

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# HOW CULTURE AND THE ARTS CAN PROMOTE INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE IN THE CONTEXT OF THE MIGRATORY AND REFUGEE CRISIS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT BY WORKING GROUP OF EU MEMBER STATES' EXPERTS  
ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE

## 1 | Introduction

Under the European Union's 2015-2018 Work Plan for Culture, EU Culture Ministers agreed to create a working group of Member State experts, with the following terms of reference:

*Mandate:* In the context of the migratory and refugee crisis, explore the ways culture and the arts can help to bring individuals and peoples together, increase their participation in cultural and societal life as well as to promote intercultural dialogue and cultural diversity. Links will be established with other EU-level integration networks and databases\*.

*Instruments and working methods:* Experts will take stock of the policies and existing good practices on intercultural dialogue with a special focus on the integration of migrants and refugees in societies through the arts and culture.

(\*) Such as the [European Website on Integration](#) (EWSI).

This is a summary of the handbook produced by the group, in which 26 EU Member States participated actively (all but PL and UK), as well as Norway and Iceland, by invitation. The European Commission hosted the group's meetings, led by the Directorate General for Education & Culture, with input from DG Migration & Home Affairs. Invited guest speakers were Nora Ragab from the European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual, film director Maria Tarantino, and cultural sector representatives participating in the European Commission's Voices of Culture structured dialogue.

## 2 | Existing policies and practices

The group collated and analysed over 200 existing policies and practices relevant to the integration of refugees and migrants through the arts and culture. Forty-six are presented as case studies in the handbook. A number of these have also been uploaded to the European Website on Integration. The majority of initiatives identified were multidisciplinary (covering a range of cultural genres). Drama, visual art, music and media were also well represented.



### 3 | Prerequisites to effective intercultural dialogue

The working group identified two key prerequisites for intercultural dialogue to be effective in the context of the migratory and refugee crisis:

- a positive attitude towards integration and a willingness to engage in dialogue, among both migrant and host communities;
- acceptance of and respect for the rule of law, among both migrant and host communities, including support for fundamental human rights, and condemnation of violence and terror.

### 4 | Key themes identified by the group

**Empowerment**, which paves the path to equal opportunities and participation in social and cultural life. We must not frame migrants and refugees as collective identities, but consider all people, with or without a migratory background, as individuals, with a voice that has the right to be heard. Empowerment, as 'the process of becoming stronger and more confident, especially in controlling one's life and claiming one's right' is an essential step to increase the participation of migrants and refugees in cultural and social life.

**Intersectoral connections and partnerships.** Successful integration of migrants and refugees depends on many factors. Given these interdependencies, the role of art and culture should not be considered on their own. We therefore decided to focus on practices where the arts and culture are connected with other sectors of public action like employment, education, welfare, housing and justice.

**Evaluation.** In order to claim that art and culture help bring individuals and peoples together, we need to monitor and evaluate our efforts, share results and learn from each other's experiences. We therefore decided to focus also on *evaluation*, including an analysis of the information in our own case studies. There are many lessons in these practices that are relevant for further policy development.

### 5 | General conclusions

Migration and the right to shelter are fundamental human conditions and rights, but neglected dimensions of empowerment. Policies and activities that affirm human rights are critically important in empowering migrants and refugees.

Participatory arts practices are particularly conducive to integrating refugees and migrants. The arts and culture provide unique opportunities to bring together refugees, migrants and host populations.

Poorly managed migration, in both host and transit countries, can create challenges requiring rapid responses. To address these challenges and the root causes of migration, the EU and its Member States should adopt a more coordinated, systematic and structured approach, strengthening inter-linkages and consistency between different European policies.

## 6 | Recommendations for policy-makers (EU, national, local)

### Empowerment

1. Support and fund networking, self-organisation and active participation of refugees and migrants in the arts and culture.
2. Be sensitive to different needs, interests and abilities of individuals and groups, including those experiencing multiple forms of disadvantage/discrimination.
3. Provide spaces and opportunities for refugees and migrants to lead as well as to participate in arts and culture, including new museums and new exhibitions dedicated to migration (in line with a recent joint recommendation by UNESCO and the International Organisation for Migration).

### Intersectoral

4. Proactively connect and share information with policy-makers in other areas (including those responsible for immigration, education, employment, health and social affairs).
5. Support and fund networks (formal and informal) with publicly funded cultural organisations, civil society and other stakeholders, to contribute towards policymaking processes.
6. Consider intersectoral cooperation (e.g. with education/social/employment organisations) as a main criterion for funding cultural projects for refugees' integration.
7. Prioritise funding for cultural and artistic projects for the integration of refugees and migrants under national and EU programmes, including those outside the field of culture (e.g. at EU level under the Europe for Citizens programme, Asylum & Migration Fund, and Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme, as well as Creative Europe).

### Evaluation

8. Broaden and deepen the evaluation of publicly funded culture projects, beyond financial and quantitative aspects, to assess their societal impacts and their effectiveness in promoting intercultural dialogue.
9. Promote a flexible, realistic approach to evaluation, both quantitative and qualitative, which is not off-putting to project managers.
10. Establish a working definition of intercultural dialogue to assist project developers in formulating their objectives and make it easier to evaluate results. Be impact-orientated: specify what should be achieved, but leave flexibility on how it should be done.
11. Support and fund the development of evaluation tools for the ongoing monitoring and final evaluation of projects, including indicators relating to intercultural dialogue and performing arts.

## 7 | Recommendations for stakeholders/ cultural institutions

### Empowerment

1. Assess and improve recruitment in cultural organisations, promoting opportunities widely, to be open to people with different backgrounds, including refugees and migrants.
2. Identify suitable partners to guarantee the required contact with refugee populations.
3. Pay particular attention to issues relating to vulnerable sections of the refugee population, including security, data protection and gender sensitivity.
4. Develop more practices with host populations, including activities which bring them into contact with migrants and refugees.

## Intersectoral

5. Be interculturally aware in community outreach, and develop quality data on audiences and their specific needs/interests (at all stages of the integration process).
6. Adopt a learning attitude and a corresponding evaluation style, to help fine-tune implementation, and pay attention to the broader range of effects.
7. Participate in networks (formal and informal) with publicly funded cultural organisations, civil society and other stakeholders, to better understand all aspects of the integration process.
8. Consider intersectoral cooperation (e.g. with education/social/employment authorities, etc.) as a very effective tool for the integration of refugees and migrants.

## Evaluation

9. Take an active interest in the evaluation process and be aware of appropriate evaluation methods and tools (short and long term).
10. Adopt a flexible, realistic approach to evaluation, both quantitative and qualitative, which justifies the investments of donors/funders and explains the goals achieved by the project/initiative.
11. Involve refugees/migrants in project design and evaluation activities.
12. Participate actively in activities to develop evaluation tools, for the ongoing monitoring and final evaluation of projects.

Related recommendations, broadly endorsed by the group, were made by the culture sector in the European Commission's Voices of Culture initiative, and by city authorities in the Eurocities guidelines on the role of culture in the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (both 2016). For more information see [www.voicesofculture.eu](http://www.voicesofculture.eu) ; [www.eurocities.eu](http://www.eurocities.eu)

### Annexes to the report:

- Annex 1 – List of group members
- Annex 2 – Case studies
- Annex 3 – Full list of initiatives submitted, my main cultural genre
- Annex 4 – Voices of Culture: The role of Member States
- Annex 5 – Some facts on migration

The full report is available at:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/culture/library/index_en.htm)

Chair of the OMC Working Group:  
 Emilio Cabasino (IT) [emilio.cabasino@beniculturali.it](mailto:emilio.cabasino@beniculturali.it) / [emilio.cabasino@esteri.it](mailto:emilio.cabasino@esteri.it)

**For further information, please contact:**  
 European Commission  
 Directorate-General for Education & Culture  
 Directorate D – Culture & Creativity  
 Unit D1 – Cultural Diversity & Innovation  
 Email: [EAC-UNITE-D1@ec.europa.eu](mailto:EAC-UNITE-D1@ec.europa.eu)

© European Union, 2017