**Contribution to the report on cultural rights and migration**

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| **Contribution by** **UN Etxea** **with the participation of (listed in the alphabetical order):** Begoña Guzmán (Head of Culture at UN Etxea), Begoña Intxaustegi (director of AMIARTE), Betto Snay (Musician, director of Afrook and community cultural facilitator), Ekain Larrinaga (Immigration Technician of the Cooperation and Coexistence Department of the Bilbao City Council, Bizkaia), Ixone Sádaba - Ignacio Rodríguez Tucho (Moving Artists) and Nilda Diarte (Playwright and theatre director). |

**Introduction**

We join the ambition of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals to "ensure that no one is left behind" and reduce inequalities among all people and, with the commitment adopted by the Basque Government in the advancement and achievement of this development agenda, we demand that "no one is left behind" in the fulfilment of their cultural rights of access, participation, production, creation, talent development and enjoyment of cultural life.

We support “the new impetus given to the role of culture for sustainable development, peace and stability, as a force for resilience, social inclusion and cohesion, environmental protection and sustainable and inclusive growth, and fostering a human-centred and context-specific development, which supports the foundations of multicultural human societies” as stated in the recently adopted MONDIACULT-UNESCO 2022 Declaration.

We understand that physical activity, sport, and culture are and can be safe spaces for the participation, coexistence and socialization of migrants, refugees, and the local population.

**What challenges do migrants face currently in practicing, maintaining, and transmitting their culture?**

* [There](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/there) [are](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/are) [few](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/few) [cultural](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/cultural) initiatives [with](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/with) [a](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/a) [community](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/community) [focus](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/focus) [that](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/that) [are](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/are) promoted, [made](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/made) [visible](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/visible) [or](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/or)

[financially](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/financially) supported [by](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/by) [the](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/the) [public](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/public) [administration](https://dictionary.cambridge.org/es/diccionario/ingles-espanol/administration). There is not collaboration between these community-based initiatives and the major cultural institutions that enjoy better spaces, resources and budgets.

The city of Bilbao (Biscay, Basque Country) has a strong network of cultural associations and organizations which, from and for the neighborhood, has an important impact on the promotion of participation and enjoyment in the cultural life of all the neighbors, including immigrants. They carry out their work independently and in parallel to the cultural offer of the large cultural institutions. The moments when they collaborate are occasional and anecdotal. The network of associations demands a greater involvement of these cultural institutions in the incorporation of cultural diversity in their programs, as well as the creation and promotion of spaces for the participation and development of creativity for migrants. There is an urgent need for greater collaboration between public institutions, cultural institutions, social agents with experience in community work and people of reference for migrant communities.

* In this sense, it is necessary to socially recognize, institutionally support and economically boost those initiatives that promote access, participation, and enjoyment of migrants in cultural life. These initiatives are usually unknown to most citizens and manage to survive through small public subsidies, their social base, and volunteers.
* Diversity has been proven to be nurturing creative thinking and fostering innovation, contributing to effective problem solving and establishing better corporate practices. This approach promoted by the private sector has hardly permeated public administration and cultural institutions. It is in inclusive environments that the benefits of diversity are much more likely to be realized.
* One of the initiatives of the Basque Culture Plan 2019-2022 is: "to promote innovative projects to attract new audiences and activate cultural audiences. Inserting the activation of new audiences in policies to promote innovation". Community-based cultural agents and entities demand that information and opportunities concerning cultural life reach all citizens, with direct invitations so that they feel called upon to participate and attend, through the information channels that are closest to them, such as the media, people and associations that are of reference to them.
* It is also urgent to optimize and facilitate the dissemination in the media of initiatives and events organized by migrant individuals and groups. Communication usually takes place through posters distributed in the neighborhood where the actions take place, through invitations to the close circle of collaborators, participants and people who are already aware of cultural diversity. Occasionally, people with interest and curiosity about cultural expressions from other countries are also approached. These actions are not usually communicated to the public or in official agendas. Communication in these media would make them known and recognized by the host population.
* There is a generalized idea that migrants should adopt the cultural expressions of the host country. However, they should not be expected to replace and/or renounce their culture. Spaces can be created where the host society gets to know the cultures of migrants and vice versa, beyond a folkloric vision. Public spaces must be created where they can recreate and transmit to the next generations the expressions linked to their intangible heritage, as well as their own language, in addition to the private sphere.
* There is a greater mainstreaming of culture in public policies in cultural projects with a social dimension promoted by different areas: equality, migration, social action, youth, employment, and economic promotion, etc. However, there it is urgent to incorporate the cultural diversity and human rights approach in cultural policies, just as others, such as gender, have been incorporated and should continue to be promoted. In this sense, we refer to the words of the MONDIACULT 2022 Declaration which welcomes the trend towards “public policies, enabling inter alia inclusive and participatory cultural policies, involving a multiplicity of actors (…) thus expanding the voices of diverse segments of society and taking full advantage of their potential and creative capacities and all resources available to them, to act at social, economic, and environmental levels, within the broader framework of cultural policies”.
* Greater recognition and promotion of cultural mediators who intervene directly in the community through direct communication activism with migrants. It is necessary to identify and involve these figures in the design of cultural policies so that decision-makers are aware of the cultural diversity of their citizens, their concerns, needs, talent and creativity.

We identify below **initiatives and programs in our territory that represent an opportunity for the host society to meet and engage with the cultural resources of migrants:**

* Bizilagunak program (inspired by Next Door Familiy, Czech Republic 2004) builds bridges between people, and between Basque culture and the great diversity of cultures carried by those who have decided to make the Basque Country their home in their migratory project. The dynamic consists of sharing a meal one day of a specific weekend (it is done at the same time throughout the Basque Country) between two families (or groups of people), one of native origin and the other of foreign origin. In the intimate space of the host family home, the opportunity for positive and meaningful interaction is provided, and the families are accompanied by a facilitator or mediator (who helps them in the logistical organization of the day). It is a fundamental tool in the development of the [Basque antiRUMOUR strategy](http://zas.eus/), due to its contribution to promoting spaces for deconstructing stereotypes and social discourses that make difficult coexistence between different people; it is also considered a community tool of added value in the reception processes of migrants, applicants for international protection or refugees.
* [Arroces del Mundo-Munduko Arrozak](https://mundukoarrozak.info/) is an intercultural, popular, participatory, and self-managed festival that takes place in the public space of different municipalities in the Basque Country and aims to promote interculturality and interrelation between different people and social organizations from different origins through different dishes and their preparation with rice as a common base.
* Gentes del Mundo Festival is a social awareness-raising project aimed at promoting cultural knowledge and interaction between Basque society and migrant groups living in Bilbao. It aims to foster mutual recognition, respect, dialogue, as well as friendship and professional ties. It is a social initiative that originates from associations of migrants and is supported by the Bilbao City Council, the Provincial Council of Bizkaia, and the Basque Government.
* [ZAS!, the Basque Anti-Racism Network](https://zas.eus/), is a network of social and institutional agents that develops a social awareness-raising strategy to prevent discrimination and xenophobia, improve coexistence and make the most of the potential of cultural diversity. They carry out different projects in localities in the Basque Country to promote and disseminate the values and principles of interculturalism and anti-racism and to influence the political and social agenda. They carry out training workshops and artistic actions for social transformation (bertsolaritza theatre, audiovisuals, literature, micro-theatre...) to work in a comprehensive way and cover the different areas of society.
* [Recognition of Immigrant Women from Bilbao](https://www.bilbao.eus/cs/Satellite?c=BIO_Evento_FA&cid=1279220682447&language=es&pageid=3000094681&pagename=Bilbaonet%2FBIO_Evento_FA%2FBIO_Evento). Promoted by the Local Immigration Council of the Bilbao City Council, its aim is to recognize the presence of immigrant women in the social and public life of the city and to create scenarios for the recognition of diversity. Women are recognized in six categories: artist, human rights defender, entrepreneur, politician, young woman, and community woman.
* The Ongi etorri Errefuxiatuak Bizkaia platform, made up of people and organizations for the defense of migrants and refugees, organizes advocacy, awareness-raising, and training activities. It has a commission dedicated to cinema and theatre to bring the reality of people forced into forced displacement or the uncertainty of emigration closer to the public through stage performances, films, and documentaries.
* "Liburutegiak Topaleku. Libraries as a meeting place" is a program promoted by the Basque Government to encourage the use of municipal libraries in the Basque Country as a resource for inclusion and socialization. In the case of Getxo Libraries, the program is supported by the Municipal Libraries and the Interculturality Unit in collaboration with the Basque Government (Library Service, BILTZEN Integration and Coexistence Service), social organizations and cultural institutions that have collaborated, such as Casa Asia, Casa América or diplomatic missions and their cultural attachés. Its objectives are to promote libraries as safe spaces for meeting and coexistence; to bring cultural resources closer to the entire population of the municipality; to highlight the artistic creation and production of the main countries of the migrant communities and to provide spaces for reflection, debate, and knowledge about the political, economic, social, and cultural context of other countries and regions of the world.

We identify below **good practices to protect the cultural rights of migrants to access cultural resources and services and to participate in cultural life:**

* [Candela Radio](https://candelaradio.fm/) is a community radio project led by Miguel Ángel Puentes that seeks to foster social change and citizen participation by serving as a bridge for dialogue on human development, cultural and linguistic diversity, and feminism. They promote the participation of migrant and racialized women in the media and organize free workshops for the development of women's capacities in voice-over and radio communication with a gender perspective.
* [AMIARTE](http://www.amiarte.org/) is a center for creation in visual arts, recognized as a Public Entity, created by Bego Intxaustegi, PhD in Mural Painting from the University of the Basque Country, to host, train and give the opportunity to create to migrants and socially excluded people. In the first stage, with the support of professional artists, until the people are already the protagonists of their creative process. The center hires people, with training and receives commissions for mural projects under the slogan "Art transforms people" and "Art transforms cities". The murals are created between people from the Basque Country and artists from many countries. The classes are taught in several languages, with teachers from Cameroon, Peru, Senegal, Morocco, and the Basque Country. "*We have created a job opportunity for muralists in the city, with the most avant-garde techniques, which offers work to people who until now have had no voice or social space. We have demonstrated the great creative capacity when we combine cultures, professionalism and enthusiasm*".
* The Euskal Rap Cultural Association, led by Angolan rapper Betto Snay, aims to promote urban culture and interculturalism among young people in the Basque Country, using urban music as a cohesive element between the migrant population and the host society. To this end, it organizes inclusive events that promote coexistence, respect, creativity, and gender equality among young people. In 2022, on the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) proclaimed by the United Nations in 1966, he organized the Damba Festival in Bilbao. In its first edition, the youngest hip hop scene in the Basque Country shared the stage with the acclaimed rapper Frank T, who also presents the podcast "There are no blacks in Tibet", where he tackles blackness with humor and criticism to generate reflection and awareness.
* [Diversitours-Aniztasuna Tours](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8fHAQ_u2MAQ-r3wTg5O1hA) are intercultural routes guided by previously trained neighborhood residents who connect visitors with the history of the community and its landmarks. It aims to foster new attitudes towards migration and cultural diversity by bringing participants closer to places and experiences that do not appear on traditional tourist circuits. These intercultural routes through Bilbao have the participation of Koop SF 34 and are based on the experience of the European Migrantour Network, an educational proposal of routes guided by community agents to highlight the cultural richness and diversity of cities such as Turin, Milan, Lisbon, Brussels, Marseille, Paris, and Barcelona.
* [Koop SF34](https://koopsf34.org/) is a space for "African-style entrepreneurship", as they describe themselves, a social microenterprise incubator that is emerging in San Francisco, Bilbao, the neighborhood with the highest concentration of migrants in the Basque Country. Since 2015, they have been supporting the socio-occupational integration of migrants through entrepreneurship. It is part of the pioneering group of intercultural incubators of the Council of Europe's Diversity Incubators program. Its cultural ventures include those re to related to dance, fashion and audiovisuals, among others.
* The [Learning Community Cuaderno de Bitácora Intercultural](https://www.unescoetxea.org/nuestro-cuaderno-de-bitacora-intercultural/) is a privately sponsored project of the UN Etxea association. For 6 months in BBK KUNA (The House of the SDGs, Bilbao, Bizkaia), accompanied by Cruz Noguera, Venezuelan playwright, actor and theatre director, people with artistic interests from different countries have reflected on how they interact, coexist, and participate in the host society. They have relied on the "Cuaderno de viaje hacia las ciudades interculturales", published by the Spanish Network of Intercultural Cities, to promote debate and critical thinking. The result of the process culminated in a staging of various artistic expressions that they shared in an open space with citizens.
* Follow The Party is an artistic collective that, through dance and music, aims to generate "afro-awareness". From hip-hop to afro-music, from reggae-dancehall to funk, they spread the message of unity and equality wherever they perform with their dj sessions. One of their artists, Quinndy, a dancer and choreographer of the collective, also promotes Afro sessions combining dance, physical activity, and African culture.
* [Moving Artists (MA)](https://www.movingartists.org/en/) is an independent organization based in Bilbao formed by a multidisciplinary team of artists and legal professionals. Working at the intersection of human rights and the arts, MA is dedicated to facilitating mobility and cultural exchange between countries that have restricted access to one another. MA seeks to enable movement and transnational exchange for cultural workers whose practice is threatened by situations of conflict, isolation, instability, censorship, and cultural crisis. Since 2017 MA has developed artist residencies between Biscay and Iraq with the collaboration of the BilbaoArte Foundation and Palestine with Matadero Madrid. MA is a member of [On the Move](https://on-the-move.org/) and participates in different European mobility groups.

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