

**Office of the Co-ordinator of OSCE Economic and Environmental Activities (OCEEA)**

# E-MINDFUL: Enhancing European Migration Narrative to Develop Further Union’s Long-term actions

**Target Countries/Region:**

Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Germany, Italy, North Macedonia, Serbia

**Project Duration:**

06/21 – 06/23

**Moving attitudes beyond polarization**

**Project Budget:**

2,164,502.53 EUR

**Thematic Area:**

Migration Governance



**Partners:**

International Labour Organization (ILO),



**Donors:**

European Commission, DG HOME;  
German Federal Foreign Office; Italian Ministry of Labour

European University Institute/Observatory on Public Attitudes of Migration (EUI/OPAM)

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**Background**

The political discourse about migration has changed significantly in the past few years. The European Agenda on Migration underlines how “Misguided and stereotyped narratives tend to [...] overlook the inherent complexity of this phenomenon, which impacts society in many different ways.” The consequences of an increasingly gloomy public discourse are particularly visible at the level of policymaking: the growing negative attitudes towards migrants has made migration management approaches that could harness the positive contributions of migrants in both home and host countries, more difficult to implement. Evident repercussions are felt on economies of countries of origin, due to decreased remittances, and countries of destination, facing labour shortages, growth of the informal economy, as well as migrants’ exploitation. The recent lockdown measures due to COVID-19, although necessary to save lives, have further polarized the debate. On the one hand, the diffused perception of the “foreign virus” has fuelled anti-migrant sentiment; on the other, the acknowledgement of the essential role migrant workers play particularly in critical sectors such as public health, elderly care and agriculture, have shed a new light on their positive contribution to host societies.

Aware of the divisive potential of an increasingly polarized public discourse on migration, the E-MINDFUL project offers the opportunity to leverage the OSCE migration-related commitments and the ILO’s Conventions on labour migration to provide relevant stakeholders in the European Union and in the OSCE region with substantial knowledge and tools in order to communicate migration in a balanced and effective manner. The intention is to foster social cohesion and inclusive policy-making so to make host societies a place where everyone feels belonging.

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<b>Project Objective(s)</b>	<p>By researching the complex factors that shape public attitudes towards migrants, the E-MINDFUL project intends to provide evidence-based guidance on how to communicate effectively about migration across multiple segments of society, offering relevant stakeholders a decision-making tool that will help orient future, effective communication strategies on migration and migrants.</p>
<b>Project Stakeholders/ Beneficiaries</b>	<p><u>Stakeholders:</u> European Commission/Directorate General for Migration and Home Affairs (DG HOME); state authorities of the countries involved; national broadcasters of the countries involved; ILO and OSCE constituents.</p> <p><u>Beneficiaries:</u> governments and societies hosting migrants; migrant workers and their families</p>
<b>Brief Summary</b>	<p>Aware of the divisive potential of an increasing polarized public discourse on migration, the E-MINDFUL project intends to research those complex factors that shape public attitudes towards migrants. To do so, the project will pool lessons from selected awareness-raising campaigns on migration carried out in the past by specialized NGOs and international organizations. Such analysis will offer evidence-based grounds to develop innovative prototypes of awareness-raising/edutainment formats in collaboration with communication experts at the national level, including University faculties of semiotics, communication and marketing, schools of journalism/TV/radio and art. The impact of the prototypes on selected audiences will be assessed in order to provide further evidence-based grounds on how individuals frame their perceptions about migrants and migration. The outcomes of this in-depth analytic process will be capitalized in a set of guidelines and a toolkit, comprising a publication, making-off videos and distilled key findings, which will provide a relevant compass and effective instruments to steer and assess future communication strategies on migration and migrants. The project will involve countries in the European Union and in the Western Balkans that are currently facing relevant challenges related to the presence of migrants: Austria, Germany, Italy, Bosnia-Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Serbia.</p>
<b>Project Activities</b>	<p>The project activities will be underpinned by a combination of scientific-led, multi-stakeholder and participatory approach.</p> <p>The implementation of the project activities is structured around four phases, as follows:</p> <p><i>1. Stocktaking exercise:</i> With the aim to understand elements that shape effective communication on migration, the stock taking exercise will analyse selected migration-related communication endeavours carried out in the past. The exercise will focus on the following, three axes: communication – understood as the content of the message; language(s) – understood as the means and the symbolic system(s) through which the message is conveyed; and the audience’s absorption capacity, what makes individuals reject or embrace information that are not fully in line with their beliefs or personal experiences. The expected outcome is a systematized and reliable set of lessons learned from past information campaigns on migration;</p> <p><i>2. Development of innovative edutainment prototypes:</i> Based on the lessons learned from the stocktaking exercise, awareness-raising/edutainment prototypes will be developed in the six countries involved. The prototypes will target key segments of audiences selected in such a way that they can be considered representative of social groups that express mixed feelings about diverse and inclusive societies. In this way, the impact on the shifting of perceptions can be better appreciated. The expected outcome is a package of tested campaign prototypes that could be further serialized in the framework of future communication interventions.</p> <p><i>3. Assessment of the early impact of innovative awareness-raising/edutainment formats:</i> The EUI/OPAM will develop and administer ex-ante and ex-post surveys on the selected audiences targeted with the edutainment prototypes developed in phase no. 2, compare results and draw lessons. Such impact assessment will strive to refine conclusions about the effectiveness of the six prototypes on the respective target audience(s), as well as the causal relationship between the communication models and the shift in perceptions in the target audiences. The expected outcome is a set of additional lessons learned from the innovative awareness-raising/edutainment formats collected and systematized.</p>

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	<p><i>4. Capitalization:</i> The full set of materials, reports, key findings and lessons learned, including the six prototypes, generated throughout the project implementation, will be systematized in a comprehensive, evidence-based, action-oriented, set of guidelines and tools that will allow steering effective, balanced, fact-based, future communication endeavours on migration and migrants</p>
<p><b>Cross-cutting Information: youth's participation and gender mainstreaming</b></p>	<p>The project will be fully gender-mainstreamed, also thanks to the participation in the Project Steering Committee of the Gender Section of the OSCE Office of the Secretary General as well as UN Women.</p> <p>Young professionals from the relevant fields of expertise will participate through the respective Universities/schools/educational entities dealing with journalisms/arts/film-making/marketing/communication.</p> <p>The project will be aligned to the following SDGs:</p> <div data-bbox="425 751 1016 898"> </div>