



CIVIL SOCIETY SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT

CISOMO II: Civil Society Solidarity Movement II

PROJECT NUMBER: 101148054

EmpowerMigra Living Lab Integration Playbook

*Practical Guidance for Designing and Implementing Living
Labs for Migrant and Refugee Integration*

www.cisomo.eu

Lead Organization:
Zavod Boter



Co-funded by
the European Union



TABLE OF CONTENTS



• Introduction	03
• Understanding Living Labs	04
• The EmpowerMigra Living Lab Methodology	05
• Core Principles	07
• Planning an EmpowerMigra Living Lab	08
• ChallengFacilitating the Living Lab	10
• Practical Checklist	11
• Conclusion	12



INTRODUCTION

Migration continues to shape European societies, creating both opportunities and challenges for communities, institutions, and policymakers. Promoting the meaningful integration and empowerment of migrants and refugees requires approaches that extend beyond traditional consultation processes. It requires spaces where citizens, migrants, refugees, civil society organisations, local authorities, educational institutions, and policymakers can work together to identify challenges, exchange experiences, and co-create practical solutions.

Within the CISOMO II project, Living Labs became one of the project's most innovative methodologies. Rather than relying on one-way communication, the Living Labs promoted active participation, collaborative learning, and joint problem-solving. Participants were encouraged to contribute equally, regardless of their background or professional role, creating environments based on mutual respect, trust, and solidarity.

The EmpowerMigra Living Lab Integration Playbook has been developed to capture the methodology, experiences, and lessons learned from the Living Labs organised throughout the project. It provides practical guidance for organisations wishing to replicate this participatory approach in their own communities.

The Playbook is addressed to:

- Civil society organisations
- Municipalities
- Public authorities
- Educational institutions
- Community organisations
- Migrant associations
- Volunteers
- Policymakers

Understanding Living Labs

Living Labs are collaborative environments where stakeholders work together to co-create, test, and improve innovative solutions for real societal challenges. Unlike traditional conferences or consultation meetings, Living Labs encourage participants to actively contribute to discussions, identify problems, and jointly design practical responses.

Within the context of migrant integration, Living Labs provide opportunities for citizens, migrants, refugees, local authorities, civil society organisations, researchers, and community leaders to engage in open dialogue and develop shared solutions based on local needs.

The Living Lab methodology is based on five key characteristics:

- participation;
- co-creation;
- real-life problem solving;
- multi-stakeholder collaboration;
- continuous learning.

Rather than positioning experts as the sole providers of knowledge, Living Labs recognise that every participant contributes valuable experiences and perspectives.

The CISOMO II project adapted this methodology to strengthen solidarity, civic participation, and migrant empowerment. Each Living Lab focused on practical dialogue, stakeholder collaboration, and the co-creation of recommendations that could be transferred to other European communities.

The EmpowerMigra Living Lab Methodology

Phase One – Preparation

Successful Living Labs begin long before participants arrive.

Preparation includes:

- defining objectives;
- identifying community needs;
- selecting participants;
- mapping stakeholders;
- preparing facilitators;
- developing discussion themes;
- organising logistics.

A balanced participant profile should include:

- migrants;
- refugees;
- citizens;
- NGOs;
- municipalities;
- educators;
- youth;
- policymakers.

Phase Two – Implementation

Each Living Lab should combine information sharing with interactive participation.

Suggested structure:

Opening session

↓

Icebreaking activities



Presentation of the theme



Small group discussions



Co-creation workshops



Presentation of ideas



Reflection



Recommendations

Facilitators should encourage equal participation while ensuring that all voices are heard.

Phase Three – Follow-Up

After the event, organisers should:

- evaluate participant feedback
- prepare reports
- disseminate results
- maintain stakeholder networks
- develop follow-up initiatives
- translate recommendations into practical actions.

Core Principles

The EmpowerMigra Living Lab is built around eight principles.

Inclusion

Everyone participates equally regardless of nationality, gender, age, religion, or migration status.

Participation

Participants actively contribute rather than simply observe.

Co-Creation

Solutions are developed collectively.

Dialogue

Respectful discussion is encouraged even when opinions differ.

Empowerment

Participants gain confidence and leadership skills.

Collaboration

Public authorities, NGOs, and citizens cooperate.

Innovation

Creative solutions are encouraged.

Sustainability

Results should continue beyond the project.

Planning an EmpowerMigra Living Lab

Before organising a Living Lab, organisers should complete several planning steps.

Step 1

Identify the objective.

Examples:

- integration
- employment
- education
- advocacy
- social inclusion

Step 2

Identify stakeholders.

Possible stakeholders include:

- municipalities;
- schools;
- universities;
- NGOs;
- migrant associations;
- employers;
- volunteers;
- policymakers.

Step 3

Prepare facilitators.

Facilitators should:

- remain neutral;
- encourage discussion;
- ensure equal participation;
- manage time;
- record ideas.

Step 4

Prepare participatory activities.

Examples include:

- World Café
- Round Tables
- Case Studies
- Storytelling
- Stakeholder Mapping
- Problem Tree Analysis
- Vision Building
- Action Planning

Facilitating the Living Lab

Effective facilitation determines the success of a Living Lab.

Facilitators should:

- encourage quieter participants;
- prevent domination by a few individuals;
- respect cultural diversity;
- promote constructive dialogue;
- summarise discussions;
- guide participants toward practical recommendations.

The objective is not to reach unanimous agreement but to encourage mutual learning and collective understanding.



Practical Checklists

Before the Living Lab

- ✓ *Define objectives*
- ✓ *Map stakeholders*
- ✓ *Invite participants*
- ✓ *Prepare facilitators*
- ✓ *Develop agenda*
- ✓ *Arrange logistics*

During the Living Lab

- ✓ *Encourage participation*
- ✓ *Respect all opinions*
- ✓ *Record ideas*
- ✓ *Facilitate discussions*
- ✓ *Monitor time*
- ✓ *Collect recommendations*

After the Living Lab

- ✓ *Evaluate outcomes*
- ✓ *Disseminate results*
- ✓ *Prepare reports*
- ✓ *Maintain partnerships*
- ✓ *Develop follow-up activities*

Conclusion

The EmpowerMigra Living Lab Integration Playbook demonstrates that meaningful integration is achieved through participation, dialogue, and shared responsibility. The Living Labs implemented within the CISOMO II project showed that bringing together migrants, refugees, citizens, civil society organisations, public authorities, educators, and policymakers creates valuable opportunities for mutual learning, collaborative problem-solving, and the co-creation of practical solutions to common challenges.

By documenting the methodology, principles, and lessons learned from these experiences, this Playbook offers a practical resource that can be adapted by organisations across Europe. It encourages stakeholders to move beyond traditional consultation approaches and adopt participatory methods that empower individuals, strengthen partnerships, and promote active citizenship.

The Playbook is intended to remain a sustainable legacy of the CISOMO II project, supporting future initiatives that seek to foster solidarity, resilience, intercultural dialogue, and social inclusion. Through the continued application of the EmpowerMigra Living Lab methodology, communities can strengthen their capacity to respond to emerging challenges while ensuring that migrants and refugees are recognised as active contributors to inclusive, democratic, and resilient European societies.



**CIVIL SOCIETY
SOLIDARITY MOVEMENT**

**CISOMO II: Civil Society
Solidarity Movement II**
PROJECT NUMBER: 101148054

**EmpowerMigra Living Lab
Integration Playbook**

www.cisomo.eu



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.