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D 2.1 - User requirements and Needs and Gaps analysis report

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- CONSORCI DEL MUSEU MEMORIAL DE L'EXILI (MUME)
- ETHNIKO KENTRO EREVNAS KAI TECHNOLOGIKIS ANAPTYXIS (CERTH)
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Project no. 870939

SO-CLOSE

Enhancing Social Cohesion through Sharing the Cultural Heritage of Forced Migrations DT-TRANSFORMATIONS-11-2019: Collaborative approaches to cultural heritage for social cohesion

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1. Executive Summary

The goal of this deliverable is to illustrate the main findings of the WP2 collective research, based on participatory methods and group reflections (co-creation and focus groups).

The idea is to enlighten coherences and resources as well as questionable and problematic points, in order to help WP3, WP4 and WP5 with new and tested ideas together with suggestions to mitigate possible obstacles, misunderstandings and mistakes.

The text starts illustrating a short analytical premise and it then covers the 4 main So-Close fields of interests: historical memory, social cohesion, cultural heritage and methods and tools for sharing between native and refugee / asylum seekers communities.

2. Acronyms and abbreviations

A / As	Academic / Academics
CI / CIs	Cultural Institution / Institutions
FG / FGs	Focus Group / Focus Groups
GA	Grant Agreement
GFR	Elliniko Foroum Prosfigon
MONTE	Fondazione Scuola di Pace di Monte Sole
MUME	Consorti Del Museu Memorial De L'exili
NGO / NGOs	Non Governmental Organisation / Organisations
PM / PMs	Policy Maker / Makers
R / Rs	Refugee (and Asylum Seeker) / Refugees (and Asylum Seekers)
S / Ss	Student / Students
VDA	Stowarzyszenie Willa Decjusza
WP / WPs	Work Package / Packages





3. INTRODUCTION

3.1. Structure of the deliverable

This deliverable is structured in order to give the reader the widest account both of the FG activity structure and of the activity findings.

It starts with a short description of the task as per GA and of the Consortium partners mostly involved in it. It then faces the challenges due to the Covid-19 world pandemic and the mitigation strategies taken. It moves then to the illustration of the methodological framework and its actual fulfillment. The next chapter gives an updated account of what the situation is in terms of migratory flows and legislation in relation to the So-Close CI countries.

Entering the core of the analysis, the deliverable follows the list of themes identified in the FGs questions lists (Annex 11.4 and 11.5): it explores the findings linked to the relationship with the Memory of the Past, to move then to explore the visions on Social Cohesion first and on Cultural Heritage secondly, with a detailed report on tools and methodologies selected to go on working.

It ends with an open conclusion, since the richness of the answers and the continuously changing of the contexts do not allow to consider the findings as a final word on the subject while a contribution to mark a path to follow.

3.2. Task description

As for the project design (from GA), the goal of WP2 is to develop the common co-creative methodology and tools to gather information from the target group, users, cultural institutions and academics necessary for the continuation of the project. Specifically, the first step was 1a) to design the procedure and structure of the co-design methodology and then 1b) to test this methodology in locally-based activities. The second step was 2a) to collect and 2b) to analyse the data resulting from the exchange activities in order to provide empirical content to WP3, WP4, WP5.

Within this project design, and because of the pandemic emergency restrictions, FGs were meant to serve the points 1b and 2a.

While designing the structure of the co-design methodology was done using the WP1 achievements, so to say deriving needs, gaps and requests from the individual interviews as stated in GA, WP1/Task 1.1 description [WP1 aims to] “establish the base of data for the next co-design phases (WP2)”, the test was supposed to be done through Communicative Focus Groups. They differ from traditional FGs because the communicative focus group is composed of a group of people who share a given activity on a regular basis and is conducted in their regular place of gathering (i.e. school, workplace, association, home).

As for the management of the Covid-19 pandemic risk (see 3.4), it has to be mentioned that a re-framing of the FGs proved to be necessary and it was not in relation to the mode (in person or virtual) while it related to the obligation to abandon the “communicative” characteristic: it was not possible to meet people in their own environment but the blending of different stakeholders became unavoidable.

3.3. Cultural Institutions

The project partners involved in this phase were the four Cultural Institutions.





Villa Decius Association - VDA

Villa Decius Association was established in 1995 by well-known representatives of the Polish world of science, economy, and culture. Within several years Villa Decius has been defined as a cultural institution of international outreach and has become one of the bridges linking European nations. The renaissance palace and garden complex of Villa become a base for the Association's activities continuing the idea of a place for the dialogue of cultures and meeting point of people, artists and scientists.

The historical background this cultural institution was meant to explore was outcomes and displacements after the end of a war given fact that after being a Nazi Police headquarter during the Second World War, the Villa housed a school for auditors of co-operatives, a dormitory and a tuberculosis ward of the Dr. Anka Hospital.

The Peace School Foundation of Monte Sole - MONTE

The Peace School Foundation of Monte Sole, created in 2002, has its registered office and its operating facilities in the Historical Park of Monte Sole, founded in 1989 by a law of the Emilia Romagna Region. Its aim is to promote training and peace education projects, non-violent conflict resolution, respect of human rights, for a peaceful living together among different people and cultures, for a society without xenophobia, racism and any other kind of violence towards human beings and their environment.

Starting from a historiographical reflection around the Nazi massacre of civilians that took place there in 1944, its historical to explore were the mechanisms of violence that made that violence possible, through the memory of who was there and of the place itself as a silent guardian of its past.

The Exile Memorial Museum Consortium - MUME

The Exile Memorial Museum Consortium is a public body constituted for the establishment and joint management, in the town of La Jonquera, whose object is the exhibition, research, interpretation and dissemination of history and memory related to the Spanish Civil War, republican exile and Franco dictatorship, taking also into account the phenomenon of exile globally in the context of the twentieth century until today.

The consortium was meant to explore the link with other historical and current issues such as migrations, exoduses, other forced displacements of people and persecutions due to their ideas in defense of freedom, democracy and social progress.

The Greek Forum of Refugees - GFR

The Greek Forum of Refugees (GFR) is a registered non-profit making Association established in Athens, Greece, in 2012. Its overall aim is to support the unity of the refugee communities based in Greece and at the European level and to foster refugees' inclusion within their host society by encouraging their active participation and need to be recognized as skilled and knowledgeable individuals. The historical connection to the European traumatic past was to be developed through the connection with and the analysis of the Trikeri Island Concentration Camp, on political persecution and women internment during the Greek Civil War.





3.4. Covid-19 pandemic related risks

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 world pandemic prevented the Cultural Institutions, members of the project consortium, to realize this specific research method. Actually, lockdown and restrictions in every country stopped almost every activity - job related or community related - in person, and for this reason it was not possible to reach the selected groups of people in their regular place of gathering. Moreover, there were a lot of difficulties in gathering itself and once it was clear that this scenario was far from changing, the Consortium decided to change the way of testing, and studied the best way to achieve the goal, keeping the maximum possible level of interaction and the widest range of stimulus and perspectives.

While for the part of work with stakeholders it was relatively simple to reframe the FGs settings from in person to virtual. When it came to FGs with refugees the issue of internet accessibility presented all its substance: instability of connections, costs for subscription, lack of proper devices and softwares prevented the participation in more than one situation and in more than one context. This was also a precious lesson in order to mitigate this kind of risk for the future of the project. The decision was then to prioritize, in terms of possibilities left open by the pandemic restrictions, the work with the most fragile categories, so to say to try to have only in person experiences with Refugees and Asylum Seekers in order not to incur in difficulties linked to lack of proper devices or proper connection providers.





4. METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

4.1. Focus Groups framework

Each project partner took part in an intensive seminar organized by LUND and UAB (agenda of the meeting and relevant materials as Annexes 11.1 to 11.3).

Some relevant essays were given to the participants to read in advance in order to be well prepared for the discussion and a request for a detailed presentation by every Cultural Institution experience and practice was sent out. Distinguished experts from universities that are members of the Consortium prepared very deep and punctual presentations.

What was to take into consideration for the project was mainly related to the fact that FG is to be put in place in order to:

- Have a wider range of responses (diversity aspect)
- Observe conflict lines, solidarities and hierarchies (interaction aspect)
- Detect the limits of what goes to say and discuss in a group; detect sensitive topics (normative aspect)
- Activate forgotten details (memory aspect)
- Produce data or ideas that might not have been uncovered in individual interviews (synergetic aspect).

Starting from there, WP2 tasks leaders and experts further discuss in other meetings and email exchanges those 5 points in order to intertwined them with the SO-CLOSE 5 key concepts:

- ✓ *Co-creation* - Talking with and not talking about or talking on behalf of.
- ✓ *Dependencies* - No hierarchies among roles but horizontal relationships.
- ✓ *Bottom-up* - The target group is not only the final recipient of the project but it is also the trigger and the engine of the process.
- ✓ *Innovation* - The 3 elements mentioned above are the substance of the innovation that will embody themselves also in the final tech outputs.
- ✓ *European Dimension* - It is the general framework and the option to aspire to but at the moment it is not fully implemented and a risk exists to use it as a concept to level the differences of contexts.

Finally, it was necessary to take into consideration the fact that FGs were to be implemented *after* individual interviews and for this reason attention should be paid to:

- estimating how frequently or publicly accepted are certain ideas, concepts, solutions;
- observing how these ideas, concepts, solutions are generated within the group depending on power differentials or group dynamics;
- discussing idiosyncrasies and details found in individual interviews

What follows is the actual workflow designed and - even if with some differences - applied.

4.2. FGs Participants

Each Cultural Institution (GFR, MONTE, MUME, VDA) was requested to lead at least 3 FGs:

- one with Policy Makers + Academics





- one with Cultural Institutions and NGOs
- one with Refugees

The idea behind this decision was determined by the fact that the pandemic was entering a new worsening phase and it was already foreseen the inability to hold more than that number of meetings. In this situation, the mitigation of the power differential was considered a necessity in order to take off the table a potential trigger of conflicts and/or a possible reason for silencing part of the group.

GFR was asked to have a protection group that was meant to experience first-hand the information gathering techniques and content for the purposes of correcting culturally inappropriate materials and minimizing the risks of triggering a traumatic experience. Unfortunately, this was not possible due to the Covid restrictions and the decision was then to have GFR doing 2 FGs with refugees in order to make the voice of the central group of the So-Close project louder and stronger.

Generally speaking, it was shared the idea that, when possible, it would have been incredibly good to have more than 3 FGs; moreover, if Cultural Institutions were in contact with possible FGs participants that didn't fit the previously mentioned criteria, they were invited to consider them as a parallel path of work. The request was simply to be ready to describe why and how they were “meaningful” FGs.

Further conditions were shared:

- to preferably take into consideration the gender balance for each group but there were no restrictions in terms of age or country of origin;
- a minimum of one meeting in 2 parts for each FG was requested. That is to say that every Cultural Institution could decide if they want to / can have one meeting for the content part (Cultural Heritage and Social Cohesion) and one meeting for the tools part or if they want to / can have just one session of 1,5 hours + 1,5 hours to explore both parts;
- if not forbidden or almost impossible, FGs were asked to be in person and not virtual;
- audio / video -recording was compulsory.

As mentioned, the FG was supposed to cover 2 sets of themes. There was a dedicated workshop among the 4 Cultural Institutions, UAB and LUND and TEMP in order to design the set of questions for the research and the facilitation. The final templates are readable in Annex 11.4 and 11.5.

It was finally requested to store all the information collected during the FGs in a safe and encrypted workspace (NEBULA - UAB) that only authorized members of the consortium have access to, ensuring that Article 8, Title II (European Parliament, Council and Commission, 2012) on the protection of personal data is complied with.

The commitment of the Cultural Institution resulted in:

Country	Partner	FG 1	FG 2	FG 3	FG 4
Greece	GFR	6 Refugees	3 PMs 2 As	2 CI 2 NGOs	4 Refugees





Italy	MONTE	6 Refugees	3 PMs 3 As	1 CI 3 NGOs	4 International Students from the International cooperation on human rights and intercultural heritage Second cycle degree/Two year Master of the University of Bologna
Poland	VDA	4 Refugees	3 Refugees	1 PM 3 As 1 CI 3 NGOs	
Spain	MUME	4 Refugees	2 PMs 3 As	2 CI 4 NGOs	4 Refugees

Table 4.2.1 - Number and types of FGs per CI

The MONTE decision to have a FG with participants other than the target decided among the Consortium partners came from the suggestion of one of the Academic interviewed in WP1. She is the coordinator of the *International cooperation on human rights and intercultural heritage* master course of the University of Bologna and she suggested that it would have been interesting to challenge some of her students - volunteering in participating - with the crucial themes of the So- Close project. At the same time, it would have been interesting to ask experts-to-be their vision about the current situation in relation to the So-Close core questions. The FG resulted in a lively discussion, with a lot of ideas exchanged among the students while, in terms of insights about the So-Close goal, it remains too much on a theoretical level and it was not possible to extract useful info in terms of what FGs were meant to collect.

Country	Partner	Tot nr. of participants	Participants previously interviewed	Nr. of Persons attending but not participating
Greece	GFR	19	FG1: 1 R out of 6 FG2: 1/2 A +2/3 PMs FG3: 1/2 CI +1/2 NGO FG4: 1/4 R	FG1: 1 mediator + 1 photographer FG2: 0 FG3: 0 FG4: 0
Italy	MONTE	20	FG1: 6/6 R FG2: 1/3 A +2/3 PMs FG3: 1/1 CI +2/3 NGOs FG4: 0/4 S	FG1: 1 photographer FG2: 3 MONTE educators FG3: 3 MONTE educators FG4: 3 MONTE educators





Poland	VDA	16	FG1: 1/4 R FG2: 2/3 R FG3: 1/1 PM 0/3 As 0/1 CI 0/3 NGOs	FG1: 1 cameraman FG2: 1 cameraman FG3: 0
Spain	MUME	19	FG1: 4/4 R FG2: 2/2 A + 2/3 PMs FG3: 2/2 CI +3/4 NGO FG4: 4/4 R	FG1: 1 UdG expert + 1 UAB expert + 1 TEMP expert + 1 photographer FG2: 1 MUME expert + 1 UAB expert + 1 UdG expert + 1 photographer FG3: 2 UdG expert + 1 photographer FG4: 1 UdG expert + 1 UAB expert +1 TEMP expert + 1 photographer

Table 4.2.2 - Number and types of FGs Participants per CI

The fact to have involved participants already interviewed or not was determined by different contextual conditions.

All CIs shared the idea that when recruiting people for interviews, an explanation and a description of the entire So- Close project in terms of plan of activities and goals was due. All the interviewees were then informed about the WP2 FG activities planned to be a generative and shared moment. No pre-selection was done by CIs and the possibility to take part in the second working package was offered to all.

MONTE and MUME found themselves in the fortunate situation of meeting persons that were particularly interested in the project and that consider the interview only as a first step of a process. Moreover, those persons were also in a life moment and general conditions that allowed them to answer positively. As per ethical requirements, no payment was done to people involved in the interviews and to welcome their availability and commitment was a way to give back to those people. Moreover, even if social cohesion is the goal of So-Close, to have a hard core of people committed made clear that the activities of So-Close themselves could become a factor for social cohesion. In terms of rigorousness of the FGs research and its findings, this decision and opportunity had no backlash because individuals were unknown to each other and for this reason the original generative process was not invalidated.

On the other hand, GFR and VDA found themselves in a different situation, above all in connection with the pandemic measures and consequences, and a lot of the people firstly involved were not available for the second phase of the project. Economic crisis made a lot of people changing their job status or field of action, many refugees and asylum seekers migrated again when possible or had a lot less time available for other activities than family life supporting ones.

Summing up, the fact to have as FG participants persons who were already interviewed was a matter of giving value to previous connections and people commitment without compromising or misrepresenting the research findings.

4.3. Different modes of facilitation

Given the fact that there was a little span of time to realize the FGs and that the number of FGs requested was very little, it was asked for a “traditional” moderation. In FGs the moderator sought





group interaction to encourage participation and stimulate free discussion. The moderator’s main role was also to ensure all viewpoints were heard. The goal was to be as fast and effective as possible, paying attention to the participatory process as well as to the goal of collecting clear and defined information from the work sessions. Nevertheless, in some FGs, a couple of facilitation structured activities were introduced and the difference is visible in the peculiarity of the answers about specific topics. This results in deep but still quite incomparable data.

In order to have a set of comparable data, then, a "summary template" was prepared and distributed to all the cultural institutions (Annex 11.9 and 11.10). The rationale behind the summary template was to collect statistical data about the FG event in itself and to let the facilitators reflect deeply on what happened and be able to model the group process flow into the WP2 activity goal.

The summary template mirrored the questions template developed in accordance to the interview findings and consortium analysis and workshop but it asked for direct quotations. This request was in turn mirrored to the summary template of WP1 individual interviews.

The benefit of this decision lies in the fact that it balances the interpretation of the facilitator of the FG that may have left the session with some ‘personal’ opinions about what happened what were the findings. Having to fill in the summary with quotations s/he had to mediate between his/her perceptions, what was really said and what was the starting questions.

Thematic analysis was used to communicate the results. The purpose was to identify major themes in the content of what had been said by the participants. That is, the focus was principally on the project objectives and necessities. The data drawn from focus groups were presented by means of illustrative quotations from the groups’ discussions.

It made a big difference whether or not it was possible to have in person meetings. While the virtual gathering resembled more a sort of group interview, interactions were a bit smoother when being in the same room, above all considering the possibility for the moderator to “read” the group atmosphere and the non-verbal dynamics of the group. Nevertheless, in this case, it has to be considered also the influence of the presence of persons not directly participating in the group. On the other hand, virtual meetings offered reduced opportunities of interaction between participants but, once introduced as auditors and audio and video muted, external presences were not anymore interacting with the participants dynamics.

A final remark about the virtual meetings were made in terms of accessibility: GFR reported that half of the participants of the second Rs_FG were not able to attend because they were not able to connect to the platform. And this results in important information in terms of risks mitigation also for the following WPs of the project.

Country	Partner	FG 1	FG 2	FG 3	FG 4
Greece	GFR	In person	Virtual	Virtual	Virtual
Italy	MONTE	In person	Virtual	Virtual	Virtual
Poland	VDA	In person	In person	Virtual	
Spain	MUME	In person	In person	In person	In person





Table 4.3.1 - FGs context per CI





5. MAPPING FIGURES AND CONTEXTS

5.1. Similarities/Differences in the refugees' numbers and situations in different host country

The use of the summary template and the resulting set of comparable data made it clear that the analysis could not disregard the context conditions characterizing each of the 4 countries involved in the research. Differences in answers were not only linkable to the obviousness of their being born in different groups with different people but it emerged immediately that they were due to the differences detectable in the legislation about migration in each country set after different numbers related to the phenomenon. That's the reason why it is necessary to provide such information before jumping into the content analysis.

UNHCR statistical data show that in 2019 asylum seekers applying for international protection in the EU increased by 11.2 % compared with 2018. UNHCR highlights how this was the first time the number of asylum applications (676.300 of which - the 9.4% - are repeat applicants) increased year- to-year since 2015. The main contribution to this increase was higher numbers of applicants from Venezuela, Colombia and Afghanistan. Since 2013, Syria remains the main country of citizenship of asylum seekers in the EU-27 even if last year the number of Syrian first-time asylum applicants fell. "With 142.400 applicants registered in 2019, Germany accounted for 23.3% of all first-time applicants in the EU-27. It was followed by France (119.900, or 19.6%), Spain (115.200, or 18.8%), ahead of Greece (74.900, or 12.2%) and Italy (35.000, or 5.7%)"¹.

Considering only the countries involved in the So-close project, in the table below the distribution of refugees and asylum seekers in 2019 becomes visible by processing the data collected in the UNHCR database².

Host Country	Refugees	Asylum-seekers
Italy (ITA)	207.602	47.031
Greece (GRC)	80.454	105.690
Spain (ESP)	57.751	133.030
Poland (POL)	12.658	4.778

Table 5.1.1 - Distribution of refugees and asylum seekers in 2019 per So-Close CIs countries

Italy hosts almost twice as many refugees as other countries, but this percentage changes when considering asylum seekers alone, where it ranks behind Spain and Greece.

The following tables show the top 5 countries of origin of refugees and asylum seekers in each country involved in the So-close project. Only Greece has a large number of people from Unknown countries: 11063 refugees and 18242 asylum-seekers.





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- 1 https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Asylum_statistics#Number_of_asylum_applicants:_increase_in_2019 accessed: 15/01/2021.
 - 2 www.unhcr.org/refugee-statistics/ accessed: 12/01/2021





Refugees number and %		Asylum-seekers number and %	
Greece			
Syrian Arab Rep. (SYR)	26.696; 33,2%	Afghanistan (AFG)	27.608; 26,1%
Afghanistan (AFG)	17.685; 22%	Syrian Arab Rep. (SYR)	16.165; 15,3%
Iraq (IRQ)	9.614; 12%	Iraq (IRQ)	7.283; 6,9%
Palestinian (PSE)	2.756; 3,4%	Pakistan (PAK)	6.018; 6%
Iran (IRN)	1.916; 2,4%	Turkey (TUR)	5.185; 4,9%
Italy			
Nigeria (NGA)	25.241; 12,2%	Eritrea (ERI)	9.257; 19,7%
Pakistan (PAK)	20.063; 9,7%	Pakistan (PAK)	7.800; 16,6%
Afghanistan (AFG)	17.849; 8,6%	Nigeria (NGA)	5.380; 11,4%
Mali (MLI)	15.842; 7,6%	Bangladesh (BGD)	1.934; 4,1%
Somalia (SOM)	14.029; 6,8%	Cote d'Ivoire (CIV)	1.250; 2,7%
Poland			
Russian Fed. (RUS)	9.870; 78%	Russian Fed.(RUS)	3.320; 69,5%
Syrian Arab Rep. (SYR)	542; 4,3%	Ukraine (UKR)	515; 10,8%
Ukraine (UKR)	485; 3,8%	Tajikistan (TJK)	179; 3,7%
Iraq (IRQ)	272; 2,1%	Georgia (GEO)	96; 2%
Belarus (BLR)	201; 1,6%	Kyrgyzstan (KGZ)	79; 1,7%
Spain			
Venezuela (VEN)	35.243; 61%	Colombia (COL)	34.110; 25,6%
Syrian Arab Rep. (SYR)	14.133; 24,5%	Venezuela (VEN)	33.960; 25,5%
Palestinian (PSE)	1.184; 2,1%	Honduras (HND)	9.085; 6,8%





Refugees number and %		Asylum-seekers number and %	
Cuba (CUB)	856; 1,5%	Ukraine (UKR)	6.460; 4,9%
Somalia (SOM)	747; 1,3%	Nicaragua (NIC)	6.145; 4,6%

Table 5.1.2 - Top 5 countries of origin of refugees and asylum seekers in each So-Close CI country

The tables show differences in the distribution of refugees and asylum-seekers in different countries. The most evident are that Italy hosts mainly people from Africa (also from its former colonial domains), as well as Pakistan and Bangladesh; while, as example, refugees and asylum-seekers from South America are hosted, among So-close's countries, only by Spain; Poland, instead, hosts many people from neighboring countries and from Russian Federation.

The tables show that there is no homogeneity among the most consistent origins of refugees and asylum-seekers; the country of origin that appears most is Syria, but is not among the Italian table. Furthermore, there are substantial differences in the reception system in Europe, as well as in the countries involved in So-close.

A participant in the Greek FG among Policy makers and Academics highlighted the great difficulties in refugees and asylum-seekers' reception after the Dublin Regulation, he asserts that "In general, there has been this denial since the first Dublin Regulation was adopted, the burden has always been on southern Europe, countries that have been receiving waves of refugees due to their borders" (GFR_PMsAs_FG2).

There is no doubt that this regulation has shown many criticalities and limitations over the years and that it fails to provide fair protection favoring an unequal distribution of asylum-seekers among member states. One of the reasons for this failure is the fact that the countries are joining the program on a voluntary basis: this has led to attitudes that are either refusing the agreement (Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia) or not meeting the quotas decided by Brussels (Spain, Belgium, the Netherlands). As a consequence, Italy and Greece are overload³.

The possibility to reach the country both by sea and land makes Greece one of the countries most affected by migratory flows.

A refugee in Greece disagrees with the politicization of the asylum system in his country because it makes the percentage of applications accepted or rejected fluctuate depending on who governs (GFR_Rs_FG4).

Greece receives the incoming flow in refugee camps, mostly located on islands.

On the mainland, arrivals are initially subjected to a "pre-registration" procedure in which they can apply for international protection, relocation or family reunification. Pre-registered persons then receive a one-year residence permit, bearing their personal data and a photo with which they have, theoretically, access to basic services, but not the possibility to work. The situation on the islands is more complicated: here too all migrants can express their willingness to apply for asylum and, upon

³ <https://www.unhcr.org/it/risorse/carta-di-roma/fact-checking/la-relocation-unoccasione-persa-per-leuropa/>
15/01/2021.

accessed:





arrival, there is the possibility of being subjected to the so-called “fast-track border procedure”, an accelerated procedure applied to requests subject to the EU-Turkey declaration, which does not, however, seem to ensure that the asylum applications are adequately taken care of⁴. Greece is also employing, as many other countries, illegal push backs, especially on Evros (which borders Turkey to the east) and the islands. In some cases, there are reports of FRONTEX’s participation at the illegal push backs⁵.

Most of the participants in the Greek FGs experienced refugee camps.

In the answers to the question asking whether recently arrived refugees have found more settlement problems than those who have been in the country longer, different thoughts coexist: on one hand there are those who argue that it was more problematic for those who arrived long ago, due to the lack of information and organizations specialized in this field, on the other hand there are those who support the thesis that now it is more complicated because refugees are hosted in camps far from local communities and today people often fear strangers (GFR_PMsAs_FG2 and GFR_Rs_FG4).

Several voices of Greek refugees' FGs have denounced camps' situation: both because of the long time they have been there and because they are often places of abuse.

Strong is the voice of this refugee who speaks about "second traumatization in the camps", explaining how they also make the integration process difficult:

“Refugees must be within the society, in a village, in the local community. They should stay with society and get to know society. The way they keep us in the camps means that they want those who are Afghans to stay Afghans, those who are Syrians to stay Syrians, those who are from elsewhere stay the same as they were. [...] The old refugees were within society. The situation in camps is so difficult that psychologically it injures you and then the whole process becomes more difficult for you. Secondly, there are no services there, such as learning the language which is the tool for integration. Not only you are marginalized, but they are traumatizing you psychologically, so integration is taking longer. [...] After a year or two when you have your papers and you come out of the camp and come to Athens you have to start all over again... Because you don't know the language, because you've wasted time there, you start all over again. You still have to wait too long until you have papers, this bureaucracy lasts too long and makes the integration process difficult. Other than that, when the papers come, then it's back to uncertainty, are you going to stay or leave for another country? That's still on your mind, stay or go. And this makes the integration process difficult” (GFR_Rs_FG1).

The reception system in Italy is different⁶: the first reception is both immediately after disembarking at the hotspots, where the first material and medical assistance are carried out, together with identification and photo-identification procedures, and later on, at facilities activated by the Prefectures throughout the national territory, where essential services are provided, pending the definition of the application for international protection. However, it must be reminded that

⁴ https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/report-download_aida_gr_2018update.pdf and https://www.meltingpot.org/IMG/pdf/il_sistema_d_asilo_in_grecia.pdf.

⁵ <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-55231203> <https://www.dw.com/en/is-frontex-involved-in-illegal-pushbacks-in-the-balkans/a-56141370>

⁶ <https://www.interno.gov.it/it/temi/immigrazione-e-asilo/politiche-migratorie> accessed: 15/01/2021.





disembarking may not occur immediately upon arrival. The second reception, still not so easy to be accessed since the difficulties put in place by political/bureaucratic decisions, is implemented by means of personal assistance and integration projects in the territory which are activated by the local authorities participating in the Protection System for Persons with International Protection and Unaccompanied Foreign Minors (SIPROIMI). The Protection System is characterized by: the voluntary participation of local authorities in the network of reception projects; synergic policies on the territory with third sector subjects who contribute in an essential way to the implementation of the interventions. Some praxis experience flaws according to political settings, for instance about the number of refugees hosted in structures. Italian NGOs often declare that having small accommodation structures help integration, but still some large accommodations are in use and it did happen that refugees were moved from a structure to another one only for mere political propaganda purposes. Moreover, even if not located necessarily on islands as for Greece, accommodation facilities are often located far from villages or cities centers, making it difficult to interact with local communities. Italian system is based on a fragmented legislation that does not find a common dimension. Asylum seekers are taken to the 9 CPRs (Centres for Permanence and Repatriation) across the country, centres where those who have received expulsion proceedings and are to be returned, are detained⁷. Many asylum seekers also struggle to access second level reception and when they do, they often end up in CASs (Centers for Emergency Reception), which have larger numbers.

In Poland, too, the refugees and asylum seekers accepted are integrated on the territory. Refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries have full freedom of movement in Poland. There are no specific facilities for refugees and subsidiary protection beneficiaries in Poland. They are entitled to stay in reception centers up until 2 months after the decision on the asylum application becomes final. Afterwards they have to organize all living conditions themselves⁸.

Obtaining the refugee status is complex: “the main challenge regarding access to the asylum procedure and the territory remain the push backs at the Terespol border crossing point. Notwithstanding several interim measures imposed by the ECHR on the Polish authorities prohibiting removal where the applicant expressed an intention to apply for asylum, this practice continued in 2018 and the Commissioner for Human Rights as well as NGOs continued to challenge this practice”⁹. Additionally access to legal assistance remains problematic and it's rarely free due to lack of funding, as also expressed in a FG (VDA_PMsAsCIsNGOs_FG3).

An even different situation is found in Spain.

“The main obstacles regarding access to the Spanish territory are faced mostly at the Ceuta and Melilla borders and checkpoints. (...) One of the ways used by migrants and asylum seekers to enter

⁷ In the Minniti-Orlando decree, which established the CPRs, migrants could be detained for a maximum of 90 days, extended to 180 by the Salvini decree, brought back to 90 by the Lamorgese decree.

⁸ https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/report-download_aida_pl_2019update.pdf.

⁹ *ibidem*.





the territory is to attempt to climb border fences in groups¹⁰. Spain enacted an amendment to expel these people. “The amendment aimed at legalizing the push backs (*devoluciones en caliente*) practiced in Ceuta and Melilla (...) Spain has been criticized for ignoring human rights and international law obligations towards asylum seekers and refugees by several European and international organizations such as UNHCR, the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, and the United Nations Committee against Torture”¹¹.

Spain also has people arriving by boat: for these people the intention to apply for international protection is registered by the police, usually following the intervention of NGOs on arrival. The Spanish reception system is a mixed system which combines: a network of collective centres, consisting of Refugee Reception Centers (*Centros de acogida de refugiados, CAR*) and Migrant Temporary Stay Centers (*Centros de estancia temporal para inmigrantes, CETI*) managed by the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Services; a reception and care network managed by NGOs, subcontracted by the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Social Services.

There are two Migrant Temporary Stay Centers (CETI) in the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla. This type of center hosts any migrant or asylum seeker that enters the Spanish territory undocumented, either by land or by sea and arrives in the Ceuta and Melilla enclaves.

The typologies of reception places vary depending on the institution or entity that manages the centre. The reception system relies on places within big reception centers and apartments, but some reception places are in urban neighborhoods while others are located in rural areas. Types of available accommodations also differ from the point of view of provided services and spaces.

5.2. Different perceptions of European host countries

Together with different narratives concerning Europe and the European Union, the FGs showed prevailing images concerning some specific countries. Depending on, among other factors, the perceived cultural distance between the country of origin and the country of arrival, as well as images created before and/or after the arrival, there are different ways in which the host country is considered or evaluated. The perception of the host country affects the social cohesion, since it might hinder the level of satisfaction and the willingness to invest in the process.

Beside a tendency to speak about an us/them axis with poles consisting in Europe and Middle East, sometimes polarizing attributes accordingly, it appears the Mediterranean area shares some sort of continuum, so that some participants distinguish different levels of cultural similarities depending on how southward in Europe the hosting country is.

“We should start to approach Europe differently. We can start using terms such as Global North or Global South, we can start using the Mediterranean as a tool to locate ourselves [...] we hear Europe all, all the time. Let’s change a bit this narrative” (MUME_PmsAs_FG2).

“I think the Spanish people are more open compared to other people in Europe but you know we are living with some friends, at the same flat, for a while, you still have this barrier. Ok, we are flatmates, but we are not brothers, okay” (MUME_Rs_FG4). Similarly, in the refugee Polish FG involving mainly Ukrainians, the perception is that of a welcoming country, very open to foreigners and refugees.

¹⁰ https://asylumineurope.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/report-download_aida_es_2019update.pdf.

¹¹ *ibidem*.





Southern European countries are not always perceived as the final destination, at least at the beginning of the journey, but they might become so due to the Dublin Agreement or the time already spent on integrating in the host country.

Concerning differences among EU countries, both from stakeholders and refugees it emerges sometimes a polarized dichotomy between Southern Europe and Northern Europe, the latter identified with a superior model, and a particularly high opinion of Germany is expressed by some participants. When a comparison arises, the country is usually quoted as a good example, whether it is about integration, policies concerning refugees, economic situation, or memory policies. This perception doesn't appear to be based on empirical data, where Germany experiences a huge variety of situations depending on the state and local dimension. The European Union Agency for fundamental rights noted in 2019 study¹² "Integration of young refugees in the EU: good practices and challenges" how in many fields Germany and other northern countries do not appear particularly performative in terms of good practices. As an example, the German system is quite restrictive in terms of mobility, and family reunion (for beneficiaries of subsidiary protection family reunion was not possible between March 2016 and July 2018, and since August 2018, every month a maximum of 1,000 visas per family members can be issued). Access to schools also remains limited, particularly for children from families originating from so-called "safe countries and territories of origin". While the rise of right-wing nationalist parties is acknowledged and considered a concrete danger present in other countries, Afd is never mentioned despite getting more than 13% of votes in the 2017 federal election. It is interesting that the perception of a better "north" seems shared between refugees and locals. Reasons for this perception might be rooted in a successful exercise of soft power as seen in 2015 "refugee crisis" as well as a consolidated myth of efficiency opposed to a more chaotic South that is vividly present in Europe too. "Germany is a country where historical memory is well studied and sponsored [...] The actual situation with Erdogan, the Polish politician, Salvini [...] or the right parties here are scary. In Europe, there isn't a collective consciousness" (MUME_CisNGOs_FG3).

For what concerns refugees' point of view, from the FGs it is not possible to establish if these concepts are due to contacts with locals or they represent previous assumptions about different European countries.

5.3. Countries of origin of refugees and asylum seekers participating in FGs

Greece had two refugee FGs. The first involved people from Afghanistan, the second people from Iraq. Both these countries of origin of the participants are among those with the higher numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers in Greece. An Iraqi participant's grandfather fought for Greece (GFR_Rs_FG4).

The composition of the Italian refugee FG is different, involving people from: Benin (Rs: 297: 0,1%; ASs: 36: 0,1%); Gambia (Rs: 12968: 6,2%; ASs: 701: 1,5%); Iraq (Rs: 6994: 3,4%; ASs: 934: 2%); Niger (Rs: 676: 0,3%; ASs: 53: 0,1%); Turkey (Rs: 2845: 1,4%; ASs: 381: 0,8%) and Venezuela (Rs: 1988: 1%; ASs: 580: 1,2%)¹³. The Venezuelan participant is of Italian descent.

¹² https://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/fra-2019-integration-young-refugees_en.pdf

¹³ All the % is calculated on total refugees and asylum-seekers hosted in the host country.





Poland had two FGs with refugees and asylum-seekers: the first one involved people from Ukraine (one of the first countries of origin of Rs and ASs), while the second one involved people from Syria (present in the Poland's table), Turkey (Rs: 92: 0,7%; ASs: 76: 1,6%), Egypt (Rs: 71: 0,6%; ASs: 16: 0,3%). Therefore, first FG's participants are people from a neighboring country.

Also Spain had two different FGs with refugees/asylum seekers: one with people from Syria and Afghanistan (Rs: 395: 0,7%; ASs: 270: 0,2%); the second with only Syrians.





6. MEMORY OF THE PAST

6.1. Preliminary notes

It is important to remember that when referring to “memory of the past” the reference is very fluid and prismatic.

At a first level, the individual and personal memory, when touching on who a person is and where s/he comes from, what his/her values and links to the context are, seems not to be meant to serve the future - such as the rhetorical refrain “never again” - but to confirm and reassure the present. Moving from the individual level to that of the community and then to that of the society, it is quite easy to find the same mechanism working. The collective memory can be considered functional to specific interests and projects belonging to those managing it. What actually happens is that the selection concerning what is worthy to remember from the past is carried out on a political level and implemented by the relevant cultural industries.

Far from claiming that there is a sort of conspiracy, the idea is that memory and remembrance can be considered simultaneously both as the origin and as the reproduction tool for the self-definition of a person, of a community and of a group.

In this respect, it is not really possible to distinguish the memory at the community level and the uses it undergoes. What it is possible to do is to try to identify, at the collective level as well, what the goals are that the selection tries to obtain. There are two main aims: the construction of a strong group identity which nourishes a positive attitude towards the group itself and, through this, the maintenance of the consensus to the power system.

It becomes possible, then, to claim that memory is seen as an instrument for social cohesion and that the main strategy for this purpose is to build strong symbols where people can easily satisfy their sense of belonging. In the same way as this process of identification has to be easy, immediate and widespread, the whole discourse about the past also has to be simple: instead of bringing to light the complexity of what happened, what its origins and causes were and what its context was, the risk is that myths and grand narratives emerge and become the shared truth. Unless individual memories fit perfectly into the big picture, they are often shut away because there is a deep fear of anything that could damage or undermine the overall system of identities at different levels.

As Daniele Salerno states, then, “when analyzing memory, we are asked to acknowledge its puzzling nature: memory is always localized and always displacing, living in its transmission from one context to another, between local *mise en forme* and movement. [...] [R]emembering and forgetting have been examined through two methodological and epistemological models, which have been presented as counterposed or mutually exclusive: containment and flow. The former conceptualizes memory as contained within cultural artefacts, that is, within their symbolical, textual, discursive and even physical boundaries; the latter looks at memory as a migration of contents and forms from one cultural manifestation to another, taking place in a chain generated – over time – around a subject matter”¹⁴.

In analyzing the FGs responses about the possibility to share traumatic experiences of the past between European native communities and refugees / asylum seekers in order to find commonalities

¹⁴ Salerno, D. (2020:1-2).





and to have a chance to build a new hybrid identity together, considering all the above mentioned is essential to fully understand the complexity of the subject and the difficulties to thrive unambiguous conclusions.

6.2. Remembrance

The major upheavals of the period 1914-1945 and the long phase of the Cold War crossed the whole continent and in an ambivalent process of the Europeanisation of war, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, of the globalization of European wars. The dramas and tragedies of war have united most Europeans along the deep ideological rifts between fascism and anti-fascism, between communism and anti-communism¹⁵.

Nevertheless, considering the context of economic, political and social crisis the EU is experiencing in the last 5 years, it is important to take into consideration that the use of historical discourse as a weapon of confrontation has strongly increased. That is to say that episodes, events or periods of the past of a country are more and more selected in order to foster a nationalistic narrative opposing the “foreign” enemies and/or invaders. This tendency contributes also in building a peculiar reading of those episodes, events or periods that cannot serve the purpose of national greatness: “I do not think we do not know what is happening, we do not know what a refugee means, we do not know that movement is movement. I think we refuse to accept reality and many times what we say to our interlocutors in general is that the world will move, crises will exist, the places where something happens are just changing” (GFR_PMsAs_FG2).

When considering the core of the So-Close project, then, the subject of people moving from their country of origin benefits from at least 3 possible definitions: conquer, escape, fulfillment of a personal ambition. Depending on which point of view is selected, an invasion corresponds to a conquer, an attack corresponds to an escape, and the hopelessness for the future could link to the fulfillment of a personal ambition. All these six clusters of meaning and their possible declinations are somehow applied when local-native communities and refugees/asylum seekers get in contact about their respective narratives of the past: “[I think we should] focus on increasing our knowledge of what is happening in the countries of origin of asylum seekers, instead of somehow forcing the fact that they are more aware of what happened in our past, because of the two we say the greatest wealth lies in giving them an opportunity to rework their experiences, not an opportunity for us to remember once again what happened during the Second World War. [...] It is a challenge to shift the focus, but I think it is in the fact of always going towards them so what is useful to them” (MONTE_CisNGOs_FG3).

First thing to notice is that often the local-native community is precisely a community, that in some way is carrying a shared version of the past or at least a shared debate on the past, while the newcomers' group is often not a group at all while individuals. This is one of the reasons why while people from the local-native community are thinking about the remembrance of the past they are referring mainly to grand narrative of historical events while it seems that refugees/asylum seekers are referring to their personal experiences. In particular, this phenomenon causes the frequent

15 Baldissara, L. (2016). Our translation.





shifting or confusion between historical narrations and personal storytellings: “It all depends on how you show these stories. You can emphasize the reasons, the war on the problems. Or you can just show individual stories of human migration, how it was adapted. This makes sense and there should be more such stories, only they should be focused on socio-psychological aspects, not on historical and political ones” (VDA_Rs_FG1).

In this confusion, the refugees/asylum seekers seem to be born with the journey, themselves incapable and almost never asked to give an account of the long-term dynamics that caused their decision to move. While the exile of the Spanish population during the Civil War or the moving of Greeks towards Asia Minor “to escape starvation and the Germans” (GFR_PMsAs_FG2) as well as the confinement of women during the Greek Civil War are interpreted as a part of a bigger picture and they recall the words dictatorships, political control and persecution, (foreign and) unequal exploitation of resources, the moving from present Syria, Afghanistan or Niger are framed into the generic word of war, undetectable in terms of origin, actors, flow and consequences. The outcome of this is that sharing the personal experience of the traumatic event seems to be the only possible point of contact to the largest part of participants to the FGs. It is important to underline that - of course - this is also a matter of human empathy towards the sufferance of the other, but what is observable is that instead of sharing the anger for the existence itself of a confinement camp or for the ongoing fight for power control, it is more immediate to share the pain for the living condition in a detention center or the very big load of stress caused by the leaving of your home carrying nothing or a little more. It emerges very clearly the power of a specific aesthetic related to concentration realities: “I just saw these photos and I remembered the camp of Moria that we were in, exactly the same but 50-60 years before. And they were, as we are, out of society. They obliged them to live far away. And they want us far away or on an island, the camps to be far from the city. I see these queues that did then and now are exactly the same. (...) But that was 70 years ago, and it may be accepted by some. But now it is not acceptable. That is the difference. Today all this is even worse, these queues for food and water. We do not need to talk only about Moria. Moria is an example. But near Schistos or Malakasa [other installations for refugees], people are waiting in line. For two or three hours we waited for the food in the queue. The women had at least one photo, one memory. We in Samos where we were, there was a big sign that photos were forbidden. All the photos that come out of there were illegal” (GFR_Refugees_FG1).

In this respect, it seems to be a common concern the fact that also this kind of human dimension is going to be more and more difficult because “one thing is to understand, and another to feel it” (GFR_Rs_FG4). With this short but very effective sentence, the FG participant brings to life the fact that once talking about the memory of the past it is compulsory to consider how far this past is. This is true not only in terms of a general relationship between native Europeans and actual refugees/asylum seekers but it also fractures the supposed homogeneity of Europe. When it comes to sharing a common past, it emerges quite clearly that for the Polish context the immediate reference does not go so far back in time as the WWII but it refers mainly to the Cold War Soviet domination of the country. And considering that - roughly speaking - it ended only 30 years ago (instead of 75 as for the last world conflict), it means that there is at least an entire generation more,





still alive and active, that is aware of what an external interference and the lack of democracy meant and that there is a recipient society in general that is closer to the present experience of refugees/asylum seekers in that country: “I have a friend who is 65 years old, he is aware of war, and about what happened when there was war [...] People who had this experience understand us more [...] If you haven’t drunk from the same glass, you can’t know the taste of the drink. [...] How can I tell them my story? They will not understand. How can they understand that I had days with no electricity, no water, no electricity”; “The new generation are becoming more sterile. In Syria, we still have worries and concerns about the basic rights, about survival. Here the new generation, the younger generation is still... they are not afraid about surviving anymore. So, that's why. For example, as I was in the Middle East, I should know about how to prevent a new war because it's happening around. But here, they are away from this, they don't care” (MUME_Rs_FG4).

This brings us, then, to another important aspect that emerges and that refers to the fact the more you are close to the “history” you are trying to escape from the bigger the fear to is to touch too much sensitive topics, that could reinforce divisions instead of cohesion if not endangering your personal life at all: “It seems to me that political and historical issues should not be discussed. I would talk about the intangible heritage of Ukraine. First of all, you can not only tell about it, but also show, for example, Reshetyliv embroidery, Petrykivka painting. Secondly, it can be imagined, it can be accompanied by history. I think such moments should be shown to the Poles. We have such a list of intangible assets of Ukraine” (VDA_Rs_FG1). The result is a sort of flattering of memory until it becomes so similar to present that it is simply too much also the idea to talk about it: “For each of us, in my opinion, it is very normal that there is a blockage, and hearing the story of Cornelia [a survivor of the massacre of Monte Sole] is a mental block because it has a lot to do with the emotions that depending on the situations everyone has gone through, some worse than others, but always bad” (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

A side effect to this dynamic is that in this relationship between local-native communities and refugees/asylum seekers recalling of the past, memory seems to be exactly what Salerno meant by *local mise en forme*: it embodies in reference to an indefinite and apparently eternal past time and in the shape of food traditions, religious ceremonies, sometimes art, becoming suddenly a version of the more general and sometimes more safe cultural heritage.

As a last point that brings the analysis further, it is necessary to highlight the cluster of conceptualization raised by the MONTE FG with refugees that was the only one held directly on a place of memory. This is not certainly the place for a scientific discussion of the concept and we will use the authorial definition given by Pierre Nora: a place of memory is “a significant unit, of a material or ideal order, which the will of men or the workings of time have made a symbolic element of some community. [...] The purpose of the place of memory is to provide the visitor, the passer-by, with an authentic and concrete picture of a historical fact. It makes visible what is not: history [...], and unites two disciplines in a single field: history and geography”¹⁶. The encounter of refugees/asylum seekers with such a place opened to another set of possibilities for the memory of the past to be a means, a tool for social cohesion: “when I arrived here immediately, it made me

16 Nora, P. (1997)





think for a moment, before knowing the story anyway, I said to myself 'something happened here'" (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

6.3. Cultural trauma

"Cultural trauma is an experiential, scientific concept, signifying new meaningful and casual relationships linking earlier dissimilar events, structures, perceptions, and actions"¹⁷. In this outlook, in some refugees FG a common feeling of belonging in the group emerged, even when nationalities and ages/period when they sought asylum were different. But there were common points beyond mere pain, such as the need to be recognized, the seek for justice, the fight for your right. The same common points were extended to traumatic past experiences.

"I would say that the courage you [referring to a Monte Sole survivor] had to go and testify anyway, to maybe ask for justice, is all that happens to us too, even though they don't believe you, despite the fact that the police headquarters gives you the denial, you still have faith because it is your story and therefore it is not that you have to change it because they did not believe you at the first Commission, so there is still faith, that is to say you still believe and come back to appeal, to deserve that piece of paper anyway. So, you did it and so we did it and so did all of us, those who had the residence permit, right to reside in this country is that we believed it, is that our story, is that justice must be done and so, that is a small gesture they made is that piece of paper they gave us to be able to reside in this country and so I do not think justice was done at that time, let's say no". (MONTE_Rs_FG1)

In the dynamic relation refugees experienced about the presentation of past memories, many elements emerged, like the will not to be compared with other stories, which might also be a result of the need to be recognized as a victim, as well as the owner of his/her own story. Sometimes, in a more emotional and deep approach, they felt memories of the past closed to them. Sharing survivors' storytelling and the complexity of presenting one's own story may create connections, which is helpful to reach a further level of understanding and possibly the creation of a common heritage. Past and present refugees and survivors in general are not part of a same community, nevertheless there are in their specific experiences some traits in common that somehow make them speak a sort of common language. Those shared traits are commensurable, therefore they are beyond the domain of absolute subjectivity and contribute to their cultural heritage and connect them in a loose and deep way at the same time.

¹⁷ Alexander, J.C., (2004:1)





7. SOCIAL COHESION

7.1. Expectations on refugees by the host society

Both refugees and stakeholders agree that common and shared ideas about refugees cover a variety of images. Diversity in these ideas is said to be connected with political views and opinions, and prejudices that nationalist parties are spreading through the media are more commonly detected: “I had to communicate with people who openly express their nationalist views, and hence the negative. It does not matter what nationality a person is, and negative nationalists have a negative attitude towards all migrants, regardless of nationality, skin color or other factors” (VDA_Rs_FG1).

Common stereotypes are that refugees are trouble makers, they steal our jobs, they are in countries in not so good economic situations i.e. Southern Europe.

On the other hand, it is not so easy to detect stereotypes or prejudices when they are not openly part of a nationalist discourse. It often happens that refugees are valued for heroic or very generous acts: “an Egyptian who has his own fish tavern and now with the lockdown he was frying fish and distributing it for free to the world that has nothing to eat. And many Greeks answered that they were moved by this. He even said that I feel grateful for this country and the way I can reciprocate now is to fry these fish and give some portions to those who have nothing to eat. An immigrant or refugee who has now become an entrepreneur and helps hungry Greeks. Very strong image” (GFR_PMsAs_FG2). This reported story is similar to other stories, or in smaller scale, very often refugees or migrants are asked to offer food to promote social cohesion (MONTE_Ss_FG4). Sometimes it is a heroic act: “there were refugee initiatives that had helped. As in the past, refugees have helped in fires, they have helped in various situations in Greece”; “such as in Chios where refugees sew masks and distribute them to the population. That is, small initiatives”; “The Syrian refugee who recently rescued a grandmother in Volos [a Greek city in the mainland], waited a year and a half for his interview. He may have faced a lot of racism in the society of Volos, but from the moment he saved the grandmother, a week later the minister himself gave him asylum and he became a hero” (GFR_PMsAs_FG2).

Implicitly, even people supporting refugees, underline they proved to deserve ‘the right to stay’. Actually, asylum has nothing to do with the value the host society assigns to a refugee, it is a basic human right, no matter how good or ugly one is. In recent years, nevertheless, in order to convince conservative host society members not to reject them, or be racist, the media and communication focused on showing them as a resource, mainly in economic terms. Little by little the image of an iconic “good refugee” emerged. UNHCR as well some years ago released a video with very famous refugees, from Isabel Allende to Rigoberta Menchu.

“Everyone can become a refugee. Einstein was a refugee” (VDA_Rs_FG2).

“I think we have the right to be imperfect. Sometimes people expect us to be perfect, to be on the top of things every time, but it’s hard, you know? I want to have the possibility to make mistakes” (MUME_Rs_FG4).

“I avoid certain things when I am outside because I know that I am an ambassador, when I go out they don't say Omar you are an asshole because you’ve done this, a refugee has done this, a black has done this, a Muslim has done this. So as soon as I go out, I avoid certain things, even though I





know that they are not... that is... they are not crimes, but I try to avoid them for others” (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

It is therefore hard for a refugee to be seen as a complex human being, the process of narrowing down is constantly in use.

Moreover, in Europe the image of the good or true refugee is also connected to the country of origin and level of education, suggesting discrimination and classism.

It seems to be a quite shared idea that Syrian refugees are true refugees, because Syria war is acknowledged by public opinion and because there is a positive stereotype that they are educated.

“I mean, if you're Afghan, that's the way it is, if you're Syrian is another way. For example, Syrians are treated more favorably, while both have come from the war zone” (GFR_Rs_FG1).

“That is, the man from Syria tells you that these people from Afghanistan are not refugees. Or say the Afghans, the Pakistanis are not refugees or the Africans who are even further away, what business do they have to come?” (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

“A few years ago, it was impressive how many other member states, democratic western societies - the democratic ones always in quotation marks - chose people with a specific profile and you saw a family of young Syrians being rejected by a large European country” (GFR_PMsAs_FG2).

“I remember that there were girls from Syria who spoke English, were psychologists and did not wear headscarves that as soon as they were interviewed in three days they had a positive answer and left for Germany. And there appeared a family with six children who did not speak anything, did not work, did not know anything and they said that for security reasons we cannot take them. If I had the choice, I would also take the girl who knew English and was a psychologist and obviously did not wear a headscarf” (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

There are also voices against this main narrative: “Many companies are not accepting Syrians to work. I mean specifically Syrians, because Iraqi, Turkey, Egyptian, it's easier for them, because companies accept them and give them a job. For Syrians it's almost impossible to get a normal job even having a high degree. This is like the biggest problem residency card for those people and find a job” (VDA_Rs_FG2).

The acknowledgement of the Syria war is somewhat surprising, because it seems now to be out of the European political agenda, but obviously in the recent past it got some mediatic and unfortunately ephemere attention. On the other hand, there are multiple reflections to be considered, such as, on one side, the failure of acknowledging wars other than Syrian or Middle Eastern, even by refugees themselves and on the other side the idea that refugees are only those fleeing from war. The latter element is of extreme importance in dealing with host society, because when a refugee is not recognized as such, implicitly he/she is unwelcomed to stay.

In order to make refugees be recognized as full individuals, especially stakeholders warn constantly about the risk of victimhood, meaning recognizing them only as victims.

“We can't just see migrants as vulnerable. This stigma can influence their lives, it can just contribute to see them just as victims, fragile” (MUME_PMsAs_FG2).

“I believe that a representation to bring and to highlight is one that in a certain sense goes beyond, or even rejects, an excessive victimhood and pietist image of refugees: in the sense that, this is a





temptation that even for those who work in the front line, let's say on these issues, is quite around the corner because it is thought that moving, let's say so emotionally, to empathy, solidarity, but also to compassion and a little perhaps pity, towards those who go through dramatic situations". (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2).

Victimhood often causes misunderstandings in interactions with members of the host society, who tend to link refugees to all misfortunes in the world: "They see something like a curtain, for example, and he turns and says to you: Do you have curtains in your country?" (GFR_Rs_FG4).

"And we answered them, no it is not the house of our dreams, in this house we lived. Did you have such a house? They could not imagine. They thought we came from the mountains" (GFR_Rs_FG1).

Another aspect of victimhood is that victims are perceived as good and innocent. They are expected to be good and fair so when a victim makes racist statements, for instance, in host society members eyes he/she cannot be considered anymore a victim, as this breaks the image of victimhood.

However, awareness should be raised towards the idea that avoiding victimhood and recognizing refugees as victims are not the same cup of tea, so to speak. Chances are that focusing on victimhood, stakeholders force themselves not to take into consideration the victim part of a refugee, which could be quite relevant to them. In many FGs the idea of being victims and reacting to that clearly emerged. Avoiding the victim part means not accepting part of their stories.

"- Do you want to change your surname? - And so why do you force me to do it, I have my surname, is this and my name is this, it has been mistranslated, it can be solved, there is a law that we have... so we also have to be strong in pulling our right [...]" (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

"So, your future, your destiny, your life depends on another person who absolutely doesn't have any idea about you, or about your culture, about your experiences. So, this is another thing that we are facing" (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

Another possible outcome of victimhood culture is to celebrate the *heroic* or *winner* quality of a refugee, because he/she survived. Awarding them because of survival can also be problematic, when we don't fully know their stories and their personal dealing with survival. They could be the only survivors of their families, they could have lost friends on the journey to Europe, they could be suffering with PTSD or they could be willing to make political statements on behalf of those who didn't make it and being celebrated could be considered offensive by them.

On a more general level, the expression "those who make it" is per se problematic, when we are talking about basic Human Rights. Intersectionality is extremely important, and host society should also be reminded of the juridical frame.

7.2. Refugees' needs

The needs that most refugees feel can be divided into first and second level needs. The former are linked to human rights and practical issues (language, document, housing, orientation), the second to instances of recognition and appreciation in the host country (work, personal and cultural expression, integration).





A recurring theme is related to language problems and understanding the host country: refugees need to understand linguistic, cultural, structural differences and it takes time, energy, mentoring and practice.

“The children did not understand Polish at all. [...] Next to us there were just strangers who helped us. Find a school for children, find a place to live. Nobody treated us badly, they said when I didn't understand something, I apologized. We feel good now” (VDA_Rs_FG1).

“It's a different world here and in more than one concept like culturally, the structure of the country... we have a country here or you have, but there is a different world, [...] It's not about the structure itself, but it's about the culture, I think. When I arrived there the main thing that interested me when I was entering the metro and then going out and the people were just standing on the right of the stairs and this is nothing written at all, you know, this is something that the people agree, this is nothing you can click... [...] it took time until you can make this change into cultural” (MUME_Rs_FG4).

A first-level need shared by all refugees is the document. The regularization of the status or at least of the residence permit directly affects the possibility of working and therefore also the possibility of being independent and the integration in the host country. In Greece and Italy, it is remarked that the procedures are often handled inappropriately: “They ask questions in a very bad way, abrupt and rude, while we are not well psychologically. This way of welcoming them creates us more panic, more fear” (GFR_Rs_FG1).

Answering the question whether recently arrived refugees have found more accommodation problems than those who have been here longer, some refugees think that now it is more complicated because refugees are hosted in camps or structures far from local communities and today people fear strangers more than in the past, when there were fewer people migrating.

Policies inextricably influence access to rights and in recent years in Greece there have been complaints about summary and contingent decisions on who is entitled to receive refugee status and who is not (GFR_PMsAs_FG2, GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3). This also affects refugees' perceptions, both of themselves and of how others view them. There are some initiatives of organizations that can help small numbers of refugees, but in general there aren't organized programs to explain the procedures, how to learn Greek and how they can build their lives. People don't know what they should do, so they feel powerless and disoriented. Reception on islands makes orientation and integration even more difficult and it happens that refugees are only trying to survive and are not encouraged to learn the language or organise activities. These bureaucratic procedures and reception conditions challenge the mental health of people who have already escaped from extremely difficult situations. The other countries involved also complain about bureaucratic problems and discriminatory policy that make it more difficult to understand and follow procedures.

“We do not want to ensure some standards of dignity for these people, because this can act as a pull factor and others will come” (GFR_PMsAs_FG2).

The need for decent housing to live in, access to services and employment continues even after the end of the reception period, due to the discrimination refugees suffer because of their personal





conditions, such as skin colour, sexual orientation, religion, etc. (GFR_PMsAs_FG2, GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MUME_Rs_FG4).

The issue of work can be considered somewhere between the first and second level need: it may not be the essential priority as long as refugees are in a reception project, but for migrants who do not fall into this category or who have become irregular due to refusal, it becomes a fundamental need for subsistence. Refugees find it very difficult to enter in the world of work, for language reasons, difficulties in having their qualifications and skills recognised, discrimination.

“I feel we lose time. I lost my professional network, one part of my life. I can’t use my past CV, I had to create another one, it’s like the past is lost [...] Learning a language requires time to adapt to a new place too, [...] looking for a scholarship was also hard, now I have it, but I have lost 5 to 6 years [...]. Sometimes I feel like an elephant. For example, I love satire, it’s hard to understand the sense of humour of another place [...] It takes time to understand the culture of a place.” (MUME_Rs_FG4) Some participants think there is discrimination in finding a job for people belonging to one country rather than another (VDA_Rs_FG2) and distinctions are also perceived towards those who come from the same country, e.g. Syria, but profess different religions (VDA_Rs_FG2).

Second level needs are felt more strongly when first level needs are guaranteed. They concern more the sphere of identity and integration and their fulfilment may be hindered by various types of problems refugees face in host societies.

The idea that refugees need cultural activities to foster their inclusion is highlighted by some participants. The antidote to fight negative perceptions about the world of migrants is knowledge, opportunities for meeting, exchange, dialogue and mutual knowledge (GFR_Rs_FG4, VDA_PMsAsCIsNGOs_FG3, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3).

“When we talk about migrants, there is another cultural demand. People need development, people need communication. These people want to show themselves and see someone. [...] For example, an art picnic in Krakow, where it was organized by Ukrainians, but Poles came and everyone who wanted to come. [...] This type of meetings, events organized interculturally, not only according to the status of a refugee, should be the best” (VDA_PMsAsCIsNGOs_FG3).

There is also a focus on identity and how this must somehow be reconstructed and find new equilibrium in the host country. It is important for integration that refugees feel they have a role in which they recognize themselves and can be recognized; this aspect gives greater stability and “justifies” the very presence of the refugee, which on several occasions is questioned by policies, people in the host country and sometimes by other refugees.

“I agree that refugees have to deal with bureaucracy, health, access to essential services [...] but I think there is a second step to consider, the re-creation of their identities inside new collectives. They must find their meaningful occupation of space, that is what we do at Chapter 2. We try to create projects where refugees can find a space where they feel welcomed. When a refugee is collocated in a small municipality, we try to find spaces where she/he can have a role [...] we do it through entrepreneurship, we believe that the access to the labor market and the social integration are essential aspects in the life of refugees” (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).





7.3. Refugees' challenges

It is a common opinion in the focus groups that personal conditions such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, appearance or health conditions have an impact on the challenges encountered, in general on the reception and the possibility of integration. Stereotypes on refugees concern the reasons for migration, refugees' ethics, their customs, how they live, their behaviours, presumed faults and in a certain way even their presence itself, which by law is illegal and even criminal attitudes. From the refugees' part the aspects related to the Muslim religion and ethnicity are the ones that emerge with greater strength, but prejudices are not present only in host communities, but in some cases they are felt also by migrants themselves.

"Syrians are treated more favorably, while both have come from the war zone. Also, I, as a Muslim woman with a hijab, find it very difficult to find a way in society, for the society to accept me, precisely because of my appearance" (GFR_Rs_FG1).

"Islamic religion is not... it doesn't take much space here. Do we have a mosque here? We have it but politically correctly according to the Polish government it's not a mosque, it's a cultural center. They say it clearly that we do not accept Muslims here, we do not recognize considerable social space for Islam as a religion" (VDA_Rs_FG2).

The main reported cause of discrimination is the fear of diversity and ignorance, a theme that emerges throughout the focus groups, not only as a problem today, but as a timeless aspect of societies. Ignorance about the culture of the other and propaganda contribute to this fear and to foster stereotypes and prejudices.

"Ignorance, the fear of the unknown [influences the perceptions]. They [locals] don't know, and they discriminate. There are many prejudices against us. The fear of the unknown influences [these negative perceptions], the fact that they don't know our culture, our customs, what we do, how we live" (MUME_Rs_FG1).

Despite free access to information, it is difficult for those who are not familiar with refugee issues to develop a critical view, due to the fact that the media often portrays a homogeneous and stereotypical image of refugees. Media communication is therefore identified as an important cause for refugee discrimination. The individual responsibility of citizens is also taken into account: those who passively perceive homogenizing and discriminatory propaganda without critically questioning themselves have a very specific role in this situation: "There is a lot of ignorance among people, the majority of people base his knowledge on the media, so now if we talk about immigration in Italy the first people that come to mind are the blacks of course, because every day we see them on the boats that arrive in Italy" (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

In the refugees focus groups in Greece, Italy and Poland racism is openly mentioned as the cause of the difficulty of integration.

"I have experienced this racism for many years through my daughter who was good at school. The children were born here, they went to school here. She was excellent in the sixth grade. They chose her as a flag bearer [the best student carries the Greek flag at an honorary ceremony]. Then an issue was created, not by the teachers and the school; from the parents, especially the mothers, because they chose my daughter who was a stranger and not their own child" (GFR_Rs_FG4).





“I started to be a cashier at the Carrefour in Casalecchio, do you know how many situations [of people not expecting a black person being a cashier]? Do you know how many situations I see in front of me? But, then, when things like that happen to me, I always have to go on, [...] demonstrate that I am black, immigrant, Muslim, [...] these three people are those [...] who face the biggest difficulties” (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

Due to the distorted perception of refugees, it becomes very difficult, even when the document is regular, to live in the host country in a satisfactory manner. Once refugees have overcome the language and document problem, they must address the difficulties related to finding housing, finding a job, creating a social network.

Schools have an important role to play as a place of prevention and as a meeting place for children and families. Within schools it is possible to develop quality projects that can be fundamental in overcoming stereotypes and living together with other cultures in a more peaceful way. It is necessary to enhance past and present initiatives and show them off and give them continuity (GFR_PMsAs_FG2, GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3, GFR_Rs_FG4, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MONTE_PMsAs_FG2, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_Rs_FG1, MUME_PMsAs_FG2, MUME_NGOsCI_FG3, MUME_Rs_FG4, VDA_PMsAsCIsNGOs_FG3).

Another important action is to organize intercultural meetings and opportunities, where cultural institutions can work on activities to improve mutual understanding. There are various opinions on how projects of this type should operate: on the one hand, there are those who argue that it is more effective to work on similarities, and on the other, there are those who would emphasize differences. In any case, beyond the content, there is agreement on the methods used to manage these spaces. It is a good practice move towards interculturality, promoting respect and contamination of the parties: “I think we should leave people to decide what they want to share about their culture, what they want that survive in the new content, interculturality somehow is more natural than we think” (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).

7.3.1. Specific challenges faced by refugee women

Dedicating a space in the FGs to the specific challenges faced by refugee women helps to reiterate how important it is to give women a voice and consider their specificities, not as a social group, as it is not possible to talk about half of humanity as a social group, but as bearers of rights from a gender perspective. It is important to stress this because the narrative concerning women cannot afford to consider them a 'minority' as it is sometimes done. We can - and must - be concerned with the specific challenges faced by refugee women because they often share common elements of discrimination. These make them subjects of a collective narrative, which cannot in any way forget that they are bearers of multiple differences because each of them has a personal and unique experience (MUME_Rs_FG4).

Gender equality is also fundamental to the well-being and rights of all persons of concern and is a central component of UNHCR's protection mandate¹⁸.

¹⁸<https://www.unhcr.org/publications/manuals/5e5cd64a7/unhcr-gender-equality-toolkit.html>. Accessed on 15/01/2021.





UNHCR points out that "The rising numbers of women asylum seekers in recent years - particularly from countries that have historically had an almost entirely male flow - can be read as a sign of worsening conditions in the countries of origin and their severe impact on women¹⁹".

In FGs there is agreement that the journey to Europe is more dangerous for women. (GFR_Rs_FG1). One FG participant tells the example of a woman who chose a man as her companion in the journey so as not to be abused by more than one person (MUME_PMsAs_FG2).

It is highlighted that women can also find risky situations in host countries (GFR_Rs_FG_4). Gender-related issues are necessarily linked also to the new everyday life, where it is important to know one's rights and to find a balance between them and one's own culture.

For example, women often face greater obstacles in finding work (MONTE_Rs_FG1 and MUME_Rs_FG4). And, for some of these women, the concept of work itself is a new and complex one (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

Several voices underline the importance for refugee women to know their rights (MUME_Rs_FG4) and how important it is to talk to them about what they feel is important in relation to their needs and requirements (MUME_Rs_FG1) this is also in order not to present ourselves as solvers of problems that they may not see as such or as imminent (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).

The issue of rights was also often linked to support for women victims of domestic violence, a theme that emerged in several stories (VDA_PMsAsCIsNGOs_FG3 and MUME_Rs_FG1).

In this speech a Greek refugee introduces the fact that it is important for the helper to be familiar with the culture of the person being helped, as cultural action to combat violence may be necessary (GFR_Rs_FG1). In fact, domestic violence is an area that is largely determined by cultural factors and, for this reason, a gradual intervention is needed and compromises might be necessary, such as accepting that a woman may choose to stay at home despite suffering violence (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3). Cultural work on gender-based violence is a universal discourse that should be extended to the whole population, including men, and not only to refugees.

FGs highlighted that in many countries there are both women clinics and groups to empower them (GFR_PMsAs_FG2; MONTE_PMsAs_FG2; MUME_Rs_FG2). As a Greek refugee woman explains, these groups are considered to be very important because they give support in the host countries and make women feel less alone (GFR_Rs_FG_4).

It is emphasized, however, that slow and gradual change is needed (GFR_PMsAs_FG2). This time is necessary and certainly more effective if it comes through awareness that drives change itself (GFR_Rs_FG_4).

Therefore the need not to frame women in the victimhood paradigm emerges and to support a path towards empowerment both within their communities and in the host country, even at institutional level (MUME_PMsAs_FG2 and MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).

Especially Academics and Policy Makers share that "we need to change the stereotyped image of the fragile refugee woman. We need to change the narrative. We need to show the different stories of women that exist" (MUME_PMsAs_FG2).

19 <https://www.unhcr.org/it/risorse/carta-di-roma/fact-checking/donne-rifugiate-la-violenza-molte-facce>. Accessed on 12/01/2021.





Several actors from the third sector who participated in the Italian FGs reported their experiences in empowering refugee women in informal contexts, sharing also the difficulties with their involvement. All of them highlighted how it was easier to involve women in practical activities related to action, preferably regarding family needs (eg. sewing; cycling, etc.). Furthermore, they highlighted how these occasions helped participants to meet other people and find a space for themselves (MONTE_CISNGOs_FG3).

7.4. Refugees' rights

This chapter will focus on the rights of the refugees in the EU, since the aim of the project is to enhance social cohesion in the host countries.

Since all refugees experienced on their own lives one or more violations of human rights in their country of origin, it might be tempting to assume they are particularly aware of the importance of claiming the respect of their rights in the host country. However, the Human Rights paradigm is not the main lens to read the society, therefore people - including refugees - are not able to equally claim all the rights they are entitled to. Factors such as education and culture might influence the degree of this entitlement, as well as, referring to what stated in FGs, the amount, clarity and relevance of the information provided to refugees by the authorities of the host country. Also the behaviour of authorities might influence which requests are considered reasonably achievable.

It appears the very first right to be claimed is the one to have a status, since it represents the preliminary step of recognition, as well as, in many cases, the difference between safety and danger. Basic human rights can still be violated in situations of first reception; therefore the basic needs prevail on everything else. More possibilities are considered when documents are obtained and the process of inclusion takes a step further.

Among the rights more often claimed as such we have the right to dignity, to have a home and to work.

These aspects emerged in all the focus groups.

Another important aspect that can be observed concerns the responsibilities for this lack of respect. In all 4 countries, participants deem politicians and politicization of the asylum process as the cause. "The politicization of the decision is, in my opinion, perhaps the most dangerous of all that we are discussing, in the sense that this policy has been done in a way that has very bad consequences for the refugees themselves, regardless of whether the other waits two, three, four years." [GFR_Rs_FG4]

7.4.1. The right to a decent life

When addressing the will to conduct a "normal" life and to have a sustainable future, refugees mentioned several unfair treatments and life conditions hindering their possibilities (as stated in chapter 6.2). The need to have a recognition of the rights they have been deprived is not guaranteed by the long process leading to the refugee status, nor this acknowledgment is guaranteed to manifest in the real-life interactions between refugees and hosting society. It appears somehow the refugees are expected to deserve their acceptance, for example proofing to be useful for the society they now live in, in terms of economic or cultural contribution. This undermines the concept of asylum as a





right (6.1) and forces some refugees to be pressured into specific categories of usefulness and other-directed “goodness”.

7.4.2. The risk of a cultural approach to human rights

Analyzing the Refugees’ FGs, a very important aspect concerning the perception of rights emerges. While, just to quote an example, peace is considered an achievement that the EU reached after a violent past, thus acknowledged as a process by many participants, other rights are seen as “cultural differences”.

Particularly when it comes to gender roles and sexual freedom, refugees tend to refer to these aspects as if they are not the product of a long, dynamic process of struggles and setbacks, but as if they are part of the habits and “natural” cultural practices of the society in which they are in. This observation might be caused by the framework of the project: since the focus is on the forced displacement connected with war and the European history of the 20th century, no specific space was reserved to civil rights acquired in the following decades as is the case for many women’s rights. In other words, while a diachronic approach is used to explain why some rights (sometimes considered values too) are guaranteed in Europe but not in their home countries, a synchronic approach is applied to others, leading to a situation in which the border between what is a cultural aspect prevalent in the host society and what is a right guaranteed in the host society becomes blurry.

7.5. Stereotypes, racism, sexism, ageism

Many generalizations and stereotypes appeared in the focus groups. Most of the time these are mentioned by the participants as labels present in the society they live in and targeting refugees, but not as ideas they agree with. Stereotypes connected with refugees are defined as negative, while the image most of the participants want to promote is based on positive features involving specific skills and attitudes considered part of a refugee background. In other circumstances, some participants are warned by others as stereotyping. And, of course, also refugees have stereotypes towards the citizens of the country they live in, as well as people from other countries or belonging to specific groups. For example, concerning sexual life “Here [in Europe, people] ... have no worries, nothing, no borders... anybody is about talking about sex” (MUME_Rs_FG4), interests “but the people, for European people, for them it's better playing something on the mobile, that is interesting, judging somebody else, let's be honest.” (MUME_Rs_FG4) discrimination of specific nationalities “The drunken Moroccan, Iraqi, African can come and burst into your tent and hurt your family.” (GFR_Rs_FG4).

When it comes to discriminatory speeches or behaviours, many participants addressed racism as one of the main one. Of course, what is meant by that varies according to the aforementioned relation between host country and country of origin. In refugees’ FGs, racism based on skin color appears more often when there are participants from sub-saharian Africa, while discrimination based on religious belonging, and particularly towards Islam, is more present in those focus group involving refugees from Middle East. As a notable exception, skin color is mentioned by middle-eastern refugees in Poland. Stereotypes connected with Muslim identity appear often to involve the equation





muslim-terrorist, and together with examples of discrimination based on Muslims' women appearance, notably connected with wearing a hijab.

Discrimination based on sex and gender appears often too, and it is intended as a lesser chance for women to express themselves, find job and choose their way of life in general. Sometimes this is considered a cultural feature, instead of a form of discrimination, as explained in 6.4.1. In some refugees' FGs gender roles are sometimes perceived as pre-defined whether by culture or by nature, and sex is considered a feature defining specific skills and competences. It appears the discourse on sex and genders switches immediately on a discourse on women only. Sometimes it leads to the creation of an image of the refugee woman as carrying specific traits, from a sort of embodiment of victimhood (critically approached) to an example of a "hero" (less critically approached, rather considered an image to convey).

Even though apparently unaware of it, many participants expressed forms of ageism, with a positive image of elders opposed to a less positive image of youngsters, particularly for what concern empathy towards war victims and the capacity to learn from the past, but also attributing to the first a higher will to inform themselves (see GFR_Rs_FG1 and MUME_Rs_FG1 and MUME_Rs_FG4).

7.6. Controversial points and cultural dilemmas

"Common points are easier for people who do not want challenges" (GFR_Rs_FG4).

Indeed, conflicts are part of everyone's life and the interaction between different people with different backgrounds and experiences is also generating conflicts.

Something host societies are particularly concerned with are gender issues.

"And also when we talk to the communities about gender issues, there suddenly all the refugees who are very progressive, suddenly there they start and look at the ceiling, they say that I have a job, that time has passed, maybe I should do it, let's talk later..." (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

"For being an LGBT person, I haven't been discriminated by Italian people, in Italy I have been discriminated by immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers, I'm having problems in the street with many people" (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

A very common attitude to this dilemma is avoidance. Since there has been a politicization of the attitude towards refugees, with nationalists wanting to reject them, the subject of women empowerment has become part of the reasons why Europe should reject refugees for some political group followers. But indeed, it is a powerful subject for everybody and it should be dealt with.





8. CULTURAL HERITAGE

8.1. Ideas on content

To improve social cohesion, almost all participants believe it is very important to share culture, individual stories and create meeting spaces on topics of common interest. There are different ideas about what to share and how to do it, some oriented towards showing traditional aspects of refugees' culture, others more focused on the experience in the host country, to raise awareness of the reality of migration or to exploit the potential that refugees bring to the host country in terms of energy and knowledge.

Once it comes to the cultural aspects to be shared in order to enhance social cohesion, suggestions are linked to cultural traditions such as dances, paintings, music or artefacts, the mother tongue, concrete aspects of everyday life, such as food, and intangible aspects such as concepts and visions, the personal story and experience or the history of their people. These aspects are mentioned in both refugee and stakeholder FGs, and as analysed in 6.3, they are presented as a resource or a matter of possible complexity.

The personal migration story is something to be shared as a heritage but ambivalent aspects coexist: there is the desire to share in order to make people understand the reasons why refugees left their countries, but there is also their pain, as they don't want to relive traumatic aspects of the past. Individual stories should be valued in order to convey the complexity of migration dynamics, thus contrasting the uniform perception of migration (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).

"I realize that it is difficult to tell one's own stories... that is not only for the fear of not being believed but also for the fear that when I tell my experience, sometimes to tell my story I feel I have to force you to understand what I feel, that is I from my pride, from everything I believe sometimes I say to myself: no, I can't take it anymore, [...] at the beginning I was struggling to tell my story with all the pain here and there and then comes a point where I say: it's enough" (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

About the sharing of refugees' stories, stakeholders highlight that great care must also be taken not to be a further vector of generalizations, stereotypes and exoticism. Refugees are often seen as a homogeneous group, forgetting that they are very different people. When actions of cultural sharing are carried out using refugee materials, cultural institutions must remember that every person actually comes from different places, has a different story and considers "his/her culture" as something personal, linked to his/her family or community, not necessarily with the people, tribe²⁰ or nation state. "I think that the narration of the traumatic experience keeps these people stuck. In other words, I am very upset that I still see after 5-6 years that we live in this situation, large humanitarian organizations still ask for children's painting competitions, these children to paint the experience on the boat. We have to finish at some point, put an end to it. It is not Mustafa who lost his child, it is Mahmut who has studied medicine" (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

²⁰ This term is often used in the interviews by refugees, referring to groups or kinship, whose boundaries are fluid, that do not correspond to a political state with recognised borders.





The involved stakeholders believe that working on culture and memories can enrich both the host country and the refugees themselves. People can learn new perspectives, enrich their knowledge, empathize more with others, reflect on interpersonal and social dynamics.

Seeing others' culture can help to spread a greater sense of security and knowing different perspectives can generate cultural bridges contributing to the reduction of hate speeches and racism. The collected experiences also refer to how telling his/her story can be therapeutic for the refugee who feels both recognized and valued. It can create a network and a sense of belonging, and it can generate self-esteem (MUME_PMsAs_FG2, MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).

Refugee perspective can help the host country to read its own reality with greater complexity, for example its colonial past which is now forgotten (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2). History, but also the present, can be enriched by the vision of other people, and getting in a relationship makes it possible to overcome unidirectional knowledge in favour of a knowledge that is contaminated.

"We have completely removed our colonial experience. But completely, there is no memory. When I deal with memorial studies, it always makes me very much realize that that part is skipped by everyone and there is a huge hole in history and we have traces, traces in our moments and especially in our museums. And so there are communities of arrivals that have arrived here, that our museums can really look at them with another eye and there are countries that are working on this" (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2).

Much emphasis is given to migration personal stories, as a testimony that brings knowledge and as an emotional hook in the interlocutor (GFR_PMsAs_FG2, MONTE_PMsAs_FG2). All the artistic expressions that can be used to recount these experiences are also much appreciated. As already highlighted in chapter 6.1, it is important not to fall into a perspective of victimhood, but to give back a complex image, give dignity and contextualize what happened through the rights that every human being has: "There are too many such stories and very often they emphasize the element of pain and fight and the experience of the negative refugee, I would like to see both the resilience and strength of the refugee and his skill and experience" (GFR_PMsAs_FG2).

In order to create a sense of community, it is considered very useful to address issues and problems of common interest, to create the conditions for meetings and dialogues for shared purposes, whether these be on purely cultural issues, or on issues more related to life in society (VDA_Rs_FG2, VDA_PMsAsCIsNGOs_FG3, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MONTE_PMsAs_FG2, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3). On the refugee side, talking about the problems of the present allows them to show their will to be active subjects in the host communities and not a "burden, trouble makers or criminals" (*thieves of public and private money, of work, of women*). The intention is not only to escape from dangerous situations in their own country, but to settle in the host country making their skills available to contribute to the collective welfare: "The solution is to provide cultural information and education, to show that refugees are not like that. And so, you can change this narrative, this narrative that exists. [...] We must show the positive, the abilities that the refugee has. I have come to this society with the aim of ascending, not to be a burden to others. I want to help this society" (GFR_Rs_FG1).





On the native side, discussing issues related to the society in which they live with refugees allows them to see that there are common interests and goals, and that even if they are different they are part of the same community: “Sharing cultural heritage can generate a sense of community, for example, I am part of a group called Mutual Support Network in my neighborhood in which the housing problem is one of the biggest problems we face in our days and well, there are people from all over the world, newcomers, migrants [...] with them I perceive we are creating a community [...] We are all learning a little from each other, we recognize differences [...] we are living in a common struggle that I think helps to create this sense of community” (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).

8.2. Ideas on methods and ways of sharing

In order to share their migratory reality and cultural heritage with European host societies, participants suggest interactive and digital technological methods, but also spaces for face-to-face or on-line discussions and use of arts. In several focus groups the importance of education at school is mentioned, because, through curricular studies or workshops, it can present the experience and culture of refugees in a critical way.

Participants talk mainly about tools and activities they have seen in the past and which have aroused their interest, bringing several concrete examples which could be replicated in the future. Only a minority makes a meta-reflection, questioning the motivations and their logical coherence with the refugees’ situation in Europe.

Regarding tools and ways of disseminating culture focus groups dealt with:

- on-line or face to face interactive meetings (GFR_Rs_FG1, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MONTE_PmsAs_FG2, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, VDA_Rs_FG1, VDA_Rs_FG2, VDA_PMsAsCIsNGOs_FG3)
- literature: books, poetry, dramaturgy, plays (GFR_Rs_FG1, GFR_Rs_FG4, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, VDA_Rs_FG1, MUME_Rs_FG4)
- Schools and Universities (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MONTE_PMsAs_FG2, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, VDA_PMsAsCIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_Rs_FG1, MUME_PMsAs_FG2, MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_Rs_FG4)
- social media (GFR_Rs_FG1, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_PMsAs_FG2, MUME_Rs_FG4)
- movies/short films (GFR_Rs_FG1, MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_Rs_FG1, MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- paintings (GFR_Rs_FG4, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MUME_Rs_FG1)
- theatre (MONTE_Rs_FG1, VDA_Rs_FG2, MUME_Rs_FG1)
- social or radio broadcasts (GFR_Rs_FG4, MONTE_Rs_FG1, MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- experimental drama (MONTE_Rs_FG1, MUME_Rs_FG4)
- virtual reality (MUME_Rs_FG4)
- photos (VDA_Rs_FG2, MUME_PolMak_Aca_FG2)
- TV series (VDA_Rs_FG2, MUME_Rs_FG1)
- documentaries (MONTE_Rs_FG1, MUME_Rs_FG1)





- graphic novel (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- sites (GFR_Rs_FG4, MONTE_Rs_FG1)
- museums (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2, MUME_Rs_FG4)
- walking tour (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3, MUME_Rs_FG4)
- living library (MONTE_Rs_FG1, GFR_PMsAs_FG2)
- augmented reality (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3)
- video games (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- festivals (GFR_Rs_FG1)
- social circus (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- tv (MONTE_Rs_FG1)
- expo (GFR_Rs_FG4)
- translation apps (MONTE_Rs_FG1)
- digital storytelling (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3)
- games (MUME_Rs_FG4)
- satire (MUME_Rs_FG4)
- sport (MONTE_Rs_FG1)
- biographies (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2)
- contests on social media (MUME_Rs_FG4)

Video games are in some cases cited as a useful tool for creating awareness and empathy (MUME_PMsAs_FG2, MUME_Rs_FG4), but in others they are criticized for turning real and serious problems into a game (MUME_Rs_FG1, MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3). These tools certainly have potential, but they also carry risks that can compromise the depth of the message: “it is necessary to be aware of the risk of gamification [...] the risk of ‘ah, the adventure...’ Oju, we are playing with very serious thing, real stories, there are escape-rooms and there are situations that can be well thought out, but sometimes we trivialize things that if you do not treat with some complexity can generate the opposite effect of what we want” (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).

Even when the tools identified are not strictly digital, social media and digital tools are in general recognized for their role in sharing and disseminating culture. As explained in chapter 6.3, social media, or the media in general, are also considered one of the main actors responsible for the creation and dissemination of stereotypes and prejudices, so their very role is also questionable. On the one hand, their ability to make news travelling fast and to a wide audience is recognised, on the other hand, the quality of what is communicated is constrained by the limits of the medium. A solution could be to integrate digital tools with real meeting opportunities. In order to share cultural heritage and messages aiming at social cohesion, we can affirm that a mix of digital and face-to-face activities is considered useful: “It would be great to record minute by minute the life of a refugee from morning till night and at the same time put the life of a person from the local community. And compare them. Because I make documentaries and make videos in the camps, I understand that no one knows about them. If he understands exactly what the other person is going through, that in itself has an impact” (GFR_Rs_FG1); “There is a group on Facebook called movies in the Wavell in Krakow where they shove foreign movies and have discussion about this with movies representative





by native. For example, I can show an Egyptian movie and have a discussion about it, about the culture and all those things. It's a movie [festival] presenting native and Polish movies also. And people from different countries meet there" (VDA_Rs_FG2); "It could be something interactive, like virtual reality or something that they can interact with it, that they can move, that they can look around or something... I've seen this in the museo de historia de Barcelona, when you enter you can put your glasses and see this castle. This could be interesting" (MUME_Rs_FG4); "I am thinking what if we make a *meme* on Monte Sole web page about dictatorship, we give two weeks time to all registered members to connect also to our friends who have the opportunity to tell something in native language or in Italian so we have [...] many testimonials, ideas on this theme. [...] Something came to my mind since M. and I did theater. We can create events telling our own, my story, doing like a show, could be another way, I'm not so good at singing or playing but we can call someone who can do it even if he is not part of the group" (MONTE_Rs_FG1).

Particularly in stakeholder focus groups, but not only there, there have been discussions on how cultural institutions should work on heritage sharing. As already expressed in the previous chapter, it is stressed that, in order to strengthen social cohesion, it is useful to involve refugees and the host society together, through activities of common interest in which they are on the same level.

Cultural institutions should work on issues that actually benefit refugees, instead offering them tools that are considered useful a priori, otherwise there is a risk that they will not be used effectively or not be used at all: "It's important is to not present resources before they are requested, but to wait for this demand to exist, that is to say, to look for resources so that the person that needs it, has the space to present this demand. Say look, we would need, we would like something because we are refugees, or because we are not, whatever it is, in this case, surely, because they are refugees, we would like to have a space to do this or that, a tool, a blog. So yes, I think we should find the mechanisms, not to give the tool, but to give the space to present the need for this tool" (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3).

It is also essential to reach the widest possible audience, and not only those who are already aware of intercultural issues. This seems to be one of the most difficult challenges because it is very difficult to get out of the circuit of those who are already interested and to hook people who are totally outside refugee dynamics. Through school activities it's possible to reach children and families, but it is still critical to be able to involve other sections of the adult population. Some participants underline that many projects have been made already and therefore there is a big amount of material that can be used. What it is important to focus on is to find new communication strategies in order to reach more people.

The idea of sharing materials already produced is associated in some focus groups with the valorisation of refugees who are artists and spontaneous refugees' projects (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3, GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3). Supporting existing refugee-led initiatives would enable their recognition and empowerment and prevent the problem of projects built on the needs of institutions, rather than the real needs of refugees: "There are many examples of refugees who, say, the same artists, who took space on their own and organized various such actions on their own. One group that comes to mind now is a Syrian group that took an abandoned building and organized yoga classes, art, traditional





wedding festivals. It would be worthwhile now in the next stage in terms of art and culture, to strengthen these groups that are already doing such things. And in the conditions of the pandemic, it would make sense, if it is to offer some tools, to offer them perhaps some knowledge of how they will present all this in a digital environment” (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3); “But do not give the resource thinking it is good, with the prejudice of ‘I know what you need and I will give it to you’. [...] Honestly, and I'm sorry to say, but Europe has programs like this and spends millions and millions of dollars on solutions to problems that no one has raised. The problems that are on the street, do not find an answer [...]. That is, I don't need a glass if I don't have water. I'll come and tell you, look I have water, do you have glasses? Okay, so let's fill them. I think this would be more useful” (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3). Regarding social media existing content, the topics and sources most searched for on the web by the refugees are mainly related to the search for information and help during the journey phase, and to information and services in the host country during the integration phase, especially about documents and work. Participants also look for physical or virtual places to be able to participate in social life in the host country. Often searched words and hashtags are: human rights, ngo's names, women's rights, equality, inclusion, empowerment, news for refugees, information on asylum procedures, how to promote the asylum procedure, new rules of asylum, new government decisions on refugees, rules for finding a job, work, housing, free language lessons, 'name of the city' follow by services/help/government/facebook groups.

For better understanding and handling, a participant highlights the importance of communicating in a simple way and with the support of images (GFR_PMsAs_FG2). It is also useful to exploit the influence refugees themselves have on the groups in which they are placed, where they can mediate linguistic and cultural information (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3 and GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

Concerning the use of words on social networks, a participant points out the difficulty of certain issues to be "viral" on social media because of algorithms blocks: “We made a campaign against racism through the poems written by migrants and these poems, precisely these video pills, were put on social media [...]. In practice, the algorithm or whoever read the whole sentence, "poems against racism", read only "racism" and then automatically blocked the message and then we should do a work upstream so that there is awareness on the part of those who manage these social media about the importance of not separating words and meanings, because otherwise you run into an impossibility to reach the public, and this made us think a lot about how the information works” (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3 and GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

In some focus groups examples of interesting projects or materials are given for viewing:

- Observatori de Drets Humans i Empreses a la Mediterrània (MUME_PoIMak_Aca_FG2)
- Encontres D'Exili (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- Video game: Survival Algericas (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- Radio programs: Red Refugio (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- Short documentaries: Festival Andalucine (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- Amira Tik Tok (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)
- Youtube videos to share messages: De compras con la Hannah Arendt (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)





- Shower power (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3)
- Cuida tu Gente (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3)
- <https://www.hmd.org.uk> (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3)
- <https://www.genocidewatch.com/tenstages> (MUME_CIsNGOs_FG3)
- The journey of Amman project (MUME_Rs_FG4)
- Qisetna project (MUME_Rs_FG4)
- Iniciativa Mirath (MUME_Rs_FG4)
- Syrien Effet project (MUME_Rs_FG4)
- Abrazo cultural project (MUME_Rs_FG4)
- Homo Faber (VDA_Rs_FG3)
- Multaka project (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2)
- Dinnertime Atlas (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2)
- Foreign Farmers of Leone Contini (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2)
- Eks&tra (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3)
- Cantieri Meticci (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3)
- Next Generation Italy (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3)

8.3. Possible critical issue

Refugees, of course, come from another country and therefore are perceived and also perceive themselves as “ambassadors” of another country. Sometimes there is a controversial relationship with this country or community, sometimes it is described with nostalgia, but indeed the “country of origin” difference is one of the first to be detected by host society and sometimes by refugees too. However, there are multiple possible negative effects deriving from this.

Ethnicization of refugees bears multifaceted risks: “We need to remember that culture is dynamic”. (MUME_PMsAs_FG2)

"Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behavior acquired and transmitted by symbols, constituting the distinctive achievements of human groups, including their embodiments in artifacts; the essential core of culture consists of traditional (i.e. historically derived and selected) ideas and especially their attached values; culture systems may, on the one hand, be considered as products of action, and on the other as conditioning elements of further action."²¹

Culture is not necessarily related to the area of origin, it is multidimensional and constantly changing. If members of host society value a refugee for his/her country of origin, they enact a process of narrowing down, not to mention that in Europe there is still a lack of knowledge about the rest of the world. The latter element, together with generalization processes lead to inaccurate visions, where “arab” food, for example, should be the same from North Africa to Arab peninsula.

“Exoticism also needs to be reviewed: diversity produces a relationship of strangeness through exoticism, the other becomes an exotic element to collect, to show, to consume if you like. The most, most beautiful, most productive vehicle, in the relationship between locals and migrants in Bologna, obviously, was the culinary cuisine. [...] In the end I found out that many immigrants and especially

21 Kroeber, A.L., & Kluckhohn, C., (1952:181)





female immigrants are tired of attending these multi-ethnic dinners because everyone asks them 'yes for your integration let's have a party, let's all eat together, let's create sharing, bring couscous', this one, that one, everything you do in your countries and nobody makes them a plate of tagliatelle, nobody makes them a plate of lasagna. Exotic, produces nothing but distance" (MONTE_PMsAs_FG2). "Turkish girls are treated well because they are exotic so Polish people are looking for cute exotic Turkish girls. She is exotic not by choice. She has political problems in Turkey. She is in liberal organization in Turkey and now she is on the list. If she returns, she will be arrested" (VDA_Rs_FG2). Food, very often, is considered one of the easy vehicles of interaction. On the side of the refugees, very often this has to do with nostalgia, as in MUME_Rs_FG1 about Arab bread, falafel, Syrian restaurant.

Sometimes it has to do with "offering" by migrants, as mentioned before, sometimes with similarities, as in the case of Greek-Sudan Moussaka or Ukrainian-Polish pelmeni.

In any case, food seems to be about eating, not about history or relationships between different parts of the world, or about the lack of food in some areas of the world. The festive and sharing (mostly one-sided) aspects of it are mainly considered.

But talking about food in everyday terms, one of the main disputed issues in between neighbors is the smell of other culinary traditions.

"I do not think it is just the food, the dance, the colors, the clothes and so on. It is also everyday" (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

Also festivals or traditions face the risk of ethnicization of refugees.

"The ethnic element we have clearly seen does not work well. Eating and dancing African dances does not work, it does not help. It also reinforces stereotypes" (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

It is to remark that very often when we come to the ethnic element, a process of generalization is enacted, considering vast and different areas of the world as one culture. The case of Africa is probably the most emblematic. It is true that there are common elements shaping somehow a part of "African culture", such as colonialism, but on the other hand different occupying countries influenced and affected cultural heritage differently.

Africans do not perceive themselves as the same.

It is relevant to be careful to avoid fighting stereotypes using stereotypes.

"But again, we do not put the refugees as exhibits to see the spectacle of music they offer, to buy clothes? That is, as what interaction? Its culture is gaining visibility, but it is not really interacting" (GFR_CIsNGOs_FG3).

That is another problematic aspect. Often, when we come to ethnic elements, there are separate roles for refugees and host society members, affecting the possibilities of interaction, mostly one group shows, the other is the audience, since the contents are not shared between the groups. Generally, only in more creative and challenging experiences and methods, people are treated as people and the country of origin is of course part of the picture, but not the only content.

"Above all, the experience of the collective and crossbred writing workshop with the University of Bologna has been enlightening in these years because participants started from historical themes, looking at archives, looking for 'new' stories, and from there they took inspiration for the theme of





the story they wanted to develop. The groups were always mixed, Italians and migrants, and within the group the tutor [...] taught them how to interact, how to create a collective writing, respectful of all aspects and all the people participating. And through this method they were able to create stories that had aspects of each of the participants” (MONTE_CIsNGOs_FG3).

Moreover, when a group or individuals are asked to be the audience, unavoidably they come to judgements about whether they liked something or not, as human beings normally do when they experience something. When that something is considered as “the other group culture”, in a sort of othering and essentialist vision, this may lead to misunderstandings and non-acceptance. What if some host society members don’t like a performance, a recipe or any other ethnic element? Would that reduce the possibility of future interactions, in terms of considering an individual as the mere representative of cultural traditions *I am not crazy about?*

It seems also that in FGs where refugees shared the same country of origin - although it is to be noted that such an expression is itself a generalization - the risks of critical fallouts of cultural essentialism were higher than in mixed FGs.





9. CONCLUSION

As observed in the report, focus groups provided the occasion and the stimulus for participants to engage in a joint discussion, to attempt collectively to tease out some of the difficult issues concerning refugees in four countries, in particular regarding cultural heritage and memory. Focus groups sessions, real and virtual, generated large amounts of detailed information and additional analysis. The results of the focus groups revealed polarized points of view on the refugees' situation throughout the European countries and the dichotomy between Northern and Southern Europe. Focus group discussions yielded data on the issues of remembering the past and sharing memories related to the traumatic experiences of forced migration. Similarly, focus group sessions provided data on host societies' expectations of refugees. Relatedly, focus group data also throw light on the content of forced migrants' experiences and ways in which this content could be shared.

The richness and the variety of stimulus detected in FGs prevents the possibility to draw one single conclusion but they allow a multiplicity of conclusions. It is clear that each national social, jurisdictional and geographical context determines very different conditions for the interaction between the native communities and the refugees / asylum seekers ones. And it is also clear that the starting conditions of the refugees / asylum seekers influence a lot the hosting atmosphere. In this respect, one important aspect to stress is that more than about other issues, when dealing with reception, integration, inclusion of migrants it is almost impossible to talk in terms of European framework. As illustrated in chapter 5, the main reason seems to be that the EU itself created the premises for such an unbalance by designing the entire system around the Dublin Agreements. Moving then to chapter 6, 7 and 8 it is extremely visible the effort and the amount of compromises that every society is trying to put in action to manage the phenomenon. Racism, discriminations and violence are extremely present but there are a lot of committed persons, organizations, associations and institutions that are working hard to create better living conditions for all, citizens or not.

In this respect one concept emerged, more or less explicitly: intersectionality. Intersectionality and a multidisciplinary approach are an important part of this project. The connection between past European history and nowadays refugees is not only in terms of similar experience of pain and trauma. During that dark period in Europe an idea on freedom and human rights was starting to be shaped, with a lot of gaps, and a common awareness in Europe on individual dignity and the role of a person inside its community. Social cohesion is unavoidably intertwined with social justice, so it appears as a difficult task to foster it in context where social justice is poor. It is not possible to ignore that a continent strongly shaped around liberistic values and structures is in deep trouble in terms of solidarity and openness, when considering the need and the right for a dignified existence for every human being, no matter what race, skin-color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status that human being is identifiable with. Moreover, and more to the point of the So-Close project scope, no matter what is the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs.

Now the arrival and presence of refugees are challenging the awareness about and the principles of universality of human rights: human rights were not conquered once for all and we cannot take them for granted. Efforts on fighting for a decent life for everybody are and must be constant.





The complexity that emerges from FGs, far from being contradictory, hints at possible risks in working on such topics: there is an urgent need from the refugees' side, to be considered as full human beings, overcoming the frame of their ethnicity, and at the same time, there is a common trend, sometimes also among refugees to adopt essentialist frames. Cultural Institutions are well aware of this dynamic relationship and are able to and will control it.

Another apparently contradictory issue is the aim of the project itself, i.e.: social cohesion and the temporary quality that is sometimes perceived by refugees about their life. Long term refugees are more available to commit to projects and to bond to local communities. It must be said though that availability to commit doesn't correspond directly to integration or satisfaction of refugees.





Finally, it is important to underline a lesson learnt. The research was not meant to be a statistical representation of the refugees / asylum seekers world, while it was meant to push a strongly horizontal methodology: the co-creation. Firstly, with the interviews in WP1 and then listening to the WP2 FGs participants, it became clear that even if the one-to-one relation can vastly enrich the human dimension, it is important not to forget that for a long time the scientific world has developed different frameworks underlying what is mostly effective in order to smoothen the power differential between who is native and who is a newcomer. This means that the biggest challenge and forthcoming commitment for the So-Close Consortium will be to be able to balance the human listening to each other and a scientific attitude.





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11. ANNEXES

11.1. Focus Group theoretical framework seminar agenda (15-16.09.2020)

Day 1. Focus groups: Theory and experience

10:00 – 10:30 Presentation by LUND Dr. Anamaria Dutceac Segesten

10:45 – 11:15 Presentation by LUND Dr. Eleonora Narvselius

11:30 – 12:00 Presentation by UAB Dr. Teresa Sorde

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch break

13:00 – 13:15 Experience with focus groups VDA

13:20 - 13:35 Experience with focus groups MONTE

13:40 – 13:55 Experience with focus groups GFR

14:00 – 14:15 Experience with focus groups MUME

14:20 – 14:35 Experience with focus groups LUND

14:40 – 14:55 Experience with focus groups UAB

15:00 – 15:15 Wrap-up of day 1

Day 2. Focus Groups: Practical implementation

10:00 – 10:30 Presentation by UAB-GEDIME on ideas for FG content for the entire project

10:45 – 11:15 “Homework” presentation of local focus group ideas, MONTE

11:30 – 12:00 “Homework” presentation of local focus group ideas, GRF

12:00 – 13:00 Lunch break

13:00 – 13:15 “Homework” presentation of local focus group ideas, MUME

13:20 - 13:35 “Homework” presentation of local focus group ideas, VDA

13:40 – 13:55 Break

14:00 – 15:30 General discussion (moderated by Dr. Anamaria Dutceac Segesten) on the design of focus groups with both a general (project overarching) and specific (to each cultural institution) components.

11.2. Lists of relevant readings for the Focus Group theoretical framework seminar (15-16.09.2020)

- Morgan David L., *Focus Groups*, Annual Review of Sociology 22(1):129-152, August 1996
- Passerini Luisa, *Conversations on visual memory*, European University Institute, Department of History and Civilization, 2018 BABE series, Cadmus permanent link: <http://hdl.handle.net/1814/60164>
- Stewart David W., Shamdasani Prem N., Rook Dennis W., *Group Depth Interviews: FocusGroup Research*, Chapter 18 in “The SAGE Handbook of Applied Social Research” (2009)

11.3. “Focus Groups. Why, when, how to conduct” by Dr. Eleonora Narvelius

What are focus groups?





“...a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher” (Morgan 1996, p.130)

“Focus groups provide a rich and detailed set of data about perceptions, feelings, thoughts and impressions of group members in the member’s own words (Stewart, Shamdasani & Rook 2009, p. 590)

We are interested in group as a unit of analysis, collective/shared ideas

Why to conduct research in focus groups?

Widen range of responses (diversity aspect)

Observe conflict lines, solidarities and hierarchies (interaction aspect)

Detect the limits of what goes to say and discuss in a group; detect sensitive topics (normative aspect)

Activate forgotten details (memory aspect)

Production of data or ideas that might not have been uncovered in individual interviews (synergetic aspect)

Share and compare (- or confront?)

Spontaneous reactions (or detailed knowledge?)

When to conduct focus groups for what purposes

Before collecting individual interviews

Explore “general contours” of the topic

Formulate questions in the respondents/interlocutors own words -> clarifying concepts

Piloting (e.g., for knowing what research hypotheses obviously do not work)

After collecting individual interviews

Estimate how frequent or publicly accepted are certain ideas, concepts, solutions...

Observe how they are generated within a group depending on power differentials or group dynamics

Discuss idiosyncrasies and details found in individual interviews

General recommendations

Avoid power differentials

Homogeneity (common ground, comparing and sharing details) / heterogeneity (speaking from different positions and arguing)

Strangers/acquaintances

Different strata

Specific recommendations

What to practise:

8-12 questions, fewer is better

5-10 min questions

Ice breaker question – open, easy, relevant for all the group

Open ended questions (think back)

Conversational language, simple formulations





More talk about something does not automatically mean that something is more important. What has been avoided/dropped/aborted?

Be aware of non-verbal information (gestures, postures...)

Suggestions about changing situations, finding solutions...

Summary, concluding remarks, follow-up questions

What to avoid:

asking WHY?

asking for examples (may lead participants, takes time)

to question someone's opinion, do not signal your (dis)approval

No leading questions, no loaded questions!

Typical structure of a focus group

Opening questions

Introductory questions (focus on topics, foster interaction)

Typical structure of a focus group

Transition (link to a key question)

Very few key questions discussed in more detail

Summaries by the participants themselves (what have you learned during the session, what was most interesting, helpful, revealing...)

Follow-up questions

Moderation

Listen acutely

Observe, watch dynamics in the group

Control and guide discussions to the key topics

Respect the participants, do not provoke, do not distress

Establish a safe space

11.4. Refugees FG Question template



Focus group questions and discussion guide

Focus group with refugees





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[Theme 1: Social Cohesion-Cultural heritage](#)

[Theme 2: Use of digital technology and social media](#)

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DATA COLLECTION FOCUS GROUP

Please see all **consent forms** required [here](#).

Consent forms should be uploaded on Nebula.

THEME 1: SOCIAL COHESION-CULTURAL HERITAGE

Sub-themes	Proposed questions
Most important challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Do you think that recently arrived refugees find more challenges than refugees who have settled in your host country since a long time ago? 2 What do you consider are the most important challenges to integrate in a host country? 3 In which ways, if any, personal conditions such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, appearance or health conditions have impact on the challenges encountered?
Opinion on the current situation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 How would you describe the context of arrival for those coming seeking for asylum? 2 How would you describe the access to information on how to regularize asylum procedures? 3 From where you stand right now in your integration process, what is your personal balance?
Cultural interaction (acceptance, activities, differences and similarities)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 What do you think affects the different perceptions people have of refugees? Are the differences you see between home country and host country something to value or try to smooth out? For integration purposes would you highlight similarities or would you like differences to be valued? 2 What similarities and differences did you find between your country of origin and the host country?
Cultural Institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Do you think activities designed exclusively for refugees in cultural institutions would be a helpful tool to integration? <p><i>Let's ask this in order to see if new ideas for activities or tools already emerge here but let's keep in mind that: "Is it really only for refugees?" Because if you think about language tools, it makes more sense to refer to activities aimed at intercultural citizenship. The lesson deriving from the interviews coming from NGOs and Cultural Institutions</i></p>





	<i>experiences in this sense are clear: yes to universal, not further ghettoizing products</i>
Share culture (history, experience, traditions, etc.)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What would you like the people learn about your home country and where do you think you would be able to speak freely? 2. What would be the key messages? 3. What are your opinions about the potential impacts on sharing your stories in the society you are living now? 4. What would facilitate for refugee communities to share their stories and also the history of their countries?
	<i>Please, let's consider that from the interviews it emerges clearly that "culture" is not only about the past or about a nation-based context but it refers deeply to politics, political fights, rights, and to a family-based dimension. "Listening to stories" is really important considering that as Anamaria highlighted during the August EB, our project is a storytelling based project and we should always remember not to mix the country dimension and the personal one.</i>
Memories of past European displaced population crisis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What do you think about the fact of having had stories of ancestors who lived a forced migration or a situation of violence such as civil wars? Do you think that this opens up new opportunities for better mutual understanding and promote a shared space of belonging? 2. Based on your experience, do you think that people in general are aware of forced migration realities?
Specific challenges faced by refugee women	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is your opinion about the additional challenges refugee women face in term of being more susceptible to more violence than men during transit and during integration in host country? <i>What do we want to reach with this question? Is it really useful? We would suggest to focus on the present and the future, on the things on which we can have some impact</i> 2. Do you think that services provisions consider these additional challenges faced by refugee women? What would contribute to better do so? 3. What would contribute to a better protection for /empowerment of women refugees? <i>Focus on this question!</i>

THEME 2: PROJECT CORE THEMES AND CO-CREATION METHODS AND TOOLS

Sub-themes	Proposed questions
------------	--------------------





<p><i>Notes for the facilitator: S1 aims at exploring the connections between past and present displacements. Also, to define the prevailing narrative themes, that tie together historical and actual migration stories, in every local context of So Close.</i></p>	
<p>S1. Regarding past and present traumatic experiences (forced migration, dictatorships, exiles, attacks on civilians)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If past and present (forced migration) experiences were displayed altogether, which connections would you expect to see? Which are the similarities and the differences that you would highlight? 2. How are the different stories and themes of the project connected with each other? (i.e. What is the historical episode of the host country that you want to evoke regarding migration?)
<p><i>Notes for the facilitator: S2 aims at defining the communication framework to be co-created: departing from the needs detected in the interviews and exposed in D1.1, which are the messages to be communicated regarding migration realities nowadays, who is the final recipient, which is the expected impact on social cohesion.</i></p>	
<p>S2. Regarding the purpose</p>	<p>In the interviews, several participants pointed out that it was necessary to correct the dominant picture of refugees (D1.1, p61).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's your motivation? Which stereotypes should we challenge to reinforce social cohesion? Which aspects of the migratory reality do you think are important to share? 2. What social outcomes and impacts do you want to achieve (organizations) and which communication tools and media do you need? 3. Who is your specific target audience/s?
<p><i>Notes for the facilitator: S3 aims to identify which interactions will best serve the work to be done in WP4 pilots in each country, in order to address the subjects and narratives. The aim is to ask the stakeholders how they would prefer to interact, and how they imagine themselves working on the themes. The definition of the way interactions between local and refugee communities will take place in So Close is crucial in order to unchain the following steps: Design of content-gathering and sharing methods and tools, and alignment between WP2 with WP3 & 4. Knowing the way each cultural institution will work, will allow to address specific content gathering needs and move towards the sharing tools that can better serve the co-created narratives.</i></p>	
<p>S3. Regarding the co-creation during the workshops</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How would you promote mutual cultural and life-experience understanding between migrants and local communities? 2. What kind of interaction methods could better promote dialogue in your present context and why? <p><i>[For the facilitator: please, consider the following as a list of possibilities and try to explore the ones that better fit to your context and the content already emerged in your interviews and in your experience]</i></p> <p>LIST of METHODS</p> <p>A Culture and arts</p> <p>B Role play and drama strategies. (Group work techniques portray the given subject matter using body language and role</p>





	<p>play).</p> <p>C Actively recording the reality in the refugee camps / refugee everyday life using immersive cameras and sharing migrant's current and future expectations, while also gathering and working historical pictures from past migrations.</p> <p>D Through fieldwork (i.e photowalks or soundscapes), getting to know the daily life of refugees and finding common links to past migration experiences oral testimonies, personal recordings, audio messages.</p> <p>E Sharing objects and pictures as cultural artifacts that embody memories from the past and present experiences to share inspiring stories of overcoming obstacles.</p> <p>F Using a virtual representation techniques and mind maps to actively reflect and explain present and past migrations. This could be a useful tool to help participants in better understanding and sharing migration pathways, timelines, life-stories</p> <p>G Other new ways of interaction and co-creation</p>
<p><i>Notes for the facilitator: S4 is linked to social media crawling planned, as a part of So Close. The question intends to give a direction to the search, by identifying the subjects, relevant sources/accounts and hashtags that can lead to content related to migration.</i></p>	
<p>S4. Social media existing content</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you provide a list of themes (subjects) that categorizes the content of posts and feeds? 2. What are the main sources in social media that are relevant and meaningful to track in order to enrich such content collections (provide a list of subtopics, hashtags and/or social media accounts per each collection theme)?

NOTES

11.5. Stakeholders FG Question template



Focus group questions and discussion guide

Focus groups with stakeholders





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Theme 2: Use of digital technology and social media

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DATA COLLECTION FOCUS GROUP

Please see all **consent forms** required [here](#).

Consent forms should be uploaded on Nebula.

THEME 1: SOCIAL COHESION-CULTURAL HERITAGE

Subthemes	Proposed questions
Most important challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Do you think that recently arrived refugees find more challenges than refugees who have settled in your host country since a long time ago? 2 What do you consider are the most important challenges to integrate in a host country? 3 In which ways, if any, personal conditions such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, appearance or health conditions have impact on the challenges encountered?
Opinion on the current situation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 How would you describe the context of arrival nowadays for those coming seeking for asylum? 2 How would you describe the access to information on how to regularize asylum procedures?
Cultural interaction (acceptance, activities, differences and similarities)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 What do you think affects the different perceptions people have of refugees? Are the differences you see between home country and host country something to value or try to smooth out? 2 For integration purposes would you highlight similarities or would you like differences to be valued?
Cultural Institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Do you think activities designed exclusively for refugees in cultural institutions would be a helpful tool to integration? <i>Is it really only for refugees? Because if you think about language tools, it makes more sense to refer to activities aimed at intercultural citizenship. The lesson deriving from the interviews coming from NGOs and Cultural Institutions experiences in this sense are clear: yes to universal, not further ghettoizing products</i> 2 Is it possible to design and mainstream cultural activities with refugees with the current financial and human capital resources that cultural institutions have available?





	<p><i>Take into consideration if this is really an important question. Go rather for a more content-based questions: this is the kind of question whose collective answer can take 15-20m: do we have them?</i></p>
<p>Share culture (history, experience, traditions, etc.) <i>Please, let's consider that from the interviews it emerges clearly that "culture" is not only about the past or about a nation-based context but it refers deeply to politics, political fights, rights, and to a family-based dimension</i></p>	<p>Considering the sharing of the new comers cultural heritage,</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 What would be the key messages? 2 What are your opinions about the potential impacts on sharing personal stories in the context you are living now? 3 What would facilitate for refugee communities to share their stories and also the history of their countries? <p><i>This is really important considering that as Anamaria highlighted during the August EB, our project is a storytelling based project and we should always remember not to mix the country dimension and the personal one.</i></p>
<p>Memories of past European displaced population crisis</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 What do you think about the fact of having had stories of ancestors who lived a forced migration or a situation of violence such as civil wars? Do you think that this opens up new opportunities for better mutual understanding and promote a shared space of belonging? 2 Based on your experience, do you think that people in general are aware of forced migration realities? 3 There is a large cultural apparatus found in European countries to tell stories of forced migration, wars and other issues faced in the continent, notably in the 20th century. Is it prepared to also tell stories of non-European refugees?
<p>Specific challenges faced by refugee women</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 What is your opinion about the additional challenges refugee women face in term of being more susceptible to more violence than men during transit and during integration in host country? <p><i>What do we want to reach with this question? Is it really useful? We would suggest to focus on the present and the future, on the things on which we can have some impact</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2 Do you think that services provisions consider these additional challenges faced by refugee women? What would contribute to better do so? 3 What would contribute to a better protection for /empowerment of women refugees?





THEME 2: PROJECT CORE THEMES AND CO-CREATION METHODS AND TOOLS

Sub-themes	Proposed questions
<p><i>Notes for the facilitator: S1 aims at exploring the connections between past and present displacements. Also, to define the prevailing narrative themes, that tie together historical and actual migration stories, in every local context of So Close.</i></p>	
<p>S1. Regarding past and present traumatic experiences (forced migration, dictatorships, exiles, attacks on civilians)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If past and present (forced migration) experiences were displayed altogether, which connections would you expect to see? Which are the similarities and the differences that you would highlight? 2. How are the different stories and themes of the project connected with each other? (i.e. What is the historical episode of the host country that you want to evoke regarding migration?)
<p><i>Notes for the facilitator: S2 aims at defining the communication framework to be co-created: departing from the needs detected in the interviews and exposed in D1.1, which are the messages to be communicated regarding migration realities nowadays, who is the final recipient, which is the expected impact on social cohesion.</i></p>	
<p>S2. Regarding the purpose</p>	<p>In the interviews, several participants pointed out that it was necessary to correct the dominant picture of refugees (D1.1, p61).</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What's your motivation? Which stereotypes should we challenge to reinforce social cohesion? Which aspects of the migratory reality do you think are important to share? 2. What social outcomes and impacts do you want to achieve (organizations) and which communication tools and media do you need? 3. Who is your specific target audience/s?
<p><i>Notes for the facilitator: S3 aims to identify which interactions will best serve the work to be done in WP4 pilots in each country, in order to address the subjects and narratives. The aim is to ask the stakeholders how they would prefer to interact, and how they imagine themselves working on the themes. The definition of the way interactions between local and refugee communities will take place in So Close is crucial in order to unchain the following steps: Design of content-gathering and sharing methods and tools, and alignment between WP2 with WP3 & 4. Knowing the way each cultural institution will work, will allow to address specific content gathering needs and move towards the sharing tools that can better serve the co-created narratives.</i></p>	
<p>S3. Regarding the co-creation during the workshops</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How would you promote mutual cultural and life-experience understanding between migrants and local communities (during the workshops)? 2. What kind of interaction methods could better promote dialogue in your present context and why?





	<p>[For the facilitator: please, consider the following as a list of possibilities and try to explore the ones that better fit to your context and the content already emerged in your interviews and in your experience]</p> <p>LIST of METHODS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Culture and arts B Role play and drama strategies. (Group work techniques portray the given subject matter using body language and role play). C Actively recording the reality in the refugee camps / refugee everyday life using immersive cameras and sharing migrant’s current and future expectations, while also gathering and working historical pictures from past migrations. D Through fieldwork (i.e photowalks or soundscapes), getting to know the daily life of refugees and finding common links to past migration experiences oral testimonies, personal recordings, audio messages. E Sharing objects and pictures as cultural artifacts that embody memories from the past and present experiences to share inspiring stories of overcoming obstacles. F Using a virtual representation techniques and mind maps to actively reflect and explain present and past migrations. This could be a useful tool to help participants in better understanding and sharing migration pathways, timelines, life-stories G Other new ways of interaction and co-creation
<p><i>Notes for the facilitator: S4 is linked to social media crawling planned, as a part of So Close. The question intends to give a direction to the search, by identifying the subjects, relevant sources/accounts and hashtags that can lead to content related to migration.</i></p>	
<p>S4. Social media existing content</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Can you provide a list of collection themes (subjects) that categorizes the content collected from the end-users? 2. What are the main sources in social media that are relevant and meaningful to track in order to enrich such content collections from end-users (provide a list of subtopics, hashtags and/or social media accounts per each collection theme)?

N





11.6. GFR presentation used during FGs

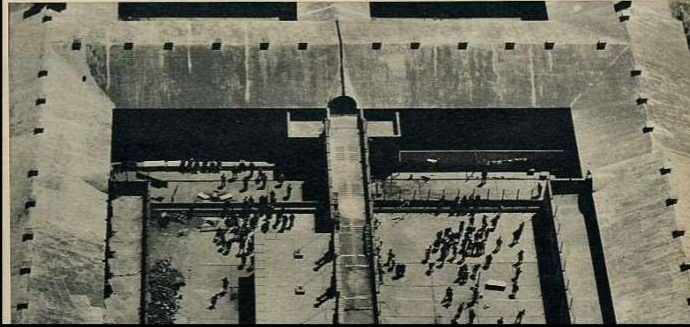


GREEK CIVIL WAR (1946–1949)



MAKRONISOS CAMP





YAROS CAMP



TRIKERI





TRIKERI

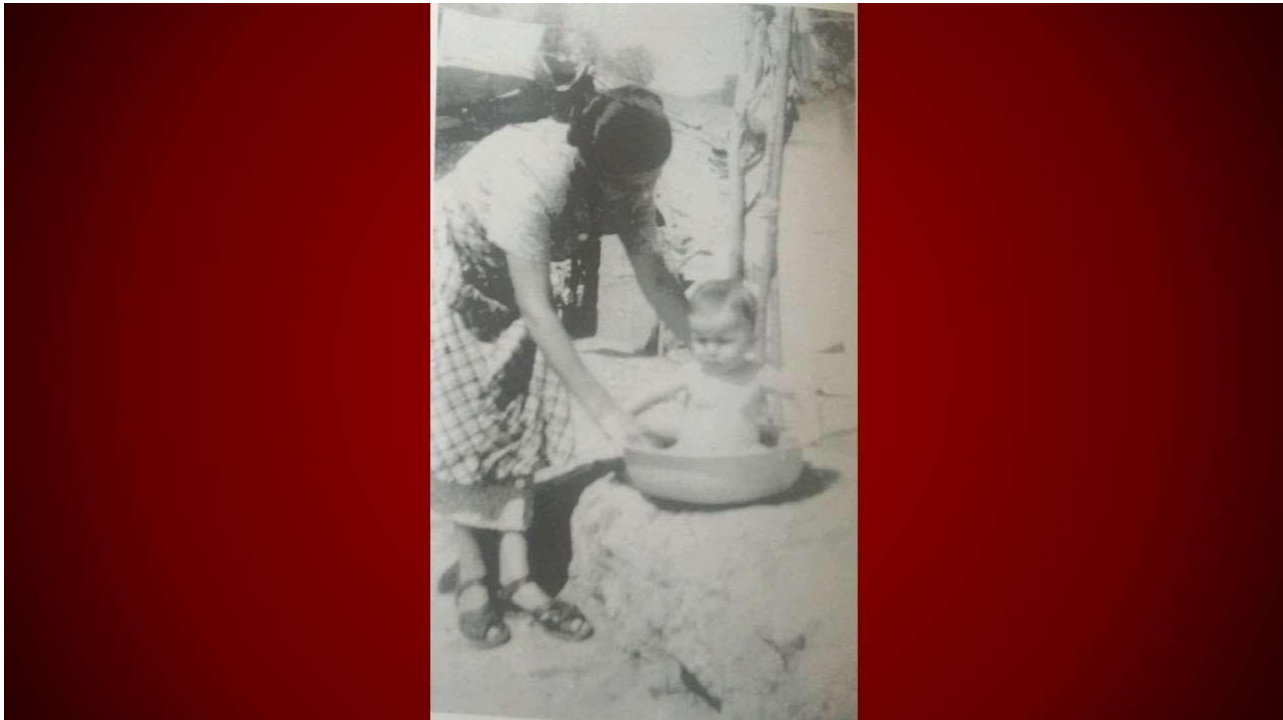


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11.7. MUME presentation used during Refugee FG

WP2

SO-CLOSE Focus Group Barcelona Refugees



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Temas

- o **Cohesión social y patrimonio cultural**
- o **Temas centrales del proyecto. Herramientas y métodos de cocreación**



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Vamos a presentarnos!

Presenta lo que quieras compartir de ti!



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1. ¿Qué elementos (momento de llegada, género, orientación sexual, salud, etc) influyen sobre estos retos? Y de qué manera influyen?



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2. El contexto actual de llegada



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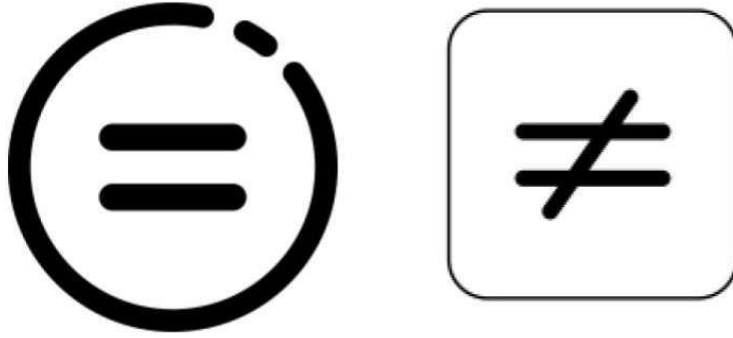


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3. ¿Creéis que para favorecer una buena cohesión social es importante resaltar las similitudes o resaltar estas diferencias?



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4. Creéis que si los museos, bibliotecas, archivos, universidades, etc, organizaran actividades dirigidas exclusivamente a personas refugiadas ayudaría a la integración de estas personas?



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5. Compartir cultura



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¿Cuáles de estos elementos culturales te gustaría compartir con tu lugar de destino? ¿Cuáles pondrías en la maleta? ¿Cómo impactarían estas cosas en la sociedad de acogida?



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7. Mujeres refugiadas

Si fuerais las personas encargadas de elaborar las políticas públicas, qué propondrías para dar una buena protección o potenciar el empoderamiento de las mujeres refugiadas?



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PICA PICA!

nos vemos en 30 minutos!



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S.1 Si tuvierais que comunicar ante una audiencia la experiencia del pasado español y la situación actual de Siria, Afganistán, Irak o cualquier otra que conozcáis, ¿qué similitudes y qué diferencias resaltaríais?



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¿Qué conexiones entre las experiencias del pasado y el presente esperaríais ver?



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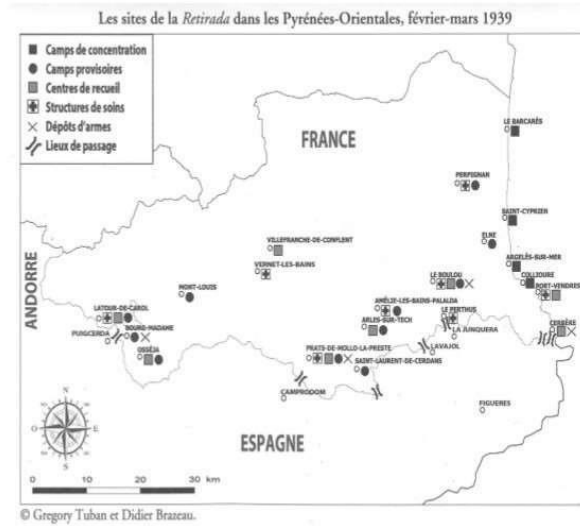


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6.1 El hecho de que aquí haya un pasado de migraciones forzadas, ¿creéis que favorece el entendimiento mutuo? ¿De qué manera?

6.2 ¿Creéis que aquí la gente es consciente de las realidades de las migraciones? ¿En qué sentido?



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S2. Respecto al propósito del proyecto: la cohesión social



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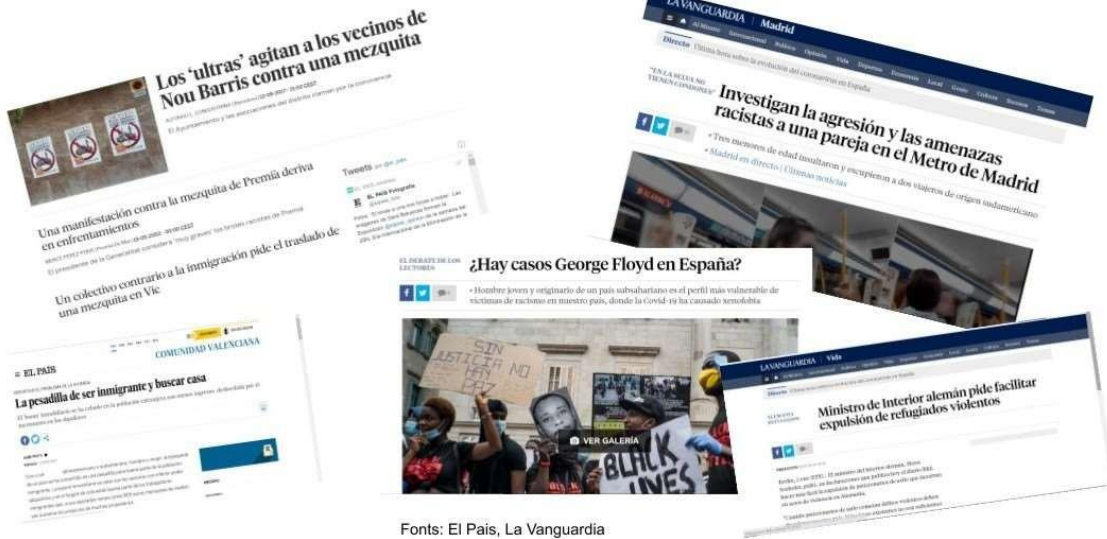


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S2. Revisión / mejora de las visiones mayoritarias sobre personas refugiadas a nivel social



Fuente: El País, La Vanguardia



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S2. ¿Qué es lo que afecta o qué elementos influyen sobre estos estereotipos referentes a las personas refugiadas?

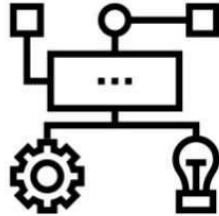


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Si tuvierais que lanzar un mensaje que tuviera un gran impacto para modificar los estereotipos referentes a las personas refugiadas y compartir la realidad migratoria.



- a) ¿A quién te dirigirías? (estudiantes, sociedad civil, personas refugiadas, representantes políticos, medios de comunicación, ONGs..)
- b) ¿Qué le dirías y por qué?
- c) ¿Cómo lo comunicarías? (con qué herramientas: vídeo, carta, libro, teatro...)



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S3. Herramientas de interacción y metodologías participativas



©. Stop Mare Mortum

06. Signe particulier

Signage, link, message, singularité.
As to un signe particulier, un détail bien à toi, qui te caractérise ?



©. Severine Sajous, Trànsit tales.

Videos

Browse our videos here you can find recordings from our events, including the European Remembrance Symposium and Genealogies of Memory conferences, video summaries of our educational youth projects, as well as 10-story lessons animations for teachers and pupils.

In Between? Catalan cross-border region

Collective work by the study visit participants: Eduardo Granados BARGUÑO, Jaume LICHNEVITZ, Caudia FERRER MARTÍNEZ, Anne-Florence NEUVY and Laila GALGÓ VILA. The group was led by Zhanna VIDIEVSKA and David González Vázquez from MUME - The Solé Memorial Museum.

language: French, Spanish, Catalan
duration: 05:11:51

©. In Between Project.





Ejemplos visuales de cultura y artes



©. Museu Sant Cugat, Cartografiant la Memòria.



©. 9 Barris Acull, Festival de Sopes del món.





Ejemplos visuales de juegos de rol y dramaturgia



© Yiannis Papaioannou, *Rebetiko, nascut a l'exili.*



© Cristina Robledillo, *Catalejos.*



© React Project, *EU. Community theatre.*



© *Mind the fact, Station Athens.*



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Ejemplos visuales de documentación inmersiva



©. For my son, 360 film



©. New York Times news documentary, *The Displaced*, produced in partnership with *Within*.



©. McClarchy New Ventures Lab, Sketchfab, 3D model of object



Ejemplos visuales de acción de trabajo de campo



©. Museu d'història de la immigració de Catalunya.



©. Marlen Mouliou, The Museum of our discoveries.



©. Museu d'història de la immigració de Catalunya.



©. CAMOC and Museu de Favela.



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Objetos patrimoniales ejemplos visuales



©. Museu d'història de la immigració de Catalunya. Histories of Cub



©. Museu Memorial de l'Exili i Arolsen Archives.



©. Les Adriànes de la Mina reconstrueixen el barri amb una maqueta col·lectiva.



©. Maria Arvanitidou, exiled woman testimony and personal photographic album.

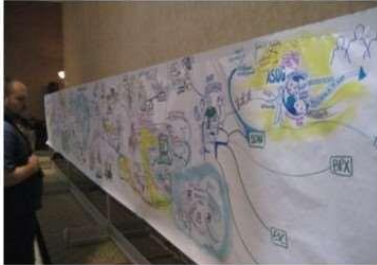


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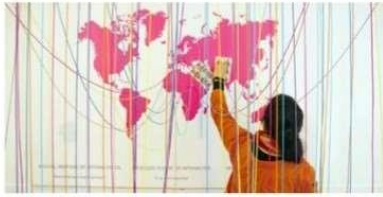




Mapas colectivos



©. Example of a mind map.



©. Migratie Museum Migration. La Libre.be



©. Observatori de la Vida Quotidiana i Tatiana Donoso, MI Mem[or]ia Camina por estas calles.



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Otros métodos de interacción

- pizarras blancas
- Metáforas de cartas
- mapas mentales
- Líneas de tiempo
- Materiales de archivo
- storyboards
- herramientas nuevas
- Blogs de mapas de viajes
- ...



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S.3 Respecto a los futuros talleres de co-creación de So Close (2021-2022), ¿qué crearíais para facilitar el entendimiento mutuo y el intercambio histórico y cultural? Es decir, ¿qué métodos podríamos utilizar desde el MUME que facilitarían un diálogo intercultural entre pasado y presente?



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Interacción SO-CLOSE

- A) **Cultura y artes**
- B) **Estrategias de juegos de rol y dramaturgia.** Las técnicas de trabajo en grupo retratan el tema dado mediante el lenguaje corporal y el juego de rol.
- C) **Grabar activamente la realidad a los campos de refugiados / vida cotidiana de refugiados** mediante cámaras inmersivas y compartir las expectativas actuales y futuras de los migrantes, al tiempo que se recopilan y trabajan imágenes históricas de migraciones pasadas.
- D) **A través del trabajo de campo** (es decir, fotowalks o paisajes sonoros), conociendo la vida cotidiana de los refugiados y encontrando vínculos comunes con experiencias migratorias pasadas testimonios orales, grabaciones personales, mensajes de audio.
- E) **Compartir objetos e imágenes como artefactos culturales** que encarnan recuerdos del pasado y experiencias presentes para compartir historias inspiradoras de superación de obstáculos.
- F) **Utilizar técnicas de representación virtual y mapas mentales** para reflejar y explicar activamente las migraciones presentes y pasadas. Esta podría ser una herramienta útil para ayudar a los participantes a comprender y compartir mejor las vías de migración, los plazos y las historias de vida
- G) **Otras nuevas formas de interacción y co-creación ...**

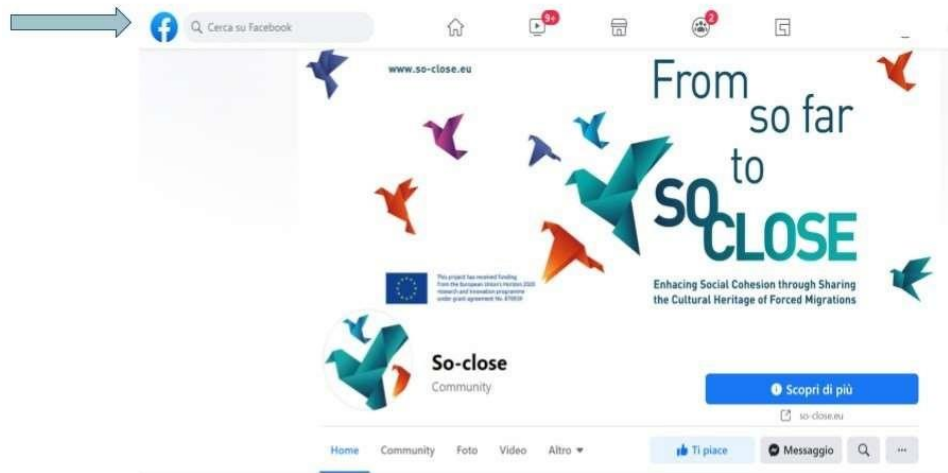


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S.4 ¿Qué cuentas, hashtags y temas debería seguir y tener el cuenta So Close en las redes sociales?



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Closing the FG

Media crowdsourcing call

Being already part of the co-creation process of So Close, participants that have signed a consent form are invited to contribute, sharing relevant content after the session's end.

We propose to explicitly ask for 3 or more media, from each participant, related to:

- Content that illustrates the discussed themes and the narratives proposed.
 - Photos and videos of past and/or present themes discussed.
 - Texts and testimonies and other documentation on political issues they have dealt with, in the past or in the present.
 - Content to be used in the interactions proposed, objects, routes, localisations etc.
- Content that represents their own personal stories and testimonies.
 - A photo that reflects who they are in some way (hands, objects, landscape...)
 - A photo of their that reflects their past, present and future perspectives.
 - A photo of the community life and activities.

** Set a calendar to receive the material by the end of November and do a follow up if necessary.*

The central axis should be the locally prevalent subjects and themes selected. Personal stories and narratives will be used as parts and illustrations of the narratives, that will be further developed in the design workshop



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Closing the FG

Visual examples of media to be gathered.



Figure 40 © Sara i Dabelyn, Ins Verdaguer



Figure41 Bosnia, June 1992 © Kevin Weaver (IWM)



My little bit of comfort.



2nd. lesson. Difficult.



Laundry washing.

Figure 42. © Kaylynn Deveney: "The day-to-day life by day of Albert Hastings"



Figure 43. Copyright free images



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Closing the FG

Visual examples of media to be gathered.

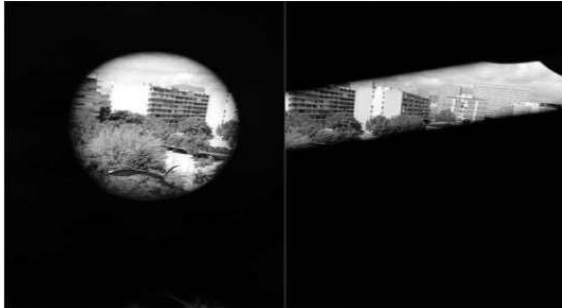


Figure 45. © Carmen Pedraza Martínez: "Miradas hacia fuera"



Figure 46. © Alex, Ins Verdaguer

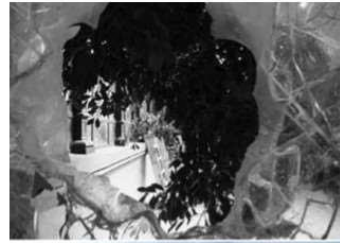


Figure 47 © Mon Casas



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11.8. MUME presentation used during Stakeholders FG





WP2

SO-CLOSE Focus Group Barcelona Stakeholders



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Presentem-nos



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TEMES

- o **Cohesió social i patrimoni cultural**
- o **Temes centrals del projecte. Eines i mètodes de cocreació**



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1. Quins són els principals reptes en el procés d'integració als quals han de fer front les persones refugiades?



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1. Quins elements (moment d'arribada, gènere, orientació sexual, salut, etc) influeixen sobre aquests reptes? I de quina manera hi influeixen?



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2. El context actual d'arribada



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8

Copyright free images



9



10



11

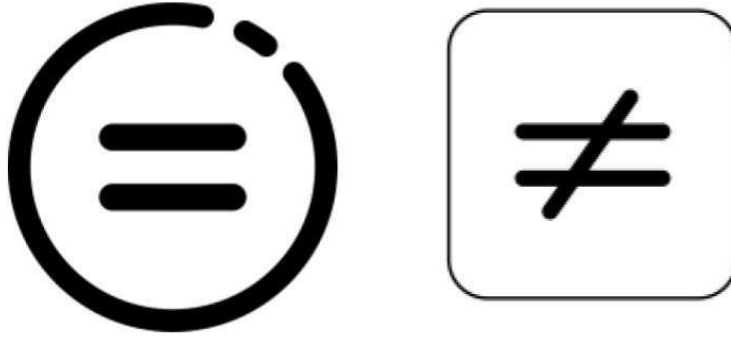


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3. Creieu que per afavorir una bona cohesió social és important ressaltar les semblances o ressaltar les diferències?



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4. Penseu que si les institucions culturals dissenyessin activitats adreçades exclusivament a persones refugiades ajudaria al procés d'integració?



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5. Compartir el patrimoni cultural de les persones nouvingudes



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5. Compartir el patrimoni cultural de les persones nouvingudes

- Beneficis generals per a la societat
- Quins missatges haurien de compartir?
- Beneficis específics per a la comunitat refugiada
- Quins impactes tindria?



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7. Dones refugiades

Què proposaríeu per garantir una bona protecció i potenciar l'empoderament de les dones refugiades?



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PICA PICA!

ens veiem en 30 minuts!



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S.1 Si haguéssiu de crear algun material que recollís l'experiència de les migracions forçades en el passat espanyol i l'experiència actual. Quines similituds i diferències ressaltarieu?



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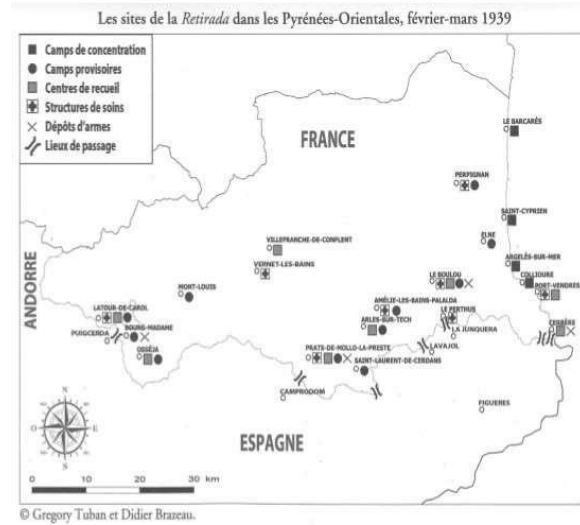


© Museu Memorial de l'Exili



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6.1. Creieu que el fet que aquí existeixi un passat de migracions forçades afavoreix l'enteniment mutu? De quina manera? Creieu que a Europa estem preparats per introduir les narratives de les experiències de refugi no europees?

6.2. Penseu que som conscients de les realitats de les migracions? En quin sentit?

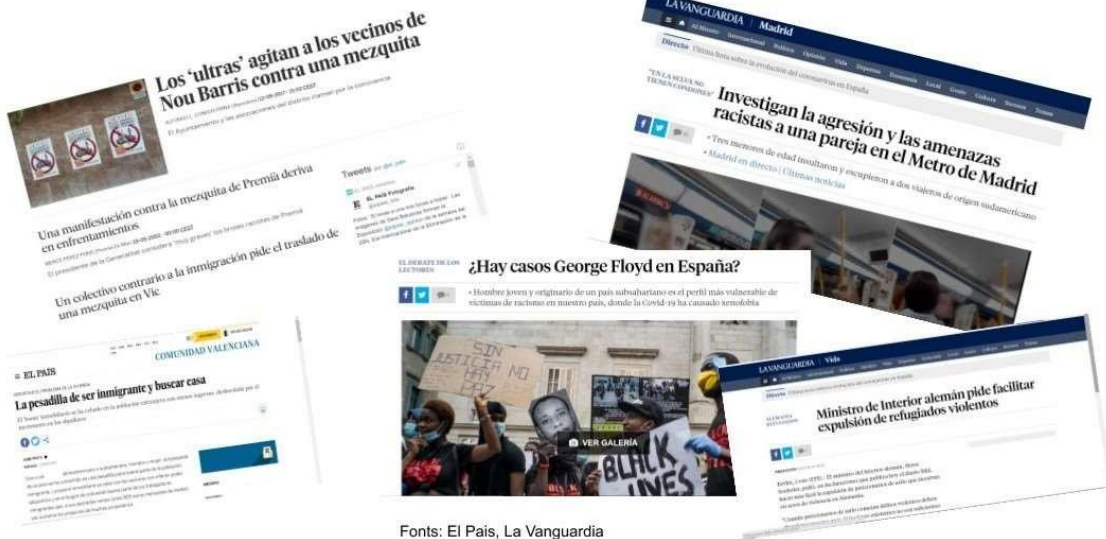


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S2. Revisió/millora de les visions majoritàries sobre persones refugiades a nivell social



Fonts: El País, La Vanguardia



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S2. Què és el que provoca que existeixin aquestes percepcions o estereotips sobre les persones refugiades? Quins elements hi influeixen?



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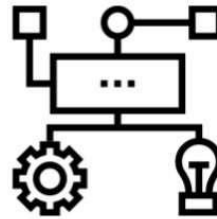


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Penseu en quins estereotips referents a les persones refugiades s'haurien de modificar per millorar la cohesió social i quins aspectes de la realitat migratòria s'haurien de compartir. Podríeu fer un esquema d'algun tipus d'actuació que es pogués fer en aquest sentit? (acte, documental, manifest, campanya informativa...)

- Destinatari
- Missatges a compartir
- Impacte esperat
- Eines comunicatives que necessitaries



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Exemples visuals de cultura i arts



©. Museu Sant Cugat, *Cartografiant la Memòria*.



©. 9 Barris Acull, *Festival de Sopes del món*.





Exemples visuals de jocs de rol i dramatúrgia



©. Yiannis Papaioannou, *Rebetiko, nascut a l'exili.*



©. Cristina Robledilla, *Catalejos.*



©. React Porject, *EU. Community theatre.*



©. *Mind the fact, Station Athens.*



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Exemples visuals de documentació immersiva



©. For my son, 360 film



©. New York Times news documentary, *The Displaced*, produced in partnership with *Within*.



©. McClarchy New Ventures Lab, Sketchfab, 3D model of object





Exemples visuals d'acció de treball de camp



©. Museu d'història de la immigració de Catalunya.



©. Marlen Mouliou, The Museum of our discoveries.



©. Museu d'història de la immigració de Catalunya.



©. CAMOC and Museu de Favela.



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Objectes patrimonials exemples visuals



©. Museu d'història de la immigració de Catalunya. Històries of Cub



©. Museu Memorial de l'Exili i Arolsen Archives.



©. Les Adriànes de la Miria reconstrueixen el barri amb una maqueta col·lectiva.



©. Maria Arvanitidou, exiled woman testimony and personal photographic album.

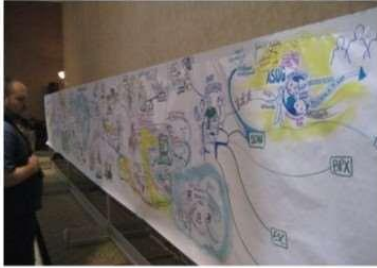


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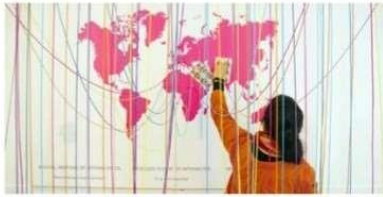




Mapes col·lectius



©. Example of a mind map.



©. Migratie Museum Migration. La Libre.be



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Altres mètodes d'interacció

- Pissarres blanques
- Metàfores de cartes
- Mapes mentals
- Línies de temps
- Materials d'arxiu
- Storyboards
- Eines noves
- Blogs de mapes de viatges

...



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S.3 Respecte als futurs tallers de co-creació de So Close (2021-2022), quins d'aquests mètodes/interaccions valoreu com els més adequats per crear un diàleg entre els temes històrics locals i les narratives actuals, i entre comunitats locals i nouvingudes?



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Interacció SO-CLOSE

- A) **Cultura i arts**
- B) **Estratègies de jocs de rol i dramatúrgia.** Les tècniques de treball en grup retraten el tema donat mitjançant el llenguatge corporal i el joc de rol.
- C) **Gravar activament la realitat als camps de refugiats / vida quotidiana de refugiats mitjançant càmeres immersives** i compartir les expectatives actuals i futures dels migrants, alhora que es recopilen i treballen imatges històriques de migracions passades.
- D) **A través del treball de camp** (és a dir, fotowalks o paisatges sonors), coneixent la vida quotidiana dels refugiats i trobant vincles comuns amb experiències migratòries passades testimonis orals, enregistraments personals, missatges d'àudio.
- E) **Compartir objectes i imatges com a artefactes culturals** que encarnen records del passat i experiències presents per compartir històries inspiradores de superació d'obstacles.
- F) **Utilitzar tècniques de representació virtual i mapes mentals** per reflectir i explicar activament les migracions presents i passades. Aquesta podria ser una eina útil per ajudar els participants a comprendre i compartir millor les vies de migració, els terminis i les històries de vida
- G) **Altres noves formes d'interacció i co-creació...**

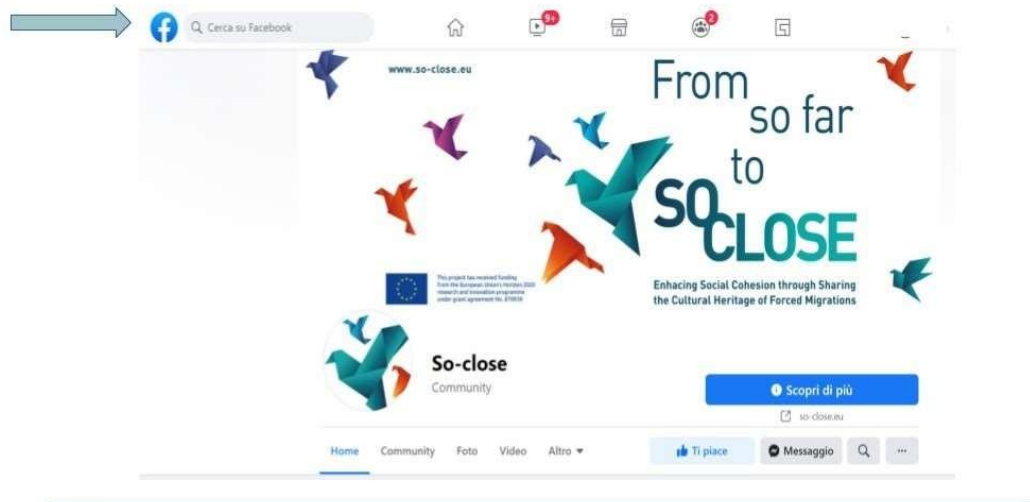


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S.4 Quins comptes, hashtags i temes hauria de seguir i tenir en compte So Close a les xarxes socials?



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11.9. FG_Summary_REFUGEES_template

Date and time of FG	
Country	
Partner name	
Facilitator(s)	
Nr. of Attendees	
Nr. of Attendees	
Type of recording	
Language used	
This summary author (name and email)	

Consent forms should be uploaded on Nebula.

THEME 1: SOCIAL COHESION-CULTURAL HERITAGE

Sub-themes	Direct Quotations
Most important challenges	
Opinion on the current situation	
Cultural interaction (acceptance, activities, differences and similarities)	
Cultural Institutions	
Share culture (history, experience, traditions, etc.)	
Memories of past European displaced population crisis	
Specific challenges faced by refugee women	

THEME 2: PROJECT CORE THEMES AND CO-CREATION METHODS AND TOOLS

Sub-themes	Direct Quotations
S1. Regarding past and present traumatic experiences (forced migration, dictatorships, exiles, attacks on civilians)	
S2. Regarding the purpose	
S3. Regarding the co-creation during the workshops	
S4. Social media existing content	

Information regarding the pilot's participants

Regarding the migrant participants in the future pilots	<p>Where do they come from? (Countries of origin)</p> <p>Will all genres be represented?</p> <p>What are their ages: less than 20; 20-30; 30-40; 40-50; 50-above?</p> <p>What caused them to migrate?</p> <p>Are all or part of them they living in camps?</p> <p>What are their general profiles?</p>
--	--

11.10. FG_Summary_STAKEHOLDERS_template

Date and time of FG	
Country	
Partner name	
Facilitator(s)	
Category of Attendees	
Nr. of Attendees	
Type of recording	
Language used	
This summary author (name and email)	

Consent forms should be uploaded on Nebula.

THEME 1: SOCIAL COHESION-CULTURAL HERITAGE

Subthemes	Direct Quotations
Most important challenges	
Opinion on the current situation	
Cultural interaction (acceptance, activities, differences and similarities)	
Cultural Institutions	
Share culture (history, experience, traditions, etc.)	
Memories of past European displaced population crisis	
Specific challenges faced by refugee women	

THEME 2: PROJECT CORE THEMES AND CO-CREATION METHODS AND TOOLS

Sub-themes	Proposed questions
S1. Regarding past and present traumatic experiences (forced migration, dictatorships, exiles, attacks on civilians)	
S2. Regarding the purpose	
S3. Regarding the co-creation during the workshops	
S4. Social media existing content	

Information regarding the pilot's participants

Regarding the local participants in the pilots	<p>What are their ages: less than 20; 20-30; 30-40; 40-50; 50-above?</p> <p>Will all genres be represented?</p> <p>What link do they have with forced migration?</p> <p>What are their general profiles?</p>
--	--

