

IN-CREATE

IO1 National Report *United Kingdom*

**EXPLORING THE ROLE OF CULTURE AND ARTS IN TCN'S
INTEGRATION AND BEST PRACTICES.**



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Author (s)	Liliya Anisimova/Shamim Talukder
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Introduction

Cultural policy is important. Indeed, in the context of a twenty-first-century liberal democratic state, there are certain elements of cultural policy which form a pre-requisite for its flourishing. As it has been highlighted by Hadley and Eleonora (2018), there is a lack of policies associated with both democracy and culture. Furthermore, the Warwick Commission's report into cultural value advocates the need to address the stratification of cultural consumption. Indeed, it is essential that the question of cultural democracy is accounted for by the cultural policy of the UK. Ideas of participatory democracy are also evident in the work of the Movement for Cultural Democracy which urges to re-prioritise values and address the hierarchies of class and race embedded within arts policy. Art has been traditionally considered a hegemonic European practice; yet, the practices of cultural democracy expanded the definition of art. It has now been 33 years since the AGM of the Shelton Trust campaigned for cultural democracy, the requirements for the new concept of cultural democracy have changed. In light of the evidence collected via the means of this research, it is possible to conclude that cultural democracy includes both structural and non-structural integration of migrants. Indeed, there is a need for a shift in public opinion and the promotion of non-structural integration which expands the meaning of 'culture' and 'art'. Cultural democracy is important in terms of two-way integration. This report provides several recommendations for the capacity-building programme, including improving the diversity of the teaching team and promoting inclusion through effective marketing and communications.

Desk research in the UK

Statistics

There are some important statistics on ethnic groups residing in the UK. According to the 2011 census, 13.4% of people in England and Wales (7.5 million people) were born outside the UK. Moreover, the most ethnically diverse region in England and Wales was London, where 40.2% of residents were from either Asian, Black, Mixed or Other ethnic groups (Ethnicity Facts and Figures, gov.uk). Out of all regions, London had the smallest percentage of White British people and the North East had the highest percentage. Wellbeing, who teamed with Public Health England, LGA, NCVO, the Social Care Institute and others has found in a recent 2016 reported that: 17% of British people engage in some form of 'everyday creativity' (A 2016 report by All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing commissioned by the UK Parliament). This might include drawing, painting, pottery, sculpture, music, film-making, handicrafts or singing. Although it does not directly mention third-country-nationals, it shows the importance of art in the every-day lives of people.

The importance of art to the lives of people is reaffirmed in Westminster's 2021-26 cultural report. The report claims that around 20% of GP visits are made for non-medical reasons, such as loneliness (see Westminster Cultural Strategy 2021-2026). On the other hand, arts-based therapies are shown to be effective in treating stress and mental health issues. It was found that

‘arts-on-prescription’ projects, which make patients visit art galleries and museums instead of taking medication, have led to the reduction of the General Practitioners’ consultation rates.

*“Cultural activities both reduce the risk of dementia and slow its decline”
Westminster Cultural Strategy 2021-2026, p. 17*

Although this evidence does not directly mention TNCs, it can be assumed that this group is also affected by the arts. The current role of culture is recognised in the Public Service Agreement 21, issued by the HM Treasury, which says that there should be help “to help people from all sections of society to understand and celebrate the contribution made by a range of cultures to Britain”. Moreover, the report commissioned by the Baring Foundation, Arts Council England, London, and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation highlights the national survey of the arts and refugees across the UK in the context of government policies and demographic changes that have shaped the current UK. The report states that although the arts practice working with asylum and refugees in the UK started from 1970, it gained momentum long after that. Indeed, art projects have had a beneficial impact on building positive relationships between the host community and the refugees (The Baring Foundation report, 2008, p. 20). In particular, art has proved to be valuable in addressing the issues that cannot be addressed by structural measures, such as inclusive laws; the arts contribute positively to migrants’ well-being and maintenance of their cultural identity (The Baring Foundation report, 2008, p. 20). Moreover, integration initiatives positively influence economic development (confirmed by Bilgili, 2014; Erdal & Oeppen, 2013, Mazzucato, 2008). This is recognised by the Westminster Cultural Strategy of 2021-2026 and the European-wide guidance on the integration of refugees into domestic economies. The Mayor of London’s Culture Strategy “Culture for Londoners” reinstates the importance of culture as a tool for challenging the stigma and discrimination that refugees are facing (see page 31). The report also states that migrants contribute to the diversity and emphasising the diversity that characterises London as a cultural hub (page 30). Thus, there is a clear policy context for further investigation and measures which has to be implemented to ensure further integration of migrants into the arts sector in the UK.

“The value of the work lies not only in the skills and confidence that young people gain, but also in giving them respite from the difficulties in their lives and the chance to develop social networks” The Baring Foundation Report, 2008, p. 15

Problems and Obstacles faced by TCNs

The main problems and obstacles faced by TCNs are that of integration and inclusion. The Greater London Council Economic Team reported in 2017 that 36% of creative jobs were held by women, and 23% by BAME groups (Department for Culture and Media report, 2016). McGregor and Ragab (2016) state that there are two types of integration; structural and non-structural. Structural integration involves the granting to migrants a set of rights, including the right to work, the right to association, and so forth. Indeed, the “Bloomsbury Handbook of Popular Music Policy” recognises that, in a post-Brexit world, it is essential for musicians to sustain the relative freedom

of movement and capacity of working within the EU (page 327). One of such solutions is to follow the Swiss and Norwegian scenarios which allow access for performing artists and their support staff to the EU market with minor red tape (page 327). Moreover, the report notes that it is important for the UK to retain its image of a positive place to visit; to achieve this, the government has to be involved in providing new solutions for the music industry.

However, even if migrants are structurally integrated, they may experience discrimination and prejudice (McGregor, Ragab, 2016, p.7). In 2014, the Department for Education recorded that children in UK Schools – of whom 31% were categorised as minority ethnic – were introduced to visual art by teachers who were 94% white. 2021 report by the Runnymede Trust highlighted that 46% of schools in England have no Black, Asian or minority ethnic English teachers. This had a knock-on effect on the entrance to the profession (The Runnymede Trust, 2021). Diversity is, henceforth, an integral solution to the problems of modern education. Indeed, the issue has also been investigated by the Runnymede Trust, a race equality thinktank, and Freelands Foundation who partnered to deliver the first major commission into how black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students are excluded from art education. FilmWorks Trust has recently carried out a survey directly with the marginalised communities and other European partners. These were the findings of the report in the UK; art is an important tool alleviating the issues of discrimination and prejudice; language and non-verbal communication also play an important role (URB_Art report, August 2021). Moreover, it was found that integration positively influences economic development; therefore, there is a strong case for the development of the arts in the UK (confirmed by Bilgili, 2014; Erdal & Oeppen, 2013, Mazzucato, 2008).

Opportunities available to TCNs

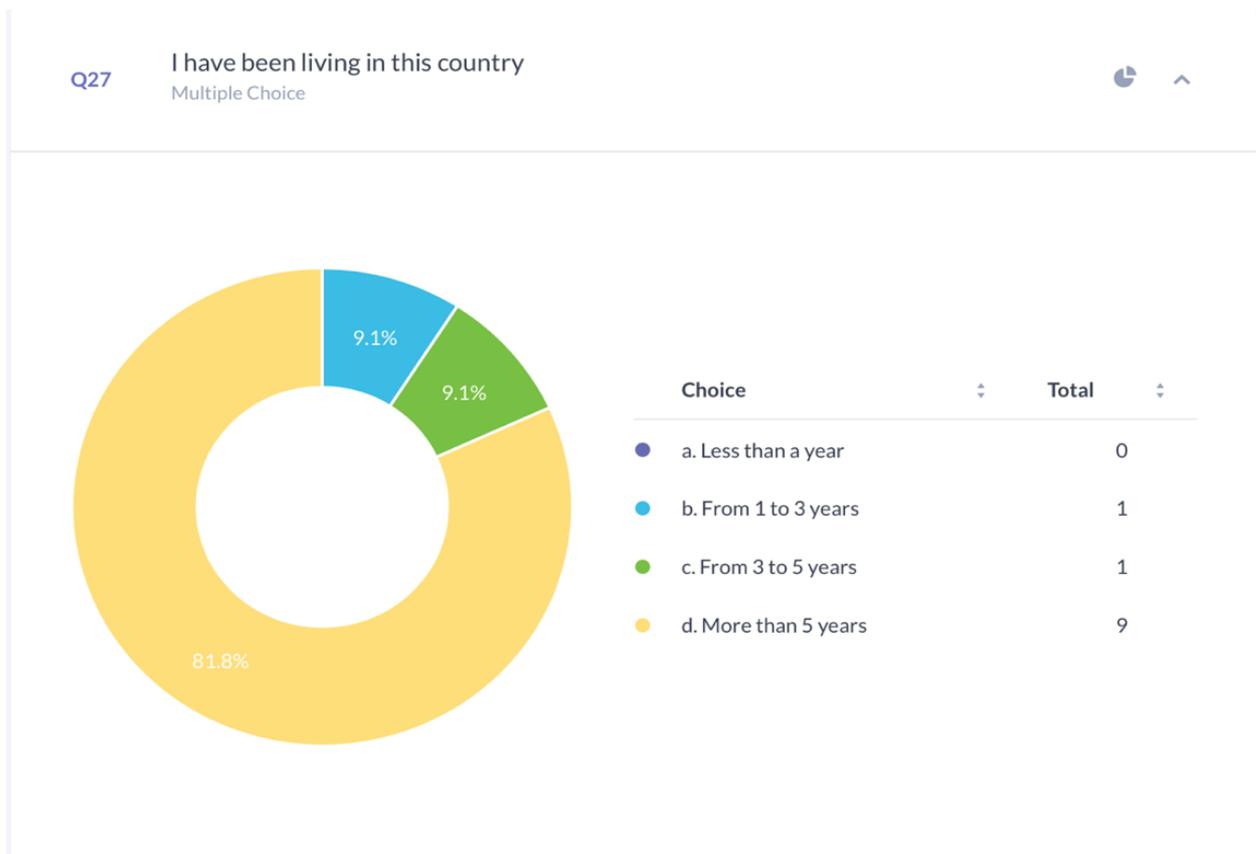
Now we will look at the opportunities for Third Country Nationals in London and beyond. The majority of participants in the URB_Art survey testified that there were opportunities within their city for individuals with fewer opportunities to access community arts (64 per cent to 36 per cent). This is confirmed by real-world evidence. Indeed, an example of such an opportunity is the Refugee Week 2020 - a UK-based festival celebrating the creativity and resilience of refugees. Moreover, another such example is the London Film Festival, which is a festival supporting refugee themes. For instance, “Hit the Road” by Panahi won the most prestigious prize in 2021 (The Guardian, 2021). Furthermore, there are organisations such as Yaa Asantwaa that care specifically for groups within the migrant communities. COVID-19 pandemic led to further developments within the arts industry. Indeed, out of 42% of the respondents who knew if there was a change of access, the vast majority said there was a change in delivery/access as a result of COVID. The majority of the participants of the Urb_Art were migrants, so the findings of the report are representative. However, although there were many new initiatives in the field of culture, there were fewer initiatives in education. Although there are training providers such as Screenskills, they are not many of them. ScreenSkills embed diversity into their programmes (see Screenskills, 2021) by analysing the data, tracking the industry makeup, and using this research to lobby the government and industry. They also use this data to report to their funders and to inform

decisions on which services they develop (Screenskills, 2021). There is a clear need for further providers in this area.

Overall, this report demonstrates that there is a need for further integration and participation of Third Country Nationals in the creative sector. This is supported by the Barring Foundation Report, the URB_Art report, the 2016 report by All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing, the Westminster Cultural Strategy 2021-2026, the Mayor of London Cultural Strategy, and the British Screenskills. It is clear that although there are a few opportunities in the UK for people from marginalised communities, there is a gap in training. Yet, it has been shown that this gap can be reduced by the provision of relevant training, the sharing of information and know-how, and promotion of the change of attitudes towards the arts and migrant cultures. As the UK is one of the established countries in welcoming migrants from all over the world, the need for migrant development is ever more present in Europe.

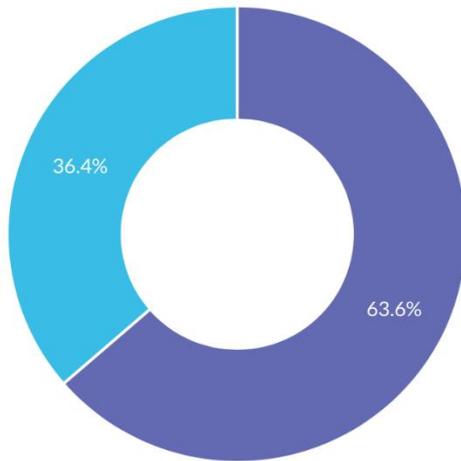
Field research in the UK

Here we present our IN-CREATE survey findings.



Q3 How valuable is the contribution of arts and culture to your sense of community?  

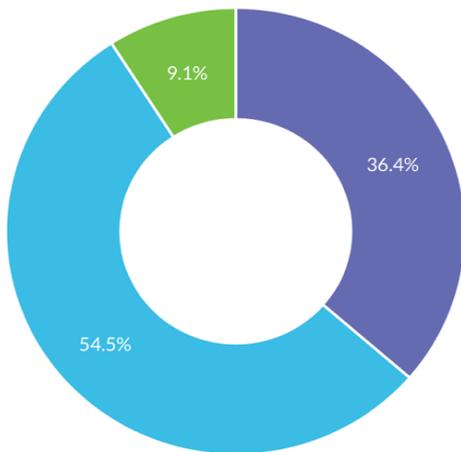
Multiple Choice



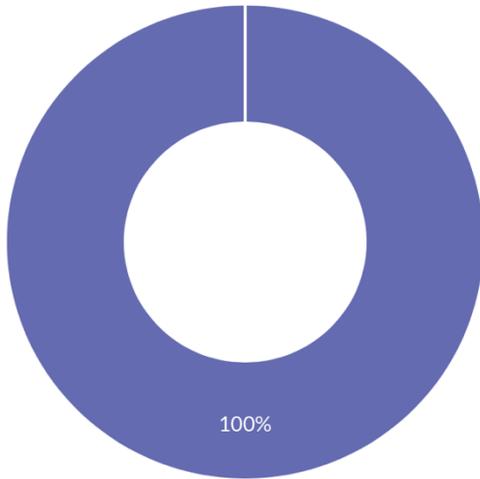
Choice	Total
a. Very valuable	7
b. Of some value	4
c. Not valuable	0

Q28 What is your age group?  

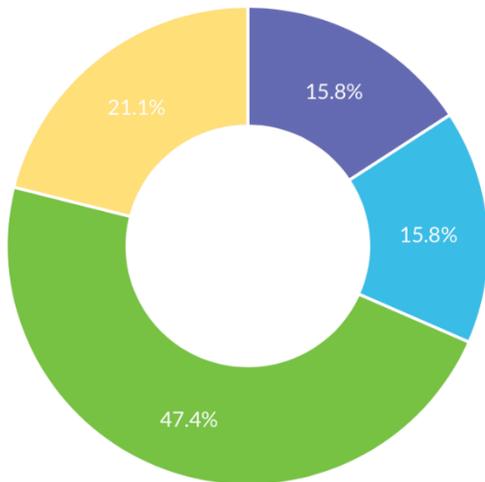
Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
18 to 24	4
25 to 39	6
40 to 60	1
60 plus	0

Q4
The arts make me feel good
Multiple Choice


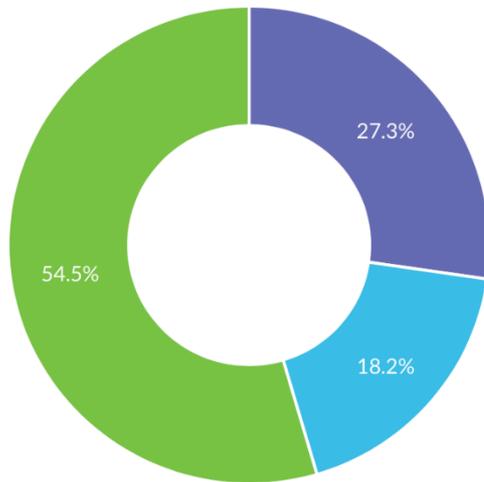
Choice	Total
a. I agree	11
b. I disagree	0

Q5
Which of the following do you consider as most important for cultural integration?
Multiple Choice


Choice	Total
a. Promoting migrants' culture	3
b. Language training	3
c. Promoting intercultural dialogue	9
d. Promoting the frequency of contacts with host country and country of origin	4

Q6
Are the migrant associations in your city involved in cultural activities?

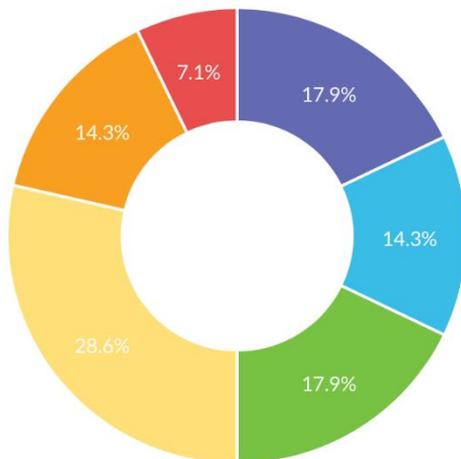
Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
a. Yes	3
b. No	2
c. I do not know	6

Q7
To what level do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Arts & Culture (in your region): (Agree, Disagree)

Multiple Choice

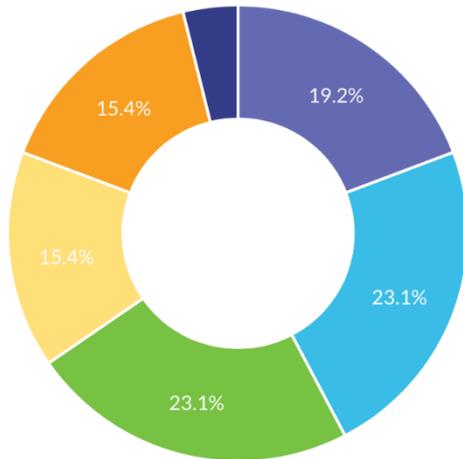


Choice	Total
a. In my area a lot of Arts are available	5
b. Arts & Culture are an essential part for my community	4
c. I would like to see more opportunities to engage in Arts & Cultural activities	5
d. I believe Arts & Culture have the ability to address a wide range of community concerns and contribute to the positive transformation of a community	8
e. The city should be investing more to provide increased opportunities for Arts & Culture	4
f. Arts only helps those people who participate, not the broader	2

Q8

What kinds of PERFORMING ARTS programs, events and activities would you like to engage in? Please select all options that apply.

Multiple Choice

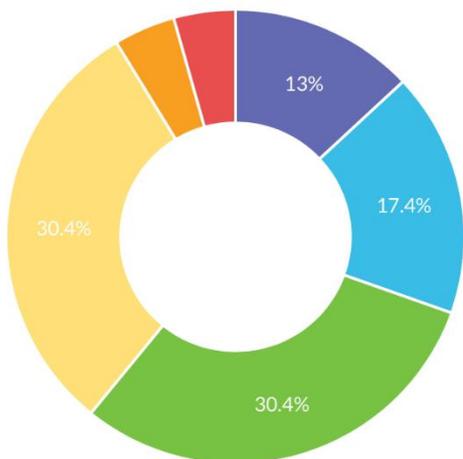


Choice	Total
a. Music	5
b. Dance	6
c. Film	6
d. Theatre	4
e. All	4
f. None	0
Other	1

Q9

What kinds of VISUAL ARTS programs, events and activities would you like to engage in? Please select all options that apply.

Multiple Choice

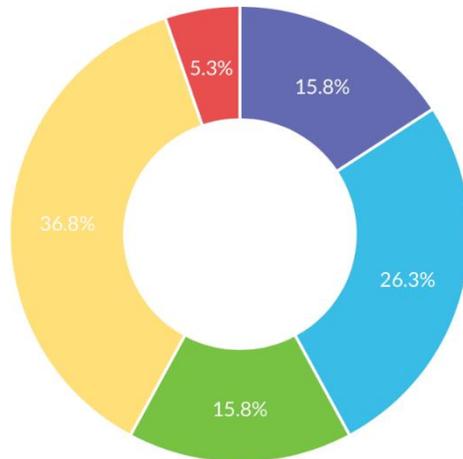


Choice	Total
a. Painting	3
b. Drawing	4
c. Sculpture	7
d. Photography	7
e. All	1
f. None	1
Other	0

Q10

What kinds of APPLIED ARTS programs, events and activities would you like to engage in?
Please select all options that apply.

Multiple Choice

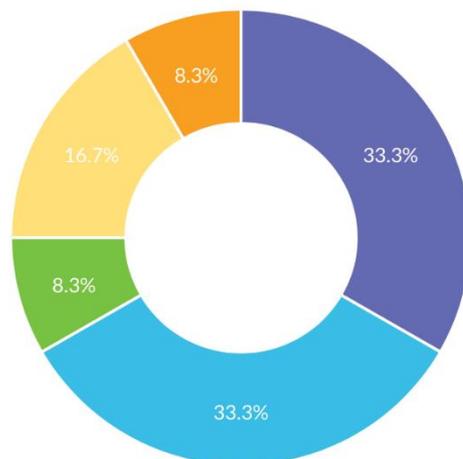


Choice	Total
a. Architecture	3
b. Fashion design	5
c. Jewelry making	3
d. Traditional skills	7
e. All	0
f. None	1
Other	0

Q11

What kinds of LITERARY ARTS programs, events and activities would you like to engage in?
Please select all options that apply.

Multiple Choice

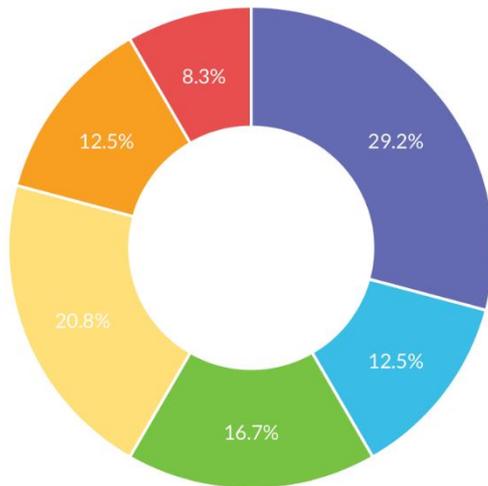


Choice	Total
a. Play	4
b. Poetry	4
c. All	1
d. None	2
Other	1

Q12

What kinds of NEW MEDIA programs, events and activities would you like to engage in?
Please select all options that apply.

Multiple Choice

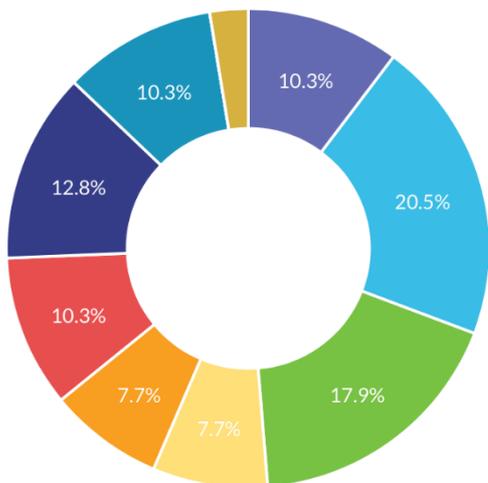


Choice	Total
a. Film making	7
b. Digital media	3
c. Video	4
d. Animation	5
e. All	3
f. None	2
Other	0

Q13

Which of the following art activities have you participated in or attended in the last two years? Please select all options that apply.

Multiple Choice

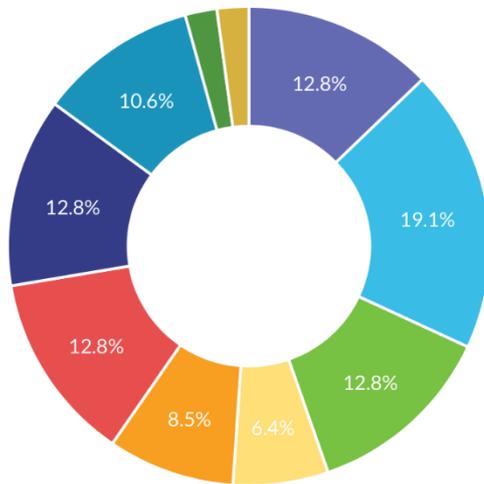


Choice	Total
a. Theatre	4
b. Cinema	8
c. Art exhibition	7
d. Free concert	3
e. Paid concert	3
f. Art exhibition	4
g. Photo exhibition	5
h. Museum tour	4
j. None of the above	0
Other	1

Q14

Which of the following art activities have you participated in or attended in the last two years? Please select all options that apply.

Multiple Choice

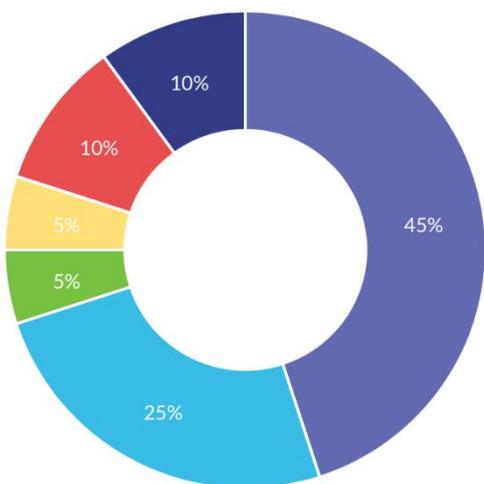


Choice	Total
a. Theatre	6
b. Cinema	9
c. Art exhibition	6
d. Free concert	3
e. Paid concert	4
f. Art exhibition	6
g. Photo exhibition	6
h. Museum tour	5
j. None of the above	1
Other	1

Q15

How do you get information about local Arts & Cultural events and activities? Please select all options that apply.

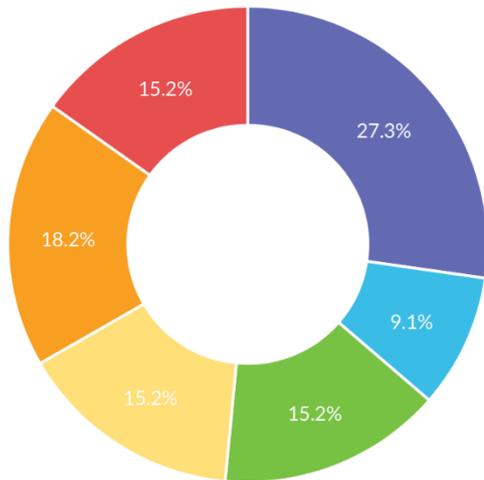
Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
a. Internet	9
b. Friend	5
c. Newspaper	1
d. Tv	1
e. Radio	0
f. I rarely or never receive information on local Arts & Cultural events and activities	2
Other	2

Q16
What would you like to see more of in your area?

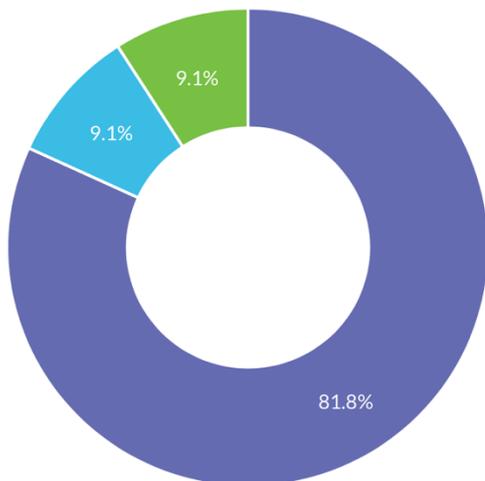
Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
a. Multi-Cultural Arts & Culture Programming	9
b. Social Development Related Arts & Culture Programming	3
c. Live Events	5
d. Festivals, Fairs and Multi-Day Events	5
e. Interactive Community Engagement Events	6
f. Neighborhood Focused Arts & Culture Programming	5
Other	0

Q17
Do you think there should be more Arts & Culture in our community?

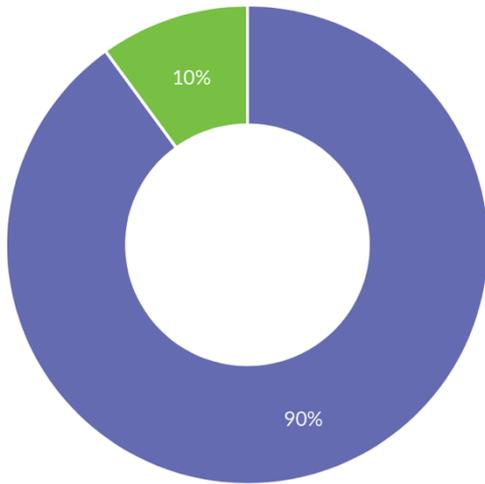
Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
a. Yes	9
b. No	1
c. I don't know	1

Q18
Do you feel Arts & Culture play a key role in the development of a community?

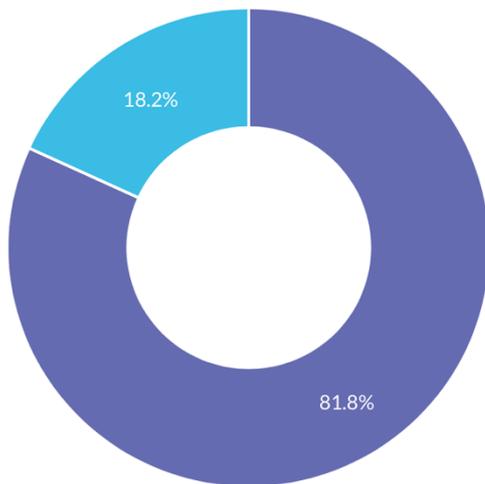
Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
a. Yes	9
b. No	0
c. I don't know	1

Q19
Are you interested in taking art classes?

Multiple Choice

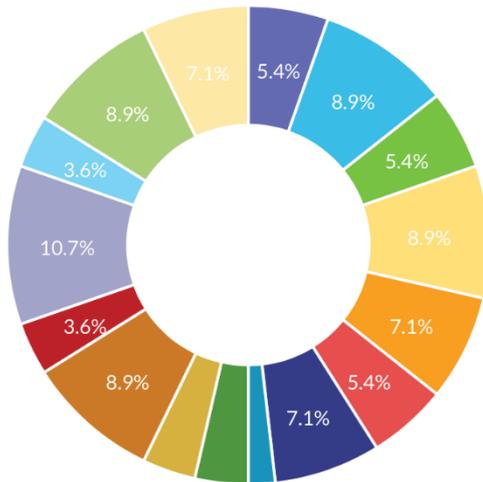


Choice	Total
a. Yes	9
b. No	2

Q20

If yes, which of the following would you be interested in? Please select all options that apply below or add your own.

Multiple Choice

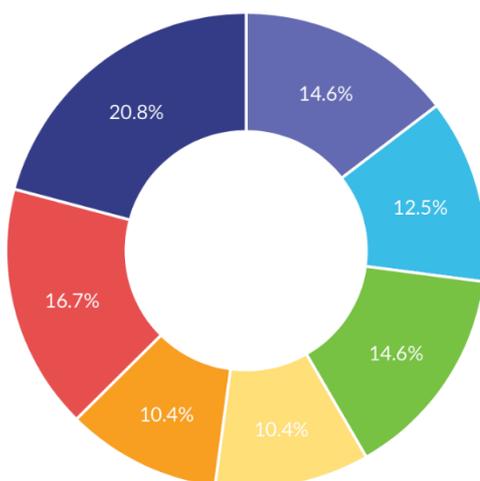


Choice	Total
a. Drawing/Sketching	3
b. Photography	5
c. Collage	3
d. Sculpture	5
e. Ceramics	4
f. Mixed Media	3
g. Digital Media	4
h. Music	1
i. Singing	2
j. Indigenous Arts	2
k. Storytelling	5

Q21

My motivation for participating in art and cultural events are

Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
a. Interest in the content	7
b. Having fun	6
c. Experiencing new things	7
d. Interacting with friends and/or family	5
e. Relaxing or feeling less stressed	5
f. Broadening my perspective or worldview	8
g. Learning something new	10
h. None of the above	0
Other	0

Q22

What do you think is the main barrier for participation in art activities?

Essay



Date	Answers
Dec 15, 2021	A lack of support from the creative industry, especially when it comes to understanding cultural and religious differences.
Dec 14, 2021	Information and a sense that the events are for them. I think sometimes art and culture can make people feel alienated, so engagement is key.
Dec 3, 2021	Politics
Nov 28, 2021	Лень
Nov 9, 2021	Unawareness of events and narrow availability
Nov 5, 2021	Fear you will look like a loser I guess
Nov 5, 2021	None
Nov 5, 2021	The lack of advertisement and awareness
Nov 3, 2021	shyness

Q23

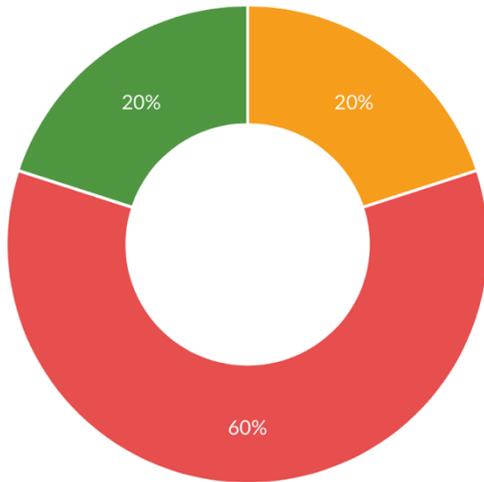
Do you have any further comments?

Essay



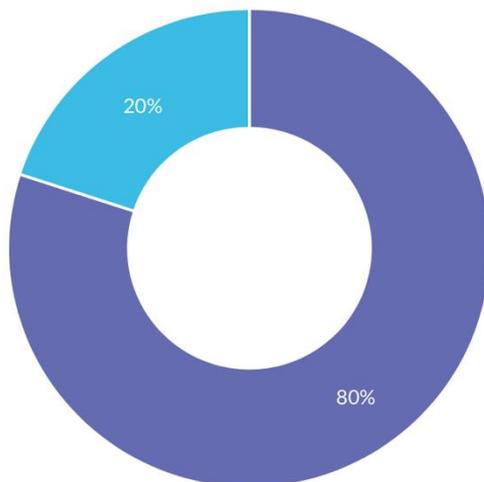
Date	Answers
Dec 14, 2021	N/a
Dec 3, 2021	Please awake some international movies with Iranian artists
Nov 3, 2021	art is an amazing way to build communities and make sure that people have interesting and varied lifestyles

Q24

What is your level of education?
 Multiple Choice


Choice	Total
a. Less than primary	0
b. Primary education	0
c. Secondary education	0
d. Tertiary education	0
e. Bachelor's or equivalent	2
f. Master's or equivalent	6
g. Doctoral or equivalent	0
h. Adult Education/Continuing Education	0
i. Other	2

Q25

Are you currently employed?
 Multiple Choice


Choice	Total
a. Yes	8
b. No	2

Q26

If you are employed, please also answer to the following questions: a. What is your job title? b. How long have you been working? ^

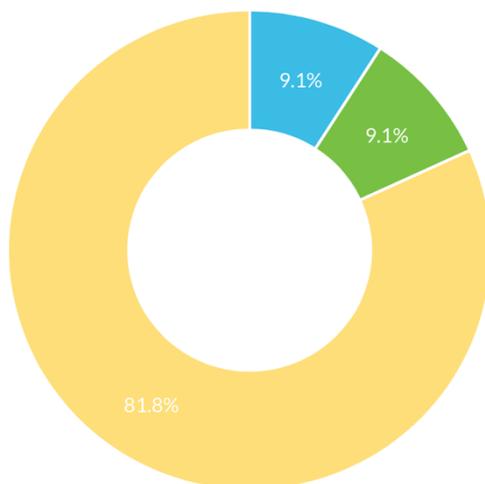
Essay

Date	Answers
Dec 14, 2021	Communications officer (I've been in my current role for 6 months)
Dec 3, 2021	Radio producer Film Editor And podcaster
Nov 28, 2021	Высокая
Nov 9, 2021	8 months
Nov 5, 2021	I was employed but quit my job and looking for another one right now.
Nov 5, 2021	CEO 25 years
Nov 5, 2021	Work in a cafe, a few weeks
Nov 3, 2021	Teacher, 4 years

Q27

I have been living in this country 🌐 ^

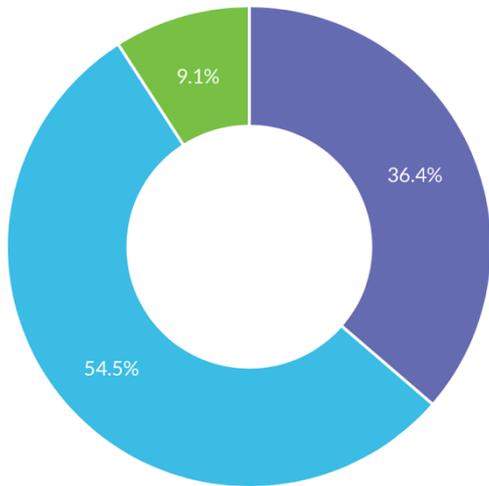
Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
a. Less than a year	0
b. From 1 to 3 years	1
c. From 3 to 5 years	1
d. More than 5 years	9

Q28
What is your age group?

Multiple Choice



Choice	Total
18 to 24	4
25 to 39	6
40 to 60	1
60 plus	0

Q29
What is your gender? (if prefer to answer)

Essay



Date	Answers
Dec 14, 2021	Female
Dec 3, 2021	Male
Nov 28, 2021	Женского
Nov 28, 2021	female
Nov 9, 2021	Female
Nov 5, 2021	Female
Nov 5, 2021	Male
Nov 3, 2021	Female

Q30 What is your nationality?
Essay

Date	Answers
Dec 14, 2021	Canadian
Dec 3, 2021	Iranian
Nov 28, 2021	Русский
Nov 28, 2021	china
Nov 9, 2021	Russian
Nov 5, 2021	Russian
Nov 5, 2021	Finnish
Nov 5, 2021	British

Data from focus groups/interviews and recommendations

We have surveyed six participants. The first participant is a student in architecture, he is a UK citizen of Zimbabwean origin living in London. The second participant is a screenwriter working in finance. The third participant is a worldwide speaker originally from Madagascar living in the UK. The fourth participant is a migrant from Russia also living in London and working in education. Participant 5 is a renowned book editor and creator of a literary club aimed at providing access to the sector for Asian minorities. Our sixth participant was a trustee in a charitable organisation working with young people in the creative sector. All of our participants considered artistic expression to be important for integration. Whilst some highlighted the importance of one-way integration, some focused on **‘reverse integration’** i.e. the inclusion of the majority into the culture of minority groups.

Participant 1

Participant 1 is an architectural student and his origin is Zimbabwe, Harare. The participant asserted that artistic expression is important for integration as it allows people to bond on a common ground. Participant 1 highlighted that there is an absence of the language barrier in the creation and consumption of the arts; “art is what makes us human”. The participant also mentioned that art allows to reduce assumptions about each other and that a vivid art scene makes London a “home for everybody”.

Participant 1 highlighted that there is a financial barrier, class barriers, and language barriers in terms of accessing the arts. On the other hand, London provides many opportunities for people to meet (“bump into each other”) and share ideas in common spaces. Participant 1 mentioned his collaboration with a prominent creative director who sold his work to Nike as an example of a successful artistic expression. It was successful as it helped Participant 1 to make his work more commercial: taught him how to liaise with contractors, respond to a brief, and make his work stand out amongst others.

Participant 1 could also think of alternative ways of expression; for instance, he mentioned landscaping (working with flowers and horticulture), organised religion, alternative performance arts (for example, people riding bikes in Central London), vlogging, and oration (poetry). The participant highlighted that these alternative forms of arts are known for their inclusion. Participant 1 said he will be interested in developing a capacity-building programme for artistic expression and mentioned that these programmes should have people from different walks of life, such as business, design, quantitative fields, and others. He mentioned that programmes such as Freedom and Balance could provide a good model for such collaboration. The participant said that good social media profiles, impressive graphics and having something that people can bond over are all crucial to successful collaboration. Moreover, there should be a physical or virtual space where people could meet and share their experiences with each other.

Participant 2

Participant 2 claimed that artistic expression is one of the most important principles of humanity and a way to show our vulnerability as humans. In her words, integration is linked to the freedom of artistic expression; it offers a glimpse into a person’s inner world, educating, and helping to “bring us all together”.

Participant 2 said that programmes that help migrants to hone their skills are very important. The main issues facing TCNs are that their basic needs such as accommodation and food often remain unmet. Moreover, as creative expression is synonymous with freedom, these individuals are often not given freedom due to relative scarcity and the inability to accommodate basic needs. Yet, Participant 2 thoughtfully proposed that creative expression is a basic need; every person has to have something that lets them be themselves and communicate across the walls created by cultural and language discrepancies.

Participant 2 believes that all modes of creative expression are important; and accessibility - being able to do those things regardless of your resources, is key to facilitating the growth of the arts. Participant 2 emphasised that, historically, these modes of expression were reserved to the rich and (there was ‘gatekeeping’ around that). Yet, she claimed that the world is moving in the direction where creative people come from all walks of life. Participant 2 did not think that there is no such thing as an unsuccessful creative expression; “the more rules we put on what creative expression is, the less space it has to be what it is supposed to be”. Participant 2 mentioned that

“creative expression should be something that allows an individual to speak and to show, as well as something that can be later interpreted by someone else, i.e. the creation has to ‘see the light of day’. Participant 2 said that if there are ways to participate in a capacity-building programme that corresponds to her previous experience, she will be interested in participating.

Participant 3

Participant 3 is an entrepreneur, investor and a worldwide public speaker from Madagascar living in the UK. The participant mentioned that artistic expression is ‘absolutely key’ to the integration of migrants and refugees. “Artistic expression is not just important for the identity of individuals, but it is also important for the expression of their former identity and the roots, as well as grounding one in their own heritage”. Participant 3 claimed that those things you never forget as an adult are children’s rhymes, stories, and art. So the participant asked; why don’t we think that when we immerse ourselves into new societies, art may be helpful in facilitating the twin processes of adaptation and integration?

Interestingly, in the societies that Participant 3 could think of, the percentage of migrants in the arts sector was more than the percentage of migrants in the general population. Yet, crucially, migrants still lacked important skills such as communication and ‘art-preneurial’ skills. Moreover, according to the participant, other challenges that artists faced were access, language barriers, and having important networks to build upon. For instance, Participant 3 argued that Finnish artists in Finland often got premium spaces at Christmas, whilst artists who were foreign did not. Participant 3 mentioned that there are both visible and invisible barriers that artists faced. Some of the visible barriers were the inability to operate in a certain business environment and the lack of knowledge about how to be self-employed. Another barrier was the salary. In the UK, the average pay for artists (even professional ones) was way below the poverty line. Yet, the Participant claimed that these visible barriers could be more easily addressed than the invisible ones.

Participant 3 argued that successful artistic expression is that which is visible to a large number of people and could touch many lives, heal and empower many individuals through the arts. According to the participant, another way to look at the question of success was whether this particular form of art allowed the individual to express themselves. “An unsuccessful expression may be that the person themselves is not happy with”. Importantly, the participant mentioned that it is very hard to identify a lack of success as an artistic expression means different things to different people. Ultimately, according to Participant 3, the success of expression could be measured by seeing whether the person has managed to convey what they wanted to convey and express.

Participant 3 claimed that a good way to develop the different ways of expression is to focus on all of them simultaneously; all different types of art matter as “we all perceive differently”. Participant 3 said that any art that can immerse and reflect the participant’s emotions and

experiences back onto themselves is useful as an art form. The participant mentioned that capacity-building programmes should come in a form of public-private partnerships. Indeed, the participant mentioned that despite the lag on part of the public sector, corporates have already started to recognise the value of the arts. Indeed, Participant 3 proposed that qualitative university degrees could be the degrees of ‘the future’ as they could endow one with a skillset that cannot be easily automated or replicable; “accountants are dying out, and artists are not”. Yet, there is ‘a lacking moment’ in terms of deploying these skills in a productive and economically way.

Participant 3 emphasised that art can be helpful to integration as it allows to communicate difficult topics (for example, these topics could be linked to the challenge of integration). Moreover, art could be a wonderful communication tool to highlight what is going in society. Overall, artistic skills are a “net positive” and a massive opportunity and the key to the successful integration of TCNs is realising the value of artistic skills as a ‘massively underutilised’ resource. Moreover, art needs to be priced correctly. Importantly, there are also challenges of finding the market and a good pricing point which could be solved by clearly articulating the solution that art is providing (for example, solving the child mental health crisis). Overall, Participant 3 mentioned that he is ‘optimistic’ as everything with an artistic side is finding its place ‘more and more’, whilst everything that is mechanistic is pushed by the robots and algorithms.

Participant 4

Participant 4 is a migrant who is currently working in the field of education. Participant 4 thought that artistic expression comes after the satisfaction of basic necessities and things such as logistical concerns, questions of accommodation and education. Yet, after these essentials are ticked, artistic expression can help to “bolster integration at a deeper level”. The participant mentioned that one of the really important aims of artistic expression is the ability to expose people to your culture and to ‘your ways of seeing the world’. “Once you are educated, you are no longer afraid of it”.

Importantly, Participant 4 distinguished between the commercial aspect and the ‘genuine desire to educate’. He thought that the aim of artistic expression should be to provide true insight into the culture and what the culture is rather than an opportunity to commercialise something “mysterious and foreign”. Successful artistic expression is that which leaves a ‘lasting emotional impact’; something you attend, see, or listen to that leaves an ‘imprint’ on you and changes your perception. In Participant 4’s words, things that are genuine change us; he gave an example of seeing striking images of the Syrian conflict and being moved by them. Participant 4 also provided an example of participating in the Diwali celebration which immersed him in a sensory experience and completely changed his perception of Hindu culture. Participant 4 mentioned that integration could happen both ways; yet, the minorities and the refugees are in a ‘position of weakness’ in relation to the native populations. “If there are routes for the migrants to come into the country then integration should also be essential”.

For Participant 4, an example of an unsuccessful artistic expression is that which ‘does not reach the masses’. He also saw it as a ‘problem’; “often it is hard to have an impact you want without finding a direct channel for advertising and marketing your artistic input”. However, Participant 4 mentioned that successful artistic expression was also about respecting the space that an individual is operating in as an artist and correctly perceiving the norms and the people of the society. Hence, according to the participant, not being considerate of society and its beliefs and offending or putting a ‘tint’ on someone’s beliefs through artistic expression is not a successful way to make an impact.

The main challenges of integration for migrants were logistical challenges, understanding the culture, and understanding what is acceptable or not. Participant 4 mentioned that there are ‘little things’ that distinguish foreigners from non-foreigners. For example, in some countries, people handle money with their right hand and in some countries with their left hand. “You can live in a country, you can have a job here, but if the nuances are not understood, one cannot really see themselves as integrated”. Participant 4 mentioned the main challenge of artistic expression is being able to ‘cut through the noise’ and prove that you are worth the audience’s time making a real impact. The way to overcome these challenges is to establish a ‘clear path’ that immigrants can follow to be able to express themselves. Migrants could also be led to understand the culture of a society they want to integrate into. Such education could be facilitated through a charitable organisation, as one example.

Participant 5

This participant has a writer’s club which helps writers from minority groups to get access to the industry and puts them in front of authors. The participant started the club when she realised that, traditionally, access to the sector has been reserved for the elite. Participant 5 thinks that artistic expression is important for integration as it is about inclusion, visibility. “It is not only about putting yourself out there, but also it is important for your children to see as belonging to that place rather than clinging to the ‘home’ of their dreams which no longer exists”. Artistic expression is important as not everyone’s primary area of expression is business, earning money, and others. Artistic expression is a different mode of expression which helps to create “the full picture”.

The participant argued the main barriers for migrants are language, spaces that are hidden away, particular dress codes, and others. The participant argued that it is important to understand the background to be able to perceive different forms of art; this is another challenge that migrants may be facing regarding integration. Moreover, migrants face obstacles in terms of creating art as their basic needs often go unmet. Participant 5 mentioned that Trade Unions used to do lots of work in terms of bringing art to the workplace; yet, this was no longer the case. The interviewee argued that artistic expression can be seen as successful if what it says is important and meaningful and it matches what the person has to say. Moreover, enough people have to ‘take it

up', understand it and draw parallels between their experiences and someone else's experiences. "You understand more about what it is to be human based on the things you consume and create".

The participant argued that COVID has been a 'cultural dead zone'. Yet, she could recall a project one of her relatives attended; this project involved art therapy in nature – "bringing nature to people". The participant highlighted the value of this project in terms of mental health; art made it easier for people to express and talk about what they have been through without talking about it. The participant stated that those sorts of projects were incredible for 'all ages'. Yet, the participant mentioned the existence of a cultural barrier; not all migrants view artistic expression to be integral to their experiences. Thus, the value of art has to be taught from childhood and participation in the arts should be encouraged from a young age.

The participant mentioned that, generally, people started to appreciate the value of art more in the last couple of years. This realisation that not everything has a monetary value led people to believe there is another measure to the quality of life, and that measure is happiness, spontaneous joy, feeling like you are seen and heard... The participant recalled a project aimed to measure the value of artistic expression... She found that this trend is important, and it is important to focus on everything that adds "colour and interest" to our lives.

Participant 6

The participant is a trustee of Westminster Young Foundation, which is a charitable organisation working with young people, as well as a local policy-maker being a Councillor. The participant served as a Youth MP for Westminster, trustee for his student's union, member of Paddington Arts, Paddington Farm Trust, and sat on the grants committee for John Lyon's Charity. The participant argued that artistic expression is important for integration as those people who from different backgrounds, different countries (even different areas of the same country) need some way to make them feel 'like home'; "there is very little that they can do to feel home, to feel comfortable". On the other hand, art is something that connects people, allows them to express themselves, send a message, and even feel connected to their own community. The participant mentioned that there is a general neglect of migrants' needs and a lack of organisations revolving around these issues; thus, projects such as In-Create are essential to integration and promotion of the arts.

Participant 6 mentioned that there are various obstacles to integration; for instance, Islamophobia. Yet, these things are not always blatant; sometimes, there are hidden obstacles, such as language or cultural barriers, which exclude migrants from day-to-day lives and activities. The main issue in terms of expression are the cultural challenges; the forms of artistic expression in the native country are not always the same as forms of artistic expression in the host country. There may also be a certain 'lack of understanding' on part of the host country. Yet, success stories happen 'all of the time'; for example, he recalled musical and drama shows organised by his organisation for the youth. An unsuccessful experience that the participant could recall was

when a young migrant could not understand what they are asked to do and was close to giving up. The participant strongly emphasised that literature is a key form of artistic expression; ‘a story leads to a spoken word, a spoken word leads to performance, and performance leads to a physical art piece’. In terms of fostering the development of the arts, the participant highlighted the significance of nurturing and focusing on the bigger picture as essential to building capacities in artistic fields. The participant mentioned that people in positions of power should be involved in the capacity-building programme. However, there is also a need for people from the community who are already successful and may be from the same backgrounds as participating TCNs to participate in such programmes. “What we need is perseverance, trust, and commitment on part of organisations and inclusivity on part of the government. Similarly, the participant highlighted that there should be a focus on the media and a change of “narratives”. “I really enjoy being able to make a real change to my community by helping improve the lives of so many young people”.

Recommendations

In conclusion, cultural democracy is an essential part of integration. The Baring Foundation report, 2008, Westminster Cultural Strategy 2021-2026 and the Mayor of London’s Culture Strategy “Culture for Londoners” all reinstate the importance of culture both for the general well-being and integration of Third Country Nationals into the UK society. The problems that Third Country Nationals are facing are linked with both structural and non-structural integration. The main recommendation to achieve the integration of Third Country Nationals is to set up a programme with the inclusion of professionals from different fields. According to our participants, the inclusion of professionals from different fields is the most optimal way to make a lasting impact on the industry. Moreover, it has to be a diverse group of people reflecting the target group. Indeed, according to research conducted by the Runnymede Trust, a race equality thinktank, Black- and Asian- led organisations are vital to ensuring that ethnic minorities are included in the arts education. Importantly, our participants also highlighted the lack of relevant organisations as well as a general neglect of the needs of migrants.

In line with our participants’ attitudes, the capacity-building programme should act as a platform for knowledge exchange allowing the participants to showcase their achievements. Moreover, the knowledge and know-how gained by participants should lead them to see a ‘clear path’ that they should follow to achieve success in the arts. Moreover, the organisers should provide a virtual or physical space for participants to meet and exchange, creating ‘something that the participants could bond over’ (in the words of one of our interviewees). Our participants also mentioned that the programme has to be marketed on social media and be visually appealing enough to catch the eye of professionals or aspiring professionals in the creative fields. Thus, different marketing strategies have to be used to promote the programme.

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