



PERCEPTIONS



Online Roundtable
Discussion



Location

Online



Contributors

ADITESS, CARITAS, KEMEA, SYNYO



Purpose/Aim



This activity aims to create a virtual and dynamic discussion space to stimulate discussion among the experts working in migrant reception, integration, and support on the sensitive migration-related issues that emerge from the PERCEPTIONS project. It will use creative multimodal design (visual images, sound, streamed video) to engage with different PERCEPTIONS narratives, use different grammar of analysing images, and foster new modes of communication that transcend geographic distances and boundaries. The activity opens an important opportunity for non/governmental stakeholders (such as officers from the asylum service) to engage knowledge creation and connect to action networks at the international level, which they often cannot access. Furthermore, the project gives participants new opportunities to experiment in accessing a wide range of mediums to create and convey meanings about migration, and raise awareness about alternative PERCEPTIONS of Europe and migrant journeys.





Audience

This event targets first-line practitioners, civil society organisations, community and migrant organisations in Greece and Cyprus. It will also be available (via livestream and recording) to the broader public and include migrant-facing practitioners, researchers and migration experts in other partner countries involved in the PERCEPTIONS project. The main participants (around 20) of this digital event will be:

- i. Representatives from public bodies (Such as: Ministry of Citizens protection, of Asylum Services, of the ministry of Migration, UNHCR).
- ii. Law enforcement agencies with interagency cooperation and active involvement on the management of migration.
- iii. Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) representatives



Description of the Activity

A one-off online roundtable discussion engaging experts from Cyprus and Greece discussing the themes which emerged from the PERCEPTIONS project (in particular, migrant interviews, practitioners' survey, interviews and focus groups). The target audience will be practitioners working in any capacity with migrants in Cyprus and Greece. The event will be live streamed and recorded via the PERCEPTIONS social media platforms (Facebook and YouTube channel) and will be available for policy makers and migrant-facing practitioners in partner countries to view later.



Techniques/Format of Activity

This event develops in 2 stages:

Stage 1: Creation of virtual and dynamic discussion space. The event lasts between 2-4 hours and engages around 20 stakeholders working directly with migrants, inviting them to reflect on how (mis)perceptions are constructed and disseminated. The event will be led by several speakers and will include interactive elements in the form of the photographs, pictures and textual prompts from the PERCEPTIONS findings to stimulate discussion. Each speaker focuses on a thematic area relating to the perceptions and narratives expressed by the migrants and practitioners during the PERCEPTIONS interviews, and relates these findings to their area of expertise. After these speaker-led introductions, the event opens up virtual discussion space on contested migration narratives, exploring how these narratives are used to inform policy choices and justify decisions around "better" or "more effective" policy responses. It draws on previous experiences of conducting roundtable discussions, and introduces new modes of communicating and meaning making by bringing this discussion into a digital realm. Engaging officials in decision-making positions in a discussion around (mis) perceptions is vital to addressing concerns raised by the migrants and practitioners in the PERCEPTIONS project.

Stage 2: Creation of awareness materials and dissemination. Partners involved in this activity align inputs from experts with the PERCEPTIONS outputs creating a number of dissemination materials which can be integrated into the PERCEPTIONS platform. This activity will be conducted virtually, and on the back of it press releases, blog posts, social media posts can also be generated. The event will be streamed online recorded via the PERCEPTIONS Facebook page and YouTube channel, and later uploaded on YouTube. The link will be available for dissemination on the project website as well introduced on the creative multi-dimensional framework (3D-Crystal) bringing together best practices, creative materials and potential responses/future migration scenarios.



Outcomes

This online creates a dialogue between experts in the field of migrant reception, integration and management and frontline practitioners. It focuses on delivering several outcomes, including:

- Video recording of discussion and contributions from partners, used as a summary of the main outcomes. To facilitate further dissemination, QR codes will be added to share this activity and motivate other partners to actively organise similar events.
- Production of engagement materials such as leaflets, infographics of results, and whitepaper recommendations based on the outcomes of the event.
- This activity also has an educational outcome. The format of this event will be catalogued, explained and transferred to other PERCEPTIONS partners in order to facilitate stakeholder engagement and interactive discussions on the project's outputs. Similar thematic areas will be discussed, and a network of contributions will be developed based on the outputs.



Key Concepts

Voicelessness – this activity engages with the migration narratives of hard-to-reach groups to ensure that they can be heard and their ideas inform policy and practice. By drawing on the images, texts, symbols produced by migrants, this activity helps to adjust policy instruments to the needs of participants and ensure that culturally and context-specific migrant knowledge informs policy making. Using multiple media and hybrid (image/text) language can better express emotions, opinions, narratives and cultural practices important for migrants, which are often obscured due their multiple positionings and identifications in the transnational context.

Exploration and interaction – this activity creates space for exploring contested narratives of migration, disseminating information and sharing opportunities for innovations in responding to migrants. It allows communication across multiple modes and language forms, thus helping to take multiple perspectives on contested migration-related issues. Engaged multimodal discussion can help to challenge the legitimacy of traditional narratives, highlight oft-overlooked responses and **attend to the uncertainty and unpredictability of migration**, which often contributes to migrants' **sense of loss and disorientation**. Creation of a virtual and interactive space can bridge digital and academic worlds, avoid routinisation of accepted solutions, as well as to share migration concerns and challenges at the international level.

Impact



This event and its dissemination will facilitate a targeted informational campaign, and inform policymakers by delivering accurate and contemporary data on migrants' perceptions. This activity will **question the established wisdom and routines of migrant policy** making and explore how policy narratives are produced, revised and disseminated. It will highlight the importance of revisiting traditional migration narratives that frame issues to the advantage of particular policy actors, as well as acknowledge and adopt **explorative, interactive styles in co-producing tools** for regulation and responding to migration. Informed by the real world migrant experiences from the PERCEPTIONS project, this activity cuts across traditional left/right values shaping migration and helps policymakers in moving away from a technocratic approach to steering migration flows. It will encourage broader debate on the key migration-related issues involving uncertainty about its impacts, concerns about how to best negotiate different mobilities and maximise its social and economic benefits.

Furthermore, this event will produce context-specific reflections on the links between migrant perceptions and appropriate solutions in the countries, which are at the forefront of welcoming migrants to Europe. By means of exchanging views on migration politics, migration scenarios and migration management procedures, the event will help **transfer good practices and expertise** between Greece and Cyprus and introduce tangible changes in practical responses to migrants. Opening up of a new discussion space informed by the evidence from the PERCEPTIONS project can help introduce new, potentially controversial issues on the policy agenda, reconcile multiple and conflicting knowledge claims, and **enhance understanding of migration** in the countries that provide many migrants with the first points of reference for European experience.





PERCEPTIONS



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