, Menu, Capital Light, Tema, Dnevnik, SofiaLive, Programata, Slovesa, Girls of the City, and others.

#### **6. Membership**

The Association accepted three new members in 2013 and comprises 14 members by the end of the year.

**7. Financial return** – according to the annual financial report of the Association for 2013.

*This report was prepared by the Management Board of the Association and it is a part of the agenda of the Annual General Meeting of the Association, convened on 09.06.2014.*