

“I believe that this is a good solution, to provide spaces for the artists on the one hand and on the other hand saving maintenance costs. And at the same time, we make the designed buildings more attractive for the public.”

Public Administration Interviewee, Germany

“With restrictions you lose the artists and you get rapid graffiti and tags.”

Enterprise Interviewee, Spain

“You can’t expect the authorities to punish it less. You can’t expect that and as far as I can see you can’t demand it.”

Graffiti Writer Interviewee, Germany

“We understand that we can’t keep on going [with] this zero tolerance approach. (...) We tried to get closer to different graffiti crews in order to raise their awareness on where could they paint and how...”

Public Administration Interviewee, Spain



GRAFFOLUTION

Understand . Collaborate . Improve

POLICY BRIEF

for decision and policy makers, authorities and managers of built environments and transport contexts

Innovative and context-suited strategies to manage graffiti, graffiti vandalism and street art are important, not least because they can help achieve significant efficiencies in resource allocations, but also since smartly designed approaches can help better identify who is being served and who is not, and can help achieve actions which meet multiple drivers, for example, of culture, social enterprise/ commerce and community safety.

This document sets out to introduce you to some of the research, resources and recommendations that have emerged through the European Graffolution project, particularly those related to shaping strategies and actions among regional and local authorities, policing professionals, transport operators and place managers.

What is Graffolution?

European city administrators, public transport services and law enforcement agencies spend enormous amounts of money attempting to tackle graffiti vandalism. This EU-funded project has sought to help mitigate problems associated with graffiti vandalism in public areas and transportation networks by focusing on awareness and positive solutions for all stakeholder groups affected and implicated.

Our consortium is formed by public and private sector partners from five European countries: SYNIO (Austria), the UIC (France), Sine-Institut (Germany), Universitat de Barcelona, Eticas Research & Consulting, Ferrocarrils de la Generalitat de Catalunya (Spain), University of the Arts London and London Borough of Islington (UK).

During the course of this two-year project, we have researched over 300 sources of literature on graffiti, undertaken 85 interviews across groups including, graffiti writers and artists; municipal authorities; police and law enforcement professionals;

transport operators; enterprises; social work, cultural and civil society groups, in Austria, Germany, Spain and the UK and we have analysed 100 strategies and responses to graffiti, all with the aim of understanding the range of opinions and approaches to the graffiti phenomenon. Building on these insights, we have developed a platform aimed at connecting all different stakeholders and becoming a source of reliable information as well as a tool for enabling collaboration.

Note: Drawing upon the extensive research conducted, this document purposefully does not separate the activities of graffiti and street art at a generic level, since while in some cases they can be very different, in many cases they are part of a linear scale of activities related to painting, mark making and to creative practices in cities, both legal and illegal, commissioned and uncommissioned. We propose it is more productive to take a position of no-bias in favour of, or against these practices, so that diverse communities involved and affected can be seen best accommodated.

Recommendations for decision and policy makers

The Graffolution research findings, have lead us to to two main implications, which guide the following recommendations:

1. The importance of effective and multilateral communication for awareness and prevention

- Adopting an inclusive and collaborative approach is essential to an issue that involves so many diverse stakeholder groups
- Multi-dimensional impact assessment should be done prior to any intervention and the surrounding areas should be included in the research. Graffiti can have positive and negative effects on many different dimensions. Consider issues regarding social inclusion, legal implications, promotion of art and culture, property damage, economic impact, freedom of expression.
- Credibility is crucial to solve trust-based problems. Disproportioned punishments, zero-tolerance messages and mouse-trap strategies which use legal alternatives to identify and punish graffiti writers can have long lasting counterproductive effects.
- Legal alternatives, such as free walls, artistic initiatives in public spaces, easier processes/ tools and facilitating regulation to ask for/give painting permission etc. should be available, encouraged and spread.
- It might be more effective to focus communication on key channels and places as well as higher activity periods. Prevention campaigns might be more effective if launched before/during holidays, using social media and targeting touch-points (graffiti equipment shops, public transport...).
- It is important to have local mediators'

support. Other cultural, educational and social organisations are key for strengthening mutual understanding.

- This is a global phenomenon, it is important to stay aware of and contribute to inform global trends and other cities' responses.
- Citizen participation should be actively promoted in the debate, as it concerns the shaping of public space.

2. The importance of data and feedback for strategy design and evaluation – Collection, analysis and exchange

- Research reveals a general need to reassess response strategies, and particularly identify and act upon contextually appropriate responses, and taking the motivations behind graffiti writing into account.
- Data about graffiti should be separable from other categories such as vandalism or anti-social behaviour incidents to enable a better understanding and evaluation of the situation.
- Crowd sourced or 'Wiki' type categorisation and data organisation models can prove very pro- ductive in enabling experts, specialists and graffiti management practitioners to upload, correct, refine and update information and categorisations through a shared, live and evolving platform.
- Collecting data about graffiti's positive impact such as strengthening social cohesion, building a sense of community or attracting tourism can help to achieve a better understanding of the

situation and other stakeholders positions.

- The culture of developing shareable indicators of 'pro-social' success needs to be developed.
- Differences between types of activity (Tags, Offensive Pieces, Murals, etc.) need to be recognised and taken into account to assess the perception of security and insecurity (depending on individuals' interpretations, context and type of graffiti). Communities who are affected negatively or positively by graffiti need to have a say on these matters too.
- Laws and policies need to be informed by all perspectives (in order to develop graffiti related responses that satisfy various groups).
- In order to enable a better impact assessment and strategy evaluation, changes that have taken place during an intervention should be tracked. Data gathering (for legitimate purposes and respecting transparency and accountability) should not stop in any phase, starting with stakeholder groups' identification and data gathering of the initial situation.
- Collaboration between dutyholders by sharing intelligence and data between departments (within and between cities) would allow to increase efficiency, knowledge, resilience and preparation. For example, joined up enforcement & arts/culture policies could increase efficiencies and maximise opportunities.

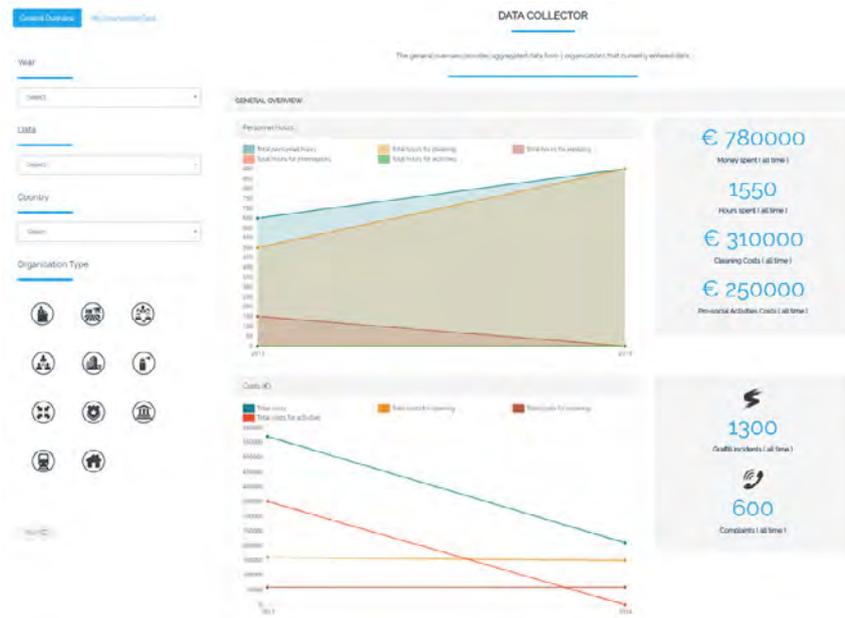
What is the Graffolution Platform and how might it help you?

The Graffolution Platform is a free and EU-focused resource for those wondering about, those wrestling with, as well as those making graffiti and street art. It has been designed with the collaboration of representatives from a wide range of stakeholder groups including cultural and civil society organisations, public administration and graffiti writers. Its content and structure are the result of combining these different groups' experiences, points of view, suggestions and feedback (gathered through interviews and an e-consultation) with the project partners' research findings and professional knowledge.

These are some of the features you might find interesting:

- **SHARE AND COMPARE YOUR ORGANISATION'S INSIGHTS AND STATISTICS WHILE RAISING AWARENESS - DATA MATTERS!**

Beyond policy evaluation purposes and cross-city comparison, data can also be useful for raising awareness among citizens, especially among young people, by transmitting powerful messages like the cost of the cleaning caused by illegal graffiti, to society.



- **LEARN ABOUT SUCCESSFUL INITIATIVES IN OTHER CITIES THROUGHOUT EUROPE AND TELL OTHERS ABOUT YOURS**

Even though the success of strategies depends heavily on local context factors, graffiti is a global phenomenon. Stay aware of its trends and learn how other cities are tackling this challenge. Are their strategies replicable in your environment? Are you willing to share your experience?

CASE STUDIES

This area helps you to find cases studies which make use of different kinds of response actions

Recently added:



Calm Streets



Enhancing the Legal Response



Graffiti Art



BLEIB SAUBER - Jugend OK



Newcastle and Gateshead Graffiti Forum



Bristol Graffiti Partnership

Case Study	Type of Response	Target Groups	Rated By Organization Types	Details
 <p>Vienna Central Railway Station Street Art Murals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment & Infrastructure Collaboration Culture Enforcement - Activity Support Education and Empathy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graffiti writers Tourists Local community 	<p>★ ★ ★ ★ ★</p> <p>Average Rating 0</p> <p>Organizations that rated 0</p> <p>Your Rating 0</p> <p>🔍 Detailed info</p>	<p>Details</p>

- **COMMUNICATE WITH AUTHORITIES, LAND MANAGERS, CITIZENS, BUSINESS OWNERS, GRAFFITI WRITERS, CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ORGANISATIONS**

It is important to ensure all stakeholders affected by the phenomenon become part of local responses. Spread news and initiatives easily through the Graffolution network and engage them.

ORGANISATIONS

If you are looking for interesting organisations that are related to graffiti, graffiti vandalism prevention or street art this is the right spot for you.



Strategy

Share on

This part of the platform helps you to develop a strategy and plan the whole cycle: from problem definition to evaluation and impact assessment. The following elements can be for one-time or long term interventions, single or complex actions, as well as for approaches departing from prevention, response or recovery nature. This section will help you to document a strategy specific for your aims to fully achieve them.

STEP 1: PLEASE DEFINE YOUR GOALS ACCORDING TO YOUR CHALLENGES (PROBLEM OR OPPORTUNITY)

1	Awareness
	Draw a distinction between vandalism and street art
	Explain the possibilities to create value through graffiti
	Explain the problems and costs caused by illegal graffiti
	Increase capacity for visual critique
	Introduce graffiti prevention by design
	Introduce legal alternatives
	Raise awareness on graffiti as a part of the youth culture
	Raise awareness on pro-social and anti-social aspects of graffiti
	Understand the causes of graffiti
2	Arts-Led Activities
	Offer an artistic alternative to graffiti vandalism
	Provide activities through community art

CASE STUDIES

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Recently added:

Case Study	Type of Response	Target Groups	Rated by Organization Types	Details
Vienna Central Railway Station Street Art Mural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment & Infrastructure Collaboration Culture Environment & Activity "Suburb" Education and Equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graffiti writers Tourists Local community 	<p>4.5/5 stars</p> <p>Amnesty International</p> <p>Organizations that rated this listing</p> <p>1 Detailed info</p>	Details
URBAN AREA open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment & Infrastructure Collaboration Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Graffiti writers Local community 	<p>4.5/5 stars</p> <p>Amnesty International</p> <p>Organizations that rated this listing</p> <p>1 Detailed info</p>	Details
OGARNA s.r.o.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Environment & Infrastructure Collaboration Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tourists Local community Local business 	<p>4.5/5 stars</p> <p>Amnesty International</p> <p>Organizations that rated this listing</p> <p>1 Detailed info</p>	Details



Supporting Research

- Different actors and community groups were consulted and broadly formed six categories of stakeholder: 'Social Work, Cultural & Civil Society', 'Police & Law Enforcement', 'Public Administration', 'Transport Operators/Authorities', 'Enterprises' and 'Graffiti Writers'.
- Most established literature on graffiti vandalism and related responses revolves around anti-social and pro-social approaches. In more recent years there is an emergence of innovative, smart and contextually sensitive urban management and design models embracing both pro-social and anti-social perspectives. These contemporary practices are often more cost-effective than those which respond to graffiti solely as an anti-social activity, and can be more inclusive in accommodating multiple drivers and understanding 'what works'.
- Stakeholders who were interviewed expressed a lack of communication between different groups and the large majority of them emphasised the importance of pro-social and educational projects in the context of graffiti.
- Actions to facilitate greater engagement and awareness of the diverse debates, voices, concerns and values associated to graffiti, among all affected parties, are seen as important by all the stakeholder groups that were consulted.
- Graffiti satisfies the paradoxical needs for affiliation (with like-minded others) and differentiation (from society) among young people, but also other generations and communities. Practices invariably change over the span of an individual's 'graffiti career', whereby a person who starts out making uncommissioned graffiti interventions that are not liked, respected, or may be offensive to some groups, is likely to change their practice over time, some with negative impact and some with positive impact, or both.
- Projects in schools or organisations working with young people should always include the multiple sides of graffiti; the positive (artistic, creative expression, community building) as well as the negative ones (the consequences of illegal graffiti to the directly affected parties and broader society), and encourage people to be innovative in thinking through what they think would work best in their own contexts.



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