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TOOLKIT & ACTIVITY GUIDE
FOR LIBRARIANS

SUPPORTIVE AND WELCOMING INFORMATION HUBS



LiBri




Co-funded by
the European Union

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These mediation resources were developed as part of the LiBri project, a European initiative co-funded by the European Union and led by Bibliothèques Sans Frontières (BSF). It aims to strengthen the role of libraries as inclusive, accessible spaces that actively support people with a migration background.

Through a series of thematic toolkits and 50 local integration strategies, LiBri equips librarians with practical tools to promote cultural understanding, support integration, and foster meaningful community engagement.

For more information about LiBri and its consortium: www.librarieswithoutborders.org/libri

The toolkits were conceived and designed by BSF, which since 2017 has been working to make knowledge accessible to all. Through its solidarity-driven initiatives, the organization turns culture, education, and information into powerful tools for resistance, resilience, and empowerment. With innovative solutions, a vast library of content available in over 27 languages, and recognized expertise in community engagement, BSF reaches people in crisis zones, development settings, and areas marked by deep inequality in over 30 countries, including France.



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INTRODUCTION

List of acronyms

ACV	Communities of the Future Association
AMIF	Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund
ANVITA	Association Nationale des Villes et Territoires Accueillants
BSF	Bibliothèques Sans Frontières – Libraries Without Borders
CIS	Culture and Information Systems Center
EBLIDA	European Bureau of Library Information and Documentation Associations
EU	European Union
FRSI	Information Society Development Foundation
LiBri	Library Bridges
MHPSS	Mental Health and Psychosocial Support
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
WHO	World Health Organization

Libraries have the potential to offer safe and welcoming information hubs for migrants while ensuring a respectful approach to cultural differences and different uses of the space. The lack of accessible and safe community spaces where refugees and migrants can safely share experiences, gather information and seek guidance remains a challenge in many areas. By adopting welcoming postures and designing libraries to make them accessible, librarians can help establish libraries as trusted points of contact for persons from a migrant background, to seek assistance on administrative procedures, acquire information on local services, and referred to certain institutions, while also providing opportunities for social and emotional support.



SUMMARY

About this toolkit and activity guide

This toolkit provides practical guidance for librarians on fostering social cohesion through cultural inclusion. It is part of a series of resources created by Libraries Without Borders (BSF) together with Association Nationale des Villes et Territoires Accueillants (ANVITA) in France, the Information Society Development Foundation (FRSI) in Poland, the Culture and Information Systems Center (CIS) in Latvia, the Communities of the Future Association (ACV) in Romania, Biblioteche Senza Frontiere in Italy, and the European Bureau of Library Information and Documentation Associations (EBLIDA), through the Library Bridges (LiBri) project.

Migrants have unique needs that differ from those of typical library visitors. The LiBri project focuses on helping libraries address these needs by fostering a collaborative and inclusive environment. Co-funded by the European Union through the European Asylum, Migration, and Integration Fund (AMIF), this two-year project, which began in May 2024, seeks to support 50 libraries across Europe in their role of welcoming and including people in exile. The project aims to enhance the capacity of libraries to aid in migrant reception and integration.

To learn more, please visit:

<https://www.bibliosansfrontieres.org/libri/>

This toolkit is structured around key themes and resources identified during the first phase of the project.

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TOOLKIT

KEY CONCEPTS

Accessibility and inclusion

Inclusion is about creating environments where **all individuals**, regardless of their personal characteristics—such as age, gender, disability, nationality, language, migration status, or other factors—**feel welcomed, respected, and able to participate fully**.

For libraries, inclusion means more than offering a welcoming space; it involves actively ensuring that all community members can access resources and services equally, and that their diverse experiences, barriers, and needs are recognised and addressed. Particular attention should be paid to users with disabilities, linguistic minorities, people with varying levels of digital literacy, or those navigating complex legal and social situations, such as migrants.¹

Inclusion is not a one-size-fits-all process. The needs of asylum seekers, refugees, labour migrants, undocumented individuals, trafficking survivors, and second-generation migrants may all differ—and so must the approaches libraries use to reach them.²

Psychosocial support

Migrant populations are often confronted with **traumatic situations**, including family separation, forced displacement, insecurity, and lack of access to basic services. These experiences can significantly hinder wellbeing, especially for children and other vulnerable groups.

Psychosocial support means providing local or external help to **protect or promote well-being**. In practice, this support can be delivered at four interrelated levels, often visualised as a pyramid. Understanding these levels can help librarians identify where their activities fit and how to respond when deeper needs arise.³

¹UNESCO, 'IFLA-UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022', 2022.

²International Organization for Migration, 'World Migration Report 2020', 2020.

³UNICEF, 'Operational Guidelines. Community-Based Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Humanitarian Settings. Three-Tiered Support for Children and Families.', 2020.

Hierarchy of needs

Mental health professionals (psychologists, psychiatrists) provide support when distress is severe. Your role is to help connect people to these services if needed.

4 Some people may need extra help. While you're not a specialist, you can listen, offer reassurance, and refer them to trained staff or partner services.

3 This is where your work matters most. By offering access to education, information, culture, games, and digital tools, you help rebuild stability, inclusion, and well-being.

2 Access to food, shelter, healthcare, and safety. Essential for well-being but usually outside your direct role.

1



Signs to Watch Out For

Pay attention to individuals who show:

- Social withdrawal or isolation
- Refusal to participate or cooperate
- Persistent sadness, apathy, or mood swings
- Aggression or unusual negativity
- Expressions of wanting to hurt themselves

Tips for Responding Appropriately

- Talk to your team before taking action—get a second opinion.
- Approach the person gently. Share your observations without judgment.
- Offer information about available support services.
- Involve the family if appropriate—they may help relay the information.
- Respect their choice: if someone declines help, don't insist.
- The importance of access to information

Important:

You're not a mental health professional. Your role is to **observe, listen, and refer**—not to diagnose or intervene directly. Always avoid pushing too hard or making assumptions that might harm rather than help.

The importance of access to information

A key ingredient to an inclusive environment is access to information.

Libraries play a vital role as **information hubs**, connecting people to essential resources and services, especially newcomers, who often face unique and urgent information needs related to housing, healthcare, work, language learning, and navigating local institutions.¹ However, many migrants experience “disruptions” in their information environment when arriving in a new country. Trusted sources and familiar systems are often lost, and new barriers arise, due to:

- Language
- Unfamiliar information systems
- Cultural differences
- Digital divides
- Psychological factors
- Low literacy levels²

By recognising these barriers and taking proactive steps to address informational gaps, libraries can strengthen what researcher Annemaree Lloyd (2015) describes as “**information resilience**.³ In other words, libraries can help newcomers rebuild their ability to find, assess, and share information, while also fostering social ties and community trust.

Safe spaces

A safe space is a sanctuary created by and for any marginalised groups to share experiences and receive support, without fear of judgement, abuse or violence.⁴

For many, libraries are places for study, leisure, and social interaction, but for migrants, especially those navigating displacement and uncertainty, they can also meet their basic needs. Such as: offering rest, hygiene facilities, and digital connectivity. Recognising this reality means both clearly communicating the services available and adapting library spaces to respond with empathy and flexibility to these specific needs.

Table 1: Examples of additional migrants’ needs which the library can fulfill

Need	Sleep and rest	Hygiene / Toilets	Internet / Device charging
Explanation	A quiet, safe space to sit or rest when no other options exist	Access to clean, free, and safe toilet facilities	Charging devices and accessing Wi-Fi (e.g. to communicate with family, access information)
Risk/barrier	Staff may wake or ask people to leave; perceived misuse of space by other users	Toilets may be locked, monitored, or restricted to “visitors only”	Limited sockets, time restrictions on desktop computers, need for logins, or staff gatekeeping
Tip for Librarians	Approach with empathy, allow brief rest/sleep if safe, prioritise well-being over rule enforcement	Clearly label (picture) toilets, and keep unlocked/accessible. Have a basket with free pads, tampons, and diapers for young children	Offer flexible access, provide guest login credentials, proactively share information on how to connect

An inclusive space is shaped not only by the environment, but by the people within it. Staff must be approachable, culturally sensitive, and committed to making all visitors feel welcome. This involves:

- Using respectful clear language
- Recognising and valuing cultural differences
- Avoiding assumptions and stereotypes about persons from a migrant background
- Asking about their needs, encouraging dialogue, and involving them in shaping library programmes.

¹Sofia Serra and Jorge Revez, ‘Social Inclusion of Refugees and Asylum Seekers: The Role of Public Libraries in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area’, *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* 56, no. 2 (1 June 2024): 397–414.

²Chunying Wang et al., ‘Towards Better Information Services: A Framework for Immigrant Information Needs and Library Services’, *Library & Information Science Research* 42, no. 1 (1 January 2020): 101000.

³Annemaree Lloyd, ‘Stranger in a Strange Land: Enabling Information Resilience in Resettlement Landscapes’, *Journal of Documentation* 71, no. 5 (14 September 2015): 1029–42.

⁴UNHCR, ‘Guidance on How to Create Your Own Safe Space’, UNHCR UK, accessed 12 April 2025.

ACTION AREA 1:

Welcoming, inclusive, and safe spaces



Many migrants have pressing needs that libraries are well placed to help meet, whether it's internet access, a safe place to rest, or even hygiene facilities. Yet, many migrants do not feel safe or welcome in these spaces. Especially in contexts where political support for asylum seekers is limited, public institutions are often met with skepticism by those who have experienced surveillance, discrimination, or exclusion.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR LIBRARIANS

Libraries can be vital entry points for information, services, and social connection, but to truly reach migrants, they must first create **a safe space** with clear, proactive communication about the library's role and a visible commitment to inclusion.



HOW LIBRARIES ARE TRANSFORMING THEIR SPACES FOR BETTER ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION

1 Effective communication and space management

For many newcomers, the first interaction with a library, whether through signage, a website, or a conversation, can determine whether they feel the space is open to them. Inclusive communication strategies can help break down language and cultural barriers, so that migrants can easily understand the services available and feel confident using them.

Multilingual welcoming guide | FRANCE
In France, the Library of Bobigny has created a **multilingual welcome guide** available in six languages (English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Tamil, Turkish). The guide is available both in print and online and is regularly distributed in public places, such as community centres and municipal offices, to ensure it reaches new arrivals before they even step into the library.



Communication tools you can use include:

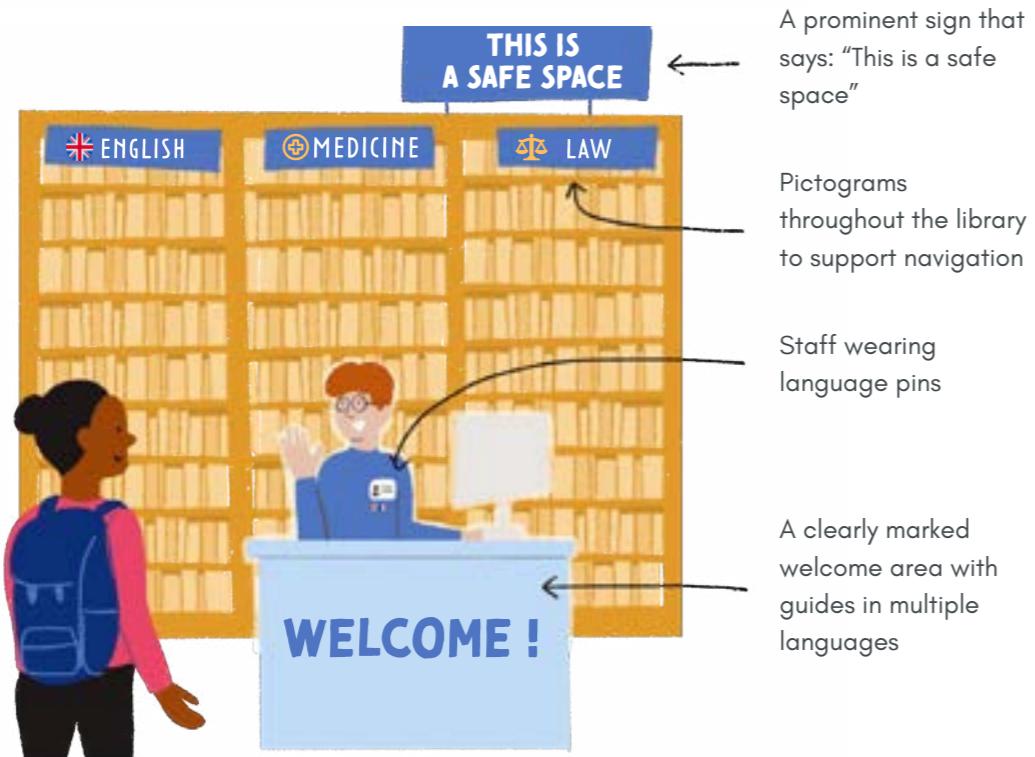
 <p>Multilingual welcome guides</p>	<p>both in print and online, to ensure that essential information is accessible to all. Display it at the entrance in a well-lit, easy-to-spot area.</p>
 <p>Outreach posters and flyers</p>	<p>in community spaces (e.g. schools, NGOs, faith centres, social services) and social media.</p>
 <p>Place a visible sign near the entrance stating</p>	<p>such as signs that say "This is a safe space," reinforcing the library's commitment to inclusion and safety for all visitors. You can also include signs with the house rules.</p>
 <p>Language pins/ name tag for staff</p>	<p>encouraging non-native speakers to seek assistance.</p>
 <p>Redesign reception areas</p>	<p>to be more intuitive and user-friendly, ideally with direct input from migrants. Replace dense signage with clear, visual information such as pictograms for facilities (e.g., bathrooms, help desk, computers).</p>

Small design choices, such as making foreign language books more visible, can greatly improve how people navigate and experience public spaces, by reducing confusion and creating a welcoming atmosphere for everyone.

Before
A less accessible library



After
A transformed, inclusive library space



2 Adopting welcoming and inclusive postures

Adopting a welcoming and inclusive posture goes beyond offering services; it requires deliberate efforts to lower both formal and informal barriers to access, promote cultural sensitivity, and build trust with newcomers. Some examples of welcoming practices include:

- Lowering administrative barriers:** In France, many public libraries, including those in Paris, Villeurbanne¹, and Le Vigan, have adapted their registration procedures by accepting alternative forms of IDs, such as "local citizenship cards," ensuring that lack of formal documentation does not prevent access to library services.² Reducing registration fees can also support better access.
- Staff training and cultural sensitivity:** Training frontline library staff to approach new users with empathy, open body language, and culturally aware communication is a key component of building trust. For example, the Jura departmental council's media library network in France delivered training on welcoming newcomers, covering topics such as the social role of libraries, appropriate terminology related to migration, and the design of culturally responsive programming.

BSF has developed a dedicated training resource for librarians to welcome migrants in libraries. For more information, please contact: library.bridgesbibliosansfrontieres.org

Creating a Safe & Inclusive Space Quick Checklist

- Is there a sign at the entrance that says "This is a safe space"?
- Is the library website available in multiple languages?
- Are multilingual materials visible and accessible?
- Can visitors who do not know the local language navigate the library without needing staff support?
- Do staff have visible language badges?
- Have you consulted with a local migrant group about their needs and user experiences?

¹[Mairie de Villeurbanne, 'La Carte de la Citoyenneté locale'](https://mairie.de.villeurbanne.fr/la-carte-de-la-citoyennete-locale), accessed 14 April 2025.

²[Library Bridges \(LiBri\), 'Desk Research Report. Context Elements and Existing Initiatives for TCN-Welcoming Libraries in France, Italy, Latvia, Poland, and Romania'](https://library.bridgesbibliosansfrontieres.org/reports-and-publications/reports-and-white-papers/report-on-welcoming-libraries-in-france-italy-latvia-poland-and-romania), September 2024.

ACTION AREA 2:

Emotional and social well-being



Many newcomers arrive after **difficult and often traumatising journeys**, and are in urgent need of a safe space. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), mood disorders and depression are the most frequently reported conditions among international migrants in the European region, especially for refugees and recently arrived asylum seekers.¹ Additionally, children migrating through Europe often face violence and abuse, with research by Save the Children highlighting that such experiences are nearly universal among those using the Balkans route.² Similar risks of physical abuse and sexual violence were reported along the migration routes between North Africa and Southern Europe.³

WHY IT MATTERS FOR LIBRARIANS

Beyond their role as spaces for learning and information, libraries can be vital places of emotional comfort and social connection—especially for those navigating the challenges of displacement, loss, and adaptation.

While librarians are not mental health professionals, they are often on the front line of community care. Through compassionate communication, basic trauma-informed approaches, and partnerships with specialised services, libraries can provide meaningful emotional and social support.

¹World Health Organization, 'The Health of Refugees and Migrants in the WHO European Region', 30 August 2023.

²Save the Children, 'Children Migrating to Europe Experience Horrific Rates of Violence, Abuse and Trauma: Report', Save the Children International, 13 September 2022.

³International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mixed Migration Centre (MMC), and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), eds., 'On This Journey, No One Cares of You Live or Die', Volume 2: Abuse, Protection, and Justice along Routes between East and West Africa and Africa's Mediterranean Coast: A Route-Based Perspective on Key Risks (Geneva: International Organization for Migration, 2024).

HOW CAN LIBRARIES SUPPORT THE EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL WELL-BEING OF MIGRANTS?

1 Healing through reading: Bibliotherapy and creative workshops

Libraries across Europe are embracing the therapeutic potential of reading, storytelling, and creative expression. Initiatives such as bibliotherapy, art and movement workshops, and community reading groups not only promote well-being but also foster inclusion and personal expression.



Between Cultures

| POLAND

In Poland, the Children's Department of the Z. Herbert Provincial and City Public Library in Gorzów Wielkopolski has been running Colourful Syllables—a weekly workshop for preschool-aged Ukrainian refugee children. Since the start of the program, nearly 2,000 children have participated in sessions that blend bibliotherapy, art therapy, movement, and linguotherapy (a method designed to both teach Polish vocabulary and gently distract from traumatic thoughts). These sessions are designed not only to support language acquisition and integration but also to promote emotional well-being through creative engagement.¹

2 Counselling and group support

Some libraries go even further, offering the library space for dedicated psychosocial support, such as in the example from Romania:



Emotional Accommodation

| ROMANIA

In Romania, the Ioan N. Roman County Library in Constanța launched the Emotional Accommodation for Ukrainian Refugees project, offering individual counseling and group support sessions to help alleviate psychological stress and foster social connection among refugee communities.³



¹Library Bridges (LiBri), 'Desk Research Report. Context Elements and Existing Initiatives for TCN-Welcoming Libraries in France, Italy, Latvia, Poland, and Romania', September 2024.

³Library Bridges (LiBri)

ACTION AREA 3:

Partnerships with local administrative and support networks



Navigating administrative procedures is often a long and complex process for migrants, and it is especially difficult for those who may not yet be fully informed of their rights and be fluent in the language of the host country. Yet, their access to essential services such as housing, financial assistance, healthcare, education, and work permits, hinges on their ability to **successfully navigate these administrative procedures and situate available services.**

WHY IT MATTERS FOR LIBRARIANS

Partnerships are the backbone of any successful library strategy for supporting migrants.

Libraries that actively engage with local administrative bodies, non-profits, and migrant support services are better positioned to inform migrants about their rights, understand evolving community needs, and connect newcomers to the right resources and services.



HOW LIBRARIES ARE SUPPORTING MIGRANTS THROUGH MULTI STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS

1 Creating hubs of information and support

Libraries often act as first points of contact for migrants, offering initial guidance on navigating local administrative systems and connecting them to specialised services. By building strong partnerships with various actors, libraries are better equipped to respond to needs that go beyond their own mandate, and can:

- Provide relevant, up-to-date information on services and organisations in the area
- Refer migrants to the appropriate organisations (e.g. healthcare, housing, legal advice)
- Set up dedicated computers or tablets with key websites or links
- Host joint events or information and orientation workshops

Libraries may also consider developing a simple “start-up package” for new residents: a bundle of essential information, service directories, and local contacts to help newcomers feel grounded and supported in their new environment. For instance:

Official information | LATVIA

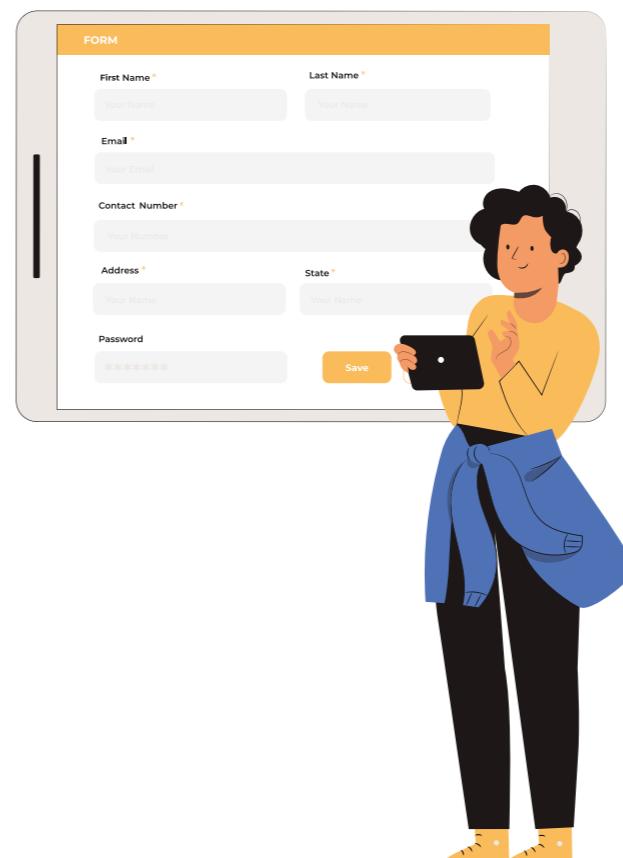
In Latvia, public libraries offer migrants official information from state and local governments on residency conditions, education, self-education opportunities, and employment. Migrants also have free and unlimited access to library materials, news sources, computer workstations, and internet/Wi-Fi services – essential tools for staying connected and informed.

Using a Trauma-Informed Approach – Quick Checklist:

- Do you explain environmental changes (e.g. closing a door or dimming lights) in advance?
- Do you offer choices when possible (e.g., where to sit, alternative exercises)?
- Are you mindful of tone, body language, and facial expressions?
- Do you validate emotions and avoid judgmental language (e.g. say “That sounds hard” instead of “Calm down”)?

Living in Aosta Valley Project | ITALY

In Italy, the Autonomous Region of Valle D’Aosta, in partnership with the Bruno Salvadori Regional Library, implemented the “Living in Aosta Valley Project.” In addition to providing guidance on Italian civic education, culture, and national and local services, it has installed three multimedia stations which allow foreigners to carry out online administrative procedures.



- Do you maintain consistent routines and give notice before changes?
- Do you reassure participants that personal information will be kept private and treated with care?
- Do you check in with yourself and others regularly—emotionally, not just logically?
- Have you built time into the day for active listening and trust-building?

2 Dedicated social support sessions

Some broad initiatives exist aiming to improve access to services for migrants. These initiatives can be offered directly to migrants or be organised for librarians and other organisations working with migrants. Before undertaking these activities, it is first necessary for librarians **to better understand the needs of migrant groups**. Research shows that while libraries are widely seen as trusted institutions capable of responding to newcomers' needs, many librarians admit to having limited direct contact with migrants and are often unaware of the specific challenges these groups face.¹ To address this, it is necessary to regularly consult with migrant groups, support associations and other involved stakeholders.



Awareness training | FRANCE

In **Nantes, France**, the municipality has introduced awareness training for librarians on migration-related issues, providing them with knowledge about existing services for migrants and resources for professionals in contact with migrant populations. This allows librarians to act as informed intermediaries who can confidently refer users to the right services.



One-on-one guidance sessions | FRANCE

At the **Bibliothèque Publique d'Information in Paris**, trained mediators offer short, one-on-one guidance sessions without prior appointment. These 20-minute interviews help identify users' needs and direct them toward appropriate services, including legal aid, administrative support, and social services.² Outside of regular opening hours, the library also makes its Self-Learning Service available to groups referred by social support organisations, as well as offering a dedicated self-training area for members of associations working in the social field.³

PRACTICAL TIPS AND TRICKS

Below is a list of helpful tips and tricks for librarians to keep in mind when working to create supportive and welcoming information hubs, leverage partnerships and better support migrants in their communities:

Tip or Trick	Explanation
Use clear signage and materials	Ensure people can navigate the space and access services intuitively.
Build regular communication channels	Establish a clear, ongoing point of contact with key partner organizations for easy referrals.
Map your local ecosystem	Identify and connect with local organisations, services, and solidarity actors supporting migrants. Set up processes to keep information updated.
Offer cultural awareness training for staff	Equip staff with basic knowledge about the migration experience and empathetic communication.
Create clear referral pathways	Maintain a list of local services (legal, healthcare, housing) for quick and easy signposting.
Host co-organised events with partners	Strengthen visibility and relationships by co-hosting workshops, info sessions, and cultural events.
Ask for feedback from migrants and partners	Continuously assess if services are accessible and relevant, and adjust based on lived experiences.

¹Serra and Revez, 'Social Inclusion of Refugees and Asylum Seekers'.

²Bibliothèque Publique d'Information, 'Permanence d'aide juridique à la Bpi', Fiche pratique (Bpi, 8 February 2019).

³Bibliothèque Publique d'Information, 'Accueil des associations du champ social à la Bpi', Fiche pratique (Bpi, 26 April 2024).

CONCLUSION

Libraries play a crucial role in welcoming and supporting migrants as they navigate their new environments. By fostering inclusive and safe spaces, offering emotional and social support, and building strong partnerships with local services, libraries can lower barriers and help newcomers access essential resources, develop new connections, and feel part of their communities. Whether through small design changes, compassionate staff practices, or targeted programming, libraries can become trusted spaces of refuge, learning, and empowerment for all.



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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Multilingual welcome guides

- Bobigny Library (France) Welcome Guide: <https://www.calameo.com/read/00004596623bf88c20aa0> (Multiple languages)
- IBBY Italy Migrant Welcome Kit (Distributed in libraries) https://issuu.com/supersantos/docs/welcome_kit (Multiple languages)
- BSF guide to welcoming librarians <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLhvAuASAUTt1Phpz9XvadQy7aaXr3EVzM> (French)
- The Watizat association has developed a set of updated guides for the cities of Toulouse, Lyon, Paris, Nantes, and Oise department. <https://watizat.org/> (French)

Creating welcoming and safe spaces

- Jura Departmental Library. Training for Librarians on how to host migrants in libraries. <https://mediatheque.jura.fr/component/c3rbevenement/230-l-accueil-et-les-services-aux-migrants-et-primo-arrivants-dans-les-bibliotheques> (French)
- Daudin, Lucie. *Accueillir des publics migrants et immigrés. Interculturalité en bibliothèque*. Presses de l'enssib, 2017, <https://doi.org/10.4000/books.pressesenssib.7527>. (French)
- Gerasimidou, D. (2022) "International Guidelines for Library Services to Displaced Persons Refugees | Migrants | Immigrants | Asylum seekers." International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) and GoetheInstitut. <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/culturalrights/cfi-cultural-rights-and-migration/2023-01-30/IFLA-Ann.1-draft-Guidelines-for-Library-Services-to-Displaced-Persons-cfi-cultural-rights.pdf> (English)
- Guide by the American Library Association Becoming a Welcoming Space for Immigrants & Refugees. <https://www.ala.org/alsc/publications-resources/professional-tools/welcoming-space>

Promoting migrant social and emotional wellbeing

- Agnes Montanari. Supporting People With Mental Health Challenges. Available at: <https://www.bsfthema.org/en/fiche/supporting-people-with-mental-health-challenges/>
- Campaign for Trauma-Informed Policy and Practice. "GUIDE: Trauma-Informed Meetings, Discussions & Conversations." <https://www.ctipp.org/post/guide-to-trauma-informed-meetings-discussions-conversations> (English)
- UCLA Prevention Center of Excellence. "Trauma and Resilience Informed Tips" <https://www.wellbeing4la.org/trauma-informed-tips/> (English)
- World Health Organization (2018). "Mental health promotion and mental health care in refugees and migrants – Technical guidance." <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/342277/9789289053747-eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y> (English)



Find extra resources in different languages on the **Displaced, exiled and migrant persons page developed by Eblida** within the project : <https://eblida.org/displaced-exiled-migrant-persons/>



ACTIVITY GUIDE

ACTIVITY 1:

Focus Group Discussion on Safe, Accessible, Inclusive Library Spaces



→ **AUDIENCE:** Migrant youth, adults and volunteers



ATTENDEES
5-8



FACILITATORS
2



LEVEL
Intermediate



PREPARATION
1 hour



ACTIVITY
2 hours

DESCRIPTION

In this activity, you will organise a focus group discussion with migrants to better understand how your library can be better equipped to meet their needs. You will collaboratively identify access or informational barriers, brainstorm solutions, and ultimately implement feedback.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Reflect on issues of library access, services, and information.
- Brainstorm ways to enhance the library's capacity to serve migrants.
- Learn about the services already available.
- Support the library's user feedback processes.

WORKED SKILLS

- Active listening and empathy
- Problem-solving
- Sense of service
- Updating of knowledge
- Community-centered design

PREREQUISITES FOR THE AUDIENCE

Basic understanding of the facilitator's language or translation (if available).

EQUIPMENT

- A comfortable, quiet space for discussion
- 2-3 flip charts or several large sheets of paper for mapping exercises and gallery walk
- Markers (different colours) for writing

CONTENT USED

- None

PREPARATION (1-2 HOURS, 2-3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE)

This activity requires advance preparation:

- Identify and invite migrants who are willing to participate in the workshop. This can be done in several ways, including sending out announcements through social media, flyers or newsletters, and including the date(s) for the activity in the library's website and/or calendar.
- Inform social centres and migrant associations, and other partners that work regularly with migrant communities, in order to recruit migrants and volunteers as participants in the workshop.

TIP: If other migrant-involving activities are already happening at the library, consider recruiting focus group participants from among these guests.

Identify some key research questions and workshop objectives in advance. What do you want to know? Consider if specific migrant groups should be involved in the consultation process.

Examples could include:

- What services do migrants currently use at the library, and how frequently?
- What motivates migrants to visit (or not visit) the library?
- Are library hours and locations accessible to migrants with varying work schedules, transportation options, or caregiving responsibilities?
- What kinds of books, films, media, or cultural materials do migrants want to see more of in the library's collection?
- Are there language barriers or literacy concerns that limit participation?
- How can the library better support migrant-led or migrant-serving initiatives?

1. SET UP ON THE DAY (10 MIN)

- Arrange the room with tables or small-group stations to allow for discussion and drawing.
- Set up flipcharts or wall space for the gallery walk.
- Place materials (paper, pens, markers, sticky notes) at each group table.

2. INTRODUCTION (20 MIN)

- Welcome** (2 MIN)

Greet participants and have them take a seat.

- **Presentations** (3 MIN)

Facilitators briefly introduce themselves and their roles.

- **The Ice Breaker** (10 MIN)

Ask each participant: "If you could describe the library in just one word, what would it be and why?"

- **Posing the Framework of the Activity** (5 MIN)

Explain the purpose of the activity: to get honest feedback from library users, especially persons from a migrant background, to see how the library can better serve this group.

TIP: Manage expectations. While the feedback given during this discussion will help to guide the library's strategy, be sure that participants have realistic expectations. For tips on pedagogical practices to adopt, please consult the chapeau paper.

Ensure participants sign a participation form and provide informed consent, with adaptations available for individuals of low literacy.

3. THE ACTIVITY (1 HOUR)

- **Step 1: Experience Sharing** (15 MIN)

Invite participants to share their experiences with public libraries through open-ended, reflective questions.

- What comes to mind when you think of a public library?
- When was the last time you visited a library? What was that experience like?
- What kind of people or activities do you expect to see in a public library?
- Have you ever used a library for something other than borrowing books? What was it?
- How do you feel when you walk into a public space you're not familiar with?

TIP: This discussion may bring up uncomfortable memories or emotions. Allow participants to pass without judgement. Acknowledge emotions and remain empathetic.

- **Step 2: Ideal Library Mapping** (30 MIN)

Prompt: Imagine walking into a library that feels just right for you. It is welcoming, supportive and accessible. In groups of 2-3, participants will map out (e.g. draw, label and/or describe) their ideal library. Ask them to think about:

- Space (rooms, layout, signs, postures, etc.)
- Services (information, activities, etc.)
- Staff (support, language, etc.)
- Collections (language, subjects, etc.)

Encourage participants to label ideas using images, words, or short phrases and to differentiate between "must-have" or "nice-to-have" elements. For participants with lower literacy or language levels, consider creating pictograms for this exercise.

TIP: If participants are uncomfortable drawing, suggest making a list instead. Consider making groups with participants who already have more experience with accessing libraries and those who have not, to facilitate the reflections.

- **Step 3: Gallery Walk & Discussion** (10 MIN)

Invite each group to do a short "gallery walk" (or "marketplace") or quick presentation, highlighting 1-2 must-have features they feel are most important. Capture recurring ideas or surprises on a flipchart for the next step.

4. CLOSING OF THE ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

Thank participants for their suggestions. and use the remaining time to invite participants to explore the library and/or discover what other services and activities it has to offer. Consider using a SWOT Matrix (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) to structure findings.

Strengths	Weaknesses

Opportunities	Threats

After the activity, Summarise feedback into Key Findings. Meet with staff to discuss the results and feasible ideas to implement. Follow up with participants to show how their input shape changes.



SUGGESTIONS TO GO FURTHER...

→ **CIRCULATE AN ONLINE SURVEY ON INCLUSION**

to in the library's newsletter or other contacts groups (note: analysis of the results should be done with caution, as not all users may be from a migrant background, but may still have valuable feedback).

→ **DEVELOP AN ACTION PLAN**

together with library staff that prioritises areas of action for creating a safer, more inclusive and accessible library space for migrants.

ACTIVITY 2:

Guided Library Tour



→ **AUDIENCE:** Migrants and host community



ATTENDEES

2-10



FACILITATORS

1



LEVEL

Beginner



PREPARATION

5 minutes



ACTIVITY

1h10 min

DESCRIPTION

The guided library tour offers migrants and host community members the chance to familiarise themselves with a library. This could take away some fear or hesitation to make use of the information available in books or digitally.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Understand how to become a member of the library
- Know how to find books in the (digital) catalog and shelves
- Be more confident to visit the library and make use of all the information

WORKED SKILLS

- Active listening and empathy
- Sense of service
- Updating of knowledge

PREREQUISITES FOR THE AUDIENCE

Basic understanding of the language used by the facilitator, or translation if available

EQUIPMENT

- None

CONTENT USED

- Books
- Catalogue of the library

1. PREPARATION (1-2 HOURS, 1-2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE)

Decide which person at the library can be involved in the facilitation of guided tours for new potential users of the library; these new users can be migrants or host community members. Consider a representative from the refugee or migrant community to assist or independently facilitate the guided tour for migrants.

To ensure migrants are aware of the existence of these tours, it could be worth reaching out to migrant associations to inform them and to arrange small groups of migrants coming together.

2. SET UP ON THE DAY (5 MIN)

- Develop a small checklist or guide that can be used by the facilitator when delivering the tour. The checklist could highlight the library's objectives and the most important information that needs to be shared during the guided tour (e.g., catalogue, certain books, membership).

3. INTRODUCTION (25 MIN)

• **Welcome** (5 MIN)

Start with a warm welcome, acknowledging the presence of the audience. Briefly explain the purpose of the library. Highlight that a library is a place for learning, finding and borrowing books, and accessing information. Use simple, clear language.

• **The Ice Breaker** (10 MIN)

Build some rapport with the audience by asking them a couple of questions, for example

- Have you been here before?
- What do you already know about this library or about libraries in general?
- Did you have a library in your country of origin? If yes, ask them to explain a bit how these libraries worked.

• **Presentation** (10 MIN)

- Briefly explain the library's free services, including books, magazines, newspapers, audiobooks, computers, and e-books.
- Mention that borrowing items requires a free membership.
- Highlight any cultural or language-based activities the library offers.
- Finally, share key rules to help new users understand and respect the library space.

4. THE ACTIVITY (30 MIN)

Give a tour through the most important parts of the library. For example

- Show the entrance and membership/Library Card. Demonstrate how to get a library card (if they don't already have one), how much it costs, and explain how to check books in and out.
- Pass by some of the bookshelves and explain how they are organised, for example by category (e.g. fiction, non-fiction, children's books, etc.) and/or by author and alphabet. Highlight sections which might be specifically interesting for migrants, such as children's books (including for adults to learn the new language of the host community), specific language books, or foreign language books.
- Show the library catalog or online system (if available), and explain and demonstrate how to search for books by title, author, or subject.
- Ask the participants for a category or specific book they would like to find, and allow them to practice with looking up books on the computer catalog or searching for a book in the physical shelves with your help.

Throughout the tour, encourage the audience to ask questions about where to find specific types of books. Make sure to use clear, easy language.

5. CLOSING OF THE ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

Thank everybody for their attention and participation. Give space for any open questions. Encourage everybody to further explore the library.



SUGGESTIONS TO GO FURTHER...

→ GIVE WEEKLY OR MONTHLY GUIDED LIBRARY TOURS

to newly arrived migrants

→ DEVELOP A WRITTEN DOCUMENT

which explains in easy language and pictures the different functions of the library, the catalogue, and the way the books are organised

ACTIVITY 3:

Staff Workshop



→ AUDIENCE: Library staff

ATTENDEES	FACILITATORS	LEVEL	PREPARATION	ACTIVITY
5-7	1	Intermediate	10 min	1h55

DESCRIPTION

This interactive workshop invites library staff to reflect on migration trends in their area, share experiences of welcoming newcomers, and practice positive, culturally aware approaches when supporting migrant patrons. Through discussion and role play, the session builds awareness and empathy, strengthening the library's role as a welcoming space.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Increase staff awareness of local migration trends and the lived experiences of newcomers.
- Reflect on the library's role in fostering inclusion and belonging.
- Practice culturally sensitive approaches to communication, including personal space, body language, and customer service scenarios.

WORKED SKILLS

- Active listening
- Cultural awareness
- Empathy building
- Conflict management
- Team collaboration

PREREQUISITES FOR THE AUDIENCE

- Participants should be library staff.

EQUIPMENT

- Flipchart or whiteboard
- Markers, pencils, etc.
- Chairs arranged in a circle

CONTENT USED

- Local migration statistics and profiles (collected in advance)
- Short narratives or scenarios illustrating migrant experiences in libraries.
- Printed "story cards" (case examples based on real migrant experiences)

1. PREPARATION (1 HOUR, 2-3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE)

This activity requires advance preparation:

- Gather recent local data on migration.
- Create or print 2-3 short real-world inspired "story cards" (or case studies) of migrants using library services.
- Prepare handouts with communication tips and positive postures.

2. SET UP ON THE DAY (10 MIN)

- Set up chairs in a circle and place story cards and handouts on each chair.
- Set up a flipchart with "Today's Agenda"
- Arrange room for easy interaction (circle or horseshoe seating).

3. INTRODUCTION (30 MIN)

• Welcome (5 MIN)

Facilitator greets participants, outlines the importance of the library as a community hub for all, including migrants.

• Presentations (5 MIN)

Each staff member introduces themselves and shares one reason they enjoy working at the library, and/or one thing they would like to get out of this workshop.

• The Ice Breaker (15 MIN)

The facilitator reads out a short series of real or common but surprising facts about cultural norms around the world, and staff vote "True" or "False" by raising their hands.

Example questions:

- "In Japan, it's polite to slurp your soup loudly."
- "In some cultures, making direct eye contact is considered rude."
- "In Germany, it's common to smile at strangers on the street."
- "In many Latin American countries, being 15-20 minutes late is still considered 'on time' for a social meeting."

After each question, the facilitator confirms the correct answer and opens a quick discussion:

- Has anyone ever experienced this?
- How could such differences show up in library interactions?

• Posing the Framework of the Activity (5 MIN)

Facilitator explains: Today's goal is to discuss how our library caters to the needs of different vulnerable groups, particularly migrants. We will explore real situations, reflect on past experiences, and test out welcoming strategies.

4. THE ACTIVITY (1H15)

• Step 1: Read the story (15 MIN)

Participants read 2-3 short story cards, each describing a migrant's first visit to the library. Example scenarios:

- A newcomer who avoids eye contact.
- A refugee parent struggling with form-filling.
- A newly arrived teen using the library as a place to take a nap.
- A visitor at the library complains that there are only activities for migrants or questions
- A visitor at the library questions why foreign books are on display/why the library hosts a specific multicultural event (e.g., as opposed to prioritising the local language and culture)

• Step 2: Group Discussion (15 MIN)

Facilitator poses reflective questions:

- Have you encountered a similar situation?
- What worked well? What was challenging?
- What specific needs do you observe among migrant visitors?

Notes and key themes are recorded on the flipchart.

• Step 3: Role Play (30 MIN)

Staff pair up and act out real-life service interactions using:

- One challenging scenario from Step 1.
- Discuss as a group and agree on a positive posture/ response to adopt.

• Step 4: Debrief as a Group (15 MIN)

- What did you experience when doing this role play?
- What felt natural or awkward?
- How did body language affect the exchange?

TIP: You can debrief in pairs first, and then reflect as a group.

5. CLOSING OF THE ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

Facilitator summarises key takeaways.

Open floor: Ask participants to mention one thing they will apply in future interactions.

**SUGGESTIONS TO GO FURTHER...****→ INVITE REPRESENTATIVES**

of migrant communities or refugee organisations for future staff talks.

→ CREATE A "WELCOMING PRACTICES"

cheat sheet for the library.

ACTIVITY 4:**Bibliotherapy Sessions**

→ **AUDIENCE:** Migrant and local children (ages 6-10)



ATTENDEES
10-15



FACILITATORS
1-2



LEVEL
Intermediate



PREPARATION
10 min



ACTIVITY
1h 40 min

DESCRIPTION

Bibliotherapy is a creative arts therapy involving reading and storytelling, designed to promote mental health and wellbeing. Through a guided group reading and reflective creative activities, children and youth will practice emotional expression and empathy.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Stimulate emotional processing and wellbeing through literature.
- Strengthen social-emotional skills like empathy, self-awareness, and confidence.
- Create a safe space for self-expression and discussion.
- Encourage a positive connection with reading and libraries.

WORKED SKILLS

- Creative expression
- Listening and discussion skills
- Self-reflection and empathy
- Optimism

PREREQUISITES FOR THE AUDIENCE

- Familiarity with the language spoken by the facilitator or translation where available.

EQUIPMENT

- Soft seating
- Drawing materials to create a bookmark (crayons, markers, stencils, hard paper)

CONTENT USED

- Children's books dealing with the topic of change, travel, migration
- Story prompts
- Visual emotion cards (E.g. 'Feelin Cartes' or 'Mindful Talk')
- (Optional) Movie: Disney's *Inside Out*

1. PREPARATION (EST. 1 HOUR, 2-3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE)

This activity requires advance preparation:

- Identify one or two migrant support associations to help organise the session.

TIP: Request the presence of a volunteer from the association, ideally someone who is trained in mental health or psychosocial support (MHPSS) to provide emotional support to participants if needed. Volunteers who are migrants and/or speak foreign languages should also be prioritised.

- Identify participants, by sharing a sign-up list with the partner association.

- Identify short stories for group reading.

- Be sure to match stories to the age groups and literacy/fluency levels.
- Look for stories that validate feelings without being overly distressing, ideally with a constructive or hopeful ending.
- Stories with clear dilemmas or turning points can help children project, reflect and share.
- Visual elements can enhance engagement, particularly among younger participants and those with limited fluency.

2. SET UP ON THE DAY (10 MIN)

- Set up reading corner, cushions, materials, and visuals. Consult partner associations to understand the accessibility needs or emotional triggers of the group. Prepare a quiet area or “calm corner” for breaks.

3. INTRODUCTION (30 MIN)

- Welcome** (5 MIN)

Greet early arrivals with quiet drawing or music.

- Presentations** (5 MIN)

Facilitators introduce themselves and set gentle ground rules.

- The Ice Breaker** (15 MIN)

Feelings Charades: Act out emotions using cards. (Requires: Emotion Cards)

(Alternative) Emotion Walk: Participants move like they feel a called-out emotion (e.g., joy, frustration, nervousness, pride), and act out that emotion using body language, pace, and posture to express it. After 20-30 seconds, call out a new emotion.

TIP: Mix positive and negative emotions, and end with a positive emotion.

• Posing the Framework of the Activity (5 MIN)

Explain bibliotherapy: “Today I am going to introduce you to bibliotherapy. Our lives can get quite hectic sometimes. It can sometimes be challenging to make sense of things happening in our minds and bodies. By reading stories together, we can use characters and experiences in books to help us understand our own feelings and talk about them with others.

IMPORTANT: Be mindful that children and youth who have experienced trauma may need additional support or may choose not to share. Encourage children to speak up if the stories or representations make them feel uncomfortable, and be open to discussing. Participation in discussion should always be optional. If possible, have a social worker or a volunteer from a migrant support association present to provide follow-up.

4. THE ACTIVITY (1 HOUR)

• Step 1: Read the story (15 MIN)

The facilitator reads a chosen story aloud, pausing to gauge the group’s reactions. You can also incorporate props or puppets for more visual storytelling for younger groups.

• Step 2: Group Discussion (15 MIN)

Ask the group to reflect on the book:

- Which character in the book did you like most? Explain why?
- Are you like any of the story’s characters?
- What emotions did the character feel? Have you ever felt the same? (You may use the emotion cards as a visual aid or to prompt reflection).
- Do any of the characters remind you of someone?
- Imagine what might happen to the characters next, what do you think their lives will look like tomorrow, in a few weeks, or even a year from now?
- If you could change something in the story, such as a character, an event, or the ending, what would you do differently?

• Step 3: Follow-up craft (30 MIN)

- Invite the participants to create a bookmark based on the story using paper and the markers and materials provided. Younger kids can draw; older ones can write messages or quotes.

5. CLOSING OF THE ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

- Invite participants to share their bookmarks (optional). Encourage using them for future library visits. Distribute library flyers and thank participants.



SUGGESTIONS TO GO FURTHER...

→ TARGET MIGRANT PARENTS:

Offer parents a follow-up workshop on using books for emotional support at home.

→ MOVIE SUGGESTION:

Pair the activity with a film screening of Disney's Inside Out to talk about emotions.

ACTIVITY 5:

Relaxation Station



→ AUDIENCE: Migrant children (ages 6-10)

ATTENDEES	FACILITATORS	LEVEL	PREPARATION	ACTIVITY
10-15	1-2	Intermediate	15 min	1h 30 min

DESCRIPTION

This playful and calming workshop invites children to explore a multi-sensory "Relaxation Station" in the library. Using the five senses model from mindfulness and grounding, the session helps children identify ways to self-soothe and feel safe in new environments, whether they are managing stress, big emotions, or simply need a quiet break. The station can remain in the library for daily use after the workshop.

OBJECTIVES

- Introduce children to simple relaxation techniques using their five senses.
- Create a calming and welcoming space where children feel safe and valued.
- Foster social interaction through shared sensory exploration.
- Support emotional self-regulation and wellbeing.

WORKED SKILLS

- Emotional awareness
- Self-regulation strategies
- Sensory exploration

- Peer collaboration
- Mindfulness basics

PREREQUISITES FOR THE AUDIENCE

- Basic understanding of the language used by the facilitator, or translation if available

EQUIPMENT

- Headphones and pre-loaded calming music or multicultural playlists
- Mini tabletop sand garden or kinetic sand station
- Aroma diffuser or essential oil cotton balls (child-safe scents)
- Herbal tea or fruit-infused water station (supervised)
- Printable mandala or cultural art coloring sheets & coloring supplies
- Comfortable floor mats or cushions

CONTENT USED

- Curated multicultural soundtracks.
- Simple visuals and signs for each sensory station.
- (Optional) Aroma Game (e.g., [Le Loto Des Odeurs](#))

1. PREPARATION (EST. 1 HOUR, 2-3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE)

This activity requires advance preparation:

- Source and prepare safe, age-appropriate sensory materials.
- Curate calming and culturally diverse music playlists.
- Print mandala templates and prepare coloring supplies.
- Confirm allergy considerations for tea/aroma products.

2. SET UP ON THE DAY (15 MIN)

- Arrange five "sense zones" in different corners of the room.
- Soft lighting or natural light, calm background music.
- Lay out floor mats and arrange signs for each station.

3. INTRODUCTION (30 MIN)

- **Welcome** (5 MIN)

Facilitator introduces the idea of a "Relaxation Station" — a place to pause, relax, and take care of ourselves.

- **Presentations** (5 MIN)

Each child shares their name and one thing that helps them feel calm or happy.

- **The Ice Breaker** (15 MIN)

In a circle, each child picks one sense (touch, sight, smell, sound, taste) and shares a favorite memory linked to it. For example:

- "I love the smell of cinnamon at home."
- "I feel calm when I listen to rain sounds."

- **Posing the Framework of the Activity** (5 MIN)

Explain the stations: "Today you'll explore five ways to feel calm using your senses — these are tools you can use anytime you feel stressed or worried."

4. THE ACTIVITY (50 MIN)

- **Step 1: Explore the Stations** (25 MIN)

Children rotate freely between the 5 sense stations:

1. Sound Zone - Try headphones with calming music and sounds from around the world
2. Sight Zone - Color mandala drawings or cultural art patterns.

3. Touch Zone - Shape the sand garden or run hands through kinetic sand.

4. Smell Zone - Smell essential oil samples (e.g., lavender, orange, mint) on cotton rounds. (Possibility to use the Loto des Odeurs game)

5. Taste Zone - Try a cup of herbal tea or infused water or a piece of fruit, noting its warmth and/or flavor.

- **Step 2: Reflection Circle** (15 MIN)

Back in a circle, the facilitator asks:

- Which station made you feel the most calm?
- How can you use these senses when you feel upset or worried at school or home?

Children can draw or write one idea on a small "My Calm Recipe" card to take home.

- **Step 3: Co-Create the Relaxation Station** (10 MINUTES)

Children help arrange the materials for a permanent Relaxation Station corner in the library, voting on:

- Which items should stay.
- Any new items that should be added.
- What signs or rules to create for the space.

5. CLOSING OF THE ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

Recap the five senses and why each helps us relax.

Give out the "My Calm Recipe" cards.



SUGGESTIONS TO GO FURTHER...

→ **KEEP THE RELAXATION STATION**
open during library hours.

→ **OFFER SENSORY
STORYTELLING SESSIONS**
in the same corner.

→ **LET CHILDREN CREATE**
new sensory objects or playlists for
future workshops.

ACTIVITY 6:

Create a Local Phone Book (Workshop with Partners)



→ **AUDIENCE:** Library staff, NGOs, etc.



ATTENDEES

15-20



FACILITATORS

1-2



LEVEL

Intermediate



PREPARATION

15 min



ACTIVITY

1h 30 min

DESCRIPTION

The aim of this activity is to collaboratively develop a comprehensive directory ("Phone Book") of essential services and support organisations serving migrants. This will provide a practical resource for library staff, enabling them to refer migrants and help them navigate available services more effectively.

OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Create an accessible directory for migrants to navigate local services
- Promote collaboration between libraries, NGOs, and community organisations
- Facilitate information exchange across service providers
- Increase knowledge sharing among libraries and NGOs

WORKED SKILLS

- Collaboration
- Information management

PREREQUISITES FOR THE AUDIENCE

- Participants should be familiar with migration support (e.g. local NGOs, migrant associations, social services).

EQUIPMENT

- A meeting room
- (Optional) Flip charts for brainstorming

CONTENT USED

- Pre-filled or existing local directory (if available)
- Printed templates, pens, laptops/tablets, printed lists of services (if available)

1. PREPARATION (EST. 1-2 HOURS, 2-3 WEEKS IN ADVANCE)

This activity requires advance preparation:

Collect information from local government agencies, NGOs, social service organisations, and community-based support groups that offer services for migrants. Check with migrant support associations and libraries to determine if a directory already exists; this activity is meant to fill a gap. The workshop allows validation of the directory, identification of service gaps, and ensures the final version is up to date.

Ahead of the meeting, send out a directory template for partners to complete with known services. Collect submissions, identify gaps, and conduct additional research to help complete the template in advance.

2. SET UP ON THE DAY (10-15 MIN)

Arrange tables with printed templates and contact forms.

3. INTRODUCTION (30 MIN)

- **Welcome** (5 MIN)

Welcome guests into the room.

- **Presentations** (5 MIN)

Do a quick round of introductions among participants.

- **Ice Breaker** (15 MIN)

Ask each participant to share a unique or underused service their organisation offers migrants. Alternatively, ask: "What do you hope to learn or achieve today?" or "What aspect of collaboration would you like to strengthen?"

- **Posing the Framework of the Activity** (5 MIN)

Outline the directory's importance and how it will help migrants access services such as healthcare, legal aid, education, housing, and employment. Emphasise the opportunity for improved collaboration—joint activities, visits, and sharing information between libraries and associations.

4. THE ACTIVITY (50MIN)

- **Step 1: Review and complete the directory** (25 MIN)

Work as a group to review the template. Discuss what services exist under each category (e.g., healthcare, legal aid). Fill in missing information collaboratively.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 2: Identify gaps and areas for improvement (25 MIN) <p>Discuss what migrant needs are not addressed and how to respond. Brainstorm together and record ideas or solutions, either in notes or on flip charts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Step 3: Creative brainstorming (25 MIN) <p>Discuss how libraries and associations can collaborate more efficiently. Suggestions might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint workshops or information sessions - Shared resources and referral systems - Coordinated outreach efforts - Collaborative events or cultural activities
<p>5. CLOSING OF THE ACTIVITY (10 MIN)</p> <p>Allow time for informal conversations and networking among participants, which can help foster better coordination.</p> <p>(Optional): Provide drinks and refreshments.</p> <p>After the activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share and/or print out and distribute the directory for participants to take with them. - Highlight how this directory can be shared with migrants at NGOs, social centers, and local libraries. Encourage NGOs to use the directory as a resource for their clients. - Conduct follow up meetings with organisations once or twice a year to pursue any interesting ideas or opportunities for further collaboration.



SUGGESTIONS TO GO FURTHER...

→ TRAINING AND UPTAKE:

Organise a follow-up training with library staff on how to implement the resources list (e.g. what types of situations would require it, how to approach individuals in a sensitive manner).

Service Type	Organisations	Contacts	Service Description	Eligibility Criteria (if applicable)
Healthcare (emergency and non-emergency)	Organisation X Organisation X	E.g. Phone, email, address	(doctors, mental health, emergency care,	
Legal Aid			(immigration advice, asylum support, rights advocacy)	
Social Services			(housing, food banks, financial aid)	
Employment Services			(job search assistance, training programs)	
Community resources			(cultural centers, language classes, volunteer opportunities)	
Education			(pre-school, primary / secondary schools, TVET, Universities, language schools)	

ACTIVITY 7:

Orientation Sessions



→ **AUDIENCE:** Migrant youth and adults

ATTENDEES	FACILITATORS	LEVEL	PREPARATION	ACTIVITY
7-10	1	Advanced	10 min	1h 20 min

DESCRIPTION

This orientation introduces newcomers to the library as a welcoming place for community support, learning, and reliable daily life information. It highlights basic rights and shows how the library connects users to trusted services beyond books, including legal aid, language learning, and digital tools. It complements tours by focusing on people and support.

OBJECTIVES

- Familiarise migrants with the library as a community resource hub.
- Provide clear information on key rights and where to seek help.
- Encourage independent use of services (sign-ups, programs, materials).
- Promote confidence in asking questions and navigating local services.

WORKED SKILLS

- Understanding community resources & services.
- Self-advocacy and asking for help.
- Basic problem-solving and critical thinking.

PREREQUISITES FOR THE AUDIENCE

- No prior library experience needed.
- Basic understanding of facilitator's language.
- Optional: interpretation or translated handouts.

EQUIPMENT

- Scenario cards for group work.
- Whiteboard or flipchart.
- Pens / sticky notes
- (Optional) Individual note pads and pens for individuals to take with them

CONTENT USED

- Simplified rights flyer (library-approved or NGO-produced).
- Welcome handout: Library map, NGO contacts, events.
- Library membership info.
- List of local support organisations (legal aid, shelters, clinics).
- Guiding questions for the photo walk
- Handouts with photography tips

1. PREPARATION (1-2 HOURS, 1-2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE)

This activity requires advance preparation:

- Identify and invite participants via migrant associations, NGOs, or flyers.
- Request updated rights materials from NGO partners. Invite a volunteer from a support association or legal expert to support the "Know Your Rights" part.
- Print library sign-up forms, scenario cards, and welcome handouts.
- Select display materials: resources, language books, digital services.

2. SET UP ON THE DAY (10 MIN)

- Arrange room in small-group format for discussion and presentations.

3. INTRODUCTION (20 MIN)

• Welcome (5 MIN)

Greet participants: "Welcome to the library! Today's session is about learning how the library can help you feel at home in [City] – with information, support, and friendly faces."

Emphasise that the library is for everyone: No question is too small – library staff are here to help.

• Presentations (5 MIN)

Facilitator introduces themselves and the library.

- Explain library cards and access to books, computers, events, language cafes, job resources.
- Clarify requirements (free? ID? address?). Emphasise safety and inclusivity.

• The Ice Breaker (5 MIN)

Invite participants to introduce themselves and to share one word (or very short phrase) in any language that reminds them of home or what makes them feel welcome in a new place. If people want, they can also explain why, but it's fine to just share the word.

• Posing the Framework of the Activity (5 MIN)

Explain that the session focuses on rights and how the library helps connect users to support services.

4. THE ACTIVITY (50 MIN)

• Step 1: "Know Your Rights" Presentation (10 MIN)

Present basic rights (health, education, safety, non-discrimination), using flyers or NGO materials. Emphasise that rights apply to everyone, regardless of status. Reference international law (e.g., EU Charter). (See 2024 [IFLA Guidelines for Libraries Supporting Displaced Persons, Section 2.1](#)).

TIP: Invite an NGO or legal expert to support and respond to questions.

Show participants where to find NGO contact info and how to ask librarians for help.

• **Step 2: Obtaining a Library Card** (10 MIN)

Explain the value of the library's services and how to obtain a library card.

- Explain what a library card gives access to: books, computers, free workshops, community events, language cafés, job-seeking support.
- Clarify: card is free (or conditions if applicable), no status or address limits (if possible), how to sign up.
- Emphasise: the library is a safe and non-judgmental place and staff are available for help.

• **Step 3: Discussion - "Where Would You Go?"** (30 MIN)

The facilitator reads short, everyday situations aloud, for example:

- "You feel sick. What do you do?"
- "You want to learn French. Where can you start?"
- "You want to meet new people in the community. Where could you go?"
- "You (or your child) need to study for a language test/ prepare a history project. What resources can you use?" (both in print, digital, tutoring, etc.)
- "Your child is being treated unfairly at school. Who could help?"
- "You want to know how to register your children for school."

Match each situation with a resource (poster, staff member, flyer). Facilitator confirms and locates resources with participants' help.

5. CLOSING OF THE ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

- Ask: "What's one thing you learned today?"
- Reassure: You can always ask the librarian – it's their job to help.
- Hand out flyers and help those interested register for a library card.



**SUGGESTIONS
TO GO FURTHER...**

→ **CREATE A PHOTO BOOK**

Set up a monthly "Ask a Rights Expert" session co-hosted with a trusted local NGO, or dedicated administrative help clinics.

ACTIVITY 8:

Welcoming Posters and Signage Activity



→ **AUDIENCE:** Migrant youth

ATTENDEES	FACILITATORS	LEVEL	PREPARATION	ACTIVITY
7-10	1	Advanced	10 min	1h 30min

DESCRIPTION

This creative workshop invites migrant youth and children to design pictograms and multilingual welcome signs for public library spaces. The focus is on visual communication, empathy, and accessibility—ensuring that all community members, regardless of language, feel safe and included.

PREREQUISITES FOR THE AUDIENCE

- Ability to draw or express ideas visually (no artistic skill required)
- Basic awareness of symbols and signs in public spaces
- Some lived experience of navigating unfamiliar places or systems

EQUIPMENT

- Large drawing paper, markers, colored pencils, scissors, glue
- Flipchart or board to brainstorm ideas

CONTENT USED

- Printed examples of pictograms and multilingual signage
- Access to translation apps or dictionaries (optional)
- Multilingual "Welcome" messages and inclusive phrases
- Accessibility symbols (e.g., disability icons, hearing assistance). See: [The Noun Project](#)

OBJECTIVES

- Foster a sense of ownership and belonging in public spaces.
- Promote visual literacy and inclusive design.
- Raise awareness of accessibility and communication needs.
- Create tangible, meaningful outputs that libraries can display.

WORKED SKILLS

- Visual communication and design
- Teamwork and peer collaboration
- Critical thinking on inclusion and accessibility
- Creative expression
- Language awareness and empathy

1. PREPARATION (1-2 HOURS, 1-2 WEEKS IN ADVANCE)

This activity requires advance preparation:

- Collect and print examples of symbols and inclusive signage.
- Prepare a list of useful multilingual or visual messages (e.g., "Safe Space," "Welcome," "Need Help?").
- Coordinate with the library to display selected final works.
- **TIP:** Consider involving a migrant or community member with good graphic skills to support in the session.

2. SET UP ON THE DAY (10 MIN)

- Arrange drawing materials and examples of symbols on tables
- Set up a welcome board with inspiration images
- Prepare a wall space or area where youth can post their signs as they finish

3. INTRODUCTION (30 MIN)

- **Welcome** (5 MIN)

Friendly introduction, overview of the space and today's activity.

- **The Ice Breaker** (10 MIN)

"Symbol Charades" – Act out or draw common signs and have others guess.

- **Presentations** (5 MIN)

Participants and facilitator introduce themselves and share one sign or symbol they like or that even helped them feel welcome or safe.

- **Posing the Framework of the Activity** (20 MIN)

- Why signs matter, especially for newcomers or those who don't speak the language.
- Show examples of effective, inclusive signs.
- Introduce the goal: create original signs and pictograms for the library.

4. THE ACTIVITY (50 MIN)

- **Step 1: Brainstorming and Sketching** (15 MIN)

- In pairs or small groups, participants brainstorm ideas for signs they'd want to see in a

library. Reflect: "What would have made you feel more welcome when you first arrived here?"

- Examples: "You Are Safe Here," "Ask for Help," "Storytime," "Quiet Zone."
- Think about: who might need this sign? How do we show it without words?
- Alternatively, you can also create signs for the different sections of the library (e.g., literature, arts, foreign language books, philosophy...etc.).

- **Step 2: Create the Signs** (30 MIN)

- Participants design their signs using markers, stencils, and collage.
- Encourage use of color, different languages, and accessible design (e.g., large letters, simple icons).

- **Step 3: Sharing** (5 MIN)

Everyone presents their sign to the group.

5. CLOSING OF THE ACTIVITY (10 MIN)

- Offer a certificate of participation or small takeaway (e.g., bookmark with inclusive message).
- After the activity, post the new signage around the library.



SUGGESTIONS TO GO FURTHER...

→ **RUN A FOLLOW-UP SESSION**

to create a full multilingual "Welcome Wall."

→ **ORGANISE A SIMILAR WORKSHOP**

to develop symbols and signage on the computer

→ **AFTER THE ACTIVITY**

post the new signage around the library when ready to be used or make adaptations or digitalisations to prepare for use.



WE'D LIKE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Do you have feedback on the toolkit and activities or ideas you would like to share?

We'd love to hear your thoughts, suggestions, and ideas.

Reach out to us at:

library.bridges@bibliosansfrontieres.org

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