European Alternatives

euroalter.com

RECOMMENDATIONS ON SECURING FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS AND ADVANCING NEW FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS IN THE AREAS OF WORK AND CULTURE

Deliverable D6
101234699
EUDem-IEI

This document presents recommendations emerging from two transnational assemblies organised by European Alternatives in 2026:
1. **Mending the Net: Against the Fragmentation of Migrant Justice Movements**, held on 28 August 2026 at SPoRE Initiative in Berlin.
2. **Cultural Summit and Transnational Assembly: The Right to Culture**, held on 14 November 2026 at Teatro Garibaldi in Palermo

Both events, while addressing distinct challenges, provided perspectives on the conditions necessary for individuals and communities to exercise their rights, particularly those communities that are in a more vulnerable position such as migrants and refugee.

1. Recommendations emerging from Mending the Net: Against the Fragmentation of Migrant Justice Movements

The gathering *Mending the Net: Against the Fragmentation of Migrant Justice Movements* brought together in particular organisations and activists engaged in migrant and refugee struggles in Spain and Germany, with participation from throughout Europe. It featured contributions from Regularización Ya, a migrant-led coalition in Spain that brought together hundreds of organisations around a shared campaign for the regularisation of undocumented people, alongside Oplatz United and Women in Exile, two organisations playing an important role in migrant and refugee organising in Germany. The experiences that these collectives shared demonstrated how collective organising can advance fundamental rights. Campaigns for regularisation, protections from discrimination and access to social and labour rights challenge the exclusion of these communities from democratic decision-making and recognise them as political actors who are part of European society.

Throughout the gathering several challenges were mentioned for migrant communities to access their fundamental rights when it comes to working conditions. People with undocumented or insecure migration status continue to face significant barriers to accessing fundamental rights. This makes them more vulnerable to exploitation, discrimination and precarious working conditions, as fear of deportation or other consequences can prevent them from reporting abuses or seeking support. As such the main recommendations that came up from the assembly were:

1.1 Strengthen pathways to regularisation and ensure access to fundamental rights regardless of migration status

A person's migration status should not determine whether they can access their fundamental rights. Regularisation is not only a migration policy issue, but a necessary step towards ensuring equal rights, dignity and security. European institutions and Member states should work towards reducing the structural barriers that prevent undocumented people from exercising their fundamental rights. People should not be excluded from fundamental rights

because of their migration status. In particular, the lack of regular residence status creates barriers to accessing employment, healthcare, housing and social protection, reinforcing situations of dependency and vulnerability.

1.2 Guarantee effective access to labour rights and protection against exploitation for all workers

Labour rights should be effectively accessible to all workers independently of their migration status or employment arrangements. And particular attention should be paid to certain sectors, such as the care work or food delivery, where informal employment, subcontracting and precarious working arrangements increase the risk of exploitation.
Undocumented workers should have ways to report labor exploitation safely, without being exposed to immigration enforcement. Local governments as well as trade unions have a role to play in providing these safe avenues. Access to legal assistance should also be guaranteed as well as interpretation and effective mechanisms to recover unpaid wages.

1.3 Hold employers accountable for exploiting migrant workers

Labour protections need to address the specific practices through which employers take advantage of workers with insecure migration status. Employers must not be allowed to use workers' insecure migration status as a means of avoiding their responsibilities. The threat of dismissal, deportation or reporting to immigration authorities can be used to impose abusive conditions, withhold wages or prevent workers from challenging unlawful practices. Tackling labour exploitation therefore requires not only protecting workers, but also ensuring that employers face consequences when they violate labour rights. Both national governments and justice systems and the European Labour Authority have important roles to play here.

2. Recommendations emerging from the Cultural Summit and Transnational Assembly: The Right to Culture

The *Cultural Summit and Transnational Assembly* brought together cultural practitioners, artists, independent cultural spaces and organisations working to defend and expand the right to culture from across the EU and neighbourhood countries. It created a space to reflect on the role of culture in democratic life, and on the conditions needed for people and communities to access, participate in and shape cultural life. The discussions highlighted that culture is not simply a matter of entertainment or an economic sector, but an important part of individual and collective expression, social participation and democratic life. Independent cultural spaces and grassroots initiatives play a particularly important role, providing places for artistic experimentation, community organising and the expression of perspectives that are often underrepresented in mainstream cultural institutions.

Several challenges were mentioned during the gathering around the effective enjoyment of cultural rights. Access to cultural life remains unequal, shaped by economic, social and geographical barriers, as well as discrimination and the concentration of cultural resources in established institutions. At the same time, many artists and cultural workers face precarious working conditions, unstable incomes and limited access to social protection, making it difficult to sustain their work and participate in cultural life on equal terms. Independent cultural spaces also face financial insecurity, rising rents and limited long-term public support, despite their contribution to local communities and cultural diversity. These challenges affect people's ability to access culture, but also their ability to create, share and shape it. As such, the main recommendations arising from the gathering were:

2.1 Recognise culture as a collective right, not simply access to cultural activities

European and national cultural policies should recognise that the right to culture extends beyond the possibility of attending cultural events or consuming artistic products. It includes the ability of individuals and communities to create, organise, maintain and collectively shape cultural life.

The participants of the assembly stressed that cultural participation remains unequal when communities are invited to access existing cultural offers but lack the resources, spaces and institutional recognition to develop their own cultural practices. The European Union should ensure that culture is at the heart of Europe's social, economic and democratic model and is resourced accordingly at all levels.

2.2 End the normalisation of precarious and unpaid labour in the cultural sector

The cultural sector cannot be sustainable when its functioning depends on underpaid workers,

unpaid preparation time, volunteering and the ability of cultural professionals to subsidise their work through personal resources or other employment.
Participants called attention to the gap between the public value attributed to culture and the economic conditions under which cultural work is carried out. They highlighted the need for specific legal frameworks that recognise the particularities of cultural work, including intermittent employment, freelance arrangements, multiple sources of income and periods of unpaid artistic development.

One of the specific demands within this recommendation was the establishment of a European framework for the social and professional status of artists and cultural workers. European institutions should work towards a common framework recognising the specific employment conditions of the cultural sector and establishing minimum principles for fair remuneration, social protection and professional recognition. This framework could build on existing national experiences, for instance Belgium's statut du travail des arts or France's régime des intermittents du spectacle.

2.3 Protect independent cultural spaces as essential cultural and democratic infrastructure

Independent cultural spaces are essential infrastructures for cultural production, artistic experimentation, community organising and democratic participation.

They create spaces where communities can meet, exchange knowledge, develop collective practices, express dissent and organise outside established institutional and commercial structures. To protect these spaces is necessary to address their access to land, buildings, long-term funding and collective ownership models. Furthermore, dedicated funding for the maintenance and renovation of these spaces should be part of their protection through public funding covering structural repairs, accessibility improvements, energy efficiency, equipment and operating costs. Europe and Europeans have strong economic and cultural interests in their cultural spaces throughout the territory being well resourced: given territorial economic imbalances, this requires a deliberate politics of solidarity and redistribution from centres to the peripheries.

Funded by the European Union

This publication reflects the views only of the authors. The European Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.