

The positive impact of migrants in the sphere of culture

A report on desk research
done by the MAX project



Disclaimer

The information, documentation and figures in this document are written by the MAX project consortium under the EU's AMIF Action Grant (AMIF-2017-AG-INTE 821672) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Commission. The European Commission is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained herein.

Acknowledgment

This document is funded under the AMIF project MAX, Grant Agreement 821672.

More info and contact

www.maxamif.eu

Professor Ola Nord

ola.nord@malmo.be

Table of contents

I.	Introduction: country reports and culture	2
II.	Country Reports in summary	4
1.	Belgium	4
2.	Czech Republic	6
3.	Estonia	9
4.	France	12
5.	Germany	14
6.	Greece	17
7.	Italy	20
8.	Netherlands	22
9.	Poland	24
10.	Spain	26
11.	Sweden	27
III.	Immigration and culture conclusions	29

I. Introduction: country reports and culture

To research and understand the cultural impact of immigration in our society is not an obvious task. In our research, we have come across this complexity from the partners' country reports that mainly stand as the basis of our analysis and concluding remarks.

Our society is constantly evolving, and global tendencies and new trends are continuously developing, including cultural developments which have a strong influence in our lives. With the advent of the digital era our planet has become "smaller" and everything in the world has started to feel much closer to our own backyard.

We have also become more aware of other countries and their cultures from our travelling, an economic sector that is not ceasing to expand. However, the picture often showed in media is that of an immigration crisis due to wars and conflicts not only in neighboring countries to the EU but much further away. The situation for many immigrants and refugees is that of despair and horrors. Obviously, these images also influence our perception to immigration since it is a picture of pain and suffering.

Politics in Europe has become more and more infected and controversial since the most recent immigration influx mainly from Syria. New forms of populism have had spinoffs in several European countries and through different forms of media (from traditional to social media) have often created a situation of "us and them", at times with negative images that people in general seem to accept. Our research and our report(s) will try to address this problem from the perspective of culture, in the attempt to highlight the positive cultural aspects of immigration to the EU.

In our research we have set out a number of key factors to look at, from language and education, to arts and media, to food and sport. In terms of culture, the focus is on how immigrants and refugees contribute to European multi-culturalism, and how they influence the development of our own cultural heritage. From a positive perspective, we also examine how they potentially contribute to breaking down negative stereotypes in society. All in all, we are looking at how immigration and its cultural impact in our society is a positive influence.

We are in this report looking at different trends in different countries. An additional aspect we considered is where third country immigrants mainly come from. If possible, how this is connected to cultural aspects and why. What are the cultural reasons for settling in a certain city, region or country? We are assuming that culture and cultural belonging is a defining reason for geographical choices of settlement being made by newly arriving migrants.

Not surprisingly one of the key elements to be considered regards cultural understanding and integration from the perspective of *language and learning*. This is a factor that has been highlighted in media in recent years. It also has a double effect on immigrants since it can both be a way of integration but can also be used as a way of exclusion: many countries have made it obligatory to learn the language to be able to stay and gain the nationality.

Arts and music are not only a means of expressing oneself, but they also unites people. This comes in all forms and shapes from happiness to trauma rehabilitation. It can make people curious to find out more about others and to better understand other cultures and people. Cultural festivals, either organized by immigrants from one

or many ethnical groups, or by the country of settlement, are a means to tie newcomers own cultural background to the hosting one.

We also look at how immigration is influencing the world of *sports* in the EU. Several heroes or new idols among the populations have an immigrant background. These athletes influence our younger population and are often described as positive influences on different generations of people. Sport and arts are also a way for immigrants to integrate and to become accepted. Many sport clubs have also been started by immigrants or a managed by immigrants

Historically, immigration has also influenced the area of cuisine and food consumption. Culture is of the linked to our food and eating habits. In Europe we are now influenced in terms of food, from our neighboring EU 27 as well as the rest of the world. Eating and food is continuously a “social meeting point”, where we can meet and socialize with less prejudice than perhaps in other social situations. This trend has been and is continuously so to impact cultural life in European countries. This without mentioning at this point its economic impact in our daily European lives.

As already mentioned, we now live in the “Internet” society. News, “fake news”, facts, opinions and views come to us faster and faster and not the least more and more. This can have a negative impact on immigrations and the view on immigrants, but it also creates an opportunity. Society, NGO’s, “media” also have access to the same tools and are able to use these tools by showcasing and spreading positive, real news and information about immigrants. We will look for these examples in the country reports and see if they can be used in a broader and more effective sense.

The picture we get today in the media, is surprisingly judgmental. The earth has never been more open, transparent and accessible to more and more people with growing prosperity, wealth, educational opportunities. And at the same time, we close in on ourselves and the issue of borders and need of protection from other people and cultures becomes more and more visible. While studying the country reports, we will explore how the physical meeting between people and different cultures is a determining factor of cultural understanding, and success in integration of immigrants. Where the actual meeting between people is a way to prevent negative prejudices and help improve understanding.

Below we start by presenting immigration and culture, country by country from our local partner’s research reports.

II. Country Reports in summary

1. Belgium

Belgium is a federal state having federated entities based on territory and language (Regions and Communities). The three regions are Brussels-Capital, Flanders and Wallonia; while the language-based Communities are Flemish, French and German-speaking communities. The Communities have their responsibilities in areas of culture, education and the use of language and matters relating to the individual, which concern for instance health policy, social welfare, integration of foreign nationals and emancipation of ethno-cultural minorities (EMN, 2018). Issues of migration and international protection most commonly fall under the competence of the federal government while the integration issues are mainly the competence of the Communities.

Belgium has a long history of migration which has played an essential role in the political and cultural development of Belgium. Large groups of third country immigrants have historically arrived from former colonies such as Congo, or countries like Turkey and Morocco. Today, some of these immigrants are part of the political establishment, improving people's view of integration and creating a better understanding concerning people from these countries.

In the last decade, the growing participation of Turkish, Moroccan and Congolese first-generation migrants and their offspring in the federal, regional and local political arenas also demonstrates the influence of immigration on the Belgian political stage. For example, a Turkish migrant, Meyrem Almaci is a leader current leader of the Flemish Green party, Zakia Khattabi, leader of the francophone Green Party. In addition, Zuhail Demir, Nahima Lanjri, Meyriame Ketir and Yasmine Kherbache are prominent members of parliament.

At the cultural level, there are several artists who contribute and influence Belgian's art and music scene. For example, the Italian-origin singer Adamo or the Rwandese-origin singer Stromae are two notable musicians. Moreover, Belgo-Congolese artists Zap Mama, Baloji, Leki, Pitcho Skinf, Senso and Damso, the Puerto Rican musician Gabriel Rios and the Egyptian Tamino, the self-styled 'serial social entrepreneur' Sihame El Kaouakibi, the choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, the theater makers Chokri Ben Chikha and Milo Rau, or the authors Thomas Gunzig, Chika Unigwe, Rachida Lamrabet, Mustafa Kör and Fikry el Azzouzi, all are influential artists in Belgium.

The historically open society in Belgium receiving immigrants and respecting their rights has surely played a significant role in some of the positive integration examples gathered in this report. Belgium has a very strong legislation protecting immigrants, the so-called Immigration Act, based on the Belgian Constitution. The Article 191 declares that "... every foreigner, who is residing on Belgian soil, must have the same protection as Belgian citizens regarding their goods and the personal integrity, apart from exclusions by the law" (ibid).

Education has a significant role for the process of integration. In Belgium minors are obliged to fulfill the compulsory education within 60 days upon arrival. Due to the not being able to speak the language of country, minors are granted a special treatment. The objective of this treatment is to ensure that they can speak Dutch or French after one year. Even though, when families are not registered at a commune, minors have the right and obliged to go to school.

Regarding the recognition of foreign degrees, Belgium has a system to adjust them with Belgian degrees. Each region has different organization for recognizing of the degrees. For example in Flanders, the Naric is an organization that recognizes degrees for people who want to work in Flanders. This procedure is costless for every category of people. For the procedures, people have to provide documents such as the degree, or the course program. As for being a university student, language level and the previous degrees are significant conditions.

Education and language are also preconditions for getting citizenship, a process which has hardened in the past decade. Citizenship for those who ask for it, is a very important cultural step towards full integration. It shows a willingness to become a full member of a new country. A change in the law in 2012 from 3 to 5 years of residence before you can apply to become a citizen is a sign of stricter times, not only in Belgium but overall in the EU. The law also demands that you can show a certain financial independency as well as possessing school diplomas and master one of the 3 official languages in Belgium.

Also, populism has grown over the past decades. The political situation in Belgium from the Flemish side in the country, is in strong support of either dividing the country between Flemish and Walloon, and or between the Flemish speaking and French speaking side. Culturally speaking, there is a big rift in the Belgian society and a federal divide that influences also the immigrant communities. The Flemish political parties NVA and FB jointly had almost 30% of the votes in Belgium in the last election and they both stand for strong immigration restriction (www.euronews.com/2019/06/20/divided-belgium).

Over the years, the *Diaspora associations* have proven to play an important role in cultural integration. In Belgium, the diaspora associations set up their own social and cultural institutions for migrants. Many of them focus on social and cultural activities such as sports, education, language and home country culture. They also provide many services to help immigrants develop their language and help with other important services in daily life.

Good examples of cultural initiatives include “*Refugees Got Talent*” initiated in 2015. Considering that Art is universal, the funders provided a meeting place for immigrants to come together and practice their art in their new country. Communities from various backgrounds come together twice a week to share their ideas and work together. It is also a way to reach out to and meet with Belgian artists and the cultural world in Belgium.

Furthermore, in the national football -*Red Devils*- team there are several players of foreign origin footballer among its top player, which confirms the ability of migrants and their children to shape the country’s cultural and social identity.

2. Czech Republic

Immigrants in the Czech Republic come mainly from the East, from Russia, Mongolia, Ukraine but also China, Korea and Vietnam. These groups come for different reasons such as work and business, studying or family reasons. For Ukrainians a special procedure is put in place when linked to skills the Czech State is in particular demand of. This is a special job and work initiative that give Ukrainians faster visa treatment.

Since its creation in 1993, the Czech Republic quite fast has become an attractive destination for migration and transit. Until 1990s there was basically no migration policy in action, and for foreigners present in the country there was no legal way to be naturalized, except of marriage with a Czech citizen. Migration policy was based on individual cases. It was developed with the accession to the European Union and necessity to have it. Since 2000 until 2008 the number of migrants doubled and reached 450.000 people. Reacting to the economic crisis in 2008, migration policy took the direction to restrict the access for foreigners to the Czech Republic. Ever since, every year there are new novels and new rules of migration policy, which make it difficult for foreigners to orient in the legislative framework.

The Ministry of Interior seeks to promote information and thus orientation of migrants both before leaving the country of origin and after their arrival in the Czech Republic. Pre-departure measures with the project named *"Next Stop the Czech Republic¹"* include information materials (brochures, video) at Czech embassies in the countries of origin and are intended primarily for foreigners from third countries who are considering long-term residence in the Czech Republic. Migrants can get basic information about Czech Republic, contacts for state institutions and non-governmental organizations, and possible risks related to dishonest intermediaries.

Upon arrival measures with the project named *"Welcome to the Czech Republic²"* include so-called adaptation integration courses, where migrants can learn about their rights and obligations in the Czech Republic, find a way to solve practical problems or prevent intercultural misunderstandings. In order to improve access to information the Ministry of Interior established *network of integration centers³* throughout the Czech Republic, where foreigners are provided legal and social services, job counselling, Czech language courses, interpreting, sociocultural courses, or community events.

Czech Republic historically has been a country of many cultures, and many nationalities have been living on its territory. Culture is an important component of Czech citizens' lives, and attendance to cultural events is rooted in their habits and traditions. The Czech State supports cultural events of foreigners and for foreigners through different calls launched by the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture or by regional governments like city councils and city districts. There are small and big funds that can support cultural activities. Small organisations and associations however have trouble to access funding and to make their voice heard as in

¹ <https://www.mvcr.cz/mvcren/article/next-stop-the-czech-republic.aspx>

² <https://www.mvcr.cz/docDetail.aspx?docid=21786075&doctype=ART>

³ <http://www.integracnicentra.cz/?lang=en>

putting up shows or music events. The city of Prague, being the capital of the Czech Republic, and also cultural capital, has more opportunities for cultural activities for foreigners and run by foreigners.

The vast majority of associations established by foreigners aim to present and support cultural exchange in the hosting society through different cultural events (concerts, festivals, exhibitions, etc.). It is possible to find various initiatives linked to specific minority immigrant groups, trying to either increase knowledge of their home countries, for reasons that often caused immigration, or increase knowledge on their cultures in the country of settlement.

Several organizations and NGOs are active in the Czech territory. The *Burma Centre Prague*⁴ is a community interest organisation established in June 2006 by the Burmese community in the Czech Republic along with Czech and international supporters of Burma. *Caucasus – East European Information Centre*⁵ is an NGO which has been publishing an independent Armenian-European magazine called ORER since 1999. *KITAP*⁶ – Tatar and Turkic Association in Prague aims at establishing and developing friendly relations between migrants and the majority society and at establishing, mediating, and in many ways promoting cooperation in the field of national cultural values, traditions, history, and cultural heritage on national as well as international levels.

Other organisations comprise *Youth Included*⁷, a youth non-governmental organization, working as a as an open-space for open-minded, curious and active youth who want to know new people and cultures, learn and share their skills, inspire and be inspired. also, the *Ukrainian Initiative*⁸ in the Czech Republic is a diaspora organization. Activities of the organization focus on the support and development of Ukrainian culture within the Czech and European community. In addition, the *Klub Hanoi*⁹ is a group of people interested in Southeast Asia and especially in Vietnam, its culture, history, traditions, and life of the Vietnamese community in the Czech Republic

A good example of cultural activity is the *House of National Minorities*¹⁰. Located in Prague, it facilitates inter-ethnic understanding and overcoming any prejudices that citizens might have regarding certain ethnic groups and nationalities. HNM unites under one roof several national minority organizations, and hosts activities and initiatives supporting multiculturalism and integration of foreigners.

Also, *Praha Srdce Narodu*¹¹ is the largest joint action of national minorities in the Czech Republic, which takes place since 1999. They organize in the city center manifestations of traditional folk art through many performances such as music, dance, costume show, exhibitions, crafts and creative workshops from Africa, Belarus, Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Mexico, Moravia, Mongolia, Poland, Gypsies, Russia, Greece, Serbia, Slovakia, Romania, Tatars, Ukraine, Vietnam, UK and Israel.

⁴ www.burma-center.org

⁵ www.orer.eu/en/

⁶ www.facebook.com/kitappraha

⁷ www.facebook.com/YouthIncluded

⁸ www.ukrajinci.cz

⁹ www.sea-l.cz

¹⁰ www.dnm-praha.eu

¹¹ <http://prahasrdcenarodu.cz/>

Other examples are the *Festival Refufest*¹², another space for people from all around the world to meet up and express solidarity with refugees and migrants thanks to music, dance, theatre and diverse experiences. Also, the *Festival Kaleidoskop*¹³ enables visitors to experience a colorful day full of flavors, scents, music and dance. One can also look forward to workshops, travel lectures, exhibitions and competitions not only for children.

¹² www.refufest.com/

¹³ www.festival-kaleidoskop.cz/#

3. Estonia

Since regaining independence Estonian immigration policy has been characterised as conservative: restrictions are established for entry and stay of immigrants, based on the volume and origin of immigrants or reason for migration. Restrictions on immigration, such as the annual immigration quota set at 0,1% and specific grounds (working, studying, family reunification) for granting residence permits were already set up in the process of Estonia regaining independence.

The biggest groups of third-country nationals coming to Estonia are Russians and Ukrainians. In recent years, there have been also new arrivals from Asia, Afghanistan, the American continent and Oceania. Russians have a special relationship with Estonia as there is already a large Russian speaking population that has immigrated to the country over the years, since the Soviet era. Russians express their reasons for moving to Estonia as legal, geographical, and cultural. Russians find the Estonian society fairly similar to the Russian and therefore easier to integrate in and to find work than other places.

Due to the large presence of Russian immigrants, Estonia faces a language issue, as in some areas Russian even becomes the predominant language bypassing Estonian. This means that other minority groups moving to those areas, will choose to learn Russian instead of Estonian as their second language, which represents an additional barrier for integration. Russian refugees feel that they cannot make optimal use of their Russian language skills in terms of social mobility; instead, they tend to “get stuck” both in terms of employment and in relation to housing, in residential areas with a majority of Russian-speakers, having fewer opportunities to learn and practice Estonian and immerse themselves in Estonian society.

Another cultural issue that further increases the cultural divide in the country between its population and its largest minority is related to the school system. Since the Soviet era, Estonian schools have been divided into Russian-medium and Estonian-medium formats, which tends to segregate the population —starting at an early age—along cultural and linguistic lines. Today, new immigrants from EU Member States usually choose to send their children to English-medium schools, even if they live among the Estonian majority population. Immigrants from countries east of Estonia tend to send their children to Russian-medium schools. Both of these choices amplify the language-based cultural divides in Estonian society.

The segregation of children into Russian- and Estonian-medium schools produces inequalities later in life; academic performance of Russian-medium pupils is lower than their Estonian counterparts, and a large share of Russian-speaking youth do not enter Estonian universities. Aside from poorer educational outcomes, the division of education by language in Estonia produces two subgroups of Estonians who do not share a common culture and are less likely to form social networks and shared values. Language-based segregation carries over into earnings potential; Russian-speakers unable to attend Estonian universities because of language barriers are likely to have lower incomes than their Estonian-speaking counterparts. Lower economic status in turn leads to residential segregation, which then exacerbates cultural and social segregation (Seney, Hess, 2018).

As of 1st of May 2016, refugees between 18 years and the retirement age are required to learn Estonian by law, except if they are studying primary, secondary or higher education in Estonian. You can be asked to reimburse

the costs occurred when learning the language if not fully accredited in the end and additionally, all refugees may lose the right to social benefits if they do not reach the required level of language skills.

The current approach based on language teaching, however, has not increased the coherence of society, and Estonian language skills remain passive within many Russian-speaking families. A better exchange between the two ethnical and linguistic groups should be sought already from an early age to improve cultural integrations and acceptance.

Besides the language barriers, there is in general a good number of initiatives and cultural programs aiming at welcoming foreign populations and better integrate them into Estonian society. The project *“Let’s Get to Know Each Other”*, for example, conducted by the Estonian Refugee Council, in collaboration with Johannes Mikhelson Centre and International House Tartu, organizes local joint events in the field of international protection. They aim at increasing the awareness of local communities about migration and adaptation processes, and to strengthen their feeling of unity and openness towards people who have been granted international protection.

Another project is the *“Cultural program for foreigners in Estonia¹⁴”*. The Estonian National Museum and International House Tartu have been running the cultural program for recently arrived foreigners and other people of other ethnic backgrounds living in Estonia. The purpose is to allow people to understand better who they live next to, where they come from and their culture. The Estonian National Museum. “Estonian National Museum also has the world’s biggest Fenno-Ugric collection. Museum’s new building and the expositions are the perfect meeting point for people and cultures!” The participants will also be able to share their culture, widen their networks and learn the stories of people who have come to live in Estonia. The program also invites Estonian volunteers to participate, share their view on Estonian culture, and learn about other cultures.

In addition, *“An Open Beginning¹⁵”* is preparing kindergartens for receiving children with migration or refugee background and supporting the creation of a culturally and religiously diverse and tolerant study environment. The aim of the project was to prepare kindergartens for receiving kids with migration or refugee background and creating a culturally and religiously diverse and tolerant study environment.

On the other side, *“Peace in Exile”* by artist Anrike Piel¹⁶ is a program offering psychosocial support for young women residing in refugee camps, to activate them and teach empowerment through creativity and visual arts, ultimately creating a safe space for them. A small isobox in a refugee camp in Greece, a classroom in the slums of Shatila in Lebanon, or office rooms in the Estonian Refugee Council, turned into a makeshift paradise. The women are taught basics of what it takes to create storytelling visual art - by learning about female artists, how to create vision boards, different techniques to renewing second hand clothing, using each other’s faces as canvases for creative makeup, practicing posing like models, amongst other things.

Another recent cultural initiative is the *“Youth Photographic Club”*, a photo club organized by the Estonian Refugee Council. The Pilot project lasts for 3 months: 10 youngsters - 5 of them having a migrant (refugee)

¹⁴ <https://visittartu.com/blog/cultural-programme-for-foreignersliving-in-estonia/>

¹⁵ <https://www.pagulasabi.ee/en/projects/open-beginningpreparing-kindergartens-receiving-children-migration-or-refugee-background>

¹⁶ <https://www.anrike-piel.com/>

background and 5 being local Estonians- meet in the office of Refugee Council or in other meeting points in Tallinn. Meetings are twice a month, the length of each meeting is 3-4 hours, the main methods are photography and storytelling. Through those methods young people become more aware about themselves, about their identity and about people surrounding them.

Despite all the cultural initiatives in place, intolerance and xenophobia towards immigrants are on the rise. In *the Eurobarometer poll No 85* from spring 2016, Estonia is among the four countries with the most negative attitudes towards immigration from outside the EU: only 15% of them associate it positively compared to EU28 average 34%¹⁷. In addition, the rise of xenophobia is indicated by the growing support towards the nationalist right-wing party (*Estonian Conservative National Party*).

¹⁷ Standard Eurobarometer 85. Annex: T118

4. France

Immigration has a very long history in France since the late nineteenth century. As of 2019, the country is the third most popular European destination for refugees after Germany and United Kingdom¹⁸. According to the INSEE, the French national institute of statistics, in 2014 census counted nearly 6 million immigrants in France, representing 9.1% of the total population¹⁹. Immigration shows a constant increase from 2010 to date. Immigrants mostly come from the Maghreb, Southern Europe, and Africa. The group of immigrants from Sub-Saharan Africa is more recent and concentrated on French ex- colonies: Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Mali and Senegal. Another set of recent immigrants is from Eastern Europe and Turkey, with an ongoing inflow from this latter country since the 1970s. Finally, the lowest group of immigrants come from Asia. Most of these immigrants come from ex- French colonies in South East Asian: Cambodia, Laotian Vietnam. This immigration is rather recent and linked to the retreat by westerners from Asia after the Vietnam War.

Immigrants in France play a significant role in affecting the French culture and in influencing French daily life in many ways. Primarily seen in terms of varieties of restaurants, the mix of French and other countries food traditions. Different specialties can be found from different religious groups and or country origin, being bread, kosher food, or North African specialties. Passing from food to media, increasingly some of the radio stations and TV programs in France have become a reference point for news and cultural events involving the French Arab community, but it is also of interest to French of all origins. These kinds of programs have also become a launching pad for promising young, Ethnic-Arab singers. Algerian Rai, Berber and other traditional Arab and North African music is widely popular in France. Stars like Cheb Khaled perform to sold-out audiences.

The French, like other Europeans, appear to welcome the contributions immigrants make to artistic and athletic life. French soccer champion Zinedine Zidane remains one of the country's most admired figures. Several ethnic-Arab sports stars have also emerged to date. A leading member of the Paris opera ballet is of North African extraction. So are several prominent movie stars, such as ethnic Moroccan actor, Jamel Debbouze.

Linguistically, immigrants are responsible for a new French slang language known as "verlan" that was founded in France's immigrant-heavy housing projects. Verlan is a kind of argotic vocabulary of the suburbs, the inner cities, where they change the order of the syllables, for example, la fete, the feast, they name that "teuf."

Malek Boutih, the head of the Paris-based anti-discrimination group, SOS Racism, believes the influence of ethnic Arabs has revitalized French arts and sports, and will emerge as a dominating influence in French culture this century. Also, a survey by the European Center on Racism and Xenophobia found 48 percent of Europeans agreed that immigrants had enriched the cultural life of European Union countries.

However, despite the long history of immigration and integration in the country's economy, social structures and cultural life, France has relatively negative attitudes to immigration when compared with other western

¹⁸ OECD. International migration Outlook. 42nd Edition. Last accessed October 30, 2019 https://read.oecdilibrary.org/social-issues-migration-health/international-migration-outlook-2018_migr_outlook-2018-en#page1

¹⁹ "Étrangers – Immigrés" INSEE, last Accessed October 30, 2019. <https://www.insee.fr/fr/statistiques/3303358?sommaire=3353488#titre-bloc-3>

European countries. According to a Eurobarometer survey carried out in 2016, around 60 per cent of Frenchmen have negative attitudes towards non-EU immigrants. Also, 74 per cent of French respondents overwhelmingly believe that it is very important that immigrants speak French, which seems to be in line with the importance that has been traditionally placed in France on cultural assimilation²⁰.

²⁰ James Dennison, Teresa Talò, "Explaining attitudes to immigration in France," (EUI Working Paper RSCAS 2017/25), 2-3.

5. Germany

A total of 890,000 refugees arrived in Germany in 2015 – more than twice as many as in 1992, the year in which the previous record in terms of the inflow of asylum seekers to Germany was set. This development was largely unforeseen and represented a stress test both at the administrative and regulatory level. It is not least thanks to the active support of civil society and business that the various actors at the various levels of government were able, in an unprecedented effort, to find solutions to migration policy issues and in terms of promoting integration.

The annual report made by the Expert Council of German Foundations on Integration and Migration (SVR)²¹ talks about the fact that cultural issues played quite a minor role in terms of integration policy for a long time in Germany. Now, though, the debate has once more turned to questions such as whether, given their values and traditions, it is in fact possible to integrate refugees (who chiefly hail from predominantly Muslim countries) and whether Germany needs an explicit “dominant culture” (Leitkultur)²².

Following a public debate on the political use of the term “Leitkultur”, the *Initiative Kulturelle Integration* (IKI²³ = Cultural Integration Initiative) was established in December 2016 in the Federal Chancellery. The non-partisan Initiative forms a broad coalition of 28 civil society organizations, religious communities, media, social partners, federal states and local authority organizations. IKI wants to make clear that cultural integration and living together has success in a plural Germany society. They have formulated fifteen fairly general theses about what constitutes social cohesion. Its fundamental pillars are: Democracy, Cultural Diversity, and Participation.

In 2018, the initiative introduced culture to the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the *National Action Plan for Integration*²⁴. It dealt with the questions of how the diversity of society in cultural and media operations is already taken into account and what else can and must happen. Cultural institutions and artists want and can contribute to integration. At the same time, it is about promoting and appreciating migrants, not just as a target group for cultural offerings, but also as cultural creators.

Even in July 2019, the Federal Minister for Culture and the Media provided € 6.5 million as part of the governmental “Strategy for Extremism Prevention and Democracy Promotion”. Here the focus is on projects in which young people can increase their media literacy as well as on initiatives dedicated to the enlightening power of culture, media and cultural integration (e.g.: online media project “RISE – Youth cultural answers to Islamist extremism”)²⁵.

In addition, several examples of cultural integration and understanding have been initiated in Germany even before these recent developments. A wide number of festivals all over the country have been launched by immigrant communities over the years, as well as museum projects that combine migration with cultural

²¹ <https://www.svr-migration.de/en/>

²² <https://www.svr-migration.de/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/SVR-Annual-Report-2019.pdf>

²³ www.kulturelle-integration.de

²⁴ https://www.verwaltung-innovativ.de/SharedDocs/Publikationen/EN/nationaler_aktionsplan_en.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=1

²⁵ <https://www.iff.de/kompetenzbereiche/projekt-detail/rise/>

education such as DOMiD²⁶ in Cologne or TAMAM²⁷ in Berlin where the Museum of Islamic Art develop materials for cultural education. Also, dedicated radio stations have seen the light, such as Radio Metropol FM in Berlin, which is the first and oldest Turkish-language radio station in Germany, founded 1999 as “Bizim Dalga”. For the latter, the target group is Turkish people living in Germany at the age of 18 to 49 years.

Since 1975, *die Interkulturelle Woche*²⁸ (The Intercultural Week) takes place nationwide at the end of September. More than 500 cities are involved in this week today, with about 5,000 events. Local programs are organized through alliances involving churches, communities, migrant organizations, charities, trade unions, associations, initiatives and individuals. To date, the advocacy of better political and legal conditions for the coexistence of Germans and immigrants has remained a goal of the Intercultural Week.

In some cities in Germany there are cultural institutions born according to the motto “*Haus der Vielfalt*”²⁹ (House of Diversity) which operate as an intercultural meeting place, a place of work, education and culture for and by the migrant’s involving the whole city (e.g. VDMO in Dortmund, MIGRApolis House of Resources in Bonn³⁰). Also, the city tours of “*Querstadtein*” are worth mentioning as initiatives that promotes refugees’ integration: newcomers take on the role as city guides in their new hometown either in Berlin or Dresden.

Also, the federal program “*Integration through Sport*” (IdS)³¹ has run for 30 years. It is organized by the German Olympic Sports Confederation, by the Federal Ministry of the Interior and the BAMF. In a monthly podcast series, immigrants tell their personal story of integration and identity mainly through participation in sports. Another good example is the «*Spin-Sport Interkulturel*»³² model project, which promotes inclusion at a regional level and focuses on girls and young women with an immigration background. The goal is to support sport clubs as «institutions of borough-related integration» and to enable a systematic encouragement of the process of inclusion, particularly of young girls and women from 10 to 18 years of age with a migrant background.

Football in particular is the sport where most contacts between Germans and immigrants occur. One good example is the *FC Afrisco Berlin Football Club*³³ established in Berlin, which was the first African football club in Germany. Everyone in the team has his own migration story and discrimination experiences. Therefore, the club also serves as a protected space for empowering and strengthening each other. Their goal is to represent the African culture positively in all its facets, too. In Berlin you have Berliner Athletik Klub e.V. and it has become a “multicultural” German-Turkish football club. The slogan of the Turkish managing directors is: “We are Berlin. Diversity is our strength.”

²⁶ <https://www.domid.org/en/>

²⁷ <https://tamam-projekt.de/>

²⁸ <https://www.interkulturellewoche.de/geschichte>

²⁹ <https://www.vmdo.de/haus-der-vielfalt.html>

³⁰ <https://migrapolis.de/haus-der-vielfalt/>

³¹ <https://integration.dosb.de>

³² <https://www.projekt-spin.de/>

³³ www.afrisko.com

In general, attitudes towards immigrants are relatively stable in Germany. People rate them as very important. Studies show that general attitudes to immigration have not actually become more negative. Attitudes are considerably more “sluggish” than media outrage tends to lead us to expect. All the evidence suggests that key starting points would be to avoid spatial and economic segregation and to create opportunities for people to meet in the public sphere, in particular in schools, the labor market and neighborhoods³⁴.

The German “Religion monitor³⁵” also published an article on how Germans deal with cultural diversity. They say that half of Germans would like immigrants to adapt to mainstream society. One third would prefer a merging of cultures – and among younger people, this is even the majority view. Attitudes about successful coexistence in an immigration society differ apparently according to this study significantly across generations: the younger the person, the less the wish for adaptation. While 66 percent of the population over 70 years of age express the opinion that immigrants should culturally adapt, this proportion gradually declines among younger groups, to 22 percent among respondents under 25 years of age. A majority of young adults want all sides to draw closer together: A significantly higher proportion (55 percent) of respondents under 25 years old would like to see a merging of cultures.

³⁴ <https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/our-projects/living-diversity/>

³⁵ <https://www.bertelsmann-stiftung.de/en/our-projects/religion-monitor/>

6. Greece

Being a frontline EU country, at the easternmost part of the EU, Greece is one of the most important first reception country of immigrants. In the 90ies refugees came mainly from the Balkans during the Balkan wars. Recently, the development in Syria, Afghanistan and Middle East has had a large impact in immigration flows into Greece.

The post-2015 influx of immigrants had undoubtedly increased the multi-cultural element within the Greek society. Indeed, this is evident, not only by the large number of migrant and refugee associations that have been established in Greece, but also by the continuously increasing number of cultural interactions between refugees and the Greek population. The first migrant associations were established in Greece during the 1990s, following the migration flows originating from Eastern Europe and the Balkans. Currently, there are more than 40 associations and organized ethnic communities for immigrants that come from Asia and Africa.

Since 2015, there is a steadily expanding network of cultural activities taking place every year in Greece. Their aim is to promote the integration of migrants and refugees into the Greek society and to increase the exposure of the Greek population to the variety of different cultural identities. The detailed mapping of all those activities and initiatives is a highly challenging task, as there is no unified way of monitoring such activities.

A selective reference of cultural activities engaging with immigrants and refugees in Greece over the last years comprises *Hope – Refugee Football Club*³⁶ was established in Piraeus in 2016 by Organization Earth aiming to facilitate integration and social inclusion, through football programs for refugees and asylum seekers in Greece. It also serves as a communication vehicle between refugees and the Greek public, allowing refugees and asylum seekers to be seen as fellow human beings instead of foreigners. The impact of this program achieved is multifaceted. Organization Earth uses the power of football to reinforce social inclusion. Through football matches and other integration and solidarity related activities, beneficiaries are able to interact with Greek society.

In Athens, the Refugee Youth Service has created a *Youth Centre*³⁷ as a safer space in the heart of the community accessible by all vulnerable young people regardless of race, ethnicity, cultural background, or religious affiliation. The space provides a place where young people can feel safe, take respite, seek emotional and material support and connect with those services offering legal counsel and psychological care. A youth empowerment training program is run within this space, enabling and inspiring young people to generate visions for their futures, create innovative personal development plans and have the confidence and resources to action them.

The Network for Children's Rights has established a *Culture Lab*³⁸, adopting the concept of a *Mobile Library* that can be set up in just a few moments in squares, schools, parks, refugee reception centers or hostels. It is a bright

³⁶ <https://www.accmr.gr/el/%CF%85%CF%80%CE%B7%CF%81%CE%B5%CF%83%CE%AF%CE%B5%CF%82/service/2220-hope-refugee-fc.html>

³⁷ <https://www.refugeeyouthservice.net/athens-greece>

³⁸ <https://ddp.gr/en/2006/07/19/culture-workshop/>

and particularly friendly space that houses a lending library of around 3,500 Greek and bilingual books. Several creative groups offering recreational, educational and collective activities, specially designed for children between the ages of 6 to 12, also meet there. The Mobile Library gives refugee children the opportunity to visit the wonderful world of books and take part in educational games that will teach them their rights and how to assert them. The Mobile Library also gives their parents the opportunity to participate in special activities that encourage reading to their children and with their children.

The Art and Action Network was created by an association of teachers and artists to offer “*First Aid Education*” to refugee children. The Network’s members together with the ceramist Vicky Lazou and the painter Alma Vysniauskaite, deliver ceramic and watercolor lessons on a weekly basis. The courses are free of charge and offered to women from different nationalities including Greeks³⁹.

The event “*Listen to My Story*”⁴⁰ has been organized three times in Athens. The event is supported by the Athens 2018 World Capital of the Book and is part of the Accommodation and Services Program for Asylum Seekers. Using live narration, which pre-exists in all human cultures as a means of educating, entertaining and preserving memory, the event serves as an opportunity for all guests to listen to live storytelling by refugees, through the mediation of interpreters. Live storytelling is an experience that overturns stereotypes and prejudices concerning the “other” and engages narrators and listeners into meaningful interactions.

To mark the World Refugee Day⁴¹, in June 2019, Greek chefs and refugee cooks came together between 18 and 22 June to serve their favorite dishes and fixed menus in selected restaurants in Athens, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, and Lesvos. The visitors had the opportunity to taste Greek, Syrian, Afghan, Iraqi, Iranian, Congolese, and Moroccan gastronomy in thirteen restaurants, which either belong to refugee cooks or are opening their kitchens to refugee cooks living in Greece for the Cooking #*WithRefugees festival* organized by the UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, and partners.

The “HANDs on Refugees Talent and Sustainability – HARTS”⁴² is a workshop that focuses on the promotion and development of women refugees’ skills towards autonomy and inclusion in the Greek Society. The workshop HARTS is not only there where art begins but also mainly, it is about a women empowering time and space where they design, train and support each other in their creations.

The Cultural Center of African Art and Cultures “ANASA” is a Non-Profit and Non-Governmental Organization working for the elimination of racism, exclusion and discrimination, the promotion of multiculturalism and intercultural dialogue among peoples, and the empowerment and inclusion, through art and culture, of young people of African origin who were either born in Greece or came as migrants or refugees.

³⁹ <https://balloonartpeople.blogspot.com/>

⁴⁰ <http://estia.unhcr.gr/en/listen-to-my-story-storytelling-by-refugees/>

⁴¹ <https://www.unhcr.org/gr/en/7404-world-refugee-day-empowerment-solidarity-arts-culture.html>

⁴² <https://refugees.gr/harts-en/>

Language is a very important part of cultural integration also in Greece. Another good practice is the initiative and project “*Odysseus*”⁴³. Education of immigrants in the Greek language, the Greek history and the Greek culture. It aims at providing the language skills, as well as the social and intercultural competences required for the cultural and social inclusion of the participants and their families. The program “Odysseus” formed part of the Operational Program “Education and Lifelong Learning” of the Ministry of Education, Research and Religious Affairs and it was co-funded by the European Union (European Social Fund) and National Funding.

Despite the wide number of cultural initiatives taking place in the Country, some findings from recent opinion poll surveys on migration in Greece⁴⁴ say that, over half of the Greek population considered migrants and refugees as more of a problem rather than an opportunity. This perception shows significant differences between age and education. Younger respondents, and those who are better educated, are more likely to see immigration as more of an opportunity, while older respondents and those with lower levels of education are more likely to see it as more of a problem.

Moreover, the Greek research and policy institute diaNEOsis published a thorough survey, according to which 37.6% of the Greek population believed that migrants are “positive”, whereas the corresponding figure for “refugees” reached 49.3%. As well as that 3 in 10 Greeks believed that “many Muslims” agree with jihadist terrorist attacks and that such a terrorist attack was likely to happen in Greece in the coming year⁴⁵.

In relations to cultural understanding and cultural integration still has a long way to go and these varying opinions causes divide and problems.

⁴³ <https://www.inedivim.gr/en/programmes-actions/%E2%80%99Odysseus-education-immigrants-greek-language-greek-history-and-greek-culture>

⁴⁴ Eurobarometer. 2017. Available at <https://webcache.googleusercontent.com/search?q=cache:TqpFvIrcUYcJ:https://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopin/index.cfm/ResultDoc/download/DocumentKy/82538+&cd=1&hl=en&ct=clnk&gl=gr>

⁴⁵ diaNEOsis. 2017. What Greeks believe. Available at <https://www.dianeosis.org/en/2017/04/greeks-believe-in-2017/>

7. Italy

In Italy (as of 1 January 2019), the largest three foreign communities were from Romania (23% of total immigrants), Albanians (8.4%) and Moroccan (8%). The foreign population tends to live in the more developed regions of the North and Center and less so in the South and Islands. Lombardy, Lazio, Emilia-Romagna and Veneto all have around 10% of their population recognised as foreign citizens, slightly less than the urban conurbations of Rome (13%), Milan (14%) and Turin (10%) but much more than Naples (4.4%).

Italy is also a country of emigrants. Since 2014 the loss of Italian citizens is the equivalent of a large city like Palermo (677.000 people): a loss compensated, in the same period, by the new citizens for acquisition of citizenship (over 638.000) and by the simultaneous increase of over 241.000 units of foreign residents. The contribution of immigrants to the demographic reproduction of Italy is therefore significant.

In this context, the school and educational system plays a crucial role for integration, to assimilate to the Italian culture and to be able to participate in society. In the 2017/2018 school year there were 841,719 foreign students in Italian schools (9.7% of the total school population), an increase of 16,000 compared to the previous school year. The data also show that 63.1% of students with non-Italian citizenship were born in Italy. The primary school sector is still the one that records the greatest number of students with non-Italian citizenship.

The argument is that a number of reasons influence integration originating from school. These are difficulty in entering the school, school delays due to problems estimating the age and school level of pupils, school failure such as early drop out, difficulty in continuing studies and poor knowledge of the Italian language. In 2018, Italy was among the countries with the highest share of foreign-born early leavers from education and training (35,2 %) who scored also the largest difference between the share of foreign-born and native-born early leavers from education and training (with higher shares for foreign-born populations), recorded at 23,2 percentage points.

Regarding Adult participation in learning activities in Italy, native born are accounted for the 10,1% of the aged 25-64 years while those born outside the EU, score the 4,7 a clear sign that there is the need for a further effort to support those born outside the EU to improve their skills and therefore to lower their exposition to job market turmoil.

Integration also in the cultural context is affected from these obstacles creating a cultural situation of "us and them". It is a problem that will have long lasting effects to the Italian society. Immigrants have to have their cultural and artistic possibilities and opportunities safeguarded. The Italian country report highlighted in particular two cultural projects to showcase this.

The *MigrArti project*, now in its third edition started in 2016. It aims to involve immigrant communities permanently resident in Italy, with particular attention to second-generation young people, who are now an integral part of the country. The project is funding some cinema and theater projects. In particular, the competition was open to theater, dance, music, film reviews, short films and documentaries projects and aims to consolidate the link with the "new Italians", recognizing and enhancing their cultures of origin. This project has won prizes such as the "Rete critica Awards" for best theatrical project.

The Cultural Association "*Teatro Utile*" is made up of Italian and foreign artists who have participated over the years in the project "Teatro Utile (Art and Development)" promoted by "Accademia dei Filodrammatici" of Milan. Teatro Utile is the only example in Italy of a School of Dramatic Art with a project-laboratory on multi-ethnicity inside. It is a space for a reflection on intercultural pedagogy through theatre training. This project has the objective to train a group of artists able to develop a research on acting and writing, through the comparison between different cultures. Through the project the "Accademia dei Filodrammatici" of Milan, and the Ethno psychiatry service of the Niguarda Hospital has jointly worked on therapeutically intervention regarding torture and trauma via the dynamics of theatre and performing.

8. Netherlands

Since the 16th century, the Netherlands has had a reputation as a humanitarian haven, with refugees and immigrants attracted by Dutch tolerance and prosperity. After World War II, immigration came from the Dutch colonial heritage, Indonesia, Suriname and the Caribbean. Between the end of World War II and the oil crisis in 1974, the Netherlands, like the other Western European countries, received guest workers through labor recruitment programs. These workers came primarily from Mediterranean countries, including Italy, Spain, Turkey, Morocco and Yugoslavia. Their migration was intended to be temporary, but in many cases it was not. With vast inflows of asylum seekers and migrants in Europe in 2015 and 2016, fueled in part by the Syrian civil war, asylum-seeker arrivals in the Netherlands rose. The largest groups who seek asylum are Syrians, Iranians and Eritreans. The increase in the number of asylum applications from Turks and Algerians is also notable, as well as the entry of Moldovans and Yemenis to the top ten countries of origin.

Historically having been a tolerant country in regards of immigration, the Netherlands has in many ways dramatically changed over the past two decades as a rise in populism has moved in. Although right-wing parties have not been able to join governing coalitions so far, politicians are influencing the political debate, and their successes attract media attention. The newer man on the Dutch right-wing scene, Baudet, has Indonesian ancestors. He is a self-styled eccentric intellectual who turned to politics in 2017. Baudet has railed against Dutch academia, media and experts stating that they are undermining and breaking 'Boreal' Europe (a term used by right-wing European figures to indicate an Aryan, original continent).

There is also a cultural change happening in the Netherlands. The perception of the population and their view on receiving refugees and immigrants is also changing: half of the population today believe that refugees pose a threat to safety in the Netherlands and an equal amount of people also feel that Dutch cultural norms and values are being threatened⁴⁶. The country is much divided in their opinions. In the naming and recognizing the multi-cultural society, immigrants are perceived in two different ways. On the one hand, they are pictured as a threat to Dutch society. Their culture is considered outdated, inferior to and incompatible with Dutch values. On the other hand, refugees are perceived as poor, helpless and passive victims that are in desperate need of help⁴⁷. A greater division among Dutch residents is seen in the contribution refugees make to the Dutch culture: 31 percent say they enrich our culture and 36 percent believe they do not. In addition, 31 percent feel that refugees should be able to maintain their own culture, versus 33 percent of people who do not agree⁴⁸.

This country division on views, has helped starting a number of cooperation's on local level to improve the cultural image of immigrants and their integration in society. One good example of improving cultural understanding and integration is the website from a Dutch Public Broadcaster NPOR – *New to the Netherlands*⁴⁹

⁴⁶ <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/migration-netherlands-rhetoric-and-perceived-reality-challenge-dutch-tolerance>

⁴⁷ <https://imiscoephdblog.wordpress.com/2018/05/22/exclusionary-power-of-acting-normal/>

⁴⁸ <https://www.cbs.nl/en-gb/news/2018/13/most-dutch-people-in-favour-of-receiving-refugees>

⁴⁹ <https://www.netinnederland.nl/en/>

- providing programs with Dutch, English and Arabic subtitles. By using a selection of on-demand media, NPOR wants to offer refugees and immigrants a guide to Dutch society. There are more than 1500 stories, movies, programs subtitled to Arabic to embrace people watch Dutch television programs. The organizational team is mainly based on experienced journalist with a refugee background who just arrived in the Netherlands themselves. Because the organization is supported by the national broadcast organization there is a wide range of people they can reach in the Netherlands.

Another example is 'the *"Night of the refugee"*⁵⁰, a yearly charity walk where people walk 40km in the night. This night is organized to both tell the stories of some refugees who are now settled in Holland and participate in this walk to raise money for refugees.

⁵⁰ <https://www.gelderlander.nl/nijmegen/massaal-wandelen-van-nijmegen-naar-arnhem-vluchteling-blijf-je-misschien-wel-je-hele-leven~a3732488/>

9. Poland

Since about 2015 there has been a significant increase in the number of migrants in Poland, especially from Ukraine and Russia. The data published by the Office for Foreigners⁵¹ indicates that in 2018 the number of foreigners holding valid residence permits in Poland increased by 47 thousand people, reaching 372 thousand as of 1 January 2019. Despite the observed increase in the total number, there is also a dropping trend, i.e. the increase in the number of foreigners was lower by 12 and by 7 thousand respectively compared to 2017 and 2016.

In 2018, the highest increase in the number of residence permits concerned mainly citizens from Ukraine (by 33.9 to 179 thousand people), Belarus (by 4.7 to 20 thousand people), India (by 1.9 thousand to 8.8 thousand people), Georgia (by 1.3 thousand to 2.9 thousand people) and Vietnam (by 0.7 thousand to 12.4 thousand people). The largest increase concerned temporary residence permits (up to 3 years maximum) - by 35.8 thousand and permanent residence permits - by 9 thousand.

Without a doubt, besides family reasons (12%) and studies (10%), the most frequent purpose of foreigners' stay in Poland is to take up employment - last year this applied to almost 73% of cases. A characteristic feature of migration to Poland is its seasonality and repetitiveness of trips to and from Poland within one household. This means that Ukrainian citizens, in particular, take up seasonal or contractual work for years without making any integration efforts at all - they plan to return to their country of origin.

However, quite a number of cultural and intercultural initiatives can be showcased in Poland as good example for immigrants' integration. In Warsaw for instance, there is a group of *intercultural assistants* working at schools. Initially employed by NGO's already in 2010 (Association for Legal Intervention, Foundation for the Development of Social Diversity and Vox Humana Foundation), these assistant are today often hired by the schools themselves. The initiative is supported by the Polish Migration Forum Foundation to try and "build bridges" and improve communication between foreign pupils and parents, and school staff. The main area of an assistant's work is to help with linguistic problems and cultural difficulties, as conflicts occur between students and teachers, as well as with parents that have different traditions and views of the role of the school compared with the way Polish schools actually are run. The assistants also support pupils by helping them understand the school's expectations and requirements, as well as the Polish culture and cultural differences.

The Polish Migration Forum also has trainers that work with preschoolers, children under 10 years of age, using a method that allows them to "visit" different countries of the world where refugees and migrants come from in a fun way, to talk about these countries in the language of children, to rise interest in cultural diversity, all by using cultural dolls. The classes are conducted on the basis of a set of materials called "*The Whole World in Our Classroom*", which was developed gradually over the years.

⁵¹ <https://udsc.gov.pl/podsumowanie-legalizacja-pobytu-w-2018-r/>

In Gdańsk in 2015, in response to the heated discussion on the place of migrants in society in Poland, the Mayor of Gdańsk Paweł Adamowicz established the first interdisciplinary and intersectoral immigrant integration model team in Poland. Its aim was to develop a *Model of Immigrant Integration* for Gdańsk, which would direct and standardize the dispersed services provided by the city to foreigners, taking into account their perspective and needs, as well as increase the civic activity of migrants who chose Gdańsk as their new home. The immigration integration model was run in 2015 and 2016 and had 140 people representing over 80 different entities. A group of over 20 immigrants, new residents of Gdańsk, from various countries, also took part in the works. Eight thematic groups were established, each of which had its own leader, carrying out substantive work in the following areas: Education, Culture, Housing, Social Welfare, Labour, Abuse, Local Communities and Health. The aim was to achieve an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral synergy effect – to use all potential resources, to diagnose and find solutions for immigrants integration. The focus of School education was to package educational and integration activities addressed at teachers, administration and service staff, parents, migrant pupils and foreigners, and adapt university structures to the needs of foreign students. Furthermore, the project was creating conditions for active participation of immigrants in culture and trying to help shaping an interculturally open attitude in the host community.

Finally, In the field of sport, worth mentioning is the “*Ethnoleague*”, a football tournament in which each team is diversified in terms of nationality and gender. It is an initiative for all Warsaw residents who love football, and it is organised in a spirit of equality, friendship and fair play . This tournament takes place twice a year. Nearly 300 people and 21 teams divided into two groups took part in the 18th tournament in the spring of 2019. Over the last 9 years of the Ethnoleague, more than 1,500 players from 95 countries have been part of the project. The Ethnoleague shows us how to build common values and bonds between people brought up in different cultures.

10. Spain

For much of the 20th century, Spain was a country of emigration, with millions of its nationals moving to countries in the Americas and in North and Western Europe. In the 1980s, however, immigration to Spain began to pick up. Immigration in Spain is mostly from Ibero-American countries, since they can apply for citizenship after two years of continuous legal residence in Spain.

About 80% of immigrants get the nationality by the residency procedure. Those who are not from Latin American countries must prove ten years of continuous legal residence in Spain. The term is reduced to five for refugees and one after marrying a Spanish person. Children born in Spain of foreign parents have the right to Spanish nationality after one year. To achieve Spanish nationality, foreigners have to meet the requirements, pass some language exams and sociocultural knowledge to demonstrate their integration.

Since the first Immigration Law was approved in Spain, in 1985, immigration has started to figure prominently in public debate. In this period Spain has gone from being a culturally and ethnically homogeneous society to one in which immigrants hailing from over the world and different countries, with widely differing religions, languages and physical characteristics, account for 13% of the population.

Still Spain claims to have less friction in society regarding immigration. To a certain extent perhaps due to a historical situation of immigration as well as emigration to and from Latin and South America, with similar historical cultural traditions, religion and not the least language. Another reason is the lack of a strong national feeling in Spain that doesn't create a nationalistic conflict with immigrant cultures or perhaps the existence of an overall more accepting approach to cultural diversity.

However, the danger within diversity of modern societies that can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts based on cultural differences exists also in Spain. Media play an important role, sometimes adding to stereotypes and rumors about certain groups in society. In this respect, cultural activities can provide an open environment for meeting others and discussing complex issues around cultural difference and conflict, while cultural heritage can reinforce community cohesion and cross-community conflict resolution in a creative and reflective environment. Authorities and social services in Spain have a fundamental part in this. However, they are the same that sometimes reinforce stereotypes about immigrants that needs to be changed, which in itself causes additional problems of cultural understanding and interaction.

One area where cultural diversity and understanding needs to be enforced is in the urban context, as the city and its fabrics plays an important role of integration. In this perspective, cultural heritage can have an important role for community cohesion and cross-community conflict resolution in a creative and reflective environment. Different to national identities, urban identities can be inclusive to everyone living in a city, across national borders or citizenships. The *STEPS project*⁵² is an example and it is an EU-CoE Joint pilot project which aims at building and strengthening community cohesion, promoting trust, dialogue and mutual understanding across diverse societies.

⁵² <https://www.coe.int/en/web/interculturalcities/cultural-heritage-and-diversity>

11. Sweden

Immigration is not a new phenomenon in Sweden and the larger cities are all very diverse and multi-cultural. Statistics show that Sweden hosts immigrants from almost all countries of the world.

The immigration flow was dominated by guest workers in the 60s, followed by the refugee flow from middle east in the 80s, and from the Balkans in the 90s. During the millennium era university students who came from third countries represented the major share of immigration. Nevertheless, in 2011 universities introduced fees for students from outside EU, which cut drastically the number of visiting students.

In 2013, Swedish migration agency has granted permanent residence permits to all Syrian and stateless persons who came from war zone in Syria. This has attracted a huge immigration flows to Sweden which resulted in introducing temporary boarder control in 2015. In order to control this pressure Sweden has changed its generous asylum law from the EU's most generous to the minimum of EU level.

Historically being an "exceptional case" in the EU for not having a single far-right representative in the parliament, things changed as from 2010 with the electoral success of the right wing. Sverige democrats are now the third biggest party in Sweden. In the recent EU election in 2019 they casted more vote than the Moderate party which is the second biggest party in the parliament. The anti-immigrant rhetoric has certainly been an important element for this success. Consequently, public opinion in Sweden has changed, also partly due to the way media report about immigration.

Cultural integration in Sweden is supported by the large number of local or mostly small projects that started on grass root level in recent years. Some examples are "*Kompis Sverige*⁵³" that reaches people on an individual level. Allowing new comers to interact and meet ethnic Swedes as friends or mentors. It improves cultural understanding and participation, help language learning and helps Swedes to better understand other cultures. On the other side, "*Plattformen*⁵⁴" organizes cultural events, helping people and cultures to meet. The *Global Village*⁵⁵ initiative stands as an umbrella. It covers all areas including social, political and economic level.

A worth noting initiative is *Peace of Art*⁵⁶, an art exchange project around the world first launched in Arizona 1993 by artist Katherine Josten, also nominated for an UNESCO prize. Participants create a work of art in any media followed by an exhibition of all work done on local level. Global Art project then organise an international exchange where similar work of art around the world can connect. During the exchange the art with the person or group with whom you've been matched will be shared, the art you receive will be yours to keep. In Sweden the connection is with refugee children in the Beqaa Valley in Lebanon. Children start by drawing paintings in Lebanon, they are then scanned and sent to children in schools in Malmö. In Malmö the children using the Central station for the exhibitions, finalize the drawings or paintings. It follows by Skype talks to learn about and

⁵³ <https://kompissverige.nu>

⁵⁴ <http://www.plattformen.org>

⁵⁵ <http://theglobalvillage.se/#>

⁵⁶ <http://www.globalartproject.org/index.html>

share things between children and cultures. The organization in Lebanon is War Child, organizing the work locally as well as helping children to deal with their war traumas.

Another successful initiative is *Nordiska museet*⁵⁷, the Nordic Museum in Stockholm. They started collecting migration stories voluntarily jointly with the Swedish immigration authority. The aim is to showcase that most of us are in one way or another connected to immigration and people that have immigrated. It began during 2015 with the collection of stories and documentation from people arriving at the Stockholm central station. It continued in 2016 with the aim to document and show 100 stories. They also cooperate with the Swedish newspaper DN – Dagens Nyheter through a joint effort under @RefugeeSweden. Current topics from the crisis for refugees in Europe is reported via that platform and all information is stored and archived at the museum.

In Sweden a number of athletes originally from other countries are also seen as good examples of integration. Athletes have gained the admiration and trust from people but, doubtfully added more knowledge among Swedes towards their country of origin and their cultural traditions. Also, a number of former refugees and immigrants that today have become Swedes, hold posts in the government and the Swedish parliament, or at local city councils' level.

⁵⁷ <https://www.nordiskamuseet.se/migrationens-roster>

III. Immigration and culture conclusions

The Country Reports showed in many ways how immigration is contributing to transforming and developing our national cultures, giving rise to cultural diversification and enrichment, with positive impacts on our society. Cultural changes have taken place regarding the arts and the media, cuisine and sport.

Also, how we see cultural integration has changed. We can understand from the Country Reports that to fully reach integration in society we tend to prioritise the necessity for the newcomers to learn the language and be integral part of our education systems. Nowadays, it seems not be enough to just understand each other's cultures, but the tendency is for immigrants to adapt to the culture of the mainstream society.

More and more, western populations seem to carry different sorts of prejudice towards several migrants' groups, and cultural negative views not only still exist but seem to grow. Images or stereotyped ideas are flourishing in recent times through media due to the success of some xenophobic political parties.

However, it is not the same everywhere. We have seen from the reports how immigrants are not a homogenous group of people. Each immigrant has its roots, traditions, religion and cultural background. Also, EU 27 countries and regions are all very diverse themselves, and so their approaches in facing immigration. Here we highlight some common tendencies and trends that can be found across the countries in terms of: 1) Language and Education; 2) Arts, Theatre and Music; 3) Sports; 4) Cuisine and food; and 5) Media.

1. Language and education

Understanding the language to be able to participate in society has been pointed out in most of the country reports as one of the key factors for successful integration. In some countries today we find new policies geared towards practically forcing immigrants to learn and speak the national languages as a condition to remain (i.e. Estonia, Italy).

It is also important for immigrants to have access to the educational systems in the countries of settlement. In most European countries, immigrants have the right to attend schools or other forms of educational institutions as newcomers. The achievement level of immigrant children, however, has showed to be considerably lower than the average level of national children, and the percentage of foreign-born early leavers the educational system much higher. The qualifications needed to access to higher education also differ among EU countries.

The Italian Country report is particularly focusing on school and education for integration into the Italian culture and to be able to participate in society. In Belgium the Diaspora associations have proven important in setting up their own social and cultural institutions helping with education, and language courses; while in the Czech Republic the Ministry of interior has established a network of integration centres where among other things, education and language courses are provided. Co-funded by the European Union (European Social Fund) and national funding, the project "*Odysseus*" run by the Ministry of Education in Greece, supports education of immigrants in the Greek language, the Greek history and the Greek culture.

On the other side, in Estonia language learning and schools have proven particularly problematic especially towards the largest minority and group of migrants that are Russian speaking. This group tend to settle and live in Russian speaking communities also geographically isolated from the Estonian society. They also provide

schools and education. This is an example of how integration does not work but rather how two parallel societies and cultures live parallel existences. It has proven that the Russian speaking part of the population, has less success in school and education also higher education.

Another aspect of language importance is showed in Spain. The majority of immigration has previously come from Latin and South American countries that better understand the Spanish culture and speak the language. They also have a “fast track” for naturalization in Spain when it comes to that group of immigrants.

All the examples and perhaps in particular the Estonian and Spanish examples show the importance to provide quickly to immigrants the opportunity to learn the language in the new country you arrive to.

1) Arts, theatre and Music

When we look at arts, theatre and music many of the countries highlight their importance as integration factors. In Belgium today, there are several artists who contribute and influence Belgian’s art and music scene. For example, the Rwandese-origin singer Stromae, a number of Belgo-Congolese artists, the choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui, the theater makers Chokri Ben Chikha and Milo Rau all are influential artists in Belgium. A good example of cultural initiatives in Belgium include “Refugees Got Talent” initiated in 2015. Considering that Art is universal, the funders provided a meeting place for immigrants to come together and practice their art in their new country.

In the Czech Republic most associations established by foreigners/immigrants work with cultural exchange through cultural events of music, festivals, exhibitions. The problem is funding and doing this on a larger scale. However, one good example is the House of the National Minorities organizing many cultural events under the same roof and also hosting the minority organizations in the same building.

In Estonia one project is the “*Cultural program for foreigners in Estonia*”. The Estonian National Museum and International House Tartu have been running the cultural program for recently arrived foreigners and other people of other ethnic backgrounds living in Estonia. The purpose is to allow people to understand better who they live next to, where they come from and their culture.

Germany has since 1975 been running the *die Interkulturelle Woche* (The Intercultural Week) and it takes place nationwide at the end of September. More than 500 cities are involved in this week today, with about 5,000 events. Local programs are organized through alliances involving churches, communities, migrant organizations, charities, trade unions, associations, initiatives and individuals.

The Italian country report also highlight a number of cultural arts or theatre projects such as The MigrArti project that aims to involve immigrant communities permanently resident in Italy through the funding of some cinema and theatre projects. This project has won prizes such as the “Rete critica Awards” for best theatrical project.

Sweden has several good examples on culture through arts and theatre. “*Plattformen*” organizes cultural events, helping people and cultures to meet. The initially American project that is also running in Sweden is *Peace of Art*, an art exchange where participants create a work of art in any media followed by an exhibition of all work done on local level. Global Art project then organize an international exchange were similar work of art around the world can connect. The Nordic Museum in Stockholm started collecting migration stories voluntarily jointly with

the Swedish immigration authority. The aim is to showcase that most of us are in one way or another connected to immigration and people that have immigrated.

Art, theatre, film and music as well as literature create heroes and idols. For the immigrant it becomes a means of expressing their cultural origin, and the new country can show its culture.

2) Sports

Sport has been presented by several reports as a means for cultural integration. France like other European countries welcome the contributions immigrants make to artistic and athletic life. “National heroes” such as the football player Zinedine and several other ethnic-Arab sports stars have emerged to date. SOS Racism in France believe that sports will play a more and more important role in the French society and help shape it for the future.

In Germany the federal program “*Integration through Sport*” (IdS) is a significant initiative. In a monthly podcast series, immigrants tell their personal story of integration and identity mainly through participation in sports. You also have several football clubs that have been started, saved or developed by and with immigrants such as *FC Afrisco Berlin Football Club* or the *Athletik Klub e.V.*

Sports and particularly football play an important role also in Greece. *Hope – Refugee Football Club* was established in Piraeus in 2016 by Organization Earth aiming to facilitate integration and social inclusion, through football programs for refugees and asylum seekers in Greece.

In Poland, the football tournament “*Ethnoleague*” organised for Warsaw residents, hosted more than 1,500 players from 95 countries in the last 9 years.

Sports can create idols that people and society look up to. It helps when working on stereotypes. Sport is not the least through world championships, Olympic Games, highly nationalistic and filled with pride. Caring for and showcasing immigrants’ success in sports is clearly an important way forward for cultural integration.

3) Cuisine and food

When talking about cuisine and food one good example is in Greece where when promoting the World Refugee Day Greek chefs and refugee cooks came together between during a week to serve their favourite dishes and fixed menus in selected restaurants in Athens, Thessaloniki, Ioannina, and Lesbos.

Food is also “big business”. Developing ways to make people come together through food and to create that important and safe meeting place is showed to be very important.

4) Media

In the field of Media, traditional, new and social media, immigrants play a more and more important role. Both in using media themselves and in the way they are exposed and broadcasted by others. In France an increasing number of the radio stations and TV programs have become a reference point for news and cultural events involving the French Arab community, but it is also of interest to French of all origins. Connecting to the field of music and arts above, these programs have also become a launching pad for promising young immigrant musicians.

Germany also have a number of dedicated radio stations to and by immigrants, such as Radio Metropol FM in Berlin and others; while in the Netherlands the Dutch Public Broadcaster NPOR is running *New to the Netherlands* providing programs with Dutch, English and Arabic subtitles. By using a selection of on-demand media, NPOR wants to offer refugees and immigrants a guide to Dutch society. There are more than 1500 stories, movies, programs subtitled to Arabic to embrace people watch Dutch television programs.

Media is becoming more and more important. You can reach much larger groups of people today. You can popularize culture and cultural diversity. Smaller ethnical groups in society can use social media to show and promote their culture with small means. And mainstream media can reach the broad audience as showed in some of the examples in this report.

Most examples in our report are generated with small means, rather isolated and often run on grass root level. But we also see from the country reports that people like to stay within their own culture, and this creates pockets of immigrants not the least in the urban environment. Those pockets seem to tend to be isolating people and maintain the problem of cultural integration and diversity.

In this respect, it is crucial to motivate immigrants to pursue a long-term inclusion process. While institutions cannot remove the uncertainty that comes with an insecure legal residence status, they can encourage young migrants and refugees to identify and formulate their goals and help them develop a plan to get there including improving their language skills.

Creating and maintaining an integration process as early as possible is important for all newcomers and refugees who tend to suffer intense distress as a result of prolonged idleness. To make sure that information about available opportunities and support reaches all newcomers, relevant stakeholders should invest in proactive outreach and make use of informal and digital channels - such as social media, texting apps, or 'trusted messengers' with a similar migration experience. Culture plays an important role, but more efforts have to be made to create those bridging moments between cultures where both the immigrant's culture and the recipient country's culture can be discussed, reflected and analyzed jointly.

For migrants and refugees, feeling accepted in the local community is a key factor for psychological well-being, with huge effects on all dimensions of their development and integration. In most cases, however, finding friends and beginning to feel at home is not a smooth process that happens automatically. Language barriers may hinder communication, and the lasting effects of traumatic experiences may isolate refugees from their peers.

We should create safe spaces for interaction, trust-building, and participation—from youth work and social services to sport and cultural activities.

Recreational activities have a huge impact on the well-being and health of everybody and so also for migrants and refugees, and they can foster social ties with local communities. Through investments in youth work and community organizations, NGO's and local authorities can promote opportunities for social interaction between migrants and their peers in informal, low-pressure settings—such as cooking, sports, and arts and culture—where culture, nationality and legal status lose their centrality.

In our current climate of growing fearmongering and hostility towards newcomers this affects migrants and refugees to a greater degree, given how important it is for people to feel part of a group or a community that provides security and safety. With targeted interventions, different national or local actors can empower migrants to become part of the solution, by giving them a platform to articulate their voices and perspectives.

We have seen examples like that from several of the country reports.

Culture as a means of integration has to be handled both on a national level and on a local level. The grass root level helps building those ever so important social networks between people. Feelings of belonging play a key role in the personal development of migrants and refugees, giving them a stable basis on which to rebuild a sense of home. While membership in the national community is governed by citizenship (and to a lesser degree, by immigration status), the local level is well-positioned to propose a more inclusive and proactive notions of belonging, reflecting the diversity of their urban communities. This could also include getting immigrants involved in local democratic processes.

Culture is also very diverse and some groups of immigrants facing a more difficult situation in one country would perhaps find an easier environment in another country. We also have to be aware of local cultural differences, traditions and history. There are certainly many good initiatives that can work and be repeated as models or ways to integrate cultural diversity, but they might not work or fit everywhere.

One can speak of a transformation of European economic, cultural, political and social life as a result of immigration and cultural diversity formations as well as globalization. Culture has no elements of violence, threat or prejudice. Culture helps to create bonds and develop a different image from the one presented in media and by politicians. Culture can make visible and give voice to those, who are invisible in the society or do not have possibility to be heard. Therefore, culture plays an essential role in social inclusion and integration to the society.

Much information to support this conclusion has been made available through the country reports.