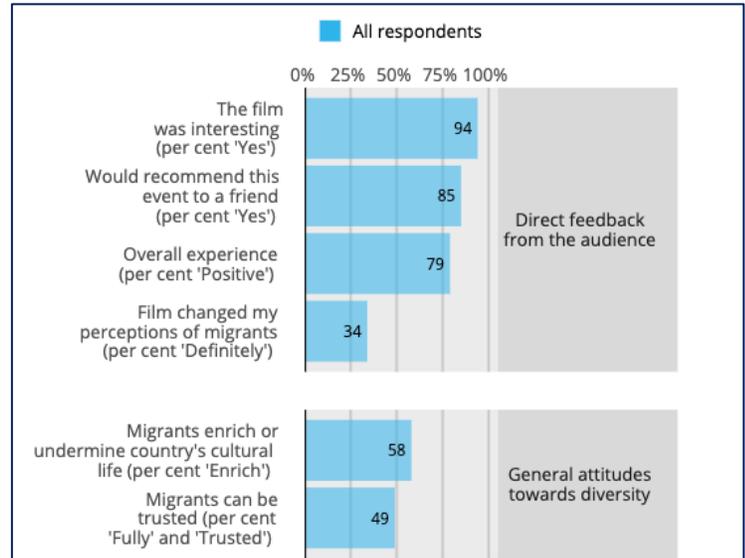


For decades, the IOM has been working with migrants and receiving communities to reduce prejudice and prevent xenophobia through the facilitation of positive interaction between migrants and host communities as well as targeted campaigns to promote a more balanced narrative on migration.

Since 2016, the **Global Migration Film Festival (GMFF)** is held annually to showcase the promise and challenges of migration through films and documentaries. With 'social cohesion' as the GMFF's theme in 2019, a pilot study was conducted to explore the effect of public film screenings on perceptions and attitudes of audiences towards migration and migrants. Based on global data from over **4,000 respondents** in over **40 countries**, preliminary evidence finds that participation in events during IOM's GMFF may have a positive effect on the perception of migrants and diversity and lend itself for addressing and countering misinformation, xenophobia, racism and other forms of intolerance towards migrants.

Visit the [interactive online report](#) to browse through the detailed results.



GMDAC Calculations - GMFF Data 2019  
(Observations: 4275)

## KEY FINDINGS



**Positive Feedback.** Overall, audience feedback was positive. **95 per cent** of respondents found the event interesting and **85 per cent** would recommend the event to their friends.



**Change of Perception.** While the mostly young, highly educated, and urban audience were already supportive towards migrants prior to the event, the positive views about migration increased even more – by some **11 per cent**, according to surveys conducted with audiences – after watching the films. The data reveals certain tendencies – for example, that positive changes appear to be more pronounced for women, non-migrants and those that do not know migrants personally – when migrants' stories are dramatized on film.



**Attitudes towards Diversity.** General opinions towards diversity were more mixed. Only half of attendees (**49%**) reported that migrants can be trusted. Survey results further suggest that migrant respondents and those who personally know migrants are more likely to agree with the statement that migrants enrich the country's cultural life. While most respondents across the different education levels believe that migrants enrich society, those with university background tend to have more positive views (**63%**). Interestingly, respondents aged 40 years old+ recorded the highest level of trust to migrants (**66%**).



**Bringing Communities Together.** GMFF is a powerful advocacy tool to bring attention to social issues, counter misinformation, and create a platform for meaningful interaction. The pilot study indicates that films have the immense potential to influence perceptions of and attitudes towards migrants, and as such, they could be fit for the purpose of combatting COVID-19 related hate speech and xenophobia.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, this pilot study provides evidence of the potential of the GMFF – as well as other similar events – to serve as a vehicle for promoting social cohesion between migrants and host populations.

- To maximize impact of GMFF on social cohesion, events should target audiences with less favorable views towards migration and diversity including those with less personal contact with migrants. It is those audiences that may experience the largest changes in views.
- Events should increase participation of migrant groups to foster a two-way conversation on social cohesion at the events.
- Events should be part of a long-term strategy to engage with communities over time.
- More research is needed to assess the effects of film on perceptions and attitudes towards migrants.



## DATA COLLECTION

Data was collected at approximately 50 film events organized by 40 IOM country missions (Argentina, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Cabo Verde, Chad, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Gambia, Georgia, Greece, Honduras, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Panama, Portugal, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Spain, Sudan, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, UK, Uruguay, Viet Nam). Participants at the film festivals were handed evaluation forms with questions to be filled out before and after the event. In total, 4,275 survey responses were collected. It's important to note that due to time and resource limitations, not all GMFF country participants were included in the study.

*This pilot study is just a first step towards understanding how events can shape attitudes towards migrants. While it is not possible to directly identify the causal effect of the films on attitudes with this approach, it provides insights on whether films have the potential to change views on migration and how those changes can vary across countries and demographic groups*

## ABOUT THE STUDY

The joint pilot study was conducted within the framework of the IOM's [Joint Global Initiative on Diversity, Inclusion and Social Cohesion \(DISC Initiative\)](#) in partnership with the Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC) and Media and Communications Division (MCD).



### DISC INITIATIVE

The Joint Global Initiative on Diversity, Inclusion and Social Cohesion



IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre  
GMDAC