

Diaspora Engagement Newsletter

MIGRATION AND DEVELOPMENT - IOM Belgium and Luxembourg

October 2021



After three insightful newsletters, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Belgium and Luxembourg is proud to deliver its fourth edition. This newsletter contains a variety of information, including a brief introduction to our Country Office’s projects U-CARE and CoP without borders, a call for Rwandan diaspora professionals, recommendations and many opportunities to engage in diverse projects and activities. Our webpage and social media accounts on Facebook and LinkedIn are updated regularly with new events, calls and info relevant for diaspora residing in Belgium and Luxembourg.

With over 30 years of experience, IOM Belgium and Luxembourg is aware of the importance to establish links and to engage with diaspora communities as powerful actors of development and change. The expertise, commitment, knowledge and skills of diaspora make it essential for our office to give you a prominent place in the development and implementation of our project activities.



Rwandan Diaspora Engagement Projects

Initiated in June 2019, the projects **aim to address the needs** of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector and Health sector in Rwanda **through the engagement of highly skilled diaspora professionals residing in Europe**. Through Trainings of Trainers (ToT) and capacity building and skills transfer activities, diaspora professionals get a hands-on experience that is both captivating and inspiring for other diaspora professionals.

Would you like to know how you can **participate**? Head over to our webpage [here](#) for more information!

Anke Van de Velde
U-CARE project coordinator
Diaspora Focal Point



Ange-Vanessa Nsanzineza
Trainee [EqualCity](#) and Diaspora Engagements



U-CARE project: Alternative Care for Unaccompanied Minors



Unaccompanied migrant children risk their lives on a perilous journey to Europe, forced to leave everything behind because of conflict, violence, famine or persecution. Without parents or any other adult who is responsible for them, they need a safe environment where they can receive adequate care.

The U-CARE project, implemented by IOM in Belgium, Germany and Greece together with Pleezorg Vlaanderen and Greek NGO ARSIS, aims at strengthening alternative care to better support unaccompanied minors. For more info on the project, click [here](#).



What about foster care?

Research has shown that foster care generally gives better chances and results for unaccompanied minors who are looking to rebuild their lives. Pleezorg Vlaanderen and IOM are **looking for new foster families** to give a warm home to unaccompanied minors arriving in Belgium. Do you have a place in your heart and your home? Register for the **online info session, free of charge, on Thursday 14 October 2021**, through [this link](#).



This project is financed by the European Union's Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund



What does foster care offer to unaccompanied migrant children arriving in Belgium and foster parents?

Watch their testimonies [here!](#)

The Future of Diaspora (publication)

Through research and various webinars, IOM's iDiaspora, IOM Development Fund and the Africa-Europe Diaspora Development Platform (ADEPT) created a publication called "The Future of Diaspora".



Read the publication [here](#). On the next page you can read more about webinars organized about this publication.



CoP Without Borders

Have you ever filed (or thought of filing) a **complaint against the police based on discriminatory behaviour**? The CoP team would like to know more about this experience. Fill out the **survey** here (in ENG, FR, NL). For more info, click [here](#).

About Community Policing without Borders

Our Country Office has launched the 2-year **CoP project**. The goal is to reduce racial bias, xenophobia, and intolerance within the Belgian police and by the Belgian police towards migrant communities. The project team has already mapped good practices and is hosting study visits to inspire project partners and other stakeholders. More activities will follow soon.

Are you interested to share your ideas on how to diversify the HR policies, how to change the workings of the complaint mechanisms or how to regenerate trust between the police and communities through community policing? Then join us for a **Reflection Day on the 14th of October!** To find out more about this day and to register, click [here](#).



Let's celebrate and commemorate together! October 2021 - March 2022



October

- o Hispanic Heritage Month (15/09-15/10)
- o International Day of Non-Violence (02/10)
- o World Mental Health Day (10/10)
- o International Day of Girl Child (11/10)
- o United Nations Day (24/10)

November

- o International Day for Tolerance (16/11)
- o World's Children Day (20/11)
- o International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (25/11)
- o International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People (29/11)

December

- o World AIDS day (01/12)
- o International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (02/12)

- o International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime (09/12)
- o International Migrants Day (18/12)

January

- o International Day of Education (24/01)
- o Martin Luther King Day (21/01)

February

- o International Mother Tongue Day (21/02)

March

- o Black History Month Belgium
- o Women's History Month
- o Zero Discrimination Day (01/03)
- o International Women's Day (08/03)
- o Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination (21/03)
- o International Day of Nowruz (21/03)



In January 2021, IOM Belgium and Luxembourg launched its very own podcast series, “Diaspora Insights”. Diaspora Insights is a platform by and for diaspora in Belgium where their work and key topics will be highlighted.

Are you interested in finding out what it means to be **the first youngest district counselor** of a Belgian city? Click on Aïssatou’s photo to hear all about the power of youth within big decision-making processes.

Does **cultural identity** and the importance of understanding one another spark your interest? Head over to Olivia’s podcast episode to hear why she founded Skin Mutts by clicking on her photo.

Calls, events, proposals

From the 1st until the 16th of October the **Afrika Film Festival** will host its 25th edition in Leuven. This yearly film festival highlights a variety of film screenings and other events that are created by people of the African continent. Consult the schedule [here](#).

Is the democratic change in the Gambia standing for a wider dynamic? On October 12th, Jimmy Hendry Nzally, PhD candidate at the VUB, will lead a discussion on this question with Corrado Pampaloni, EU Ambassador to The Gambia, Dr. Baba Galleh Jallow, Executive Director of The Gambia Truth Reconciliation and Repatriation Commission and Muhammed Lenn, lecturer at the University of The Gambia. Click [here](#) for registration and more.

WATAN DABKE ASBL invite you all to a **Dabke workshop** on October 16th at 21h in Anderlecht. More info can be found [here](#).

“**Congo in conversation**” is an exceptional collaborative **visual documentary** that shows the actual social, ecological and economic challenges in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In **three locations in Brussels**, you can view the photographs. This exhibition runs from September 9th until October 24th. For more info on this project, visit [their website](#).

What does the future hold for diaspora engagement? iDiaspora and ADEPT have joined forces, resulting into the new publication "The Future of Diaspora". On **October 28th at 14u (CET)**, they invite you all to hear the authors present their insights on how they foresee diaspora engagement in the next 10 to 20 years. Register [here](#).

Journalismfund.eu opened a call for **two grant programs**; one for cross-border teams of journalists and news outlets who investigate environmental affairs and one for organizations to develop training and support services. Deadlines are **October 27th and November 3rd**. Click [here](#) for more info.

Tomas Ntamashimikiro, Les Mybalés & Ester Nadal invite you to their dance performance "BULLY — BECAUSE U LOVED LOATHING YOURSELF & LE VIDE" on October 30th at KVS in Brussels. Tickets and info can be found [here](#).

On November 25th, **Entrepreneurs for Entrepreneurs** (OVO) organizes a conference for its 20th anniversary "**Africa and Europe: hand in hand**" in Brussels. Find out all about the potential routes for entrepreneurship between both regions by registering [here](#).

On February 22nd 2022, the University of Ghent is inviting **Navi Pillay**, the first non-white woman judge of the High Court of South Africa, to give a Mandela Lecture on **contemporary challenges within human rights and possible future avenues** for local action. The event is free, in Ghent but registration is required. For more info, click [here](#).

In March 2022, **Black History Month Belgium** will organize its 5th edition. Check [their website](#) for any updates.



Did you know...

Nowruz

Nowruz is the **Iranian New Year**, marking the start of Farvadin (the first day of the Solar Hijri calendar, the official calendar of Iran). It is a celebration where its activities **symbolise rebirth and the link between humans and nature**.

For over **3,000 years over 300 million people around the globe**, but mostly in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions, people have been celebrating Nowruz.

Depending which country you are in, this day can also be referred to as: Nauryz, Navruz, Nawrouz, Nevruz, Nooruz, Novruz.

Nowruz means **New Day in Farsi**, a language vastly spoken in Iran, parts of Afghanistan, and the central Asian republic of Tajikistan.

Nowruz starts **between the 19th and 21st of March and lasts for 13 days**.

Recommendation

BOOK: *Groetjes uit Vlaanderen*
by Mohamed Ouaamari (NL)

PODCAST: Héritage Podcast (FR)
by We Tell Stories

DOCUMENTARY: *Steenweg: Cornered in Molenbeek*
by Sahim Omar Kalifa