

# How Music Can Fight Prejudice

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The outpouring of [hostility](#) toward immigrants and refugees has reminded us that [ethnocentrism](#) remains a fact of life in both Europe and the United States. Combating it will require teaching a new generation to view members of different cultures as potential friends rather than threatening outsiders. But what mode of communication has the power to stimulate such a shift?

[New research](#) from Portugal suggests the answer may be music.

It reports schoolchildren around age 11 who learned about the music and culture of a faraway land expressed warmer feelings toward immigrants from that country than those who did not. What's more, those positive emotions were still evident three months after this exposure to the foreign culture.

"Music can inspire people to travel to other emotional worlds," writes a research team led by psychologist [Felix Neto](#) of the University of Porto. Their work suggests songs can serve as an emotional bridge between cultures, revealing feelings that are common to both.