

# Common Ground

## 2023 International Conference

Key results of the first year of the project



Delivered by:





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the European Union**

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Common Ground is a project co-funded by the European Union delivered in partnership by Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, the3million and British Future, exploring the future UK-EU political relationship and supporting communities of EU citizens in the UK to thrive.

The opinions expressed in this paper are the sole responsibility of the Common Ground project and do not necessarily reflect the views of the European Union. The European Union is not responsible for any use that might be made of the information contained therein.

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# Executive summary

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The Common Ground 2023 International Conference marked a crucial milestone in the first year of the [Common Ground project](#). This initiative, led in partnership by [Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini](#), [the3million](#), and [British Future](#), seeks to support EU citizens in the UK, fostering stronger UK-EU ties post-Brexit through research, advocacy, and strategic engagement. The conference convened key stakeholders, experts, and community representatives to assess progress, discuss pressing issues, and explore avenues for future collaboration.

## Beyond Brexit: public perspectives on the future UK-EU relationship

Research presented by British Future highlighted a strong public appetite for closer cooperation between the UK and the EU. While political divisions persist, the study revealed broad support for pragmatic UK-EU collaboration, particularly in trade, security, research, and climate policy. Findings also highlighted a strong public interest in UK-EU mobility, educational exchanges and social contact opportunities. The report concluded with recommendations to promote constructive engagement and policy reform.

## Media representation and storytelling

The conference emphasised the importance of storytelling and accurate media representation in shaping public perceptions. Barbara Serra,

a journalist with Sky News, highlighted the underrepresentation of EU voices in mainstream UK media. Panel discussions with EU-focused media outlets explored the role of community journalism in countering misinformation and fostering civic engagement. The 'Stories for Change' photography project showcased the personal experiences of EU citizens in the UK, centering their lived experience, challenging stereotypes and illustrating themes of their journey, identity and belonging.

## Community organising and advocacy

Community organising emerged as a key theme, with discussions on the importance of grassroots organising, solidarity, and intersectionality in policy advocacy. Zain Hafeez from the Civic Power Fund highlighted the systemic barriers facing migrant communities and the necessity of sustained funding for community-led initiatives. The conference also introduced the Advocacy and Campaigning Toolkit, designed to support organisations in their efforts to influence policy and protect EU citizens' rights.

## Challenges and calls to action

Several challenges facing EU citizens in the UK were identified, including:

- Immigration policy and implementation: issues with the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS), including digital-only status complications, late applications, redress mechanisms, and family reunification barriers.

- Access to rights and services: difficulties in proving immigration status, barriers to healthcare and welfare, and digital exclusion.
- Structural and social barriers: racial and ethnic monitoring disparities, issues in recognition of qualifications, and inadequate engagement with marginalised communities.
- Engagement with policymakers: limited consultation with EU citizens, insufficient outreach efforts, and a lack of comprehensive data collection on race and ethnicity.

The conference concluded with a call for sustained advocacy, stronger policy engagement, and increased public awareness campaigns. Recommendations for future initiatives included:

- Campaign for the Home Office policy and process changes: tangible back up to digital only immigration status, deal with the backlog of EUSS applications, enhance decision making process
- Community organising: more resources needed to enable grassroots organisations to support vulnerable EU citizens
- Inclusive engagement: strengthen the networks by ensuring marginalised and racialised groups are represented
- Public Awareness: centering EU citizens lived experience to shape the narrative and counter misinformation through engagement with EU media and representation in mainstream media

The Common Ground 2023 International Conference reinforced the need for continued dialogue, strategic advocacy, and collaborative efforts to strengthen the UK-EU relationship. While challenges persist, the event showcased resilience, solidarity, and a shared commitment to ensuring EU citizens in the UK can fully participate in and contribute to British society. The findings and recommendations from this conference will inform the second year of the Common Ground

project, driving impactful engagement with civic society organisations increasing their influence and working towards achieving project outcomes. ■

# Common Ground project background

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Millions of EU citizens have made the UK their home, with the country having the largest diaspora of EU citizens in the world. Those communities are incredibly diverse, with people of all ages, backgrounds, ethnicities and life experiences sharing a common identity.

This publication is intended to highlight the key learnings from the activities carried out in the first year of implementation of the Common Ground Project and the International EU Citizens' Conference.

## The mission

Common Ground is a project delivered in partnership by [Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini](#), [the3million](#) and [British Future](#) supporting communities of EU citizens in the UK to thrive.

Common Ground aims to facilitate new activities, conversations and dialogues to strengthen the network of EU citizens in the UK, enabling grassroots groups across the country to have their voices heard and contributions celebrated.

Through events, workshops and campaigns informed by research, the project works with civil society organisations and grassroots leaders to build even stronger and more positive ties between the UK and the EU.

Co-funded by the [Foreign Policy Instruments](#) of the European Union, the project mission is to inspire more empowered EU communities in the UK by building connections, celebrating our shared European identity and sharing knowledge, with the aim of building a more positive relationship between the UK and the EU.

The project delivery is designed on four pillars: research, engagement and advocacy, strategic communication and sustainability.

## Project partners

[Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini](#) is a network of change-makers, with a mission to generate social impact and socio-economic progress. FGB works to transform ideas into policies for a just and inclusive society. Strengthened by more than fifty years of experience, they are distinguished through an unshakable faith in human potential.

[the3million](#) is the largest grassroots organisation of and for EU citizens in the UK, working to protect the rights of people who have made the UK their home. the3million's vision is a world where EU citizens can thrive, reach their potential and have an equal voice in UK society.

[British Future](#) works to understand public attitudes and inform debates on issues that can often seem noisy and polarised. They listen to people's views, finding common ground and offering constructive solutions - building consensus for reforms to immigration and integration policy that can work for all of us.

## International conference

The Common Ground International Conference marked the culmination of the first year of the project's implementation. The event offered a valuable opportunity to reflect on the outcomes

achieved so far, including the findings of the research conducted by British Future. Barbara De Micheli from Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini introduced the project's results, highlighting key insights and progress made during the year. The conference also provided a space for networking with civil society organizations engaged throughout the project, drawing inspiration from the wealth of diverse stories that EU citizens bring to the UK and weave into its social fabric, and brainstorming ideas for future activities. The themes of community connection, communication and participation were explored by keynote speakers and through discussion panels. Advocacy and Campaigning Toolkit was launched during the event. Activism, campaigning and building power within the EU diaspora were explored in the wider intersectional migration context in solidarity with all migrants and minoritised communities.

## Our common ground

**ANDREEA DUMITRACHE,**  
**the3million interim co-CEO**

*'Today is about inspiring each other to find this hope - to talk about how together we are stronger, together we have a voice which must be heard. Together we can uplift each other and make change happen'.*

Migration is a natural and universal phenomenon driven by necessity, choice, or aspiration. Barriers to free movement are man made and implemented by borders and political changes. The UK's departure from the EU divided British society and deeply affected EU Citizens by ending Free Movement.

The implementation of the EU Settlement Scheme has been an experience with varied outcomes, where many applications were processed smoothly, but administrative, technical and systemic failures had devastating consequences for thousands of EU citizens who call the UK their home. There are countless examples of individuals facing hardship, destitution or homelessness due to delays in decision making, technical glitches or unclear communications and increasing evidence burden. The immigration system causes suffering by compounding barriers and creating fear rather than compassion. Those difficulties and experiences of marginalisation unite people, fostering solidarity and shared purpose. This is the common ground which can inspire hope and collective action to amplify voices, and create positive change.



# Beyond Brexit: Public perspectives on the future UK-EU relationship

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HEATHER ROLFE and JAKE PUDDLE, British Future

The research examines public attitudes regarding the UK's future relationship with the EU. It highlights perspectives on European and British identities and values, attitudes towards closer collaboration, and interest in educational and cultural exchange programmes. Based on research conducted by the think tank British Future as part of the "Our Common Ground" project, the findings aim to inform UK policymakers and political leaders on constructive engagement strategies with the EU.

## Research methods

Three methods were employed to gather data: an evidence review, a survey of 2,000 respondents conducted by Focaldata, and 12 focus groups held in London, Peterborough, and Manchester between June and September 2023. This mixed-method approach provided a comprehensive understanding of public sentiment.

## Key findings

### Attitudes towards Brexit

Survey results revealed that almost half of the public (49%) believe the decision to leave the EU was incorrect, compared to 36% who feel it was

the right choice, with 15% uncertain. Divisions are particularly evident across political lines. Among Labour supporters, 69% view Brexit as a mistake, while 61% of Conservative supporters consider it justified. Age differences are also pronounced, with 60% of those aged 18-24 believing Brexit was a mistake compared to just 12% who support the decision.

### Desire for a less heated debate

A majority (59%) expressed a preference for less polarised discussions about the UK-EU relationship. Support for this sentiment was highest among Labour supporters (68%) and Remainers (76%), but also significant among Conservative supporters (61%) and Leavers (56%).

### Support for closer cooperation

There is a growing appetite for pragmatic collaboration across various policy areas. A majority (52%) favour a closer relationship with the EU, while only 12% prefer a more distant one. Approximately 27% support maintaining the status quo. Labour supporters (68%) and Remainers (81%) show the strongest support for closer ties, with only 17% of Conservatives and 24% of Leavers favouring a more distant relationship.

Table:

Policy area	Support for closer cooperation (%)	Maintain status quo (%)	Less cooperation (%)
Crime & terrorism	68	24	8
Trade	61	30	9
Science & research	61	29	10
Defence	57	31	12
Health	57	32	11
Climate change	56	31	13
Mobility	57	28	15

## Importance of the UK-EU relationship

The EU is perceived as the UK's most important international partner for peace, stability, and prosperity, surpassing relationships with the United States and the Commonwealth. Nearly half ranked the EU as the most crucial partner, with Remainers (66%) prioritising the EU more than Leavers (26%).

## Collaboration on immigration

Public support for collaboration on work and study immigration policies stands at 61%, with higher support among Labour supporters (72%) compared to Conservatives (54%). Remainers (78%) are more favourable than Leavers (46%). Support for refugee resettlement collaboration is lower, at 46% overall, with significant divides between Remainers (64%) and Leavers (31%).

# Identity and values

## European identity

Less than 10% of UK residents identify as European, and among these, only 4% consider it their primary identity. European identification is more prevalent among Remain voters, those living in Northern Ireland and Scotland, graduates,

and individuals in higher social classes. Even among those who were born in or have lived in EU member states, only 20% identify as European, with 85% ranking it below other identities.

## Perceptions of values

Participants struggled to define British or EU values when presented with a list including democracy, freedom, human rights, and mutual respect. These were more readily attributed to the UK than to the EU, and many perceived them as global rather than specifically European. Focus group participants noted overlap in values between the UK and Western Europe but highlighted perceived differences with Eastern Europe.

Table:

Value	Attributed to UK (%)	Attributed to EU (%)	Attributed globally (%)
Democracy	78	61	59
Human rights	71	67	63
Mutual respect	82	58	60

# Social contact and exchange programmes

## Social interactions

Over half (56%) reported frequent social contact with EU citizens, with Remainers (64%) more likely than Leavers (48%) to engage. Work colleagues, friends, neighbours, and family were cited as the most common connections. Discussions about Brexit were generally avoided to prevent re-igniting divisions.

## Awareness and engagement in exchanges

Awareness of exchange programmes, such as Erasmus and town twinning, was moderate, but participation was low, with only 11% having had opportunities to engage. Young people (18-24 years) demonstrated both low awareness and low participation (24%), despite a majority expressing interest in educational exchange programmes.

Table:

Programme type	Public awareness (%)	Participation (%)
Erasmus	74	11
Town twinning	76	8
Educational exchanges	67	10

## Research conclusions and recommendations

### Public sentiment

The balance of UK public opinion has shifted against Brexit, with exhaustion over divisive debates evident. While most prefer a less heated discourse, there remains significant space for pragmatic collaboration without revisiting polarising issues from 2016.

### Policy recommendations

Collaboration in practical areas, particularly security and terrorism, holds broad appeal across political divides. Opportunities for educational and cultural exchanges should be revitalised to foster connections between UK and EU citizens. Future initiatives should prioritise inclusivity to ensure accessibility for individuals from diverse socio-economic backgrounds.

### Opportunities for action:

Opportunity	Key Actions
Security cooperation	Strengthen joint efforts on crime and terrorism
Educational exchanges	Lower barriers for participation
Climate collaboration	Promote shared sustainability objectives
Immigration policies	Enhance mutual work and study opportunities

This research emphasizes the public's willingness to support practical collaborations over shared values in action. While affiliation to European identity remains limited, issue-specific closer cooperation is welcome and offers a pathway to fostering a constructive UK-EU relationship.

## Main points from panel discussion

**Dr KUBA JABLONOWSKI, University of Bristol**

**LYDIA MARTIN, New Europeans**

**Dr DANIEL DEVINE, University of Southampton**

- The report's mixed methods approach benefits academics and campaigners alike.
- Reduction in polarisation between Remainers and Leavers and a desire to move on from Brexit is very welcome.
- Critique of the EU Settlement Scheme for perpetuating the misconception of a "white European" identity by omitting data on race and ethnicity - transnational and diasporic identities need to be recognised.
- British Future's attitudes to immigration tracker shows a dip in positive attitudes towards immigration post-2015 progress (negative media coverage of migration persists).
- Dissatisfaction with Brexit stems from unmet expectations rather than ideological shifts, opening opportunities for improved EU-UK cooperation.
- Public interest centres on values in practice rather than abstract ideas with focus on social contact, reducing barriers to mobility, cooperation on climate change & migration and security.

- Calls for expanding the research to include other UK regions and EU citizens.
- Acknowledgement of post-Brexit barriers experienced by British citizens across the EU.
- Questions about the research's geographic focus reveal a need for broader inclusion, though resource constraints limited coverage to England.

# Stories for Change: storytelling and media coverage

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**“Voices Unheard: The Struggle for Representation in UK Media”**

**BARBARA SERRA, SkyNews**

A compelling keynote addressing the issue of the lack of representation of EU journalists in the mainstream UK media landscape illustrated by examples from lived experience. Lack of foreign accents on British TV and radio was noted as very telling of shortcomings in representation and diversity. While there have been positive changes in terms of regional accents from across the UK and ethnic diversity among British presenters, the same is not the case for EU citizens. Those communities are absent from the screens and the radio and therefore their voices and their stories are not heard and can be misrepresented. Accent is a barrier, affecting the way stories are perceived in the media and stereotyped. This makes many professionals strive for ‘perfect English’ and linguistic assimilation potentially contributing to a lack of authenticity in storytelling and perpetuating a narrow narrative that often sidelines EU voices.

Moreover, this issue of underrepresentation cannot really be called out as the data collected within the media and creative industries is not sufficient and not fully relevant as often neither nationality nor EU identity are monitored. A review of the UK monitoring framework and introducing categories allowing to capture diverse backgrounds and identities is crucial and would be welcome.

The call to action was clear – an urgent need for inclusivity that goes beyond tokenism,

and novelty, and fostering an environment where all voices, regardless of nationality or accent, are valued and heard.

## The role of EU citizens’ media publications and news outlets in the UK

**CLAUDIA DELPERO, EuropeStreet News**

**MALINA VIRTEJANU, Romania in the UK**

**ALESSANDRO ALLOCCA, Londra Italia**

**ALEXANDER SEALE, Les Francais Press**

**BRUNO MATEIGAS, Lusa News Agency**

The panel explored the role of media outlets serving EU citizens in the UK, focusing on their contributions to their respective communities and their unique challenges. The discussion involved panellists representing Romanian, Italian, French, and Portuguese news outlets, each offering insights into their work and the role of media in supporting EU citizens’ rights and fostering community engagement.

## Key highlights:

### Introduction and context

The session emphasised the importance of media for EU communities in the UK, providing information in native languages and addressing specific cultural and linguistic needs. Over 25 outlets were identified as helping EU diasporas navigate complex issues like the EU Settlement Scheme.

### Media landscape and challenges

- Outlets serving various communities often fill gaps left by mainstream media, offering critical information about rights, immigration procedures, and community-specific issues.
- The role of these outlets has evolved from traditional reporting to addressing challenges such as disinformation on social media and the broader impact of Brexit on EU citizens.
- The infrastructure varies and some media networks are very new with limited resources, often struggling with quality and reach.

### Portrayal post-Brexit

National media outlets have a role to play by countering negative narratives and focusing on factual reporting and highlighting the contributions of EU citizens and success stories.

### Fostering political engagement

The panel stressed the importance of media in promoting political awareness and participation among EU citizens, especially in the context of upcoming elections. Providing clear, accurate information about voting processes and fostering collaboration among outlets can help increase civic engagement.

## Future opportunities

Panellists noted the potential for collaboration to amplify community voices, share resources, and address common challenges. There is also a growing need to support diverse community groups, including those from former colonies, who face additional integration challenges.

### Conclusions

**Community Media's Role:** Media outlets dedicated to EU citizens play a vital role in delivering accurate information, countering disinformation, and strengthening community ties.

**Brexit's Impact:** Brexit has reshaped perceptions and increased the demand for accessible, reliable reporting on rights and bureaucratic processes.

**Collaboration as a Strategy:** Joint efforts among community media can enhance their ability to promote political participation, civic awareness, and community engagement.

**Highlighting Success:** Stories of achievement within EU communities help to challenge stereotypes, promote integration, and inspire broader participation in UK society.

# Stories for Change photography project

CAROLINA HENRIQUES and LINDA NAGY

The project explores the lived experiences of EU citizens in London through a unique storytelling approach that shifts focus from portraits to objects, places, and spaces that shape individual narratives. Using photographs and interviews, it uncovers themes of journey, belonging, and identity, challenging stereotypical portrayals of migrants seen in media and political rhetoric. By highlighting personal environments and meaningful objects, the aim is to humanise migration and foster understanding.

The project sought to shape the narrative about migrants by focusing on their personal surroundings and symbolic items and exploring their experiences.

The authors recruited participants via an online open call, then conducted conversations with them, guiding discussions around three themes of their journey, belonging, and identity. These discussions explored motivations for migrating, concepts of home, connections to cultural heritage, and reflections on personal identities. Participants also identified objects and places significant to their stories, which were photographed to complement their narratives.

The project revealed recurring themes such as migration for education or career opportunities and the impact of Brexit as a pivotal moment. Participants shared deeply personal experiences of domestic violence, exploitation, discrimination, and challenges with integration, highlighting the complexities of migration.

Stories for Change encourage audiences to reflect on their own meaningful objects and spaces,

recognising shared human experiences. By presenting migration as both extraordinary and ordinary, the project bridges divides, promoting empathy and understanding.

While every story is unique, common threads unite us as communities and individuals. The work demonstrates that migration narratives are nuanced and deserve broader recognition and appreciation.

# People power, solidarity and shaping policy

ZAIN HAFEEZ, Civic Power Fund

*“If you’re not at the table, you’re on the menu.”*

Zain Hafeez, a refugee and community organiser, shared his journey of overcoming systemic barriers and highlights the transformative power of community organising. His aspirations for higher education were thwarted by his immigration status, replacing ambition with frustration. This, however, led him to community activism, where he discovered the power of collective action to dismantle systemic challenges.

Community organising is more than political influence; it is about relational power—the ability to drive change through collective agency despite the inadequacies in funding, with only 1% allocated to community organising compared to service delivery. This disparity undermines efforts to address societal root causes, leaving organisations under-resourced and activists overburdened.

There is a need for sustainable change, for a shift from short-term solutions to nurturing partnerships and solidarity. The role of community organising in uniting diverse groups, especially migrants, to challenge systemic barriers and advocate for justice and equality cannot be underestimated. Amplifying marginalised voices to create a cohesive network of resilience and shared purpose is crucial when advocating for any group’s rights.

## Key points:

- Community organising empowers people through relational power to address systemic barriers.

- Adequate funding and strategic partnerships are crucial for sustainable societal change.
- Solidarity among diverse communities fosters resilience, inclusion, and collective action.

## Advocacy and campaigning toolkit

DAPHNE GIACHERO, [the3million](#)  
KEZIA TOBIN, [the3million](#)

*“You can’t organise what you can’t imagine.”*

Inspiration from and good practice examples of campaigns are vital for communities to imagine the change they want to campaign for and achieve. Recently published [Advocacy and Campaigning Toolkit](#).

This toolkit is intended to be a guide for organisations working with EU citizens and their family members with rights conferred by the Withdrawal Agreement who want to expand their campaigning for change.

It is intended to help organisations influence decision-makers, advocating for policy solutions informed and led by the lived experience of EU citizens in the UK who are facing issues with the EU Settlement Scheme.

Figuring out where to start when advocating for change can be daunting. For those seeking to protect and ensure people can access their

rights as EU citizens<sup>(1)</sup>, these are some ideas to help get you thinking about how best to kickstart your campaign.

## Importance of intersectionality and solidarity in campaigning. Challenges and opportunities for EU citizens' campaigns.

SABRINA JANICKA, Rom Romeha  
FIZZA QURESHI, Migrants Rights Network  
MARZENA ZUKOWSKA, POMOC  
AKÉ ACHI, Black Europeans  
ANDREEA DUMITRACHE, the3million

*“We need to decolonise, and understand what solidarity and intersectionality means.”*

Panellists from organisations representing marginalised and racialised groups shared insights into the systemic barriers, representation issues, and the necessity of solidarity within and across communities.

### Amplifying voices and representation

A key theme was the importance of amplifying marginalised voices of lived experience while avoiding tokenism. ‘Having a seat at the table’ is insufficient unless it translates into meaningful influence and systemic change. Arguably, new equitable spaces should be nurtured where there is no exclusivity of the notion of ‘needing a seat at the table’. However, currently underrepresentation

of black Europeans in EU citizen spaces and systemic challenges they face are an indisputable reality that make building “common ground” all but aspirational. Despite outreach efforts, black Europeans often encounter dismissive attitudes, resistance to discussions of discrimination, and inadequate resources compared to non-Black-led organisations.

A values-led approach alongside lived experience was advocated as crucial to ensure diverse representation and combat harmful narratives alongside eliminating extractive practices by compensating individuals for their contributions. Events like “Who’s Welcome?” exemplify resource sharing and solidarity, enabling marginalised groups like Black Europeans to form and thrive independently.

### Practising solidarity and intersectionality

Solidarity was framed through the lens of intersectionality, with panellists stressing the interconnected nature of oppressions and the need for pushing for systemic change across the spectrum of oppression. Solidarity, it was argued, should embrace broader struggles such as LGBTQ+ rights, racial justice, and migrant support, recognising their interdependence.

Practical good practice examples of solidarity included grassroots approach, empowering community members and prioritising leadership development and recruitment practices valuing lived experience over a “perfect candidate”. This strategy avoids tokenism by integrating lived experiences into organisational strategies, fostering long-term impact.

### Reaching marginalised communities

Unique challenges faced by Roma communities were highlighted, including language barriers, illiteracy, and systemic discrimination. The

importance of community-led initiatives was highlighted, such as Rom Romeha's Community Forum, to empower marginalised groups and shape advocacy efforts. Organisations are urged to collaborate while recognising the distinct challenges faced by specific communities.

### **Addressing structural inequalities**

The discussion on structural inequalities sparked a heated debate, with panellists urging the need for equity before pursuing common ground. Systemic disparities prevent equal participation in advocacy spaces. Greater understanding and acknowledgment of these differences was called for, particularly the compounded challenges black Europeans face due to racism and systemic discrimination.

The importance of equitable resource allocation was stressed, with funders being urged to prioritise organisations led by people with lived experience. This approach can combat exploitation by larger organisations that outsource case studies and narratives from smaller groups.

### **Concluding reflections**

A call for deeper understanding of intersectionality and systemic issues. The need to decolonise practices and address structural racism in policymaking and activism was highlighted. True solidarity requires recognising and addressing disparities while fostering an environment where all voices are not only heard but valued and acted upon.

A necessity of collaborative, values-led efforts to create inclusive and impactful campaigns that address the intersecting challenges faced by diverse EU citizens.

### **Shaping policy and calls for action**

Below are results of a brainstorming workshop facilitated by the3million aiming to identify shared values in action or pragmatic areas of interest that can be centered in organising EU communities. These ideas and proposals will inform the planning and implementation of project activities in the second year of the project such as the online working groups and media campaigns.

### **Main issues affecting EU citizens today**

#### **■ Immigration policy and implementation:**

- Lack of clarity, transparency, and accountability in immigration processes.
- Issues with EUSS (EU Settlement Scheme), including late applications, difficulty transitioning from pre-settled to settled status, and reliance on digital-only status.
- Barriers to family reunification, with restrictive definitions and limited recognition of family members.
- Diminution of mechanisms challenging decisions (appeal only - scrapping administrative review).

#### **■ Access to rights and services:**

- Challenges in proving immigration status for access to healthcare, welfare benefits, education, and travel.
- Insufficient support for literacy, digital literacy, and legal advice for vulnerable groups.
- Disenfranchisement from voting and lack of representation in decision-making.

#### **■ Structural and social barriers:**

- Additional barriers faced by racialised and minorities groups.
- Lack of recognition of non-UK qualifications and inadequate funding for learning and development.
- Need for equitable and tailored engagement with minority and marginalised groups including black Europeans, Roma community and Central & Eastern European groups.

### ■ Engagement with policymakers:

- Limited communication and consultation from government bodies, insufficient outreach efforts, and lack of community involvement in policymaking.
- Insufficient data collection on race, ethnicity and nationality hindering targeted interventions.

### Proposed policy solutions

#### ■ Immigration and EUSS reform:

- Introduce physical proof or back up to digital only immigration status to complement digital systems.
- Reinstate administrative review options for rejected applications.
- Expand definitions of family members eligible for reunification and provide consistent appeal mechanisms.
- Stop profiting from immigration fees

#### ■ Support and accessibility:

- Fund literacy, legal literacy, access to justice and digital training for community leaders and vulnerable groups.
- Provide interpreters at borders and develop non-digital alternatives for immigration status.
- Increase funding for organisations offering higher-level immigration advice.

#### ■ Representation and data Improvement:

- Include EU citizens' concerns in party manifestos and engage with local councils and community groups.
- Improve and streamline race, ethnicity and nationality data collection across all government and local authority departments Community Outreach and Partnerships.
- Collaborate with businesses, unions, and minority groups to ensure diverse voices are included in policymaking.
- Engage EU Delegation, EU consulates, and local and EU media to raise awareness and promote solutions.

## Calls for action

### Policy reform:

Urge the Home Office to introduce back up to digital only proof of status, reinstate administrative reviews and expand family reunification definitions.

### Community empowerment:

Advocate for increased funding for literacy and legal training and support organisations working with vulnerable EU citizens.

### Inclusive engagement:

Engage with unions, minority communities, and rural representatives to incorporate diverse perspectives in policy discussions.

### Awareness campaigns:

Mobilise media, local representatives, and the EU Delegation to raise awareness of EU citizens' rights and encourage voter registration and participation.

# Annex

## Agenda

<b>Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2023 – 09.00am - 17.00pm</b>	
09:00 - 10:00	Registrations and networking breakfast
10:00 - 10:30	<b>Introductions:</b> Andreea Dumitrache (the3million), Barbara De Micheli (Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini), Dahaba Ali Hussen (chair)
10:30 - 11:2	<b>Launch of “Beyond Brexit: Public perspectives on the future UK-EU relationship” report by British Future</b>  Key findings and panel discussion chaired by Kuba Jablonowski, with report authors Heather Rolfe and Jake Puddle, and discussants Dr Daniel Devine and Lydia Martin
11:20 - 11:35	<b>Stories for Change:</b> Belonging and identity photography project presentation by EU citizens’ campaigners Linda Nagy and Carolina Lima Henriques
11:35 - 11:45	Break
11:45 - 12:15	<b>Keynote speaker:</b> Italian and British journalist Barbara Serra - the importance of representation of EU citizens in British newsrooms
12:15 - 13:10	<b>Media panel discussion:</b> EU citizens’ media publications and news outlets in the UK. Panel chaired by Claudia Delpero, Europe Street News
13:10 - 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 14:05	Introduction to afternoon session
14:05 - 14:20	<b>Keynote speaker:</b> Zain Hafeez (Community Fund Manager at Civic Power Fund and Community Organiser at Citizens UK) on the importance of community organising.
14:20 - 14:45	<b>Campaigning for EU citizens’ rights in the UK:</b> Kezia Tobin, the3million
14:45 - 15:40	<b>Panel discussion on the importance of intersectionality and solidarity in campaigning.</b> Challenges and opportunities for EU citizens’ campaigns.  Chaired by the3million. Panel speakers including Fizza Qureshi (Migrants Rights Network), Marzena Zukowska (POMOC), Aké Achi (Black Europeans and Migrants at Work), Sabrina Janicka (Govanhill Roma Community Work), Alicja Kaczmarek (Centrala)
15:40 - 15:45	Break
15:45 - 16:35	<b>Group workshops on successful methods of campaigning for EU citizens’ issues ahead of the next General Election.</b>
16:35 - 16:55	Plenary feedback session
16:55 - 17:00	Closing

# Annex

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## Speakers' bios

### **DAHABA ALI HUSSEN, Journalist**

Dahaba is a freelance journalist who has specialised in EU citizens' issues. As a Dutch citizen, Dahaba is passionate about access to justice for everyone in the UK.

### **BARBARA DE MICHELI, Coordinator of Social Justice Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini**

Barbara De Micheli brings over 25 years of experience in designing and managing multi-stakeholders transnational projects promoting social inclusion.

### **ANDREEA DUMITRACHE, Interim Co-CEO the3million**

Focused on bringing attention to EU citizens' lived experience, Andreea supports campaigners whose voices are seldom heard to make change happen.

### **HEATHER ROLFE, Director of Research and Relationships British Future**

Heather Rolfe is director of research at the think tank British Future. She has expertise on immigration, including labour market impacts and public attitudes.

### **JAKE PUDDLE, Researcher British Future**

Jake Puddle is a researcher at the think tank British Future, exploring public attitudes on themes of immigration, integration, identity and race.

### **KUBA JABLONOWSKI, Lecturer in Sociology University of Bristol Research associate the3million**

Kuba's research is focused on digital identity, border control and social justice.

### **LYDIA MARTIN, Deputy Head of Projects New Europeans**

Lydia has worked with minority communities for over 20 years in the UK and abroad in community engagement and development.

### **Dr DANIEL DEVINE, Lecturer in Politics and IR University of Southampton**

Dr Devine is also an Associate Member of Nuffield College, Oxford. He researches public opinion and political behaviour in the UK and Western Europe, focusing on the formation of political attitudes.

### **BARBARA SERRA, Journalist**

Barbara is an Italian-born British-based broadcast journalist and TV presenter with more than 20 years' experience working for some of the world's leading news networks.

### **CLAUDIA DELPERO, Journalist**

Claudia Delpero is the founder and editor of Europe Street News, a news service on the European Union and citizens' rights. Claudia has more than two decades of experience in media and public affairs across Europe, China and Africa.

**ALESSANDRO ALLOCCA, Journalist**

Alessandro has been working for 25+ years as a journalist. For the last 10 years, she has been a London-based correspondent and contributor for media outlets such as La Repubblica and London-based news site Londra Italia.

**MĂLINA VÎRTEJANU, Manager Romania in the UK**

Mălina is a journalist and founder of Belfast Intercultural Romanian Community as well as Romaniainuk.com portal. Passionate about promoting Romanian culture and heritage in Northern Ireland and bringing communities together.

**CAROLINA LIMA HENRIQUES, Stories for Change Campaigner**

Carolina works with forcibly displaced people and she is passionate about contributing to human-centered approaches to address the movement of people across borders.

**LINDA NAGY, Stories for Change Campaigner**

Linda works in political research at the UK Parliament, on social justice policy areas including social security and workers' rights, that also intersect with migrants' rights.

**KEZIA TOBIN, Head of Policy and Advocacy the3million**

Kezia is an immigration lawyer with over 15 years experience in advocating for migrants to the UK, and their families.

**ZAIN HAFEEZ, Funding Manager at Civic Power Fund. Community Organiser at Citizens UK.**

Zain is an expert by experience public speaker who campaigns for refugees and asylum seekers rights.

**MARZENA ZUKOWSKA, Co-Founder POMOC**

Marzena Zukowska (they/them) is a Liverpool-based organiser, communications strategist, and co-director and co-founder of POMOC, a UK-based immigrant rights organisation.

**AKÉ ACHI, Founder and CEO Black Europeans Migrants at Work**

Aké is the co-founder of Black Europeans, a group led by Black EU citizens, formed as a result of the barriers their members have faced in the EU Settlement Scheme and after the UK's departure from the European Union.

**SABRINA JANICKA, Engagement facilitator Community Renewal Trust, Rom Romeha (for Roma, by Roma)**

Sabrina delivers a multi-lingual EU Settlement advice service for the Roma community living in Glasgow.

**FIZZA QURESHI, CEO Migrants Rights Network**

Fizza is CEO of Migrants Rights Network, a charity that stands in solidarity with all migrants in their fights for rights and justice.

# Annex

## Photo gallery

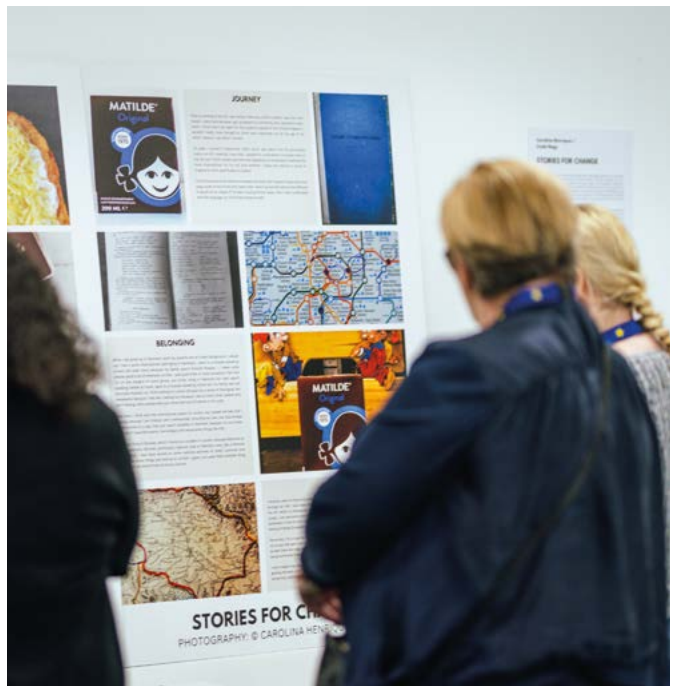










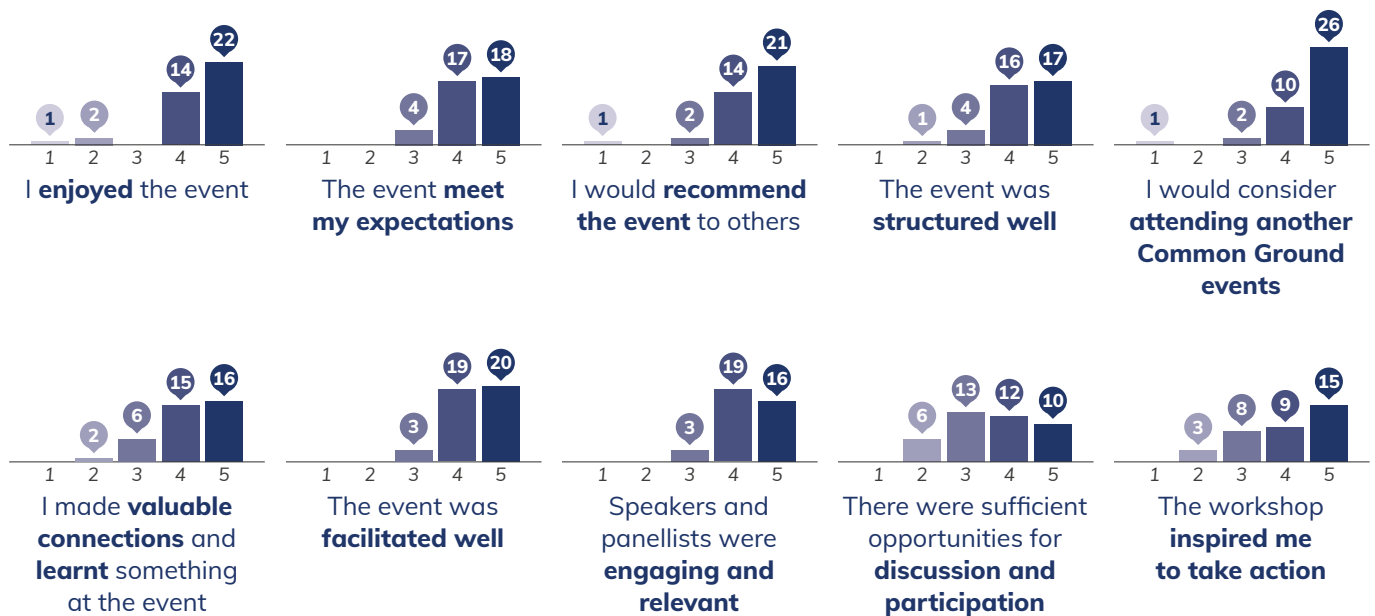


# Annex

## Summary of evaluations

### Values

Ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 represents the lowest rating and 5 the highest.



### One word to describe how you feel about the conference

INSPIRING      UNCOMFORTABLE      EYEOPENING

THOUGHTPROVOKING      EMPOWERING      ENERGISED      INFORMATIVE

ENGAGING      SOLIDARITY      INFORMAL      THOUGHT PROVOKING

COLLEGIAL      CONNECTION      DIVERSE

HOPEFUL      WELCOMING      DISAPPOINTED

POSITIVE      SOLIDARITY      INTERESTED

INSPIRATIONAL      GOOD & SUPPORTED      INTERESTING

ILLUMINATING      INSPIRED      SATISFIED

GREAT      INTRIGUED      JOYFUL!

UNEASY      INSPIRATIONAL      ENERGY      A REALLY GOOD STARTING GROUND

# Annex

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## Summary of evaluations

### What was the highlight of the conference for you?

- Barbara Serra - EU visibility in the UK media; report by British Future & discussions + questions
- The networking & future prospects for collaborations in helping people and fight for their rights
- I enjoyed the way ideas and experiences & views have been discussed in a respectful and considerate way
- Panel discussion on intersectionality
- The speakers and the representation of different backgrounds, communities, NGOs (incl. Scotland and NI)
- The professionals, Barbara Serra journalist, sky news, POMOC speaker and the rest of the people involved, thank you for creating a room space where people can share their experience to build a better space
- Meeting new activists
- The panel on intersectionality, more on that would have been great
- Zain's story and suggestions
- Research on attitudes and Stories for Change - fantastic projects
- Stories for change, afternoon panel-speakers were so good. shame about some audience negating the experience
- Stories for change project and focus on community organising
- Research, intersectionality panel
- Media panel & speaker, Zain's speech
- Key speech about community organising and campaigning
- Panel discussion on intersectionality/solidarity - I did not expect this to be so powerful
- Connecting with new community leaders
- The variety of the audience
- Lively discussions and great speakers
- The opportunities to meet other organisations, panels discussions were inspiring and on point
- More interactive workshops, group discussion divided per relevant group
- I was happy to see so many representing so many organisations today that I was not aware of
- Sabrina Janicka overcoming her fears, finding her voice & giving a clear account on behalf of the Roma community. Barbara Serra for a highly articulate and layered analysis
- All round excellent!
- The afternoon discussion with group
- Speaking to many different groups about many different subjects, finally meeting my 13m colleagues face to face
- Sabrina Janicka speech
- Having the chance to understand British politics better and how campaigning works
- Intersectionality panel
- Stories for change project. the idea was great and the speakers told the story so well. best illustration of the issues discussed
- Media panel, did not know there were EU media outlets. Did not like/understand the notion of 'white EU box' - it may have started the controversy which made me uneasy
- The intersectionality panel was heated & thought provoking.
- Those conversations are needed & ppl need to know and reflect about racism and how vulnerable others are and how privileged others are
- Panel discussion on media & solidarity made me realise the need for more agency among EU communities
- British future presentation

# Annex

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## Summary of evaluations

### What was missing?

### What could have been done better?

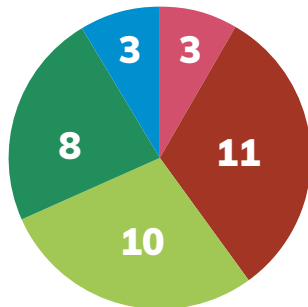
- Free sessions in order in discuss arising issues during the conference
- Better time keeping
- More networking & table discussions
- Better time keeping in the afternoon
- Heating
- Sound and heating working better, bring discussion makers to the tables not just organisations
- Perhaps more on each of the marginalised groups. Realise that there is only limited time.
- I only attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> half, but I thought that four marginalised speakers were put in harmful and triggering environment where a 'container for principled struggle' was not created. The public attack on Ake and microaggressions were difficult to stomach
- EU media panel to reflect more on EU perspective
- More group works to foster more discussions with other participants
- More discussions and workshops
- Better Heating
- Nothingm, it was very interesting and well run
- The way the talks were organised, it was hard to move aroundand network. Also more time to network would have been great.
- The sitting system, attendees did not stick to the assigned tables which resulted in some ppl sitting on their own & representation.
- Issues talked about were majority recycled topics for a couple of years now
- The 2<sup>nd</sup> part of the day was about cooperation & diversity, but the 1<sup>st</sup>, while equally illuminating gave space to ppl with a debatable language e.g Lazy Italians. A nod to systemic would have been appreciated and aintersectionality felt misunderstood+ asking for solutions
- Dividing ppl into breakouts was messy. Could have been assigned in advance. More interactive elements would have been welcome
- Extend topics
- More discussions
- Longer breaks, sound problems
- Opportunities for networking, not enough time, maybe a breakout instead of one of the panels
- Not enough time to explore all the issues raised and interact

# Annex

## Summary of evaluations

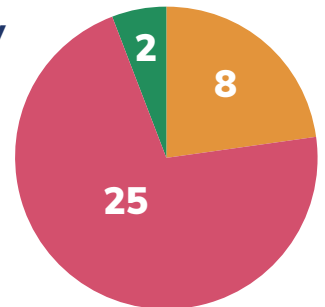
### Age

- Under 18
- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- Over 65



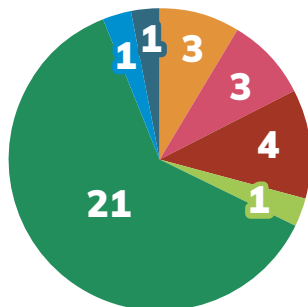
### Gender identity

- Identify as male
- Identify as female
- Identify as non-binary
- Identify as trans
- I'd rather not say



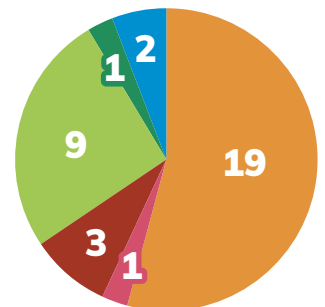
### Sector

- Individual
- Academia and students
- Public sector
- Media
- Civil society/NGO
- Private sector
- Other



### Citizenship

- EU citizenship
- NonEU
- British
- Dual British/EU
- Dual British/NonEU
- Dual EU/NonEU



### Type of organisation/role in the organisation

(if applicable)

- Generalist advice or support
- Immigration advice
- Community group
- Policy/research/advocacy
- Volunteering
- Culture/heritage
- Public sector
- Private sector
- Other (administration)

