Belgium Report

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La Tricoterie – Fabrique des Liens

Brokering Migrants’ Cultural Participation

the Learning Partnerships on managing cultural diversity in cultural institutions
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I. Introduction
Brokering Migrants’ Cultural Participation (MCP Broker) is a European project that has emerged from the need to provide public cultural institutions with devices and tools to improve their cultural diversity management. The aim of the project is to analyse the state of diversity management in cultural institutions, and in 5 European countries in particular: Spain, Italy, Sweden, Austria and Belgium. To promote this study it aims to support the adoption of a framework to guide cultural institutions in managing cultural diversity.

As stated in the Open Method Cooperation Report on “The role of public arts and cultural institutions in promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue” (2012-2013), the diversity of Europe, albeit powerfully enriching, come with tensions and challenge. Challenges that all the public institutions need to address by going back to their main mission: promoting social cohesion. In this respect, the role of arts and cultural institutions is crucial, as they can trigger a real change from the symbolic and cultural point of view.

“By becoming spaces for deepening the understanding of different cultures and providing room for participative and creative encounters, cultural institutions may play a pivotal role in connecting people and building a more cohesive and open society (...). Becoming vehicles for social cohesion is not only a moral obligation for cultural institutions receiving public funding; it is also essential for their long-term survival.”

MCP Broker was born out of the idea to question, rethink and improve the way cultural institutions adapt to the new demographic composition of our society, and to analyse their reaction to and handling of new cultural and social flows. Central to these tasks is the enhancement of the intercultural power of public cultural institutions by diversifying their staff and governance bodies.

The MCP Broker (Brokering Migrants’ Cultural Participation) project is funded by the European Commission-Directorate General Home Affairs, and coordinated by Interarts with the participation of four partners from different EU countries: Austria (Educult), Belgium (Platform for Intercultural Europe and Culture Action Europe for the phases subsequent to the Pilot Study), Italy (Eccom) and Sweden (Intercult).

OBJECTIVES

The main objective of MCP Broker is to train public cultural institutions and provide them with the tools required to improve their cultural diversity management. At the same time it aims to stimulate migrants’ cultural participation by improving national and international power and influence of local public cultural institutions to interact with them. MCP Broker is thus a project that studies the role of cultural institutions as actors in migrant-integrating societies.

In a more specific way, the project strives to take local action in order to promote the commitment of receiving communities when interacting with migrants, based on the mutual respect of their rights, obligations and different cultures. Moreover, the project targets equal treatment and better diversity management in the work place, in public and private services, in education, media and other important areas.

1 Report on the role of public arts and cultural institutions in promoting cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue (2012-2013), Open Method Coordination
**PHASES**

The project foresees the following activities in each country partner:

1. **BENCHMARKING TOOL**
   The development of a benchmarking tool to manage the sector’s needs on how to promote integration at different levels.

2. **PILOT RESEARCH**
   with 10-15 cultural institutions each in at least 6-7 EU countries in order to apply the benchmarking tool, to analyse cultural diversity management within these institutions, and to identify obstacles and needs for better intercultural integration.

3. **LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS (LPs)**
   Setting up learning partnerships (LPs) to equip the sector and other key operators with tools to help promote integration. These Learning Partnerships (LPs) will be developed not only between cultural institutions that are more or less advanced in their diversity management, but also between cultural institutions and non-governmental organisations targeting migrant self-organisation, between cultural institutions and employment agencies, and between cultural institutions and the educational sector.

4. **DISSEMINATION**
   The Learning Partnership’s outcomes will be disseminated through European networks, at thematically relevant conferences and at a public conference in Barcelona. Belgium was able to afford the different phases with the gracious help of two different organisations: the Platform for Intercultural Europe – PIE (phase 1 and 2) and Culture Action Europe – CAE (phase 3 and 4).
II. Focus on the current phase and motivations
The third phase of the MCP Broker project requires the development of a set of Learning Partnerships (LPs). The main objective of this phase is to set up several meetings to provide the cultural sector with thoughts, tools and an interactive exchange on how to encourage and stimulate migrants' cultural participation. Each partner was asked to design four types of Learning Partnerships according to the guidelines as described earlier.

In this respect, during the first two phases of the project, CAE built on PIE’s preliminary work. During the Pilot Study (second phase) a number of ideas arose were, alongside the particularities of Belgium, key elements in the development of MCP Broker’s third phase:

- Belgium has a federal structure with three different official communities: the Flemish community, the French community and the German-speaking community. Cultural institutions from the 3 different communities are subjected to the policies put in place by their own community;

- The eleven cultural institutions interviewed by PIE during the second phase of the MCP Broker project are part of the Federal and the Flemish communities;

- The OMC Report, mentioned in the Pilot Study, presents four cases of good practices in of cultural diversity management in Belgium. These four case studies were conducted by Moussem (NGO, Antwerp), t,Arsenaal, (Theatre, Machelen), RAB/BKO (NGO, Brussels), and CBAI (NGO, Brussels);

- The benchmarking tool has great potential in its intention to raise standards and to lead the way to a transformation and renovation process allowing migrants improved access to cultural institutions. Therefore, it should be revised, refined and improved to meet demands;

- The different cultural institutions interviewed by PIE that applied the benchmarking tool did not all collect positive results, although some of performed very well.

In order to implement the next phase (LPs), CAE started from these different issues and decided to focus on Brussels as a representative of the whole of Belgium. This choice needs to be considered an attempt to reflect the diversity of the Belgian structure, shaped by three communities that each have a different history and background, as well as different policies as stated in the Pilot Study.

To picture this complex system, CAE decided to invite people and organisations covering not only the 4 phases stated above, but also the 3 communities. Moreover, due to the diversity of the communities and their policies, and the enriching contribution from project partners, CAE decided to gather all the actors within a framework of social cohesion and proposed a work format that allowed co-working, turning the the concept of ‘diversity’ into an important element of co-creation.

At the same time and in line with any previous work done by PIE, CAE continued collaborating with BOZAR, KVS and RAB/BKO, organisations that had already taken part in the second phase of the MCP Broker project. Whereas BOZAR and KVS are a federal and a Flemish cultural institution, RAB/BKO is a cultural network.
CAE worked closely with Billy Kalonji in particular, the Diversity Officer at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, designated to carry out research on the diversity in audience development for the museum. As administrator and/or member, he is involved in various organisations, such as Africalia, Share, Became and African Platform. He was appointed in 2014, after the interviews for the Pilot Study. Billy Kalonji started his research in October 2014 and is expected to present the results shortly.

Mr Kalonji helped us contact people that were directly related to MCP Broker’s field of action and actively participated as a speaker to the Learning Partnerships bringing in his experience and explaining his role in a cultural institution. Moreover, CAE asked him for technical assistance to “Pour La Solidarité”, an independent European think & do tank committed to promoting solidarity and sustainability in Europe.

Our participant selection resulted in a wide range of organisations’ representatives connected to cultural and diversity issues. With over 70 field actors attending the Learning Partnership(s), our aim was to gather as much information as possible in order to tackle the topic of interculturality from different perspectives. The high quality of the selected participants gave way to high-level discussions and broad debates, resulting in agreements and consensus on the whole, despite inevitable tensions here and there. The diversity of participants brought a significant added value to the event, covering all the facets of the concept of interculturality. Indeed, it allowed a meaningful insight of the different related issues linked to the topic, thanks to the high degree of pooling field experiences.

The graphic below shows the variety of the selected partners for the Learning Partnerships in Belgium, divided by type of organisation and community they belong to:

![Pie chart showing the variety of selected partners for the Learning Partnerships in Belgium](chart.png)

- **FEDERAL**: Cultural institutions
- **WALLOON**: Non governmental organizations
- **EDUC**: Educational organizations
- **EMPL**: Employment agencies
- **FLEMISH**: Not Applicable

Aware of the fact that the result cannot be an exhaustive portrait of the complexity of the Belgian landscape and of the topic, CAE believes this project is a laboratory project and in on-going process.
METHODODOLOGY

In terms of methodology, CAE made one important choice: all participants were gathered in one room for two days to attend different but interlinked sessions. We decided not to split participants by type of organisation but to encourage the highest level of interaction between the different parties involved.

This is due to a strong belief that adults can learn and spark new ideas if provided with a different kind of process that involves a different work rhythm and a different way of using the physical, social and content architectures. Indeed, the so-called “Group Genius”® methodology (from which CAE methodology took inspiration from) is meant to offer participants an accelerated environment where learning is enhanced, exchange is sped up, and where collective understanding and agreement are reached more easily.

A total of 75 participants were involved. Some Learning Partnerships were held in parallel (with participants choosing the ones they wanted to attend, but following some basic “group-assembling” rules); others were designed as collective sensemaking sessions with participants all together.

During the two days, participants were put together in different formats that allowed various types of conversations to spark:
- Small groups discussions around relevant issues and priorities
- Small groups conversations on experiences, practices, challenges and mistakes
- Plenary discussions to understand the current situation in Belgium
- Plenary discussions to discuss possible political frameworks and guidelines
- Plenary discussions to share (small groups) conclusions.

In all these Learning Partnerships, 3 categories of people were involved as main actors of the process:
- 2 facilitators for the two days helping with process facilitation and content “assembly/sensemaking”
- An inspirational guest for each session to give a specific point of view and to engage in a conceptual and practical exchange with participants
- Expert practitioners/participants/learners joining small-group working sessions aimed at comparing theory with practice, gathering new input for their work, summarise their discussions into reflection points for political guidelines.

The whole process was also designed to allow shared concerns and issues to emerge and to be promptly discussed. In fact, throughout the 3 main parts of the programme various tensions emerged as a conclusion of the work and became the elements of discussions for the final conference.
THE PROGRAMME SESSIONS

SESSION ONE
Intercultural strategies and territory

PLENARY A conversation with Billy Kalonji
Working groups session
  Coordination (x 2)
  Networking
  Socio-cultural activities (x 3)
  Gathering resources
PLENARY Putting Together & Debate

SESSION TWO
Interculturality and participation

PLENARY A conversation with Mehdi Maréchal
Working groups session
  Local democracy
  The others and me: how to deal with diversity?
  Valorisation of the different cultural heritage on the territory
  Negotiating spaces for encounter
  Socio-cultural factors which favor marginalisation
PLENARY Putting Together & Debate

SESSION THREE
Interculturality and socio-economic development

PLENARY A conversation with Denis Stokkink
Working groups session
  Intercultural education (x 2)
  Migrants & school
  Migrants & employment
  Multiculturalism & Teamwork
  Professional careers & the cultural field
PLENARY Putting Together & Debate

Final Conference

Working groups session
PLENARY Putting Together & Debate
III. HYPERdiercitié
learning partnerships
CAE organised a two-day workshop on the 24th and the 25th of March in Brussels, named “Hyperdivercité: le territoire comme espace de relations” (Hyperdivercity: the territory as a space for relations).

It is a fact that the different models of integration currently in place in European countries should be improved in order to foster cultural participation of migrants in Europe.

The aim of this workshop - also called learning partnership - was to discuss different matters linked to cultural diversity and migration in order to give recommendations to the Belgian authorities and the European Commission. The issue of cultural diversity and migration implies a multitude of factors and challenges needing to be linked to the ground reality of finding efficient solutions to promote the integration of migrants through cultural activities.

Hyperdivercity or Hyper-diver-city is an attempt to sketch the portrait of the territory according to Belgium’s situation. The event took place in “La Tricoterie – Fabrique des Liens”, an area dedicated to debates and political actions, built as a “link factory”. La Tricoterie is located in Saint Gilles, a multicultural commune of Brussels. It hosts cultural events, local activities and political meetings organised by the civil society. It promotes citizens’ active political participation in a sustainable society. La Tricoterie was a symbolic choice as it is an example of the values the project promotes: it is the perfect balance between culture and the concept of citizenship. Finding the right place was crucial, since it created an exceptional working atmosphere of mutual exchange and emulation.
The first session was opened by Luca Bergamo, the Secretary General of Culture Action Europe. After welcoming all the participants, he presented the two-day sessions with an in-depth elaboration of Hyper-divercity. Hyper-divercity would be at the basis of designing political recommendations on cultural diversity management, which would then be presented to the relevant national and European authorities during the fourth phase of the MCP Broker project. Mr Bergamo ensured that Culture Action Europe would share the workshop report with all the participating experts. He then introduced Elisabetta Maria Falchetti, partner of the Italian MCP broker project, appointed to facilitate the two-day workshop. She presented the key concepts of interculturality starting from her own experience as curator and director of the educational department at the Museum of Zoology in Rome. She concluded by introducing the MCP Broker project, its main objectives and the framework of Hyperdivercity.

Ms Falchetti started with a metaphor: “to describe the process of this two-day workshop we can imagine ourselves as an orchestra. By practising together, orchestra members manage to improve their skills and produce a final result that can be shared to the public. Here we will try to play the music of interculturality as an orchestra”.

She continued with an assessment: the territory should be regarded as a relational space. Indeed, the question of the relation between culture and migrants is extremely complex, as there are many actors, different ways of thinking and several systems that interact with each other. The workshop brought together organisations of individual, communitarian and national levels with the aim to draw an intercultural path.

One of the first issues was to create clear and proper terminology because a lot of the key concepts are still unclear: culture, cultural diversity, migrants, intercultural dialogue, multiculturalism, interculturality, citizens’ participation. Migration is a phenomenon engraved in humanity. There are prehistoric, historic, pre-modern, modern and postmodern fluxes. The causes and consequences have changed over time, but the phenomenon has never ceased to exist.

Ms Falchetti insisted on the fact that we have to make a clear difference between separation and marginalisation, integration and assimilation. For example, in the USA, there is a strong assimilative policy. On the other hand, in Great Britain, society is multicultural and diversity is ‘tolerated’.
The assimilation process is characterised by the adoption of cultural structures of the hosting society, with an attempt to erase the migrants’ cultural identity. Integration consists in the participation of migrants to the “life” of the hosting country. Promoting integration, knowledge and understanding between the inhabitants of the country and the migrants is crucial. Interculturality is defined by the legitimisation of every culture, the promotion of cultural exchanges and the right to be different.

Intercultural dialogue is an exchange, a open debate between cultural visions and groups of people with different roots in a sustainable society. In this respect, Ms Falchetti argued: “We have to build bridges between cultures, and during this event we will have to build an operational definition of this dialogue. There is a huge gap between theory and practice, and our aim is to build bridges between those two elements”.

To support the key concepts she highlighted, Ms Falchetti mentioned the evolution of the institutional point of view on interculturality. As a matter of fact, institutions have been defending “the right to be different” as well as “the right for everyone to keep his/her own culture” since 1948 with the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Thus, there is a strong link between respecting human dignity and respecting human cultures. Since the Hanoi Statement on the culture of peace in 1999, the UN has been developing a clear “culture of peace”.

In 2001, “the right to be different” was officially promoted as a basic human right. At the same time, many policies have been implemented in order to protect cultural diversity, as the Faro convention of 2005 shows. The official documents created by political institutions are the mirror of the changes that have happened to the cultural, social and political paradigms over the past years. 2008 was the European year for intercultural dialogue, proving that this topic is a central issue for the European Union. The White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue responds to an increasing demand to clarify how intercultural dialogue can help appreciate diversity while sustaining social cohesion. It seeks to provide a conceptual framework and a guide for policymakers and practitioners.
A conversation with Billy Kalonji (BOZAR)

After this introduction, Elisabetta Falchetti invited Billy Kalonji to discuss his vision on the situation in Belgium and the role of institutions when it comes to promoting social cohesion. Billy Kalonji started by pointing out that culture sharing is pivotal. There is a strong link between personal experience and culture. There are many different ways of interpreting cultural heritage, depending on our personal experience and our cultural roots. Brussels is a wonderful example of multiculturalism: the city brings together not only two of the Belgian communities, but also a wide range of different nationalities that live in our European capital. Somehow, Brussels contains three different worlds, ruled by different social codes, behavior and conduct. These cultural differences have an impact on migrants when they to the country. Public institutions have to adapt themselves to migrants, they have to accept different points of views on their cultural heritage, they should think about creating new places to bring together different cultures. Building a strong link between institutions, migrants and the rules of the territory is critical. Diversity is a human reality. Nobody looks exactly like another person. The territory, the rules, the institutions are increasingly important in order to build identities and a strong social cohesion. It is impossible to erase somebody’s culture, since our culture is a definite part of us.

The time has come for interculturality to replace the old assimilation and integration models implemented in Europe. We have to keep and protect local identities, but we need to have them interact with each other in order to build a more coherent society. Furthermore, we should not only promote cultural diversity, but focus on individual diversity as well.

Billy Kalonji rounded off with a statement: institutions should recognize the diversity of the populations, and create a dialogue with the different communities to understand the various issues they have to face. He also wondered about the difference among generations. How can we deal with the existing culture gap between the youngest and the oldest migrants’ generations? Mr Kalonji stressed the role of institutions, faced with a clear mandate and crucial role in building a coherent intercultural society.

The presentation was followed by a very interesting debate on the meaning of terms such as ‘culture’, ‘interculturality’ or ‘migrant’. The participants were asked to think about the significance we give to these words in our everyday life and about the significance of using one word rather than another.
Working groups session

Once the first session finished, participants were invited to come together in a close-by working area and gathered around seven white cardboard cubes. First of all, each participant had to select one of the 4 suggested topics: “coordination”, “networking”, “socio-cultural activities” (3 cubes) and “gathering the resources”. The aim was to create 7 groups each representing one of the following working areas: public cultural institutions, NGOs, employment agencies and the educational sector. These 7 groups worked their way around the cubes and debated on the 4 topics, noting down ideas and key words. Throughout the whole session, relaxing music played in the background. The input of each participant was of significant value and a lot of interesting remarks and suggestions arose. Each and every one insisted on the fact that the diversity within the different groups was a key element to enriching debates.

Each session lasted one hour and a half. Towards the end each group was asked to synthethise the results and to present the most relevant elements that has arisen. The starting point for the discussions were the working experience of the experts in order to focus on the everyday context. The resulting elements were organised around these 3 different categories:

- The crucial existing elements to preserve and reinforce
- The missing (but necessary) elements to be introduced
- The obstacles to be removed.
The first group working on the topic “coordination” dealt with the key issue of coordinating actors that don’t only work at a ground level but also at an institutional level. Two participants were designated for reporting back: Chantal Hemerijckx from the Maison Africaine and Mabiala Mbeka, from the Comocongo organisation, working on the Congolese audio-visual environment.

Their starting point was to acknowledge the structures already in place and working. As a matter of fact, some coordination already exists among actors on specific aspects such as the work on “values into society”, and tools have already been created to work on interculturality collectively. They described meeting and debate spaces and platforms, and expressed the desire to further develop these spaces of encounters. In the same way, they insisted on the fact that there is a strong demand from the intercultural community to be informed on the topic.

However, they spotted a few problems that need to be addressed. There is a clear lack of training at two levels: at the grassroots, organisations need more preparation, and at the higher levels policy-makers sometimes impose unadapted structures and mechanisms to ground organisations, which slow down the work and create confusion in the sector. Their solution to this lack of clear information was to create an open data space about interculturality resources that would be accessible to anyone facing these issues and willing to get information. This idea was warmly welcomed by the audience, considering it a simple and useful tool.

When Ms Falchetti asked the group to elaborate on the obstacles they face in the search for better coordination, they acknowledged that tensions among actors slow down processes since information is not commonly shared. Illustrated by a very simple example they explained how prejudices and categorisations represent a very important obstacle: if someone was born in Belgium and has African roots, how should he/she be categorised? Finally, they pointed out that NGOs working in the field should involve the communities they are working with more in order to better understand their needs.
The participants of this second group also pointed out that there is an increased need for skills development, both in society (through popular education for example), in the ground organisations, and at the institutional level, which needs to be more involved and supportive (from an economical and organisational point of view). On a more conceptual level, Ms. Berlaimont added that a transversal vision on interculturality and citizenship has to be more present.

The group acknowledged that organisations should force themselves to look beyond their working field and networks and meet other organisations in order to enhance their vision and capacities. The problem of information sharing was once again raised as a crucial issue. While the group stated that their leverages had improved, they addressed some institutional problems, and condemned the short-term vision that prevails since the interculturality issue depends on electoral programs and campaign promises most of the time. This shortsighted vision makes cooperating even more difficult. Finally, they drew the attention to the capital role schools should play in the learning process of interculturality.

**NETWORKING**

Modi Ntambwe, working for the SHARE platform (an association of Belgian associations focussing on migrations) presented the main results of the working group on networking. Their focus was not only the relationship between field organisations but also collaboration processes. Ms Ntambwe reported that her group came to the conclusion there already is a real dialogue established between organisations even if more similar gatherings that allow real personal contact should be put in place. She also explained that formal networks already exist but should be be integrated into the official systems. Even if this group explained about already existing networking opportunities, they nuanced there is still a balance to be found since the so-called “minorities” often don’t feel legitimate to speak up in these networks. In the same way, a balance between generations has to be found since “older-generations” networks are well structured, whereas “younger” networks are often more informal; this sometimes makes the dialogue more difficult and organisations have the task to find a way to integrate both parties equally well. Moreover, the lack of a common language and framework makes it more difficult to communicate: there is a real need for a global framework that could involve all the actors. To conclude, the rapporteur presented the leverages for improvement identified in her group and once again, the need to step out of the usual spheres was raised. The group also recognised that there are power issues in the networking situation and that a level-playing field must be set up between powerful well-established networks and smaller and weaker actors.
SOCIO-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The representative of Transe-en-Dance, Coline Billen, made her reporting by putting the tension between individuals and plurality at the heart of the discourse. Indeed, she explained the importance of considering people as a product of their diversity, respecting their different identities to create an inclusive message in order to take the best out of everyone; she pointed out to what extent the group discussion in the white cube was a good way to express this idea graphically and visually. She also insisted on the fact that every actor has specific skills, values and experience that need to be preserved. Ms Billen explained that her participants agreed to share that political, economic and social resources are present and should be used to help the already strong associative field working on socio-cultural activities. However, she tempered her presentation by adding that trust in each peer actor is needed to be able to work and that it is important to give visibility and recognition to the actions led by the social cultural sectors. She also stressed the importance of time and the need to “take the time” to think about the projects and to implement them, while there is always pressure to deliver things (the abundance of short-term projects has been presented by the group as an obstacle). The second need raised was the lack of education for professionals and young citizens on how to integrate “interculturality”.

SOCIO-CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

The second group working on socio-cultural activities was represented by two participants from two totally different backgrounds: Jan Vercauteren from SMartBe, an association working on accompanying artists in employment issues, and Virginie Noël working for the Omar Khayam cultural centre in Brussels and in charge of the socio-cultural department.

Both acknowledged that they share all previous groups’. They agreed on the fact that the socio-cultural network is already strong and that there is a need for collaboration, and added that popular education has a key role to play in this sector. They also called on everybody to keep a critical mind and to continue learning about this “Other”, and to remain creative, critical and innovative in order to make use of public spaces.

Nevertheless they also noted out the discrepancies that were shared and had been pointed out: projects have to be more strongly linked to the social, economical and urban realities. There is a need to give a voice to the ones that do not feel legitimate to speak up and take action. There is an increased need to know the “Other’s” culture better and to have a political vision. In order to implement the missing part, Mr Vercauteren and Ms Noël reported three fields of action: first of all, actors have to give up on conservative attitudes and adapt their tools, attitudes and way of thinking to social changes. Second of all, some neighbourhoods are stuck in communitarian enclosure, and finally they mentioned the complexity of administrative procedures, an important issue for one of the rapporteurs, who works on helping artists and cultural operators in the administrative maze.
SOcio-CultureL ActivIties

The last group working on socio-cultural activities was represented by Anne Brisbois from the ‘Lire & Ecrire’ association, that promotes literacy and Jonas Nunes de Carvalho, working for the association Pax Cristi. Once again, the role of popular education was emphasized. Education needs to be developed, the existing dialogue broadened and information and knowledge sharing become the norm. The downsides for this group (except for the need to get more professional education) were targeted towards institutions, calling for more funding and long-term vision as well as for a better knowledge of social realities from the policy makers. Ms Brisbois and Mr Nunes de Carvalho also reported that their group expressed a general dissatisfaction when it comes to the institutions implementing their recommendations. This only leads to frustration and does not help to create the environment of trust needed in order to perform efficiently. Other difficulties had already been raised by the previous groups: the generation gap is a problem when communicating among actors; communitarian behaviour is a brake on the improvement of interculturality. Furthermore, cultures are not equally represented in organisations and short term projects are “polluting” the development of interculturality.

Gathering Resources

This group work was organised around the process of gathering financial, human and organizational resources. The two rapporteurs designated in this group were Anne Bernard from the “Centre Regional de Libre Examen” and Céline Serrad from the editing house “Editions du Souffle”. Both women agreed there is a strong global associative network with specific skills and a real willingness to work together. But as they drew a close-up of the functioning of the different organisations, they came across gaps and significant room for improvement. As a matter of fact, it seems that interculturality is not always respected when it comes to teams in charge of socio-cultural projects. Staff members remain white men or women in their forties. The working group also reported the need of more organisational and systemic skills to question the power relations and the need to place human beings at the centre of the global project and as actors of their communities. Some concerns have been raised repeatedly by many of the experts working on the different topics. Following this trend, Ms Serrad and Ms Bernard also reported back on the internal obstacles: issues of competition and seclusion amongst associations and between institutions and associations were raised. On an external level, the group pointed out that policies in place do not always allow for any interculturality and integration this is not a priority in time of austerity. In this respect, current migration policies are more focused on stopping migration flows rather than integrating migrants.
Cultural institutions are called to deal with the topics that emerged during the working groups and by means of selective feedback, Billy Kalonji, Elisabetta Falchetti and Luca Bergamo were able to highlight the key points that came out of these working sessions. There is an important intercultural network among us, but it is still too divided to create a real cooperative tool to promote intercultural dialogue.

We have to define specific skills, to develop specific attitudes through lifelong learning. In order to achieve this, education has to be changed in such a way that it becomes the promoter of an intercultural spirit. We have to connect the values transmitted at school and by our family with each other, and these connections should then be used in order to build a strong intercultural identity.

Cultural institutions have to be able to dialogue, to exchange information not only internally but also with the different local communities. At the same time, informal networks should be recognised as formal cultural networks. We have to work on our environment, our cultural landscape in order to create an intercultural society. We need to create an intercultural landscape out of our political, economic, social and geographic environment. The main principle developed through the UNESCO educative program was “imagining a better society”. This aim seems too have been forgotten by cultural institutions, there is no place for imagination and dreams about a better society in schools. This has to be changed. We shouldn’t be afraid of changing our behaviour; we have to find a balance between change and a relative continuity.

The need for continuity and for change is one of the basic guidelines of the human evolution. The lack of funding and the administrative complexity are two of the main obstacles to promote interculturality.

There is a need for better linkage between fieldwork realities, the institutions and the projects developed by the associations responsible for the promotion of interculturality. On top of all this, a language issue emerges. Every association, every community has its own codification, and this barrier has to be erased. There is a global need for more places to debate, exchange and promote interculturality. We have to create a deep social movement, from the “integration” process to an inclusive process. Interculturality is a totally new concept, and we have to adapt our society to that idea, even though it might frighten some people. Furthermore, we should not underestimate the political component: currently there is only one short-term political vision of interculturality, which doesn’t necessarily meet the needs of intercultural actions, as they require much more time than what the political space-time offers. How can we build intercultural policies efficiently then?

The institutions and the actors in the field have to act together more effectively; there is a strong need for mutual comprehension and the existing associations have to collaborate more. This would be a “win/win” situation. The associational network would improve a lot if those associations were to collaborate. There is a strong intercultural basis, which has to be improved over time. Let’s create a intercultural identity out of our cultural diversity!
The second session was opened by a plenary conversation with Medhi Maréchal from DEMOS, a non-partisan public research and advocacy organisation where Mr Maréchal is “Stafmedewerker cultuur & interculturaliteit” and deals with issues on minorities’ cultural participation and promoting cultural diversity.

Ms Falchetti launched the intervention by giving the specific case of the multicultural orchestra Piazza Vittorio in Rome, Italy. The orchestra introduced the different cultural background of its musicians in a classical repertoire. This example was presented as the perfect reflection of a successful multicultural experience, as it has been recognised by the opera of Rome, a rather conservative institution. At the same time it was also a way of linking what had been worked on in the previous workshop, organised around the metaphor of the orchestra. Furthermore, it raised the following questions: who creates the interculturality programme and the symphony and which public is it created for?

**A conversation with Mehdi Maréchal (DEMOS)**

Elisabetta Falchetti invited Mehdi Maréchal to explain DEMOS’ vision and work on how cultural institutions should implement actions in order to create an intercultural vision and policy. Mr Maréchal drew the portrait of Belgium’s society by saying that it has changed a lot and quickly over the past decades as the country has already known three or four generations of immigration. However, there is a gap between this reality and the way institutions are operating. Most of them deal with certain issues in a way that is not adapted to the current society. For a long time, cultural participation was seen as a way to assimilate and integrate migrants. To be able to take part in Belgian culture, migrants were expected to learn the cultural background of the country. However, this situation is not sustainable in the long run as young people disagree with this paternalistic speech. In his opinion, many youngsters have created their own informal networks they use for cultural activities. However, they still have the feeling that their cultural reality is neither recognised nor financially supported by cultural institutions. There is a real need to take into account informal cultural activities, taking place outside institutions such as theatres or cultural centres.

**The interbreeding dimension:** there are various cultural blocks in Brussels and the idea of interculturality is to create bridges between these different communities. A new identity is emerging in large cities due to the melting pot of cultures that share the same territory. However, the work done on intercultural issues does not take into account this new reality: meeting spaces are created where people from different cultures can interact, but they are missing a key factor: individuals now have a variety of identities which interculturality needs to be built on. In parallel, the problem of categorization remains. The complexity
of a multi-identity cultural environment is reduced to a very simplified framework. Mr Maréchal’s vision is that of the adoption of a completely new approach towards cultural diversity built on a new form of citizenship, a new way of perceiving others. Indeed, there are no longer groups of cultures: each individual is a multiple person, with his own reference framework based on different cultures. Hyperdiversity should be considered as a norm. We need to be open, to experiment, to produce new things, and to elaborate new ways of thinking about interculturality.

CATEGORISATION: Mr Maréchal stated that categorisation is a human necessity which allows individuals to relate to their environment. Could we give up on categorising people? It seems to be a very difficult task, and so maybe we need to create a new way of categorising our environment. The problem seems to be not ‘categorisation’ as such but rather the indicators we used to categorise people. We need to stop saying that minorities’ cultural participation does not exist. We do not need to stimulate this participation but simply recognise and legitimate cultural actions that are already taking place in every European city. Interculturality is all about this acknowledgement. We need to build bridges between cultures, build bridges between the formal and the informal.

Many questions rose after this speech and participants with different points of views entered in a heated, albeit peaceful, debate, bringing their own experience and expertise to the table.

Here is a list of the questions that arose:

*Should we build intercultural identities or intercultural attitudes?*
*Is it still relevant to call people the “third/fourth generation of immigration”?*
*Do we need another paradigm to deal with interculturality?*
Working groups session

The experts were invited to move to the other side of the room where five white cardboard boxes were waiting for them. Each participant had to select one of the 5 following topics: “local democracy”, “me and the other facing diversity”, “valorisation of cultural heritage”, “negotiated spaces for encounter” and “marginalisation”. Participants chose their groups and each group focused on one topic only. At the end of each brainstorming session, the groups were asked to structure the insights from their debate around three main questions:
- The existing initiatives that must be withheld
- The missing elements
- The obstacles that they have to face in the spectrum of interculturality.
LOCAL DEMOCRACY

The first topic to be tackled was local democracy as a tool to promote the involvement of all citizens in the decision process when it comes to cultural issues. The group designated two rapporteurs, Coline Billen and Tamara Maes (from the Brass, Forest cultural centre) to report back. The women explained that there is a clear lack of power-sharing and of acknowledgement of others’ capacities and points of view. It stood out from the introductory speech that it is important to give a voice to certain categories of the population and to be able to listen to what they say and in this way, to create a physical place for encounters and exchanges on approaches and practices.

On the other side, they acknowledged good practices such as positive discrimination, the “Belgian compromise” and people’s ability to follow their dreams and imagination. This last comment was welcomed with a warm applause.

THE OTHERS AND ME: HOW TO DEAL WITH DIVERSITY?

Anne Bernard started by explaining that the group unanimously decided to change the name of the group in French, “moi et les autres face à la diversité”, as they felt the preposition “face à” (facing) sounded too “rebellious” and leading to opposition. Thus, they changed it into “moi et les autres avec la diversité”, with the preposition “avec” (with) expressing the idea of inclusiveness and showing diversity from a more positive point of view. They also chose to illustrate this change on their cube by enhancing it with a colourful illustration.

The rapporteur insisted on the fact that everybody needs to keep his/her own personality, his/her “me” with all its aspects, as an individual, rather than an “ego”, as Ms Bernard explained. People’s self must be related to the others, as knowing oneself allows you to acknowledge others. She also called out to always remain open and curious towards others.

On the other hand, she regretted the lack of time to listen, to question oneself, to release certitude, to open up to different ways of thinking and to acknowledge that we are not always right. She concluded by explaining that this can be difficult since most of us have a very auto-centered vision of the world and think accordingly, disregarding the complexity of society. Amongst the different actors of interculturality, she pointed out the failures on the organisations’ side, as they continue having difficulties developing strong collectives, common sense, framework and spaces. Moreover, the group noticed that they had difficulties in sharing the same priorities at the same time.
VALORISATION OF THE DIFFERENT CULTURAL HERITAGE ON THE TERRITORY

Anne Brisbois was designated by her group to be the rapporteur of the group work about the valorisation of cultural heritage. She started by stating that the group drew its conclusions from the knowledge they had gathered from their daily work in Brussels and had all agreed that there is a gap between the institutions’ perception of the city and the reality in the field. Once again, it became clear that it is of crucial importance to take into account every single facet of the city. It is also often perceived as difficult to understand cultural codes and practices as well as to break cultural prejudices, which adds up to already challenging work. In addition to all these obstacles, Ms Brisbois explained that her group thoroughly discussed not only the lack of communication between the different actors, but also the missing acknowledgement of the actions that are already implemented. However, the group agreed on initiatives and methods: it is of utmost importance to trust in the actions implemented and in the power of initiative from field organisations that are flexible enough to adapt their public needs during the implementation of projects. This bottom-up mechanism and collective actions are, once again, primordial. The rapporteur concluded her intervention by describing Brussels is a laboratory of diversity and cultural identities that should be collectively promoted and maintained throughout the process.

NEGOTIATING SPACES FOR ENCOUNTER

As one of the central topics for “Hyperdivercity”, the issue “negotiating spaces for encounter” was presented by Mabilia Mbeka and Jonas Nunes de Carvalho. Although there are common projects, attempts of dialogue and enough actors present in the field to form a network of dedicated individuals and an organisation willing to act together and to promote diversity, there are still a number of pivotal elements that need a lot work. The two rapporteurs explained that they need a lot of support to succeed in their mission, not only from a financial and administrative point of view, but also tools and competences to manage spaces for encounters, and time and opportunities to experiment and think. Participants expressed the wish to work in new creative spaces, outside the institutions, which are often too limiting. Organisations need to step out of their comfort zone to be able to find new working methods and build up competences in order to promote interculturality. Again a transversal key concept emerged: the need to “the time to take time”.

SOCIO-CULTURAL FACTORS WHICH FAVOUR MARGINALISATION

The last group of this second session chose to work on marginalisation and its factors. Abdelmalek El Houari and Luce Goutelle were in charge of reporting back on the group’s brainstorming session. The rapporteurs explained that they all agreed that all the actors are animated by enthusiasm and willingness to promote interculturality. They work with a participative approach on bottom-up projects and acknowledge the existence of informal networks. Meanwhile, this willingness and enthusiasm is undermined by the lack of financial resources, political support from authorities and the absence of a global project monitoring/structural framework, there is also a strong need to adapt and open up cultural institutions to marginalised people.
At the end of this working session, DEMOS and all the participants are called to put together all the brainstorming elements from the learning partnerships to find the common threads that will then lead towards an open debate with all the experts. Since society is changing steadily and rapidly, there is a crucial need to rethink social models, as they currently do not match with our reality anymore. Informal spaces, that have emerged outside of the system, should be recognised to generate a new form of social innovation. Decisions should not be paternalistic anymore. A strong participative approach has to be put into practice, promoting the dialogue between institutions, field actors and the public in order to find effective solutions and not to command decisions that do not take into consideration all the parameters to suit the complex reality of the field.

The pooling of results drawn during the working group session led to the resurgence of key concepts that should be taken into account when talking about interculturality: **SPACES**: changes emerged from spaces such as negotiated spaces, physical spaces or institutional spaces. Links need to be created and encouraged between these different spheres if we want to reinforce interculturality. Meeting spaces are everywhere; they just need to be either recognised if they are informal or made more accessible if they are formal. Dialogue spaces are often put forward but it needs to be mentioned that contestation spaces are key since solutions are also to be found within confrontation.

**CODES**: the construction of an intercultural world, which focuses on the links between the familiar and the unfamiliar, needs to be based on the understanding of codes. Each individual carries around its own world, with its own representations and language. The concept of interculturality asks for various interactions between all these worlds at all levels of society.

**CITIZEN’S INITIATIVES**: a bottom-up approach should be developed in the political field. Political utilisation is not always a negative thing. However, citizens need to be strongly recognised and consulted throughout the whole process.
Elisabetta Maria Falchetti asked participants for volunteers to briefly sum up the results gathered during the previous sessions. Chantal Hemerijckx (Maison Africaine) took the floor and made a quick synthesis of what had emerged from the encounters, stating that this occasion represented an important breathing space where sharing reflections on some controversial topics in cultural diversity for all of the experts and practitioners were key. Ms Falchetti thanked Chantal and introduced Denis Stokkink, president of the think-and-do-thank “Pour La Solidarité”, committed to promoting solidarity and sustainability in Europe and she asked him to join the plenary.

A conversation with Denis Stokkink (Pour La Solidarité PLS)

Denis Stokkink was responsible for the introduction of the third session and opened with a recent speech by Bart De Wever, Mayor of Antwerpen, stating it was impossible to integrate the Arabic communities into Belgian society, whereas the Asians fitted quite easily into the Belgian social system. In his opinion, integration should be replaced by assimilation in this case. This then raised the racist issue, poisoning the possibility of the integration of different cultures and erasing the dream of an intercultural society.

There are strong links between discrimination and employment. What about social actions and social protection? What are the policies that have been implemented in order to solve these issues? What can the institutions do in order to facilitate the integration of immigrants onto the labour market? Urban planning policies are crucial in promoting the integration of minorities into society. A lack of efficiency in those policies implies a higher unemployment rate that leads to severe social exclusion.
Lifelong learning has to be promoted as well as popular education. A balance between thinking about interculturality and acting in favour of interculturality has to be established. Mr Stokkink used the example of a primary school in Saint Gilles where 99% of the pupils have foreign roots, to show that the intercultural issue is strongly connected to territory and problems in education. The same thing happens in Forest: there is a very big gap between what happens in the north of the commune of Forest and in the south part. Even within the same commune, one school can have up to 99% of kids with Arabic roots while another one has a large majority of white children. Then there is also the issue of self-censorship; some people integrate so perfectly into this social segregation system that they feel they cannot get a higher standard of living. What can be done in schools to tackle this issue?

Interculturality raises an economic problem too. Just outside the Tricoterie, in Saint Gilles, Micro-start is a small business that helps freelancers to build up their own business by using social micro-credit. It has set itself the task of supporting those excluded from the traditional banking system to create or develop their own business. Needless to say most of the people using this service have foreign roots too.

We have to look for increasing social cohesion by understanding and integrating different cultures.

**Working groups session**

In order to allow an in-depth dialogue, all participants were once again invited to choose one of the six white cardboard boxes in the adjacent working area. Each participant chose one of the following 5 topics: “migrants and employment”, “migrants and school”, “intercultural education” (x 2 groups), “cultural sector as a professional career” and “diversity on teamwork”.

Each group focused on the selected topic and structured the results of the discussion into four main reflection parts:
- What should we maintain from the existing elements?
- What is missing?
- What do we need from the institutions to face the issues differently?
- What should WE do as actors working on the issue?
INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Hamel Puissant from the Centre Bruxellois d’Action Interculturelle represented the topic by stating that there are several very positive aspects of the current method and landscape: there is a dedicated methodology with the according tool already in place and managed by people with experience and skills that were developed while working in real “laboratories”. This provides them with spaces where they are able to try out new ideas and projects. He also reminded the participants of the fact that the pre-existing multicultural facet of Brussels should be preserved.

On the contrary, it also seemed obvious to these experts that they are sometimes missing audiences and real accurate target groups as well as information and contact with many cultures. This can be explained by the lack of cooperation and partnership between organisations and actors who often position themselves in a rivalry setting. Moreover, the acknowledgement that there are not enough actors working in the field and that teams working on the topic are themselves not representative of the cultural diversity that is being promoted primed. Thinking about what they would need from the institutions to work more efficiently Mr Puissant pointed out that time is once again a crucial element. Participants also expected more interest and promotion of interculturality from the authorities. As a conclusion, they all conceded that they have to work on mutual trust, cooperation and collective thinking and dare take action and denounce incoherence.

INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

The second group to work on intercultural education decided to ask the two youngest participants of the working group, Nancy Malaka, from CCAEB (Conseil des Communautés Africaines en Europe et Belgique), and Lauriane Tamisé (specialised on Social and Intercultural Psychology) to be their group speakers. Both women stressed the importance of the motivation and dedication of organisations, and especially associations. Unfortunately this is often counterbalanced by the small amount of funding and tools available and dedicated places to meet and exchange, as well as the lack of a
comprehensive approach.
In order to compensate these difficulties, authorities should intervene to reinforce their organisational and financial support and strengthen the link with field organisations, create partnerships and include regular meetings. It was also suggested that schoolbooks should be reviewed and material should be created in order to include the intercultural message. Moreover, ideas were shared to help overcoming or reducing obstacles: training and information sessions on interculturality, work on erasing power relations between the different cultures and leveling the playing field, developing deeper knowledge on the reality of the field and collaboration work with media and the way they deal with interculturality.

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MIGRANTS & SCHOOL
Maurice Chefneux from the CEFA of Liège, specialised in education, was designated by his group to be the rapporteur of the discussion on integration migrants in school and raising awareness among children and pupils in order to create active citizenship around interculturality.
Language plays a crucial role in integration processes: being able to communicate is a first step towards exchange and integration but also towards independence: this mechanism has to be continued in schools. School must also maintain curiosity and openness of pupils and children. However, in school, children depend on their parents who also need help for integration, regarding administrative procedures linked to school for example. According to Mr Chefneux and his group this problem can be overcome by introducing “coaches” or mentors whose role would be to explain how the country works.
Furthermore, organisations, to be helpful, need to cope with difference and innovation and involve the population (but this requires to know well the communities’ needs!).
When it comes to the relationship with institutions, the rapporteur explained that his groups expressed the need for better coordination between all the actors (schools, political institutions and associations) in order to build on actions that assure continuity, allow more efficiency in the long run and lead common projects.
They also launched a call for authorities to help fight against communitarian schools and reminded that teachers cannot be all at the same time teachers, psychologists and social workers, they need support to work on migrants’ integration and interculturality and this requires more staff and a bigger budget.
MIGRANTS & EMPLOYMENT

Before pointing out the findings of his group, rapporteur Rix Depasse from “Coordination et Initiatives pour Réfugiés et Etrangers – CIRÉ” (Work department) explained that his working group was composed of several different profiles in terms of age and background, which allowed a very rich debate but also a complementarity in the points of view. There was a general agreement to maintain and strengthen their individual skills, ideas, networks and projects on the one hand, but to also create a global and common vision that gathers all the actors as well as to develop and distribute educative tools on the other hand. Once again, the problem of funding was raised.

Rix Depasse, as an expert on the topic, explained that authorities from short sighted vision, in addition to the job creation plans, in relation with the particular Belgian landscape, adding that more cooperation between the different governments and ministries is necessary to be more efficient. This comes on top of more transparency, more coherence and clearer dialogues with actors, and a better knowledge of the reality of the field, in order to adapt policies to the social cultural and economic realities. The complexity of the administrative procedures also considerably slow downs the work.

The group also discussed the discrepancies on the actors’ side and they pointed out a requisite to find a common language; unclear terminology is definitely an obstacle to good communication and fruitful work. Field organisations must also think out of the box and find innovative ways to deal with interculturality in the employment and work sector. The final remark regarded the fact that if there is a general need for more funding, and organisations also have to work on how to adapt their budget to the fieldwork (this could pass by cooperation for projects).

MULTICULTURALISM & TEAMWORK

After working in small groups on multiculturalism and teamwork (what are the obstacles to diversity and how can we trigger teamwork?), the group came back to the plenary to set up a “team attitude” and designated two rapporteurs for the reporting: Coline Billen and Natacha Giloteau (from Actiris, the public Agency for employment and work). As the process and learning partnerships went on, it was interesting to see participants take ownership of the process and start using all the material at their disposal in order to give a lively and interactive reporting.

The two rapporteurs elaborated on the dedication, the interesting networks and the specific skills of the actors but found the absence of a teaching program on multiculturalism and of the Other’s culture, necessary to create a mixed team, regrettable. Teams and businesses also have to go further than multiculturalism and try to reach “interculturalism”. Authorities were seen as possible partners to enhance a deeper global vision of interculturality and provide goals to firms and associations. Possible leverages that were identified were the following: the improvement of intercultural skills, communication with a universal code, the sharing of points of view in order to trust and know each other.
PROFESSIONAL CAREERS & THE CULTURAL FIELD

The group that dealt with professional careers and the cultural field focused on the cultural sector as a possible career option for migrants. The participants, represented by Angela Tillieu Olodo from KVS (the Brussels Flemish City Theater) started her reporting by explaining that we have to consider both migrants with an academic background in any kind of arts and “self-made” artists who developed their artistic skills on their own. She started her reporting by recalling the dedication, skills, creativity and knowledge present in various organisations as well as in informal networks. However, she nuanced that there is a real need for more financing and for organisational support adapted to the fieldwork. Angela Tillieu Olodo also called for professional training on this topic for cultural operators. This help could be provided by institutions, both for cultural workers and for migrants through explanations on the codes and rules in place for artists (administrative process, grants opportunities...). In addition to these points, she added that institutions are still reluctant to recognise art forms (hip hop is for example still not always considered by institutions). To help solve these issues, she reported that the working group wished to foster cooperation at all levels and get out of mental and special segregations.
Debates

Denis Stokkink made a brief summary of the working session, outlining a few keywords:

A. SOCIAL MELTING POT There is a strong link between social diversity and territories, especially in the so-called “ghettos”. Mr Valls, the French Prime Minister, used the word “apartheid” to describe the events that take place in the poorest French suburbs. This is a strong concept, which every actor involved in intercultural should work on.

B. SCHOOL IS FUNDAMENTAL It is the root of many problems, but on the other hand, it can be the catalyst of many solutions. Schools shouldn’t be communitarian. Kids open up to each other naturally, they are curious by nature: we have to work on that trait in order to promote an intercultural spirit. Discriminations are inscribed as soon as children go to school.

C. INTEGRATION PROGRAMME An integration programme is being developed in Flanders and Wallonia. There is a strong political issue: how do we lead this programme? Should it be a compulsory programme, that imposes many things in order to integrate people, or is it something that should be adapted to the different fieldworks?

D. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FIELDWORK It is now crucial to create real cooperation between the different associations and institutions of the intercultural network. How can we create and reinforce the links between them?

E. INDIVIDUALS VERSUS COMMUNITIES Individuals versus institutions. The individual is both the object and the subject of the intercultural policies. How can we connect the individual and communities needs?

F. INNOVATION AND EUROPE It is one of the main issues of the European strategy of development. Why don’t intercultural actors use Europe to create? There is a disregard towards Europe, how can we solve it?

G. LEGITIMATING THE ILLEGITIMATE CULTURES IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE Cultural marginalisation has to be erased. There are many social barriers to the legitimisation of the “minor” cultures. How can we erase them?

After the intervention participants raised some remarks and questions. The general attitude was tense and sometime defiant because the topic seemed highly challenging and demanding:

“We shouldn’t talk about ghettos. Ghettos exist only in our minds.”
“We have to work both on our differences and our ressemblances”
“We have to rethink the way we categorise people. It is natural to categorise, but we have to find new categories that are adapted to the new social realities.”
“School excludes and includes at the same time.”
“Aren’t experts too far from the concrete fieldwork?”
“There is always a cultural domination when we deal with interculturality.
We cannot fight against that, but how can we adapt to this situation? We can’t totally erase the power relations between the different communities, we have to deal with that situation.”
“The social justice system triggers differences between the different communities.”
“We have to tackle self-censorship: sometimes, people feel their background doesn’t give them the right or chance to access an upper position, even though it is wrong. We have to change that.”
“Interculturality is a political concept, it is an issue that involves debates and fights.”
“Belonging to a territory can open or close doors, depending on the place where we live or used to live. Sometimes, people that live in the poorest neighbourhoods do not want to mention it on their résumé”.

Ms Falchetti then drew the attention of the participants to the work we have to do as experts. Mr Stokkink’s speech raised the issue of discrimination. We have to work on the reasons of the existence of segregation. The relation between employment, culture and education is really important and strong. But school does not hold the monopoly on education. The territory, the institutions and the associations have to support school. We have to look for a social cohesion in school, in the institutions, in the associations, in the families as well.
There is still the huge problem of communication: how can we communicate with different codes, different languages? How can we be skillful in the intercultural area? How can we teach people the intercultural way of thinking? We have to develop our intercultural competences: we should be able to act efficiently to intercultural contexts. This is linked to specific attitudes and affective characteristics. Knowledge, education, discovery, intercultural attitudes and interpretation are fundamental in order to get good intercultural skills. Our empathy and our interest in foreigners are crucial. There are many types of informal languages, like our art, our attitudes. Those kinds of informal communications are important in order to create new spaces for dialogue. After the plenary debate, the experts agreed on the importance of working together in order to promote an inclusive social model in synergy between cultural institutions, educational sector, associations and employment.
IV. Final Conference
Introduction

Luca Bergamo thanked both participants and guests for their precious input and welcomed them for this final moment of working together, stating that the exchanges during the sessions had been very productive and interesting. He summed up the efforts made in all the learning partnerships pointing out that the greatest difficulty relied in finding coherence between concepts and practices in the field. An interactive approach through discussions needs to be investigated, developing flexibility regarding causes, consequences, and actions.

The lack of financial support had often been mentioned during the previous sessions. The public sphere should be protected, especially since our world is built on the commercialisation of our society, promoting unequal growth. Growth is currently based on private consumption. Therefore, we need to understand the differences between public and private issues, by looking at political implications on this topic. Language is one of the main tools that allow people to interact and to get to know each other. Which languages should we use? Between formal and informal language, there is a wide range of possibilities, thus creating a real complexity. Interculturality also means sharing codes. It implies discussions to understand our differences and our contradictions, which often lead to tensions. These issues need to be discussed in order to innovate and bring about changes regarding the intercultural speech. For this reason, Luca Bergamo suggested to tackle the emerged issues from another perspective that tried to read them transversally. He introduced 3 different topics that came out during the learning partnerships and invited participants to reflect on them.

TIME-RELATED COMPLEXITY

Time is extremely important. We need time to make changes, to create innovation, to bring about transitions in our society. There is a gap between the institutional space-time and the field reality. Institutions often demand to act and react fast, but at the same time we can notice slowness in the way institutions are dealing with financing for example. We need a new system, closer to the reality, less rigid and more efficient. A link needs to be made between the time-related dimension and the flexibility of management. How to handle this double need for slowness and rapidity?

PARTNERSHIP/COMPETITION DUALITY

How can the actors of the intercultural field collaborate with each other, especially when they all have different specific goals? Which factors should we change if we want to transform competition into partnership?

PRESERVATION VS. INNOVATION

Interculturality has two goals that can appear as opposite. We need to preserve the plurality of identities but need to be open to innovation and changes at the same time. How can we combine these two forces? When should we open up to changes and when should we preserve what already exists?

There are numerous tensions. How should we deal with that? How can we promote collective actions without forgetting the individual dimension? How do we work within a formalised system, represented by institutions, and the informal field reality?
Working groups session

Mr Bergamo explained to participants how to move to the final conclusions: small groups were asked to reflect on a further elaboration of the three topics explained earlier. Indeed, they are better explained through these five “tension threads”:

- Institutions ~ Territory
- Partnerships ~ Competition
- Individual ~ Collective
- Change ~ Preservation
- Going Slowly ~ Going Quickly

After gathering into 4 small groups, participants were called to choose what tension they wanted to focus on and explore their choix in depth during the following 60 minutes. People reached their cube, background music started and the working session began.
Connecting the Dots

The Final Conference was also an occasion for participants to go back to small groups in order to discuss these four tension threads, as the participants believed that the four topics were interlinked and they were interested in all of them. They did not focus their discussions on one specific point and shared their findings on several different aspects. Indeed, all the participants were all really active during the plenary, sharing points of view, agreements and disagreements.

On the topic “preservation versus change” interesting findings and remarks were shared: one group stated that it is necessary to keep time for “palabres”, endless speech, for the sake of the dialogue and with the sole goal of discussing, without looking for a set objective. This keeps alive interpersonal relationships. All participants agreed to say that considering the Belgian situation, it is capital to keep the existing ability to negotiate and compromise, to value simplicity, humility, solidarity and the typical Belgian self-mockery. However, it was reported that it is also important to valorise others’ culture and practices; the solution to local issues may be found here. Other cultures can enhance “our” culture. In Belgium, participants raised the question of terminology: should we talk about Belgian culture, the culture in Belgium or about cultures in Belgium? It was also explained that the tension between modernity and tradition is not always where we traditionally think it is: society is often asked for innovation and flexibility, whereas the system does not allow room for it because of its rigidity: flexibility was reported as one of the key elements. Experts noted that in the cultural integration field, the quicker the changes and integration are needed, the slower and heavier the system becomes. They feel there is a need for change of evaluation mechanisms inside the institutions; therefore, it is important to explain the codes and highlight them. They concluded this discussion by telling that we need to acknowledge that all cultural changes need time.

This last remark shows that these topics are largely intertwined, since participants discussing “time versus space” pointed out that the notion of time through the intercultural scope is tricky. We could go as far as developing a new philosophy of time according to Frédéric Lubans, who works on pedagogical approaches and publics for the Théâtre Varia: “Let us wait in order to have more time to act”. Time lapse should be managed differently according to events that can occur during a
project. Moreover, changes constantly occur in a given space, therefore actors have to take the time required to evaluate and analyse these changes through dialogue. Adaptation of tools, methodologies and even behaviours are a constant need. It is important to question what is considered normal as it is always relative to our own perception of the world, our language, our representation and values. The cultural relations framework has to be changed to fit in with the new reality of our society. Participants argued that they should take time to think, not only in reaction to a specific issue; equally, alternative space where individuals are considered a global entity, with needs but also ability should be created, with an inclusive approach.

Besides, even within the same culture, not all individuals interact with each other. It is crucial to keep in mind that culture is not always a factor of social cohesion. Coline Billen explained that individuals have to be understood in all their complexity and as an global entity, on account of this, interpersonal non violent communication should be promoted and taught in addition to intercultural dialogue as this would certainly improve the living together in a given space. She added that the vocabulary chosen is also important as it can on its own include or exclude individuals or part of their identity.

The relation between the collective and the individual (as a person and as an organisation alone) was the third thread of tension proposed for further discussion. The experts conceded that even if organisations always want to act collectively, they sometimes end up working alone on a project; the same goes for individuals who often end up acting according to their own agenda. Collective action therefore requires stepping out of one’s comfort zone, and encounters most of the time create unexpected positive collective actions; as it has been said: “the whole is always more than the total of the parties”. As they reported their group’s work, Virginie Noël and Jan Vercauteren explained that the collective and the individual are intertwined, as the collective appropriation of a space by the community reinforces the expression of the individual and his/her appropriation of the public space most of the time. Finally, the collective also creates an image, often distorted, of reality and the “other”. In this respect, Carmelo Virone from SMartBe shared an anecdote about the “Festival International de l’Insulte” in Liège in the 1980s where people from numerous nationalities living in the city were called on stage to declaim insults that aimed at depicting the “Other” and lead to deconstructing the vision of the “Other” in a alternative and humorous way.
The last thread of tension proposed for the final discussion “institutions versus reality on the field” had been present throughout the Learning Partnerships. Mabiala Mbeka reported that discrepancies between institutions and the on-field reality often lie in the mistaken vision authorities have of the field: its composition, its needs. Indeed, participants reported that they often feel institutions don’t see the diversity of people nor the variety of possible answers and try to trot out a model for every situation. The fragility of the territory is in some cases real but also a construction: we often assume that territories in the city are defined by one culture while actually the situation is often different and shows great diversity within a same area. As an expert in the Learning Partnerships pointed out, a easy exercise enables you to deconstruct these prejudices: check the names on mail boxes or doorbells, it is most of the time possible to see that our ideas on a territory are just prejudices. Inclusive decisions processes would also help engage citizens on what is being done on their territories. Similarly, an efficient and inclusive territorial policy can only be constructed in association with the local concerned populations. It was also reported that media play an important role in the collective imaginary since their vision is often disconnected from reality and interculturality is far from a common trend in media. Before the conclusion of the discussion, Rix Depasse served as a spokesperson for the rest of the participants and confessed that field organisations worry about the consideration of their recommendations to authorities; they feel that they are asked to content the local actors and give an impression of participation to political power but are never taken into account, which leads to a lack of mutual trust.

**Debate**

The closing debate tackled the question of European financings related to cultural projects. The gap between field actors and the European Union was often outlined. To illustrate it, we could take the metaphor of the Troy horse. Each territory, each defended cause, has a lot of Troy horses inside of the European walls however it is really difficult to find people who are actually able to open the doors of these horses to access the institutional world of European institutions.
The European Union jargon is difficult to understand and constantly changing. Field actors have a limited amount of time, so the time they need to spend learning always results in a reduction of the time they work on the field. Furthermore, the world of European project is in the hands of experts, which makes it difficult for the different associations to compete, especially for the small structures. Few people on the field are trained to answer European call of proposals. Therefore innovation should also be pushed through by European institutions by simplifying operating framework decrees to organisations. Innovation is not only dedicated to the field of artistic activities. Several trails were drawn in order to help field organisations to access European financings:

>> One of the solutions to overtake this issue could be to create a greater communication between administrative guides and the artists whom projects emerged from.
>> Perpetuation should not remain a great concept. If we really want to build long-term projects, things need to be done differently, allowing changes and flexibility.
>> Interculturality needs to be based on an innovated administration. The European Union should take the time to think about all the issues that field actors have to face and maybe introduce a part of flexibility in their call of proposals.

When we talk about interculturality, we often avoid some structural factors such as discrimination, racism, and marginalisation... However these key issues need to be discussed beforehand in order to go further in any discussion. Today there is a twofold rejection between cultural communities sharing a same territory. A marginalised young person, who has the feeling to be excluded from society, partly because of his culture, will react by completely rejecting the system and the codes associated to it. Are we still able to change this situation, or is it too late? Can we create links between the familiar and the unfamiliar; can interculturality be promoted in extreme situations, which sadly also reflects the reality?

Education might have been a great solution in the past. However, times have changed, as it does not work well for people who are still within the educational system, so what can we do for the ones who are outside of it?

Interculturality has to face many tensions: the tension between institutions and field actors, the tension between different perceptions of time, the tensions between productivity and efficiency, social tensions, the tension between changes and preservation. All of these are the consequences of diversity and of the multitude of different ways to perceive the world. However, solutions can be found. Not in order to reduce diversity, which is vital, but to communicate more clearly on these issues. It is important to have endless debates, to never stop discussing the situation.

To be efficient in their operations, field actors need flexibility. To overcome tensions, collective actions should be taken, in order to regain ownership of the public space, but also to improve the decision-making process by promoting a bottom-up approach. Time is also needed in order to properly conceptualise projects, to fully understand the complexity of the territory people are living in.
Hyperdivercity was an opportunity where many interesting points of views were shared. The working atmosphere was really positive and was nurtured by the great commitment of each participant in the room. Everyone had a different social and professional background and this contributed to the build-up of in-depth discussions. We understood that the development of interculturality faces countless issues. Nevertheless, the resilient work of each actor in the cultural field together with the strong contribution of the cultural networks represent two crucial assets for paving the way. It is now essential that the cultural actors strengthen their collaboration in order to promote a much stronger interculturality. Cultural projects should be more carefully connected to the field of reality. Education, tolerance, and respect are essential pillars for the development of a global intercultural spirit.

The obstacles are numerous, but every participant brought solutions by sharing and designing possibilities with others. These Learning Partnerships offered many hints to exploring the nuances of the intercultural issue. They have been a wonderful example on how interculturality can be achieved. It has shown that being in an open and informal space, thinking and debating about concrete and theoretical issues, is essential and vital for actions to be coherent and impactful, and to make Hyperdivercity even more powerful and meaningful.
V. Annexes
### Participants' list learning partnerships

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**Individual participants**

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## Participants' list final conference

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Billy Kalonji
Billy Kalonji is presently working at BOZAR Center for Fine Arts at Brussels as a diversity officer. He is and has been member, founding member and administrator for various organisations such as COMRAF (Committee of the Royal Museum for Central Africa), AFRICALIA (which develops a programme to support African contemporary arts, mobility of artists and to reinforce actions of cultural organisations working in Africa with the civil society), SHARE (forum for migrants) and BECAME. All these associations were created and are supported by people who are eager to share experience and knowledge on migration with communities, migrants and the receiving societies. He is also a member of the Collective Colonial Memory and Fight against Discrimination and is one of the founders and the first coordinator for the African Platform. This association represents 22 nationalities and brings together African organisations and communities of Flanders and Brussels. He is also involved in socio-cultural initiatives such as the project “Afrikaanse Talentendag” which is an event he has initiated to promote African talents, and has taken part in the README European project. Finally, he is one of the founding members of Mwinda Kitoko, a socio-cultural association which is one of the first African organisations involved in the participating and integrating dialogue with the authorities of Antwerp. Billy Kalonji graduated from the three Belgian regions. He holds a degree in Sciences of Labour and Human Resources Management from the Université Libre de Bruxelles and another one in Development policies from the University of Antwerp – RUCA.

Mehdi Maréchal
Mehdi Maréchal is staff member at Demos, a Brussels based research and advocacy organisation funded by the Flemish government. Demos aims to innovate and broaden participation in arts, youth work and sports, focusing specifically on groups that experience a narrowing of opportunities within society (due to education, wealth, ethnicity, disability). From the perspective of the social environment of these underprivileged people, the organisation advocates the intrinsic value of arts, sports and youth work in strengthening a more vibrant and inclusive democracy. After his studies in political and social sciences at Ghent University, he worked as a programme manager Middle-East for the International NGO Oxfam for five years. Since 2012 Mehdi is staff member at Demos where he focuses on cultural participation of ethnic and cultural minorities. He has made many publications for Demos including the research paper “In nesten” on talent-development and interculturality in the performing arts and “integratiestop” on migration and citizenship. He regularly writes opinion pieces on this topic and he is one of the initiators of the “Ghent Spring” a civil movement that aims to change the current approach of cultural diversity.

Denis Stokkink
Denis Stokkink is an expert in social and solidarity economy, and he is the founder and the president of Pour la Solidarité. This is an independent European think & do tank committed to promoting solidarity and sustainability in Europe. It brings its expertise in research, consulting, coordination of European projects and event organization to companies, public authorities and the civil society. PLS is strongly implemented on the different European territories, due to its numerous projects. The think & do tank converts its ideas, its concepts into concrete actions,
in order to promote solidarity in Europe.
Denis Stokkink studied economy at the “Université libre de Bruxelles” and the “Solvay Business
School” (Brussels). He was serving as advisor of the Belgian Minister-President from 1995 to
1999, and at the Ministry for Employment from 1999 to 2003. He has always used its expertise
in order to develop a social economy that relies on solidarity.

Elisabetta Maria Falchetti
After graduating in Natural Sciences at the University of Rome “La Sapienza”, Elisabetta
Falchetti specialised in Zoology. Since 1998 she has been working at Rome’s City Museum of
Zoology as coordinator and director of the Educational Department. During the first years of
her career she taught Natural Sciences in high schools and took part in university didactics.
No matter where she worked, she always devoted her energy to didactics and lifelong learning
and education (in particular for marginalised people), strongly believing in the value and the
power of culture in improving the quality of life for all. She taught topics such as Museum
Education and Communication and Lifelong learning in Italian Universities as lecturer both at
graduate and post-graduate level. She is the author of many papers and books on the various
fields within her specialisation and in particular on museum education. Her current interests
include museum education and communication (also by new ITC); the role of museums and
other Cultural Institutions in social - cultural inclusion; the impact of museums on individual,
social and environmental sustainability.

Luca Bergamo
Luca Bergamo has been the Secretary General of Culture Action Europe since March 2012.
For the first ten years of his career, Luca was a specialist in artificial intelligence and IT. Since
1994 he has switched his focus to people. Along with Zone Attive, the company set up by
the city of Rome on his recommendation, Luca has created and guided some of Italy’s most
revolutionary cultural initiatives. In 2004, he was appointed Director-General of the Glocal
Forum, an international foundation promoting peace dialogue in post-conflict areas through
local diplomacy and cultural cooperation. In 2007 he was called to lead the launch of the Italian
National Agency for Youth (ANG). Under his leadership, the ANG started a global initiative to
support youth activism for sustainable development worldwide. He built a coalition involving
major United Nations agencies and over 1300 civil society organizations from 104 countries.