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ROOTS & ROUTES

HAS OFFICIALLY STARTED!

**MIGRATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN PART
OF EUROPE'S HISTORY.**

IT IS NOT AN EXCEPTION.

IT IS PART OF IT.

**THE STORIES OF THOSE WHO LEFT, THOSE WHO ARRIVED,
AND THOSE WHO BUILT NEW LIVES ALONG THE WAY HAVE
SHAPED EUROPE'S CULTURES, COMMUNITIES AND IDENTITIES.**

What is R&R

Roots & Routes is a European project supported by the European Union's **Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values (CERV)** programme. Bringing together organisations and communities in Belgium, Greece, Spain, Slovakia, Austria and Italy, the project aims to recover, preserve and share memories that have often remained fragmented, private or underrepresented in mainstream historical narratives. The project focuses particularly on the **histories and experiences of Roma communities, People of African Descent, migrants and LGBTIQ communities.**

Rather than speaking about these communities, Roots & Routes creates opportunities for people to become the **authors and storytellers** of their own histories.

CONNECT
BRUSSELS



SEPT 2026

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Objectives

Connect & Share

Create spaces for young people (18–30) from Roma, People of African Descent, migrant and LGBTIQ communities to meet, share experiences and preserve their stories.

Give local stories a voice

Bring local migration stories to light through oral history and create accessible digital spaces where these stories can be preserved and shared.

Engage young people through art

Use theatre, photography, podcasts and creative writing to transform migration memories into contemporary forms of artistic expression.

Build an inclusive European identity

Challenge exclusionary narratives and promote an inclusive understanding of Europe, where different life journeys are recognised as part of our shared history.

Bring stories to policymakers

Create opportunities for participants' voices and experiences to reach European policymakers and institutions, contributing to educational and civic approaches that recognise migration as part of Europe's collective memory.

R&R in numbers



6
Countries involved
Belgium, Greece, Spain, Slovakia, Austria and Italy.



24
Months
of activities, workshops and international encounters.



1,600+
Direct participants
including young people, older generations, educators and citizens.



240
Migration stories
collected and connected through a European digital Story Map.



80
Certified multipliers
young people trained to keep memories alive.



14
Media outputs
films and podcasts giving voice to real stories.



1
Creative Dissemination Festival
held online.



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Kick-off Meeting

On 21 September, the project consortium met in Jette, Brussels, at the Connect Brussels premises, with representatives from all partner organisations for the official **Roots & Routes kick-off meeting**.

The meeting provided an opportunity to present the project's objectives, partnership and implementation framework, and to discuss project management, governance, financial and reporting arrangements, monitoring, quality assurance, ethics and data protection.

Partners also presented the activities planned across the different work packages, covering needs analysis, training, memory labs, storytelling, youth exchanges, museum pathways and dissemination activities.

The meeting concluded with an open discussion and an agreement on the next steps for the implementation of the project.



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Launch event

On 22 September, the Roots & Routes journey continued with a vibrant Launch Event at the Commune of Saint-Josse-ten-Noode, bringing together **more than 60 people from different backgrounds, cultures and origins!** It was a lively evening full of **music, delicious food, conversations and new connections**, creating the perfect atmosphere to celebrate diversity and the many stories that make our communities so rich.

Music was at the heart of the evening, taking us on a journey from traditional sounds and songs from different cultures to contemporary and popular tracks. The atmosphere quickly became lively, with people enjoying the music, dancing, chatting and sharing the evening together.

Delicious food from different backgrounds added even more flavour to the celebration and created plenty of opportunities to gather around the table and exchange experiences. But above all, **the evening was about people.**

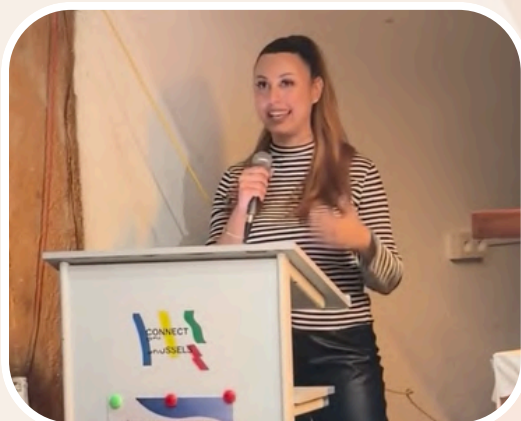
It was a wonderful opportunity to meet new faces, share stories, discover different experiences and learn more about the many cultures represented in our community.

The event was a joyful celebration of diversity, connection and community, and a fantastic way to begin the Roots & Routes journey together!



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