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Bloody Foreigners

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'Bloody foreigners' essential to Ireland's blood transfusion service

23 April 2018

ORGANIZATION*
The Immigrant Council of Ireland, Irish Blood Transfusion Service and Forum Polonia

COUNTRY AND CITY/IES
Ireland

FIELD OF WORK
Inclusion, promoting blood donation amongst migrant communities in Ireland

THE ACTION IS ADDRESSED TO (BENEFICIARIES)
Polish blood donors - While the Organisation encourages anyone who is able to donate, this is a specific campaign focusing on the Polish community, inspired because they are the largest population group in Ireland and they have a culture of contributing to their communities through blood donation.

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY
'Bloody Foreigners' is part of the 'ACT4FreeMovement' programme in support of the free movement of EU citizens. The campaigns aim to increase the capacity of EU citizens to effectively secure access to and knowledge of their rights, as well as build public awareness and political support for mobile citizen rights, including political and civic rights. The Organisation encourages people to take part in our social media campaign where photos photos from the donation clinic using the #BloodyForeigners are shared. The purpose of the Bloody Foreigners campaign is to promote blood donation amongst migrant communities in Ireland.

There is the need to convey this message: *It's about reclaiming the term 'bloody foreigners' and creating a positive connotation between blood and foreigners. It's also challenging the notion that there's such a thing as 'purity of blood'. It doesn't matter if it's Polish, Irish, Nigerian or Romanian. If you're sick in hospital does it really matter where the blood comes from as long as it's healthy? We might have different skin colours but we're all connected through our biology.*
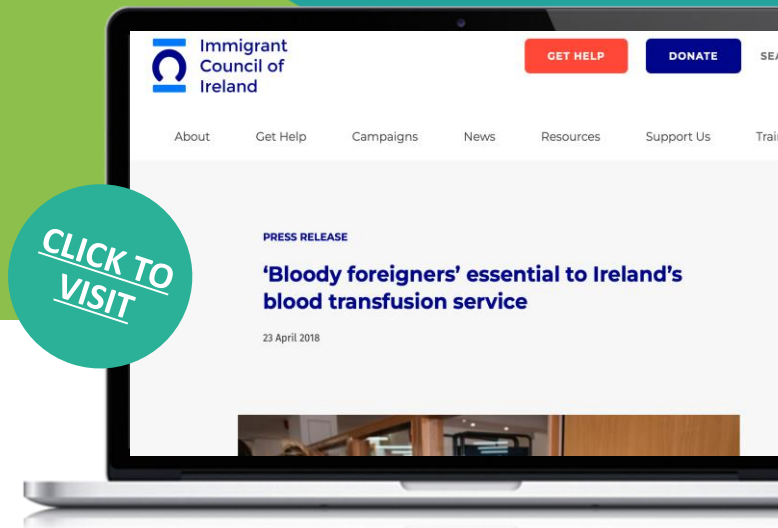
In 2018 there was a Day of Action:
- A Day of Promotion was organised on 30 July 2018, where as many Polish people as possible will be encouraged to make a blood donation or register their interest to attend the next clinic in their area.
- During the run-up, the Immigrant Council of Ireland in partnership with the Irish Blood Transfusion Service was celebrating the contributions made by the Polish community and encouraging more Polish people to come forward and donate.
- There are three Polish blood donors - two regular givers and one preparing for a first donation - available to speak with the press.

MAIN GOALS
The purpose of the Bloody Foreigners campaign is to promote blood donation amongst migrant communities in Ireland, promoting acceptance, inclusion, and diversity.

IMPACTS OF THE ACTIVITY
The campaign is expanding the notion of integration
People measure migrants' integration very often by labour market participation and fiscal contributions. However, people are much more than labour units. People have a multilayered and deep connection with this country. People's contribution can come in many different forms of community participation. The blood exchange was chosen as a mediation method. This action allows to communicate messages about equality. According to the Organisation, there is no better symbol of integration than the exchange of blood.

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COOPERATION WITH STAKEHOLDERS

The Immigrant Council of Ireland, Irish Blood Transfusion Service and Forum Polonia

SUSTAINABILITY (ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SUSTAINABILITY)

The biggest issue is to have a paid coordinator who could motivate volunteers and keep the public interest in the campaign. Apart from that there is no other heavy financial burden as blood donation is one of the most impactful community engagement activities: 1 donation can save up to 3 lives. It also does not cost any money; there is only a requirement of time.

paid staff was coordinating the project. The coordinator is a Polish migrant woman and she works as the Integration manager at the Immigrant Council of Ireland. There were also a number of volunteers (around 10) who shared their story of blood donation on the social media and the project website to encourage others to donate blood.

TRANSFERABILITY

Replicated it from the UK and it is highly replicable further.