

# SIOS

## The cooperation Group for Ethnical Associations in Sweden

SIOS was founded in 1972. The cooperation started with a few local immigrant associations and two national associations, the Italian and the Greek.

By 1981, the network had increased to a number of 10 national associations and was transformed into one organisation in 1989. The organisations rules and general guidelines were established and the cooperation was given the name “Cooperation Group for Immigrant Organisations in Sweden, SIOS.

Under the period from 1997 until 2003 the following national associations joined SIOS: the Iranian, Kurdish, the Chilean, the Eritrean, The Syriac (Aramaic), the Somalian and the Roma People.

At the Meeting of Representatives in May 2000, SIOS adopted a Program of Principles and a new set of rules. The name was changed to “The Cooperation Group for Ethnical Associations in Sweden”, although the acronym SIOS remains the same.

At the Meeting of Representatives in May 2002, SIOS adopted a new Program of Principles, which states that active work aiming at equality of opportunities (gender equality) is required for becoming a SIOS member. Furthermore the Principle of Consensus applies only when accepting new members.

SIOS is free from political and religious affiliation and consists of voluntary associations of both recognized and non-recognized ethnical minorities that want to create a multi-cultural society in collaboration with all democratic forces in Sweden.

**SIOS** has three main objectives: to work with minority issues like mother language, culture and education, to pursue a diversity policy that mainstreams the entire society and to strengthen the cooperation for the Members common interests. This work is done by raising opinion with communications, statements, education and different projects.

Today the Cooperation works through a Board of Representatives, elected by the members of the national associations with the assistance of a head office, situated in Stockholm.

At present, SIOS is constituted of 16 national associations, representing approximately 400 local associations and 90 000 members throughout Sweden.

In **SIOS** Program of Principles the Cooperation’s values, views and principal standpoints are established for the following priority areas: *language and culture, equality and diversity, development of democracy and the multi-cultural society.*

**SIOS** women’s committee pursue issues and organize activities of common interest for the Members women’s committees.

**SIOS** also cooperates with other ethnical and Swedish associations. SIOS is also involved in international network collaboration.