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## **Integrating Migrant Children at Schools through Artistic Expression**

WP4: Dissemination and Exploitation

ArtsTogether Toolkit (4.7)

Prepared by

FOUR ELEMENTS

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## Project Information

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## Introduction

This toolkit aims to provide the reader with an overview of the research that has been done in the framework of ArtsTogether methodologies applied in the partner countries. Before starting with the actual deliverables, it is important to provide the issues that ArtsTogether tackle through the analysis of its theoretical basis. In this way, the reader will be able to comprehend the problem at hand, how different national societies cope with it, and to what extent the suggestions made can offer new perspectives on the study of the refugee education.

In particular, according to the WP1, migrant children face complex and intersectional challenges such as socio-economic disadvantage, language, native culture bias and attainment. The idea of examining this phenomenon across the European countries of Greece, Italy, Belgium, the United Kingdom, and Austria has shed some significant light upon the different resources available in each country.

The disadvantaged position of migrant children vis-à-vis children with both native parents has thus been examined by different parameters. Some common challenges faced by migrant children in every host country result from the characteristics of migrant groups, such as low socio-economic status, knowledge of a local language, psychological barriers, potential low expectations from parents and teachers as well as insufficient family and community support.

In educational level, migrant students are exposed to those barriers and especially to intolerant behavior at school. Although the pattern varies by country, children with a migrant background show tendency towards lower educational performance and are more likely to leave school early than their counterparts from a native background. Educators, on the other hand are not properly equipped to deal with increased diversity at classrooms and that can lead to conflicts between students and at the same time support migrant students to perform better. A tested practice that has yielded results in terms of improving performance of disadvantaged children and bringing the classroom together is through arts integration.

## Theoretical background of ArtsTogether and the current situation of migrant children in schools

ArtsTogether promotes an inclusive pedagogy that aims to engage all participants in learning in and through the arts, and specifically supports the integration of migrant children and their families. Emphasis is placed on creative intercultural engagement across the school community.

This chapter is focused on several pillars regarding refugee education and highlights the most important findings from practices in the field, as these were provided by the partners. More specifically, this chapter presents the challenges encountered by migrant children in learning process and social integration at schools. Here, some educational systems from Greece and Italy were given as examples for the identification of specific learning and cultural barriers.

Furthermore, this chapter examines best practices selected from the consortium countries, and abroad, related to the integration of migrant children and depending on different techniques for transfer to direct beneficiary countries. Artistic and intercultural activities at schools are also studied here in order to specify to the reader social inclusion methods and to make recommendations based on the findings. Before starting with the recommendations of tools and techniques made in this project about refugee education, it is important to provide the reader with the research context of two major case studies.

In the case of Greece, most of the migrants and refugees arrive by sea to the Northeastern islands of Lesbos, Kos, Chios, Samos and Leros. Refugee children arriving in Greece primarily come from three countries: Syria (57%), Iraq (27%) and Afghanistan (13%). On the other hand, unaccompanied minors and unaccompanied children are not included in the Italian case-study, and this is one of the most relevant differences with respect to Greece. Unaccompanied minors and children were not selected, since this phenomenon is highly marginal in Italy with respect to children in age 4-10. Statistics point out that 93% of unaccompanied minors are 16-17 years old, whereas partners' attention was focused on younger children enrolled in pre-primary and primary schools.

Because the reference targets were so different from each other, the results that emerged in the two research contexts were very different to each other. If in Greece the interviewees clearly underlined the economic and linguistic difficulties, in Italy the lack of information for those who arrived (regarding, for example, the legal and administrative procedures to be implemented in various fields, from the legal ones related to the residence, to those related to the educational world) was considered as problematic as the financial difficulties.

Throughout the project, ArtsTogether partners from Greece referred to two major initiatives related to the integration of migrant children into education:

1. Reception Facilities for Refugee Education (RFRE), and
2. Refugee Coordinators in the Reception Facilities.

According to the representatives of public and social organizations interviewed throughout the project, with the great majority of interviewees being teachers (33 out of 37) and only 4 interviews being principals, there are two prerequisites that are considered relevant to the success of an action. The first aspect is related to the financial resources that can implement effective inclusion projects and that can make count on an adequately trained and experienced staff (moreover, the skills required for those working with children in pre-primary schools are extremely different compared to those who work with children in primary and lower secondary schools). The second aspect is related to the role of the teacher whose passion, attention to the needs of the children, will to invest time in these activities allow an efficacy of inclusive actions undertaken.

## Cultural activities

At the same time, the partners proposed the means of arts and intercultural learning as methods of integrating migrant and refugee children at schools via:

- Study visits: educational visits to activity parks, museums, archaeological sites, monuments, sites of environmental interest. Participation of children in educational workshops, games and experiential activities held at museums, education institutes, libraries.
- Cultural and music festivities: participation of RFRE students to morning zone classes; Joint participation of refugee and native-born children in art, sports, and educational activities at schools.
- Open information events and artistic events: holding of open information events-discussions at schools with the participation of parents, teachers, representatives of local authorities and cooperating ministries for the integration of refugee children in schools.
- Support actions for children engagement: creative engagement of preschool children (painting, constructions, music, and theatre play) in cooperation with teachers and psychologists of the community work program.

The above-mentioned activities were then analyzed in a more detailed style and concrete examples were given, such as the supplementary educational support for younger people (and sometimes for their parents). Issues of cultural orientation and citizenship training were used as the content of recreational events for additional educational support. Moreover, actions of informing on issues relating to residence permits, as well as facilitating the lives of immigrants in terms of education and residence are carried out locally and aim at the proper information of migrant origin people. However, the organization of recreational events aim non-exclusively at migrant children. There is a need for these activities to be addressed also to native young people (or parents) in order to connect foreign-origin families with local families and promote their integration into the local community. More specifically:

- **Intercultural ethnic activities, musical parties, and ethnic-food festivals** can be mentioned and concern the focus of the research activity: from the organization of Seminars and artistic activities for social vulnerable groups to the use of artistic activities for psychosocial support and inclusion.
- **The creation of training programs by teenagers and for teenager** appears as an excellent practice for both the educational development of minors and for the integration and equal treatment of people with migratory background.
- Activities related to the **housing of vulnerable families**, health services, psychosocial support, humanitarian aid (material and capacity building support), family reunification, and supply of basic necessities (clothing, clothing, food, etc.) to migrants, and, in particular, to refugees.



The partners highlighted the need to rely on a network in order to implement the different activities: in this way, it would be easier to implement **long-term projects**, which can rely on diversified **sources of funding**. Depending on the later, a **wider target** can be reached and therefore the activities can have a **greater impact** on the inclusion of migrant children and their parents.

## Best Practices (a)

Some of the best practices that were mentioned include:

### 1. Creative Expression Workshops in School: Prevention Pro-grams for Immigrant and Refugee Children – Canada

The children are given sand trays and are encouraged to create a world and a story with small figures representing nature, animals, people, and various objects. In our qualitative assessment of the first pilot project for immigrant preschoolers, the children represented death and organized violence scenes in ways unexpected for this age group. This led the team to pay special attention to the reconstruction strategies used by the children. When the children were later given numerous figures representing their cultural and spiritual universes, they made massive use of these cultural signifiers in explaining adverse events and in proposing solutions.

### 2. Festival of Languages and cultures – Greece

The Festival of Multilingualism includes: round table discussions, theatrical productions, music and dance performances, film screenings, multilingual workshops, research projects, a multilingual cafés, memory and photography exhibitions, talks, thematic cycles of academic and research interest, seminars in the form of workshops, language stands, tributes to authors who focused on pluralism, interchangeability, networking and interaction, participatory knowledge workshops for citizens, parents, educators, and children, open discussions, multilingual literacy and calligraphy, the citizen's cuisine, and the highlighting of the transnational nature of regional cuisines etc. While at the roundtables concerns may arise and a contemplative mood may be created, it is therefore important to ensure active listening and consultation between the present bodies and the citizens during the interim meetings.

### 3. Intercultural theater project “Wolf Sein” – Austria

The content of the story: The sheep “Kalle” is a strong young guy. When the wolf dies, there is a chance to take his place: Kalle applies to the employment office and gets the job. But as soon as he has slipped on the wolf fur, in front of the eyes of his friend “Locke” already begins the



change. Agonizingly fast “Kalle” finds himself in the role of the carnivorous alpha animal. He orders his friend Locke around and even eats his friend “René”, a clever and gentle sheep who shares the pasture with them. But then it's over with Locke's friendship, with the big hunting scissors he cuts open Kalle's stomach and saves René. But he shows himself conciliatory and renounces serious revenge. Finally, the three remember the beautiful sides of being a sheep and bring together the wolf fur back. Every single child was able to participate in this project. No matter which country of origin or which language it has spoken of.

#### **4. Kindervillas educational principles – Austria**

Each family is greeted with an initial interview at the facility. If there are families that do not speak German, a language assistant is called in to support them. At this first meeting with the educational director, the parents are shown the premises, presented our pedagogical concept and answered the first questions. After the family has decided to attend "Kindervilla", the respective teacher approaches the family to be informed about the next steps, namely familiarization. Again the families and educators are accompanied by a language assistant if necessary. At the beginning, parents receive a Kindervilla- Reader and a welcome folder with all the most important information. After the gentle familiarization phase with which the parents work closely together with the teacher, a reflexive talk between teacher, director and parents, follows. Parents are informed about the process of familiarization, integration into the group and well-being of the child. Many questions that may arise during this time will be answered.

#### **5. MET – Meticceria Extrartistica Trasversale – Italy**

The MET is a diverse group of artists from over twenty different countries that make living a large hybrid laboratory, spaces designed specifically to create contact between the outside, the city, and the artistic processes; it is a space for theatrical performances, jam sessions, exhibitions, artistic activities, video installations, ateliers, hybrid exhibitions that mix languages: a kaleidoscope of artistic forms from all over the world. And it is also the home of Cantieri Meticci, a cultural association that for years has found its distinguishing mark in the "métissage" between arts and people. Cantieri Meticci organizes and conducts theater workshops for intercultural groups, also involving asylum seekers and refugees. In particular, the guests of the two reception facilities in Bologna are involved, in collaboration with Cooperativa L'Arca di Noè, as part of the Emilia-Romagna Terra d'Asilo project, and the SPRAR project of the city of Bologna. Over the years the project has consolidated to become a reference point for migrants

and refugees of all origins and experience, and to create a working group that includes over fifty actors from Afghanistan, Belgium, Cameroon, China, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Iran, Italy, Morocco, Nigeria, Pakistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Russia, Sierra Leone, Syria, Somalia, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea. I Cantieri Meticci thus constituted are renewed year by year, always welcoming new people as they arrive at the centers, continuing to maintain in its core even the old visitors. This system guarantees a gradual process and a growing involvement and sense of responsibility for the "old" members, creating at the same time a welcoming and prepared environment for newcomers.

#### **6. Migration Museum Project – UK**

The Migration Museum Project is a museum and centre currently housed in a temporary venue in Lambeth London until a permanent venue is established. It aims to increase knowledge and appreciation of how migration has shaped Britain across the ages through the creation of: an authoritative and inspiring permanent national Migration Museum', a far-reaching national education programme, a knowledge-sharing network of museums and galleries across the UK. The Arts Council England-funded Migration Museums Network was founded in 2017, bringing together heritage-sector organisations across Britain to share knowledge and best practice, with the aim of increasing and improving outputs related to migration across the UK heritage sector. Migration Museum Project has established a programme of exhibitions, events, lectures, educational programmes, and it generates publications and other outputs such as videos.

#### **7. MUS-E. Art for integration at school – Italy**

The MUS-E project is an idea born from the mind of an artist, the famous violinist and conductor Yehudi Menuhin, with the aim of promoting integration, respect for cultures and the enhancement of diversity among the youngest. In the classes reached by the project art becomes a means of social inclusion. According to the intuition of Menuhin, through art, children learn to communicate with a universal language in which differences become riches. Kindergartens and primary schools can participate in the MUS-E Project on spontaneous demand or because they are proposed by institutional partners, such as the Municipal, Provincial or Regional Administrations, or by other partners operating in the educational and social field or at the request of the same parents. The Educational Directions of the Schools participating in the Project stipulate with MUSE a Memorandum of Understanding which

describes the mutual commitments and guarantees compliance with the MUS-E guidelines. The Project is implemented in the context of the P.O.F. (Plan of the Educational Offer) of each school.

#### **8. Pan Intercultural Arts – UK**

Pan's expertise in arts for social change techniques has been called upon to assist in the development and support of specific disadvantaged groups addressing a range of issues in society. Projects developed through strong links with partners such as Freedom from Torture, Medaille Trust, Refugee Council, British Council, the UN, or by invitation from organizations such as The Metropolitan Police and Youth Offending Services. Pan delivers three main strands of work: Refugee Arts Programme, Arts Against Violence, International Theatre for Development. Different projects run throughout the year using a range of art forms and providing participants with creative activity, peer mentoring and leadership training, and a number of community performances and showcases. Participants also benefit from stability, new friends and a chance to re-imagine their lives.

#### **9. Step2School – Greece**

The activity was initiated in the summer of 2017 as part of a “Stavros Niarchos” Foundation initiative entitled “Open Schools”. The “Open Schools” programme is an innovative initiative run by the City of Athens, which has grown really popular within the local community. Specific schools' premises of Athens turn into meeting points and centers of action where the local community is invited to participate in recreational, cultural, educational and sports activities, organized for people of all ages. During the weekdays, those schools remain open until 21.30, while on weekends from 10.00 to 20.00. In that framework, METAdrasi organised in 2017 a summer education programme, aiming at preparing refugee and migrant children for the upcoming school year. The activity was addressed to young children and adolescents aged 6 to 17, living in camps, shelters for unaccompanied minors, rented flats, etc. Volunteering teachers of METAdrasi provided a free non-formal education programme consisting of the following courses, depending on the age of the students: Greek language, Mathematics, English language, German language, Computer science, physical education, artistic and intercultural activities.

## **10. Targeted housing and integrated supported services for most vulnerable refugees- GRC 0217 – Greece**

This project is a multilateral attempt of HELP Hellas, ANTIGONE-Information and Documentation Centre on Racism, Ecology, Peace and Non-Violence, Greek Council for Refugees and Smile of the Child to decrease the number of at risk refugees and asylum seekers on the mainland of Greece. It also aims to provide access to safe and dignified living conditions for vulnerable refugees and asylum seekers living in Diavata camp as well as those refugees staying in Thessaloniki region in general. Main activities: • Recreational and educational activities for children • Recreational and educational activities for adults • Housing (2 apartments in Thessaloniki city center offering accommodation to refugees and immigrants).

## **11. Tell me a Story (Schenk mir eine Geschichte) – Switzerland**

Tell me a story provides storytelling courses to families with migrant backgrounds in order to promote the language and literacy development of children between the ages of 2 and 5. The premise of the work is that knowing their native language greatly supports children in learning the language of the home country. In this way, Tell me a story plays an important role in addressing the educational needs of underserved populations in Switzerland. In addition, the programme aims to involve parents in supporting their children's educational attainment. The programme particularly aims to: Promote the literacy development of children aged 2 to 5 with migrant backgrounds in their native language, Induce parents to support literacy attainment and the language foundation of their children at an early age by introducing reading and writing activities into their daily lives, Demonstrate to parents that incorporating literacy activities at home plays an important role in their children's literacy attainment, Indicate to parents that their children should be literate in their native language because this is an important foundation for learning the Official language(s), Introduce parents to available resources in their community, such as language classes for adults and children, libraries and pre-school classes. Tell me a story targets family with a migrant background, who usually do not attend comparable educational courses for parents. The programme is free and families do not need to register prior to attending. Usually, between 8 and 12 families participate in each course, including mothers, fathers, grandmothers and aunts. In most cases, children are accompanied by one parent or family member.

## 12. The Learning for Integration Project: Quality Learning and Non-Formal Education for Refugees and Migrant Children in Greece –Greece

The Learning for Integration Project provided tailor-made non-formal education for refugee and migrant children in need. Psychosocial support and Balanced Literacy Approach (BLA) that promotes independent learning and active participation through the whole language learning, are core concepts for all learners. The project provides: Homework support, Mother tongue education, Language and life-skills education for out-of-school children, including unaccompanied children, Early childhood education, Promotion of parents' integration, Teachers' capacity building training and seminars.

## 13. The Museobilbox – Germany

Description of the Project: The program takes about three hours a day. Through this intensive and practical study, the children get a taste of the past living conditions in the Nordwolle. Additionally, they learn about the traditional tasks of a museum in a clear way. This playful kind of mediation creates a strong identification with the subject and the "historical" person. It increases the zeal and commitment of the children involved and thus the learning effect. The museum becomes associated with fun and interaction, which ideally leads to a long-term commitment of the children with the museum. This is of particular importance, since the "Museobil" program specifically addresses children from educationally disadvantaged levels of society, who have no access to museums and to similar cultural events. As a multiplier effect in this context, the families and friends of the children involved, visit the museum at the presentation of the "Museum boxes", a lot of them for the first time in their lives. Thus, the families and friends become multipliers of a positive experience and have the potential to increase the awareness of the museum and its offerings among audiences, which are normally difficult to be advertised. Another positive side effect is the enhanced perception of the museum as a social place in the city, which is involved in the care of children and adolescents and in playful knowledge and cultural mediation. It therefore gets interesting for parents from disadvantaged backgrounds who are little enthusiastic about museums.

## Beneficiaries

The potential beneficiaries of these best practices are both individuals (refugees and asylum seekers, teachers, adult migrants, migrant children, parents, community in general, people with disabilities) and institutions (kindergartens, schools, public bodies dealing with educational issues, international groups, organizations, etc). Partners made a distinction between:

- I. Best practices tailored on specific individual's needs (i.e. Refugee Arts Programme provides assistant to young refugees and asylum seekers who have experienced trauma and persecution in their own countries; Amies project which provides creative arts workshops for young women trafficked into the UK for prostitution or domestic slave labour; Museobilbox is dedicated to children and gives them the opportunity to create their own little "museum box" by doing playful handicrafts), and
- II. Best practices which are more comprehensive and general in nature and offer activities which suit to different actors (i.e. Open Schools programme, specific schools' premises turn into meeting points and centers of action where the local community is invited to participate in recreational, cultural, educational and sports activities, organized for people of all ages; Quartieri Teatrali promotes social inclusion through the organization of theatrical workshop and this activity involves students, artists, migrants, asylum seekers, guests of the Sprar structures, and anyone who wants to get involved).

The research showed that an action promoted at national or international level cannot be organized and administrated by a local organisation made of mainly of volunteers. This does not necessarily mean that best practices promoted at local level are less important or less effective than those implemented at national level. This just means that at different organizational structures correspond a different availability in terms of human and financial resources, number and types of beneficiaries to be targeted, and – of course – types of activity.

## Curriculum design and the structure of 5 Modules

The idea behind creating the ArtsTogether Curriculum derives from the need of human beings to build their sense of self and relationships with others through their social, cultural and political environments. Key heritable factors and traits can shape our identity from an early age through interaction with family and wider social and cultural networks.

Besides, individuals' sense of self and relationships with others is informed by a wide range of influences: family and community, nationality and locality, ethnicity, religion, gender, generation, class, sexual orientation, abilities and needs. Our cultural identity is hereto developed through a mixture of individual and shared characteristics, informed by interaction with members of our cultural and social groups. The ArtsTogether Curriculum is designed in a way to contain materials and resources which support the integration of migrant children and counter the educational disadvantages they experience through creative intercultural engagement across the school community. Furthermore, it promotes children's linguistic and academic development to stimulate their knowledge, understanding, creative and critical thinking.

The Curriculum also generates interdisciplinary active learning activities to foster collaborative working practices within the classroom. In other words, it provides a combination of supportive and stimulating curriculum elements to foster involvement, integration and inclusion across the wider family and school community.

According to WP2, migrant children, young people and families may have access to ArtsTogether curriculum materials and resources **in nurseries, schools and other phased settings**. This target group may also experience learning in non-formal settings such as migrant camps and centers where participants are not grouped within educational phases but in intergenerational and ability-related groups.



## Methodology

ArtsTogether Curriculum Design is based on 5 Modules with the overall theme 'Our Stories, Our Communities'. These Modules are:

1. ***Journeys***
2. ***Global stories***
3. ***Performing People***
4. ***Our Shared Environment***
5. ***Celebration***

Every Module incorporates 3 themes, and is differentiated at 3 Levels, each of them suitable for adaptation within age-specific phases or in intergenerational contexts. Participants of each Module can engage at all Levels through introductory to more advanced knowledge and skills, in creative, intercultural and linguistic learning, across the spectrum of expressive visual and performance arts. All Modules' themes are supported by PowerPoint Presentations, electronic resources, literature, and weblinks (15 PowerPoint Presentations in total). Exemplar projects and links support the Modules' key focus and the individual Themes.

## The role of teachers and facilitators

ArtsTogether project recommends that teachers and facilitators who implement the curriculum materials study Learning Activities at all levels when selecting materials suitable for their participant groups. Levels are indicative and activities should be regarded as flexible and suitable for adaptation across age-bands:

- **Learning Activity Level 1:** entry level capacity for language development, creative, and intercultural development (equivalent to Nursery – Lower Primary standard),
- **Learning Activity Level 2:** mid-level capacity (equivalent to mid-Primary standard),
- **Learning Activity Level 3:** advanced level capacity (equivalent to upper Primary – lower Secondary standard).





## Best practices (b)

Depending on each Module's themes, this toolkit will elaborate on the best practices that were traced throughout ArtsTogether project. Starting with the first Module (Journeys), the themes introduced were the following:

1. 1A Mapping the Journey
2. 1B Contacts and Connections
3. 1C Performing Our Journey

In the graph below, the presented best practices concern theme '1A' (Mapping the Journey). In the same direction, themes '1B' (Contacts and Connections) and '1C' (Performing Our Journey) are going to be illustrated, while the other Modules are going to follow this presentation structure.

Best Practice 1A:  
Migration  
Museum, UK

- The Migration Museum tells stories of movement to and from Britain through a series of site-specific exhibitions, lectures, outreach events & education workshops with local communities.

Best Practice 1B:  
The  
Museobilbox,  
Germany

- Museobilbox offers links for participating migrant children and others from socially disadvantaged background to experience a museum-based project and learn about their own family history.

Best Practice 1C:

Palermo Voices: Art, Dance, Theatre & Human Rights

- Palermo Voices Festival spreads colours, costumes and art in a collective reflection on freedom, democracy and welcoming. It recognizes the value of migration and migrant communities, creating active citizenship through the arts. Voices celebrates European and global associations.

Regarding the second Module (Global Stories), ArtsTogether partners developed the following themes:

1. 2A Visual story-telling
2. 2B Puppetry Tales
3. 2C Performing our Stories

Best Practice 2A:

Tell me a Story,  
Switzerland

- The UNESCO family literacy programme, Tell me a Story (Schenk mir eine Geschichte) seeks to overcome language barriers and increase parental involvement by reaching out to families with migrant backgrounds to improve the language and literacy development of children.

Best Practice 2A:

5x5x5=  
creativity, UK

- 5x5x5=creativity is an independent artsbased action research organisation which supports children in their exploration and expression of ideas, helping them develop creative skills for life. It recognises children's innate inquisitiveness, and affords them the space, time and individual adult attention to explore and learn from the world around them.

Best Practice 2B:  
Kindervilla  
Nursery,  
Educational  
Principles, Austria

- Kindervilla Nursery is dedicated to supporting children’s development as individuals and encouraging their talents. The main focus is on language assistance and communication providing an early contribution to inclusion and intercultural exchange.

Best Practice 2B:  
Box Tale Soup, UK

- BoxTale Soup is an award-winning theatre company who blend puppetry, physical theatre and traditional performance. Their production ‘Gone’, created with refugee music group ‘Stone Flowers’ relates the experiences and stories of refugees through puppetry, music and poetry.

Best Practice 2C:  
Intercultural  
Theatre Project  
‘Wolf Sein’,  
Kindervilla,  
Austria

- Kindervilla’s Theatre Project ‘Wolf Sein’ created opportunities for every child to participate in performing in a drama event. No matter which country of origin, or which language was spoken, every child was able to contribute to creating a new performance of a traditional fairy tale and perform in it together.

Best Practice 2C:  
acta Community  
Theatre

- acta community theatre company based in Bristol, UK, engages people without privilege: isolated older people; migrants, refugees and asylum seekers; vulnerable young people; disabled people; people living outside the City Centre. acta creates new theatre – intergenerational and intercultural – with diverse communities of all ages.

Some of the best practices from the third Module (Performing People) were created according to these themes:

1. 3A Portraits
2. 3B Masks
3. 3C Performance



### Best Practice 3A:

#### Face Forward...into my home, Greece

- Face Forward interactive art project in Greece explores the stories of people of all ages who have been forced to leave their homelands. It includes storytelling, image workshops, and photo-shoots of refugees. Photographic portrait exhibitions and creative workshops support asylum-seekers in rebuilding their lives in Greece.

### Best Practice 3B:

#### Step2School, Greece

- “Step2School” is a non formal education programme, providing after-school education classes. It serves young people living in temporary accommodation facilities for unaccompanied minors, and also welcomes children living in the neighbourhood.

### Best Practice 3C:

#### Pan Intercultural Arts, UK

- Pan Intercultural Arts is dedicated to the exploration of cultural diversity through the arts. Workshops and performances support young people, including refugees, who are marginalised and at risk of social exclusion. Pan helps its participants find a voice through drama, dance, music, writing and film.

The remaining two Modules (Our Shared Environment and Celebration) contained themes that were inspired by the natural environment surrounding humans and the cultural practices of

seasonal festivals respectively. More precisely, these themes were categorized for the fourth Module in:

1. 4A Movement & Film
2. 4B Recycled Sculpture Trails
3. 4C Performance & the Environment,

while for the fifth Module in:

1. 5A Global Food Cultures
2. 5B Carnival
3. 5C Recycled Orchestra

#### Best Practice 4A:

Learning for Integration  
Project: Quality Learning  
and NonFormal Education  
for Refugees and Migrant  
Children, Greece

ELIX implements voluntary actions in Greece to protect the environment, preserve cultural heritage, promote nonformal education and strengthen social cohesion.

#### Best Practice 4B:

Forest of Imagination, UK

Forest of Imagination fosters a vision to support artists from myriad disciplines. Installations, immersive pieces, soundscapes and architectural designs focus on the importance of Regeneration, Green and Blue Infrastructure, Wildlife Corridors, all seen through the lens and idea of a Future Forest.

#### Best Practice 4C:

MET Meticceria  
Extrartistica Trasversale

MET Meticceria Extrartistica Trasversale create workshops led by actors and artists of the Cantieri Meticci collective. They involve students, migrants, asylum seekers, and anyone who wants to discover and share their stories while having fun.



**Best Practice 5A:**

**SlowMed - Food as a means of dialogue, Sicily**

- SlowMed project promotes intercultural dialogue and strengthens Mediterranean cultural identity. SlowMed stimulates recognition of food as a means to enhance understanding between peoples and to build cultural identity. by testing new forms of expression of culinary heritage.

**Best Practice 5B:**

**Multilingual Festival of Language and Culture, Greece**

- Many NGOs and educational institutions participate in The Multilingual Festival of Language and Culture, which presents: theatrical and musical events, educational projects, research projects, multilingual and intercultural workshops, roundtables, the cuisine of the peoples, coffee multilingualism, art exhibitions, art and music workshops, projections.

**Best Practice 5C:**

**MUS-E Art for Integration at School, Italy**

- MUS-E emphasizes the central place of art and creativity in processes of personal and societal development. MUS-E projects links global artists with local communities and schools to initiate artistic projects that express the diverse cultures present in Europe

## Common learning outcome of the 5 Modules

The participants of all ArtsTogether Modules enjoy learning benefits and acquire knowledge associated with global stories and visual narratives, while developing **understanding, vocabulary and communication skills**. The resources and materials used throughout the learning activities enable the participants to discover and respond to a wide variety of cultural issues. In other words, participants ask questions, offer suggestions, recount and discuss the global stories of themselves and others. Participants gain confidence in speaking in pairs and larger groups, developing performance skills. While they respond to a range of different cultural storytelling images, they also develop literacy and language skills.

Furthermore, participants investigate visual and performing **arts experiences** of portraits, masks and drama. This develops their ideas about image and identity, which are experienced through listening and speaking. Using portraits as a focus for investigating and discussing meanings of visual image and identity in historical and contemporary settings is another beneficial activity which extends participants' vocabulary. What is more than that, the use of masks as a focus for investigating and discussing meanings of visual image and **identity in historical and contemporary settings** develops language understanding and communication.

Performing arts experiences of movement & film, sculpture and drama, help participants engage in the development of ideas about relationships between the individual, the community and the environment. Participants are involved in developing sculpture trails in response to a sense of place, devised from a range of reclaimed and recycled media. Ideas develops curiosity about the natural environment, and the diverse ways in which people from different cultures express ideas through art. Finally, participants investigate **visual and performing arts experiences** of seasonal and intercultural celebrations, to improve their visual communication and performance skills through engagement with their own and others celebratory practices.

## Common challenges

All the best practices examined have developed and implemented activities in order to face some common challenges as regards migrant children's integration. In particular, they implement actions able to overcome linguistic barriers and to promote social integration of foreign families. Nonetheless, the promotion of social and linguistic integration do not represent the only activities encouraged by public and private actors/organisations, since other activities – such as theatrical activities, the organization of specific festivals and events linked to multiculturalism, the implementation of artistic laboratories, the promotion of sport activities, etc. – have been developed in order to favor migrant children's integration and interaction with their native schoolmates, and more generally with the host society as a whole.

## Publicity of the project

During the implementation of ArtsTogether, round table events took place in every partner country. According to the policy briefings published in every official language, there is a number of school programmes which try to address the specific needs of migrant children in schools. These programmes focus on three main areas: "the adjustment of the school to the needs of migrant children through professional development, the improvement of the relationship between the school and the home, and the development of classroom or after-school programmes intended for the children themselves". Professional development needs the cooperation of educators. However, some teachers become passionate advocates of migrant children and may work outside their strict academic role to support refugee families, others (usually the majority) "are quite reluctant to take refugee-specific characteristics into consideration". The quality of the home–school relationship is another challenging area where it is crucial to build a shared understanding of situations.

The language barrier is the most important challenge and artistic expression is crucial in overcoming it. Artistic activities do not only complement formal education but are also a crucial step in developing language skills and an important avenue in promoting integration. Classroom and after-class artistic activities addressing the overall adjustment of migrant children to the host society and their well-being are very important. They should support the migrant children in assimilating past and present experiences by presenting these as learning opportunities, facilitating emotional expression, promoting the development of relationships among native and migrant children as well as among children and adults.



## Conclusions

As far as the analysis of the best practices is concerned, the activities referred in this toolkit were implemented by majority in European countries. The way that these activities were presented can serve as an incentive for the reader to think why their adaptability to the Greek and Italian contexts is important not only to promote social and educational inclusion of migrant children, but also to stimulate migrant parents' social integration and cooperation with the school.

To sum up, a few factors that can hinder the educational and scholastic integration of migrant children were mentioned in this toolkit:

- i.** the language barrier
- ii.** supplementary educational support for younger people outside school
- iii.** parental educational involvement
- iv.** different cultural factors
- v.** adaptability of each integration activity to the target group
- vi.** availability of financial resources
- vii.** role of teachers

The main findings of ArtsTogether project were obtained via:

- a) questionnaires which were administered to public organisations representatives, social organisations representatives and migrant parents or representatives of migration communities and,
- b) via interviews to higher authorities

Finally, ArtsTogether partners' research suggested that there is no recipe for the best "best practice". As mentioned earlier, it depends on several aspects: aims, beneficiaries and their characteristics, availability of resources, etc. The most important lesson, thanks to the collection of the best practices included in this project and to statements declared by interviewees, was that each single best practice has the potential to be fruitfully implemented in other geographical contexts as well. As a consequence, the dissemination of the knowledge concerning 'who is doing what to whom and how' seems to be a fundamental activity to be performed in order to facilitate the promotion and the activation of best practices, which are already tested in their efficacy.