

The MAX project journey comes to an end

For the last 3 years, AEIDL has been collaborating with 19 other organisations to raise awareness about the advantages of diverse societies and to work for a more nuanced debate about migration in Europe.

Patricia Martinez (AEIDL)



MAX's mission – to change the narrative

The [Maximising Migrants' Contribution to Society project \(MAX\)](#) started in February 2019 with the assumption that the integration of migrants is essential, primarily, to guarantee their human rights and community cohesion. In addition, it is proved that migration is beneficial, among other things, to boost Europe's economic performance, address skills gaps and shortages, and fight against depopulation.

However, we can see how migration is very often understood and communicated only in terms of a crisis and how a big part of mainstream media and some politicians reinforce and amplify these messages of crisis, fear or danger. Those discourses generate a very negative environment. They offer only a partial picture of what migration as a natural global phenomenon is, and most

importantly, of who migrants are. This context makes it very challenging for newcomers and their descendants to integrate in their new home countries.

Here is where the main objective of the MAX project appeared.

Time to say goodbye, time to celebrate

During the last three years, MAX has tried to challenge and change negative narratives and stereotypes about migration. To do so we have been working with migrant-led organisations, researchers, journalists, students, NGOs and CSOs to provide evidence about how migration contributes to the development of our societies, to share real stories and testimonies, to write policy recommendations and advocate them to European institutions, to train up-and-coming journalists how to write solution-focused stories on migration, and to organise local encounters among citizens of different origins.

As part of those efforts, we can definitely draw up a positive balance sheet. Our main achievements include:

- The organisation of 15 [Diversity Dialogue Fora](#) events attracting over 1,300 participants of different backgrounds around Europe.
- The publication of 4 [research reports](#) on the impact of migrant populations in Europe (social, economic and cultural) and the opinions, fears and prejudices regarding migrants in Europe.
- The presentation of one [Policy Recommendation](#) paper during a policy roundtable with representatives from EU institutions chaired by MAX's coordinator, UNITEE.
- A social media campaign with a set of [20 messages](#) aiming to improve the public image of migrants in Europe.
- A [database of good and bad practice](#) (successes and failures in migrant integration) with videos, articles and reports.
- The celebration of the [MAX Diversity Film Festival](#), with more than 450 applications received, and a 2-day [final event in Brussels](#) with 150 participants, coordinated by AEIDL.
- Drafting of a curriculum for [solutions-focused migration reporting](#) tested during the training MAX did with 150 journalists and communication students based in 20 countries across Europe.
- Dissemination of 50 solution-focused migration news in the MAX project web and media as well as at the [media outlet of The Local Europe](#).

We hope that our little project has at least scratched the surface of a global problem in a globalised world, making a modest contribution towards a new way of discussing migration. It's goodbye for now. But we will be glad to be part of continued efforts in this area.

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