

JUNE 2023 TO AUGUST 2024

NARDIV LETTER #1



Funded by the Horizon Europe Programme of the European Union under grant agreement no 101095171



NARDIV began in June 2023 and goes on until May 2026. Outside of our weekly and monthly online meetings, we met once in Marseille in July 2023 for our Kickoff (pictured above) and in Bucharest in June 2024 for our Annual Partner Meeting (pictured right).



WHAT AND WHO IS NARDIV?

NARDIV is both a research project as well as cultural one. NARDIV is the acronym for **N**arrative **D**iversity. Our full name being: *NARDIV - United in Narrative Diversity? Cultural (Ex-)Change and Mutual Perceptions in Eastern and Western Europe at the threshold of the digital age.* The question mark in our name highlights the investigative nature of our project which aims to inquire upon on questions of gender, identity, culture, and politics through varying forms and narratives.

Our project especially seeks to understand and bridge the growing alienation between Eastern and Western Europe by investigating perceptions shaped by traditions, values, and beliefs.

We are scholars, cultural practitioners, and creatives from six European countries, namely France, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Slovakia, and Romania. We work together to develop strategies for revitalizing cultural encounters and promoting inclusive cultural diplomacy, countering populist and identity-based discourses, and fostering a more unified European narrative.

RESEARCH IN 2023

In our first year, we conducted desk and archival research, along with literature reviews, to explore East-West relations through post-colonial theory, using political and cultural relations in cultural diplomacy as a case study for Work Package/WP 3.

We analyzed autobiographies of women artists from diverse generations, countries, and ethnicities for WP2, focusing on those underrepresented in European scholarly research. Additionally, for WP4 on Digitalization and Misinformation, we researched imagery and initiated surveys to understand disinformation narratives.

WP3 held an open panel and workshop between November 29-30, at the University of Wroclaw's Social Sciences Faculty with the title: *Workshop & Open Panel: Colonial, Post-Colonial, Neo-Colonial, Decolonial? East-West Relations in Europe and the War in Ukraine* to introduce NARDIV's objectives. The event focused on applying (post)colonial approaches to analyzing East-West relations within the EU, particularly in the context of the Ukrainian war. The panel featured speakers Christian U. Noack, Beata Ociepka, Pierre-Frédéric Weber, and moderator Julia Trzcńska (top left).



WORKSHOPS & EVENTS IN 2023

On November 21, the Goethe-Institut and Institut Français in Bucharest (WP5) hosted an event celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty (above), examining Franco-German cultural and academic relations from a Romanian perspective. The event marked the Romanian launch of the NARDIV project, bringing together academics and experts in cultural diplomacy to engage with students on future-oriented projects.

The day featured expert talks, workshops, and a project presentation session, aiming to foster transnational cultural dialogue and cooperation.

Between 12-13 October, Dr. Marleen Rensen, Dr. Anna Seidl, and Dr. Catherine Teissier organized a workshop *Women's Life Writing and Post-Communism*, (bottom right) in Amsterdam as part of WP2. PhD candidate Jeremy Fischbach participated, alongside four Eastern European experts: Dr. Cristina Godun, Dr. Elżbieta Klimek-Dominiak, Dr. Simona Mitroiu, and Diana Painca. Vicky Fischer and Farida Nabibaks led a movement workshop on "Perceptions and Embodiment."



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WORKSHOPS & EVENTS IN 2024

From January 25th to 5th of February, WP5 on Shaping perceptions by Cultural diplomacy as soft power successfully hosted a vibrant and impactful event in Bucharest that celebrated cultural diversity and artistic creation (banner on the right).

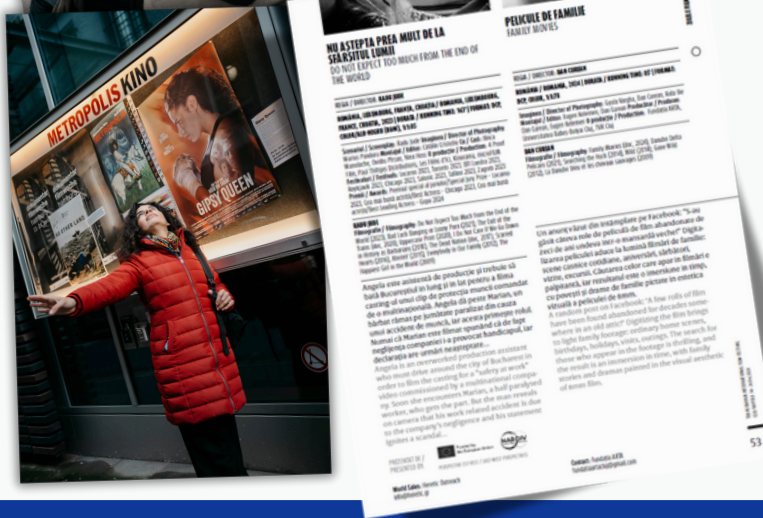
The event showcased theatrical performances, engaging debates and thrilling movies that explore the rich heritage and contemporary issues faced by cultural minorities in Romania. The aim of the event was to celebrate the artistic expressions of these communities while addressing the challenges they continue to face.



Between 16-18 February, a workshop in the context of WP6, which focuses on examining Cultural Policy Dialogue and Hybrid Community Building in social media was facilitated in Hamburg. WP6 Lead Hamburg University of Applied Sciences hosted this dynamic workshop on the role of social media in intercultural dialogue and European awareness.

This workshop united students and experts from various European institutions to discuss recognizing credible information and avoiding cultural stereotypes on social media. Participants then applied their knowledge by creating Instagram reels (pictured left), where they explored methods for identifying reputable sources about European countries.

Between 4-7 March, members and associated partners of WP 4: Challenge of Digitalisation and Misinformation gathered at the University of Amsterdam for a series of internal and public workshops (pictured right). The event focused on progress in research design and methodological frameworks, with a presentation on preliminary results from WP4. This event included a workshop on Russian disinformation featuring university partners Dr. Christian Noack (WP2), Prof. Hanna Klimpe (WP6) and Rahel Winter M.A (WP6) and associated partners Jana Kazaz LL.M (GLOBSEC), Viktoria Musilova (GLOBSEC).



WP5 hosted two significant events to about marginalized communities and explore cinematic narratives. From April 23-25, a workshop in Hamburg was led by Roma director Alina Șerban (pictured far left), in partnership with Goethe-Institut Bucharest, which provided a platform for Roma and Sinti community members to discuss discrimination and representation through film screenings and storytelling.

Back in Romania, WP5 also hosted an event in the Transilvania International Film Festival between 17-21 May. This event featured a curated selection of films from both Eastern and Western Europe that examine differing representations of imagery. The diverse array of films illustrated the contrasting perspectives and narratives between Eastern and Western European cinema. Panels brought together filmmakers, producers, and industry experts to discuss the challenges and opportunities of film production in Europe (programme pictured left).

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EXPERT WORKSHOP & SUMMER SCHOOL

Between 17-19 July, a NARDIV Expert Workshop (WP2) was held in Miercurea Ciuc, Romania, gathering professors, students, researchers, and special guests to discuss "Cultural (Ex-)Change and Mutual Perceptions in Eastern and Western Europe at the Threshold of the Digital Age." This workshop served as a precursor to a Summer School (July 21-26) focused on minority issues, attracting students from various EU countries.



The NARDIV Expert Workshop featured 9 sessions, where partner universities from Amsterdam, Bucharest, Hamburg, and Marseilles presented their work. Topics included ethnic minority representation in Romania (Oana Suciuc, WP7), social media comedy's role in minority empowerment (Hanna Klimpe, WP6), and challenges faced by Eastern European women as minorities (Catherine Teissier, Marleen Rensen and Anna Seidl, WP2).

External experts from Cluj Cultural Center, Sorbonne University, and Lucian Blaga University added insights on inclusive cultural programming, decolonizing Roma images, and intercultural belonging.

The second day focused on NARDIV-funded PhD students' work and ended with an interactive workshop on East-West European dialogue, led by Vicky Fisher and Farida Nabibaks.



The Summer School (21-26 July) in Miercurea Ciuc brought together students from various disciplines and countries to explore the theme of minorities within the context of WP5. Guided by NARDIV experts, participants engaged in transcultural research and interacted with notable figures such as ARTivist Alina Șerban and director Carmen Lidia Vidu. They explored regional culture through art and a visit to Mikó Castle. The event concluded with students pitching intercultural projects aimed at bringing minority issues to the forefront.

CONFERENCES & PUBLICATIONS 2024



Pierre-Frédéric Weber (WP3) publishes journal article *Poland or the Rise of a Disinhibited Central Europe* in *Annuaire français de relations internationales*. Read article (in French) [here](#).



Anna Seidl & Marleen Rensen from WP 2 held a roundtable on the topic (Fragmented) Identity in Post-Communist Europe through the Lens of East-West Sentiments.



Nicole Colin, Beata Ociepka, Oana Suciuc & Joachim Umlauf from WP2, 3, 5 & 7 hosted a roundtable on *Strategies of Foreign Cultural Policy in Time of Crisis*.

NARDIV IN THE PRESS



United in narrative diversity: what projects does German-French-Romanian cooperation need? in *Romania Pozitiva*. Read (in Romanian) [here](#).



United in narrative diversity: what projects does German-French-Romanian cooperation need? in *Agerpres*. Read (in Romanian) [here](#).



Testimony: Coordinating a project with NARDIV Research Coordinator Nicole Colin. In *Horizon Europe*. Read (in French) [here](#).



Interview with Joachim Umlauf from Goethe Institut Romania (WP5) on NARDIV Launch. In *Jurnal Cultural*. Watch (in Romanian) [here](#).



UPCOMING EVENTS

11.-12.09.2024: *Workshop: Culture in Digital Spaces – Utilizing Social Media as a Stage and Tool for Visibility and Participation* (Online & in-Person in Goethe-Institut Bucharest, RO)

19.09-21.09.2024: *Audio Festival: Orizont Sonor* (Constanța, RO)

16.-20.10.2024: *Conference: Alt-Controllers: East-West Euro Gaming* (Goethe-Institut/French Institut Bucharest, RO)

24.-25.10.2024: *NARDIV Panel* in Pilecki Institute (Berlin, DE)

November 2024: *Symposium on Cultural Diplomacy* (University of Bucharest, RO)