

# Innovative strategies against exclusionary narratives

The case of Germany

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## Abstract

Since the beginning of the so-called refugee crisis of 2015, German migration policy has been the subject of controversy in public discourse across Europe, with Germany either praised or criticised for its 'open door' policy. In Germany itself, hegemonic discourse has largely supported this policy, focusing on whether or how Germany can deal with its intake of asylum seekers, the significance of Germany's migration policy for Europe; little attention is given to alternative, counter-hegemonic narratives about migration that go beyond the *status quo*, especially from non-hegemonic positions such as migrants and refugees themselves. This report investigates such narratives in Germany, the movements, organisations and civil society initiatives that develop and spread them, and the strategies and circumstances that allow such narratives to successfully enter hegemonic discourse. After mapping thirteen recent initiatives that hold a salient position in Germany, two initiatives were selected for in-depth analysis for their success in spreading inclusive narratives across Germany: Seebrücke (Sea Bridge) and Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! (Network Media.Diversity!).

Seebrücke is a nation-wide platform founded in 2015 to advocate for safe pathways and safe havens for migrants and refugees to/in Europe; it comprises hundreds of local, largely independent chapters that, while subscribing to the same global aims, organise local campaigns, as well as a Germany-wide network of communes who have declared themselves 'safe havens' for refugees and jointly support Seebrücke's campaign to shift responsibility for refugee intake and integration from the state to the commune level. Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!, similarly founded in 2015, aims to change the German media landscape to address its discrimination and lack of diversity with respect to 'people with migration or flight experience'. It works as a platform to network, share experiences and provide vocational trainings, to foster critical media literacy in the general population.

Providing an in-depth qualitative analysis of these two initiatives based on interviews and document analysis, this report examines their work along five key dimensions. The findings are discussed in terms of success factors regarding narrative salience and reach. The report concludes that, while both initiatives have been successful in terms of social and media impact, there are crucial differences in their organisational structure and strategies, in particular with regard to narratives. Using a highly flexible approach, Seebrücke has managed to mobilize local communities and leverage established power structures in commune-level politics, building up momentum to affect more large-scale change. Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! has succeeded in building a nation-wide platform by securing funding and establishing a network that has increased the resilience, reach and success of local, alternative media projects run by people with migration or flight experience. Both initiatives must be considered unique in Germany and both have achieved short-term successes. Their narrative and structural success is difficult to compare: While Seebrücke has managed to tap into hegemonic power structures and mobilize segments of the autochthonous population, Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! is producing media content with growing reach and impact every day. Their positionality as migrant or refugee media makers is a source of both strength and limitations within a media landscape that remains inimical to their positionality.

**Keywords:** migration narratives, narrative success, inclusive narratives, Germany, civil society, Seebrücke, Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!, Network Media.Diversity!

# 1. Introduction

German public discourse in the wider sense, and political and media discourses in particular, comprise a range of ideological positions and corresponding narratives on migration and migrants in general, and on refugees and integration specifically. Although there has long been a broad consensus, upheld during and since the so-called refugee crisis of 2015, that Germany has a moral or ethical obligation to uphold the right to asylum and provide humanitarian relief, even at substantial cost to Germany – epitomized in Angela Merkel’s declaration “Wir schaffen das!” (We can do this!) (Zaun & Ripoll Servent 2021) – the opposition to this hegemonic consensus has been growing. This is evident in both the political and discursive dimension, with the rise of far-right protest movements such as PEGIDA and the subsequent electoral successes of the anti-immigration, far-right party Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) (Hutter & Kriesi 2022). These far-right populist political actors pander to and spread xenophobic, racist and Islamophobic narratives that present migration as an existential threat to Germany as a nation, its economy and cultural, linguistic and religious identity, while dehumanizing migrants as exploitative, savage and violent.

At the same time, however, civil society initiatives and NGOs have emerged, re-positioned themselves or expanded to support migrants, specifically asylum seekers and recognised refugees within Germany, developing and championing alternative narratives. Although the polarisation between anti- and pro-migration/refugee movements (or civil and ‘uncivil society’, respectively; see Glasius 2010) in Germany is arguably less pronounced than in other countries across the world (Hutter & Kriesi 2022; Beinhorn & Glorius 2018), we are interested in identifying and understanding these alternative, non-hegemonic narratives about migration in civil society. Some of these initiatives were founded and are run predominantly by migrants themselves, others mainly by ‘autochthonous’ Germans. While all of the organisations in this group are, by definition, pro migration or specifically asylum, they differ in terms of their organisational structures, modes of mobilization, discursive strategies and narratives. Significantly, they also differ in terms of whether and how they position their ‘voice’ as either ‘speaking as migrants’, ‘speaking for/on behalf of migrants’, ‘giving a voice to migrants’ or even ‘speaking with/to migrants’. Drawing on the concept of ‘migration narrative success’ (Garcés-Mascreñas and Pastore 2022), we aim to trace the extent to which these initiatives are able to pervade public, political and media discourses, specifically through their narratives, and induce transformative actions. Equally importantly, we are interested in the specificities of the German context.

This report first presents a document analysis-based mapping of 13 recently founded or recently re-oriented initiatives that stand out for their innovation or salience in their discourses and actions; second, we report on two selected case studies in an in-depth analysis based on interviews. Seebrücke (Sea bridge) is a Germany-wide movement founded in 2015 to advocate for the safe passage of migrants and refugees to Europe through legal and safe pathways, the establishment of safe havens in Germany, the shifting of asylum and integration agendas from federal administration to commune level politics<sup>1</sup> and, arguably its most ambitious aim, global mobility for all. Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! (Network media.diversity!) also began in 2015 as an informal exchange but has become a firmly established (and funded) platform for media

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<sup>1</sup> Communes (‘Kommunen’) in Germany are village, town or city-level entities with local political and administrative authority.

makers with ‘migration or flight experience’. It aims to transform the German media landscape, to amplify the voices of its members, to share experiences and learn from each other – specifically how to overcome discrimination, mental health issues and professionalisation. It also develops and runs public awareness and critical media literacy campaigns directed at the general German public. Both operate across Germany as nation-wide organisations and are not affiliated with any political party or administrative or governmental body.

The report is structured as follows: after this introduction and a methodological overview, an overview section covers the most relevant features of the innovative initiatives we mapped (see Appendix A for more details). This is followed by two sections that correspond to the in-depth analysis of the two interview-based case studies (Seebrücke and Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!). The analysis proceeds along the key aspects of national and historical context, main actors of the initiative, its narratives, innovative and transformative aspects, as well as impact and success factors. The analysis synthesizes the result of the empirical interview study and uses quotes to illustrate our findings. Finally, some conclusions are drawn with respect to both initiatives, in particular their comparison, as well as the respective factors that might explain narrative success in either case.

## 2. Specific empirical approach

Following the objectives of WP4, we adopted a qualitative research methodology in two stages. The first stage consisted of mapping initiatives and their key characteristics, founded and led by different civil society actors that intend to challenge and/or change exclusionary discourses on migration. The selection of these initiatives – in the German case, 13 initiatives – followed a set of criteria. Most importantly, their aims and narratives relate to the three sub-genres identified in WP3, typically in the sense of countering them or presenting an alternative narrative. Thus, the initiatives associated with the first sub-genre relate to migrants’ movement or arrival and the management of national/EU borders in relation to such migratory movement. This includes initiatives focused on any point of these movements, including the Mediterranean, external EU borders or national borders, as well as inland movement. Insofar as the second sub-genre is about integration, citizenship and regularisation/naturalisation, we also included initiatives that relate to issues of integration, legally or practically, and the discrimination settled migrants face in this context. Regarding the third sub-genre, initiatives that speak to terrorist attacks or hate crimes against migrants, be they racist, sexist or Islamophobic in nature, were also considered in the mapping stage.

Beyond relating to one or several of the sub-genres, all mapped initiatives had to satisfy the criteria of relevance in the current situation (post-2015), a minimum of public visibility, and innovativeness in terms of narrative production and resulting narrative success.

The initial mapping was undertaken as desk research, reviewing media, websites, press releases, and social media. We were also able to draw on our extensive collection of media data from WP3 to identify initiatives who had at least been mentioned in hegemonic media or social media. All information collected was entered into a common template table, to be found in the Appendix A of this report. Beyond the description of each initiative along standardised items such as date of founding, key actors, aims and strategies, we analytically identified each

initiative's key narratives that represent core topics related to migration that challenge hegemonic discourses.

Based on the mapping of stage one, we conducted an in-depth study of two specific initiatives treated as case studies to gain a comprehensive view of their discursive strategies and practices, and to allow an assessment of the narratives' success factors. These two initiatives were chosen from the initial mapping and, in the German case, relate to the first two sub-genres: Seebrücke relates to arrival, and Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! relates to integration in Germany. Both case studies drew on all relevant documents we could access as well as qualitative, in-depth interviews with several active members of each initiative, running to a total of 13 in-depth interviews. Our approach to contacting potential interviewees combined convenience and snowball sampling strategies (see list of interviewees in Appendix B).

The interviews followed common interview guidelines developed in collaboration with the Italian and Spanish research team working in WP4, so that a comparative analysis across the three national cases would be possible. However, we anticipated and allowed some adaptations during the interviews to give each interviewer the possibility to shape the conversation according to the case and each interviewee's background. All of the interviews were undertaken online via Zoom or Teams, depending on availability, between June and August 2022. All interviews were transcribed following the pseudo-anonymisation rules of the BRIDGES project, and subsequently analysed with respect to the research questions of WP4.

### 3. Overview of Mapping

The mapping of German initiatives includes a total of 13 initiatives, 7 of them related to arrivals and borders, 6 related to integration, citizenship or regularisation, and one to an extreme-right terrorist attack on migrants in 2020 (that would be classified as a hate crime or racism-based attack). Most of them are civil society organisations (registered associations or *eingetragene Vereine* under German civil law), whereas some are more informal and loose forms of mobilisations (campaigns, demonstrations, platforms). As shown in the table below, most of the initiatives included in the mapping were founded relatively recently, after 2015, especially among the initiatives related to arrivals. An exception is the Aachener Netzwerk, which goes back to early 90ies and the civil war in former Yugoslavia, but has taken on new causes since 2015, becoming more active again.

Indeed, most of these initiatives are responses to the migration movements of 2015 and after, or to the way these migrants have been received in Germany or the EU since then. Outrage over the way migrants are being treated at the EU's external borders, controversy over humanitarian help and especially sea rescue, has contributed substantially to the founding of many of these initiatives.

| Sub-genre                          | Name   | Founded | Primary aims   | Reach   | Main narratives   |
|------------------------------------|--|---------|--|---|---|
| Arrivals and management of borders | Seebrücke  | 2018    | Safe escape routes to Europe, humane reception of refugees and decriminalization of sea rescue | Germany, Austria, Switzerland                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Against Fortress Europe</li> <li>• Safe paths to asylum applications</li> <li>• Migration is not a crime</li> <li>• Any town can be a safe haven</li> </ul>  |
| Arrivals and management of borders | Borderline Europe - human rights without borders                           | 2007    | Documenting and monitoring EU agencies and national agencies at the borders for legal purposes | Germany   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EU-Turkey deal is a step to Fortress Europe</li> <li>• Closed borders lead to human trafficking, crime</li> <li>• Migration is not a crime</li> </ul>  |
| Arrivals and management of borders | Aachener Netzwerk für humanitäre Hilfe und interkultureller Friedensarbeit | 1993    | Humanitarian aid projects and long-term peace-building projects                                | Aachen, Germany; Bosnia and Serbia along the 'Balkan route' | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Humanitarian catastrophes at EU borders in the Balkans</li> <li>• EU should not delegate external border control to national governments</li> </ul>  |
| Arrivals and management of borders | Adopt a Revolution (about:change)  | 2011    | Transforming the German media coverage on Syrian refugees                                      | Germany; Syria  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Camps in Greece and elsewhere are creating disease, violence, trauma</li> <li>• Germany's asylum policies are inhumane</li> </ul>  |
| Arrivals and management of borders | Alea   | 2021    | Provide material aid, education and awareness for refugees in camps (esp. in Greece)           | Germany; Greece; Afghanistan                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children are the future</li> <li>• Education is key to the future</li> <li>• Western societies are responsible for migrant children</li> </ul>   |
| Arrivals and management of borders | Balkanbrücke   | 2015    | Abolish Frontex; stop border violence; stop deportations and push-backs                        | Germany; EU borders in Balkans                              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• While the EU is building Fortress Europe, we are building bridges across the walls</li> <li>• Europe's isolationism has high cost</li> <li>• Migration is not a crime</li> <li>• Germany's waiting for "the European solution" is an excuse</li> </ul> |
| Integration and regularisation     | Brand New Bundestag/ Wir für Zukunft eG                                    | 2020    | Promoting a more diverse German Bundestag and a society that                                   | Germany   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political representation must be as diverse as the population</li> </ul>   |



| Sub-genre                      | Name  | Founded                            | Primary aims   | Reach                                       | Main narratives   |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|---|---|
|                                |   |                                    | includes all people  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discrimination and exclusion dominate political sphere</li> </ul>  |
| Integration and regularisation | Bundesverband der Migrantinnen in Deutschland | 2005                               | Promoting equal and independent participation of migrant women                             | Germany (major cities across Germany)       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racism and discrimination are pervasive</li> <li>• Equal work deserves equal pay</li> <li>• Fight the causes of flight, not refugees</li> <li>• Women are doubly at risk</li> </ul>                |
| Integration and regularisation | dis:orient                                    | 2019 (fusion of two organisations) | Shedding light on marginalized feminist and postcolonial perspectives (esp. WANA region)   | Germany; West Asia and Africa region (WANA) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• WANA is insufficiently known/understood in Germany</li> <li>• People from WANA have a rich culture and history</li> </ul>  |
| Integration and regularisation | Migrantifa                                    | 2020                               | Coordinating the (post-)migrant struggles for social rights and against racism and fascism | Germany; Austria                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deeply rooted racism in Germany is source for recent attacks</li> <li>• Racism in politics is complicit with racist violence</li> </ul>  |
| Integration and regularisation | Migration_miteinander                         | 2015/16                            | Forging a cooperation between migrants and local/regional populations                      | Germany                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Young people need opportunities to learn/study and work to realise their potential</li> <li>• The idea of Europe is built on solidarity and mutual support</li> </ul>                              |
| Integration and regularisation | Netzwerk.Medienvielfalt                       | 2015                               | Creating a more open, diverse and sustainable media landscape and society                  | Germany                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Migrant voices bring new perspectives to German media</li> <li>• The power of media can make migrant voices heard</li> <li>• Migrants have something to say, not just on migrant issues</li> </ul> |
| Terrorist attacks              | Bildungsinitiative Ferhat Unvar               | 2020                               | Promoting anti-racist education and empowerment for people affected by racism              | Germany                                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Racism and discrimination pervade German society</li> <li>• Education and integration are crucial to prevention</li> <li>• Civil society must step up where governments fail</li> </ul>            |

Regarding initiatives that address issues related to the arrival of migrants and border control, it is noteworthy that a number of German NGOs focus on the EU's external borders, including sea crossings and the so-called 'Balkans route'. Of these, several aim to mobilise German society and change public discourses to put pressure on German politics or policy-makers; others seek to mobilise local support in the German population for migrants who arrive or have arrived; one NGO (Borderline Europe) specifically seeks to document the situation at borders, including the behaviour of authorities and treatment of migrants for the sake of legal issues and court cases (e.g., violation of human rights); and one NGO explicitly aims to abolish Frontex. What these organisations have in common is a critical stance on EU policy and Germany's role in it (e.g., the EU-Turkey deal), a policy often referred to metonymically as 'Fortress Europe' and the criminalisation of migration.

It is worth highlighting that each of the included initiatives is quite unique in some way. Seebrücke, one of the detailed case studies discussed below, is organised in a striking combination of centralised and local, bottom-up elements: templates and guides, with a centralised design (what would be called a corporate identity in business) are provided at the top of the organisation, while all protests and campaigns are organised and carried out at the local, bottom level of local chapters. This makes Seebrücke very agile and potentially effective in addressing local governments but arguably less impactful on the federal/national level.

The Aachener Netzwerk is unique among the initiatives mapped here in that it has a longer history and has undergone a transformation over time, taking on new humanitarian challenges. Its organisational resilience is arguably due to dedicated members, who have continuously kept the organisation alive through the decades. It is in many ways a typical grass-roots organisation, lacking the media-savvy strategies or professionalism we find in, e.g., Brand New Bundestag. An even more pronounced instance of this type of grass-roots, direct-help organisation can be found in Alea, founded by, run by, and named after an individual artist. Although she is not the only person contributing to the initiative, this high degree of personalisation defines the organisation. It is both a strength and a weakness: A well-known artist might be able to capitalise on their fame or recognisability, but the continuity and success of the organisation depends on one individual, who is by definition not a trained professional in any of the fields that contemporary campaigns tend to rely on.

Another unique initiative is dis:orient, which fused two pre-existing organisations in 2019, in that it seeks to change the narrative about migrants from a particular region that is not well-known or understood in Germany, and in doing so confidently asserts the identity of this region (and its abbreviation WANA). The *Bundesverband der Migrantinnen in Deutschland*, among this group, is unique in addressing intersectionality in foregrounding the integration of migrant women in Germany. In contrast, Migrantifa – which combines 'Migrant' with the abbreviation 'Antifa' - is perhaps the most elusive organisation included, with no headquarters or formalised organisational structure. It also appears to draw on academic, theoretical concepts and use them prominently – such as postcolonialism and post-Marxism in relation to integration of migrants. In contrast, Migration\_miteinander pursues a very broad appeal to the general public, focusing on the education and future of migrant children in the first and second generation, seeking to change the narrative from purely solidarity-based integration to merit- and benefit-based narratives. Although also related to the sub-genre of integration, the Netzwerk.Medienvielfalt presents a quite unique case in that it is an umbrella organisation for partly pre-existing, regional initiatives. Each of these brings something different to the overall

organisation – some are refugee-run, others are run by second-generation migrants – while the framework of the Netzwerk adds or enhances visibility, networking and educational opportunities. With respect to narratives, their crucial message and impact is that migrants in the media should not be confined to covering migration, migrants or migrant-related topics, adding a structural component to the discursive strategy. Needless to say, the means and strategies used here are highly professional, being developed and run by media professionals.

In the last sub-genre, terrorist attacks, the only initiative that met our mapping criteria was *Bildungsinitiative Ferhat Unvar*. At first glance, this seems like an integration-related organization because it focuses on education; at closer look, however, it was not only founded in response to a terrorist attack targeting migrants, its explicit aim is also to prevent similar attacks in the future by means of anti-racist and anti-Islamophobia education. Although this is not aimed specifically at ‘autochthonous Germans’ or people who do not see themselves as migrants, it relates to integration in the sense of overcoming racism- or Islamophobia-based anti-immigrant resentment.

## 4. Initiative 1: Seebrücke

### 4.1 Contextualisation

The securitization of migration in Europe in general, and in Germany specifically (Vollmer 2012, 2020), represents the context in which the political movement Seebrücke was formed and has grown rapidly. The hardship of migrants moving towards Europe, specifically the life-threatening crossings of the Mediterranean and the often-appalling treatment of migrants at the borders of the EU/Europe as well as within Germany, are the two salient issues addressed by Seebrücke. Although active mainly in Germany, it is European asylum policies, including the use of Frontex and the various missions in the Mediterranean as well as deals with Turkey and other third-party states on holding/stopping migrants, which the founders of Seebrücke identify as inhumane and responsible for the suffering of migrants.

In addition, public perceptions of migration and migrants have become increasingly pejorative, with the public becoming increasingly habituated to images and news of death, despair and suffering of migrants. In the words of a prominent member of Seebrücke:

“For years now, these images and news have been omnipresent and give the impression that dying off Europe's coasts is just as inevitable as the catastrophic accommodation of people who have fled. We have all become somewhat accustomed to these images and for many it seems as if there is no alternative to European asylum policy, but none of it is. We at Seebrücke are absolutely certain: a world in which no human being has to lose their life on the way to a secure future is possible. A world in which coincidences such as place of birth or passport do not decide where a person is allowed to live is possible. A Europe that protects the rights of all people - including those who have had to flee – rather than the border is possible.” (DE\_I\_4)

This situation can be regarded as the larger social and discursive context to which Seebrücke responds and which it seeks to change: a status quo of EU/European migration and asylum

policies that is focused on fortifying and protecting borders and the concomitant perceptions of the public, especially in Germany, that have not only become used to this status quo but find it increasingly difficult to even imagine a substantially different attitude towards borders, migration and migrants.

Images, as in actual photographs, are mentioned time and again as points of reference. Indeed, singular images, such as the photographs and videos of two-year-old Alan Kurdi that went around the world in September 2015, as well as more generic images of migrants walking, being on boats, waiting at borders or in camps, are mentioned several times both on Seebrücke's webpage and in the interviews conducted. While Seebrücke is not directly engaged in sea rescue operations, the German organisation Sea Watch, which is also a civil society association ("Verein") founded in 2015, is active at European borders.

Although there are many other initiatives that address similar issues at the European or German-national or state-level, Seebrücke has demonstrated that at the level of communes – i.e., villages, towns or cities – across Germany, there is substantial untapped potential for political mobilization on issues that are not merely communal. This reveals some key facts about the context of migration-related political mobilization and organization in Germany: a divide or cleavage between national and state-level politics and discourse on the one hand, and the commune level on the other hand. While the former can be very slow and difficult to lobby or effect change, commune-level politics and publics are more directly accessible, more quickly mobilized, and can in turn create bottom-up momentum to apply pressure on those larger levels of political representation. The commune level is also of practical or pragmatic relevance across Germany, because this is where lodging for refugees is effectively organized and where social integration takes place.

## 4.2 Main actors and networks of the initiative

Seebrücke is organized on four interrelated levels with varying degrees of continuity regarding the members involved: local groups, cross-regional action committees, a coordinating circle and a central office. Anyone can join Seebrücke, and there is no formal commitment to the organization. 'Membership' is thus a rather loose term. This flexibility and fluidity is seen by all Seebrücke members as the movement's key success factor; however, it also makes it nearly impossible to track some key features of the organization, such as number of total members, or to establish any kind of demographic characterization of its members beyond individual impressions of its more long-standing members or anecdotal evidence.

At the most local level, more than 180 local groups in villages, towns or cities constitute local chapters of Seebrücke, usually named 'Seebrücke' with the commune's name appended to the name. Local groups organize protests, media campaigns and petition communal politicians/governments, in particular to declare the respective commune a 'safe haven'. There are currently more than 310 such safe havens.<sup>2</sup> The German expression *Sicherer Hafen* is suggestive of the dangerous sea crossings undertaken by migrants but more generally suggests sanctuaries for migrants within Germany. Seebrücke launched the 'safe haven' campaign to build a network of local political/governmental allies to support the struggle to change migration, border and asylum policies: communal governments can declare a

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<sup>2</sup> For a map, see <https://www.seebruecke.org/sichere-haefen/haefen>

particular town a 'safe haven' by joining this alliance and supporting the aims/demands of Seebrücke.

“With the Safe Havens we started the independent protest of local politics. Today, mayors and city councillors are fighting for our goals. This strengthens our resistance and opens up new political possibilities. Safe havens take responsibility where politics fails. They demand the decriminalisation of sea rescue and new state rescue missions on behalf of their citizens. They welcome refugees into their midst - and are willing to take in more people than they have to. Together, the safe havens are a strong counter-voice to the German government’s isolationist policy, loud, uncomfortable and with media impact.” (DE\_I\_2)

“But we are not content with symbolic politics. Safe havens must use their political opportunities to achieve real changes in migration and reception policies. Only this will bring about improvements for people on the run! That is why we make concrete demands with which Safe Havens should change migration policy.” (DE\_I\_1)

The requirements for becoming a Safe Haven with Seebrücke are extensive, although not every criterion has to be met at the outset; becoming a safe haven entirely is often a step-by-step process that begins with a handful of commitments from the following catalogue of 11 demands:

1. Publicly declaring solidarity with people on the run, sea rescue and Seebrücke’s goals.
2. Committing to safe escape routes and support for sea rescue. Advocates for safe escape routes and an end to the EU’s policy of sealing people off so that they no longer have to flee on life-threatening routes.
3. Publicly opposing the criminalisation of civilian sea rescue in the Mediterranean and actively supports this, for example with public relations work, sponsorships, financial support or participation in a rescue mission.
4. Actively advocating for state sea rescue missions.
5. Taking in people on the run. Advocates vis-à-vis the federal state and the federal government for the establishment of new or the significant expansion of existing programmes for the legal admission of people fleeing their homes and, to this end, offers admission places itself in addition to the distribution quota (humanitarian admission procedures of the federal government, in particular the resettlement programme, and programmes of the federal states according to German law).
6. Providing places for the quick and uncomplicated reception and accommodation of people rescued from distress at sea in addition to the distribution quota of protection seekers (e.g., within the framework of a Dublin or relocation procedure).
7. Advocating to the federal state and the federal government for the creation of legal and financial framework conditions that enable municipalities to realise the reception of people fleeing beyond the distribution quota in a self-determined manner.
8. Ensuring a long-term arrival (i.e., integration) for all refugees regardless of their flight route. In order to ensure a good and safe life in the municipality, all necessary

resources must be made available for humane care, especially in the areas of housing, medical care and education, and for the social participation of those admitted.

9. Advocating for prospects to stay and opposes deportations within the scope of its possibilities.
10. Actively campaigning at regional, national and European level for the implementation of the above-mentioned points. To this end, Safe Havens network with other cities and joins the municipal alliance Cities as Safe Havens. Safe Havens campaign throughout Europe for a European migration policy that complies with human rights and for an end to the policy of sealing people off.
11. Transparently publishing all actions taken. (Seebrücke 2022; elaborated in part by interviewees DE\_I\_1; DE\_I\_7; DE\_I\_8)

The municipal network Cities as Safe Havens (*Städte Sichere Häfen*) represents a network of cities (rather than small communes) who have declared themselves safe havens with Seebrücke. This networking platform was co-founded by Seebrücke, Berlin, Detmold, Freiburg, Flensburg, Greifswald, Heidelberg, Hildesheim, Kiel, Krefeld, Marburg, Potsdam, Rostock and Rottenburg, and is currently being coordinated by the city of Potsdam.

Not only do all interview partners at Seebrücke name this as one of the major impacts and successes of Seebrücke, but it highlights the fact that Seebrücke is partly focused on mobilizing established, hegemonic actors in Germany – one might say German citizens, established German administrative and political entities – rather than marginalized communities. This leverages and highlights federal impasses in German asylum policy:

“While nation states across Europe continue to focus on isolation, countless cities and municipalities want to take in more refugees than they are allocated. They show: There is still room here. But until now, they have not been allowed to put this into practice in a self-determined way. Because in the end, it is always the nation states that decide on the admission of refugees. And in Germany, the Federal Government is stonewalling. That’s why the safe havens are blocked and can hardly help refugees.” (DE\_I\_3)

Parallel to these alliances-building and networking activities, Seebrücke’s local chapters are running more or less independent, usually small-scale campaigns of public awareness raising, protesting and trying to change local conditions. No concrete list or overview of such activities is available, but they include anything from posters along a countryside motorway to protest marches in a major German city.

Structurally and geographically, Seebrücke is strongest or best represented in the German states of former West Germany, with a noticeably lower number of local groups as well as safe havens in former East Germany.<sup>3</sup>

A third strand of activism is organized at the overarching level for all of Seebrücke, inviting all members to participate but not setting a particular agenda for local chapters. At this level, Seebrücke responds to specific events or developments, calling for solidarity or protests. In each case, the central office provides not just a rallying call but suggests a concrete activity, providing resources or materials for the respective issue that can be used. The fact that these

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.seebruecke.org/sichere-haefen/haefen>



are open invitations or calls is described as characteristic and a strength of Seebrücke by our interview partners. At this level, Seebrücke also provides a calendar of upcoming activities on its webpage, uses social media to spread calls, organise and share news with members as well as the general public.

Many of the people active at the various organizational levels of Seebrücke are, as one of our interviewees put it, “first time activists”, either because they are relatively young or because they have been apolitical before. Prompted as to what “apolitical” might mean, they indicate a lack of political mobilization or of structural opportunities to become active. Indeed, Seebrücke is designed – in its structure, mobilization, support etc. – to reach those who have found political action inaccessible before or who are new to political action for other reasons. This makes, according to interviewee DE\_I\_1, experienced members all the more important to Seebrücke, as their expertise becomes a crucial resource; consequently, Seebrücke actively seeks to support the exchange and sharing of experience with or in political activism of any sort.

### **4.3 Main aims and activities**

Seebrücke pursues both long-term and short-term aims, some of which are the supranational or even global level and require fundamental legal and social change – i.e., EU migration policy and beyond, safe passage for migrants, a global reform of the asylum system, global mobility for everyone, and end to criminalization of migration – while others are at the German national or regional level – i.e., a reform of asylum law that gives responsibility and authority for intake, lodging and integration to local communes (rather than the federal government), resulting in increased intake, better living conditions and social as well as economic integration.

The interviews clearly indicate that Seebrücke activists see these long-term, global goals as far-off even while they firmly believe in them. The key theme here is the conceivability or possibility of a different, more humane world characterized by global mobility for everyone rather than an economic elite. While they are passionate about these aims, the immediate work and activities they undertake is directed at more short-term goals that, in the long run, might contribute to the larger aims.

Beyond to the networking and alliance-building activities under the heading of Safe Havens, where bottom-up petition played and continue to play a crucial role, Seebrücke’s main activities fall into two categories. (1) The first category encompasses local group activities that are supported centrally by means of materials, guidelines (so-called “how to” guides regarding protests, petitions and other events), logos, stickers, buttons, flyers (design and printing costs) and the “toolkit” regarding racism and migration politics. Examples of such local activities named by interviewees as particularly successful include a continuing series of public film viewings and debates, the protests following the fire in the refugee camp “Moria” on the Greek island of Lesbos in 2020, and various activities at Christmas markets in 2022. (2) The second category, which might be labelled ‘advocacy actions’, are initiatives launched and centrally organized by the Seebrücke office or coordinating groups to address current crises with a bearing on migration in general, human rights or refugees specifically. Interviewees mention the recent Seebrücke campaign “Open the Ports! Block Fascism!” drawing attention to and protesting the Italian government’s recent migration policies, specifically its crack-down on civilian sea rescue missions.

“The plans published in the first government declaration are a deliberately calculated collection of atrocities that will bring even more suffering to refugees. The Libyan paramilitaries disguised as coast guards are to be equipped with more boats, large internment camps for refugees are to be built on the North African coasts and Italian ports are to be closed as much as possible to civilian sea rescue. This policy deliberately endangers human lives. Our postcard protest is designed to raise public awareness of the issue, even if there is relatively little that we as Seebrücke can do directly. [...] But our network of Safe Havens does have a powerful voice, even internationally, because they can talk eye to eye to cities in Italy. I think we always have to work such issues from multiple angles, on several levels, at the same time. There is no guarantee of success, no recipe for changing a foreign government’s policy. We know much better what works in Germany, or at a local level, that’s why we are organized, that’s why we always try to organize bottom-up. [...] I would even say that achieving successes, even little ones, is important not only for directly achieving our real goals, but for publicity, to attract people willing to participate and contribute, you might say for morale or motivation.” (DE\_I\_4)

A second recent activity in that category calls for solidarity with the “feminist revolution in Iran” – indeed, that is one of the most salient uses of the word *solidarity* for Seebrücke. In addition to protests, flyers and postcards were organized to raise public awareness and create political pressure within Germany, speaking specifically to safe escape routes:

“While there are still strikes and protests in Iran and Eastern Kurdistan, symbolic politics continue in Europe. Federal Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock has called for an investigation into the violence before the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva. But our solidarity with Iranian civil society must become practical. We demand from the European governments: Create safe escape routes and allow immediate admission for persecuted Iranians. In addition, deportations of all Iranians to Iran must be stopped immediately for all of Germany. As Seebrücke, we take a clear position and show solidarity with the civilian population in Iran.” (DE\_I\_3)

These examples of recent activities indicate the Seebrücke approach to current and ongoing developments that have a bearing on migration and specifically safe routes for refugees.

#### **4.4 Public representation**

As mentioned above, Seebrücke is generally much more present and represented in the areas of former West Germany than the former GDR. On the regional level, Seebrücke’s local chapters achieve varying degrees of visibility and representation, but – as one interviewee points out – this does not necessarily correlate with a distinction between urban and rural spaces: while Seebrücke is strongly represented in many urban spaces and frequently mentioned in associated media such as the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, local chapters in more rural regions (e.g., small towns, even villages) may have equally strong footing. This tends to depend, as two interviewees (DE\_I\_1, DE\_I\_4) confirm, on two interrelated factors: on the one hand, the individual engagement and commitment or activity level of members/activists involved locally; on the other hand, on the political perceptions and leanings of the respective public/population. On top of that, as another interviewee indicates, timing can be crucial to “make an impression” (DE\_I\_2); it is also, they continue, much easier to maintain



positive public representation locally once achieved “with a big splash” rather than slowly working up to it.

Communicating in all its forms, including social media posting, writing or signing petitions, handing out flyers, marching in public protests, attending debates and film viewings, are describes by several interviewees as the key to Seebrücke’s public representation – rather than traditional public relations work, lobbying, media collaborations etc. In this regard, too, the idea that informs the campaigns of Seebrücke is to always work bottom-up. Social media and public space therefore represent more important forums of public representation to Seebrücke than traditional media, including newspapers and television or radio. Nevertheless, interviewees DE\_I\_2, DE\_I\_3 and DE\_I\_8 also mention that getting noticed by media or a specific action being picked up and reported by media constitutes a measure of success, especially if one has not been focused on it.

## 4.5 Main narratives

The main narratives of Seebrücke correspond to its key aims, although we note that the long-term, global aims qua narratives receive much less publicity and emphasis than the short-term aims. For instance, the narrative A different world, a world without borders is possible., while present on the Seebrücke webpage, is not usually what local chapters work with.

“We do tell stories, in fact we always try to have at least two clear stories with every activity or action we plan. There has to be a clear narrative about what is happening, and what is going wrong there in terms of who is responsible and who is suffering as a consequence of their actions or inaction; and secondly, an alternative story, which can be about a demand, what we think should be done, or simply a positive alternative version of the situation. Contrast is key. If it is a demand, it is usually concrete and addressed to a specific situation or problem, that’s what local groups are best at after all. So while there are some narratives that connect and unite Seebrücke, there are innumerable small stories that are told on specific occasions and by local groups or even individuals, but all of these stories in the end come together.” (DE\_I\_6)

Among these narratives, there are also several foundational – in part rather technical – narratives regarding sea rescue and refugees. These might be summarized as follows:

(1) Sea rescue is a humanitarian activity under the Geneva Convention; while it should ideally be carried out by national governments, private sea rescue that fills the gaps or assists this function should not be illegal. Citizen activists and NGOs who carry out sea rescue, saving lives, are doing humanitarian work at great personal cost and risk.

(2) People seeking asylum are often illegally detained or deliberately ignored despite needing rescue/help. This constitutes crimes against humanity. Border policies that rely on such strategies in order to reduce alleged ‘pull factors’ are based on ethno-nationalist, racist and populist politics.

(3) A safe route towards a place where one can at least apply for asylum should be available, if we take the human right to asylum seriously. The international asylum system does need reform but not in the sense of re-nationalization.

(4) The necessary counterpart to safe passage are safe havens; safe havens need not be harbours; indeed, any community can become a safe haven for refugees. Safe havens are not merely symbolic, they coordinate to apply political pressure at the state/national level.

## 4.6 Timeframes and media, social and political impact

Seebrücke was officially founded in July 2018, though its beginnings go back to June of the same year. After the rescue ship Lifeline, with 234 rescued people on board, had been prevented from entering any Italian port for days in June 2018, Seebrücke began as a satirical social media campaign (developed by the Peng Collective, culture-jamming activists), which claimed that the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community would accept all people in distress in Germany by 2019. The German actor Jan Josef Liefers took part in a campaign video, and the movement was advertised by the entertainer Jan Böhmermann. The band KAFVKA as well as the registered association “*Mensch Mensch Mensch e.V.*” were significantly involved in the founding. In 2019, Seebrücke was supported by the football club SV Babelsberg 03, who have drawn attention to the movement with print on their Football shirts. Since 2019, the Safe Haven campaign has also drawn significant attention, and in 2020 the protests in support of refugees in Moria and calling for accepting them in Germany have been major successes. Seebrücke has continued to grow since then, as evidenced in the growth of local chapters and safe havens.

Impact, as the interviewees insisted (DE\_I\_1, DE\_I\_2, DE\_I\_4), is difficult to measure beyond a few areas where hard numbers are available, such as donations or, in the case of Seebrücke, local chapters being founded and safe havens being declared. Naturally, these figures are quoted by all interviewees as major indicators of impact, direct as well as indirect, because this growth should also translate into growing public awareness and support for policy change.

“Of course, it is an important success to be growing, and those numbers we are very happy about. But in the end, we only need those numbers to increase presence and pressure, to affect change in politics and the way people naturally see refugees. Growing isn’t an aim in itself but it means we can multiply our message, since we work bottom up. Celebrities are a great boost, but that’s usually temporary.” (DE\_I\_3)

To date, however, no policy change as envisioned by Seebrücke has happened in Germany or the EU/Europe, although Seebrücke through its Safe Havens network is actively involved in advocating for such change; indeed, in several respects the situation has worsened, with the Italian example being quoted by two interviewees. Political impact, thus remains difficult to measure beyond the communal level, where the Safe Havens campaign is clearly successful and, indeed, unique within Germany. Social impact, again, is difficult to assess directly, although the response Seebrücke is receiving both positively and negatively has been growing – this includes, on the one hand, a growing volume of donations<sup>4</sup> and support; and, on the other hand, a growing amount of hate mail and negative responses, especially online.

“I used to say that I wear such attacks as a badge of honour, you know, because they are coming from people on the right who would never support us anyway, and at least it means that we are so publicly present that we are also getting to those people. But working with Seebrücke here has completely changed my mind about this; yes, it is

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<sup>4</sup> No exact information on the number, volume or source of donations was available.

good that we reach everyone, but it is not a matter of pride that Germany is still so divided over this.” (DE\_I\_7)

## 4.7 Innovativeness

Seebrücke is quite unique in its approach, combining the bottom-up activism of its many local chapters with the kind of mid-range political alliance-building and networking that we see with the Safe Havens campaigns. This is possible because of their organizational structure, and quite intentionally so, insists DE\_I\_1. Having a central office, coordinating circles and a broad base of largely independent local chapters gives Seebrücke great flexibility in addressing local issues while also working upwards to the national level. But by the time Seebrücke’s message reached the level of state and federal/national politics, it is no longer coming from student activists protesting in the streets, it comes from municipal governments and regional politics. Seebrücke has been careful not to closely associated with any specific political party. There are several loose networking and coordinating activities with other associations, such as See Watch.

“Having these networks and alliances is crucial, I believe, to affect change in the long run. There needs to be a solid base to do that. Lobbying at the federal government level is something that many have tried and are trying, and it doesn’t seem to work. The structures there are too political, too party-political and encrusted, it is too much about power and perception and their webs. Some call it the political establishment or the system, and in a way both names are correct, it is the established system. So Seebrücke is growing its own new system of networks and alliances.” (DE\_I\_8)

Recognizing the seemingly untapped potential of regional activism regarding the in-take and integration of refugees, without superimposing strong ideological messages, as well as the local level of political representation and government, is Seebrücke’s most innovative and transformative trait. At this time, we are not aware of any organisation having been inspired by and adopted this approach.

On the practical level, the centralized elements of Seebrücke allow cross-regional identification with the same cause or message, there is a recognizable colour-scheme and, to borrow the term from economics, a kind of corporate identity associated with the movement. Providing these elements, coordination, and some funding centrally is no doubt a crucial top-down element of support within Seebrücke.

Outside of its organizational structure and bottom-up philosophy, Seebrücke might be characterized as a traditional NGO in its values and audiences: it is humanitarian and, in its long-term goals, utopian in the positive sense of the word; in its local activities, it is pragmatic and relies largely on tried-and-tested approaches to organizing protests and public visibility campaigns.

Ultimately, the combination of these elements is the reason for Seebrücke’s high visibility within Germany.

## 4.8 Success

A clear lesson to be learned from Seebrücke is that it is invaluable to analyze and understand the specifics of national and regional political structures, not in the sense only of professional politics but the structures of mobilization regarding a particular cause or aim. Communes from small villages to major cities in Germany have long felt that the intake and integration of migrants/refugees ends up happening on their level of administration anyway, and thus also ends up being their responsibility in almost all respects; they have also felt that it should therefore be recognized – politically and administratively – as their responsibility, and come with corresponding authority and resources. This idea or push for administrative reform, paired with the local will to contribute to the aims of Seebrücke, constitutes the niche that Seebrücke has successfully found and occupied.

Arguably, this insight also informs the specific discursive and communicative practices of Seebrücke: effectively bottom-up with very gentle guidance and support from a central office, partly re-creating and co-opting existing political/administrative structures in the form of networks and alliances, thus gaining voices, resources and ultimately discursive power that are already part of, or integrated into, the ‘political establishment’. In theoretical terms, we might say that Seebrücke has been partly successful in colonizing hegemonic structures to deliver counter-hegemonic narratives.

This view certainly matches the interviewees’ ideas of medium-term “success”, although they are generally careful to say that only achieving their long-term goals of global mobility and substantial changes in EU/European border and asylum policies can really be considered success. But there is a strong sense of success also in every little event organized by local chapters, having good attendance at a film viewing, etc.

“Yes, of course, there is the sense of success with every little step we take, a new member, seeing a grandmother on the tramway wearing one of our buttons, all of that is success to me. But that’s a very Seebrücke-focused perspective, what counts as real success can only be measured in terms of what changes for refugees in camps, held up at borders, or being allowed to travel where they want, and making a new life for themselves.” (DE\_I\_6)

“In the end it’s all about policy change, I think. Actually changing laws and policies, beyond a show of commitment. And on the other hand changing public perceptions and political attitudes in the population. [...] And to achieve that, I think we have been most successful in one of two ways, very locally in addressing specific circumstances in the way that only local people know how to, and with public protests that are organized very quickly and timed just right. Flexibility is crucial here, and always being consistent with your message even if one time relates to women in Iran and another time families from Afghanistan.” (DE\_I\_8)

In conclusion, Seebrücke’s trajectory or development from a satirical media project to a large-scale yet highly agile NGO that has managed to inspire not only hundreds of local chapters (doing locally targeted activist work), but also a nation-wide alliance of communes (declaring themselves Safe Havens), is highly remarkable. In terms of organizational development, there are clear indicators of success and the discursive strategies and narratives behind it.

## 5. Initiative 2: Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!

### 5.1 Contextualisation

People with a migration background are clearly underrepresented in editorial offices in Germany. However, there are only a few current surveys on the subject. Only six percent of editors-in-chief have an immigration background, and they all come from neighbouring countries of Germany or the EU. This is shown by a survey of editors-in-chief of the 126 German media with the widest coverage from the year 2020. (Neue Deutsche Medienmacher 2020)

Other studies on the proportion of people with a migration background in editorial offices show that no more than four to five percent of journalists in Germany have a migration background: No more than four to five per cent of journalists in Germany have a migration background - this is the assumption of a non-representative study from 2016 (Pöttker, Kiesewetter, Lofink 2016, 15). According to a representative study from 2009, only one per cent of journalists in German daily newspapers had a migration background (Geißler, Enders, Reuter, 2009, 91). A survey in 2007/2008 found that the proportion of foreign nationals in the German media was well below five per cent (Oulios 2010, 24).

There are various reasons for the lack of diversity: There is often a lack of concrete measures in the editorial offices to implement more diversity. In addition, journalists with a migration background face many hurdles. They often have to prove themselves on the job more than their colleagues without an immigration background.

A recent study investigated the extent to which the 12 broadcasting councils ("Rundfunkräte") of the public broadcasters throughout Germany reflect the diversity of the population. Broadcasting councils are supposed to represent different social groups and opinions and monitor whether the public broadcasters fulfil their legal mandate. The study proves: Immigrants and their descendants, Black and People of Colour (BPoC) and state-recognised minorities are significantly underrepresented. Taken together, they each have only 13 of the 542 seats.

The situation is slightly better in German film and television. A study on "Diversity and Visibility" (2021) by the MaLisa Foundation investigated the extent to which diversity is represented on television: People with a migration background represent only 11 percent of all protagonists on television (compared to their share in the population of over 26 percent). Black people and People of Colour play only 5 per cent of all leading roles in TV programmes. They are thus also underrepresented compared to their estimated 10 per cent of the population (MaLisa Stiftung 2021).

Universal Film AG (Ufa) published diversity figures for lead and supporting roles in its own film productions. According to the survey, POC were represented in only 7.6 per cent of Ufa productions. Thus, they were underrepresented compared to their estimated social share (about 10 per cent). As part of a voluntary commitment, the Ufa film company has announced its intention to reflect diversity in its overall portfolio by 2024. (Ufa Research & Digital Insights)

The first comprehensive survey on diversity and experiences of discrimination in film and television was published by the organisation Citizens for Europe 2021. For this purpose, it analysed questionnaires from around 5,500 filmmakers. The most important results show that more than three quarters of the respondents agreed with the statement that certain groups are stereotyped in films. This applies in particular to people from Arab and Asian countries, Muslims, Black people and people with a low social status. The majority of interviewees said that people with an immigrant background are rarely cast as main characters but more often as friends or assistants of the main character.

According to the study, there is a structural problem with discrimination in the film industry: Half of the respondents who gave information about discrimination experiences (3,200 respondents) stated that they had been discriminated against at work in the last two years. 13 per cent of the respondents who gave information on the reasons for discrimination (800 affected persons) stated that they had been discriminated against racially. Experiences of sexism and age discrimination were mentioned most frequently. Discrimination is also reflected in pay and working conditions: BPOC respondents are less likely to be employed on a permanent basis and earn less overall than white filmmakers.

A recent study also investigated the role of perceived migrants in German TV news programmes in connection with the 2021 federal election. According to the study, they are comparatively seldom heard. They are particularly rarely interviewed as experts (9 per cent) or politicians (3 per cent). Thematically, they speak mainly about migration and flight (42 per cent and 27 per cent of the interviewees respectively) (Neue Deutsche Medienmacher 2020, 3).

There are thus both structural problems and problems regarding content/stereotyping regarding diversity in German media – especially with respect to the representation of migrants and refugees. They are underrepresented numerically in media programmes and in the industry itself, e.g., as journalists, editors or screen personalities, and they are typecast and stereotyped when they are represented on programmes, speaking predominantly about issues of migration, integration, race/ethnicity or religion. This is the situation that the initiative Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! seeks to change through networking, vocational training and public awareness campaigns.

## **5.2 Main actors and networks of the initiative**

With a few exceptions on the administrative side, all main actors of the initiative (and its many networked individual parts) are people with migration background: asylum seekers, recognized refugees, recent migrants or second-generation migrants. This is seen by all interviewees as the defining and uniting trait of the network's participants/contributing members:

“We are media makers with refugee or migration experience. We have all of us experienced racism and discrimination and still are exposed to it on a daily basis.”  
(DE\_I\_10)

The Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! connects people and media projects that, as a rule, exist or are founded outside the network at first. The network is considered by interviewees a “transcultural network of media makers” (DE\_I\_9) that connects media projects of refugees and migrants all



over Germany, amplifying the voices of people who experience discrimination and have to live with the disadvantages of “not being seen as part of German society” (DE\_I\_10).

“In recent years, the media have increasingly reported on people with a migration background or history of flight, but we are not asked. Now we are doing the reporting, making media of all sorts. Through our voices we want to bring a new perspective to the German media landscape. We report what moves us, and we want to help shape the debate on flight and migration. But we do not limit ourselves to so-called migrant issues or our communities, we make media for everyone.” (DE\_I\_9)

From 2015 onwards, and in conjunction with the so-called refugee crisis, a number of editorial offices by and for people with refugee experience emerged in Germany, especially at independent radio stations. From the very beginning, as one interviewee emphasizes, there was an exchange of ideas across regions in Germany between these new media makers. This led, first of all, to the creation of the website “Colourful Voices”, which compiles their content and acts as a mouthpiece for the network. Because this loose network of exchange lacked organisational and financial support for sustained cooperation, its main actors founded the Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! in January 2020.

The network has been able to secure funding and support by the Federal Ministry for Migration, Refugees and Integration, allowing it to meet, exchange and educate its members in different journalistic fields. It thus hopes to create spaces for people with refugee or migration experience in which they can express ourselves freely, also but not exclusively in their own ‘native’ or ‘first languages’. The network allows them to “design these spaces themselves” (DE\_I\_11), making them “diverse and open to new people, formats and ideas” (DE\_I\_11).

At the moment, 12 radio editorial offices and media projects are active in the network, although there are plans for expanding (DE\_I\_9). Organizationally, the network comprises 4 regions in Germany: northwest, northeast, southeast and southwest. The individual media projects / member initiatives of the network are located in the northwest (Migrant Mom’s Mic; We are here, speak up!; Refugee Radio), the northeast (Walla Show; BabSharki; radio connection; Common Voices Radio), the southwest (Diversity Media; Refugee Radio Plus; NewcomerNEWS; Our Voice), and the southeast (Immigration Broadcast; Our Voice; Refugee Voices).<sup>5</sup> All initiatives use English or other language names rather than German, and they all emphasize the idea of “voice” and other elements of migrant identity.

### 5.3 Main aims and activities

The network’s overarching aims are (1) to amplify the voices of people with migration or refugee background or, in the network’s phrasing, with migration or flight experience; (2) to network, share and exchange experience among this group of people; (3) to strength or empower each other through training, education and exchange; (4) to create a diverse network that benefits everyone, i.e., all of German society, to help create an open, diverse and future-ready society; and (5) improve critical media competencies in German society to fight racism, stereotypes and discrimination.

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<sup>5</sup> For a list and websites of all projects, see <https://medienvielfalt.net/index.php/redaktionen>

All of this is linked to media diversity in the sense that media are seen as the ideal amplifier or tool for getting their voices heard and understood, to reduce bias, racism and xenophobia, and to work against long-standing stereotypes (DE\_I\_10). Diversity, then, is not just diversity of people but also of topics:

“In recent years, the media have increasingly reported on people with a migration background or history of flight, but they do not ask us to tell our own stories. Now we are reporting ourselves. With our own voices, we want to bring a new perspective to the German media landscape. We report whatever moves us or touches us, and we want to help shape the debate on flight and migration. However, we do not limit ourselves to so-called migrant issues or our communities, we make media for everyone.” (DE\_I\_9)

The network’s main activities are (1) exchange and networking events, (2) communication through webpage and newsletter, (3) training and education for the network’s members as well as the general public. The latter point receives the most funding and effort, comprising the following detailed activities:

- a) editorial workshops and trainings: “Joint education and training work is one of the most important elements of our network. By learning together and improving our critical media competence, we strengthen each other.” (DE\_I\_10) These activities are very focused on journalistic and media work and might be described as vocational training: “The needs of our local newsrooms in terms of education and training are very different. Therefore, there is a pot that we can use to organise workshops at this level. Some examples of what has taken place so far or what workshops active editorial teams have registered for: Basic workshops on interview techniques or forms of contribution, digital editing or the operation of broadcasting studios, graphic design for print and social media, content workshops on broadcasting topics.” (DE\_I\_11)
- b) network meeting workshops: more generally oriented toward all members, for instance community work, technical aspects of media work or diversity management. “Many workshops are interesting for all the journalists active in the network. We organise these at the network meetings so that as many interested people as possible can take part. Here, too, the topics are as diverse as the network: community outreach, best practice exchange, technical tools for remote communication and cooperation. Events on podcasting, basics of public relations and community management have already taken place.” (DE\_I\_11)
- c) shared learning processes: The network itself is a learning process for all participants and is also be used for this purpose. “In our cooperation, we will find out together how it actually works best, this much-cited cooperation at eye level, if one does not just want to invoke it, but also live it. We are all curious to see what training and further education measures will be necessary to achieve this. In any case, there will also be scientific support that will help us to learn on the meta-level of the network’s own organizational structures and processes” (DE\_I\_12).

(4) In addition to the above-mentioned activities, the network also publishes podcasts and runs a travelling exhibition. The podcasts are jointly developed by one or more of the initiatives connected by the network and include “(Not) Okay Podcast”, “Entwurzelt aber...” (Uprooted



but ...), “Migrativ”, “undisturbed” and “What’s up Freiburg”. They are generally local and focus on “young” or “youth-related” (DE\_I\_10) issues or on topics relevant to people with migration or flight experience (DE\_I\_11). Virtually all of the podcasts invite guests (with migration or flight experience) to share their views, experiences and thoughts; in short, to “amplify their voices” (DE\_I\_11). Although each podcast has its own topical focus – for instance, (Not) Okay Podcast focuses on issues of mental health – they all contribute to their overall aims of the network.

The travelling exhibition or *Wanderausstellung* “Stop, wir sind dran. Nothing about us without us” has been travelling across all of Germany, a wide reach that is made possible by the network across its four areas or sections. The exhibition is “a nationwide radio and media project that not only takes a critical look at existing voids in the German media landscape, but also actively fills them itself” (DE\_I\_11).

The exhibition allows media makers and radio editors of the network to give insights into their work in free radio, but also includes podcasters or social media activists. The exhibition, in one interviewee’s words,

“explores the question of how reporting, journalistic (non-)diversity and media representation are connected and what ideas and needs there are to change something about the existing conditions. And of course the exhibition provides insights into the network and its joint activities and experiences as a nationwide association of radio and media professionals.” (DE\_I\_10)

The exhibition is multimedia and interactive. In addition to graphics, illustrations, photos and texts, it also features several video and audio stations. The network uses the exhibition to reach both people with and without experience of flight and migration. While the exhibition panels are written in German, all texts and information can be also read in four other languages in an accompanying booklet (English, French, Arabic and Persian).

The interviewees all emphasized that a thread that runs through all their public awareness work and engagement with the general population is that of critical media literacy. This was especially highlighted regarding the exhibition.

“There is no doubt that people benefit from the diversity of new media. But many still lack the know-how to really use the potential. The digital is increasingly displacing the social. The consequences are one-dimensional communication structures, information overload, danger of manipulation, a lack of compassionate behaviour and a lack of conflict management skills. Also, education about carelessness in handling personal data is insufficient. Even young people today lack comprehensive media literacy. This is where critical media literacy becomes so important, especially when it comes to racism, xenophobia and the way these spread on social media and fake news. For us as a network of alternative media projects, it is important to foster a critical understanding regarding media products and their social impact.” (DE\_I\_13)

## 5.4 Public representation

The network is represented in the public sphere through almost all of its activities, since all its member organisations are media initiatives carrying the network logo or information. Beyond that, the network’s webpage, newsletter, podcasts and exhibition ensure regular

representation – in fact, one might say that public representation is simply another label for the network’s central aims.

“Almost all of our day-to-day work in our media projects is out there in the public, the public sphere you might say. But the networking, the vocational training, that is more internal in the immediate sense, but in turn it amplifies our voices as well. There is an unfortunate boundary in Germany, though, between the kind of alternative project that we run and the mainstream media, newspapers, radio, television. A separation in who works there, the topics they cover, how they work even. Cooperation and exchange are very difficult, because they do not take seriously the kind of migrant- or refugee-run media. It is not that we are small, or unprofessional, it is a structural border.” (DE\_I\_12)

Despite this structural separation, traditional media have of course reported on the network (which some interviewees referred to as an “alternative network” or “alternative media projects”). However, this reporting was often racialised, the work being done being reported on as admirable with a perhaps well-meaning but patronising attitude towards the people with migration or flight experience as being “amateurish” (DE\_I\_12). It was also noted by two interviewees that people working with or in their member organisations have gone on to work in more traditional media settings, thus carrying the network’s vision and aims into more hegemonic media settings as well (DE\_I\_11: DE\_I\_13).

## 5.5 Main narratives

As might be expected from a network of media makers, some interviewees insisted that there were countless narratives that they had developed and launched into the public sphere. The examples they described as successful and impactful ranged from local news items about a migrant community to autobiographical accounts of crossing the Mediterranean in 2015 and to reporting on German political parties leading up to elections. It became clear during our interviews that, in the case of a network of media makers, strict differentiation between the network level and the member organisations, all of which are media projects of some kind, was not just difficult but something that a number of interviewees, upon deliberation, rejected as unhelpful. Doing good journalistic work in their respective media projects may be just as important to changing the German media landscape as making headlines with *Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!*

On the network level, the main narratives collected during the interviews can be summarized as follows: (1) There is, at present a strong bias in the German media landscape that discriminates against people with migration or flight experience. This bias manifests in staffing/hiring decisions, in screen/air time, in topics covered and how they are covered, and in stereotyping, amongst other ways. As a result, the voices of people with migration or flight experience are not heard. (2) For those voices to be heard, the German media landscape must be changed. This is not a question of simply including some diversity in traditional structures, this needs a nation-wide network of alternative media projects run, bottom-up, by people with migration or flight experience. (3) These voices, when heard, have something to contribute to German society beyond talking about migration or flight, they will enrich all of German society. (4) Media consumption, if uncritical, propagates racism and can be dangerous. Critical media literacy is lacking and must be fostered across all of German society.

## 5.6 Timeframes and media, social, political impact

Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! was founded in 2015, at least partly in response to the increase in migration and arrival of asylum seekers in Germany that year. It provided a platform, initially without funding, for grassroots media projects run by people with migration or flight experience. The network has had a major impact in two ways: On the one hand, it has in numerous instances allowed alternative media projects to continue, professionalize and expand their work. It has increased publicity and reach of these projects significantly. It has helped the individuals working there to develop career prospects, but also to “feel at home” and like they are “contributing” (DE\_I\_10) something meaningful while also “standing up for themselves” and “getting their voices heard” (DE\_I\_10). The networking meetings, sharing of experience and vocational training have been instrumental in this, but there is also a strong sense of community that, although it proved much more difficult to grasp with the interviewee approach we followed, goes well beyond these activities themselves. One interviewee mentioned new friendships developing with people they first met at an exchange meeting (DE\_I\_13), another spoke of their and a colleague’s children becoming best friends (DE\_I\_10). Methodologically, we must therefore note that the kind of resilience and community-building that counts as an important success for the members of this initiative lie largely outside the scope of our approach and/or research interest.

On the other hand, there is a sense, shared by 4 interviewees, that the network’s presence and the media projects’ growing outreach has begun to impact the German media landscape. There also clear hopes that, furthermore, the travelling exhibition will likely make a difference in terms of getting the voices of people with migration or flight experience heard. Although there were no overall numbers available at the time of the interviews/writing this report regarding audience numbers, the travelling exhibition – though opening first in June 2022 – is already set to visit “dozens” of German cities (DE\_I\_12). The audiences and reach of the individual media projects that are members of the network are diverse and vary substantively; based on the interviewees’ comments, their primary audiences are local/regional and include a majority of people with migration or flight experience as well as a mostly young, autochthonous audience (DE\_I\_10, DE\_I\_11, DE\_I\_12, DE\_I\_13).

## 5.7 Innovativeness

The network must be considered transformative, first of all, in the sense that it filled a gap in the German media landscape regarding the nation-wide support and exchange among migrant- and refugee-run media as well as their professionalization. It is innovative also in terms of focusing on consistently on people with migration and flight experience, and linking this focus to professional training as well as critical media literacy. Its media formats and communication strategies themselves – ranging from radio shows, website, newsletter, to the travelling exhibition – while not innovative formats in isolation are certainly diverse and innovative in their combination as well as how they are used. There is much innovative content in what they produce, as well as innovative perspectives, such as a podcast focusing on mental health issues among people with migration and flight experience that combines expert knowledge with insights into everyday experience of living as a migrant or refugee in Germany (DE\_I\_11). Although difficult to grasp, innovation or ‘difference’ or ‘alternativeness’, to paraphrase interviewee DE\_I\_12, also emerges every time a migrant voice covers a ‘non-migrant topic’ such as gardening, especially when they are not politicised topics like elections

or unemployment. The political, one might argue, can be found in the mundane if regarded from a non-hegemonic positionality.

## 5.8 Success

The interviewees shared a view of the long-term success of the network as linked, on the one hand, to their continuous and persistent work, gradually transforming the German media landscape, raising public awareness and fostering critical media literacy, ultimately also reducing the racism- or xenophobia-based discrimination that people with migration or flight experience working in the media face on a daily basis (DE\_I\_10, DE\_I\_11). Success here is slow and difficult to measure. On the other hand, there is the more immediate goal of supporting each other, learning, developing the media projects in the network, and also finding ways of helping each other deal with difficult situations, especially regarding discrimination and mental health related issues. While this might sometimes look almost like a “by-product” of other work, one interviewee considers it a key success of the network so far: “It has been an overwhelming success in that respect, and there has been so much amazing growth and resilience that I have personally witnessed” (DE\_I\_10). Financially and organizationally, the work of the network seems secured at least in the medium term and set to continue (DE\_I\_12).

## 6. Conclusion

Our research into innovative strategies against exclusionary narratives began by mapping thirteen initiatives that stand out for their innovative strategies against exclusionary narratives around migration issues, in the German context specifically against asylum/the intake of refugees and the integration of migrants. The second stage of our research examined two initiatives, which are both highly salient and yet fundamentally different in several ways, by complementing the data on their characteristics already gathered in the course of the document analysis during the mapping by means of in-depth, qualitative interviews with members of both organisations. This deepened our understanding of both their commonalities and differences: both Seebrücke and Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! were founded during and in response to the so-called refugee crisis of 2015 and the resulting situation in Germany, which had taken in unprecedented numbers and, within Europe/the EU, led the humanitarian efforts to cope with the developing situation.

Within the German public and the political sphere, Germany’s handling of the ‘refugee crisis’ triggered discussions around solidarity, integration, costs and Germany’s role in Europe. Beyond the state-level commitment to take in refugees arriving in Europe, organisations like Seebrücke advocated more strongly than ever for safe passageways across the Mediterranean and for a more regional, local focus in the administrative process of hosting and integrating refugees into society. Complementing this focus, Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! aims to address integration and representation, specifically in the domain of media – as both the professional space of ‘media makers’ and a major aspect in the representation and perception of migrants and refugees in Germany. The network also recognizes that, beyond representation, critical media literacy in the general population is a prerequisite for pushing back racism, xenophobia and Islamophobia.

On the most detailed level of analysis, we examine these two initiatives along five key dimensions and draw some comparisons between the two. First, in relation to the nature of the narratives they disseminate, both Seebrücke and Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! combine large-scale narratives (and long-term goals) with local narratives (and short-term aims). In the case of Seebrücke, this is the combination of big narratives like 'A world without borders and global mobility is possible' with German-specific narratives that ring true and may even be considered common sense like 'Integration should be commune-level matter' and established humanitarian narratives about solidarity and saving lives. Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! uses a state-level narrative at the network level (while each media project has its own aims and strategies): Focusing on the evident underrepresentation of and discrimination against people of 'migration or flight experience'. This, first of all, makes the network strongly cohesive and resilient; second, it provides a clear agenda in amplifying migrant voices. Their narratives are all crafted to be self-confident: we are professional media makers, we are part of German society; Germany should neither talk 'about us' or 'to us' but hear our own voices; nevertheless, we have more to contribute than covering 'migrant topics'. In comparison, the narratives of the two case study initiatives are not simply about different aspects of migration (arrival, hosting, integration of refugees vs representation and discrimination against migrants and refugees) and they also relate to different areas (global-Germany-local vs Germany-local).

Second, the two initiatives seek to mobilize different audiences: German politics and the general German public in the case of Seebrücke, and mainly migrant/refugee media makers, German media and lastly the general public in the case of Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! In practice, Seebrücke has been strikingly successful in reaching German politics at the commune level as well as an already positive predisposed and interested public, albeit at a local, both urban and non-urban level where a large potential of political mobilization seems to have lain dormant. The networks and alliances Seebrücke has been instrumental in shaping, as well as its many local, largely independent chapters, have become a nation-wide movement. This has been achieved with some initial help from media celebrities but without government funding.

Third, regarding the 'who', inasmuch as the actors behind Seebrücke are largely autochthonous and educated Germans, the movement and its narratives do not immediately contribute significantly to the voices of refugees being amplified or heard within Germany. Here, there is perhaps the largest and clearest difference to Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!, which was founded by, is run by, and only has members that have experience with migration and flight, i.e., migrants and refugees. Nevertheless, both movements have managed to build a strong network of allies and launched several influential campaigns.

Fourth, in terms of aims and the 'why', both initiatives seek to transform structural inequalities fostered by exclusionary migration policies and legal frameworks, but Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! focuses its efforts on changing social representation, perceptions, and professional opportunities as well as critical media literacy; Seebrücke, in contrast, is also aiming for structural change in the administration of asylum and integration, which requires a transformation of legal frameworks, budgetary practices and a whole host of other issues in German governance. For Seebrücke's safe havens to become more than a public awareness campaign with very local impact, this structural change has to be accomplished. This is also true of Seebrücke's even larger aims of safe pathways and global mobility, both of which require fundamental political change beyond Germany, change which can only come from gradual social change. In terms of concrete actions and campaigns, Seebrücke is definitely



more activist and more protest-oriented, creating more ripples in the news (as a topic of the news) than Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!, which seeks to change the media (what they call the media landscape) in more steady and structural ways.

Fifth and finally, regarding narrative success and therefore combining the ‘what’ and ‘how’ (Garcés-Mascareñas and Pastore 2022), several conclusions can be drawn. As indicated above, Seebrücke’s range of narratives combines visionary, utopian narratives about a world with global mobility that are counter-hegemonic with established narratives about solidarity, human rights and human fellowship that have to be considered hegemonic in the German public sphere. In the midst of this range, Seebrücke is strongly relying on transformative narratives about a different administrative approach to asylum intake and refugee integration within Germany that, while not part of hegemonic discourse, are not as marginal as their ‘vision’ narratives about global mobility; indeed, they seem to be supported by common sense and everyday experience in commune-level administration, judging by the interviewee’s explanations and the immense success of the Safe Havens campaign with commune-level politics. The narrative success of Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! appears more specialized and, in some ways, just as powerful: the network of migrant- and refugee-run media projects they have built has attracted growing members and support, allowing them to conduct vocational training and exchange workshops as well as to develop a travelling exhibition. At the network level, its narratives are counter-hegemonic except for the need for critical media literacy and social integration.

Beyond these two dimensions, further explanatory factors to account for the narrative success of both initiatives may be found in their organizational structure and practices (also relating to the ‘how’). Both are, in a sense networks or platforms that connect smaller initiatives. However, in the case of Seebrücke those smaller entities are Seebrücke chapters and the Safe Havens network, all of which were created, in some sense, by the Seebrücke movement itself; they thus retain as their foundation the identity and commitment to the aims of Seebrücke. This shows, for example, in the shared design of materials, shared guidelines for protests or events, as well as some central, top-down support, guidance and steering. Ideally, this allows Seebrücke as a network to retain cohesion and a common identity while also allowing great flexibility in responding to local contexts with local resources and insights. This organizational approach certainly also corresponds to the main narrative of organizing asylum intake and refugee integration at the local level.

In contrast, Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! brought together and connects only pre-existing media projects, with its original contributions being a shared platform of exchange and training as well as the travelling exhibition. Its shared identity is thus less pronounced, with significant differences in composition, strategies and narratives between its member initiatives than in the case of Seebrücke. Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! is also a flexible network, but it does not aim to be as agile as Seebrücke in responding to current events and putting up protests within a few days.

Regarding the venues in which narratives circulate (the ‘where’), in both cases narratives were started in the societal sphere and managed to circulate in the media and social media (especially in the case of Seebrücke). Only in the case of Seebrücke did their narratives penetrate and, indeed, have begun to transform the political sphere, at least on the commune level – which includes several major cities in Germany. Because of the close ties between

administration and politics, these transformative narratives are likely making their way into administrative and legal discourses as well. In the case of Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!, their public awareness campaign with the travelling exhibition is reaching into educational as well as public discourse (e.g. Nürnberger Nachrichten 2022).

With regard to the time in which narratives are produced (the 'when'), the so-called refugee crisis presented the situation which gave rise and fostered these two movements, and the pandemic has not weakened them (except for some temporary restrictions on meeting in person). In the case of both Seebrücke and Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!, the massive arrival of refugees had sensitized the German public to migration- and specifically refugee-related issues. While the hegemonic discourse remained positive, growing opposition on the far-right, populist and nationalist margins of society called for and helped rally movements on the other side, as it were, encompassing both traditional left, progressive, humanitarian or charity (including Christian) and migrant-led initiatives. Obviously, this categorical distinction does not hold up clearly in empirical reality, with many overlaps being identifiable. Indeed, this is the situation that Seebrücke is counting and depending on, and where its bottom-up form of mobilization with a thin, overarching centre is proving highly successful.


Regarding transformativity and pervasiveness, both initiatives have achieved some steps towards achieving the kind of structural transformations they aim for in Germany. Seebrücke has managed to build a commune-level alliance that goes much beyond a protest movement inasmuch as it pervades quite deep into established power structures of Germany politics. Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! continues to amplify the voices of media projects, to support their professionalisation, and to foster resilience among its members; this, in itself, already constitutes a change in the German media landscape. However, both initiatives clearly still have a long struggle ahead before they may achieve the complete transformations they envisage. Seebrücke, based on our case studies, appears to have achieved higher pervasiveness regarding hegemonic discourse and autochthonous politics within Germany.

Finally, with respect to gender, neither initiative explicitly addresses a gender perspective in their overall aims or main narratives. This is not to say that they are insensitive to intersectionality or the doubled or even tripled vulnerability of refugee women of colour. Based on the information given in the interviews, Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! addresses gender issues in its experience-sharing and training activities in terms of discrimination, and several of its member projects regularly cover gender-related issues. Indeed, the mental health podcast was highlighted by interviewee DE\_I\_12 in this regard.

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## Appendix A: Mapping data

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| <b>Country</b> code and number   | GER1  |
| <b>Name</b> or title   | Seebrücke   |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)                                | Legally a 'registered association' (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; self-described as decentralized, international, civil society movement; a political movement carried mainly by individual people from civil society; anyone who supports their political aims and wants to participate is regarded as 'already part of the movement'. There are now more than 180 local Seebrücke chapters (mainly in Germany, Austria, Switzerland).   |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | July 2018   |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)           | After the rescue ship Lifeline, with 234 rescued people on board, had been prevented from entering a port for days in June 2018.  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding  | Began as a satirical social media campaign (by the Peng Collective, culture-jamming activists), which claimed that the Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community would accept all people in distress in Germany by 2019. The German actor Jan Josef Liefers took part in a campaign video, and the movement was advertised by the entertainer Jan Böhmermann. The band KAFVKA as well as the registered association "Mensch Mensch Mensch e.V." were significantly involved in the founding. Since 2019, Seebrücke has been supported by the football club SV Babelsberg 03, who have drawn attention to the movement with print on their football shirts. |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | Apart from the 180+ local chapters, 267 cities have passed resolutions to be 'safe havens' in support of Seebrücke aims. The registered association has a chairperson (Lisa Wegst) and board (Nike Wilhelms, Isabella Pinno). Financially, Seebrücke receives donations mainly from individuals and funding from 'Bewegungsstiftung' and 'Schöpflinstiftung'.   |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | Civil society, cities (municipalities and communes) and the federal government.   |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational) | Seebrücke calls for safe escape routes to Europe, a humane reception of refugees and a decriminalization of sea rescue; primary aim is to move federal/national governments to change their policies.   |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | Other initiatives, media.   |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues   | Secondary aim is to find local support for refugees who are crossing the sea or have crossed the sea already (e.g., refugees already in camps in Greece, such as Moria).  |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media                  | Protests, social media and traditional media campaigns, installations, interventions. These are all organised in a decentralized manner. Centrally, Seebrücke provides support to   |

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| campaigns, art installations, protests)  | organising such efforts, a platform for exchange and visibility, a legal framework, branded materials in orange (logos, stickers, buttons, posters) and flyers. Main means are protests, petitions, appeals, events and art installations. Seebrücke provides How-Tos and templates for all these. In addition to the website, Seebrücke maintains a Facebook page, a merchandise shop, a vessel finder, and an option to donate goods as well as money. |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | As a registered association, Seebrücke has a minimum of 7 members. The website lists 180+ local initiatives and 267 cities as their network, but not the number of people involved. Based on their website, the organisation does not aim at recruiting members, so the low number of memberships is deliberate. All participating individuals are voluntary. No information is available on budget or donations.  |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Most cities and activities are in Germany, followed by Austria and Switzerland.  |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Website and Social Media (Facebook; Instagram; YouTube; Twitter); petitions and appeals to local, regional and federal authorities; public awareness campaigns (protests, flyers, stickers, posters). The templates provided by Seebrücke have been designed by PR professionals.  |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  |  |
| -Narrative 1   | Sea rescue is a humanitarian activity under the Geneva Convention; while it should ideally be carried out by national governments, private sea rescue that fills the gaps or assists this function should not be illegal.  |
| -Narrative 2   | People seeking asylum are often illegally detained or deliberately ignored despite needing rescue/help. This constitutes crimes against humanity.  |
| -Narrative 3   | Safe havens need not be harbours; any place, city or community can become a safe haven for people seeking refuge/asylum. A national/federal government may be more hesitant to help than local governments, so the latter are a good basis to effect change and build up pressure on the federal government.   |
| -Narrative 4   | A safe route towards a place where one can at least apply for asylum should be available, if we take the human right to asylum seriously.  |
| <b>Documents/information</b> used for this mapping   | <a href="http://www.seebruecke.org">www.seebruecke.org</a> ;<br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/239808350076246/">https://www.facebook.com/groups/239808350076246/</a> ;  |

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|--------------------------|---|
| (including website URLs) | <a href="https://www.instagram.com/seebrueckeoffiziell/">https://www.instagram.com/seebrueckeoffiziell/</a> ;<br><a href="https://twitter.com/Seebruecke">https://twitter.com/ Seebruecke</a> ;<br><a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpFA2nMmOBnUXi9f37BQqxQ">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCpFA2nMmOBnUXi9f37BQqxQ</a> ;<br><a href="#">Q</a> ; |
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|---|--|
| <b>Country</b> code and number  | GER2   |
| <b>Name</b> or title  | Borderline Europe - human rights without borders e.V.  |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)   | Legally a 'registered association' (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; self-described as an association based in Berlin, Palermo and Lesbos that networks individuals with unique perspectives.   |
| <b>Date</b> of founding   | 2007   |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)                                  | In response to "Fortress Europe". Human rights violations and deaths caused by the EU border regime since 2007; also listed is the founding of FRONTEX in 2005, as running counter to the universal conception of human rights, inasmuch as it operates off the coasts of the EU member states Malta, Spain, Cyprus, Greece and Italy and along the coasts of Libya, Turkey and Tunisia. The EU has been trying to stop and even criminalize the crossings.  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding   | Elias Bierdel; Stefan Schmidt  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today  | Andrea Stäritz, Sara Bellezza, Harald Glöde, Judith Gleitze  |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>   | The international public, the media  |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)                        | To document and monitor EU agencies and national agencies at the borders as to how they handle migrants, especially violations of human rights; such documentation has been used in court and out-of-court proceedings; the association often refers to this as research; contesting the criminalisation of migration  |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>  | EU institutions (parliament, commission)   |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues  | Legal situation of refugees and migrants in general, in the EU and its member states   |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests) | Providing networking platform and fora for discussing border regime-related issues, laws, pacts; publishing (parts of) the information collected (see above, documentation) on social media and other channels to create public awareness and put pressure on authorities in specific cases; on-site aid for refugees in camps, for example on Lesbos (education, first aid, legal and bureaucratic aid); organising protests (e.g. to stop the construction of a deportation center); organising readings, lectures, travelling exhibitions in schools and other educational or awareness-raising events. |

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| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Many volunteers; money through donations and some public funding; substantial and extensive networks and cooperations with other organisations, including klikaktiv, we are a welcoming Europe, Women in Exile & Friends, SOS Mediterranée, Watch the Med, Sea-Watch, Returnwatch. Most of these have similar aims or are focused specifically on documenting and aiding sea crossing migrants.   |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Germany, Greece, Italy, the Mediterranean; EU institutions (Brussels)   |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/borderlineeurope/">https://www.facebook.com/borderlineeurope/</a> ; twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/borderlineeurop;">https://twitter.com/borderlineeurop</a> ; Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/borderline_europe/">https://www.instagram.com/borderline_europe/</a> ; YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDkdDFGbmS6uE8s-QFCECnA">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDkdDFGbmS6uE8s-QFCECnA</a> ; |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | Migration policy, due to EU and national changes, has been growing increasingly complex and restrictive; the EU is far from the good guy, striving to externalise its borders; nationalist politics has been pushing the EU to develop stricter border regime; these developments are fed by racism more than nationalism.  |
| -Narrative 1   | The current so-called migration partnerships with African countries and Turkey are just another step in the close-door policy of the EU. These partnerships allow investing billions in militarization, technologisation and securitization of borders, data collection, and biometrics in countries outside European borders.  |
| -Narrative 2   | In the EU, borders are reconstructed through the suspension of the Schengen Agreement, the expansion of border controls, erection of fences and deportations.   |
| -Narrative 3   | The attempt to control and stop migration on the international level only exacerbates the problems like human trafficking, torture and rape in deportation camps, forced labour and leads to death.   |
| -Narrative 4   | Despite its portrayal as a threat by the public discourse, migration is not a crime. We experience a political climate where racist and discriminating attitudes are expressed openly and are increasingly earning civil and political support.   |
| <b>Documents</b> /information used for this mapping (including website URLs)   | <a href="https://www.borderline-europe.de/">https://www.borderline-europe.de/</a> ; <a href="https://www.borderline-europe.de/sites/default/files/pdf/About%20us.pdf">https://www.borderline-europe.de/sites/default/files/pdf/About%20us.pdf</a> ; Newsletters available online 2012-2019 <a href="https://www.borderline-europe.de/newsletter-borderline-europe">https://www.borderline-europe.de/newsletter-borderline-europe</a> ;  |

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| <b>Country</b> code and number | GER3  |
| <b>Name</b> or title           | Aachener Netzwerk für humanitäre Hilfe und interkultureller Friedensarbeit e.V. |

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| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)  | Legally a 'registered association' (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; self-described as a charity.   |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | 1993   |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)   | The civil war in Yugoslavia; taking aid to the civilian population, especially children; at founding, the association had a different name referencing aid in Bosnia and Croatia   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding  | Various associations in Aachen joined together to found the current Netzwerk   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | Helmut Hardy; Snjezana Giana Haass, Björn Niehenke   |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | The German public, civil society   |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)   | Actively and solidarity-based fighting suffering and poverty through humanitarian aid projects and long-term peace-building projects and connecting peoples of the world.  |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | International, English-speaking public   |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues   | Helping children, fostering creativity and social learning   |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)  | Public awareness raising, networking; concrete projects such as: helping refugees in Bosnia (Bihac) at the EU borders with material aid; theatre week for peace "Bina Mira", bringing together youth theatre groups from across the world; run for peace "flame for peace" from Sarajevo to Aachen; local youth meet-up HEJ, sports and creativity place for social learning; art projects, exhibitions and art auction – many of these are from the border regions in Bosnia.                                       |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Local organization; money through donations and local public funds;  |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Very local (Aachen) and beyond that Germany (almost all information is in German); combined with (currently) specific focus on countries along the Balkan route (Bosnia, Serbia)   |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Rundbriefe; Podcast "sicheres risiki"; social media: facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/AachenerNetzwerk/">https://www.facebook.com/AachenerNetzwerk/</a> ; Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/aachenernetzwerk/">https://www.instagram.com/aachenernetzwerk/</a> ; Twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/AachenerN;">https://twitter.com/AachenerN</a> ; YouTube <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTgNeSIL3J_T6eCq13jfyIw">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTgNeSIL3J_T6eCq13jfyIw</a> ; |

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| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries     | External EU borders are causing suffering, the task of giving aid is left to the local population in the border regions (who are trying their best), with no government support  |
| -Narrative 1  | More than 5000 refugees are living and waiting near the Bosnian town Bihac at the moment, without little to no aid given by authorities. The local population is trying to help but needs assistance.  |
| -Narrative 2  | The camp erected near a former dump in Vucjak has catastrophic conditions: no toilets, no housing/beds, medical care.  |
| -Narrative 3  | Children suffer the most from current migration policy.  |
| -Narrative 4  | By delegating responsibility for EU borders to national governments, the EU is failing to take responsibility for the humanitarian catastrophe it is creating.   |
| <b>Documents/information</b> used for this mapping (including website URLs) | Rundbriefe (a kind of newsletter) available online <a href="https://aachener-netzwerk.de/wp-content/uploads/Rundbriefe/Aachener_Netzwerk_Newsletter_2022_02.pdf">https://aachener-netzwerk.de/wp-content/uploads/Rundbriefe/Aachener Netzwerk Newsletter 2022 02.pdf</a> ; Pressespiegel (press about the organisation and its activities) |

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| <b>Country</b> code and number   | GER4   |
| <b>Name</b> or title   | Adopt a Revolution (about:change e.V.)   |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)                                | Legally, a registered association (eingetragener Verein) in Germany  |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | Autumn 2011  |
| <b>Founding reason/event</b> to which the founding was a response (if applicable)            | Adopt a Revolution was launched in autumn 2011 by Syrian and German activists in the face of the continuing brutal persecution of the peaceful uprising against the regime of Bashar al-Assad.   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding  | Unnamed German and Syrian activists (including Syrian dissidents living in Germany)  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | No names are mentioned in the organisation's website and publications to protect the identities of Syrian dissidents   |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | German public, its media   |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational) | Declared aim is transforming the German media coverage on Syria to one that presents Syrians as acting and political subjects rather than defenseless victims; supporting the civil society self organization against the Assad-Regime and religious fanaticism; supporting projects that advocate for life in freedom and dignity; financially supporting projects in Syria; connecting German and Syrian civil society |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | International media and organisations  |



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| <b>Secondary aims,</b><br>topics or issues   | A secondary focus seems to be projects supporting women and women's rights in Syria specifically; drawing attention to refugee camps at EU borders, including Moria  |
| <b>Strategies,</b> practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)   | Publications (their own newspaper, posters, yearly reports, books) to tell the story of refugees and people in Syria;  |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Donations and funding from the fund Bewegungs-Stiftung   |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Based in Leipzig, main area of reach is Germany (media) and Syria  |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Social media and many forms of publications, occasionally protests   |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | In light of conditions in countries like Syria, the EU's and particularly Germany's asylum / migration policy is inhumane.   |
| -Narrative 1   | Almost 6 million Syrians have fled war and persecution abroad, around half a million of them to Germany. The increasingly repressive asylum policy of Germany and the EU often forces refugees onto life-threatening routes, in many cases prevents family reunification and leads - especially at the EU's external borders - to inhumane living conditions.  |
| -Narrative 2   | Since 2015, thousands of people have been living in misery in the "hotspot" Moria. Again and again, refugees have died there from cold, from treatable diseases, from suicide - they suffer from violence and abuse. Why? Because Greece and the EU want to deter further refugees from fleeing to Europe. Their message: If you survive the dangerous crossing, you won't end up in Europe, but in the dirt.  |
| -Narrative 3   | In response to the violent repression of the Syrian civilian population, the EU, the USA and other states have imposed sanctions against the Assad regime. Explicitly excluded are imports of food, medicine and other humanitarian aid. However, the sanctions still have side effects for the Syrian civilian population. The sanctions are therefore controversial. Here we collect background information, opinion pieces and sources on the debate. |
| -Narrative 4   | In northwestern Syria, at least 18 hospitals have been closed due to massive cuts in international funding. Observers fear catastrophic consequences for millions of Syrians in the region.  |



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| <b>Documents/information</b> used for this mapping (including website URLs) | <a href="https://adoptrevolution.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Adopt_Moria_FINAL3_Flyeralarm_web.pdf">https://adoptrevolution.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Adopt_Moria_FINAL3_Flyeralarm_web.pdf</a> ; official website <a href="https://adoptrevolution.org/publikation/">https://adoptrevolution.org/publikation/</a> ; the organisation's monthly newspaper, flyers |
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| <b>Country</b> code and number   | GER5  |
| <b>Name</b> or title   | Alea eV   |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)  | Legally, a registered association (eingetragener Verein) in Germany   |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | 2021  |
| <b>Founding reason/event</b> to which the founding was a response (if applicable)  | The situation of refugees, especially children, in camps in Greece  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding  | Alea Horst  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | Alea Horst  |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | German public   |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)   | To provide material aid, education and awareness for refugees in camps (Greece), especially for children growing up there.  |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | -   |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues   | To provide material aid, education, drug prevention for people in Afghanistan, especially for women and children growing up there.  |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)  | Funding and organising aid; publishing and photography as means of outreach and telling the stories of refugee (children)   |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Donations, private funds  |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Greece, Afghanistan, Germany  |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Talks, exhibitions and presentations about their aid projects at schools in Germany to raise awareness; social media; website; book publication "Europe's forgotten children"; photography as main medium |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | Refugee children have been forgotten by EU and member states, despite suffering the most.   |
| -Narrative 1   | Children are the future.  |
| -Narrative 2   | Education is the key to the future.   |

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| -Narrative 3  | Western societies are responsible.   |
| -Narrative 4  |  |
| <b>Documents/information used for this mapping (including website URLs)</b> | Website <a href="https://alea-ev.org/author/aleahorst/">https://alea-ev.org/author/aleahorst/</a> ; Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/aleahorst/">https://www.instagram.com/aleahorst/</a> ; facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/alea.horst/">https://www.facebook.com/alea.horst/</a> ; |

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| <b>Country code and number</b>   | GER6   |
| <b>Name or title</b>   | Balkanbrücke (hopetal eV)  |
| <b>Form of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)</b>  | Legally, a registered association (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; self-labelled as a network of activists   |
| <b>Date of founding</b>  | 2015   |
| <b>Founding reason/event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)</b>                                  | Refugee crisis of 2015, human rights violations and closed borders along the so-called Balkan route  |
| <b>People and entities involved at founding</b>  |  |
| <b>People and entities involved at today</b>   | Renatus Schuijlenburg  |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | German public, German government and authorities   |
| <b>Primary aims, topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)</b>                        | Abolish frontex; stop border violence; stop deportations and push-backs  |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | EU member states (governments) and EU institutions   |
| <b>Secondary aims, topics or issues</b>  | Raise public awareness   |
| <b>Strategies, practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)</b> | Public protests, webinars, lectures, social media campaigns, documenting and publishing human rights violations; campaign "Fritten statt Frontex" <a href="https://balkanbruecke.org/kampagne-abolish-frontex/">https://balkanbruecke.org/kampagne-abolish-frontex/</a> ; campaign Aufnahme statt Abschottung <a href="https://balkanbruecke.org/kampagne-aufnahme-statt-abschottung/">https://balkanbruecke.org/kampagne-aufnahme-statt-abschottung/</a> ; campaign Die volle Härte Europäischer Werte" <a href="https://balkanbruecke.org/kampagne-die-volle-haerte-europaeischer-werte/">https://balkanbruecke.org/kampagne-die-volle-haerte-europaeischer-werte/</a> |

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| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Cooperates with Balkanbrückesupports, which does on-site aid projects (Bosnia, EU external borders)  |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  |  |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Social Media: facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/balkanbruecke/">https://www.facebook.com/balkanbruecke/</a> ; twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/balkanbruecke?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor;">https://twitter.com/balkanbruecke?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor</a> ; Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/balkanbruecke/?hl=de">https://www.instagram.com/balkanbruecke/?hl=de</a> ; Newsletter (distributed only on request, not public) |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | Civil society in Germany must act as a bridge, build bridges against the borders built by Germany's government and the EU, to alleviate suffering.   |
| -Narrative 1   | EU governments are building external borders of stone, barbed wire and violence. We are building a bridge to overcome these borders together.  |
| -Narrative 2   | Europe's isolation comes at a high price. A confederation of states that forcibly holds back people who have had to leave their homes due to war, persecution or hunger and leaves them to suffer in inhumane camps on its doorstep betrays its humanitarian values.   |
| -Narrative 3   | People on the run are systematically disenfranchised and criminalised at the EU's external borders.  |
| -Narrative 4   | Instead of offering real perspectives, the German government remains inactive under the pretext of waiting for a "European solution" and ignores the humanitarian emergency of the people. Just as on the Mediterranean, the EU accepts the deadly consequences of its policy of sealing off people at its land borders.   |
| <b>Documents/information</b> used for this mapping (including website URLs)  | Website <a href="https://balkanbruecke.org/">https://balkanbruecke.org/</a> ; press reports <a href="https://balkanbruecke.org/pressemitteilungen/">https://balkanbruecke.org/pressemitteilungen/</a> ;  |

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| <b>Country</b> code and number | GER7   |
| <b>Name</b> or title           | Bildungsinitiative Ferhat Unvar (Lückenlos e.V.) |

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| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)  | Legally, a registered association (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; anti-racist education in Germany initiated by the family of one of the victims of the racist shooting in Hanau  |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | 2020   |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)   | racist shooting in Hanau, Germany, on 19.02.2020   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding  | Family of one of the victims (Ferhat Unvar), Serpil Temiz Unvar  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | Serpil Temiz Unvar, further family and friends, volunteers   |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | School children in Germany, school authorities   |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)   | promoting anti-racist education and empowerment for people affected by racism  |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | The German public and authorities  |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues   | Raising public awareness of racism, public debate and critique of education  |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)  | contact point, counseling and self-help groups, workshops for people affected by racism; awareness-raising in schools; social media campaigns and podcasts <a href="https://www.bildungsinitiative-ferhatunvar.de/podcasts/">https://www.bildungsinitiative-ferhatunvar.de/podcasts/</a>   |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Donations; networking with schools; largely volunteer work   |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Germany  |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Website; Social Media: facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/biferhatunvar;">https://www.facebook.com/biferhatunvar</a> ; twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/bi_ferhatunvar?lang=de">https://twitter.com/bi_ferhatunvar?lang=de</a> ; Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/bi_ferhatunvar/?igshid=ucj4k6p05n12&amp;hl=de">https://www.instagram.com/bi_ferhatunvar/?igshid=ucj4k6p05n12&amp;hl=de</a> ; |

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| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries     | Racism is wide-spread and deeply rooted in German society; it is passed on from generation to generation, and should be fought at public schools   |
| -Narrative 1  | Anti-racism is a responsibility of the German state and thus its education system, primarily schools.  |
| -Narrative 2  | Racism can be reduced or prevented through education.  |
| -Narrative 3  | Civil society must step up where government fails.   |
| -Narrative 4  | Migrants and people with any kind of migrant background are victims of everyday racism and violence in Germany every day.  |
| <b>Documents/information</b> used for this mapping (including website URLs) | Website <a href="http://www.bildungsinitiative-ferhatunvar.de">www.bildungsinitiative-ferhatunvar.de</a> ; media reports <a href="https://www.bildungsinitiative-ferhatunvar.de/zeitschriften/">https://www.bildungsinitiative-ferhatunvar.de/zeitschriften/</a> ; |

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| <b>Country</b> code and number  | GER8  |
| <b>Name</b> or title  | Brand New Bundestag/Wir für Zukunft eG  |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)   | Legally, Brand New Bewegung e.V. is a registered association; the associated Wir für Zukunft eG is a Genossenschaft in Germany; self-labelled as a civil society movement, not associated with particular political party |
| <b>Date</b> of founding   | 2020  |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)                                  | Lack of diversity in the German Bundestag   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding   | Maximilian Oehl   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today  | Dr. Maximilian Oehl, Daniel Veldhoen, Eva-Maria Thurnhofer Alisa Wieland, Maximilian Oehl   |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>   | Potential candidates (people with migration background who want to go into politics, regardless of political leanings)  |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)                        | promoting a more diverse German Bundestag and a society that includes all people  |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>  | The German public at large, German voters, parties and politicians  |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues  | Raising awareness of how little diversity there is in German politics   |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests) | strategic counseling, workshops and trainings for potential candidates for the German Bundestag; crowd-funding to support the candidate's election campaign financially; social media campaign #GemeinsamZukunftWählen    |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)  | Donations; merchandise shop   |

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| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Germany   |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Website; Social Media: facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/BrandNewBundestag/">https://www.facebook.com/BrandNewBundestag/</a> ; Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/brandnewbundestag/">https://www.instagram.com/brandnewbundestag/</a> ; linkedin <a href="https://de.linkedin.com/company/brand-new-bundestag/">https://de.linkedin.com/company/brand-new-bundestag/</a> ; twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/BNBundestag?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw">https://twitter.com/BNBundestag?ref_src=twsrc%5Etfw</a> ; Blog <a href="https://brandnewbundestag.de/blog/">https://brandnewbundestag.de/blog/</a> |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | Political representation needs to be as diverse as the population, which it is not in Germany   |
| -Narrative 1   | Democracy is stuck in habits and functionary structures; politics is rigid and self-centred.  |
| -Narrative 2   | We find the most capable, credible people in our country. We help them to be politically successful in our parliaments. Because only together, only if we stand together, can we overcome the immense challenges of our time. It is about more than political success - it is about our future.   |
| -Narrative 3   | People with migration background are systematically excluded from political office at all levels  |
| -Narrative 4   |   |
| <b>Documents/information</b> used for this mapping (including website URLs)  | <a href="https://brandnewbundestag.de/">https://brandnewbundestag.de/</a> ; Blog <a href="https://brandnewbundestag.de/blog/">https://brandnewbundestag.de/blog/</a> ;  |

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| <b>Country</b> code and number   | GER9   |
| <b>Name</b> or title   | Bundesverband der Migrantinnen in Deutschland e.V.   |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)                                | Legally, a registered association (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; self-labelled as migrant self-organized associations and local groups   |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | 2005   |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)           | The precarious position of migrant (Turkish) women in Germany regarding education, work, income, rights  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding  | Turkish-origin migrants living in Germany  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | 10 sub-associations and 13 local groups  |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | Turkish-origin migrants living in Germany and the German public at large   |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational) | promoting a peaceful and solidary coexistence of people from different backgrounds - for an equal and independent participation of migrant women, and a society without discrimination and exclusion |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | German politics  |



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| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues   | providing a platform, network and activities by and for (Turkish) migrant women for migrant women; political advocacy   |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)  | Protests, networking, choirs, dance groups, theatre groups  |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | A network of sub-associations and local groups across Germany   |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Major cities across Germany (Köln; Berlin; Hamburg; Bochum; Düsseldorf; Frankfurt, Rüsselsheim; Mannheim, Karlsruhe; Göppingen, Geislingen, Nürnberg, München)  |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Website; Social Media: facebook <a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/60996582646">https://www.facebook.com/groups/60996582646</a> ; twitter <a href="https://twitter.com/InfoGkb">https://twitter.com/InfoGkb</a> ; Instagram <a href="https://www.instagram.com/gkb_migrantinnen/">https://www.instagram.com/gkb_migrantinnen/</a> ; |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | Migrants and people with migrant background want to be full members of German society but are being excluded or discriminated against systematically  |
| -Narrative 1   | Equal work deserves equal pay.  |
| -Narrative 2   | Fight causes that make people refugees, not refugees  |
| -Narrative 3   | Residency rights need to be independent of marital status and marriage partners/husbands  |
| -Narrative 4   | Migrant women face double discrimination.   |
| <b>Documents</b> /information used for this mapping (including website URLs)   | Website <a href="https://www.migrantinnen.net/">https://www.migrantinnen.net/</a> ; press statements; newsletter/newspaper  |

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| <b>Country</b> code and number   | GER10  |
| <b>Name</b> or title   | dis:orient e.V.  |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)                      | Legally, a registered association (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; self-labelled as a collective of journalists, academics and activists |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | 2005 as Alsharq, fused with other association in 2019 and became dis:orient  |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable) | none   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding                                    | Unnamed journalists, academics and activists   |

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| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | Dominik Winkler, Georg Layr, Jennifer Kleemann, Ksenia Ilinskaya, Lissy Kleer, Magdalena Süß, Sören Faika, Wais Kauomee etc. <a href="https://www.disorient.de/team">https://www.disorient.de/team</a>  |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | German public   |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)   | dealing with questions around WANA region; shedding light on marginalized feminist and postcolonial perspectives  |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | Publics in WANA region  |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues   | perspective is inspired by postcolonial and feminist approaches. Specifically, want to take up questions and perspectives that are often marginalised and make them visible.  |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)  | online magazine with articles, analysis and interviews on topics around the WANA region in a global context; informative, cultural and networking events in different languages and countries;  |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | More than 100 members; donations, volunteer work, some public funding   |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Germany, WANA region  |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Website, online magazine, Social Media; cooperation with educational institutions in Germany and WANA region; In lectures, film screenings, discussions and conferences, explore current political and social debates, developments and challenges and bring them to the interested public.<br>In cooperation with universities, educational institutions and foundations, they try to experience and strengthen postcolonial perspectives, to critically question knowledge productions and to understand current developments in WANA through seminars and workshops.<br>Within the International Parliamentary Scholarship (IPS), Special Programme Arab States, of the German Bundestag, they regularly organise seminars with topics on memory culture, plural societies and civil society engagement. |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | The WANA region is insufficiently known and understood in Germany   |
| -Narrative 1   | Countries and people in the WANA region are not poor migrants and refugees but have rich cultures and histories   |
| -Narrative 2   | Germany public should engage with WANA region, its peoples and cultures on equal footing  |
| -Narrative 3   |   |
| -Narrative 4   |   |
| <b>Documents</b> /information used for this mapping (including website URLs)   | Website <a href="http://www.disorient.de">www.disorient.de</a> ; newsletter; online magazine <a href="http://disorient.de/?_ga=2.124765007.432264846.1645538778-1858110976.1645538778">http://disorient.de/?_ga=2.124765007.432264846.1645538778-1858110976.1645538778</a> ;  |

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| <b>Country</b> code and number   | GER11  |
| <b>Name</b> or title   | Migrantifa   |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)  | Legally, a registered association (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; self-labelled as a grassroots movement  |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | 2020   |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)   | Racist attack in Hanau   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding  | Unnamed individuals  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | Unnamed individuals; Impressum D. Köhler   |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | Migrants, general public in Germany and Austria  |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)   | coordinating the (post-)migrant struggles for social rights and against racism and fascism (no joint statement of all local movements)   |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | Authorities  |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues   | Specific protests may have specific aims; commemoration; showing anger   |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)  | local demonstrations and other actions; social media presence (no joint activities in all of Germany, since the racist shooting in Hanau in February 2020 increased activity)  |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Local groups in Stuttgart, Hamburg, Berlin, Konstanz, Tübingen, Duisburg, Frankfurt, Hessen, NRW, (Wien); no donations or funding; volunteer work and activism   |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Germany and Austria  |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | <a href="https://www.welcome-united.org/en/4151-2/">https://www.welcome-united.org/en/4151-2/</a> ;<br>Media:<br><a href="https://www.facebook.com/welcomeunited">https://www.facebook.com/welcomeunited</a> ;<br><a href="https://twitter.com/welcomeunited">https://twitter.com/welcomeunited</a> ;<br><a href="https://www.instagram.com/welcomeunited/">https://www.instagram.com/welcomeunited/</a> ;<br>Social<br>facebook<br>twitter<br>Instagram |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | 75 years is not enough, racism and right-wing extremism are still alive; take the fight to the streets   |
| -Narrative 1   | Long-rooted racism in German society is the source and foundation of recent attacks  |
| -Narrative 2   | Racist attacks are linked to political racism  |
| -Narrative 3   | German civil society and politics are not anti-racist enough, do take a strong stance  |
| -Narrative 4   | Racism (and racists) is in German institutions and authorities   |

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| <b>Documents/information used</b> for this mapping (including website URLs) | No joint website; Berlin chapter website: <a href="https://migrantifaberlin.wordpress.com/">https://migrantifaberlin.wordpress.com/</a> ; <a href="https://www.welcome-united.org/en/4151-2/">https://www.welcome-united.org/en/4151-2/</a> |
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| <b>Country code and number</b>   | GER12   |
| <b>Name or title</b>   | Migration_miteinander e.V.  |
| <b>Form of organization</b> (legal form, self-labelling etc.)  | Legally, a registered association (eingetragener Verein) in Germany; self-labelled as an alliance   |
| <b>Date of founding</b>  | 2017  |
| <b>Founding reason/event</b> to which the founding was a response (if applicable)                                  | So-called refugee crisis of 2015/2016   |
| <b>People and entities involved</b> at founding  | A “group of young people” not named   |
| <b>People and entities involved</b> at today   | Karla Kästner, Golde Ebding, Bianca Wambach; a range of volunteer also from within the refugee or migrant community ( <a href="https://migrationmiteinander.de/unser-team/">https://migrationmiteinander.de/unser-team/</a> ) |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | German public; migrant youth, especially refugees   |
| <b>Primary aims, topics or issues</b> (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational)                        | forging a cooperation between migrants and local populations and promoting a Europe based on solidarity and mutual support  |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | -   |
| <b>Secondary aims, topics or issues</b>  | Providing information for refugees regarding job market, education etc.   |
| <b>Strategies, practices and means</b> (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests) | (co-)organizing youth mobility and exchange programs, European voluntary services; providing language courses, legal aid, a job hunting café, providing internships   |
| <b>Size and resources</b> (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Donations, no other information provided  |

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| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Germany   |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | <p>Social Media<br/> <a href="https://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=https://migrationmiteinander.de/de-unser-verein/">https://www.facebook.com/sharer.php?u=https://migrationmiteinander.de/de-unser-verein/</a>;<br/> <a href="https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=%20https://migrationmiteinander.de/de-unser-verein/">https://twitter.com/intent/tweet?text=%20https://migrationmiteinander.de/de-unser-verein/</a>;<br/> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/shareArticle/?mini=true&amp;url=https://migrationmiteinander.de/de-unser-verein/&amp;title=Unser%20Verein%20-&amp;summary=&amp;source=https://migrationmiteinander.de/de-unser-verein/">https://www.linkedin.com/shareArticle/?mini=true&amp;url=https://migrationmiteinander.de/de-unser-verein/&amp;title=Unser%20Verein%20-&amp;summary=&amp;source=https://migrationmiteinander.de/de-unser-verein/</a>;<br/> Magazine publications<br/> <a href="https://migrationmiteinander.de/publikationen/">https://migrationmiteinander.de/publikationen/</a></p> |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | Young people need opportunities to learn/study and work to realise their potential  |
| -Narrative 1   | We need a together, not integration of “them”   |
| -Narrative 2   | The ideal of Europe is built on solidarity and mutual support   |
| -Narrative 3   | Civil society needs to build the future Europe, politics has failed us  |
| -Narrative 4   | Society includes and needs migrants   |
| <b>Documents</b> /information used for this mapping (including website URLs)   | Website <a href="http://www.migrationmiteinander.de/">www.migrationmiteinander.de/</a><br>Magazine <a href="https://migrationmiteinander.de/publikationen/">https://migrationmiteinander.de/publikationen/</a>  |

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| <b>Country</b> code and number   | GER13   |
| <b>Name</b> or title   | Netzwerk medien.vielfalt!   |
| <b>Form</b> of organization (legal form, self-labelling etc.)                                | network of media-makers with migration background and/ or affected by discrimination  |
| <b>Date</b> of founding  | 2015  |
| <b>Founding reason</b> /event to which the founding was a response (if applicable)           | Lack of diversity in German media   |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at founding  | Media makers with migration or refugee background, unnamed  |
| <b>People</b> and entities involved at today   | Bianca Arnold: Die Kopiloten e.V., Kassel<br>Luise Marbach: Radio Corax :: Halle<br>Melissa Schulz: Radio Z, Nürnberg<br>Alex Moepedi: RDL, Freiburg          |
| <b>Primary target audience(s)</b>  | German public, media makers   |
| <b>Primary aims</b> , topics or issues (also indicate scale as local-national-transnational) | creating a diverse network of media-makers in order to empower each other and contribute to a more open, diverse and sustainable media landscape and society; |

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|  | training/educating<br><a href="https://medienvielfalt.net/index.php/ausbildung/">https://medienvielfalt.net/index.php/ausbildung/</a>   |
| <b>Secondary audience(s)</b>   | Established media   |
| <b>Secondary aims</b> , topics or issues   | Support careers in media, change dominant stories and include migrant voices  |
| <b>Strategies</b> , practices and means (e.g., press releases, social media campaigns, art installations, protests)  | connecting media projects of refugees and migrants across Germany; building up independent radio stations across Germany and providing organizational, technical and financial support                                  |
| <b>Size</b> and resources (budget, people and networks involved, etc.)   | Public funding; 4 regions = across all of Germany<br>Bianca Arnold: Die Kopiloten e.V., Kassel<br>Luise Marbach: Radio Corax :: Halle<br>Melissa Schulz: Radio Z, Nürnberg<br>Alex Moepedi: RDL, Freiburg               |
| <b>Reach</b> (area of activity, geographically)  | Nation-wide, Germany.   |
| <b>Communications</b> (channels, media, genres, degree of professionalism) including activities/events/campaigns (comm. with institutions/politicians as well as outreach to public) | Publishing content on <a href="https://colourfulvoices.net">colourfulvoices.net</a> ; networking on <a href="https://medienvielfalt.net/index.php/redaktionen/">https://medienvielfalt.net/index.php/redaktionen/</a> ; |
| <b>Narratives</b> they produce (especially successes) – brief summaries  | Migrant voices bring new perspectives to German media, contributing to a more open, diverse and future-ready society.   |
| -Narrative 1   | The power of media can make migrant voices heard.   |
| -Narrative 2   | Migrants have something to say, not just on migrant issues.   |
| -Narrative 3   | The German media landscape is not diverse, it is characterised by discrimination based on racism and xenophobia.  |
| <b>Documents/information</b> used for this mapping (including website URLs)  | Website <a href="https://medienvielfalt.net/">https://medienvielfalt.net/</a> ;<br><a href="https://colourfulvoices.net/">https://colourfulvoices.net/</a>  |



## Appendix B: List of interviewees

| Code    | Name           | Gender | Case Study                | Role   |
|---------|----------------|--------|---------------------------|--|
| DE_I_1  | Anonymous      | Woman  | Seebrücke                 | Active in social media campaigns                 |
| DE_I_2  | Matthias Kolbe | Man    | Seebrücke                 | Organising and participating in several protests |
| DE_I_3  | Anonymous      | Woman  | Seebrücke                 | Organising and participating in several protests |
| DE_I_4  | Dirk Czollek   | Man    | Seebrücke                 | Organising and participating in several protests |
| DE_I_5  | Anonymous      | Woman  | Seebrücke                 | Coordinating commune level campaigns             |
| DE_I_6  | Anonymous      | Man    | Seebrücke                 | Content and media for campaigns, activism        |
| DE_I_7  | Sarah Hummle   | Woman  | Seebrücke                 | Local chapter activism                           |
| DE_I_8  | Anonymous      | Man    | Seebrücke                 | Safe Haven network                               |
| DE_I_9  | Anonymous      | Man    | Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! | Local radio project                              |
| DE_I_10 | Anonymous      | Woman  | Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! | Network meetings                                 |
| DE_I_11 | Anonymous      | Man    | Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! | Local media project                              |
| DE_I_12 | Anonymous      | Man    | Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! | Local radio project, travelling exhibition       |
| DE_I_13 | Anonymous      | Woman  | Netzwerk medien.vielfalt! | Network meetings, trainings                      |

# BRIDGES

Assessing the production and impact of migration narratives

**BRIDGES:** Assessing the production and impact of migration narratives is a project funded by the EU H2020 Framework Programme for Research and Innovation and implemented by a consortium of 12 institutions from all over Europe. The project aims to understand the causes and consequences of migration narratives in a context of increasing politicisation and polarisation around these issues by focusing on six European countries: France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom. To do so, BRIDGES adopts an interdisciplinary and co-productive approach and is implemented by a diverse consortium formed by universities, think tanks and research centres, cultural associations, and civil society organisations.

**The BRIDGES Working Papers** are a series of academic publications presenting the research results of the project in a structured and rigorous way. They can either focus on particular case studies covered by the project or adopt a comparative perspective.

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