



## Transatlantic Migrant Democracy Dialogue

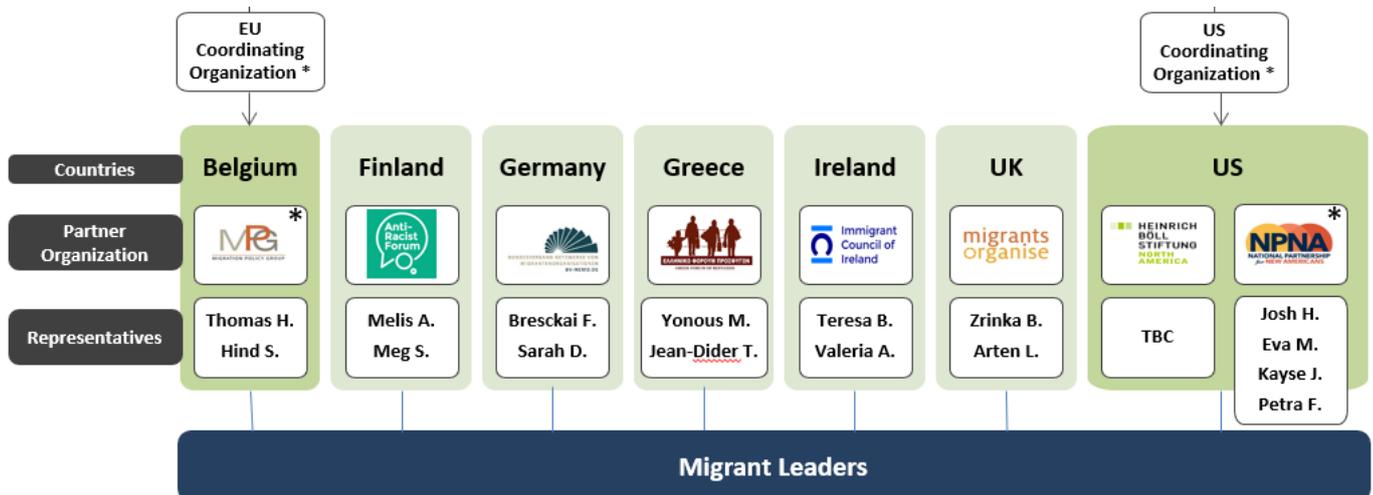
The Transatlantic Migrant Democracy Dialogue (TMDD) is a transatlantic network of diverse migrant and refugee leaders. We work to strengthen democracies by collectively building powerful movements and communities.

<p><b>OUR VISION</b></p> <p>We strive for just, inclusive, vibrant and diverse democracies that function for ALL PEOPLE—and in which migrants and refugees are full participants.</p>	<p><b>OUR MISSION</b></p> <p>We work to strengthen democracies by collectively building powerful movements and communities across Europe and US.</p>	<p><b>OUR CORE VALUES</b></p> <p>JUSTICE SOLIDARITY DEMOCRACY</p>
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The [Transatlantic Migrant Democracy Dialogue](#) (TMDD) is a network that connects and trains immigrant and refugee leaders in the US and Europe. The TMDD was launched in 2016 to fill in a gap for a space for strategic transatlantic exchange of ideas, skills and experiences in areas key to building migrant led justice campaigns. It is a shared project of the National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA), Migration Policy Group (MPG), Heinrich Böll Foundation North America (HBF), Anti-Racist Forum Finland, Greek Forum of Refugees, Migrants Organise UK, Federal Network of Migrant Organisations in Germany and Immigrant Council of Ireland.

### Governance Structure

The TMDD is committed to continue working together to build powerful movements across Europe and the U.S. that can learn from each other and take collective action. Following several days of discussion in Athens in 2019, the EU and US migrant leadership team created and agreed on TMDD’s vision, mission, values and multiannual strategic plan. All TMDD decision-making is made by the EU and US migrant leadership team which regularly grows and renews itself, while the practical project and financial coordination is undertaken by MPG.



### ***Background: Why TMDD and why now?***

Both Europe and the US are at a critical crossroads: our countries must recommit to the values of open and inclusive societies. We believe that the best way to counter anti-immigrant sentiment and strengthen our democracies is to empower immigrant leaders across the US and Europe. Yet, on both sides of the Atlantic, immigrants and refugees are frequently barred from full participation in the democratic systems they inhabit.

Democracies work best with the full engagement of all members of society. In this time of political crisis, when our commitment to democracy itself is called into question, it is a powerful strategy to equip immigrant and refugee communities with the skills to fully participate in the democratic process. TMDD is founded on the conviction that migrants must be able to organise themselves and to learn from each other in order to actively participate in US and European democracies. The TMDD aims to support immigrant and refugee leaders to build power and foster new leadership, advocate for their own interests, build coalitions with allies, and develop strategies to engage with adversaries. We believe that empowering immigrants to be influential political actors is critical to building broad, democratic coalitions. By speaking out and mobilising against political scapegoating and hate on behalf of immigrant communities, these broad democratic coalitions will contribute to the health of vibrant democracies.

The TMDD aims to fill three key needs identified in our previous work:

1. There are limited opportunities for a mutual and equal exchange of expertise, ideas and resources between migrant leaders and potential leaders across local, national and transatlantic contexts. TMDD aims to provide a platform for this exchange.
2. Migrants continue to be underrepresented or unrepresented in the societal and political discussions as well as policy-making arenas that most affect them. TMDD aims to drive political and electoral organising to better represent migrant communities.
3. Our past summits of migrant leaders have demonstrated an urgent need for more relationship-building, leadership development, and capacity building. TMDD aims to foster trusting professional relationships and provide targeted training for migrant leaders in the US and Europe.

### ***Achievements to date***

Over the past three years, over 100 migrant and refugee leaders from across Europe attended the Democracy Summits (DC) in Hamburg (2017), Dublin (2018) and Athens (2019), and spoke at the annual US National Immigrant Integration Conference (NIIC) in Nashville (2016), Phoenix (2017) and DC (2018). We have an active Facebook group of over 200 former participants and partners, where we share info on upcoming local and international campaigns, funding and training opportunities, good practices and questions in mind. This exchange of expertise happens very often, when leaders are invited to contribute in trainings/workshops. We also work together in campaigns, for example: the 2019 European elections campaign coordinated by MPG and reaching 43 million voters: [www.voteeuropa.eu](http://www.voteeuropa.eu). Our European and US migrant leaders continue to exchange their latest strategies, such as their COVID19 responses and their links with Black Lives Matter activism. Despite these exceptional times, our partners are making major achievements in their respective countries (on COVID19 impacts in Greece, on asylum reform in Ireland and on Paycheck Protection Program in the US).

## ***TMDD activities to date***

### **1. International Democracy Summits**

Each year, the Leadership Team coordinates an international Democracy summit. The aim is to facilitate mutual learning between leaders, brainstorming to identify innovative, successful and sustainable methods and group decisions to design and support joint actions (campaigns, activities and future networking). Summit participants are invited to join the network as TMDD alumni members. The Summits address topics in five tracks critical for building a migrant-led movement:

1. **Community organising:** to train and develop leaders, select and win issue-based campaigns and to transform service-oriented integration initiatives.
2. **Community navigators:** to train and develop community volunteers to inform, advise and support via legal services, intercultural mediation, interpretation, etc.
3. **Alliance building:** to identify and secure key allies for advocacy, campaigns and welcoming strategies.
4. **Citizenship & electoral participation:** to inform and encourage immigrant communities to become voters, citizens and civically active.
5. **Strategic communication:** to convey a campaign's goals with compelling messages and messengers targeted to different audiences.

### **2. National trainings and mentoring**

Over the course of the year, the European members of the Leadership Team helps each other to expand their existing leadership trainings and mentorship programmes. The Leadership Team includes the most active immigrant organisations in political organising in each country. Their programmes are adapted to local context and needs, and each organisation will be responsible for these activities.

### **3. US National Immigrant Integration Conference**

The Leadership Team comes together at the National Immigrant Integration Conference (NIIC), hosted by the NPNA. The event is the largest and most important conference on immigrant rights and integration policy in the US, as well as the primary forum where members of the US immigrant rights movement come together, determine strategy and build coalitions of support.

## ***TMDD Partner Organisations***

**Anti-Racist Forum Finland (ARF)** is the first critical, intersectional, and feminist PoC-led collaborative anti-racist initiative based in Finland. ARF is a collaborative anti-racist initiative organised by a group of people who have been active in different anti-racist networks, associations and grassroots groups in Finland and abroad. The ARF working group has planned an event that gathers different anti-racist actors and cultural influencers for discussions, workshops, presentations, and performances. It has been motivated by the thought that a space for dialogue and networking among anti-racists would be important.

**The Federal Network of Migrant Organisations (NEMO)** in Germany is a federal association of more than 530 migrant organisations in 14 cities that have come together to form an intergenerational and secular association. The network offers its members a platform for exchange and nationwide networking as well as capacity- and skill-building. The network represents the interests of local networks of migrant organisations at federal level and aims to increase participation and the representation of migrants' perspectives. As a federal association, it serves as the point of contact for politics and civil society as well as for advice on questions of integration policy, participation, development and anti-racism.

**Greek Forum of Refugees** is a Panhellenic network of refugees and their supports. Its main goals are to 1. Defend the rights and protect the freedoms of refugees and asylum seekers, as enshrined by international law. 2. Inform and raise awareness around access to refugee status, and general immigrant and refugee issues. 3. Create relationships with agencies and non-governmental organisations in order to start meaningful dialogue between all institutions of government and human rights organisations. 4. Support the unity of refugees. Create social and cultural ties between all members of the Greek Forum of Refugees, as well as between the members of each ethnic community of refugees in Greece. 5. Effectively lobby with the state for the promotion of refugee issues. 6. Provide a platform for refugees and their communities to self-organise.

**Heinrich Böll Foundation (HBS)** is a political foundation affiliated with the German Green Party. HBS acts as a catalyst for green visions and projects, a think tank for policy reform, and an international network with more than 30 offices worldwide. HBS seeks to advance democracy and human rights, protect the environment and climate, and promote the peaceful resolution of conflicts. HBS's Washington, D.C. office is a 501(c)(3) organisation that promotes policy reform and political dialogue in a range of program areas through publications, public seminars, conferences, workshops, study tours and visitor programs. The TMDD is a project of the Transatlantic Dialogue Program on Democracy and Social Policy, which explores the challenges to democracy in Europe and the US, with a strong focus on immigration and integration policies.

**Immigrant Council of Ireland (ICI)** is a national, independent non-governmental organisation that has been promoting the rights of migrants since 2001. ICI is a human rights organisation and law centre that supports and advocates for the rights of immigrants and their families and acts as a catalyst for public debate, legal and policy change. Since its founding in 2011, ICI has become one of the lead organisations in the areas of immigration and integration and its focus has expanded to tackling racism and promoting the participation and representation of migrants in Irish life.

**Migrants Organise UK** is a platform where refugees and migrants organise for power, dignity and justice. Drawing on two decades work as the Migrant and Refugee Communities Forum, Migrants Organise develops leadership and opens up spaces for relational, organised participation of migrants and refugees in public life. To achieve this goal, Migrants Organise undertakes community organising, mobilisation around strategic actions and campaigns, mentorship and networking of leaders, training of leaders, and platforms to celebrate and recognise migrants, refugees and their contributions.

**Migration Policy Group (MPG)** was founded in 1995 and acts as a leading European independent, non-profit think-and-do-tank. MPG's work supports diverse societies to invest in their future. Bolstered by an extensive international network, it plays a central role in reform and practice on antidiscrimination, immigration and integration, where citizenship and political participation have been central to its work. TMDD is MPG's main way of supporting and partnering with migrant leaders, promoting evidence-based solutions through research, innovation, networking, innovations and campaigns. All of MPG's activities benefit from an interdisciplinary methodology, and from the staff's skills, expertise, and high level of organisational commitment.

**The National Partnership for New Americans (NPNA)** is a national multiethnic, multiracial partnership. NPNA believes that America's success is rooted in Americans' ongoing commitment to welcoming and integrating newcomers into the fabric of the nation, and to upholding equality and opportunity as fundamental American values. Based in Chicago, NPNA represents the collective power and resources of the country's 37 largest regional immigrant and refugee rights organisations in 31 states. NPNA's members provide large-scale services—from DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) application processing to voter registration to health care enrollment—for their communities, and they combine service delivery with sophisticated organising tactics to advance local and state policy. NPNA exists to leverage the collective power and expertise of its member organisations for a national strategy. It holds a unique position in the immigrant rights movement as the foremost institution comprised of and led by immigrant constituencies and has been a key player in shaping local, regional, and national policy and politics impacting immigrant communities.