



ROUNDTABLE 2

How can we change the narrative on migration in the age of polarisation and disinformation?

11.00 – 12.30 and 14.00 – 15.30 on 4 December 2023 (DAY 1)

Structure: 30min of presentations/mini panel plenary + 60min of discussion to engage participants in exchanging their views, best practices and solutions

Speakers

Dr. James Dennison, Professor, Migration Policy Centre of the European University Institute

Chiponda Chimbelu, Journalist, Deutsche Welle

Rudi Osman, Founder of Union of Exiled Students (UEE), 2022 Obama Foundation Europe Leader

Patricia Martínez Sáez, Coordinator of the AMIF co-funded project EPIC

Moderator

Tina Zournatzi, Head of Unit for Communication, DG Migration and Home Affairs, European Commission

Migration is a sensitive, highly political topic that often causes polarisation of views and divisions in society. Negative migration stories and messages arise from a singular focus on irregular migration, as well as misinformation and disinformation that stoke public anxiety and advance populist discourse. Data shows a lack of awareness and knowledge about migration, although Europeans perceive it as a key concern. Migration has been high on the agenda in the media over the past years due to various crises in Europe. The salience of the issue in the context of these events has created and reinforced a crisis narrative on migration.

Narratives play a significant role in shaping how the public perceive migrants and migration as a whole. They can either reinforce stereotypes, fears and prejudices, or challenge them by presenting a more nuanced and empathetic understanding of migrants' experiences. Discussions will focus on how multiple actors - from public institutions, local authorities to civil society organisations and migrants themselves - can contribute with smart solutions and alternative, hope-based and positive stories to balance polarised attitudes and counter disinformation/resonate and engage audiences in more balanced public debate.

Questions to prompt discussions:

- How to raise awareness/build a basic understanding on migration? Can a basic understanding of migration prevent the spread of “anti-migration” rhetoric and address the concerns of citizens about the issue?
- How to build up and promote powerful personal stories of successful integration and inclusion in society? How to use these stories to showcase the contribution of migration to EU economy and society?
- The role of civil society and migrant communities in promoting alternative narratives on migration amidst often dominating exclusionary discourses.
- What concretely should governments and public institutions do to support more positive news reporting about migration?
- How to portray migrants and refugees not as a threat but as an opportunity for Europe?
- How to address disinformation on migration?

Links to documents

[JRC Publications Repository - Values and Identities - a policymaker’s guide \(europa.eu\)](#)

Dr J.Dennison. [Using emotions in migration policy communication](#)

[Special Eurobarometer 508 “Values and Identities in the EU”](#)

[Disinformation on migration by EPC](#)

<https://www.e-mindful.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/Stocktaking-exec-summary.pdf>

<https://www.clarinetproject.eu/en/how-to-run-a-campaign/>

Communication practices:

[Campaigns, tools, platforms - Good communications can be a powerful tool in support of migrant integration. This site brings together articles and good practice examples from the OECD Network of Communicators on Migration](#)

[Candidates - Clarinet Project](#)