



Accelerating Inclusion and Changing Perceptions About Migration

SINGA

PRESS KIT

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EDITORIAL



Europe is undergoing increasing polarization. Everything serves as a pretext for separation, barriers, controversy, and exclusion. The divides between generations, conservatives and progressives, local and foreign origins, urban and rural areas, and between the rich and poor are dangerously deepening. This growing fracture significantly hampers our ability to exchange and dialogue with those who do not share the same perspectives or social codes as us.

In this list of our dark ideas, hostility towards newcomers holds a prominent place. Yet, we know that migration is and will remain a structural reality in an increasingly globalized and interconnected world. These movements, intensified by global demographics, economic inequalities, international armed conflicts, and climate change pressures, are lasting. No wall, no police force, no legislation can interrupt the scaling up of migrations. To argue otherwise is as absurd as claiming that the Earth is flat.

This poisonous climate has significant repercussions at the ballot box, as evidenced by the remarkable strides of far-right parties calling for an end to migration in Europe.

A striking dissonance also emerges between the facts and perceptions surrounding migration. According to Eurostat, Europeans overestimate the number of immigrants present by 3.4 times. This distortion of perception undoubtedly contributes to the hardening of opinions and attitudes towards migrations.

At SINGA, we believe that migration, far from creating division, is an engine of prosperity, creativity, and contributes to social cohesion. This statement is corroborated by a diverse array of economists such as Jean Tirole, Patrick Artus, and the Keynesians at OFCE: immigration is an essential asset to sustain our way of life, fund our social model, and uphold prosperity.

The benefits of migration are countless. A recent CNRS survey demonstrates that the skills of immigrants and diversity within teams undoubtedly foster innovation across all sectors.

In the realm of social cohesion, as highlighted by the OECD in 2021, migration plays a major role in strengthening social cohesion by substantially contributing to balancing retirement and healthcare systems. Migration also offers unique opportunities to learn how to interact with individuals from diverse backgrounds, thereby enhancing adaptability in a constantly evolving society. This fosters mutual understanding and contributes to harmonious coexistence.

However, alongside the lack of awareness of facts, ignorance and unfamiliarity with the individuals involved exacerbate the situation. The absence of connections largely explains the rise of these prejudices. In the 2006 "Pathways and profiles of migrants" survey, a notable figure stands out: only 12% of surveyed refugees have connections with French citizens. This clearly indicates that "social bridges" are very rare.

This is the context in which SINGA strives every day to break down these barriers by providing a platform for those involved, sharing their stories, and fostering authentic connections between communities.

While Europe plunges into a political climate clouded by fear, SINGA fervently promotes inclusion, creativity, and shared prosperity. Stigmatization will never be the answer or the solution. What we need is an enlightened vision that celebrates diversity and recognizes the invaluable contribution of newcomers to our society.

It is now imperative to brighten Europe's future by turning this commitment into reality. Millions of Europeans aspire to inclusion, supported by citizen organizations and committed businesses. The lack of clarity and vision among our political leaders is all the more regrettable and dangerous.

We have the duty and the power to transform this chaos and waste into a true revealer of talents, innovations, and potentials, thus paving the way for a flourishing future for a truly inclusive Europe.

BENOÎT HAMON,
CEO OF SINGA GLOBAL
& FATEMEH JAILANI,
COO OF SINGA GLOBAL



2 A Decade of Economic, Social, and Cultural Inclusion for Newcomers

In 2012, SINGA was born out of a troubling observation: migration dominates debates and media coverage; however, residents of host societies seem to have little to no connection with those who are actually part of this migration. This gap continues to lead to an increase in ignorance and fear for some, and a growing isolation for newcomers.

SINGA means "connections"

SINGA, named after the Lingala word for "connections," was created with the goal of building bridges between newcomers (exiled and immigrant individuals) and locals, in order to accelerate their inclusion and foster a more cohesive, creative, and prosperous society.

Therefore, SINGA creates opportunities for encounters and collaboration by offering support for entrepreneurship, shared activities, and citizen hosting.

Founded in Paris, SINGA quickly expanded worldwide thanks to the enthusiasm of dedicated individuals attracted to this innovative vision of migration. SINGA is now an international citizen organization present in 7 countries (Belgium, Canada, Germany, France, Luxembourg, Spain, Switzerland) working daily on the inclusion of newcomers and changing perspectives on migration.





"We have always sought to reach the tipping point of society. It occurs when enough people have had a different experience of inclusion, have become aware of the absurdity of current rules and behaviors. For SINGA employees, there exists a world where seeking asylum is not an additional suffering, where skills are recognized, and cultural differences are embraced as an opportunity to learn. We know that this world requires architecture and infrastructure. In essence, it is under construction"

GUILLAUME CAPELLE,
CO-FOUNDER OF SINGA

THE SINGA METHOD

The SINGA method draws inspiration from the peer-to-peer network model, a model of equal exchange. **At SINGA, no one is helping or being helped; everyone is a change agent working together to share with others and learn from each other.**

The SINGA method involves giving voice, influence, and visibility to those with a migration background.

Thus, SINGA provides an environment conducive to individual flourishing while simultaneously contributing to dismantling prevalent prejudices. SINGA also shares its methodologies and actively participates in numerous coalitions involving non-governmental, economic and public actors, thereby amplifying its impact in France and Europe. Examples include the Charter of Inclusion, supported by SINGA and Utopies signed by more than 60 large companies, SMEs, networks, and associations. Following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine, SINGA shared its expertise and methodology "J'accueille" with over 10 associative actors in the neighboring countries of Ukraine.

Additionally, SINGA participates in the activities and conferences of the Refugee Entrepreneurship Network and is involved in the collective "Work with Refugee" to promote the professional integration of refugee individuals.



OUR PROGRAMS

Our method forms the foundation of all SINGA programs. Our programs are designed to accelerate the economic, cultural, and social inclusion of newcomers, with a focus on the active participation of each individual.

Entrepreneurship Support:

Our network supports entrepreneurial projects of newly arrived individuals (refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants) and locals with projects related to migration and inclusion. Each year, several hundred start-ups, small businesses, social enterprises, and non-profit organizations emerge from these programs.



Inter-Cultural Encounters:

SINGA creates encounters between local and newly arrived individuals through hundreds of workshops and events focused on common interests and various activities, such as art, cuisine, sports, education and culture, among others. SINGA events, whether occasional or regular, are frequent across Europe and Canada, bringing together thousands of people each week.

Citizen Hosting:

Throughout France, J'accueille powered by SINGA pairs up refugees in need of housing with local individuals who have a spare room for a few months. This enables them to benefit from temporary stability and focus on their projects, such as resuming their studies, job hunting, or finding permanent housing. In Belgium, the CALM (Comme A La Maison) project connects Brussels-based shared accommodations with refugees, allowing them to share living spaces.



Corporate Consulting:

SINGA offers consulting and training services to all employees of organizations or companies, covering areas such as inclusion policies, recruitment, inclusive behaviors, and interculturality.



3 For SINGA, Inclusion Boosts the Economy

The job market is often shut to newcomers, offering them positions that do not match their skills and aspirations. Moreover, many of them have a natural inclination for entrepreneurship, having accumulated a wealth of experience in this field in their countries of origin, an experience further enhanced by the challenges inherent to migration. **This experience instills valuable qualities such as resilience, innovation, and adaptability, which play a crucial role in their entrepreneurial journey, albeit unfortunately underestimated.**



Foreign individuals are overrepresented among entrepreneurs. In Europe, 21% of entrepreneurs are immigrants, with 36% coming from countries outside the European Union (Utopies, 2021). In France, foreigners contribute to 15% of new business creation, while representing only 7.8% of the population (Legal start 2021). They also play a key role in supporting both growing and declining industrial sectors. Their contribution is crucial for job creation and value generation.

In a decade marked by financial, humanitarian, and health crises, it is essential to have and value entrepreneurs capable of bridging cultures, demonstrating resilience, and offering fresh perspectives in a constantly evolving context.

Sources :

Impact SINGA study - Improve, 2023



3 examples of innovative services and products supported by SINGA [See all projects](#)

[See all projects](#)



Created by Rooh Savar and Caroline Span, **Welcome Account** is an AI-powered fintech offering simple and inclusive financial solutions for all newcomers arriving in France.



Created by Carlos Arbalaez, **Café Plural** is a company in Paris that hand-roasts Colombian coffees and trains refugees as baristas.



Created by Joyce Dworak, **Frisky** is a clothing brand made from recycled textiles from Ghana.

OUR ENTREPRENEURSHIP SUPPORT PROGRAMS

SINGA offers three support programs, all free of charge, open to newcomers and locals with projects related to migration and inclusion.

1

Pre-incubation program

A 2-month program designed to help future entrepreneurs explore and formalize their aspirations, transitioning from an idea to a project



2

Incubation program

A 6-month program designed to facilitate and secure the launch of their project: legal status, product or service testing, prospecting, development, and more.



3

Acceleration program

A 9-month program that enables entrepreneurs already in operation to raise funds and scale up their ventures.



4

Alumni/post creation

Individual support and/or collective events to maintain one's network and create collaborative dynamics after project creation.



Key figures

+2000

Entrepreneurs Supported
(50% of whom are women)

400+

Organizations Created (including associations and businesses)

12

Incubators/
Accelerators
Across Europe

60%

of Incubated
Businesses Still
Active After
3 Years

74%

of the supported
entrepreneurs
believe that their
professional and
social situation
has become
stronger thanks
to SINGA*

Sources :

Impact SINGA study
- Improve, 2023



"When I first had the idea for my project, a man from another organization told me, 'Madam, you will never create your own business. You have the three biggest obstacles: you're a woman, a foreigner, and you have three children.'

And then SINGA believed in me, and today I am a French Tech Tremplin laureate. I will never forget what SINGA has done for me"

DOUNIA HANNACH,

**FOUNDER OF ABAJAD, SINGA ALUMNI, AND WINNER
OF THE FRENCH TECH TREMPLIN 2021**

4 For SINGA, Inclusion Creates Connections and Promotes Social Cohesion

SINGA is, in a way, a "neo-social bank" that provides newcomers access to the social capital of local individuals.

Nearly 75% of newcomers experience a profound sense of isolation in their host city, leading to detrimental consequences such as difficulties in expressing themselves in the national language, hurdles in finding accommodation, barriers to employment, and a deterioration of their self-esteem.*

For local residents, **65% of them state that they do not have immigrants in their personal circle of relationships**. There is a clear lack of opportunities to meet and interact with newcomers, despite the omnipresence of migration-related issues at the core of debates and media, often generating feelings of fear and exclusion.

Sources :

*SINGA Belgique impact study, 2022

**Le Fil survey - SINGA 2023



INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

SINGA strives to create connections and shared experiences to foster connections between newcomers and locals around common interests such as culture, sports, music, gastronomy, and many others. Depending on individual preferences and availability, these experiences can be lived in groups or pairs.

Examples of SINGA Moments and Activities:

Moninga

Half of newcomers are women. Their migration journey often brings them additional traumas. SINGA provides dedicated spaces for expression for both newcomers and local women. These spaces are facilitated by a mediator and a psychologist, and interactions can take place in various languages to ensure everyone can express themselves comfortably.

«SINGA's MONINGA Program is truly a privileged moment, a safe space where every woman can freely express herself on all aspects of her life and address sensitive topics such as identity, personal reconstruction, and many others. It's a space of authentic listening where each woman can share her experiences and be heard, regaining the power to act on her own life. I have seen many women regain confidence and strength through this group dynamic and leave with tools for psychosocial support.»

NAGHAM BAJJOUR,
PSYCHOSOCIAL MEDIATOR

SINGA Blabla

A weekly meeting open to all where locals and newcomers come together to share moments of conviviality through games, music, gastronomy, and more. In Belgium, this is the SINGA BAZAR, held twice a week in Brussels.

«Thanks to SINGA, I am no longer afraid to start a conversation and make friends with new people. The SINGA team offers a great opportunity to make friends and acquaintances. This is really essential, especially for people who, like me, arrive in Belgium.»

DIANA, PARTICIPANT IN BRUSSELS

Buddy Program

Connecting two individuals on an equal footing, sharing common passions to create a duo that explores the city, attends collective activities together, and enriches each other's daily lives.

«Each encounter, each new person to accompany is a discovery: a different personality, a different culture, a different approach to life. Both individuals have everything to gain from it.»

**SERGE MAKCHEEFF, BUDDY
PROGRAM ADMIN**



Key figures

61%

of newcomers have seen their sense of isolation reduced thanks to SINGA.

67%

of newcomers have regained their self-confidence thanks to SINGA

53%

of participants feel more comfortable in the local language thanks to SINGA.

61%

of newcomers have declared that SINGA has helped them to feel at home in their host city.

Sources : Impact study SINGA Belgium, 2022

J'ACCUEILLE - OUR SOCIAL INNOVATION MODEL

What better way to learn to live together than to... actually live together ?

An alarming number of refugees find themselves without access to stable housing, which prevents them from concentrating on realizing their life projects, whether this involves returning to school or looking for a job. Paradoxically, thousands of citizens are eager to get involved and are ready to open their doors.

With this in mind, SINGA launched J'accueille in 2015, a citizen hosting program aimed at pairing up refugees in need of housing with local individuals who have a spare room for a few months. The association has grown and is now present in more than 10 cities in France.

In 2022, when war broke out in Ukraine, J'accueille received over 5,000 offers of accommodation in just one month. In Brussels, the CALM (Comme à La Maison) program brings together private individuals and refugees through shared accommodation.

Sources :
Impact study, 2017

The "J'accueille By SINGA" Method

The Key to Success? A Rigorous Matching Method, Customized Daily Monitoring, and Long-Term Support for Both Hosts and Guests.

A crucial element and a distinctive feature of J'accueille is the matching of hosts and guests on the basis of their interests and professional fields. **This prerequisite not only fosters unique moments of sharing and conviviality during cohabitation, but also opens up professional opportunities for hosts.**

«Opening your door is very simple. As soon as you decide to commit to the process. The support provided by J'accueille and the steps in the matching process defined by the association are invaluable. They enable both parties to validate each stage of the commitment without rushing.»

SOAZIC ET YOLANDE, HOSTS

The support provided by J'accueille includes:

- Social support covered at 100% by J'accueille thanks to dedicated social workers.
- Intercultural training and personalized follow-up for each cohabitation.
- Regular meetings are organized so that everyone can share their experiences.
- During cohabitation, access to professional mediation services is available to facilitate communication if necessary.



Marie-France Cohen, hostess, and Med Ewaz, host, in front of the poster for the film "Ma France à Moi" by Benoît Cohen, which tells the story of their encounter made possible by J'accueille.

Key figures

Sources : Impact study, 2017

71,5%

find a housing solution after the program

45,3%

are employed (compared to 13.1% at the start)

91%

of hosts consider citizen hosting as a solution for the future.



«I needed a roof over my head, a place to call home, to rebuild my life. With this program, my life has totally changed. I had lots of dreams when I arrived, but no contacts, no qualifications, I was alone. Today, I've found my place in French society»

MED EWAZ,
WELCOMED IN 2015, AND J'ACCUEILLE EMPLOYEE SINCE 2022



«As with any linguistic and cultural immersion, the people we welcome feel "at home" more quickly, and contribute more to their host society. As for the hosts, they also develop invaluable skills in terms of openness to others, a better understanding of societal issues, resilience and adaptability.

Hosting means becoming stronger for the future, individually and collectively.»

DAVID ROBERT,
J'ACCUEILLE CO-DIRECTOR



5 For SINGA, Inclusion, the Keystone of Changing Perspectives

Immigration is a central theme in public debate, often used to arouse fears. In this area, perceptions have an unfortunate tendency to overtake reality, and the dehumanization of new arrivals has disastrous consequences for both social cohesion and the individuals who make it up.

According to a 2018 Eurostat survey, Europeans believe they welcome 3.4 times more immigrants than they actually do. This distortion between the reality of migratory flows and their perception is corroborated by the Ipsos Steria survey "The Perils of Perception", revealing a 15-point overestimation of the number of immigrants in France and Germany. For 84% of French people, "immigration is a subject that cannot be discussed calmly in France". (Occurrence poll for Le Palais de la Porte Dorée, Study on immigration, May 2023)

This is why SINGA is stepping up its efforts to ease the debate, educate citizens and transform perceptions about migration. SINGA highlights the portraits and stories of the people concerned, their positive contributions to society, and raises awareness on the reality of migration. **SINGA is committed to transforming the lexicon and images associated with migration, embodying inclusion rather than exclusion.**

BRINGING FORTH NEW NARRATIVES AND GIVING A VOICE TO THOSE DIRECTLY INVOLVED

In a world where success models tend to resemble each other in terms of career paths and profiles, our programs accompany and reveal role models from elsewhere. These are people who take the initiative, create jobs and become success stories in their own right. Year after year, SINGA provides them with opportunities for expression and visibility.

The INSPIRE events, the SINGA Awards in Switzerland and Germany, the closing ceremonies throughout France and the many events at La Gaîté Lyrique are all opportunities to express and reveal these diverse talents.



Inspire Show Lille 2023



Inspire Show Lille 2023



Round table Gaité Lyrique 2023



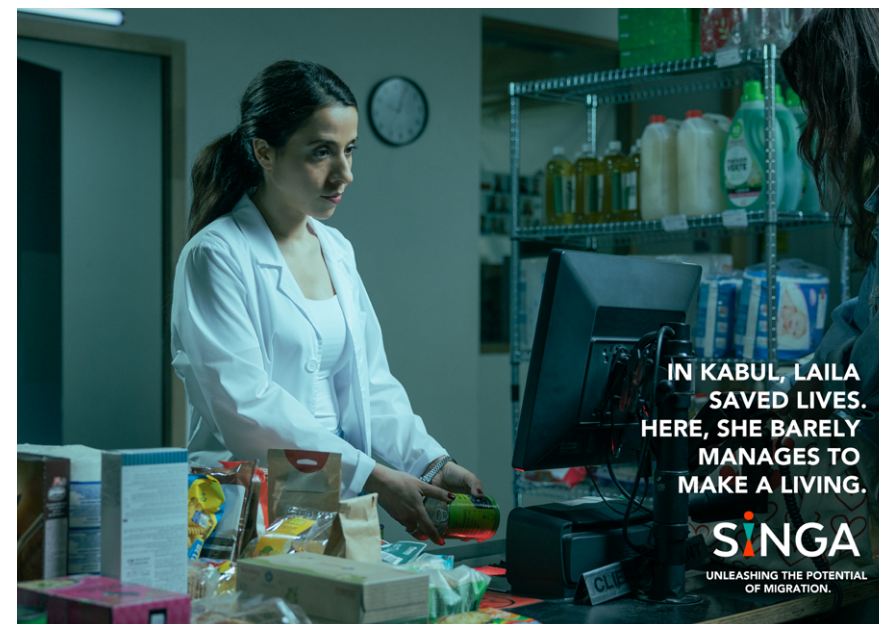
Inspire Show Lyon 2023

OUR AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON PROFESSIONAL DOWNGRADING

To mark World Refugee Day on June 20, 2023, SINGA is launching its first awareness-raising campaign on a major issue: professional downgrading.

Despite their skills and qualifications, many refugees face an uphill battle to find jobs that match their level of training and experience. In fact, it takes newcomers an average of 10 years to return to their initial socio-professional situation. This professional downgrading has a direct impact on their social and economic inclusion, as well as on society as a whole, which misses out on their talents and potential.

The campaign reached 10 million people in 2 months, and received the Golden Award for Diversity and Inclusion Communication Campaign at the Economic Inclusion Summit at Bercy, organized by the Mozaik Foundation. In the span of a few weeks, a number of media outlets and the general public have taken an interest in the subject of professional downgrading, which is so rarely covered.



GLOSSARY

OUR TOP 3 WORDS TO REDEFINE

1

☒ "Migrant" or even "Refugee"

☑ Newcomer

The word "migrant", which should define a person who travels from one country to another, now encompasses all foreign populations, even those who have been settled and perfectly integrated in their host country for years. It thus suggests a notion of permanent wandering. Gradually, the word has taken on negative connotations, to the point of being associated with unwelcome intrusion.

The term "refugee" refers primarily to a legal status, not to an expression of identity.

At SINGA, we speak of "newcomers", terms that reflect a temporal and social reality. The newcomer is not placed in a position of inferiority in relation to the citizens of the society he or she joins. The newcomer's vocation is to find a place that will soon enable him or her to lose his or her symbolic status and integrate the host society as an equal.

The term "Newcomer" also highlights the link with the place of arrival, evoking a new hope, a fresh perspective, and the possibility of a new life. It encourages us to move away from the categories and labels associated with legal status, and turn the territory into a shared space.

2

☒ French, German, Spanish...

☑ Local person

We want to emphasize residence on a territory rather than nationality. The phrase "local person" refers to someone who has lived in a territory for a long time and knows its socio-cultural codes.

3

☒ Integration

☑ Inclusion

The term "integration" often implies the elimination and dilution of differences, whereas "inclusion" emphasizes the valorization, addition and activation of the wealth that each individual brings



Our key figures

7 countries

Germany, Belgium, Canada, Spain,
France, Luxembourg, Switzerland

80 000+

Members of the SINGA community
(local and newly arrived individuals).

2000+

supported entrepreneurs, 50%
of whom are women.

67%

of newcomers have regained
confidence thanks to SINGA.*

66%

of local individuals feel they have
changed their perspective on migration*

60%

Businesses incubated at SINGA are
still in operation three years later.

90%

of project leaders leave SINGA with
a positive outcome : employment,
training, continuation of their
entrepreneurial project*.

400 +

Businesses or associations
created since 2015.

71,5%

of people find a suitable housing
solution after the *J'accueille* program.***

74%

socio-professional
improvement rate**

Sources :

*Impact Improve Study, 2023

**Impact study SINGA Belgium - 2022

*** Evaluation Impact - 2017

singa

Sharing cultures.
Shaping futures.

Presse contact :
Myriam Nouicer
Head of Communications
myriam@singa.io
+33650377667

Social:
[Instagram](#)
[Linkedin](#)
[Twitter](#)

Web:
wearesinga.org