

MAX

Maximising Migrants' Contribution to Society

Diversity Dialogue Fora

How to maximise the potential of a diverse society? Challenges and opportunities in Belgium

Wednesday 2nd of December 2020

[Register here](#)

Diverse ways of thinking can inspire creativity, drive innovation and bring new insights to address things from a different, perhaps more efficient, perspective.

Max partners believe that migration makes places more diverse. It certainly can create new challenges but also important opportunities. To make such opportunities a reality, diversity needs to be properly addressed and managed at the local level, encouraged not only by community-led initiatives but actively supported by all the actors who live together in a society (public administration, private sector, schools, neighbours' associations, etc.).

In MAX we are also convinced that ensuring the integration of newcomers is critical to support prosperous local development in Europe. Many migrants and refugees tend to settle in metropolitan areas to have better access to public services, employment opportunities and social networks, as well as to contribute with their skills and diversity to local development. However, public authorities dealing with reception and integration services still struggle with managing and communicating their actions for migrants and engaging with the wider public.

With our [local DDF](#) we aim at having a joint discussion to learn how migration can benefit the socio-economic development of our European societies in general and Belgian cities in particular, which societal challenges can be tackled at local level thanks to grassroots initiatives supporting diversity and by hearing the experiences of migrants and refugees themselves to have a joint debate on how we all can cooperate to remove the still existing barriers towards a fully inclusive society making the most out of its diversity.

Agenda

2:00 – 2:10 pm Welcoming by Mr. **Hakan Aycicek, Secretary-General at European Professionals Network (EPN)** and member of the MAX project

2:10 – 2:30 **The migration landscape in Belgium: trends, challenges and opportunities**

- Presentation by **Elise Kervyn, Advocacy Officer of Caritas International: 'A common home. Migration and development in Belgium'**
- Q&A with the audience

2:30 – 3:00 **What can we learn from Belgian initiatives supporting integration: good practices presentation**

- Presentation by **Julie Bodson, Deputy Director [DUO for a JOB](#)**: why this initiative was needed, how it has succeeded and its way ahead
- Presentation by **Chloé Overlau, Co-founder and Coordinator of [SINGA Belgium](#)**: how to create a diverse community.
- Presentation **[MUSLINKED](#)**: a network for Muslims that brings talents together and draws connections within entrepreneurship, education and social profit in Belgium (tbc).
- Q&A with the audience

3:00 – 3:25 **Newcomers in Belgium:** in this panel we will have the opportunity of hearing the experiences and recommendations of different Belgian newcomers:

- Presentation by **Zeynep Ozer, Belgian newcomer with Turkish roots, graduated in Psychology in the Philippines**

- Presentation by **Metin Pehlivan, founding member of the European Centre for Populism Studies.**
- Q&A with the audience

3:25 – 3:30 Main remarks and goodbye by Mr. **Hakan Aycicek, Secretary-General at European Professionals Network (EPN)**

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