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Report evaluating the regional intercultural networks in Cyprus based on satisfaction surveys

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Introduction

In an increasingly diverse Cyprus, fostering intercultural integration has become a key priority for promoting social inclusion, equality, and trust within communities. From 2021 to 2024, the European Commission's Directorate General for Structural Reform Support and the Council of Europe's (CoE) Intercultural Inclusion Unit, in partnership with the Migration Department of the Deputy Ministry for Migration and International Protection of the Republic of Cyprus, implemented two projects aimed at [strengthening intercultural integration structures and policies in Cyprus](#).¹

During the implementation of the first project, regional intercultural networks were established in [Famagusta](#), [Larnaca](#), [Limassol](#), [Nicosia](#) and [Paphos](#) districts, following a mapping of integration stakeholders in each region. Each regional network prepared its own terms of reference and adopted an intercultural action plan or strategy for their district. The second EU/CoE joint project further supported the development of the networks and the implementation of activities from their action plans/strategies.

The networks organised a wide range of activities from November 2023 until November 2024, including two network meetings, intercultural festivals, language cafes, community events and capacity building workshops. These initiatives aim to promote intercultural dialogue, increase understanding of different perspectives and create opportunities for meaningful interaction between the different communities in Cyprus.

In order to assess the effectiveness of these networks and to guide the follow-up to the project, a satisfaction survey was conducted among network members and participants in the network activities, and separate one for the five coordinators. This report presents an analysis of both survey responses, highlighting the successes, challenges, and areas for improvement in Cyprus's intercultural networks.

In summary, by analysing the experiences and perceptions of different stakeholders, this report aims to provide insights for the ongoing development of Cyprus' strategy for intercultural integration efforts at the local level, ensuring that future initiatives are grounded in the real experiences and the needs of the communities they serve.

¹ "Building structures for intercultural integration in Cyprus" and "Enhancing structures and policies for intercultural integration in Cyprus" co-funded by the European Union via the Technical Support Instrument, and implemented by the Council of Europe, in cooperation with the European Commission.

The design of the survey for network members and participants

The survey was designed in consultation with the network coordinators and the Department of Migration. It was designed to be accessible, considering the potential language and technical challenges that third country nationals (TCNs) may face when responding to online surveys. The survey could be completed online (which meant automatic translation could be used) and in paper format.

It was the responsibility of the coordinators to distribute the survey to the members of their networks and the participants in the network activities to assess the effectiveness of the networks in promoting intercultural understanding and dialogue. The QR code to access the survey was also shared through the Facebook page of the regional networks. Respondents were to include local authorities, NGOs, teachers, students, local businesses, TCNs and members of civil society.

The survey covered various aspects of the networks' activities, including:

- Participation in network meetings and activities
- Inclusivity and welcoming atmosphere
- Overall satisfaction with the network
- Effectiveness in improving intercultural relations
- Impact of specific activities on feelings about intercultural relations in the region
- Representation of diverse cultural groups
- Effectiveness of communication
- Barriers to participation
- Suggestions for improvement

A total of twenty-eight responses were received from four regional networks: Larnaca, Limassol, Nicosia, and Paphos. No responses were received for Famagusta district.

Regional Intercultural Network	Number of responses received
Famagusta	3
Larnaca	17
Limassol	8
Nicosia	13
Paphos	14

Overall evaluation of networks by members and participants

The satisfaction survey for participants in the networks and their activities aimed to assess the effectiveness of the regional intercultural networks in promoting intercultural understanding and dialogue.

The overall survey results show a positive perception of the effectiveness and inclusiveness of the networks. Overall satisfaction with the networks was high, with **52 out of 55 participants (94.5%)**

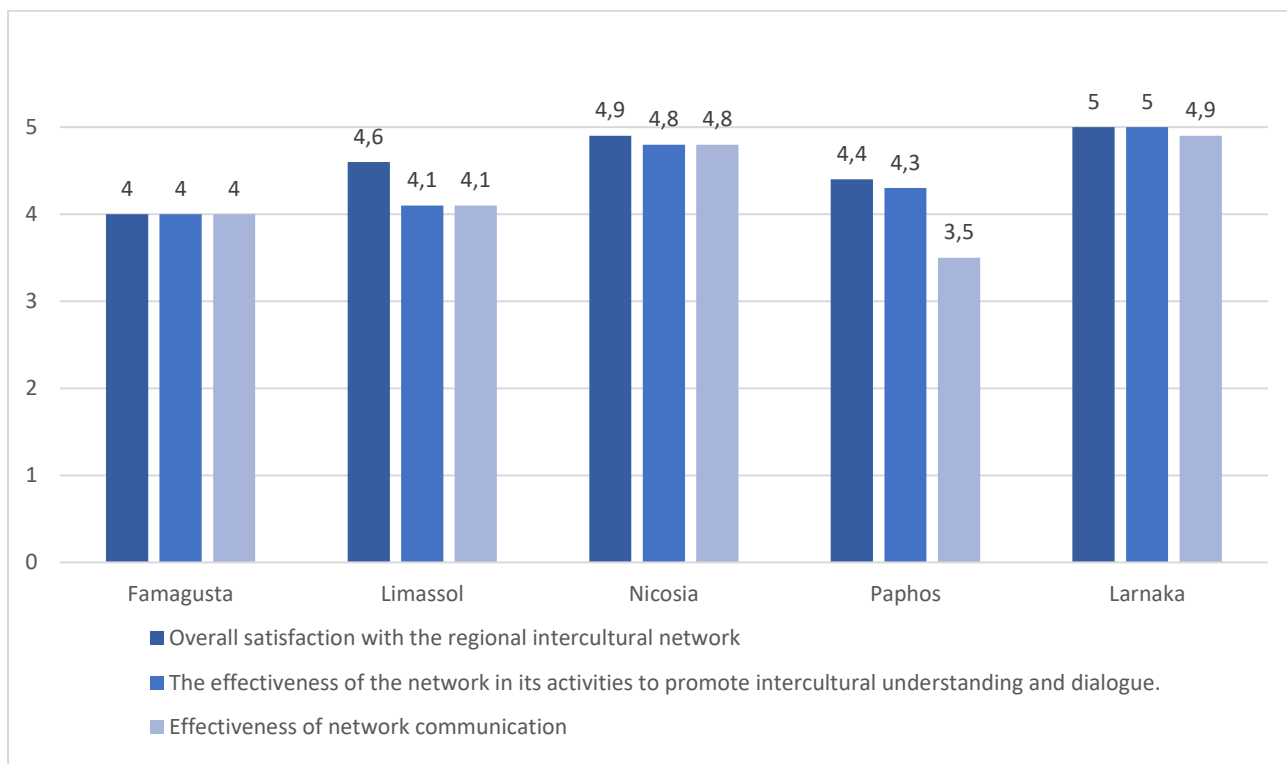
rating their experience as 4 or 5 out of 5. Regional variations were observed, with Larnaca showing 100% high satisfaction, Nicosia 98,4%, Limassol 93%, Paphos 88.5% and Famagusta 80%.

The effectiveness of the networks in improving intercultural relations was highly rated, with 93,4% of respondents rating it 4 or 5 out of 5. Participants consistently described the networks as welcoming and inclusive, creating opportunities for different voices to be heard.

Key themes emerging from the responses include the positive impact of cultural festivals, language cafes and community events in promoting intercultural dialogue. Challenges identified include language barriers, the timing of events and the need for more inclusive representation of certain communities. Also, while communication was generally effective, some participants suggested improvements, such as the use of multilingual channels and more interactive platforms.

Suggestions for improvement included increasing outreach to under-represented communities, offering more flexible participation options, and focusing on practical issues such as housing and employment. One respondent suggested “increasing outreach efforts to engage more people from underrepresented cultural communities”.

These findings demonstrate the positive effect of Cyprus’ intercultural networks in promoting dialogue and understanding between communities, while also identifying strategic areas for future improvement.



Satisfaction across different criteria in each network.

Evaluation by regional network

This section analyses the responses by district, highlighting good practices, challenges and recommendations for future improvements in intercultural networks' activities and outreach strategies.

Famagusta

The network in Famagusta district faced numerous challenges including the rural nature of the district, lack of political will to support integration, lack of civil society organisations dealing with migrant issues. The coordinators nevertheless found support from the Mayor of Deryneia and a civil society organisation near the community called [Famagusta Garage Avenue](#) and the [Sotiras Youth Club](#). Unfortunately the Mayor of Deryneia was not re-elected in 2024 and the volunteers in Famagusta Garage avenue regularly changed which has meant it was not possible to reach out to these members of the network to complete the survey. The main activities of the network were information stands for migrants, promoting the network at public events in the district and language classes. The development of the network was weakened by the coordinators being based in Nicosia, despite their best efforts and frequent visits to the district.

In future it would be important to find a coordinator who lives and works in the district, preferably in one of the larger municipalities such as Ayia Napa.

All three respondents from the Famagusta network confirmed their participation in the network's meetings and local festivals. They described the network as **"welcoming"** and rated their overall satisfaction with the experience as **4 out of 5**.

One respondent emphasised that **"participating in the network has been invaluable in navigating intercultural challenges by providing a platform for sharing experiences and insights."** They specifically noted learning **"about different cultural norms regarding communication styles, which helped me adapt my approach when collaborating with colleagues from diverse backgrounds."**

Another participant shared that **"participating in the network helped me navigate intercultural challenges by facilitating discussions that clarified cultural misunderstandings."** They highlighted learning **"effective ways to address differing communication styles, which improved my collaboration with team members from various backgrounds and built stronger relationships."**

One respondent noted that participating in the network **"provided me with valuable insights into cultural practices that differ from my own,"** particularly through group discussions where they learned **"about the importance of non-verbal communication in certain cultures."**

Regarding representation, participants identified gaps in the network's composition. One noted that in the Famagusta district, **"groups representing the local Turkish Cypriot community are underrepresented in the network's activities."** Another felt that migrant and refugee communities are underrepresented, while the third also noted that **"youth and student communities are underrepresented."**

To enhance the network's effectiveness, suggestions included *“offering events at varied times for better accessibility, providing language support for non-fluent speakers, and incorporating more diverse cultural programming.”* Participants expressed interest in future activities focusing on intercultural dialogue, such as workshops on conflict resolution and cultural exchange programs and topics like *“sustainability and social justice.”*

Finally, the network's communication was rated **4 out of 5**, with participants generally feeling well-informed about activities and opportunities.

Larnaca

All participants described the network as very *“welcoming”* and *“inclusive”*, with one participant stating that it was *“meant for everyone”*. Satisfaction levels were consistently high, with all respondents giving a score of **5 out of 5** for their overall experience, the network's effectiveness in improving intercultural relations, and its promotion of understanding and dialogue.

The activities that had the most positive impact included walking tours, festivals like “Mahalart,” public consultations, and network meetings. One participant highlighted that *“the walking tours created a community that meets at all networking activities”*, while another noted that *“the Mahalart festival fostered intercultural collaborations in the creative sectors.”* Several respondents commented on the emotional connections formed during these events, with one stating, *“I felt like I was part of a new family”* and another adding, *“I felt like home.”*

Participation in the network was seen as transformative for many. One respondent shared that *“participating in the network has been invaluable in navigating intercultural challenges by providing a platform for sharing experiences and insights.”* Another explained how meeting people from different backgrounds during the walks helped them feel included and valuable. Additionally, respondents appreciated opportunities to brainstorm ideas collectively, with one noting, *“we all together brainstormed for our next ideas and activities and how they can be truly intercultural.”*

While most respondents felt that the network provided opportunities for diverse voices to be heard, some identified areas for improvement. For example, one participant suggested that live *“interpreters or translators for DHH persons or speakers of foreign languages”* could promote higher participation. Others mentioned underrepresented groups such as migrant parents or youth, with one respondent suggesting that *“more activities with children involved”* would enhance inclusivity.

The network's communication was rated highly (**4.9 out of 5**), with participants praising its effectiveness in keeping them informed through social media and newsletters. However, some suggested the creation of additional platforms such as Facebook or WhatsApp groups to maintain engagement. Barriers to participation were minimal, with most respondents reporting no significant challenges. A few noted that providing translation or live interpretation could make events even more accessible.

Looking to the future, participants expressed interest in more cultural activities such as food festivals, additional walking tours of nearby villages, and school programmes involving migrant parents. One

participant summed up their experience by saying *“It was a wonderful journey. We made good friends, we supported each other, we made Larnaka better.”*

Limassol

The Limassol network had the advantage of being a member of the Intercultural Cities Network since 2010, it had already completed the [Intercultural Cities in Index in 2011](#), and had an established Intercultural Council, and benefitted from political and public support from the previous and current mayors.

Under the two projects the Limassol network was asked to increase its outreach and move from a city-based network to a regional network, which it successfully managed.

Satisfaction and inclusivity ratings in Limassol were consistently high, with most participants rating their experience and the effectiveness of the network as 4 or 5 out of 5. The network was described as *“highly welcoming and inclusive, actively encouraging participation from individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds”*. One participant noted, *“This network has created a platform that enables people from different countries and cultural backgrounds to get to know each other, communicate, and exchange their cultural perspectives and understandings of society”*.

A wide array of impactful activities was highlighted by participants:

- **Cultural festivals:** the Chinese Festival, Intercultural Street Festival at Ypsonas Municipal Square, and “The Musical Footprints 2024 Intercultural Festival, titled ‘One City for All’” were frequently mentioned.
- **Community events:** activities like “Bus 30”, the Full Moon Ride, and the “Running Fluent Initiative” were noted for their positive impact.
- **Collaborative planning:** *“Events co-creation and co-organising brought people together in collaborative settings, encouraging shared cultural experiences and perspectives”*.
- **Capacity building:** meetings and sessions equipped members with skills to navigate intercultural environments.

Participants reported significant positive impacts on intercultural understanding. One respondent stated, *“It enriched me more in addressing communication barriers by teaching me effective techniques for engaging with individuals from different cultural backgrounds”*. Another mentioned, *“Learning the intercultural landscape of Limassol”* as a benefit.

Language and communication emerged as important issues. While language was cited by some as a barrier, others praised the network’s efforts to provide language mediators. Suggestions for improvement included *“WhatsApp, viber, Telegram Group, or anything else for quicker and more effective communications”* and *“more social media”* presence.

Several participants noted areas for improvement in representation. One respondent observed, *“I believe there are some communities in Limassol that have not yet been reached, and some communities have participated infrequently”*. Specific groups identified as under-represented included young people, older people, and certain nationalities such as Indians and Sri Lankans.

Suggestions for enhancing the network's effectiveness included:

- *“Increasing outreach efforts to engage more individuals from underrepresented cultural communities”*
- *“Enhancing the use of digital platforms for virtual participation”*
- Creating *“a physical cultural center for meet-ups and activities”*
- Focusing on *“housing”* and *“basic problems”* faced by community members
- Organising *“more educational programmes”* and *“workshops on intercultural conflict resolution”*

The Limassol Regional Intercultural Network appears to be highly effective in promoting cultural understanding and dialogue. Its strength lies in its diverse membership with many migrants actively involved in implementing activities and its welcoming atmosphere. The network has demonstrated a significant positive impact on intercultural relations in Limassol, with potential for further growth and influence.

However, there is room for improvement in terms of communication strategies, representation of all community groups and addressing the practical challenges faced by participants.

Nicosia

The respondents from Nicosia confirmed their participation in network meetings, walks, and public consultations, with the walks emerging as a particularly popular and impactful activity. One enthusiastic participant shared, *“I loved the walks, I am actually thinking on becoming a tourist guide after that!”*

The network's welcoming and inclusive atmosphere was consistently praised by respondents. When asked about the network's inclusivity, participants rated it highly, with one Cypriot noting, *“Very much, although I am Cypriot, and I cannot speak on behalf of them!”* Another described it as *“Very welcoming and very supportive!”* This welcoming environment seems to have fostered meaningful intercultural interactions, with one participant stating, *“It was nice to catch up with different cultures.”*

Satisfaction ratings for the network were exceptionally high, with most respondents giving the maximum score of **5 out of 5** for overall experience, effectiveness in improving intercultural relations, and promoting understanding and dialogue. The impact of the network's activities on participants' perspectives was significant. One respondent shared a powerful personal transformation: *“I never liked the concentration in certain areas of migrants although I did not consider myself a racist person. But through the discussions that took place, I felt bad about my perceptions, and I understood the differences in culture.”*

The educational value of the network's activities, particularly the walks, was highlighted by several participants. One noted, *“I became more familiar with the rich intercultural history of Nicosia (and of Cyprus more broadly) and got to know specific historical events and circumstances during the walks I attended that have gradually led to today's multicultural landscape on the island.”* This suggests that the network is successfully promoting a deeper understanding of Nicosia's cultural diversity and history.

Communication within the network was also rated highly, with most respondents giving it a **5 out of 5**. However, some suggestions for improvement were offered, such as creating a WhatsApp group and increasing social media presence. While few barriers to participation were identified, some respondents suggested including more diverse age groups and backgrounds, with support from translators/interpreters. One insightful comment noted, "*Immigrant groups (particularly from non-western/non-European countries) themselves are usually missing in activities that concern them to a great extent.*"

Looking to the future, many respondents expressed interest in more walks, cultural events, and potentially cross-border activities. One participant suggested, "*Maybe crossing the Green Line,*" indicating an appetite for even more diverse and challenging intercultural experiences.

Paphos

Satisfaction and inclusivity ratings in Paphos varied widely, with scores ranging from **1 to 5 out of 5**. Despite this variation, the network was consistently described as inclusive and welcoming. One participant described it as "*very inclusive*", while another found it "*quite useful*". The average satisfaction rating among Paphos respondents was around **3.8 out of 5**, indicating a generally positive but mixed reception.

Several activities were highlighted as particularly effective. The multilingual and linguistic café was highly praised, with one participant describing it as "*a drop in multilingual and linguistic café in a fun and friendly environment*". Anti-Rumour Training was also frequently mentioned as an important activity. Cultural tours, such as "*Guided tours of the Paphos Museum with translators in Arabic, French and Chinese*" were noted as an effective way of engaging different communities. Many participants reported positive impacts on intercultural understanding. One stated, "*People met and got closer*".

Also, language emerged as a central theme in Paphos. Language courses were often mentioned as beneficial activities, with one participant specifically mentioning "*Greek lessons*" as a positive impact of the network. However, language was also mentioned as a barrier to participation, as some people do not speak English very well.

Participants offered several suggestions to enhance the network's effectiveness. One respondent proposed "*More contact between foreigners and locals, for example an event where everyone will make a traditional dish*". Enhanced communication through "*various instant messaging apps*" was suggested to improve outreach. Requests for "*more Greek lessons*", "*more activities*", and "*more online cafe*" indicate a desire for expanded offerings. While generally positive, some participants noted areas for improvement in representation. One respondent suggested the "*Inclusion of African culture*" and "*African oriented schemes*". Another noted that "*Indigenous and smaller migrant communities often feel underrepresented in the network's activities*".

In conclusion, the Paphos Regional Intercultural Network shows promise in promoting cultural understanding, with highly rated activities such as the multi-language café and the anti-rumour Training. However, the wide range of satisfaction scores suggests that there is room for improvement, particularly in terms of consistent communication, diverse representation and addressing language

barriers. The strength of the network lies in its welcoming atmosphere, the large number of non-EU participants as well as locals, and the variety of intercultural exchange opportunities, but it could benefit from more structured outreach and tailored programming to meet the needs of all community members.

The design of the survey for network coordinators

The survey was designed by the project officer in consultation with the Department of Migration to gather input for improving the sustainability, effectiveness, and impact of the networks.

The coordinators were asked whether a dedicated budget for appointing personnel could enhance the network's sustainability and how this investment might ensure long-term success, they were also asked for ideas on maintaining the network's sustainability without a budget for dedicated personnel.

Key areas of inquiry included the potential benefits of dedicated budgets for personnel, alternative sustainability strategies, methods to increase participation and diversity, ways to enhance municipal involvement, strategies for engaging more migrants and refugees, future activity plans, and the potential value of a national intercultural network. Additionally, coordinators were asked to provide feedback on the project's effectiveness and suggest areas for improvement.

All five coordinators completed the survey online in November 2024.

Overall evaluation by network coordinators

As part of the evaluation of the regional intercultural networks in Cyprus, a satisfaction survey was also conducted among the five network coordinators. This survey, designed to complement the broader participant feedback, aimed to gather insights from those directly responsible for managing and implementing network activities. The coordinators were asked to reflect on various aspects of network sustainability, potential improvements, and the overall impact of the "Enhancing structures and policies for intercultural integration in Cyprus" project.

The coordinators felt that the project had **significantly enhanced community cohesion** and intercultural integration, but they recognised it faced several challenges including the project's limited influence on national policy due to political priorities.

Their **priority recommendation** for the follow-up to the project was that the next financing for the networks should be put in place quickly to maintain the momentum established.

The coordinators unanimously supported establishing a **national intercultural network** to:

- Share resources, expertise, and best practices.
- Enhance collaboration between regions.
- Secure larger funding opportunities and organize national level events.
- Strengthen advocacy efforts for intercultural integration at the policy level.

They also encouraged fostering stronger collaboration across cities and stakeholders and involving a broader range of sectors, such as businesses, schools, and healthcare providers, etc. to embed the intercultural integration approach across society.

All network coordinators emphasised the need for **allocated budgets for human resources**. Dedicated personnel would ensure better coordination, consistent communication, and long-term sustainability of network activities.

Suggestions for **sustaining the networks** included:

- Engaging volunteers, including migrants and refugees
- Forming partnerships with NGOs, educational institutions, and local organisations.
- Leveraging digital tools for outreach and engagement
- Aligning network goals with broader community development initiatives, such as cultural heritage or sustainable tourism

Recommendations to **increase network outreach** included:

- Increasing participation by using multilingual materials and digital campaigns
- Building partnerships with schools, businesses, and community centres to reach diverse audiences.
- Developing small, targeted events like mobile workshops, cultural festivals, and storytelling sessions
- Collaborating with mayors, community representatives, and other stakeholders to align activities with local priorities and ensure consistent support and membership.

Suggestions to **increase participation of third-country nationals** included the following ideas:

- Organising events like cooking nights, sports tournaments, and networking sessions to foster connections.
- Offering incentives, such as residents' cards with access to services or discounts, to encourage participation.
- Providing interpretation services, bilingual staff, and multilingual promotional materials to ensure inclusivity.
- Collaborating with migrant influencers and organisations to co-design activities and establish safe spaces for dialogue and engagement.

Evaluation by topic of inquiry

The detailed replies are organised by topic to facilitate a clearer understanding of the insights gathered.

Budget allocation and network sustainability

Coordinators unanimously emphasise the importance of allocating a budget for dedicated staff to ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of the intercultural network. As one coordinator succinctly stated, *“having staff focused solely on the network ensures better coordination, continuity, and follow-through on projects”*.

Key benefits of dedicated staff, as highlighted by the coordinators, include:

- Improved coordination and management of complex tasks.
- Consistent communication and follow-through on projects.
- Ability to implement long-term strategies without interruptions.
- Enhanced capacity to adapt to changing needs and priorities.

- Stronger connections with local communities and migrants.
- More effective monitoring of progress and addressing of challenges.
- Better positioning to secure funding for future projects.

One coordinator noted that “*continuous communication, secretariat, leadership, updating, promotion of opportunities, databases, etc. always contribute to the sustainability of any network*”. Another emphasised that “*the ever-changing landscape in migration flows adds additional layers of complexity*” to network management.

Overall, the coordinators stress that investing in dedicated personnel would contribute significantly to the network’s organisation, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability. As one coordinator summarised, having dedicated staff would ensure “*consistent coordination and effective implementation of initiatives*”.

Alternative strategies for sustainability

Coordinators acknowledge the value of dedicated staff but are also open to exploring innovative strategies for maintaining network sustainability without a dedicated budget. They propose a multifaceted approach that leverages community resources, strategic partnerships, and digital solutions.

One key suggestion is to strengthen volunteer networks by “*engaging motivated individuals, including migrants*” to build a robust base of community support. This approach aims to tap into the diverse skills and experiences within the local community, fostering a sense of ownership and participation.

Strategic partnerships emerge as another important element of this approach. Coordinators emphasise the importance of forming collaborations with local organisations, NGOs, INGOs, and educational institutions. These partnerships could offer valuable “*in-kind support, resources, and expertise*”, as highlighted by one coordinator.

Digital solutions are seen as a cost-effective way to maintain network activities. For instance, CARDET can offer expertise in digital tools and platforms for communication and community engagement. These technological approaches could help optimise limited resources and maintain network connectivity, ensuring continued engagement even without a dedicated budget.

Another innovative strategy involves utilising existing EU-funded projects that address migrant-related issues. This approach could ensure “*continued support for key objectives while optimizing available resources*”, allowing the network to maintain its activities and impact.

Finally, the coordinators stress the importance of encouraging shared responsibilities among stakeholders. By distributing tasks among network members, they believe it will be possible to maintain network activities without relying on a centralised budget.

Network development and participation

To develop networks further, particularly in remote areas, coordinators recommend a multifaceted approach that combines targeted outreach strategies with effective community engagement. This approach emphasises partnering with local institutions, hosting mobile events, and creating multilingual digital campaigns to reach diverse audiences. As one coordinator notes, "***traditional media may not be as effective in 2024 for raising awareness about the network***", highlighting the need for innovative communication strategies.

More effective involvement of municipalities and communities is seen as necessary for the success of the network. Suggestions include working with key stakeholders, organising regular meetings to align network objectives with local priorities, and implementing joint projects that are in line with municipal objectives. These initiatives could range from community development to cultural preservation and sustainable tourism. However, coordinators warn that changes in local leadership can affect support for network initiatives, underlining the need for resilient partnerships.

Increasing diversity within the network is another key focus. Providing materials in multiple languages is seen as essential, with one coordinator emphasising the need for "***having a translator or representative available to facilitate communication effectively.***" Offering concrete incentives and supporting migrant NGOs are also suggested as ways to boost participation from diverse groups.

Strategic partnerships and capacity building programmes are highlighted in the responses as ways to increase participation and diversity. Digital outreach tools and targeted efforts to engage underrepresented groups are seen as effective ways to increase community engagement and visibility.

A significant challenge identified is the lack of resources in many municipalities to address migrant-related issues. As one coordinator points out, "***a lot of municipalities lack financial and other resources to develop tools to target migrant-related issues (for example to translate their websites).***" To address this, securing "***political commitment from the highest level***" and ensuring "***sufficient and stable funding***" for core operations is deemed crucial. Public statements supporting intercultural integration can "***demonstrate commitment and encourage participation from various stakeholders.***"

Engaging migrants, refugees, and third-country nationals

To increase the participation of migrants, refugees and third-country nationals in the network's activities, coordinators suggest organising different events that could foster connections and cultural exchanges. As one coordinator notes, "***food is a great way to unite people!***" and suggests cooking evenings and storytelling events as effective ways to bring communities together. Networking events connecting migrants with employers or mentors, community sports tournaments and partnerships with local migrant leaders to co-design activities are also recommended to create meaningful engagement opportunities.

In terms of linguistic accessibility, coordinators emphasise the need for multilingual materials, translation services, and the presence of interpreters or bilingual staff at events and meetings. These

measures aim to ensure that, as one coordinator puts it, "*migrants and refugees would feel more included and able to actively participate in network activities*".

To further develop the network and increase participation, coordinators suggest maintaining a core group of about 30 members while implementing micro-grants schemes and offering "*small but concrete incentives, different for each case*". Providing tangible support to migrant NGOs is also seen as a way to boost representation and involvement.

Building trust is identified as another key element in outreach efforts. Coordinators recommend working through community leaders and organisations that migrants, refugees, and third-country nationals identify with. They stress that providing safe spaces for dialogue is "*essential for boosting participation and diversity*".

An innovative proposal that stands out is the creation of a "*residents' card with benefits*". This card would offer "*incentives for participation and access to services*", including free or discounted access to transportation, cultural venues, and language lessons, providing tangible benefits to encourage active involvement in network activities.

Through this multifaceted approach, coordinators aim to create a more inclusive environment that not only encourages active participation but also provides concrete benefits to migrants, refugees, and third-country nationals. One coordinator stated that "*in this way, migrants and refugees would feel more included and able to actively participate in network activities*".

Planned intercultural activities

A wide range of activities are planned for the coming year to promote cultural awareness, dialogue and community engagement. These activities include:

- Intercultural food festivals and culinary events
- Storytelling sessions featuring migrant experiences, including a recently developed project called "DigiFolk"
- Sports events
- Workshops on cultural traditions and exchange
- Excursions exploring local heritage ("*archaeological sites, museums, businesses, and artist with guided tours in different languages*")
- Continuation of intercultural walks
- Co-creating festivals that reflect the cities' diversity
- Language exchange programmes and "*multi-language and linguistic café both in person and online*"
- Collaborative art projects
- Implementing an "*Intercultural ambassadors' scheme*"

These activities aim to "*promote cultural awareness but also encourage dialogue between participants from different backgrounds, highlighting the shared history and experiences of the community*". The networks also plan to apply for projects specifically targeting migrants and refugees.

Some networks are focusing on expanding their reach, with one coordinator emphasising the importance of scaling up these activities to reach *“larger audiences and all the population residing in the district”*. Additionally, there are plans to develop an intercultural calendar and expand welcoming statements and policies.

Communication tools and support

Coordinators suggest that additional communication tools and training could significantly improve the effectiveness of the network. Social media management tools are seen as important to improve outreach and engagement with diverse communities. Professional translation services are also highlighted as important to ensure effective communication across language barriers. Training in website development is suggested to improve the networks' online presence.

Intercultural communication training is emphasised as a key area for development. This training could *“help improve outreach, manage activities more efficiently, and strengthen connections with stakeholders and diverse communities”*. Additionally, conflict resolution techniques are mentioned as valuable skills for coordinators to acquire.

The coordinators also express interest in opportunities for networking and professional development abroad. They note that such experiences *“could enhance the network’s knowledge, skills, and connections”*, potentially bringing fresh perspectives and best practices back to their local contexts.

National intercultural network

The coordinators across Cyprus generally agree that establishing a national intercultural network would bring significant benefits to their districts and the country as a whole. Such a network is envisioned to:

- Create a unified platform for sharing resources, best practices, and expertise.
- Enhance collaboration and strengthen coordination between regions.
- Attract national and international funding opportunities.
- Organise large-scale events.
- Provide training opportunities for stakeholders.
- Facilitate the exchange of best practices.
- Promote national-level collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

One coordinator noted that *“Cyprus’ small geographic scale makes it more feasible for a national network to bring together these diverse groups, ensuring that efforts to integrate migrants, preserve cultural heritage, and foster mutual understanding are aligned across the country”*.

The network is also seen as particularly valuable for *“lobbying at national level on intercultural integration issues”*. It could enable more effective advocacy and promote *“a unified approach to intercultural integration and addressing shared challenges”*.

Furthermore, a national network could strengthen relationships between local authorities and NGOs, fostering a more cohesive approach to intercultural integration. One coordinator suggests that it

could *“provide targeted support to address these specific challenges, drawing on expertise and best practices from other districts”*.

There is interest in learning from similar networks in other countries, such as Italy and Spain, to understand their structure and funding schemes. This knowledge could inform the development of an effective national intercultural network in Cyprus.

Project feedback

In general, the coordinators across Cyprus acknowledge the positive impact of the project *“Enhancing structures and policies for intercultural integration in Cyprus”* on their communities. However, they also highlight some areas for improvement and future consideration.

One coordinator noted that whilst the project was *“great”*, its impact on national policy was limited *“due to different political priorities of national government”*. This observation underscores the importance of aligning intercultural integration efforts with broader political agendas to achieve more substantial policy changes.

Sustainability is a key concern. As one coordinator emphasised, *“ensuring that the momentum generated by the project continues after its conclusion may require further efforts”*. This includes building long-term partnerships between municipalities, NGOs, and migrant organisations, as well as providing consistent follow-up mechanisms to keep stakeholders engaged.

Improved collaboration between cities within the network is suggested as a way to *“challenge common problems that may arise in the implementation procedure”*. Additionally, there’s a recommendation to involve a broader range of local stakeholders, including businesses, schools, and healthcare providers, to *“help embed intercultural integration across all sectors of society”*.

A significant challenge also highlighted is the need to address negative perceptions among Cypriot residents. One coordinator points out that *“a substantial portion of Cypriot respondents’ express concerns about diversity, with many expressing negative views on welcoming newcomers, providing equal access to education, and involving foreign-born residents in decision-making”*. This underscores the importance of bridging the gap between foreign-born residents and Cypriot nationals regarding social cohesion and inclusion.

Overall, while the project has made significant strides, the feedback suggests a need for continued support, engagement, and innovative approaches to promote intercultural integration across Cyprus effectively.
