PROJECT REPORT TO STAKEHOLDERS

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1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Rationale for the project

Children from Arab countries constitute a growing proportion of media audiences in Europe. Recent conflicts in the region have caused hundreds of thousands of families to flee their homes in the Arab world, especially Syria and Iraq, to find safety in Europe. In January 2017, there were 577,300 Syrians in Germany, 116,400 in Sweden, 51,400 in the Netherlands, 31,000 in Denmark and 11,500 in Bulgaria.1 The displaced populations in European countries include large numbers of children.

The situation is often called Europe’s ‘migrant crisis’. From this perspective, refugee children tend to be viewed as a set of tragic statistics rather than individuals with unique histories and experiences. Yet fair and accurate representation of children with migration backgrounds constitutes a key step towards helping these children feel they have a stake in a new country. In turn, for European-born children, screen content is one of the most accessible ways to learn about forced migration and children of other cultures.

European media consequently face an urgent task of creating content that engages with the experiences of diverse and displaced children in balanced and informative ways. In fact, thanks to public service media mandates that are built into Europe’s regulatory environment, the way is open for broadcasters to provide newly-arrived children with the benefits of a service they have not previously experienced, given the lack of Arab public service media.2

The one-year project ‘Collaborative Developments in Children’s Screen Content in an Era of Forced Migration: Facilitating Arab-European dialogue’ (2017-18, www.euroarabchildrensmedia.org), funded by the UK’s Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), explored screen content made for and about children from the Arab region who have recently arrived in Europe. Aimed at ‘Impact and Engagement’, the project was intended to share findings from a three-year AHRC-funded research project (2013-2016)3 on screen content for children in the Arab world with stakeholders in Europe, including broadcasters, regulators, commissioning editors, producers, researchers and children’s media advocates. Institutions in these sectors who partnered us for the Engagement project are gratefully identified below.

One of the current project’s major objectives was to explore representations of forced migration and diversity in European screen content for young children – those aged 12 and under. By integrating Arab experts into this process, we created opportunities for dialogue between European and Arab media practitioners, helping to alert European producers to the media needs, wants and experiences of Arabic-speaking children now living in Europe. Drawing on this dialogue, the project was designed to gather recommendations concerning the regulation, funding, and distribution of content for children that deals with diversity and forced migration. It also offers a springboard for further research.

1 Eurostat, Main countries of citizenship and birth of the foreign born-born population, 1 January 2017.
1.2 The three workshops

At the heart of the project were three workshops held during 2017-2018 in Salford, UK, Copenhagen, Denmark, and Munich, Germany. In total, these brought together more than 100 people working in various aspects of children’s media: production, distribution, non-governmental organisations and academe. Arab practitioners taking part were born in Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria. Some were themselves refugees, now living in Denmark, Germany and the United Arab Emirates.

The first workshop was attached to the Children’s Global Media Summit (CGMS), hosted by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in Salford/Manchester in December 2017. The workshop, taking place on 4 December, focused mainly on English-language content. Discussion topics were guided by themes featuring in the CGMS itself, notably ‘empowerment’, ‘freedom’, ‘education’ and ‘entertainment’. The two project partners helping to support this event were BBC Children’s and the Public Media Alliance.

The second workshop took place across two mornings at the Danish Film Institute (DFI) on 19 and 20 March 2018 as part of the Copenhagen International Documentary Film Festival, CPH: DOX. In line with the documentary focus, it explored mostly factual formats and we followed two themes chosen by the CPH:DOX Children and Youth section, namely ‘escaping’ (på flugt) and ‘democracy’ (demokrati). Our project partner, BBC Media Action, contributed to this event.

The third workshop, in Munich on 24 May 2018, was hosted by our project partner, the International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI) on the premises of Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR) and under the umbrella of the biennial Prix Jeunesse International festival of children’s screen content. In keeping with the 2018 Prix Jeunesse theme of ‘Strong Stories for Strong Children’, the workshop explored treatments of migration and diversity in mainly fictional storytelling genres.

1.3 Screen content about diversity and migration

The project assessed a range of content for children up to 12 years old, an age group often neglected in studies of media and migration. Assisted by CPH:DOX and IZI, we collated a sample of 36 films and TV shows from Belgium, Denmark, Germany, the Netherlands, Serbia, Slovenia, Switzerland, and the UK, as well as Canada, the US and Malaysia/Yemen, which have been shown in Europe. The UK selection also included some family viewing. Five shows were aimed at pre-schoolers and six comprised animation.

Genres ranged through drama, reality storytelling, documentaries, news and ‘infotainment’, where educational TV is merged with entertainment. Factual programming, including news, made up the majority of what we showed at the workshops, 16 shows in total. We also showed clips from eight fiction programmes, including series, comedy drama and one-off shows (see Appendix). Live action drama for children is rare, because it is difficult to fund and sell internationally, and even rarer when it includes minority groups because of casting challenges (see Section 6.1).

1.4 Purpose of the Project Report to Stakeholders

This Report consolidates findings and recommendations from the three briefings on our workshops in Manchester, Copenhagen, and Munich. It aims to encourage continued dialogue among stakeholders after the project’s completion.
2. APPROACHES TO COMMISSIONING AND DISTRIBUTION

2.1 Public service mandates
The workshops revealed how hard it is for producers to secure commissions for children’s content about refugees and forced migration. Almost all the content we found had been commissioned by European public service broadcasters (PSBs), including the BBC (UK), Danmarks Radio (DR), Arbeitsgemeinschaft der Öffentlich-Rechtlichen Rundfunksanstalten der Bundesrepublik Deutschland (ARD, Germany), Zweites Deutsches Fernsehen (ZDF, Germany), Nederlands Publieke Omroep (NPO, Netherlands), Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen (SRF, Switzerland), Vlaamse Radio- en Televisieomroeporganisatie (VRT, Belgium), Radiotelevizija Slovenija (RTV, Slovenia), Radio Televizija Srbije (RTV, Serbia), and Sianel Pedwar Cymru (S4C, Wales/UK).

This pattern of funding reflects both PSB mandates to serve all communities and restrictions on advertising that have caused free-to-air private broadcasters across Europe to scale back their commitment to children’s content over the past decade, leaving PSBs as virtually the only commissioners of domestically-produced children’s programmes. A UK children’s television producer addressing the Manchester Workshop foresaw serious consequences:

Every region has a different economic environment, but we don't invest in our young people's minds like we're happy to invest in pure entertainment for adults [...] We don't put investment in media that are going to build the planet's future. It's a massive problem.

Finance for children’s content from sources other than PSBs is limited. Where requirements for spending on children’s content are statutory, this has been shown to promote quality improvements through the accumulation of experience and expertise. Yet securing public funds can be lengthy and frustrating. Some non-governmental organisations (NGOs) commission children’s content, but, as our Copenhagen workshop heard, filmmakers’ creative visions do not always accord with NGO agendas.

2.2 Commercial digital media
Our workshops highlighted structural difficulties in funding children’s content as well as in reaching child audiences. Professionals from across Europe were acutely aware that young audiences are increasingly viewing content online rather than on broadcast television. A Scandinavian PSB executive explained that most of his channel’s target audience, children aged 7-12, now watch content on YouTube rather than scheduled television, which makes it more challenging to promote content that touches on issues like forced migration. The decline in linear viewing is not so steep everywhere. A 2017 study by the UK regulator Ofcom suggested that UK children’s viewing (aged 5-15) of linear TV on a television set had declined from just under 16 hours a week in 2007 to 14 hours ten years later.

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Some producers expressed concern that standards of ethics and diversity adopted by European broadcasting do not always apply to commercial content shown on online platforms. The Manchester workshop revealed minimal representation of minorities in online videos distributed by some digital companies and multi-channel networks (MCNs) on YouTube. Since YouTube pays more per view in Western countries, even producers based in Asia are incentivised to appeal to a ‘white’ audience and many refrain from including characters from other ethnicities in ‘unboxing’ or ‘how to’ tutorials.

2.3 The need for marketing and distribution strategies

Effective distribution and the ability to reach out to audiences emerged from workshop discussions as key factors not only in obtaining funding but in ensuring that content does not, in the words of one producer, live ‘a very, very lonely life on some internet platform’.

“You can design your audience from a very early stage”

According to some participants, marketing and distribution planning need to start before the programme is made, not after it. One Danish content producer said:

‘I never met a funder who said: “I will not promote diversity”. But the problem is the distribution. The problem is that they [commissioners] are very scared of throwing their money towards something that is not being used, which is understandable. What we’re facing in Denmark is that Flow TV is going for the lowest common denominator’.

Annette Breijner, Creative Director of the Financing Forum for Kids’ Content, based in Malmö, Sweden, suggested that content producers need to have a strategy in place in order to secure a commission. She said:

‘The producer must know their target group and the mechanisms of marketing the film and build an audience. You can design your audience, thinking from a very early stage [...] which helps to reach your target group. Because that does not come by itself, but you can help build a taste in children just how you can help them learn how to appreciate a good meal’.

2.4 Integrating online distribution and linear broadcasting

The project found that successful producers and broadcasters are already combining online distribution, including social media and YouTube, with linear scheduling. For example, the Flemish ‘tween’ drama series 4eVeR, commissioned by Belgium’s VRT, is available both on linear children’s channel, Ketnet, as well as the VRT website and YouTube, reaching 23-25 per cent of the target market in Flemish-speaking Belgium. The Danish web series, Hassan og Ramadanen (Hassan and Ramadan), commissioned by DR and released as short episodes on YouTube, racked up approximately 100,000 views per episode on YouTube.
Broadcasters’ struggle to accurately ascertain what child audiences view and value in a rapidly changing marketplace contrasts starkly with subscription video-on-demand (SVOD) services like Netflix or social media sites like Facebook, which rely on proprietary data, guided by algorithms, to push popular content to child consumers. While television and online distribution can be viewed as complementary, some workshop attendees noted that it is not straightforward to build an online audience. YouTube channels still need to be maintained and promoted to ensure the audience finds them. Those behind both 4eVeR and Hassan og Ramadanen attributed their shows’ popularity online to the way the content reflects the rhythm of children’s daily lives, as well as their reality formats and entertaining storylines that did not focus exclusively on migration.

3. ETHICAL CONCERNS

3.1 Risks and benefits of revisiting trauma

Some European content producers have emphasised refugee children’s dangerous journeys to Europe or their painful experiences of war and conflict. Our workshops considered the ethical implications of such representations, as some participants, both Arab and European, expressed concern about the ethical and psychological dimensions of refugee children’s participation in factual productions that focused on flight.

The Manchester workshop discussed a UK reality programme designed for family viewing, in which a boy from Syria was interviewed on camera about his missing father. Participants were uncomfortable with the boy’s painful experiences being turned into television drama, potentially causing him to relive traumatic experiences. A Palestinian child-rights advocate summed up the risk of this approach:

We just opened such a tough issue. They [the TV crew] were asking him about very, very sensitive issues. When you, as a social worker, journalist or lawyer, open an issue you should be able to close it. Who is going to close this?

On the other hand, a Syrian-born participant, whose young sons had experienced flight, noted during the Copenhagen workshop that it could be therapeutic for children to confront that experience, albeit several years later.

Ethical challenges become more complex if content is made with political intentions. The video campaign #JegErDansk (I am Danish) was made by a Danish advertising company in response to a statement issued by the Danish Parliament in 2017 that seemed to imply a contradiction between being Danish and descent from non-Western immigrants. Although not aimed at children, the video featured young children of non-Western parents being visibly upset when the notion is put to them on camera that they are not Danish. #JegErDansk was viewed over 1.5 million times within 24 hours of its release on Facebook and the Danish parliament changed its initial statement to be more inclusive. However, the filmmakers received criticism from politicians and the public for upsetting the children in the film. Speaking at the Copenhagen workshop, they said the children were relatives and friends, who had been appropriately counselled and benefited from the opportunity to mention their own experiences of discrimination.
3.2 Keeping an appropriate distance

Discussions about films depicting flight revealed concern about those that portray children in refugee camps as helpless and dependent on the aid of Europeans, implying a ‘them’ and ‘us’ narrative. Arab participants felt that some documentaries, like Hello Salaam and Ferie på Flygtningeøen (Vacation on the Refugee Island), in which European children visited Greek refugee camps, ran the risk of sensationalizing refugee children’s experience of forced migration with little regard for ‘their culture, their music, their literature, their stories’ or their families’ normal living standards. Other participants felt that such films could educate European children about the realities of forced migration from a more personal perspective than news reports.

Participants were also uneasy about approaches that ‘stand too far back’. A BBC Newsround programme set in Greece, which concealed the identities of two displaced boys, was perceived as too abstract and potentially dehumanizing, making it difficult for viewers to find points of identification. A Danish media professional summed up this dilemma as follows:

This is exactly the dilemma, because now you are so distant that you’re not harming anyone. So, if you get closer, then you’re starting to harm people. So, you need to find the right balance. [...] Are you showing some [life] vests, then you go straight to the stomach of people, or do you have a guy sitting from the back talking to her face about how awful it is and you don’t get any feelings? I’m not saying one thing is better than the other, just that there is a balance to find.

Some films were thought to have found a balance that combines curiosity with respect. Participants appreciated the Dutch documentary Een Jaar zonder mijn Ouders (A year without my parents) as a non-sensationalist portrait of a Syrian boy, Tareq, who has recently arrived in the Netherlands. The film’s main focus is on Tareq’s new life, relationships, and the challenges he faces in the Netherlands, rather than on his escape from Syria. The film’s director, Els van Driel, respected the fact that Tareq at first did not want to speak about his experience of flight, which she attributed to a desire to fit in with his Dutch peers. She also recounted that, when Tareq ultimately did speak about his experience for the film, it turned out to be helpful for him because his peers supported him emotionally afterwards.

4. CHILDREN’S PERSPECTIVES

4.1 Seeing oneself on screen

The workshops highlighted an urgent need for more domestically produced European content in which children with migration backgrounds see others like themselves on screen. This need is backed by research from the UK regulator, Ofcom, which reported in 2017 that 35 per cent of children aged 8-11 in the UK felt there were not enough programmes showing children who look like them.⁶

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Exceptions to the rule include the award-winning German factual reality format *Berlin und Wir* (Berlin and Us), which was made with the intention of portraying refugee children in Europe in a positive light. One of the producers recalled: ‘We had several refugee kids who wrote us in emails or commentaries on our blogs to say “this is the first time that you show our story...I feel good that you showed it”’. After watching a clip from the CBBC pre-school series *Where in the World?* featuring a Jordanian child, a Jordanian TV executive told the Manchester workshop that her channel, Roya TV, could readily show the programme to Jordanian children, who almost never see their day-to-day family lives portrayed on screen.

We heard similar responses to ZDF’s preschool animated series *JoNaLu*, which features characters speaking different languages, including Turkish, English and Russian. One of the programme’s writers, Ina Werner, told the project team that children with migration backgrounds were pleased to see television characters speaking their native language in *JoNaLu*, while German-born children were able to identify with the characters, even without understanding every word of the dialogue. However, the workshops also revealed that broadcasters can find it hard to know what children want to see. An audience researcher working with Denmark’s DR explained the difficulties of conducting research with small target groups, including refugee children, who are not easy to reach.

### 4.2 A year is a long time for a child

The workshops showed that children’s content about forced migration is often framed by an adult perspective, which might be at odds with the attitudes and interests of children themselves. For example, as IZI researchers told us, refugee children often want to look forward, not back. Responding to a question about the very positive attitude to life in the UK apparently displayed by two newly-arrived Sudanese girls in the CBBC programme *My Life: Coming to Britain*, Maya Götz of IZI said:

> If you talk to refugee children who are there [in Europe] for one, two, or even four years, they are really at home. They are struggling with things in the here and now and not with what has been four years ago. [...] we often love to portray them still as refugees and [...] [t]hey have background stories that are really tough but to tackle them you have to be very careful. So, they are there and they are just normal children. They cope with the background stories pretty well.

Götz’s observation was echoed by Marek Beles, producer of the Swiss documentary film, *Ayham: Mein neues Leben* (*Ayham: My new Life*), about a 10-year-old Syrian boy who fled to Switzerland with his family. Beles recounted that, as Ayham gradually settled into his new environment, he decided that he did not want to go back to Syria, even though his father wanted to return.

### 4.3 Giving children a say

Some European producers have been influenced in their work by children’s expressions of anxiety about world events, including terrorism.⁷ UK producer Dominic Sant of Evans Woolfe said one aim behind

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making *Where in the World?* in eight different countries had been to produce content that challenges worrying news reports and makes children less fearful of what happens outside the UK. The Flemish drama series 4eVeR also takes children’s opinions and concerns into account, drawing on information from the child helpline Awel as well as VRT’s own audience research to identify relevant storylines.

### 5. SHOWING DIVERSITY WITHOUT NAMING IT

A consensus emerged across our workshops that diversity issues can be woven into engaging storytelling without diversity as such being the story’s main purpose. As noted above, the German preschool series JoNaLu engages with language diversity without broaching the subject directly. Gregory Boardman, producer of the preschool drama series *Apple Tree House*, recalled an episode in which different cultural responses to a solar eclipse were evoked without anyone ‘forefront[ing]’ the differences.

#### 5.1 Adults’ and children’s different perceptions

Workshop discussions indicated that adults and children often have different perceptions of what ‘diversity’ means, not least because ethnic diversity is rarely an issue for young children, even though it may preoccupy their parents. As one UK producer put it, adults are often ‘desperate to get the difference out’, whereas ‘children discover difference just by turning up somewhere’. Yet, he said, stories are often not written from the point of view of ‘discovery in a child’s mind’.

Ways to approach diversity from a child’s perspective were exemplified in the ZDF drama series *Dschermen*. Since those behind the series see children as being open to becoming friends with newcomers through play and shared activities, *Dschermen*’s storylines follow four protagonists from different demographic and ethnic backgrounds who spend time together by a lake, playing games, and discussing their personal problems. A Canadian producer of Arab heritage welcomed the programme’s child-centered approach to teaching diversity, saying:

> One of my favorite things is the opening, because I saw a kid from every different background; it speaks to multiculturalism and to your ethnic background, your religion and so on […] that exposure is so important for kids just to have that understanding, and it has not been talked about enough.

#### 5.2 Entertaining and educating at the same time

Education and entertainment are sometimes thought of under separate headings. Workshop participants who had pitched programmes to the BBC said that BBC Children’s and BBC Learning were not just separate but had fundamentally different agendas, which require producers to decide beforehand which one to pitch to. A UK producer present in Manchester suggested that children’s media would benefit from a crossover of education and entertainment, in order for producers to be better informed about the educational potential of media, and educators to know more about how different media work. In the
Netherlands and Scandinavia, however, public broadcasters and producers work to secure distribution of their films in school settings, with the support of bodies like the Danish Film Institute and educational funding sources.

The Flemish drama series 4everR, which features a diverse group of teenagers in Belgium, is intended to achieve a mix of entertainment and education. The series is made by producers with past experience in reality television, one of whom said:

Imagine yourself at home. I have a tough working day and you ask me: “Will you see a programme about a refugee or will you watch something else?” [...] I will choose the second one. But in that second one, maybe they can embed the story about the refugee and I will watch it. If they say it to me upfront, I will say: “Oh no, not today”. I think the children are the same; they want to see something nice [...] Like a present there should be a nice label on it.

5.3 Political and cultural education

The Copenhagen workshop heard that news is virtually the only genre that gives Europeans access to information about Arab countries. Whereas Europeans get some idea of other cultures through films and TV shows made outside their own countries, especially the US, they see very little audiovisual content originating from the Middle East, leaving them unfamiliar with the settings that refugees have left. A participant from the DFI said this touched a ‘bigger problem’ of diversity in fiction and cinema.

That said, several shows discussed in the workshops did educate young children about political issues and other cultures. The German pre-school programme Die Sendung mit dem Elefanten (The Show with the Elephant) produced an episode that introduced children to the term ‘refugee’. It featured an animated sequence in which a rockslide forces the crocodile Viktor to leave his pond and seek a new home, meeting resistance from the occupants of other ponds along the way. Participants welcomed the use of animation in this context, because it explored experiences of discrimination and exclusion without recourse to stereotypes.

In another example of animation avoiding stereotypes, Asylbarn, a Danish series dealing with immigration policy, tells the story of Jamila and Cecilie, who are friends in a refugee camp until Cecilie’s family is deported. The German drama series Dschermen, aimed at 9-12-year-olds, also tackles the political dimensions of forced migration and asylum, including lengthy asylum processes, illicit working by refugees, and deportation of asylum-seekers. A Syrian-born participant commended this form of ‘political education’ for children in Germany.

Dschermen also addresses social and cultural issues. Rüyet, a character whose grandparents are of Turkish origin, discovers that her brother is gay, which is a subject of conflict within the family. The series
was commended by workshop participants for dealing with different layers of diversity and
discrimination, and for showing how racial and sexual discrimination often overlap.

An unusual Dutch documentary, De Kinderburgemeester (The Children’s Mayor), offered entertaining
insights into citizenship education. It follows Yassine, a Moroccan-Dutch boy, as he becomes children’s
mayor in Gouda for one year. He has two major aims: to get children from different ethnic groups to
interact with each other and to meet his role model, the Moroccan-born mayor of Rotterdam, Ahmed
Aboutaleb. A Danish producer with an immigrant background remarked:

I really like the film. It shows that, even though you have another skin colour, you can
still have dreams and be able to pursue them. When I was growing up, I was limited. If I
said I wanted to do something [I was told] “why don’t you do something else?” I really
like the perspective that he might have a dream of being there one day and he’s trying to
pursue it.

5.4 Religion matters

Workshop debates suggested that producers should be prepared to address religion when making
content focused on refugee and migrant children in Europe. While it can be challenging to depict issues of
religion without stereotyping or judging, some participants felt strongly that it is what one called ‘a
normal part of life’ for many children, whether born inside or outside Europe, and should not be sidestepped.

Media treatment of religious practice can be contentious, however, and views were mixed among Arab
participants in the workshops as well as among Europeans. Differences were especially marked over
mention of the headscarf. A clip from Berlin und Wir showed German-born Malina asking Syrian-born
Rashad if she will wear the headscarf when she is older. In a visually powerful piece of television, Rashad
is shown thinking deeply about her (affirmative) answer, while Malina (away from Rashad) gives her view
that the headscarf is a mark of oppression. Issues emerging from this clip ranged from whether the girls
were speaking their own minds or echoing their parents, whether Rashad was given an equal chance to
probe Malina’s personal beliefs, and whether viewers see Rashad as an individual or as representing a
community.

DR Ultra’s web series Hassan og Ramadanen is ostensibly about the religious practice of fasting, which it
explores from the perspective of ten-year-old Hassan, who is officially too young to fast but wants to try
it to be like his older brothers, despite warnings from his family not to let his schoolwork suffer. Most
workshop participants in Copenhagen felt that the series showed Muslim values and practices in a positive
light, teaching non-Muslim children about Ramadan through the daily experiences of a young boy who is
strong-willed, has a sense of humour, loves football and wants to challenge himself. Although the series
was clearly not about food as such, some Arab participants remarked that religion and food are often
taken as proxies for Arab culture, which is infinitely richer than religious practice or ‘exotic meals’.
6. AVOIDING TOKENISM AND VICTIMHOOD

6.1 Issues in casting and scriptwriting

Producing children’s content that normalises diversity is impeded by the limited ethnic diversity in Europe’s media workforce. Broadcasters in the UK were shown in 2017 to be under-performing not only in respect of ethnic diversity but also social mobility. This pattern is reflected in our content sample: children and adults with experience of forced migration only rarely occupy positions in scriptwriting and production.

For scriptwriters from relatively privileged backgrounds, it is not easy to write convincingly about life experiences they are unfamiliar with. A Danish academic pointed out during the Copenhagen workshop that children’s programmes in Denmark and Sweden are often embedded within Scandinavian concepts of childhood, which, at times, clash with the ‘more conservative’ understandings of childhood that exist within families newly resident in Europe.

European content makers who have managed to integrate children and adults from ethnic minorities as actors in productions are clear about both the challenges and benefits. The writers of Three Stones Media’s Apple Tree House based it partly on their own experiences of growing up in an under-privileged ethnically-diverse inner-city environment. The series also recruited a mixed cast in order to deliberately ‘subvert the stereotypes in terms of who can do what’. Producer Gregory Boardman said:

After six months of casting, [trying to] put a boy from a genuine Muslim household on screen, we probably only had less than a dozen families come forward. [...] In terms of cultural precedents and women performers from a Muslim background available to perform in this country, it was a tiny, tiny list.

There was a consensus across the three workshops that children with migration backgrounds should have more agency in the process of film production. During the Munich workshop, a doctoral researcher based in Lebanon suggested that adults should ‘not bring them [children] into our stories but allow them to bring us into theirs’. The Copenhagen workshop introduced an example of a participatory video initiative, The One Minutes Jr, run by the Dutch organisation Cinekid, whereby children living in Dutch asylum centers were helped to produce short films that were then seen in cinemas. Questions arose here about the power dynamics between children and adult facilitators in making production choices.

6.2 Representing integration

The conclusion was also reached that representing integration and promoting diversity requires more than projecting different skin colours on screen or assuming that one member of a minority appearing in a

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show can stand for a wider group. If children from different national and cultural backgrounds are given certain ‘labels’ in children’s screen content – such as black, Asian or Arab – or are ascribed certain attitudes, there is a risk of tapping, even unintentionally, into existing stereotypes of race and gender.

Participants concurred that producers should explore aspects that children from all backgrounds have in common. Without showing the commonalities, there is a risk of enforcing a sense of ‘us and the others’. The Dutch documentary Heijplaters offered a positive example of representing the similarities among five children of diverse ethnic backgrounds (Turkish, Syrian, Chinese, Surinamese and Dutch), who live in the harbour district of Rotterdam. Rather than making the boys’ backgrounds the major focus of the narrative, the film focuses on activities they do together. The film’s director, Mirjam Marks, explained:

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\text{[I] it’s not explicit in the film, because I don’t like to do it that way. It’s about friendship in times of polarisation. That’s an issue all over in the Netherlands. My thoughts behind it were ... With the news and everything, there is so much attention, especially from adults, on differences among people from different cultural backgrounds or beliefs. But there are so many equal things far more than difference, I think.}
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6.3. Competent children facing challenges

Content depicting the resourcefulness of children newly arrived in Europe can also counter narratives of passivity and victimhood. The short dramas Nur from Slovenia and Swing from Serbia, made as part of the European Broadcasting Union Drama Exchange, both showed displaced children overcoming challenges. Some Arab participants liked the way the films showed the children taking responsibility, taking care of themselves, being respectful of local social rules and displaying their problem-solving skills.

It was suggested that child characters who are not unequivocally strong but also have flaws and confront problems can open up points of identification for children in the audience. During the Manchester workshop, a German expert who has researched child audiences suggested that the CBBC programme My Life: New boys in Town offered plenty for children to engage with through its format and storytelling, since it shows both the challenges and opportunities that come with settling into a new society.

7 MOVING FORWARD

7.1 Opportunities for open discussion

It was apparent from workshop debates that more opportunities are needed for open and critical discussion about children’s content, beyond industry events where the emphasis is on competition and selling. Producers at the Manchester workshop said that even the Children’s Global Media Summit was being deployed as a market instead of a place where people can share information about how to fund and exhibit the programmes that everyone at the workshop wanted to get made.

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7.2 Addressing the gender gap

Also needed in future is more attention to girls. A quick count of the programmes in our sample selection below reveals that 14 feature boys in the main roles, compared with only eight where girls are the main characters. Girls appear less on television than boys in general\(^{11}\) and producers from the UK and Germany drew attention to the practical challenges of making films with and about refugee girls, because it is often difficult to get permission from families.

Constraints on access can also lead unintentionally to potential stereotyping. A Jordanian TV executive who generally liked the representations of Hamza in Jordan in the preschool show \textit{Where in the World?} nevertheless questioned why he was shown with his mother in the kitchen and with his father in the mosque. The producer explained that he was aware of the film’s gender dimension but found himself confronted with pressures of time and finance when filming in foreign locations.

The implications of representing female characters in particular ways came up in discussion of a clip from the long-running US show \textit{Arthur}, aired on CBBC. In it, a white north American girl character, DW, draws her idea of the former lifestyle of a male classmate just arrived from Senegal. Both the classmate and the teacher fiercely criticise what the drawing contains, in a scene that elicited strong objections from some workshop participants. A German researcher said: ‘Producers ought to think about how child audiences react. Here comes a wonderful girl with all her enthusiasm, with all her fantasy, and it’s so easy just to put in the sentence “oh it’s wonderful”, just to encourage her to be who she is instead of slapping her down’.

In contrast, a film that drew admiration from workshop participants was the Danish documentary \textit{Laylas melodi} (2013). One of a series of films about three different Afghan children, this one follows eleven-year-old Layla, whose uncle has placed her in a Kabul orphanage. Layla is a strong and independent character who resists societal and cultural norms by playing music (forbidden under the Taliban), going to school, and resisting returning to her home village to avoid being married off. A DFI representative said:

\begin{quote}
I talked to one teacher using this [series] and he told us that the children were very much involved in the stories, and they could actually feel these children were children like them, not children in Afghanistan, but children with their own rights, thoughts and dreams [...]\end{quote}

7.3 Forced migration in historical perspective

Opportunities now exist for producers to put forced migration into historical perspective, so that children become aware that mass displacement has happened at different times and places and has followed routes from the global North to the South as well as the reverse. Europe’s history of forced migration over many centuries is often forgotten and overlooked by European media. Workshop participants praised an episode of \textit{Die Sendung mit dem Elefanten} which closed by encouraging children in the audience to ask their own parents and grandparents where they come from.

## 8. APPENDIX: SAMPLES OF CONTENT

### 8.1 Animation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Arthur</strong> (1996-2017)</th>
<th><strong>Synopsis - Series 14, Episode 25: 'In my Africa'</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Production Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Synopsis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commissioner: PBS (US)</td>
<td>Set in the fictional American location of Elwood City, Arthur revolves around the lives of 8-year-old Arthur Read, his sister DW, and their friends and family. The show has educational goals connected to literacy, problem-solving and social goals linked to friendship, diversity and family. In this episode, Sheik moves from Senegal to Elwood City and joins DW’s class. She presents him with a picture she has drawn of a hippo bus to swim to school and a volcano. He asks “Where did you learn this nonsense?”, explaining that he comes from a big city. The teacher responds: ‘DW I’m sure you meant well, but you should learn about a place before you describe it’. DW subsequently studies maps and books about Africa, determined to learn about the continent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer: Cookie Jar Group (Canada)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episodes: Airs on CBBC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age group: 4-8 years</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Asylbarn - Jamila, Gid jeg kunne flyve</strong> (Asylum Child - Jamila, If only I could fly, Denmark, 2013)</th>
<th><strong>Synopsis</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Production Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Jamila, if only I could fly</strong> is one of three animated dramas in the series Asylum Child, based on the experiences of refugee children in Denmark. Jamila is an eight-year-old girl who was born in a Danish refugee camp, after her parents fled to Denmark from Iraq ten years ago. Jamila has had many friends at the refugee center, but most of them only stay for a short while. As the clips shown at the workshop revealed, right now Cecilie is Jamila’s best friend with whom she flirts with boys and goes belly dancing at the afterschool club. But Cecilie and her family have been denied asylum and are deported, even though Cecilie was born in Denmark.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director: Jannik Hastrup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer: Dansk Tegnefilm with support of the Danish Film Institute</td>
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<tr>
<td>Animation: Jannik Hastrup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episodes: 3 x 10’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age group: 6-9 years</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Die Sendung mit dem Elefanten</strong> (The Programme with the Elephant, 2007- present, Germany), 2016</th>
<th><strong>Flüchtlingsspezial (Refugee Special)</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Production Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Synopsis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producers (Refugee Special): Renate Bleichenbach and Markus Tomsche for WDR</td>
<td>A little blue elephant provides continuity for this regular show, which offers entertaining and educational short films. The show also addresses more serious topics, such as friendship, grief, fear, and tolerance. In this episode, the programme introduces children to the complex subject of ‘refugees’. It opens with a cartoon in which a rockslide forces the crocodile Viktor to leave his pond and seek a new home, meeting resistance from the occupants of other ponds along the way. Later in the episode, documentary clips introduce children from Syria and Ghana, newly arrived in Germany. It closes with the presenter encouraging children to find out about migration stories within their own families.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers: Renate Bleichenbach, Markus Tomsche and Clemens Gersch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcaster: WDR/ARD/KiKa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration: 24 minutes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age group: Preschool</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>JoNaLu</strong> (2008-2014, Germany)</th>
<th><strong>Der Kaufladen (The shop)</strong></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Production Details</strong></td>
<td><strong>Synopsis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadcaster: ZDF/KiKa</td>
<td>The names of the protagonists, Jo, Naya and Ludwig together make up the title of JoNaLu. Jo and Naya are mice and Ludwig is a ladybird. The trio live together in a mouse hole in the house of Paul and his mother. On their excursions, they discover the world, showing children how to respond to different situations, and encouraging them to learn through music and dance. Other characters come from different countries and are recognised by speaking a different language: Caruso is from Italy, Sibel is from Turkey, Nikolaj speaks Russian, Carmen speaks Spanish, Scottie speaks English and Minou is from France. We showed a clip in which Naya and Sibel make coins from paper to go shopping in Jo’s play shop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Producer: Jan Bonath for Scopas Medien AG</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Script: Helge Mey, Michael Schulden, Ina Werner et al.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duration: 26 x 35’ (2 series)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Age group: Preschool</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Mixed Nutz (2008)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: Shaw Television and PBS (US)
- Producer: Big Bad Boo Studios (Canada)
- Episodes: 13 X 30'
- Age group: 5-8 years

**Synopsis - Episode 1- ‘School’s in Session’**

Mixed Nutz endeavors to promote diversity and tolerance by celebrating cultural difference. The main characters in Mixed Nutz, all of whom are 9 years old, are from Iran, India, Austria, Cuba and Korea. In a clip from Episode 1, new boy, Sanjay, originally from India, joins the class and introduces himself to his new classmates using jokes, but not all of them understand him. In the following sequence, Damaris, whose parents moved to the US from Cuba, introduces herself to the class.

### ZDF Logo (Germany, 2017)

**Production Details**
- Prod./Broadcaster: ZDF
- Format: Animation
- 1 Minute
- Age group: 8-12 years

**Synopsis – Verteilung von Flüchtlingen in der EU (Distribution of Refugees in the EU)**

This animated clip explains the distribution of refugees within the European Union (EU), and that the EU is now suing three of its own member states - Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic - which are failing to meet their refugee targets.

### 8.2 Factual programming and documentaries

#### Ayham: Mein neues Leben (Ayham: My new Life, 2016, Switzerland)

**Production Details**
- Broadcaster: Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen (SRF); ZDF/KiKa
- Directors: Marek Beles & Ilona Stämpfli
- Prod. company: Essence Films
- Format: Documentary
- Duration: 28’ & 15’ webisodes
- Age group: 11-15 years

**Synopsis - Film and webisodes 1-17**

Together with his family, 11-year-old Ayham is forced to flee from Syria to escape the war. He did not really want to leave his home and his friends, but the danger was too great. The family travelled for five months before starting a new life in Switzerland. The first few months are tough, but at school Ayham soon makes friends with classmates who like to play football. The football coach discovers his talent and makes it possible for him to have a trial with the Grasshopper Club in Zurich. The club then takes him into its junior team for one year.

#### CBBC Newsround (UK, 2017)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: CBBC
- Broadcaster: CBBC
- Format: News for children
- 2 minutes
- Broadcast 14 March 2017
- Age group: 9-12 years

**Synopsis - Ayshah meets child refugees in Greece**

CBBC Newsround reporter Ayshah Tull travels to Greece to meet children who have recently fled to Europe from conflict zones, particularly from countries in the Arab world. In interviews with children and youth (who remain anonymous), Ayshah learns that many of them are currently stranded in Greece and are eagerly hoping to move on and find a new home.

#### De Kinderburgemeester (The Children’s Mayor, NL, 2017)

**Production Details**
- Dir. Susan Koenen
- Executive Prod. Albert Klein Haneveld
- Prod. company: Hollandse Helden
- Broadcaster- Commissioner: NPO Zapp - KRO-NCRV
- Format: Documentary
- 15 minutes
- Age group: 6-12 years

**Synopsis**

De Kinderburgemeester focuses on Yassine, a boy of Moroccan heritage who was Children’s Mayor in Gouda for one year. Yassine has two goals for his one-year ‘term of office’: bringing children from different ethnic backgrounds together and meeting his role model, the Moroccan-born mayor of Rotterdam, Ahmed Aboutaleb. The clips in the workshop show Yassine sending an email to Aboutaleb, asking if they can meet. Aboutaleb replies saying that he does not have time, but perhaps Yassine can drop by. After a tour of the town hall, Yassine is told that the mayor is not available. But he does not give up and eventually manages to arrange a meeting, during which the mayor tells him that he has to work ‘extra hard’ as children’s mayor, because many people have prejudices against Moroccan people. The closing scene shows a wistful Yassine as he hands over the role to his successor, Romaissa.
### Een jaar zonder mijn ouders (A Year Without My Parents, NL, 2017)

**Production Details**
- **Director:** Els van Driel
- **Producer:** Anouk Dark
- **Executive Producer:** Anouk Donker
- **Production Company:** IKON
- **Broadcasters:** NPO Zapp
- **Format:** Documentary
- **Duration:** 23 minutes
- **Age group:** 9-15 years

**Synopsis**
Een jaar zonder mijn ouders puts the spotlight on eleven-year-old Tareq, who has fled war in Syria to live in Europe. Tareq embarked on this journey without his parents, leaving them behind with his sister and brother. Once arrived in the Netherlands, Tareq starts a new life and goes to school (a clip shown at the workshop). However, he faces an uncertain future, not knowing if and when he will see his parents again. This documentary follows Tareq in this critical period of waiting for a reunion with his family after having been apart for more than a year.

### Ferie på Flygtningeøen (Vacation on Refugee Island, Denmark, 2017)

**Production Details**
- **Writer/dir.:** Frej Pries Schmedes
- **Producer:** Dorthe Rosenørn
- **Broadcasters:** DR Ultra
- **Production Company:** Loke Film
- **Format:** Documentary
- **Duration:** 24 minutes
- **Screened at CPH: Dox 2018
- **Age group:** 7-12 years

**Synopsis**
Ferie på Flygtningeøen explores the situation of refugees on the Greek island of Samos from the perspective of Alvin, a Danish boy who enjoys a beach holiday with his father (the film’s director). The film opens with Alvin snorkelling in the sea, where he finds a small orange life vest and learns that it must have belonged to a child. Alvin subsequently tries to find and meet children who live in refugee camps on Samos, and hopes to give them candy.

The clips shown during the workshop included Alvin finding the life vest and meeting a group of children in a refugee camp - an encounter that is interrupted by police, after which Alvin and his father spend several hours at the police station.

### Hassan og Ramadanen (Hassan and Ramadan, Denmark, 2017)

**Production Details**
- **Commissioner/Broadcaster:** DR Ultra
- **Dir.:** Ulla Søe
- **Prod.:** Mette Mailand
- **Production Company:** Plus Pictures with The DFI
- **Format:** Documentary
- **Duration:** 45 minutes (film)/17 x 5-9 minutes (Web series)
- **Target audience:** Grades 3-6

**Synopsis**
Hassan og Ramadanen centres on eleven-year-old Hassan who lives in Køge, Denmark, with his family, originally from Iraq. Hassan’s family are Shia Muslims and he has decided he wants to try fasting for the first time during Ramadan, inspired by his older brothers and parents. But how can Hassan concentrate at school, succeed at football, and play with his friends while not eating or drinking from dawn to sunset? Hassan og Ramadanen is a 45-minute documentary film, divided into 17 webisodes of 5-9 minutes duration for distribution as a web series on YouTube.

We showed two clips. In the first, Hassan explains to his family that he would like to join them in fasting. In the second, Hassan and his father talk in the car about how and why they identify Denmark as their home.

### Heijplaters (Harbourboyz, NL, 2018)

**Production Details**
- **Director:** Mirjam Marks
- **Producer:** Nienke Korthof
- **Production company:** Tangerine Tree
- **Commissioner:** EO/IKONdocs
- **Broadcasters:** NPO Zapp
- **Format:** Documentary
- **Duration:** 15 minutes
- **Age group:** 8-12 years

**Synopsis**
Set in Heijplaat, a working-class harbour district in Rotterdam, this observational film introduces five boys who are close friends despite all coming from different religious and cultural backgrounds. They were born in the Netherlands, but their origins range from Dutch and Turkish to Surinamese, Syrian and Chinese. However, for this close-knit group of friends, these differences do not seem to matter.

The clips we showed of Heijplaters revealed that in an area where containers and ships replace playgrounds, there is not much for the teenagers to do, which makes their friendship particularly important.
### Hello Salaam (The Netherlands [NL], Greece, 2017)

**Production Details**
- Producers: Hasse van Nunen & Renko Douze
- Production Company: Een van de Jongens
- Director: Kim Brand
- Broadcaster: NPO Zapp
- Commissioner: KRO-NCRV
- Format: Documentary
- 16 minutes
- Screened at CPH: DOX 2018
- Age group: 6-12 years

**Synopsis**
This short documentary follows two Dutch pre-teens, Sil (10) and Merlijn (11), who decide to spend their summer vacation at a refugee camp on the Greek island of Lesbos. From their mothers – who both volunteer in the camps – they have heard stories of children who live there, having made the dangerous crossing from Turkey in unseaworthy boats. We showed clips depicting Sil’s and Merlijn’s experiences of the camp, including a visit to an inflatable boat ‘graveyard’, handing out food to families crammed in temporary housing, and making friends with a group of refugee boys - aided by a translation app - which prompts them to reflect on how it might be to lose one’s home, and become stranded in a foreign country.

### Het Haar van Ahmad (Ahmad’s Hair, NL, 2016)

**Production Details**
- Dir. Susan Koenen
- Prod. Albert Klein Haneveld
- Prod co.: Hollandse Helden
- Broadcaster/Commissioner: NPO Zapp: KRO-NCRV
- Format: Documentary
- 23 minutes
- Screened at CPH: DOX 2018
- Age group: 6-12 years

**Synopsis**
Twelve-year-old Ahmad has just arrived in the Netherlands from Syria. While he is busy trying to integrate into Dutch society, learn a new language and make new friends, he is also on a heart-warming, personal mission: he is growing his hair, so that it can be donated to a Dutch child who has lost their hair due to illness. The clips we showed revealed Ahmad’s initial struggle with making new friends and learning Dutch, his growing confidence, and that for him, donating his hair is a way of giving something back for the help he and his family received from the Netherlands.

### Neuneinhalb: Karim und Mahdi - Eine Grenzenlose Freundschaft (Nine and a half: Karim and Mahdi - A Boundless Friendship, 2017, Germany)

**Production Details**
- Broadcaster: ARD/WDR/KiKa
- Format: Documentary/News
- Duration: 9 minutes
- Age group: 7-11 years

**Synopsis**
Neuneinhalb is a news feature for children. This episode centres on the friendship between Karim and Mahdi, who fled his home in Afghanistan with his family two years ago and now lives in Germany. The family has not yet been granted asylum and faces deportation. Nevertheless, Karim and Mahdi enjoy their time together by celebrating Mahdi’s 11th birthday - the first time in his life he is having a birthday party - going swimming and eating lunch with all of Mahdi’s family.

### Merna in de Spotlight (Merna in the Spotlight, 2016, Netherlands)

**Production Details**
- Broadcaster: EO/IKON, NPO Netherlands
- Director: Mirjam Marks
- Format: Documentary
- Duration: 15 minutes
- Age group: 9 years and over

**Synopsis**
Eleven-year-old Merna and her parents had to leave Iraq because, as Christians, they were under threat from Islamic State fanatics. Merna previously only sang in church, but in Lebanon she makes a name for herself on the Arabic version of The Voice Kids. After waiting two years for permission to find a new home, Merna’s biggest dream is simply to be able to live in a safe environment with her family.
### My Life: Coming to Britain (2015)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: CBBC
- Producer: Amee Fairbank
- Company: Lizardfish, Manchester
- Format: Documentary
- Age group: 9-12 years

**Synopsis**
*My Life* is a documentary series commissioned by CBBC which follows the lives of individual children across the world. *My Life: Coming to Britain* follows the lives of two girls from Sudan and a boy from Romania as they try to settle into their new lives in the UK. Rania’s and Marwa’s story shows them embarking on a new journey of making friends, learning English and getting used to the weather. The film shows the girls embracing all things British, from fish and chips to having their first birthday party in the UK.

### My Life: New Boys in Town (2017)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: CBBC
- Producer: Rachel Drummond-Hay and Tamsin Summers
- Company: Drummer TV
- Episode: Aired 4 March 2017
- Format: Documentary
- Age group: 9-12 years

**Synopsis**
Part of the *My Life* Series, *New Boys in Town* shows 12-year-old Adel, a Syrian refugee recently settled in the UK, embarking on a mission with his friend Elijah to welcome new refugees in his hometown of Bristol. One of them is Ahmad who is spending his first summer in the UK.

The film follows Ahmad, Adel and Elijah at the Bristol Bike Project where Ahmad is given a bike to fix up before the three of them head off to enjoy a cycle ride around the city. This marks a poignant moment for Ahmad, who has barely ventured out of his flat other than to the supermarket.

According to Kez Margrie, CBBC Executive producer, the series represents ‘a treasure trove of different directing styles’.

### Nuzuh (Displacement, Malaysia/Yemen, 2016)

**Production Details**
- Director: Shatha Alghabri
- Producer: Yemen Identity Organisation
- Streamed by Oxfam
- Format: Documentary interviews
- 4 minutes
- Age group: 10 years and over

**Synopsis**
“We used to sleep on the floor — not in bed — so that when an explosion happened, the glass wouldn’t shatter on us’, explains one girl who fled Yemen’s capital city, Sana’a, with her family. Through the thoughts of children who have fled to Malaysia to escape the dangers of living in a conflict zone, this short film highlights the ongoing war in Yemen. The children talk about what they miss about their lives in Yemen, whether they want to return to their home country, and what they would do if they were the president of Yemen.

### The One Minutes Jr. (NL, 2017)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: UNICEF & The One Minutes Foundation
- Producer: Cinekid & Stichting De Vrolijkheid
- Format: Animation (Marwa), Documentary (Aya)
- 2 x 1’
- Age group: Family

**Synopsis - My Trip by Marwa and My New Friends by Aya**

The One Minutes Jr. is a participatory arts and video initiative that highlights the diversity among children and youth around the world. Through workshops, children produce videos of 60 seconds on a topic of their choice, and are mentored by adult film professionals. *My Trip* and *My New Friends* were made in workshops involving two Syrian girls (Marwa and Aya) who live in refugee accommodation in the Netherlands.

*My Trip* is an animated treatment of the journey Marwa took with her family to escape the conflict in Syria. In *My New Friends*, Aya reflects on how she settled into a strange new country by making new friends.
**Tro Håb Afghanistan: Laylas Melodi** (Faith-Hope-Afghanistan: Layla’s Melody, Denmark, 2013)

**Production Details**
- Directors: Jens Pedersen & Tai M. Bakthari
- Producer: Jakob Gottschau
- Production company: Pederson & Co
- Broadcasters: DR
- Format: Documentary
- 16 minutes
- Age group: Grades 3-10

**Synopsis**
Laylas Melodi is one of five films in the series Tro Håb Afghanistan, which follows children in Afghanistan who live in the shadow of conflict in the country. The film follows eleven-year old Layla, who lives in a Kabul orphanage. Her father was killed in the war and she has not seen her mother for four years. However, Layla feels happy in the orphanage, because she can go to school and play music.

Layla learns that her mother is coming to visit her. We showed clips demonstrating how Layla is torn between excitement about the reunion and fear that she might be expected to return to her mother’s village to get married.


**Production Details**
- Commissioner: CBeebies
- Producer: Dominic Sant
- Company: Evans Woolfe
- Episodes: 20 X 15’ (1 series)
- Format: Documentary
- Age group: Preschool

**Synopsis**
Where in the World? is an international preschool documentary series that aired in June 2017. It follows eight children in eight countries in their daily lives. Producer Dominic Sant said: ‘It’s just really trying to capture what they do and where they go. One of the key drivers for us was the sense that a lot of what children see is obviously the news and aid campaigns. That’s all great, but the kind of wider missing context was normal children living ordinary lives, just getting on with it. So we thought it’d be really good to go and film children with their families doing things, going to school, playing with friends and hopefully we achieved quite a lot’.

### 8.3 Drama

**Apple Tree House** (2017)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: CBeebies
- Producer: Gregory Boardman and Eugenio Perez; Three Stones Media
- Company: Five Apples Ltd.
- Episodes: 60 X 15’ (2 series)
- Format: Drama with animation sequences
- Creators: William Vanderpuye, Maria Timotheou, Akindele Akinsiku
- Age group: Preschool

**Synopsis - Series 1: Episode 2 – ‘First Days’**
The series follows Mali, who has just moved to the Apple Tree council estate and makes a new best friend called Sam. The friends go on adventures, solving daily problems and overcoming childhood dilemmas in a ‘very contemporary inner-city world’, which could be ‘any city in the UK’.

The series plays as a mainstream idea that reflects both the diversity of characters that you might find in the inner city, but also ‘a diversity of storytelling’ giving opportunities to reflect the writers’ own life experiences e.g. experiencing Ramadan, or explaining what children have seen on the news (e.g. a story about refugees).

A prominent show, Apple Tree House is a part of BBC efforts to offer a ‘more authentic’ view of children’s lives from diverse backgrounds.

**Dschermeni** (2017-present, Germany)

**Production Details**
- Broadcaster: ZDF/KiKa
- Producers: Martin Choroba, Johanna Teichmann (Tellux Films), Klaus Döring, Andrea Steinhofel (Sad Origami)
- Format: Fiction
- Duration: 6 X 25’
- Age group: 8-12 years

**Synopsis**
This drama series follows the unusual friendship among four teenagers: Moritz, who is German-born; Rüyet, who is also born and lives in Germany and whose family came from Turkey three generations ago; a Syrian boy, Yassir, who is a refugee, and Aminata, a Senegalese girl who has applied for asylum in Germany with her family. Both Yassir and Aminata risk deportation. We showed a clip from episode 4, in which Moritz and Rüyet press for Yassir’s and Aminata’s right to stay in Germany by visiting the asylum office where Moritz’s mother works. At home with her family Rüyet defends her brother, who has come out as gay. Following an angry scene, she flees the family home to a hut by a lake, where the friends often meet. Aminata is worried about her brother Youssough, who is part of a criminal gang dealing in stolen goods, which she fears puts the family at risk of deportation if he is caught.
**Dad (2014, Wales)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production Details</th>
<th>Synopsis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadcaster: S4C</td>
<td>Ten-year-old Cai is suffering the impact of a nameless war happening far from his home in Wales. His soldier father has returned physically damaged and mentally fragile from the conflict. Cai and his mother are finding it hard to love this changed man. But, on a windswept beach, Cai befriends Amir, a refugee, who has got washed up alone and is scavenging to survive. The meeting of the boys from two different worlds is the beginning of healing for both.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers: Catrin Clarke, Angharad Devonald</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director: Ashley Way</td>
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<tr>
<td>Producer: Sophie Francis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribution: EBU Exchange</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration: 14 minutes</td>
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<td>Age group: 6-12 years</td>
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**4eVeR (2016, Belgium)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production Details</th>
<th>Synopsis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadcaster: VRT/Ketnet</td>
<td>4eVeR is a semi-scripted drama series, now running for four seasons, that follows the friendship between four Flemish teenagers who live in the same neighbourhood, but who grow up in very different families. The teenagers from white Flemish, mixed race and Moroccan backgrounds have fun together, but they are also confronted with difficult situations, problems, and setbacks. Themes covered in 4eVeR include love, insecurity, foster care, bullying at school, living in a new family, media literacy, poverty, depression, and discrimination. The clip shown in the workshop addresses the 2016 terrorist attacks in Belgium one year on as well as aspects of religion, and absent fathers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writers/Directors/Producers: Camiel Scheer &amp; David Madder for ScheMa producties, in collaboration with Awel (<a href="https://awel.be/">https://awel.be/</a>)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Format: Drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration: 48 X 12’ (Series 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age group: 9-12 years</td>
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</tbody>
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**Jamillah and Aladdin (2015-2016, UK)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production Details</th>
<th>Synopsis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadcaster: BBC (CBBC, CBeebies)</td>
<td>Jamillah and Aladdin is a live-action drama series featuring magic and comedy. Set in a fanciful version of 8th century Baghdad, it has a modern-day twist, as the protagonist is Jamillah, a young Londoner living with her extended family, who finds a magic lamp in the attic on a rainy day and unwittingly becomes a hapless genie’s new master. Fulfilling her first wish, the genie transports her to Baghdad where they meet Aladdin and have adventures.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Production Company: Kindle Entertainment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Format: Comedy Drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration: 52 x 14’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age group: 4-7 years</td>
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</table>

**Nur (2014, Slovenia)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Production Details</th>
<th>Synopsis</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadcaster: RTV Slovenija</td>
<td>Nur, a young Syrian girl, arrives on her own at her uncle’s house in Slovenia after fleeing the war. Her parents still live in Syria. Her uncle, a busy doctor, is often not at home and does little to assist Nur in settling into her new environment. Nur is also unable to establish a working phone connection with her parents and increasingly isolates herself in her uncle’s flat. The only thing that reminds her of home is a bottle of rose water she finds on her uncle’s shelf. After accidentally spilling it on the floor, Nur embarks on a mission to the outside world to replace it. During this journey, she gradually makes friends with Pia, a Slovenian girl who lives next door.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dir. Kaya Tokuhisa</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Producer: Metka Dedakovic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Producer EBU: Beryl Richards</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prod. Manager: Barbara Daljavec</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Distribution: EBU Exchange</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Duration: 16 minutes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age group: 6-9 years</td>
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</table>
### Refugee (2016, UK)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: True Tube.co.uk
- Producer: CTVC (UK)
- Duration: 11 minutes
- Format: Live action drama
- Age group: secondary schools

**Synopsis**
This award-winning film is presented as follows: ‘If you were forced to leave your home and could only take one bag, what would you take? What would it feel like to be on the run from your own country, in the hope of finding a safe place somewhere else? In this short drama, we meet a young girl and her family in an unknown land and discover how they came to be there, far away from home.’

### Swing (2017, Serbia)

**Production Details**
- Broadcaster: RTS - Radio Televizija Srbije
- Director: Branko Vucic
- Executive Producer EBU: Beryl Richards
- Distribution: EBU Exchange
- Duration: 15 minutes
- Age group: 6-9 years

**Synopsis**
Swing tells the story of two brothers who arrive in Serbia after fleeing conflict in their home country. On arrival, however, they have to hide from the police as they are travelling without documents. As one of the brothers, Saber, gets sick, they hide in a shed on a farm where Milos, a Serbian boy, lives with his parents. While Saber recovers slowly, his younger brother, Amir, makes friends with Milos, who secretly provides the pair with food and supplies. When Milos’s mother discovers the brothers and calls the police, they are forced to leave.

### Berlin und Wir (Berlin and Us, Germany, 2016)

**Production Details**
- Broadcaster: ZDF/KiKA
- Director: Heike Raab
- Prod: Till Dreier, Christine Pfennig, Markus Steiner (IMAGO TV)
- Editorial: Margrit Lenssen, Eva Radlicki
- Format: Documentary
- Duration: 8 x 24’ (2 series)
- Age group: 11-15 years

**Synopsis**
This non-fiction series features four teenagers (Seyid, Akram, Rashad and Bayan), who live in Berlin after fleeing their home countries, and four Berlin-born teenagers (Millane, Linus, Malina and Oskar). Their shared goal is to find out if they get on with each other, and if they are able to grow as a team. The camera follows them for three months as they experience their city and explore how much they have in common. We showed a clip from episode 4, which follows girls Malina and Rashad as they attend a football training session at Malina’s soccer club. The series’ first season won the 2018 International Kids Emmy for factual content in Cannes; its third season is in production.

### Educating Greater Manchester (2017, UK)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: Channel 4
- Producer: TwoFour Group (UK)
- Episodes: 8 X 47” (2017)
- Format: Fly on the Wall documentary
- Target audience: Family, but post 9pm watershed

**Synopsis - Various clips featuring Rani, a Syrian refugee**
Set in a secondary school in Salford, the episode focuses on 11-year-old Rani who recently moved to the UK from Syria and is struggling to settle in. The first clip showed Rani disclosing to the student counsellor that he is being bullied by another (British) student. In the second clip, Rani’s teacher sets up a meeting between Rani and Murad, a 16-year-old student who also fled from Syria. After the meeting, Murad is interviewed about his flight from Syria (via a boat) and his missing father. Clip 3 showed coverage of the episode on This Morning (ITV), 31 August 2017, in which Rani and Jack are interviewed by the presenters about their friendship.

### The Big Family Cooking Showdown (2017, UK)

**Production Details**
- Commissioner: BBC2, 8pm
- Producer: BBC, UK
- Episodes: 12 X 59’ (2017-18)
- Format: Reality game show
- Target audience: Family

**Synopsis – Series 1, Episode 5**
This competitive food show celebrates families who cook together. We showed a clip from Episode 5 (aired on 14 September 2017), featuring the Ayoubi family, long-settled migrants, who moved to the UK from Syria 25 years ago. The clip reveals diversity inside the family, with one daughter, a construction engineer, wearing hijab and the other not.
This Project Report summarises the proceedings of three workshops in a project to stimulate dialogue between European and Arab stakeholders around European screen content for and about young children of Arab heritage who are living in Europe through forced migration. The one-year project included three workshops in different locations (Manchester, Copenhagen and Munich) under the same title, ‘Children’s Screen Content in an Era of Forced Migration: Facilitating Euro-Arab Dialogue’, and a symposium in London on 14 September 2018 under the title ‘Invisible Children: Children’s Media, Diversity and Forced Migration’. Reports on the workshops are available online as Manchester Workshop Briefing: Children’s Screen Content in an Era of Forced Migration: Facilitating Arab-European Dialogue; Copenhagen Workshop Briefing: Children’s Screen Content in an Era of Forced Migration: Facilitating Arab-European Dialogue – Documentaries, Distribution, Ethics, and Munich Workshop Briefing: Children’s Screen Content in an Era of Forced Migration: Facilitating Arab European Dialogue – Drama, Storytelling, Empathy.

For more details see the project website at www.euroarabchildrensmedia.org or contact Professor Jeanette Steemers at Kings College London (jeanette.steemers@kcl.ac.uk).

This project is funded by the UK’s Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funds world-class, independent researchers in a wide range of subjects: ancient history, modern dance, archaeology, digital content, philosophy, English literature, design, the creative and performing arts, and much more. This financial year the AHRC will spend approximately £98m to fund research and postgraduate training in collaboration with a number of partners. The quality and range of research supported by this investment of public funds not only provides social and cultural benefits but also contributes to the economic success of the UK. For further information on the AHRC, please go to: www.ahrc.ac.uk

We would also like to thank and acknowledge the support of our project partners. We thank BBC Children’s, for hosting the Salford Workshop on 4th December and for providing advice and support. We thank the Danish Film Institute for hosting the Copenhagen Workshops on 19 and 20 March, and CPH: Dox for providing access to festival films. We also gratefully thank the Prix Jeunesse and International Central Institute for Youth and Educational Television (IZI) for arranging to host the Munich workshop on the premises of Bayerischer Rundfunk (BR) on 24 May and for providing advice as well as access to films and contacts with producers. Finally, we thank our project partners BBC Media Action and the Public Media Alliance for offering guidance and support.