



CHAPTER III.

CROSSING TWO RESEARCH APPROACHES

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1. Methodology

VOICITYS project was based on two different research methods aiming at mapping the perceptions on diversity by the different segments of the local societies. The first was dedicated to mobilise voices of citizens living in the area by using a special method called “Community Reporting”; the second was dedicated to understand how stakeholders, civil organisations and policy makers see diversity and diversity management issues in the neighbourhoods. The two methods were run parallel to each other in the four neighbourhoods during the first year of the project. The summaries of each method and the crossing of their results were discussed at a project meeting, and finalised by the leaders of the research in a summary table. In the following chapter, first, the two methods will be described, and second, the summaries of the results of the two research will be presented. (The detailed description city by city of the results of the two method can be found in the Annex of this Handbook: 89-144 pages)

1.1. Bringing up citizens’ voices on Diversity: the Community Reporting Method

1.1.1. What is Community Reporting?

Community Reporting is a storytelling movement that was started in 2007 by People’s Voice Media, and it uses digital tools such as portable and pocket technologies to support people in telling their own stories in their

own ways. Using the Internet to share these stories with others, we are able to connect them with the people, groups and organisations who are in a position to make positive social change.



Central to Community Reporting is the belief that people telling authentic stories about their own lived experience offers a valuable understanding of their lives. Through creating spaces in which people can describe their own realities, Community Reporting provides opportunities in which people can use storytelling to:

1. Find their voice
2. Challenge perceptions
3. Be catalysts of change

The Institute of Community Reporters (the ICR) was founded by People's Voice Media in 2012 and is the overarching entity that supports the Community Reporter movement. The movement currently spans mainly across the UK and Europe. The ICR's functions include:

- Acknowledging the achievements of our members via a badging system (i.e. bronze, silver, gold, platinum depending on scope of your Community Reporter activities and training activities accessed);
- Quality assuring Community Reporting practices (i.e. overseeing our Responsible Storytelling methodology and continually developing relevant training materials);
- Engaging with the network via communications, events and Community Reporting activities (e.g. social media, emailers, annual conferences, network training sessions).



The Community Reporter network consists of 4 different types of members, that are:

- **Community Reporters:** People who have accessed an ICR approved Community Reporting training programme and have been badged accordingly. They contribute to the network by

sharing stories on www.communityreporter.net and engaging in the ICR's activities;

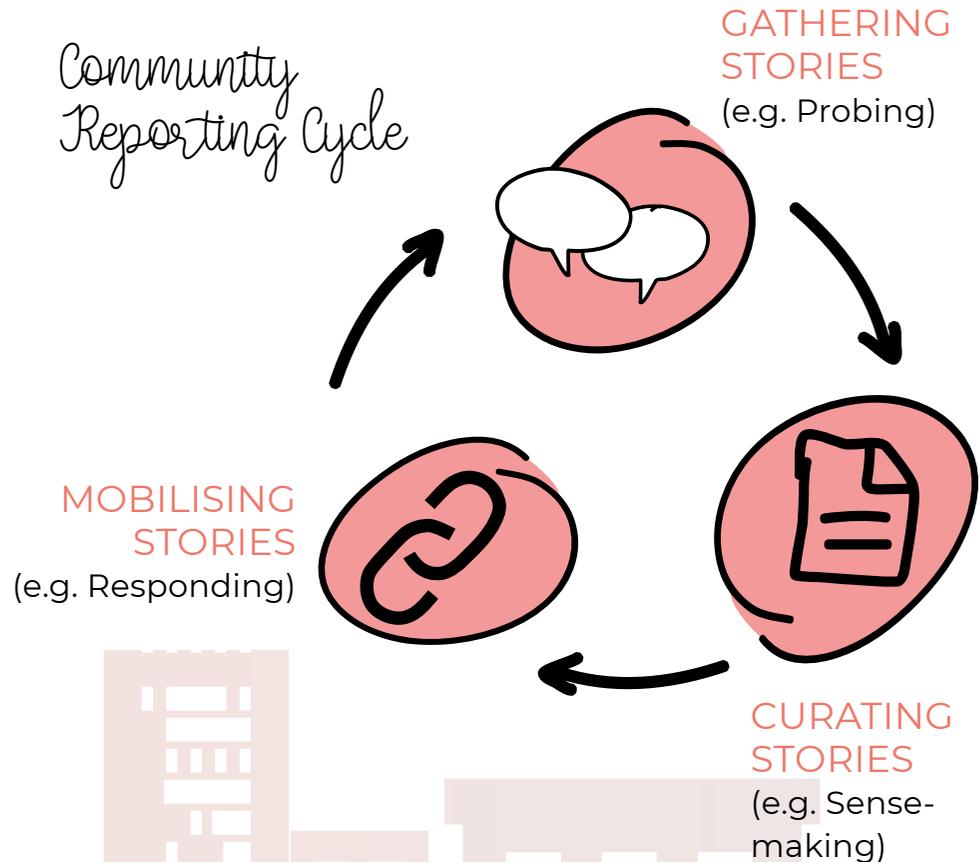
- **Trainers and Digital Curators:** People who the ICR has approved and contracts to deliver Community Reporting training programmes and story curation activities. They contribute to the



network by sharing their expertise with trainee Community Reporters and developing their skills;

- **Social Licensees:** Individuals, groups and organisations who have a license agreement in place for them to conduct Community Reporting activities outside of People's Voice Media's scope of work. They contribute to the network by supporting the development of Community Reporters, developing the usage of Community Reporting in different sectors and providing connections to people, places and organisations for our network;
- **Partners:** Individuals, groups and organisations who we work with to deliver collaborative projects, share knowledge and develop new practices, methodologies and training materials. They contribute by writing funding applications, providing links and connections to people, places and organisations to the network and by supporting us to develop the Community Reporting practices in a multitude of ways.

We believe in achieving positive change for communities by bringing peoples' portrayals of lived experiences together to influence change from the ground up via Community Reporting methodologies. Community Reporting has three distinct components – story gathering, story curation and story mobilisation – based around the Cynefin decision-making framework for complex environments (David Snowden, 1999), as depicted in the diagram below.



Through gathering, curating and mobilising stories from our growing network of Community Reporters, we seek to inform policy, processes and practice.



Models of Community Reporting

COMMUNITY REPORTING FOR STORYTELLING



COMMUNITY REPORTING FOR CO-PRODUCTION

COMMUNITY REPORTING FOR INSIGHT

1.1.2. Story Gathering

To gather stories, we have three interlinked models of Community Reporting – Storytelling, Co-Production and Insight. Community Reporting for Storytelling provides people with the knowledge and skills to become responsible storytellers and to have their say on the issues and topics that are pertinent to them. Community Reporting for Co-Production uses different forms of digital media to present a range of perspectives on a subject matter, creating a dialogue between various points of view on a topic. Community Reporting for Insight uses people’s experiences to provide rich qualitative data to projects, taking the insights from their stories to identify themes, inform findings of wider studies and positively impact on local agendas, policies and service design.

The approach we take to supporting people in telling and sharing stories of their lived experience is fundamental to all of our Community Reporting programmes. We don’t have a defined way in which people tell their stories, as we believe that the person telling the story knows the best way to tell it. Instead, we have a range of activities through which people are introduced to different storytelling tools. Using some or none of these, people create their own structures for their stories and tell them in the way that they want to.



Removing hierarchy is at the core of this practice

1.1.3. Responsible Storytelling

In order to ensure that we have a degree of consistency within our practice of Community Reporting, techniques and discussions around responsible storytelling are embedded into all of our programmes. This core module explores the ethics and values of Community Reporting, the type of content that people's stories should and shouldn't include, an exploration of permissions and consent, and how people can keep both themselves and others safe in online and offline environments.

Following the delivery of a carousel-style activity that provides opportunities for people to think about the aforementioned topics, our ICR Trainers facilitate a reflective discussion with the Community Reporter group. During this reflective discussion, a Community Reporting Best Practice Guide is produced that outlines a 'code of conduct' for that specific group of Community Reporters. This Best Practice Guide will have the core principles and values of Community Reporting within it, but it will also be nuanced enough to be inclusive and accommodating for the local context in which the Community Reporters will operate. In essence, each new group of Community Reporters produce their own Best Practice Guide that takes into consideration cultural factors (i.e. what is respectful within their communities), the legalities of their country (i.e. issues of consent) and who they are and how they will be using Community Reporting (i.e. what is 'safe' to them).

1.1.4. Supportive Learning Environments

It is really important that the learning environments of our Community Reporting programmes are tailored to the needs of our participants so that people can be confident enough to try new things and be empowered to share their ideas and opinions. The ICR Trainers create these environments through a range of facilitation techniques.

Removing hierarchy is at the core of this practice. Within our Community Reporting programmes there are no experts, only people with a range of capacities. Rather than starting with the areas that people need to develop (i.e. digital skills such as how to edit a video), we start with what people already know and build their learning from there. We encourage people to share their knowledge, skills and experience with others and as such, advocate peer-to-peer learning and support. It is important that our ICR Trainers are part of the storytelling movement themselves and that they share their own stories. Our ICR Trainers regularly participate in the storytelling activities in the Community Reporting programmes so that the conversations that take place are more peer-to-peer than trainer-to-trainee. Furthermore, it is important that we provide opportunities for everyone to have their say. This involves listening to people and ensuring that people feel that their lived experience is a valid and valued story to share. Through constructing these supportive learning environments, we create storytelling spaces in which people feel secure enough to share their authentic stories within a group setting and also with others online.



1.1.5. Story Curation

The stories gathered form the basis of our curation activities. This process involves the layered analysis of individual and groups of stories, accompanied by a series of packaging activities (i.e. feature article writing, edited films, word clouds, etc.). Once stories have been curated, we seek to mobilise the knowledge in them by connecting the packaged content with the people, groups and organisations with the power to make positive social change.

Within the context of the Internet and the digital age, the term 'content curation' is broadly used to describe the process for gathering, organising and presenting information in relation to a specific subject. Similarly, when we use the expression "curated stories", we are using it as an umbrella term that accounts for a layered analysis process that is accompanied by a series of packaging activities in order to present back the key findings across a collection of individual stories. We do this in order to better understand similar or sometimes seemingly incongruent stories within the wider context that they are told, and to find ways of exhibiting this understanding via digital and online tools that make it easier for people to share and use.

Whilst the specific analytical activities we undertake and the ways in which we present back the understandings from the stories is variable, our practice of story curation is underpinned by a core

aim of maintaining the authenticity and voice evident within the individual stories being curated. To do this we have adopted a 2-step review process that seeks to verify the authenticity of the findings and their representation during the curation process. This 2-step review process involves:

Community Reporter/ICR Trainer Review – A Community Reporter who contributed a story to the set of stories being curated or an ICR Trainer who was present when the stories were being told, assesses the curated findings to see if they are in-line with what they felt themselves and/or others were trying to communicate.

Independent Review – An individual who has no immediate connection to the stories being curated (i.e. they did not contribute a story themselves and/or were not present when the stories were being told), assesses the curated findings to see if they are in-line with what they feel the individual stories communicated upon viewing them.

These validated findings can then be used to create social change by informing service design and delivery, research findings and reports, and policy papers and reforms.





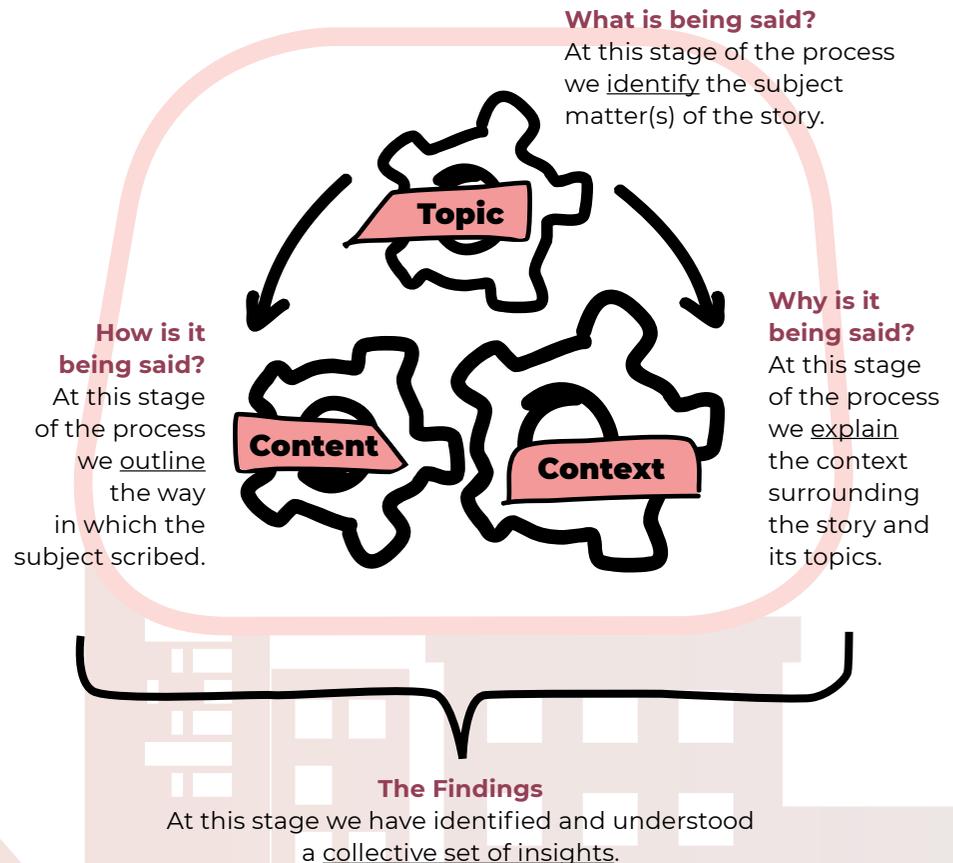
1.1.6. The analysis process

There are three stages in the analysis process through which a set of findings emerged. The first stage of the process is the 'Topic' level and this stage is concerned with identifying the subject matter(s) in a story. This primary analysis phase is based on a basic textual analysis process in which the metadata such as the categories and tags attached to a story are used to identify what it is about (i.e. work, etc.). Through looking at the subject matters evident within a set of stories the broad themes across them begin to emerge.

The second stage of the process is the 'Content' level, and this stage is concerned with outlining the way in which the subject matters are being described. This secondary analysis phase uses a more interpretative textual analysis approach to situate the subject matters within the perspective they were told through looking at them in more detail (i.e. listening to the stories and enunciations, reading their descriptions, observing body language, etc.). Through this, an understanding of the emergent themes is gained and trends can begin to be deciphered (i.e. many of the stories are about the lack of work in a village).

The third stage of the process is the 'Context' level, and this stage of analysis is concerned with explaining the wider context in which the story is being told. This final analysis phase relates the trends to the wider circumstances that surround the story and places them

The ICR Analysis Process





within the environments in which they were told (i.e. in the stories, people living in the village are talking about their experiences of unemployment since the local factory where many of them were employed closed last year). Within this stage, the understandings gauged from the stories can be related to (where relevant) existing evaluation and/or conceptual frameworks.

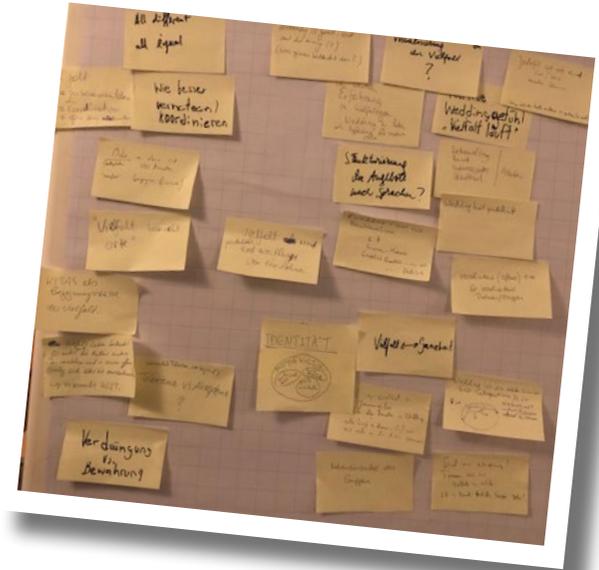
As depicted in the diagram below, this process results in the identification and understanding of a key set of themes and trends from a collection of stories that can be synthesised into a collective set of insights. These insights are not a set of judgements or a critical evaluation of the stories, but rather an objective presentation of the findings that emerge from the stories during the analysis process. From these insights, we produce packaged content such as thematic overview films, presentations, reports and more, in order to mobilise the knowledge from within the stories and connect them to decision makers at various levels.

1.1.7. Story Mobilisation

Story Mobilisation processes connect the learning from stories to people, groups and organisations who are in a position to use this knowledge to create positive change. There are many ways in which we mobilise the findings from our stories and curated content, both online and offline, such as

- Sharing on social media;
- Posting on websites;
- Using email;
- Organising events;
- Facilitating workshops and discussions;
- Adopting grassroots techniques.

A key aspect of our story mobilisation processes are Conversation of Change events. Conversation of Change events use Community Reporter stories and other stimuli to prompt a dialogue between various stakeholders that seeks to catalyze change. When we talk about dialogue, we mean the sharing of understandings, learning and ideas. Essentially, we are talking about a knowledge exchange process that can create new ways of thinking and doing things. These events can be run offline and online.





The change that these events seek to make can happen at three distinct yet interconnected levels:

- Individual (ideologies and behaviours): e.g. a person could change their perception on a topic, a professional could change their practice, etc.;
- Organisational (delivery and spaces): e.g. an organisation may change the ways it does things, a service or space could be re-designed, re-purposed or co-created from scratch, etc.;

- Systemic (society and culture): e.g. a policy could change or be written, practice could change across a whole sector, social norms may change.

The technique of Conversation of Change events was used on the second part of VOICITYS as a first step of the community dialogue, aiming at identifying the main issues and recommendations for managing diversity in neighbourhoods.

Józsefváros
BUDAPEST
(Hungary)

Old Town
SASSARI
(Italy)

CHALK
SALFORD
(UK)

Wedding
BERLIN
(Germany)

1.2. Diversity as seen by stakeholders: The social science approach

The policies and governance of local diversities in the four cities were studied by using social science research methods. The goal of social science research is “to discover goals and postulate theories that can explain (...) social phenomena, or in other words, build scientific knowledge” (Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices, 2012). Theories and observations are integral to social science research, thus “scientific research involves continually moving back and forth between theory and observations” (Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices, 2012). This process, that is, the acquisition of knowledge about phenomena, takes place through particular methods, i.e. standardized sets of techniques that enable the researcher “to independently and impartially test preexisting theories and prior findings, and subject them to open debate, modifications, or enhancements” (Social Science Research: Principles, Methods, and Practices, 2012).



1.2.1. The research design

Based on the literature review sampled above, in the VOICITYS project a research design was developed for guiding the local teams to collect data about the four neighbourhoods and conduct semi-structured interviews with local stakeholders. Following this research design, in the preparation phase of the social science research a document analysis was also implemented for analysing the way diversity appears in the local and national discourse over time. Teams described local history and social changes, the existence and disappearance of different socio-economic and ethnic groups from the neighbourhood as well as the changing economic role of the neighbourhood and its current status. Documents used in this part of the research included:

- The social history of the neighbourhood relying on existing analyses, previous research;
- Spatial planning and development documents (strategic papers, reports);
- Policy documents directly addressing diversity and/or social inclusion, social cohesion, social mobility, public service delivery;
- Local/National regulations addressing social inclusion, social cohesion, social mobility, public service delivery and, if relevant directly, diversity;
- Development project documents from the last ten years related to public spaces and social institutions.

Parallel with the document analysis, some data have been collected on the socio-economic conditions of neighbourhoods. Types of data gathered by local research teams were:

- Territory, number of inhabitants, population change during the past 20 years;
- Socio-demographic data: age groups, education, unemployment rate;
- Number of SMEs and, if possible, change of the number;
- Number of NGOs, non-profit organisations;
- Housing: general state of housing, share of social housing;
- Data on available public services maintained by local and/or national governments;
- Identification of the main socio-economic and ethnic groups living in the area, their countries of origin, and, if existing, some data on their share in the local population and their socio-demographic composition.





The overall goal of the stakeholder interviews was to collect perceptions and visions on local manifestations of spatial inequalities...

As the result of the preparatory phase of the research, a background study was produced by all local teams permitting the contextualization of the interviews for the next phase of the research.

As a preparatory phase of fieldwork, each team identified and studied the mental and physical spaces of interaction of diverse people in the neighbourhoods. They studied the appearance of different socio-economic and ethnic groups in public institutions, public spaces, at public hearings and at local events. Teams also identified the main spaces frequented by different socio-economic and ethnic groups and described spaces of interaction of hyper-diverse communities. The background study and the participatory observation of the neighbourhoods helped provide solid background knowledge for the preparation of the interviews.

For the interviews, local teams first identified and mapped the network of stakeholders, defined as organisations or individuals who have “a stake” or an interest in the issue through local policy initiatives. In this vein, all teams interviewed the following types of stakeholders:

- Members of national governments/ministries/public agencies;
- Members of local councils/different decision making bodies of the local councils;
- Formal/informal, state or non-state organisations representing different groups of various levels of socio-economic vulnerability, of socio-economic and ethnic background, of cultural and religious orientation, etc... ;

- Formal/informal, state or non-state organisations specifically linked to the chosen group (e.g. families with children);
- Spaces and mechanisms of interaction between stakeholders (channels and forms of communication, of feedback, of integrating a diversity of views in decision-making processes, etc.);
- Institutions regulating their encounters at the local level.

The overall goal of the stakeholder interviews was to collect perceptions and visions on local manifestations of spatial inequalities, i.e. segregated or even dangerous places within the neighbourhood reflecting social and spatial positions of the local stakeholders. We also collected explanations of how local stakeholders explain and evaluate the overall development trajectory of the neighbourhood. We compared, horizontally at the local level and across various levels of governance, the different perceptions and explanations of the stakeholders regarding their positions in decision making processes. Local teams were expected to study the presence or lack of representatives of vulnerable socio-economic and ethnic groups within different decision making bodies, as well as the appearance of diverse views in policy decisions and methods for inclusion in decision making processes. The interviews focused on four main subject areas: perception of diversity, places of diversity, the governance of diversity and policies of diversity.



Interview guide

The overall goal of the interviews was to be able to compare, horizontally at the local level and across various levels of governance, the different positions of stakeholders in decision making processes. Also to study the presence/lack of representatives of vulnerable socio-economic and ethnic groups in different decision making bodies, the appearance of a diversity of views in policy decisions and methods of their inclusion.

1. Perception of diversity

Describe the society of the neighbourhood?

Most important socio-economic and ethnic groups in the neighbourhood?

Main changes in the local society in the last ten years?

What kind of challenges does the diversity of the neighbourhood generate?

Differences between people with different backgrounds?

Evaluate these differences?

2. Places of diversity

Identify and describe the different parts of the locality from different (historical, social, economic) perspectives.

Draw and explain the boundaries between them.

Identify conflict zones/problem areas.

Identify common spaces used by people.

3. Governance of diversity

Governance: governance is the formulation and implementation of public policies, programmes and projects through coordinating the actions of actors and institutions, integrating policy sectors, mobilising stakeholder participation, being adaptive to changing contexts and, finally, realising the place-based/territorial specificities and impacts. Relations between the different stakeholders/institutions. Organizations' relationships to local government and to each other.

Formal and informal mechanism of interaction/cooperation.

Mechanism/channels of participation in decision making processes.

4. Policies of diversity

Policy elements, features, emphases and the way they shape institutions.

The implementation of policy decisions: everyday practices and decisions.

Formal institutional background vs. enactment of institutions with a view to social change (formal, informal changes).





1.2.2. Methodological issues

The collection and analysis of data gathered from stakeholder interviews in the four neighbourhoods called attention to some limitations of the social science methodology as applied in the VOICITYS pilot project. These limits were primarily due to structural and time-related issues, such as the different knowledge of social science methods in the local/national teams, and the lack of time and capacities to control the data collection and data analysis done in each city. Short descriptions of local and national governance structures

and policy regimes in the national stakeholder summary reports provide a basic understanding of the positions of stakeholders within the neighbourhoods and within the local governance structure. Due to these limitations, as a pilot project, VOICITYS aimed at raising questions about how to study diversity and to develop a methodology that provides linkages between citizens' views on diversity and decision-makers' understanding of the phenomenon. Utilising the community reporting method provided important reflections for the social science approach with regard to analytical dimensions about studying diversity.

2. Diversity in Neighbourhoods – conclusions of the results³

2.1. From Perceptions to Lived Experiences: Life in diverse communities. conclusions of the Community Reporting



Across the stories gathered in Berlin, Budapest, Salford and Sassari, a number of perceptions of diversity have emerged. When discussing the concept of diversity on a surface level, people generally spoke about ethnicity. For example, when talking about diversity and changes in the Józsefváros neighbourhood of Budapest, **one resident** stated that “Arabic, Turkish and other Asian people have moved here, it wasn't like this before. It was much better, for the shop and everything. Mostly

Roma musicians lived here.” Where this was slightly different was in the stories from Wedding, in which people spoke about other aspects of diversity such as religion and sexuality.

The Wedding stories valued difference and saw it as strength. As one resident reported, “People here behave peacefully and with no violence because they all got the idea since they came that our diversity

³ In the following chapter the conclusions of the two research methods and the crossing of these results will be presented; more detailed description of the results in each city can be read in the Annex of the Handbook. (89-144 pages)



builds a stronger community.” In the Old Town of Sassari as well, people generally saw diversity as a good thing: *“Diversity is an opportunity”* through which one can grow and *“enrich oneself”*, as **one resident** explained. Yet within these stories, there seemed to be a discourse that denied (whether intentionally or not) the differences that diversity presents. This could be problematic in diverse neighbourhoods if integration becomes too close to assimilation. Essentially, the recognition of difference should not be seen as a negative.

When people spoke about their lives in the neighbourhoods, their perceptions of diversity were more varied when they were not talking about it directly. For example, when just talking about their experiences, the residents of CHALK, Salford acknowledged other parts of diversity beyond ethnicity. Understandings of health issues emerged from such discussions, particularly in terms of mental health. As **one resident** stated, *“I built a wall around myself for five years, not speaking to anyone, so then trying to talk to someone was very hard.”* Moreover, societal issues that transcend ethnicity were addressed such as poverty and unemployment. Such understandings demonstrate the importance of the adoption of the concept of ‘hyper-diversity’ within this project. By approaching diversity through a multifaceted lens, we aimed not to reduce discussions around ethnicity but to seek more interconnected and nuanced understandings of people’s life in diverse neighbourhoods.

2.1.1. Overarching challenges

Within the stories, a number of challenges to the neighbourhoods and the people who live there have emerged. Some of these issues were related directly or indirectly to notions of diversity while others seemed not to be. Based on the stories gathered one might conclude that diverse neighbourhoods experience rather high levels of change across a range of areas and seem to be home to some of the more marginalised groups within society. This in turn makes them more susceptible to arising social issues.

Looking across the individual summative reports, three overarching challenges to the neighbourhoods can be identified. They are:

Demographic shifts: The stories all referenced evident changes in the areas’ demographics. In the case of Józsefváros and Wedding, the threat of gentrification may displace current inhabitants. In the case of CHALK and the Old Town of



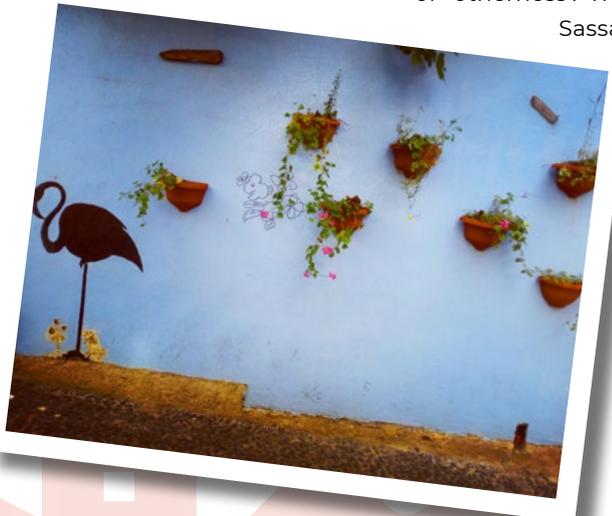


Sassari, newcomers from outside the country who have moved into the area are often greeted with low-quality built environments or housing conditions, neither of which are supportive in making a home in a new setting.

Fear of newcomers: With population changes has come a fear of the people who

are new to the area – essentially a fear of ‘otherness’. This is evident in statements like the

Sassari businessman’s description of the historic area as a “ghetto”, and in the lack of trust for Eastern European people spoken about in a story from Salford. Such fears contribute to the breaking down of a sense of community, and disable the cultivation of strong social ties across groups. This fear also appears, yet in another context, in the case of Wedding, where the arrival of new “gentrifiers” are considered as being a threat for the existing local diversity of the neighbourhood.



Wider contexts: The neighbourhoods also do not exist in a vacuum from the wider world, and external factors also inevitably influence them. For example, stories from CHALK and the old town of Sassari highlight how changing social attitudes have led to people to become less connected. In Wedding, although the neighbourhood is seen as being a good example of a diverse community, residents are still impacted by systemic issues such as institutionalised racism within the police force. It is hard for individual neighbourhoods to be resilient to such issues or have the capacity to combat them.

2.1.2. Going Beyond

What has become apparent from the stories is that in order for the diverse neighbourhoods we worked in to address the challenges they face, ‘beyond’ thinking and approaches are needed. Beyond thinking and approaches go further than seeking to solve the symptom of an issue, and delve into more multifaceted, complex solutions to an issue’s root cause. This is not to say that some manifestations of more linear and symptom-addressing approaches are not needed, but rather to state that in order to fully tackle a social issue, new ways of thinking and doing things must be cultivated. In turn, this can lead to real change that goes beyond surface-level interventions. Looking across the stories, three distinct notions of beyond thinking and approaches have emerged, as detailed below.



Beyond physical regeneration and into creating environments of interactions

There are many examples within the stories about different types of physical regeneration that has occurred in our neighbourhoods. These include new bars opening in the squares of Sassari's Old Town, facades of buildings being renovated in Józsefváros, and the legacy of the NDC Regeneration Scheme in CHALK embodied in community centres. Yet what seems to be valued about such spaces is not just the visual appeal of buildings, but the ways in which the spaces allow for interactions between people. As **one person** detailed regarding Wedding, "*There is one or several spaces where people of different origins can meet.*" When such spaces are no longer there, such as the closed pubs in Salford, it is not only the service they offered the community that disappears but also the opportunity for people to socialise. Furthermore, when certain spaces are renovated it can also lead to the exclusion of people, as is the case with the gatekeeping of the regenerated parks in the 8th district of Budapest. Therefore, **when creating or renovating physical spaces it is important to think about how they can help facilitate social interactions**, particularly for those in the community who may be the most excluded.

Beyond services and into creating meaningful connections

While many of the stories highlight how services and formal support provision have helped people in their

When creating or renovating physical spaces it is important to think about how they can help facilitate social interactions

neighbourhood, it is important to remember that **services alone are not the answer**. In Józsefváros, for example, people reported that they didn't feel that those who really needed newly emerged services were accessing them. In CHALK, people spoke about difficulties navigating services and finding out information. Furthermore, in the stories from Wedding, it is highlighted that although there is a system in place to support newcomers in settling into Germany, the bureaucracy of the system presents a barrier to people who use it. Examples of services working for the people who need them are found when people have either been signposted by other locals or when the services enable them to connect on a human level with others. As the **caregiver** who attends a Zumba class in CHALK stated, the group helps her "*live a life as well as caring for [her] husband*". What we can learn from stories like this is that **connecting local knowledge regarding services and connecting people to one another are key contributors to services reaching their intended recipients**.

Beyond top-down strategic interventions and into bottom-up action

The stories and their contexts demonstrate that **top-down strategic interventions should be combined with the real engagement of local people**. In Wedding, the Social City programme is being used to include local people in decision-making processes in an attempt to bridge this divide. In CHALK, despite some of the divides between newcomers to the area



It is evident that strengthening connections within communities helps people to overcome the challenges they face.

and people who have lived there for generations, both sets of people work together at the local food bank to help address the bigger issue of poverty in the area. In essence, people who the stories suggest might otherwise not interact with one another have connected due to a common purpose and need. This demonstrates the power of taking responsibility for creating the neighbourhood that people want to live in. As one resident in Józsefváros stated, in the future they hope that people go beyond looking to the local government for answers and realise that *“we are all responsible for the environment we live in”*.

While some wider societal issues and systemic problems are difficult to overcome, particularly in these diverse neighbourhoods which undergo change more so than other areas, it is evident that **strengthening connections within communities helps people to overcome the challenges they face**. These connections are social (i.e. between people and people), environmental (i.e. between people and the place they live) and internal (i.e. between people and their sense of social responsibility). Through activating these connections, diverse communities are better placed to build (both physically and metaphysically) the neighbourhoods and lives they would like to have.

2.2. Conclusions of stakeholder interviews

The analysis of research findings in the four neighbourhoods has drawn attention to some overarching phenomena and challenges regarding perceptions, places, policies and the governance of diversity. This section offers a comparative overview of analytical dimensions that evolved in the course of social research in the four neighbourhoods.

2.2.1. The past and its impact on social fabric

All the neighbourhoods in the VOICITYS project have a history of peripheral position within their respective cities. Formerly being traditional working class neighbourhoods, they had been inhabited by people with lower social status. Various migration flows of the late 20th and early 21st centuries affected the ethnic

and social composition of the inhabitants of these neighbourhoods. Migration also brought about the further weakening of the neighbourhoods' positions in their cities as more established citizens (working class Germans, Hungarian middle class, aboriginal Sassarians) moved out of the districts, with newcomers of lower socio-economic status having taken over their space. As a result, these neighbourhoods share characteristics of high



unemployment rates, low educational attainment of their citizens, low incomes and poverty. In two of our cases – Wedding and CHALK – migration waves brought about two deprived but ethnically diverse neighbourhoods where deprivation is a general feature of the local population. In the other two neighbourhoods of Józsefváros and the Old Town of Sassari, our research identified a local population bifurcated by socio-economic status, where deprivation is closely linked to perceptions of ethnicity.

2.2.2. Dimensions of diversity as perceived

Local people's perceptions of demographic changes in their neighbourhoods showed variation in the four neighbourhoods. In Wedding, 58% of the local population is of migrant background, which is higher than the rate of minorities in Berlin at large. In CHALK, the rate of ethnic minorities is higher than in Greater Manchester, however, the area has been predominantly inhabited by white British citizens until very recently. In Sassari, ethnic minorities that have arrived to the island with the current wave of migration comprise only 3% of the local population. Józsefváros stands out among the cases with its 4% "local" Roma minority, in Budapest, while it is still predominantly inhabited by ethnic Hungarians. Roma are seen differently from immigrant ethnic groups (Asian, Turkish, Arabic, African background) living in the neighbourhood since the 1990s; they generally appear in the narratives as poor and associated with social problems, while immigrants have stable businesses

in small shops and restaurants and are more accepted by the majority society due to their existential stability. Despite the low share of immigrants in Sassari and of the "local" ethnic minority in Budapest, diversity in these two neighbourhoods is accepted by mainstream society with serious reservations. In Sassari, diversity appears to be a positive trend if it is about integrating foreign students of the global middle class. In Józsefváros, diversity is only acceptable if it is middle class and does not concern Roma. On the other hand, in Wedding and in CHALK, diversity is seen as an asset in spite of the sometimes negative representations of diversity by the media.

These two neighbourhoods follow different pathways in terms of the recognition and perception of diversity within diversity. In Wedding and CHALK, diversities within minority groups by age, gender, disability and sexual orientation are strongly reflected upon by local stakeholders. Perceptions of local diversity in the Old Town of Sassari mainly focus on a dichotomous understanding of local and migrants/generations of migrants. In Józsefváros, diversity within the local ethnic minority of Roma is invisible, similar to the general approach of the mainstream society in considering the Roma invisible. Similar to the Sassari case, immigrants residing in Józsefváros are distinguished by generation as newcomers or more established immigrants.

Conflicts dividing local societies are present across our four cases, but the degree of such conflicts varies. In CHALK, conflicts emerge between "more transient"

Local people's perceptions of demographic changes in their neighbourhoods showed variation in the four neighbourhoods.



A diversity of social and ethnic groups is seen to be living side by side with relatively few connections between them.

and “more established” communities and mostly concern littering. In the other three cases, stronger conflicts are prevalent that are often perceived as threats by mainstream society. In Wedding and in Józsefváros, threats are conceived around drug abuse and homelessness, while in Sassari, immigrants themselves are seen as a threat mainly by those living outside of the old town but commuting there on a daily basis.

One of the most striking outcomes of our stakeholder interviews is that social integration is perceived to be dysfunctional in all four neighbourhoods. A diversity of social and ethnic groups is seen to be living side by side with relatively few connections between them.

Various kinds and degrees of regeneration programmes have taken place in the four neighbourhoods in the past decade. The general perception of these developments is that while they bring about the rehabilitation of run-down neighbourhoods, their social impact is to build boundaries between social groups of different socio-economic status. Gentrification was seen as a general threat to diversity in Wedding and in Sassari. In Józsefváros, views on population change varied according to political identities: incumbents of the local government favour urban regeneration projects and their impact on exchanging population, while stakeholders from independent organisations, the poor and Roma are against them.

2.2.3. Places of diversity

In all four neighbourhoods, we found representations of diversity in open spaces as well as in the form of community buildings. Parks, streets, squares and playgrounds are important sites of social diversity in all of our cases. Nevertheless, the dysfunctionality of integration can be seen in the way some spaces – built and open – are appropriated by particular social and political groups. In Wedding, parallel to spaces of integration such as kindergartens, Leopoldplatz community-based ethnic cafes, grocery shops and associations are also present. Stakeholder perceptions were similar: people still keep to themselves next to several integrative spaces such as the Sport Village, and spaces that serve the integration of the majority society inherently exclude others, such as the few pubs that still exist in the neighbourhood. In the Old Town of Sassari, small ethnic shops, call centres and certain “piazzas” are used by particular ethnic groups next to some spaces of integration, such as the San Donato School.

The visibility of diversity follows similar patterns: minorities in Wedding and in CHALK are visible everywhere, but they have their own spaces spread around in the neighbourhood. In Sassari, the low rate of ethnic minorities is concentrated in a small lower part of the Old Town, which gives the impression to mainstream society of a “mass of immigrants”. In Józsefváros, built spaces of integration are strongly attached to particular groups of political identities.



2.2.4. Governance of diversity

In terms of the density and types of organisations, our stakeholder interviews found thick networks of various jurisdictions in Wedding and in CHALK while finding mostly local jurisdiction in Sassari. In Józsefváros, parallel to networks of independent local and Budapest-wide NGOs, we found a network of “fake NGOs” strongly attached to and financed by the local government. Organisations in Wedding tended to focus on integrated urban and social development, community representation, mitigation, social inclusion and social services, while in CHALK we found organisations for cleaning up the river, local charities, and national organisations for home services with local jurisdiction. In Sassari, most of the organisations focused on youth and migrants, while in Józsefváros the bifurcation of local governance can be seen in the separation of the independent network of autonomous NGOs: housing, support for the homeless and support for the poor, and the “fake” network that focused on local order and “cleanliness”.

In terms of the embeddedness of these organisations in the communities, in Wedding we found strongly engaged organisations that are often group-based. A strong participatory approach was prevalent in



the entire German governance system, but not all communities are involved in this in a similar way. In CHALK, organisations do not need to use publicity for their activities because the community seems to be genuinely engaged. In Sassari, in spite of the thick network of organisations in a bounded place, associations are often seen to be an end to themselves without having any substantial impact on local conditions. In Józsefváros, independent NGOs are strongly embedded through members being part of the local community, while “fake” NGOs are embedded in a particular community of the white middle class

that represents the bifurcation of the local community. In all but one of our neighbourhoods, organisations suffer from a lack of partnerships and coordination, and long-term visions for the community as a whole. In CHALK, however, organisations collaborate in strong partnerships that closely coordinate their activities and go beyond the local level to extend to national agencies as well.

Organisations’ access to decision-making varied in Wedding: the Quartiersmanagement and some other local organisations are well-connected at the decision making and policy making level, whereas the Stadtteilkoordination has but limited access to



administration. In Sassari, stakeholders are neither involved with nor are consulted by the Municipality, while in Józsefváros only “fake” NGOs that are attached to incumbents in the local government can participate: independent NGOs are excluded from decision-making. In CHALK, two types of forums are available for organisations to participate in decision-making: a top-down, council initiative called the Community Committee, and an informal, bottom-up forum called the Community Forum. Stakeholders are more in favour of the latter, which also reflects the way CHALK residents do not like to engage with statutory organisations. We identified bifurcated participation in organisations, and hence citizen empowerment in Sassari and in Józsefváros. In the former, stakeholders saw a lack of citizens’ participation while the Municipality argued for hearing its citizens’ voices. In the latter case of Józsefváros, poor, homeless and Roma are silenced while incumbent party voters are allowed to have their voices heard through membership in “fake” organisations.



2.2.5. Policies of diversity

Housing policies emerged as central in the perception of urban regeneration policies in the four neighbourhoods. In Wedding, due to the lack of an overall systematic housing policy, the uncontrolled renewal of areas, building of new houses, selling of social housing and the resultant flight of the poor have been recalled by stakeholders as central issues of urban regeneration policies. Some policies aim at fighting against the negative effects of gentrification. In these protected areas, the demolition of buildings or the modification of their functions requires a permit and approval on behalf of the district municipality. In CHALK, the increase in buy-to-let properties and in private landlords selling off social housing were cited as major problems impacted by the urban regeneration policy. In Józsefváros, the demolition of the Corvin quarter as a “business-base” and the reconstruction of Magdolna quarter as a social regeneration scheme resulted in building new houses and a decrease in social housing. Parallel to national trends in penal populism, regular evictions of poor families without housing exchange has been taking place. National migration policies also strongly impacted the way migrants are handled in local policy-making in Sassari. In Wedding and in CHALK, however, national policies were considered of secondary importance by local stakeholders.



3. Crossing the results

The Community Reporting and Stakeholder interviews' approaches brought similar and complementary results. The two methodology are based on two different initial approaches: bottom-up in the case of Community Reporting because the discussions are not directed and based on what the interviewee wanted to say; and top-down in the case of stakeholder interviews, because the discussions were semi-directed, based on an interview guide and on a previous knowledge on the area. In the same time, both methods are characterized by an approximately similar share of subjectivity and objectivity. While Community Reporting is based on the subjective opinion of people, the whole process of story gathering, co-curation and analysis is accompanied by a strong guidance on behalf of the lead organisation, the Institute of Community Reporters, ensuring that the subjective voices are treated and analysed in a systematic and structuralized way. In the case of stakeholder interviews, the interviews are guided, since the beginning, by the clear identification of the stakeholder's types to be contacted, the questions (or at least the fields) to be asked, the approximative information expected. However, the interviews themselves and the description of the interviews were not guided, and thus let a large field of free reflexion and subjectivity to the interviewers. In this way, the two methods, that at the start of the project seemed to be in complete contradiction, revealed to be closer to each other than expected, and to be rather complementary than opposite. The crossing of their results is particularly apt to give an overview on the opinion of the large spectre of the local society. As mentioned above, VOICITYS has been a pilot project, with limited time and structural frame, therefore our method could not be deepen enough. However, this pilot research has already proved the interest of the parallel use of the two research methods for the understanding of local societies and societal issues.

Looking across the results from the Community Reporter stories and Stakeholder interviews three distinct, yet interconnected, categories in which the findings could be situated have emerged. They are:



People: This category focuses on findings related to the main **social changes and interactions**, the conditions of dialogue and inclusion of social groups, as well as the **social infrastructures** and contexts of the neighbourhoods, the lives of the people who live and work there, their own understandings and experiences of diversity and social changes.

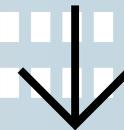


Places: This category focuses on the **main areas and physical infrastructure** where diversity is reflected in the neighbourhoods, the buildings, spaces and services that are evident in them and notions of regeneration, physical change and placemaking.



Power: This category focuses on the **power structures in the neighbourhoods** in terms of decision-making and policy making processes, management of the areas, top-down and bottom-up processes, governance, and the different types of power (i.e. public, civil, legal, social capital) and the ways in which the actors in them interact.

The table below identifies the findings that emerged in both the Community Reporter stories and Stakeholder interviews and situates them in the aforementioned categories.



	People 	Places 	Power 
Berlin, Germany	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living Together: The different demographics live together in Wedding without conflict. It is felt that there is interaction between the different groups (ethnic, social, age etc.) in the area but that this could be enhanced further. • Tensions: There is a tension around gentrification in terms of young professionals/middle-classes moving into the area and changing its social make-up that could weaken the diversity of the area. Diversity is seen as being a key part of the area's and its inhabitants identity. • Language: Language is seen as something that can united people if it is common, and separate people if it is not. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of spaces of interaction: There are spaces in which people can interact, such as specific streets/squares and schools. The schools are generally sites at which the children interact rather than their parents. • New spaces: The different migrant populations of the area have opened up different businesses such as a shops and restaurants that have added to the diverse vibrancy of the neighbourhood. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision-making and governance: There are systems in place to connect residents with the people in positions of power, and also channels through which local people can meet to address their needs through cooperation. These can help to address any power imbalances in the area.
Budapest, Hungary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptions of people: In general, the Roma community are largely seen in a negative light, whereas other groups (i.e. migrants) are seen more positively. • Perceptions of diversity: The area is seen as being diverse and vibrant, even if there are negatives associated with this vibrancy and liveliness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical improvements and social consequences: Whilst the area has seen physical improvements to the aesthetics of the area and the assets available, they are not generally seen as supporting the growth of the social infrastructure between different groups. In general, the 'regenerated' spaces seem to have fragmented people or excluded certain social groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policing: The policing has been enhanced in the area. This and other factors have penalised (and in some instances) criminalised the poor and the Roma community. • Divisions: The power structures in the area have created divisions between people. More inclusion of the residents (in particular those who are becoming more marginalised) in change processes and power structures is needed.
Salford, UK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic change: The neighbourhood has undergone changes in terms of the demographics who lived there. It was predominantly a white British area (and is still so statistically) but in recent years it has become more ethnically diverse. • Lack of integration: There is little integration or interaction between the different groups who live in the neighbourhood. This has led to the feeling that the social infrastructure of the community is not as strong as it once was. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to spaces to interact: The area has seen changes in the types of spaces open to people to use that provide sites of interaction. Whereas previously informal spaces such as public houses were the hub of social interactions, in recent times other spaces have emerged (as the public houses have closed) such as community centres that provide a range of activities and support for people. Some of these places are seen as belonging or being only used by a specific demographic, whilst others provide support that crosses such divides (i.e. the food banks that focuses on the common problem of poverty). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception gaps: Whilst the support organisations in the area feel they are well connected to one another, the users of such services identify that it can be difficult to know where to go for support. • Bottom-up Action: Action from a grassroots level is seen as positive for the community and the individuals involved as a way of 'giving back' to their community and there are communication channels that exist between people who live in the area and those in positions of power.
Sassari, Italy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic change: The historic centre has seen significant changes in which the migrant population has increased. There has also been a movement out of the local people of Sassari belonging to the lower middle classes from the lower sections of the historic centre. This area is now largely populated by migrants. • Perceptions of Diversity: The diversity of the neighbourhood is largely discussed as ethnic diversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Squares and Schools: The piazzas and schools provide spaces in which different groups of people can interact. They are seen as being key to bringing people together and promoting social interaction. The cultural events that take place in the public spaces and the new cafes opening in the squares are seen as supporting this too. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of connection and communication: There seems to be little communication or connection between residents and the power structures of the area. It is seen that people themselves most make the change happen as there is little support or connectivity with those in a position to support change processes.



CHAPTER IV.

CO-CREATING POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE NEIGHBOURHOODS – VOICITYS PARTICIPATORY EVENTS AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Krisztina Keresztély (CRN)

1. Methodology – a complex participatory process

The aim of the second part of VOICITYS was threefold: first, to double check the results of the crossing of the two research methods and to bring up complementary statements if necessary on the challenges and assets of diversity in the neighbourhoods; second, to formulate policy recommendations on the most important ways to improve diversity management on the local level; and third, to identify, through the crossing of these reflections, some more general statements and recommendations on the Pan-European level.

In order to achieve these objectives, the VOICITYS project developed a participatory process based on two consecutive meetings in each city where inhabitants, stakeholders and policy makers were invited to discuss and identify, together, the main characteristics of local diversity and some main steps to be undertaken for more integrated social development of their neighbourhoods. The outcomes of these events permitted the formulation of policy recommendations on the local level, while the summary and crossing of these local results, supported by the results of a Pan-European participatory event, permitted the formulation of some general principles and recommendations on the European level.