

Description of campaign “Mi Impegno a Parma – A winning integration”

“Mi Impegno a Parma” (I am committed to Parma) is a project to promote civic engagement and a way to be “active citizens”. It was designed to boost community participation and solidarity. Citizens can enrich the community by offering their time and skills in the form of voluntary activities. In recent years, the "Mi Impegno a Parma" project has been fundamental to social inclusion activities concerning immigrants and asylum seekers in our city.

Many asylum seekers have joined the project as volunteers and today they represent the people that are most involved in initiatives that benefit the whole city. Their involvement in terms of civic engagement was fundamental to positively affect unfavorable narratives, often built and supported by the media or by political forces adverse to the phenomenon. There are many initiatives implemented and it is possible to include them in five categories: care of the city, activities with schools, initiatives carried out online with local associations, support actions in projects and services of the municipal administration, the support offered to the most vulnerable, such as young boys with disabilities. Thanks to the efforts made by asylum seekers it is possible to involve the local media and to communicate to the citizens the positive value of the migrant presence. Moreover, through voluntary activities, people from other countries have had the opportunity to learn about the area, understand social and cultural rules and build new relational networks, very important for those arriving in new territory. Stimulating mutual knowledge between native and foreign citizens is one of the priority objectives of the project, and thanks to the numerous initiatives, step by step, we are able to make our society more cohesive and integrated. Volunteering becomes the device for the construction of plural cities.

Web site:

<http://www.comune.parma.it/welfare/integrazionevincente>

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/officialparma.miimpegnoaparma/>

Youtube link:

Mi Impegno a Parma – Winning Integration (english subtitles)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N03EPFIeo9k>

Sport and Social Inclusion

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNu-mz50PoQ>

There are several sports initiatives in which asylum seekers participate. Sport becomes the framework to promote the values of integration and acceptance. Football matches were the trigger for creating friendly relations among students and young asylum seekers.

Next to me

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E9VuQPY-iEk&t=222s>

“Next to me” is a project in which asylum seekers are engaged in a summer camp dedicated to children with disabilities over the age of 14. During the voluntary service a beautiful friendship was created between Younus, a nineteen-year-old boy from Mali, and Davide, a boy from Parma of eighteen. The friendship also extended to the boy's family, which testified, through the media, how important the presence of Younus was, regarding the progress made by Davide.

Next to me...on the bus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LiDXrb0UcoA>

Guanio, Pascal, Almamy, Success and Matthew, a group of asylum seekers accompany two boys with autism to school. They attend the Hospitality Training Institute of Salsomaggiore, in the province of Parma. The school is very far from the city (it takes almost two hours to reach it) and the parents have no chance to accompany their sons. The support of asylum seekers allowed the two students to live

more autonomously and establish friendships. An important milestone for those with autism.

E...state con NOI! (Summer with us)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNzBM2P3WMA&t=13s>

When the city calls the associations answer! Migrant and Italian associations have joined forces to guarantee, to children of families living in conditions of economic and social difficulty, a summer full of games, workshops, music and lots of fun. The result was a program full of events that involved not only the children, but also their families and the inhabitants of the neighborhood. An example of how cultural complementarity always produces positive effects for the community.

Slegati Festival

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4nOo16DlqVY>

The Slegati Festival is now a tradition for the city, of which asylum seekers are some of the protagonists. This is a two-day event dedicated to games, music and shows of all kinds. Asylum seekers, thanks to the project "Mi Impegno a Parma", participate in teaching children to build musical instruments with recycled materials. A nice way to know each other and celebrate beautiful moments together.

We take care of our city!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgst-vx7a0c>

Asylum seekers, Italian citizens and local associations take care of the city, cleaning the areas most degraded by waste. A nice way to be together and transmit important values of cohesion and social responsibility.