

Europe in Perspective

Transnational Training on
Diversity in Cultural Learning

Training Programme

Arrival Day – Here we are!

Day **0**

1 Arrival of the participants

Arrival

30 min

The participants arrive at the training venue. Coffee, tea and water is provided. Simple name tags are issued.

2 Introduction

Welcome

30 min

Local organiser welcomes the participants, all partners and facilitators introduce themselves. The lead facilitator should give a general introduction to the week. In particular, he or she should stress that the week is an opportunity for participants to reflect on and develop their own practice. It has been designed as a space in which the voices of all the participants should be heard, in which they can exchange ideas and experiences and, with some input and some challenge, explore how they might be able to include diversity and interculturality in their own practice. Learning from each other and sharing their own understandings and experiences is central to the experience.

General administrative announcements are made, and organisational questions answered.

»The key message here is that we are taking the participants on a journey towards more knowledge, sensitivity and understanding of themselves and 'the other'. Not by teaching or lecturing them but by having them undergo an experience that may provoke thought, new insights, dialogue, irritation and resistance even. This journey maybe a very different experience than participants expect when they register and therefore ensuring this is understood from the start is important.«

Ben Hekkema, Mocca Amsterdam, Netherlands

3 Name game

Activity

30 min

Useful for:

the activity is designed to help participants learn each other's names, begin conversations, and set everyone in the group at ease. It reinforces names with faces and helps establish basic introductions in a fun way.

Resources needed:

Music and a music player. Cards with the first letter of the first names of the participants. There should be one card with a letter for each group of participants whose names start with the same letter. Some cards will refer to only a single participant, as no one else shares the same starting letter.

Room layout:

A clear open space so that participants can move around freely.

What happens?

The facilitator starts the music. Participants move freely to the music in the room filling the whole space moving and dancing. When the music stops everyone freezes and the facilitator calls out a letter from one of the cards he or she has prepared. People whose first name starts with the letter called out come together in a group. Each then says their name, the country and the institution they come from. When the music then starts again, and people again move freely until the music stop when the process of freezing and calling out the letters is repeated. The game ends when all the letters from the participants' first names have been called out.

»It's a lovely start and brings the participants together. And, some people are challenged by moving and dancing to music.«

Regula Nyffeler, PHBern, Switzerland



4 Are you a stereotype?

Activity

45 min

Useful for:

Icebreaker, some insight into the world of stereotypes, revealing the mechanisms of making stereotypes

Resources needed:

As many A6 or A5 size cardboard cards as there are participants. Marker pens.

Room layout:

Chairs in a circle. One chair for each participant and facilitator.

What Happens

Each participant is issued with a card and pen. Participants are then asked to write the name of the country they come from on the card and place it on the floor in the middle of the room (the name of the country facing up). Then, they are asked to pick another card, which does not have the name of their country written on it. On the back of the card they should write five statements which they think, know or feel are true about the **people** of that country. The cards are then collected, and each country group is given the cards which describe their countries. They have a few minutes to consider the statements. They then should read out the statements and comment on them. Every participant should have the opportunity to comment.

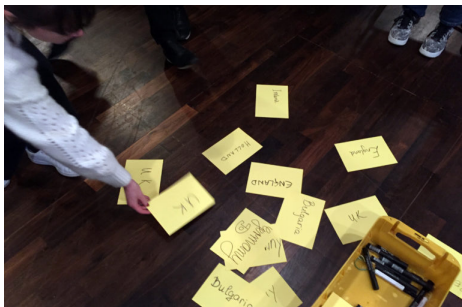
In doing so they should reflect on whether they feel that the statements are accurate and/or true, how reflective they are of the most important characteristics of the people from their country, what they feel was omitted, and what they would like to add. They should also describe how they feel about being described in that way.

Note for facilitators:

In the reflection at the end of the activity, the facilitator should try to highlight the complexity of stereotypes. Many are largely true, many are flattering (participants on the first evening will tend to say nice things about each other!). Many people believe they confirm to the stereotypes. The exercise will also tend to reveal how little we know about people in other European countries. Facilitators should also beware that some people might get upset by what they hear about their countries, but this is an opportunity to explore how we know what we know.

»This exercise has many layers and that´s what makes it such an interesting thing to do. What do you know about the other, what are your stereotypes or even prejudices? What about other people´s ideas about your country? What is true, half true or not true at all? Or maybe hard to acknowledge or even see about yourself. How is it to write something negative about another country? How does it make you feel to hear negative things about your country? Does it make you angry, defensive?«

Ben Hekkema, Mocca Amsterdam, Netherlands



Participants often complain at the end of the week that they did not have enough time to talk informally and explore ideas with participants from other countries. However, they often do not use meal times and breaks effectively for this purpose, preferring to sit with others from the same country whom they already know. Therefore, facilitators should make a big effort to get participants to sit and talk with people they do not know during meals and breaks. Dinner on the arrival day directly followed the last activity.

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