

Final Statement of the first Expert Meeting on Migration Museums
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Migration is a defining characteristic of the world we live in today. The global population is on the move and the question is now how to enhance its positive and reduce its negative impacts.

Effective cultural integration can contribute to achieving this goal. Unfortunately, prejudices and tensions exist, often due to lack of knowledge and understanding, which can in part be attributed to the absence of resources and spaces for inter-cultural exchange.

Migration museums have a crucial role to play in finding, preserving, presenting and informing people about the different cultural heritages and perspectives that compose society as well as maintaining and facilitating connections between migrants' countries of origin and host countries.

Migration can refer to all types of large movements of people – immigration both forced and voluntary, as well as emigration. Migrants in the context of this document can also refer to next-generation descendents from migrants.

Museums, whilst they share the same broad theme, are not restricted under one definition and can be represented by a variety of contents, methodologies and places.

Due to their subject matter and their potential for helping to achieve a more cohesive and peaceful society both nationally and internationally, migration museums can contribute to the protection of migrants' rights, and strive to be guided by and committed to the following principles:

- *Memories – individual, collective, dominant and subjugated - as well as the different cultural-expressions of migrants – material or non-material - are precious, to be treasured, and handled with respect and sensitivity*
- *Migrants, as any human beings, possess the right, but need the opportunity, to preserve, represent and evolve their cultural identity, always being centrally involved in the process, and always in relation to the culture of the host society.*
- *Testimonies and cultural contributions of migrants have to be represented through an adaptable and multi-disciplinary approach*
- *Cultural exchange - well-informed and interactive - has to be considered as an essential means to connect people between all cultures and generations*
- *Migration is a process with different phases which should be communicated to societies in both sending, transit and receiving countries to foster more regulation and less vulnerability*
- *Divisive stereotypes need deconstructing in order to favour the construction and expression of new plural identities*

Migration has a past, a present and a future
Migration museums can build a bridge between all three