



Brokering migrants' cultural participation

Summary of the project

SWEDEN

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1. Introduction

Brokering Migrants' Cultural Participation or MCP Broker is a two-year project (2013-2015) funded by the European Commission-Directorate General Home Affairs, and in Sweden by the Swedish Arts Council. The general aim of the project is to enhance and stimulate the cultural participation of migrants by improving the capacity of their local cultural public institutions to interact with them. Public cultural institutions are part of the receiving society and thereby have to live up to the challenge of managing cultural diversity and ensuring intercultural integration. Central to these tasks is the enhancement of the intercultural capacity of public cultural institutions by diversifying their staff and governance bodies.

The project has the following specific objectives:

- a) to promote the engagement of the receiving communities in interacting with the migrants, based on the mutual respect of their rights, obligations and different cultures;
- b) to ensure equal treatment and improve diversity management in public cultural institutions.

Project partners are:

- Interarts Foundation (Spain) – Coordinator
- Eccom – European Centre for Cultural Organisation and Management (Italy)
- Educult (Austria)
- PIE – Platform for Intercultural Europe and Culture Action Europe (Belgium)
- Intercult and Region Västerbotten (Sweden)

The project is based on 4 phases:

1. Realisation of a benchmarking tool in order to analyse diversity management in cultural institutions;
2. Pilot studies or interviews with public cultural institutions to assess the status of diversity management;
3. Learning partnerships or workshops for cultural institutions to provide knowledge and support integration measures;
4. Dissemination of the benchmarking tool and Learning Partnerships to facilitate the use and emulation of the project.

This document refers to phases 1, 2 and 3 of the project, i.e. the pilot research activity, the use of the benchmarking tool and the learning partnerships realised in Skellefteå, Stockholm and Umeå.

2. The Research

In order to analyse diversity management in cultural institutions the working group has implemented a benchmarking tool that was first developed by Platform for Intercultural Europe together with Migration Policy Group. The European partners then developed a final version. The benchmark tracks the potential journey of a cultural institution from a basic level where the institutions recognise the need to reflect society's diversity by adapting rules and making statements, through two intermediate levels to an advanced level, where the cultural institutions as organisations fully reflects society's diversity and promotes participation.

Benchmarks for each level are defined in seven different areas:

- a) Institutional policy and vision
- b) Audience/visitor relations
- c) Programme/repertoire/collections
- d) Partners/collaborators for programming and profiling
- e) Employees
- f) Board members
- g) Suppliers

Each partner has then identified 10-15 cultural institutions with a diversified cultural sector and a strong set of public cultural institutions that have had to face important challenges regarding the integration of Third Country Nationals. Relevant key functionaries within the selected institutions have been interviewed in order to establish the stage these have reached in the journey of diversity management, to establish critical hurdles and to identify needs. Participating institutions have then been ranked on the basis of the outcome of the pilot research. The selected cultural institutions in Sweden are 11 public-funded institutions from different parts of the country: museums, libraries and theatres/opera houses and a cultural school, (table 1).

Table 1. Results of the analysis according to the benchmarking tool

Name	Typology	Benchmarking level
Malmö Museer	City museum	Lower intermediate/ Upper intermediate
Bohusläns Museum	Regional museum	Lower intermediate
Västerbottens Museum	Regional museum	Basic/Lower intermediate
Riksteatern	National theatre	Lower intermediate
Västerbottensteatern	Regional theatre	Basic
Kulturhuset/Stadsteatern	City theatre	Basic
Folkoperan	Opera house	Lower intermediate
Vara Konserthus	City theatre	Basic
Länsbiblioteket i Västerbotten	County library	Basic
Finspångs Biblioteket	City library	Basic
Botkyrka Kulturskola	Culture school	Lower intermediate

The results and the analysis of the interviews show the following:

- None of the participating cultural institutions in the project has a consistent diversity perspective that concerns the overall organizations and includes its different departments.

- The cultural institutions without policies or a concrete strategy cannot rise over basic level.
- Concerning programming, good initiatives embracing diversity and inclusion have been bound to individual engagement or appointed to a specific department of the organization, therefore the result is not visible in the whole organization and poorly communicated.
- The audience work is in general not strategic when it comes to involving migrant communities. Few institutions have mapped the migrant communities in their mission area.
- We find the lowest levels of diversity within the staff, 9 out of 11 institutions reach the basic level and 2 reach the lower intermediate level.
- Most of the cultural institutions boards' are politically elected therefore it's difficult to draw any conclusions, which is why the benchmark is not applicable.
- The cultural institutions are in general bound to the municipality's rather complicated rules concerning subcontractors and are therefore not free to neither choose nor engage in this issue.
- There is a need for a tool like our benchmark that contributes with guidance.
- The self-perception of power and privileges is rather weak within most of the cultural institutions. We also see a risk with an increased influence of the Sweden Democrats that might jeopardize the current political vision of a culture for "all".

3. The Learning partnerships

The third phase of MCP Broker foresees the organization of a series of Learning Partnerships with the aim of promoting the integration of migrants. In Sweden the Learning Partnerships were organised by Intercult and Region Västerbotten and realised in three cities: Skellefteå, Stockholm and Umeå. A documentary film crew has accompanied the Learning partnerships.

Different types of Learning Partnerships were designed between September 2014 and March 2015:

- a) Learning Partnership 1 (September): A two-day workshop on recruitment. Focusing on recruitment of new audiences and staff
- b) Learning Partnership 2 (October): A two-day workshop on Swedish migration history and on how cultural institutions can work for inclusion.
- c) Learning Partnership 3 (November): Participants attended the largest event on human rights in Europe, the Swedish Forum for Human Rights. 2014 theme focused on human rights and culture. The participants attended seminars that dealt with issues concerning diversity, racism and discrimination in Swedish cultural life.
- d) Learning Partnership 4 (December-March): Two cultural visits with cultural institutions and NGO's rooted in migrant self-organisation.
- e) Sharing conference (8 December): Intercult and Region Västerbotten organised a one-day conference, "The future of Cultural Institutions in Europe: the right to culture irrespective of identity and background", that focused on diversity and cultural institutions.

4. Conclusion

In Sweden, there is a strong need for a project like MCP Broker as the results and the analysis of the interviews show.

The project has therefore identified following recommendations, based on three levels:

On a governmental level

- Support a sector overall usage of the benchmark as a tool for development of diversity and inclusion
- Continue to emphasise diversity and inclusion for all inhabitants in Sweden as a highly prioritised goal for publicly funded cultural institutions.
- Use the benchmark tool (or other similar tools) in order to evaluate the institutions work with diversity and inclusion, and articulate this perspective much stronger in evaluations and feedbacks.
- Public funding should be measured towards its results and its work with diversity and inclusion of migrants. Public bodies should work much more proactively with funding as a steering tool.

On an institutional level

- Clear and articulated policy documents and/or concrete strategies on how to work with diversity and inclusion that are anchored within the board and the management are crucial for success.
- The cultural institution should regard development in competence in diversity and inclusion as part of the overall organizational development
- The management should be prepared to give room for changes. It might lead to internal discussions when it comes to how power is organized within the institution.
- Set up teams with internal and strategic partners in order to secure engagement and sustainability for diversity and inclusion.
- Each cultural institution should collect data and map the migrant communities in their mission area in order to picture their potential audiences and understand their target groups.
- All new recruitments need to have a clear diversity target and should be regarded with special attention and affirmative action. Diversity and intercultural competence need to be the leading perspectives. We therefore strongly recommend competence based recruitment processes.
- Subcontracting is difficult and time-consuming. Team up with other cultural institutions in the municipality together with the municipality's procurement office aiming in including diversity and intercultural competence in the offers.

On an individual level

Reflect on your role as a gatekeeper and work with norm critical and postcolonial perspectives.