

Recommendations MIX IT!

"And immigrants must be freed from multicultural. It is not a question for the immigrants..."

Multiculture is a cultural climate that permeates everything" Rasoul Nejadmehr, Sweden, 2006

European society consists of people from many different backgrounds and origins. This results in many valuable cultural perspectives and presents a particular challenge for mutual understanding. To avoid the segregation of people from a migrant background, it is imperative to foster an understanding of cultural diversity in *all* children at the earliest possible age. Therefore, it is essential not to dilute the divergences between different cultures, but to ensure that each culture is given the opportunity to affirm their own identity and autonomy through a common process of deliberate coexistence. Music projects can contribute substantially to this process of intercultural learning and understanding.

The symposium "MIX IT! – Young People with Migrant Backgrounds in Music Projects" adopts the following recommendations for political decision makers at local, regional, national and European levels:

- Artistic Expression is a human right. Young people from migrant backgrounds deserve particular attention. Music should never be the preserve of a privileged social elite. Any elitist concept of culture has to be challenged.
- As artistic expression is a human right, it is as fundamental to the basic school education as reading, writing and arithmetic, claims the UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education (Lisbon, March 2006). Making music and singing need to be seen as an integral part of any curriculum from nursery to secondary school. Cultural diversity has to be included in these curricula.
- Cooperation between formal and non formal music education is essential for the acquisition of intercultural skills. The cultural scenes themselves offer a wide range of projects with integration aspects in popular and other music styles, which respond to the environment and context of children and young people¹. These projects on grass root level, which are created by artists, organisers, labels and other cultural operators, should be well recognised and supported financially and structurally.
- Traditional university programmes do not provide the skills and knowledge needed for the work in multicultural societies. Universities shall change their programmes in order to produce learning outcomes that enable the students to teach music in culturally diverse surroundings.
- People from different cultural backgrounds should be involved in teaching and leading music projects. Appropriate artistic and pedagogical training should be provided. Artistic and pedagogical competences, not diplomas, should define the recognition.
- People from different cultural backgrounds should be involved in the planning, organising and managing of music projects and in music education.
- Mobility is the oxygen of culture and intercultural dialogue. Appropriate funding and accessible visa regulations have to be provided for cultural operators.
- Musical diversity and intercultural competences have to be learned, not the various musical cultures. It is important to propose music projects in ethnically and linguistically mixed groups.
- Platforms for cultural exchange and space for intercultural discussions have to be provided.
- The media should strengthen their role as mediator and present the richness of various musical cultures.

Various cultures represent an enormous richness of social and cultural life in Europe. Intercultural dialogue, music projects and music education are the best tools to prevent possible conflicts in a multicultural society. The present situation demonstrates that there is an urgent need for action.

¹ The "EFMET – European Forum for Music Education and Training" (EMC, 2004), a project funded by the EU-Commission, has already demonstrated the importance of responding to the youngsters direct surroundings.