



Wind of Renewal/ Anemos Ananeosis

Kapodistriou 4st, Athens, 10682, Greece.

Tel. +30 210 3810646, www.windofrenewal.com

Athens, 4th of January 2018

We need your support for a decent housing and social inclusion of refugees in Athens. Could you help us?

WELCOMMON, a model for hosting and social inclusion of refugees promoting coexistence and dialogue between the cultures

Dear friends

As the President of the Social Enterprise “[Wind of Renewal](#)”, I am pleased to inform you [about WELCOMMON](#), to call you to visit our web site <http://www.welcommon.gr> or/and the links with videos and ask your kind support to this model community center where we [combine decent and safe housing with social inclusion and job integration of refugees](#). **WELCOMMON** is a different, an [innovative, model community center](#) for [accommodation of refugees](#), especially those who **need long term care and protection, the most vulnerable groups of refugees**:

- people with **disabilities, serious medical** conditions, **serious psychiatric** disorders,
- victims of **torture, rape, trafficking**,
- pregnant women, families with **newborns**.

It is a structure not only **for** refugees but **with refugees** for **the benefit of the local community** as well.

We need your support and help

WELCOMMON needs you support and help, in order to be able to sustain its function long term. The current cooperation with the Development Agency of the Municipality of Athens and UNHCR is about to finish **by the end of February 2018**. But an integrated center offering both decent / safe housing and opportunities for empowerment, social inclusion and job integration of refugees is [needed](#) now more than ever.

We are different

WELCOMMON is an excellent example of [empowerment](#), [coexistence](#), [dialogue between the cultures](#) and [cooperation](#) until now between:

- **160-170 refugees** from 18 different countries/nationalities, a total of 540 since the opening of the center in October 2016, most of them very vulnerable, [people who have suffered in their own skin the violence](#),
- **160 volunteers from 4 different continents** (Europe, Africa, Asia and America) who participated in many activities for and with the refugees, gaining experiences and feelings, having the opportunity to understand better and respect the different cultures. It is also an important experience for them and an opportunity to acquire know-how (much more if they have relevant knowledge or work professionally in relevant fields).

- [32 employees](#), most of them long-term unemployed Greek citizens, some enthusiastic - but with no experience in job - youngsters, a number of migrants living in Greece for many years and 1 new comer- refugee. We make sure we have interpreters and social mediators for everyone.
- the **local authorities, the local community, educational institutions and organizations** from all over the world.

Cooperation for WELCOMMON

WELCOMMON is implemented by the social enterprise [Wind of Renewal](#) (“Anemos Ananeosis” - WoR) and until the end of February 2018, in cooperation with **Athens Development and Destination Management Agency** (ADDMA), and the **United Nations High Commission for Refugees** (UNHCR). It is funded partially (hosting and functional costs) by the European Union. **The funding of this project will stop by the end of February 2018. Therefore, we are looking for donors and partnerships in order to be able to continue this important work.**

How did we formulate the project

In order to shape our project, we cooperated with communities and organizations representing migrants and refugees in our country (Greek Migrants Forum, Greek Refugee Forum, Syrians living in Greece and others). In addition, we studied the existing (good and bad) examples of similar projects. Our plan differs from most others, because it aims in an **integrated way of reception and housing (in decent conditions) of refugees who need long term care and support, but also in supporting their social and job integration.**

Welcommon offers:

To refugees

- [Decent and safe housing, food and coverage of basic needs.](#) We also meet the nutritional needs of the guests, as accurately as possible, depending on age, health status or cultural perceptions. Guests can wash their clothes in the washing machines and tumblers that exist in the center, or use sewing machines to repair them.
- [Psychosocial support.](#) 3 social workers , 1 psychologist and 1 child-psychologist are working in the center. We support systematically and on many levels the preparation, [intercultural education](#) and social inclusion of our guests – [for us they are not only numbers and papers](#) - in cooperation with organizations and services based in Greece or in the countries of resettlement.
- [Primary medical care](#) and systematic support (medical records file, interpreting, escort) for secondary care, if necessary, with respect to the cultural and religious sensibilities of the guests, especially since the populations we host now are among the most vulnerable ones and with multiple needs. Primary medical care is provided on a daily basis by WELCOMMON's **nurse** and **midwife**, who have a close cooperation on a voluntary basis with the Spanish Red Cross and arab-speaking doctors.
- [Non-formal education](#) of children as well as adults, such as: continuous and innovative language courses (Greek, Arabic, English, German and more), painting, [music](#), photography, [theater](#), [creative activities for adults and children](#), [sports](#), [dancing](#). We help and prepare the children who have been out of school for many years to be able to attend the greek school immediately. We are very proud for our **“arabic class”** as well as for the **tutoring lessons** (language lessons and help with the lessons in school) for children that participate in the formal Greek educational system. The walls of

our building are slowly being transformed to a [“gallery” with “exhibitions” of paintings](#) done by our guests at WELCOMMON.

To local community

- **Innovative services** and new organizational models that help address social issues in a way that benefits both vulnerable social groups and society as a whole. These models could be applied to other vulnerable groups, such as long-term unemployed greeks, socially excluded people with socio-psychological difficulties and people with special needs.

- **New jobs creation** in WELCOMMON, directly for about 32 people up today, who upgrade their knowledge, experiences and skills so as to be able to respond to new demands of their profession (e.g. teachers, social workers, psychologists etc.). In fact, we offer a kind of continuous practice and vocational training through working at WELCOMMON (both for employees and for volunteers from Greece and around the world). We offer work opportunities in a complex and multicultural-multilingual environment, with refugees from 18 different countries and volunteers from many different countries, with a multitude of different skills and abilities, with different cognitive and cultural backgrounds. We seek systematic cooperation with other institutions (universities, international organizations, social organizations, municipalities, professional bodies) from Greece and abroad, while we host seminars and exchanges practices in fields such as social services, psychological support, education, accommodation of refugees and other vulnerable groups, thus strongly contributing to professionals' expertise.

- **Boosting of the local economy and** market as all the resources being spent for the operation of **WELCOMMON**, return to the greek economy and the local market

Social integration – socialization

As part of the process of social inclusion and cultural / environmental awareness of the refugees, we organize visits to museums, art venues, parks and public spaces.

Since almost every one of our guests speaks different language, we emphasize in art as it works therapeutically and can unite people. We want refugee but also local children to get familiarized with art in their daily live. We emphasise both on organized visits to museums and exhibitions, as well as on artistic activities in our own center.

3 important awards in one year

(a) WELCOMMON was honoured on June 8, 2017 with the "[Special Mention" award of the REVES Excellence Award 2017](#)", which aims to strengthen synergies between local / regional authorities and social economy actors, and to highlight the achievements of such cooperation. The evaluation committee consisted of representatives of the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Parliament, the Regional Committee and Social Economy Europe.

(b) The French Federation of Social Inclusion Enterprises invited WELCOMMON to participate in their [national Congress](#) organized in November 16-17, in Marseille, as was selected as a "[good example of social inclusion in Euro-Med area](#)".

(c) We are awarded as [one of the 3 best examples of projects for refugees contributing to the dialogue between the cultures in the Euro-med area](#) (2017 Euro-Med Dialogue Award) by the Anna

Lindh Foundation and the Fondazione Mediterraneo, Italy. The Bestowing Ceremony took place on 16 December 2017 at the Estonian Film Museum with the support of the Estonian Foreign Ministry.

What the refugees themselves and others say about the role of WELCOMMON

- Documentary "[Working With Refugee Communities in Greece](#)", by the "In place of War" (IPOW) in cooperation with Anna Lindh Foundation
- Bibiche, from Kongo, "[What you really know about the refugees](#)"
- Beshir, from Syria, "[What you really know about the refugees](#)"
- Ghassan, from Syria, "[What you really know about the refugees](#)"
- [We are more than papers](#)
- An article published by the e-newsletter «Cooperative.news»: «[Taking steps to meet the long-term needs of refugees](#)»

How you could support and help us

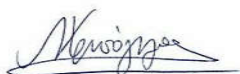
Taking into consideration the above, we would be glad to provide you with further information of our work as well as to discuss with you if you

- have some ideas how you **could help our fundraising campaign** for the WELCOMMON center or/and
- know institutions, foundations and organizations who could support our work.

We remain at your disposal

Our best wishes for the New Year

Yours sincerely,



Nikos Chrysogelos
Chairman of "Wind of Renewal"
Project manager of WELCOMMON



For donations: ΤΡΑΠΕΖΑ ΠΕΙΡΑΙΩΣ / PIRAEUS BANK
Beneficiary: ANEMOS ΚΟΙΝΟΝΙΚΙ ΣΥΝΕΤΑΙΡΙΣΤΙΚΙ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΙΣΙ;
IBAN: GR83 0172 0180 0050 1807 7868 253
Branch: ΠΛΑΤΕΙΑ ΑΤΤΙΚΗΣ
BIC: PIRBGRAA