BLOG 4
DIALOGUE

A TRAINING TOOL-KIT

FOR EUROMED BLOGGERS

ANNA LINDH FOUNDATION

www.euromedalex.org

Content

How to use this Tool-Kit?

·How it started?

The Anna Lindh Foundation organised in July 2009 the first EuroMed Training for Bloggers on intercultural dialogue gathering 20 bloggers from the region and providing them with an introduction training on what is intercultural dialogue and what is the ALF doing to bring people together in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

·Why we do it?

Since the training was one of the first in the region addressing bloggers and intercultural dialogue, the team of trainers had to develop a new methodology for training bloggers combining non-formal education tools, conceptual tools and resources inspired from the universe of blogging. The materials and methodologies used during the training were adapted to bloggers as a specific target group and received very positive feedbacks from the participants. The team and the bloggers who attended the training recommended to gather the materials and methodologies in order to produce a resource on the topic.

·What For?

This booklet aims at creating a comprehensive tool for training bloggers on intercultural dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean region. It also want to inspire civil society organisation and international institutions to run trainings with bloggers on the same topic by using the information and resources included in the tool-kit.

·For Whom?

This resource targets civil society organisations, training institutions and multipliers who are working on intercultural dialogue and willing to train bloggers on the importance of advocating for a common future between the people of the EuroMed region. This booklet will provide them with basic information on intercultural dialogue, intercultural learning and blogging in the EuroMed, which they can develop and adapt according to their national and regional needs and realities.

·Find your Way in the Tool-Kit

The booklet is divided into six major parts which combine the theoretical and the practical aspects of training bloggers on intercultural dialogue. The first part is an introduction to the world of the Anna Lindh Foundation, as one of the main actors of the EuroMed Partnership and the Union for the Mediterranean, with a special focus on its role in bringing different components of the civil society together in common projects. The second part is a window on the universe of blogging with a special focus on the EuroMed blogosphere. The third part is a conceptual introduction to intercultural dialogue and intercultural learning, with an attempt to define certain basic concepts related to these topics. The fourth part is a number of practical and methodological recommendations on how to design and run a training for this specific type of opinion leaders, with a number of exercises inspired from the world of blogging to be implemented with the participants to the training. The fifth part is dedicated to best practices of blogs and web portals dealing in a postive way with intercultural dialogue issues. The annexes include tips and guidelines on how to set up and manage a blog, useful for trainers that are not familiar with these tools and for anyone interested in starting blogging, and a list of references and online resources on intercultural dialogue and social media.

·Adaptations

This tool-kit does not want to be an exhaustive resource on how to train bloggers on these topics, but a companion which is meant to inspire trainers and multipliers, and we strongly recommend to adapt the definitions and exercises to the needs of the trained groups, to the topics tackled in the trainings and to the national and regional realities of each training activity.

The Anna Lindh Foundation and the EuroMed

EUROMED

In 1995 the Conference of Euro-Mediterranean Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Barcelona established the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership, also known as the Barcelona Process. According to the final declaration, the partnership aims to "turn the Mediterranean basin into an area of dialogue, exchange and cooperation guaranteeing peace, stability and prosperity."

3 Main Objectives were identified by the Barcelona Declaration, which are:

• Definition of a common area of peace and stability through the reinforcement of political and security dialogue (Political and Security Pillar).

• Construction of a zone of shared prosperity through an economic and financial partnership and the gradual establishment of a free-trade area (Economic and Financial Pillar).

• Rapprochement between peoples through a social, cultural and human partnership aimed at encouraging understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies (Social, Cultural and Human Pillar).

At the Paris Summit for the Mediterranean in 2008 43 Heads of State and Government from Europe and southern and eastern Mediterranean countries decided to re-launch the Barcelona Process under the name of 'Union for the Mediterranean'. The the partnership was expanded to "enhance multilateral relations, increase co-ownership of the process, set governance on the basis

of equal footing and translate it into concrete projects, more visible to citizens".

In the Paris Declaration the Anna Lindh Foundation was mentioned as the main institution for the promotion of the cultural dimension of the Union for the Mediterranean, together with the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations.

The Secretariat of the Union for the Mediterranean was officially inaugurated in 2010 in the city of Barcelona.

The 43 countries of the Union for the Mediterranean are: Albania, Algeria, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Mauritania, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Syria, The Netherlands, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom.

Learn more on:
www.eeas.europa.eu/euromed
www.ufmsecretariat.org

ANNA LINDH FOUNDATION

E U R O M E D

The Anna Lindh Foundation (ALF) is a unique institution shared by the forty-three countries of the Union for the Mediterranean, with a mandate to promote intercultural dialogue and cross-cultural understanding between people from diverse cultural and social backgrounds.

Since its launch in 2005, the Foundation has led and supported activities across fields impacting on mutual perceptions among people of different cultures and beliefs, including large-scale educational, cultural and media initiatives, and has financed projects involving tens of thousands of citizens from the region in common projects.

The Foundation has also developed the largest and most diverse Network of civil society involved in the promotion of intercultural dialogue across the Mediterranean, bringing together more than 4000 social actors who share the values of the Foundation.

Through the launching of the 'Anna Lindh Report on Intercultural Trends', the Foundation aims to contribute to the development of an intercultural strategy for the Euro-Mediterranean Region, providing recommendations to decision-makers and proposals for the intercultural dialogue agenda.

Learn more on: www.euromedalex.org
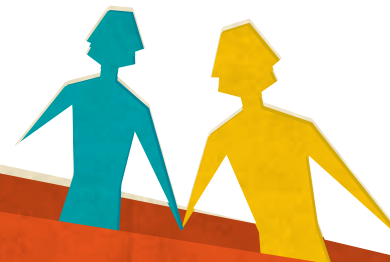
1. What is Blogging?

Defining a Blog: The word Blog comes from web log. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, a blog is an online journal where an individual, group, or corporation presents a record of activities, thoughts, or beliefs. Some blogs operate mainly as news filters, collecting various online sources and adding short comments and links. Other blogs present original material. In addition, many blogs provide a forum to allow visitors to leave comments and interact with the author. Materials are largely written, but pictures, audio, and videos are important elements of many blogs. The blogosphere is the online universe of blogs. (for tips and guidelines on how to set-up a blog please check the annexes of this booklet).

A Growing Size: The growth of the blogosphere in the last years has been remarkable. Technorati, a website dedicated to mapping and searching the blogosphere, found that by December 2007 there were 112 million blogs, a number that has been doubling roughly every five months. Approximately 70,000 new blogs are created each day, or, more vividly, nearly one every second. Also of importance is the growth of blogs in languages other than English.

An Opportunity for Expression: Blogs offer ordinary individuals the ultimate soapbox and an opportunity to create their own digital identity and personal brand. In addition to the frequency of updates, the thing that distinguishes most blogs from ordinary web pages is the inclusion of forums for readers to post comments to which the blogger may respond. In turn, bloggers often post a blogroll, or a list of other blogs that they read and respect. Blogging is a conversational activity that seeks to create a community or to reflect an existing community.

Words, Sounds and Images: Nor is blogging the final frontier of individual expression online. Podcasting, the use of a personal computer to create a radio show that users can download and play on their computer and portable music player, became the 'bleeding edge' of personal performance in the recent years. Apple's iTunes software has played a crucial role in the spread of podcasting, as users can access thousands of podcasts for free with a simple click of their computer's mouse.

2. Blogging in the EuroMed

The report 'The impact of Social Computing on the EU Information Society and Economy', published in 2009 by the JRC Institute for Prospective Technological Studies (IPTS), finds that in 2008, 41% of EU Internet users were engaged in social computing activities through Social Networking Sites, blogs, photo and video sharing, online multi-player games and collaborative platforms for content creation and sharing. This percentage rises to 64% if users aged under 24 only are considered. The report shows that social computing goes beyond individual networking and entertainment, as it empowers tens of millions of Europeans to support their work, health, learning and citizenship in innovative ways.

The research found that social computing is reshaping work practices, as employees join communities of interest outside their organisations to improve their knowledge and skills. Social

innovation enabled by social computing contributes to improve lifelong learning processes, business competitiveness, social inclusion and integration of immigrants, among others. According to Wikio, the most influent bloggers in Europe in January 2010 are French, Spanish and German such as TechCrunch (Fr), Mangas Verdes (Es) and Basic thinking Blog. In terms of the topics they blog on, it was concluded that the top 20 most influential blogs are in 80 per cent about new technologies, internet and politics.

Regarding the south of the Mediterranean, the Bekman Centre research on June 2009 on 'Mapping the Arabic Blogosphere: Politics, Culture and Dissent' underlines that the Arabic blogosphere is organised primarily around countries. Egypt, is by far the largest cluster of blogs and it includes both secular bloggers and bloggers from religious groups. In the Maghreb there is a cross-national set of bloggers located mainly in Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. Many of these bloggers write in a mixture of French and Arabic. In general the south Mediterranean Arab blogosphere focuses on personal life styles and local political issues, but reacts unanimously when there are major con-

flicts and crisis, like in the case of the Gaza war in 2009. Other important features of this group are the anonymity and the focus on the human right subjects, especially when one member of the community of bloggers get persecuted or imprisoned. Since December 2010, bloggers and social media users played a very important role in mobilising and informing people about the uprisings that developed in the Arab region, reinforcing the role of bloggers as activists and opinion leaders.

In a book called International Blogging, Blogger and Researcher Carmel Vaisman says that the Israeli blogosphere includes about 50.000 active blogs. Most blogs were produced as personal diaries or fictional literature genres over the course of the first few years of the Israeli blogosphere, but which later evolved into political blogs such as 'Ofer Landa' blog or the activist blog 'Black Labor'. An examination of the popular topics addressed shows Hebrew bloggers relate mainly to local political, economical and social issues.

3. ALF and Bloggers

A Special Interest: The Anna Lindh Foundation for Dialogue between Cultures paid a special attention to bloggers as important opinion leaders on subjects related to intercultural dialogue and acknowledged their role in shaping mutual perceptions between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Therefore, the ALF organised on the 27th and 28th of July 2009 in Luxembourg in cooperation with the national ALF Head of Network, the Abbey of Neumunster Cultural Centre, the ALF Euromed Bloggers Training on Intercultural Dialogue.

A First Training: The 'ALF Euromed Bloggers Training on Intercultural Dialogue' provided 20 Euromed bloggers with an interactive 3 days training about intercultural issues. The project also contributed in building a network of bloggers who believe in the necessity of fighting stereotypes and hatred on the virtual space. The 20 bloggers collectively participated on the 11th of September 2009 in a 'one-shot' online campaign called 'I Blog for Trust', in order to spread messages of peace and coexistence on the web on this symbolic date and to counter the messages of violence and hatred.

A Network of Bloggers: Following the training, the ALF developed a network of influential bloggers who joined its national networks as individuals, and who act as a task force during multilateral campaigns or major events organised by the Foundation, in order to provide an alternative vision about events and to reach the internet users who search for personalised pieces of news and opinions.

Introduction

In recent years, first intercultural learning, then intercultural dialogue became widespread words, especially relevant in the Euro-Mediterranean youth work. A number of publications and lots of courses have been developed so far. However, it would be risky to say that everything published as intercultural learning follows a similar approach.

This manual does not include all these theoretical inputs, but we obviously invite and encourage you to make a sound research about it, and to get well prepared before engaging in training bloggers. The purpose of this chapter is to give non-exhaustive short conceptual considerations to the approach to intercultural dialogue presented in this tool kit. This chapter is nor a research paper neither the only valid approach to intercultural learning and intercultural dialogue. Far from that, it intends to propose elements to bring into critical consideration when developing trainings on this field.

1. A Glossary of Terms

Culture

There are thousands of definitions for culture, this is probably due to the fact that culture means lots of things. Avoiding to provide a definition, we will allow ourselves a compilation of different and complementary approaches. Culture is:

• the whole of beliefs, values, norms which determine the behavior acquired during socialisation and in common in a certain group in a certain time and space.
• the way of life of a group of people
• sum total of the learned behavior of group of people
• historically created design for living
• mental maps that potentially guide our relations to the human and natural environment
• everything that people think, do and have as members of society.

And a couple of thousands of things more. There are, however, a number of characteristics that we would like to propose to be explored through any training process:
• Culture is multi-layered
• Culture is largely below the surface
• Culture is constantly in flux
• Cultural influences and identities become important depending on context
• Culture is elastic and even plastic

Intercultural Dialogue (ICD)

It is often argued that intercultural dialogue is not dialogue about cultures but dialogue between cultures. That's an interesting appreciation. However, that needs probably to be developed even further, as dialogue is an essential human characteristic, therefore is ultimately a dialogue between human beings. The fact of acknowledging human beings as multicultural entities should not add complexity to it, on the opposite should facilitate the construction of bridges for mutual understanding.

There are again lots of interesting (and interested) definitions of intercultural

dialogue. Here we have selected only a couple that may serve as introduction. The first one is from a context of inter-religious dialogue.

"Multicultural dialogue is a sustained conversation between parties who are not saying the same thing and who recognize and respect contradictions and mutual exclusions between their various ways of thinking" (John Taylor, Anglican Bishop of Winchester)

Another definition, this one from the White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue of the Council of Europe, describes it as an "open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, with an expected outcome of understanding that several cosmo-visions may exist."

Intercultural Learning (ICL)

Intercultural learning is not about national cultures. Or at least is not only about cultures, but should imply as well other elements such as political awareness, human rights

education, gender issues, social inequalities. Therefore we argue that it is possible to work on intercultural learning without effectively talking about culture. Despite many intercultural learning definitions exist, we propose to consider it as "an intentional learning process focused on developing competences promoting inclusive, respectful and peaceful relationships between human beings from different cultural backgrounds as a way for social transformation". (Baró et al. 2007)

2. Some Intercultural learning aspects

• An Onion with Many Layers
Several models and theories trying to explain the concept of 'identity' have been elaborated in the research field. Nevertheless, for its simple visualisation, we propose to use the model of identity of the onion (Educational Pack, Council of Europe).

We can consider the many layers of an onion as the needed criteria to fully define a personal identity. Conceptually it implies that no identity can be defined with only one criteria and that identity is complex. Therefore this implicitly states that nobody can be defined with only one criteria. The layers structure invite to reflect as well on the visible and hidden criteria, with elements more obvious and others more difficult to grasp from an external observer and even for oneself.

The next element to reflect upon is to which degree is our identity stable. It is obvious
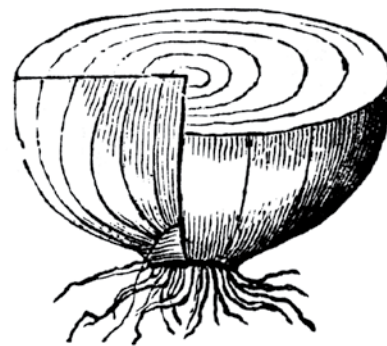
that we don't stop to be the same person, but it deserve a reflection about which criteria are kept untouched along the time and which ones may change due to diverse circumstances.

The structure of the concentric layers of the onion implies that there are 'internal criteria'

of identity that are difficult to change, with the core of the identity being a shared common humanity. On the external part of this onion model we would have the identity criteria that are easier to be changed, and in fact change. Concluding we may define identity as a dynamic complexity.

Keep in mind that identity is 'slightly' more complex than an onion. It would be risky to try to explain identity only by the onion model, but it helps us to raise a number of interesting reflections. The model proposes identifying several criteria that compose our identity as the consecutive layers of an onion.

• French People Like Cheese

We invite you to explore the construction of identity, how the different criteria of our identity appear and are developed. One of the conclusions is that a big part of criteria defining our identity are socially constructed, from our family circle to a global context influence. This aspect of social construction brings us to underline some identity criteria more than others depending on the community and context where we are. The way we are perceived in the community will have a direct impact on which criteria play a

role on defining our own identity.

As we adjust our identity criteria according to the context, we tend to construct an image of the others' identity in reference to our own identity, too. To speak about the other is in fact to speak about oneself.

We would not like to close the section without launching a last reflection on our interesting and often damaging ability to construct others identity from only one criteria. Even when we acknowledge how complex and dynamic is our own identity, we tend to be able to construct others' identity from a reduced number or only one criteria (ex: Yves is a French). From this ability emanates something that we call stereotypes, the belief that a person with this identity has a certain characteristic (French people like cheese).
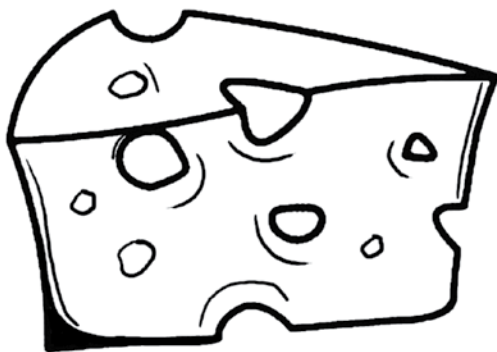
Stereotypes by themselves are not necessarily damaging. The problem is that once we have put a human being in a box of a generic group, we can easily associate to it some judgments about their potential behavior, beliefs or values. On that moment we have already a prejudice (Yves will bring smelly cheese to the meeting). A prejudice in action may lead us to discrimination (I don't want to share room with smelly Yves). (Our personal apologies to Yves... whoever he is... and to all French cheeses)

To construct an image of the other by only one criteria has important implications. To be aware of stereotypes and own prejudices is an essential element to consider when engaging on intercultural dialogue.

• Getting into Others' Shoes

Often used as a concept, empathy remains probably a sort of difficult achievement for everybody. Empathy refers to the capacity to get into others' shoes, or more realistically the attitude to try to feel and see things from the point of view of the other.

We invite you to keep in mind the natural difficulties to fully empathise with other human beings. If it requires an enormous effort to try to feel and see the point of view of our closer circle of family and friends, it is

much more complicated to explore how the others would feel in a concrete situation. Nevertheless the effort to try to get into others' shoes make sense in any intercultural learning process. It is said that solidarity is the practical expression of empathy.

When organising activities that imply the need to take a new role, we are in fact asking participants to develop their empathic attitudes. It is however essential to keep in mind that we would often be building roles on images and generalisations not always based on the reality. These images will often be

constructed over stereotypes and prejudices socially transmitted and personally learned. Unless we raise these reflections in the group these sort of approaches could be clearly damaging and bring up simplistic outcomes not supporting at all intercultural learning.

• Join the Flock

Sense of belonging is again based on perception of identity criteria that we consider shared with other human beings. The sense of belonging brings to an acknowledgement and a willingness to get bounded in interdependence by taking part in a larger group of people (a Flock). There are several criteria that may make us increase our sense of belonging to certain groups, a state, a nation, a religion, a language, a football team...

In situations where there is not only one prevalent identity criteria taken into account we can feel having multiple senses of belonging to different groups. In this way we can perceive ourselves as members of several not exclusive groups. Often occurs as well that it is not from our own acknowledgement or willingness that we are identified as member of some community. In this case is the environment which constructs and imposes on us the sense of belonging. Sense of belonging is once again a social construction.
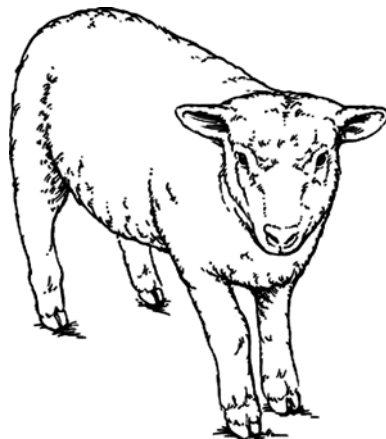
As a result of this analysis we identify human beings having the choice to have only one sense of belonging prevailing or to explore their multiplicity acknowledging human beings as multicultural entities.

• What Color are your Glasses?

Often controversial, perception is one of the elements that should be addressed as well when exploring intercultural learning. Perception is how we get awareness or understanding of any situation.

Observe this image, what do you see?
As per the image, we can see that in each situation multiple interpretations exists. In an intercultural context this means that in front of new situations or new information that we are unfamiliar with, we tend to use as references our previous knowledge and experiences.

Therefore, whatever enters our mind is affected and biased according to this background (identity, culture...). What we believe to be true is relative to who we are. Hence, perception is a fundamental aspect to consider when engaging on intercultural learning.

To launch some reflection we suggest you to read the following short tale.
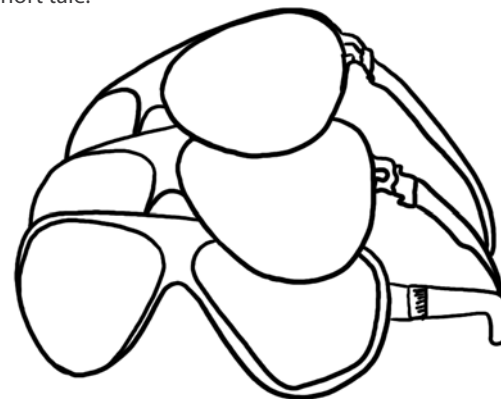
Sun glasses story

Imagine that all people in your home country, from the beginning of time, today and for all future, were born with two legs, two arms, two eyes, two ears, a nose, a mouth and a pair of sun glasses with yellow lenses. No one has ever thought that it is strange that people wear sun glasses all the time, it has always been like that and they are like a part of the human body. Everyone wears them.

Take off your sun glasses and look at them. It is values, attitudes, ideas that people in your country share which gives the glasses their yellow color. Everything everyone has seen, been taught and experienced have entered the brain through the yellow lenses. Everything has been filtered through those values and those ideas which color the glasses yellow. The yellow lenses are your attitudes, your faith, your values and your cultural background.

Thousands of miles away, in another country, there are people who, from the beginning of time, today and for all future, were born with two legs, two arms, two eyes, two ears, a nose, a mouth and a pair of sun glasses with blue lenses. No one has ever thought that it is strange that people wear sun glasses all the time, it has always been like that and they are like a part of the human body. Everyone wears them. Everything the people in this country have seen, been taught and experienced have been filtered through the blue lenses.

Once there was a person travelling from your country to the other country. She was smart and understood that if she wanted to learn about the other country and the other people she had to get a pair of blue glasses to be able to "see". When she arrived in the other country she made sure she had a pair of blue glasses. She stayed for three months and felt that she really learned a lot about the other people values, faith and ideas. She could really see with the help of the new blue glasses. When she arrived home to her own country she became an expert on the other country and proudly told a lot of interested listeners that the other culture is green.

3. Creating Spaces for Dialogue

Intercultural dialogue does not appear spontaneously and from its very beginning requires some preconditions to support it.

Considering dialogue as an exchange of ideas, views or opinions with the intention to produce an agreement among several entities we propose here several elements to take into account.

• Voluntary engagement of the parts into dialogue;

• A mindset characterised by openness, curiosity, commitment, and the absence of a desire to "win" the dialogue;

• Awareness of power relations and the political dimensions;

• Recognition of the equal dignity of all parts

• Critical thinking attitudes including the ability to self-criticism

• Awareness of own prejudices and of own moral values

• Recognition of multiple dimensions of identity

• Empathy

• Basic knowledge and further readiness to explore both cultural similarities and differences;

• The ability to find a common language for understanding and respecting cultural differences.

1. How to identify Bloggers:

Things to consider while choosing bloggers:

Bloggers are a special target group which sometimes prefer to remain anonymous and to use nicknames

Blogging is not a full-time profession for most of the bloggers and they prefer to keep it personal and virtual, so the best way to contact bloggers is to send them direct invitations which will be a kind of recognition for them.

Bloggers often don't like to be associated with an institution, hence, it is important to make them feel that they are independent.

Make sure not to include their original names or to publish their pictures without taking their authorisations first.

Try to analyse the discourse of their blogs and see if they are open for dialogue or not.

For the organisers who don't know how to establish a first list of potential bloggers to be invited for the training course, we suggest the following sources:

Examples of Blogs that promote dialogue

www.inspire.com   www.absolutely-intercultural.com

Looking for bloggers in national and regional aggregators. Aggregators are websites which track the feeds of a big number of blogs.

Looking for bloggers from databases of credible institutions and awards such as the Best of Blogs database of Deutsche Welle.

Looking for bloggers in super-blogs. Super blogs are collective blogs of several contributors interested in the same topics, such as Global Voices.

Also, geographical and gender balance are to be taken into consideration during the selection.

2.How to organise the training:

Organising any kind of educational activity requires time. Organising a training or workshop that is based on developing competences on intercultural dialogue may take even further effort and consideration.

This chapter proposes a short introduction on elements to take into account when organising a training. We would like to provide here a non exhaustive list of elements that organisers should keep in mind.

The main block elements to consider are:

a. Content
b. Participants
c. Methodology
d. Facilitation
e. Logistical and technical aspects

All of them are equally important and they are interlinked, meaning that when we plan a course we should keep all of them in mind as each aspect influences the others.

a. Content
This aspect includes several phases from the needs analysis till the follow up and final evaluation.

Here some questions that may guide you on this reflection:

• What are the needs to organise this activity?
• Why and for whom do we need this course?
• What is my target group? How will I take it into account while planning the activity?
• How will I make sure I know what are the expectations of the group?
• How will the groups work together?
• How will I create a safe space where everybody feels encouraged to participate?
• What are my concrete objectives? Do I have them clear? Are they SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, timed)? How will I make them clear?
• Am I really proposing an insight into intercultural learning? Or just reinforcing stereotypes?

• What activities/methods will I propose to the group?
• How to ensure an enjoyable process?
• How to do the evaluation of the process and the outcomes?
• What are participants going to do with all this when they are back to their realities?

This is not an exhaustive check list and will hopefully lead to deeper questioning and insights into the planning of any specific course.

b. Participants
An essential aspect to be considered when organising a training especially for a bloggers target group. It sound obvious but more often than expected it is forgotten.

• Who are the participants? What are their needs?
• What are their expectations towards the course?
• How will they contribute and how will you engage them in the process?
• How do you plan the recruitment process?
• How will you ensure diversity, geographical and gender balance?
• How will the team support their learning process along the course?
• How will the team support them after the course?

c. Methodology
In this manual we propose the use of non formal education methodologies as a way to ensure the learner centeredness and the development of competences including knowledge, skills and attitudes. In the next section we included an overview of what we mean by non formal education.

While preparing, the team should take into account how this methodology has an influence in all aspects of the course.

d. Facilitation
Another important aspect that need to be planned thoroughly long before the course is how and who will be supporting the participants through the training process. Here we identify three main profiles to take into consideration.

Facilitators and Trainers:
The quality of a course depends on a lot of factors and one of them is the capacity of the team of trainers/facilitators to work with the specificities of the target group, methodology, and to work together.

Regarding the team of facilitators it is recommended that they represent as well the diversity of the group and context, and the gender balance as much as possible.

It is essential to create a team of trainers that are committed to the course common aims and objectives but at the same time that could bring complementary competences to the process.

A final recommendation forming teams. Larger teams do not necessarily perform better. Keep a balance between the number of participants, the duration and the intensity of the activity and the number of facilitators/trainers.

Support Staff:
Depending on the degree of organisational and logistical complexity, it is advisable to include a person in the team as support staff that may help in solving all technical elements that arises in all activities.

Lecturers/Experts:
In concrete cases you may want to present a best practice or complement some sessions with an expert input on a concrete issue. On those cases you might consider inviting an external lecturer or expert. Our suggestion will be not to abuse of them, they can be very relevant to launch new questions and dilemmas, but they are as well external to the learning process and you need to prepare them before arriving to the course.

e. Logistical and technical aspects

Good management of resources, logistical and technical aspects are important points when organising any training. From the budgeting till the final report there are lots of aspects that need to be taken into account.
• If it is a residential event, have you thought about accomodation, dietary requirements, timetables, coffee breaks, free time?
• For international events, how will you deal with visas and travels to the venue of the course?
• Do you have suitable spaces for the group to work in good conditions?
• What kind of equipment would you need?
• Did the team make a list of the materials needed to run the sessions?
• How will you ensure that communication channels keep working (ICT)?
• Will you engage in any activity with a local impact? With whom do you need to check?
• Who will be in charge of managing these points?

3.How to design a programme

Untill this point we have provided a general overview on the elements that we need to consider when organising a training course.

In this part we want to raise some reflections on aspects to consider when designing a programme.

Before starting a training course we propose to plan and follow a flow that should engage bloggers in a learning process.

As a flow we propose to consider at least some key steps:

a. Introductions

b. Getting to know each other

c. Sharing Experiences

d. Creating Experiences

e. Applying to reality

f. Evaluating

This tool kit has been planned in a way to offer a short introduction to these core stages and to propose activities that could be implemented in each step.

The activities proposed are the ones that have been used in few courses that were run on the topic, but obviously are just proposals that should be adapted and could be substituted with other ones.

a. Introductions:
In each course you need to consider a space to introduce the background of the course. This space should help participants to get a clear idea of the objectives, the programme and the methodological approach of the course.

It is important to visualise as well the expectations of the participants towards the course and their potential contributions to the programme development.

b. Getting to Know each other:
This is an essential part of any activity on intercultural dialogue. We have included a longer description of it in the following section together with some methodological proposals.

TITLE OF THE WORKSHOP
FACEBOOK INTERVIEWS AND EUROMED GOOGLE MAP

○ GENERAL DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW)

Along the course introduction we propose a series of short exercises to facilitate participants to get to know each other. The proposal is to use a paper versions of web 2.0 for visualising the diversity of the group and discovering a little more about each other.

○ TECHNICAL: TIME, GROUP SIZE

For the whole exercise allocate around 60 minutes, for a group of 20-30 participants.

○ OBJECTIVES

To provide a space for participants to meet, speak and discover the diversity of the group.
To encourage the creation of a friendly and safe space for starting the learning process.

○ DESCRIPTION

The activities provide the space to get to know each other through the use of paper versions of Avatar Design, interactive Facebook Interviews, and Google Map creation. At this stage participants have had already some icebreaking exercises and know more or less each others names.
Introduction:
Participants are told that we are going to produce personal facebook profiles and link them to the google map of our group.
Avatar Design:
Each participant draws a personal avatar for him/herself .
Remind what is an avatar (can be pic, photo, object, symbol etc., representing the person). No name should be signed on it.
The avatars are collected and put in the box for later use
Interactive Facebook Interviews:

Each participant gets a page with his/her empty facebook profile (model attached).
They only sign their name on the top. The rest of the profile must be filled in by other participants trough interactive interviews, each question by a different person.
At the end of the process everybody should have its own Facebook profile, with his/her own answers written in by as many different hands as possible.
The main concept is that everybody has the chance to chat and introduce themselves in pair interviews.
Google Map creation:
When ready with their personal facebook profiles, participants should stick it next to the big Euro-Mediterranean Map and connect with strings (hyperlink) the profiles with the place of residence.
Attention: Better to use satellite photo or maps without borders.
Identifying Avatars:
The avatars are still missing to complete the profiles. Each participant picks one avatar and finds to which profile it matches (they can ask for help from the others, of course!).
At the end of the exercise we should have a nicely decorated wall with lots of relevant and interesting information about each member of the group. It may be further developed in the coming sessions, for instance adding an extra paper about organisation information.

○ DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION

The exercise does not need a complex debriefing, but is always interesting to ask everybody to comment on something interesting or surprising discovered about the others or about oneself.

○ MATERIALS

The creative part is an important component of the exercise, therefore we suggest to use as much as possible simple and available materials.

For the facebook profile, it is possible to create a simple questionnaire with some questions to be adapted depending on the group (see an example).
The avatar can be drawn in a simple middle sized post-it (consider providing colour markers for the group)

A map of the Euro-Mediterranean area would be ideal, alternatively create yours. Take into account that a map without borders could be a better starting point for a not easy region. For visualising the hyperlinks use small colour stickers (gomets) and colourful thin strings.

The idea of the exercise is to allow people to know each other and to have time to speak with everybody. Allocate enough time for this to happen and don't rush participants to finish, not everyday is possible to communicate face to face with other young people.

TWITTER PRESENTATION

○ GENERAL DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW)

The activity is thought to give a fast overview of the participants' blogs by using creativity and microblogging techniques.

○ TECHNICAL: TIME, GROUP SIZE

60 minutes for a group of 20-30 participants

○ OBJECTIVES

To allocate a participatory, creative and dynamic space for Euro-Mediterranean bloggers to present their work.
To develop skills on summarising and abstracting content in intercultural settings.

○ DESCRIPTION

The activity should allow all participants to present the main idea of their work and at the same time should give a clear overview of what is being done so far.

For the preparation thirty minutes will be allocated for participants to work individually to prepare their own blog presentation. We request participants not to present their blogs online, that could be certainly easier and longer, but to introduce them in 120 seconds with a visual drawing and using few written characters (140 as in twitter). We make use of microblogging for fast introductions with the most relevant characteristics of the blogs.

At the end of each presentation, or alternatively at the end of the full row of presentations could be allocated some time for possible short questions for clarification. Keep in mind that everybody is invited anyway to take as much time as they want to explore the blogs of colleagues afterwards.

A short debriefing should be enough to close these round of presentations:
-What are the main discoveries and surprises of the presentations?
-What elements would you like to explore further?

For fostering the creativity of participants it is good to have as many materials as possible, colour paper, old magazines, finger paints,... We can use as well real twitter (or similar) as technique.

○ TIPS FOR FACILITATORS/COMMENTS FOR TRANSFER/VARIATION

Feel free to adapt it accordingly to the group and the characteristics that you would like to stress in the presentation.

c. Sharing Experiences:

This block of the flow refers to the importance of making use of the previous experiences of participants in the subjects addressed by the course. Participants are experts, let's make use of these enriching experiences and develop them further with the group. This step is further developed in the next section and complemented with some methodological proposals.

TITLE WORKSHOP
IDENTITY AND SENSE OF BELONGING

○ GENERAL DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW)

Through both reflexive and dynamic exercises we raise awareness on the complexity of identity and the multiple senses of belonging.

This session is mainly about sharing experience, but as well a preparation for the intercultural experiences of the next section on Creating Experience.

○ TIME, GROUP SIZE

90 minutes for a group of 20-25 participants

○ OBJECTIVES

To open reflection on our own identity criteria, the complexity and dynamic aspects of identity and how it is constructed.
To explore multiple sense of belonging.
To share experiences on how we construct sense of belonging in reference to identity criteria.

○ DESCRIPTION

Flower of identity:
Participants are invited to a time of reflection by creating individually a personal (in their own language if they wish) flower with as many petals as elements they need to define their identity. Allow enough time for individual work (10-15 minutes).

When this reflection time is finished ask them to share only the points they feel like in buzz groups, first in pairs, then joining two pairs.
This is a very private exercise, therefore nobody should be pressured to share.
Do not ask conclusions in plenary.

Categories of identity and sense of belonging:
After this buzz sharing ask them to come to an open space in the room and to sit all together (not in circle) in the floor (or chairs). Tell that you will name different categories. If the category named is connected with one of the fragments, he or she should stand up and keep standing. Tell them that it is an activity without words and that it is important to look around and keep quiet.

Start reading one category – people stand up – ask people to keep standing when the mentioned category refers to their underlined (most important) group – the others are allowed to sit down.

After a few seconds all can sit down and you start with the next category. Repeat the same procedure for each category. Take care that everybody is seated before you start with a new category. Don't hurry. Allow also some time even when nobody stands up.

Examples of categories:
- food habits (e. g. vegetarian)
- spirituality
- nature
- the web

Ask them about additional categories, that were not mentioned so far, and continue with the same procedure with these categories.

You can adjust the categories to your own needs, the list is only an example.

○ DEBRIEFING

Discuss with the participants, what they experienced.

Proposed questions:
 • Was there something very difficult about this activity?
 • Did you notice in which categories there were more/less people standing up?
 • How did you feel to stand up alone or with nearly the entire group? Was there a difference?
 • Were there some groups which were more difficult to stand up for or to stay seated with?
 • Is there any difference if you feel like belonging to the group?
 • Did you realize during this exercise that you didn't think about certain groups? What might be the reason for this?
 • Is it a natural process to belong to a group? Do we always look for it? Why?
 • What creates the group identity and the sense of belonging? Which elements help in creating that identity? How this sense is an influence in perceiving the other people, the other groups?

Alternatively the session could be completed with a short input on identity and sense of belonging.

○ MATERIALS

Paper and pens

○ TIPS FOR FACILITATORS/COMMENTS FOR TRANSFER/VARIATION

A suggested presentation could include the following guidelines:
How many layers did you identify? Is there someone with only one criteria?
How many criteria play a role?
Present the model of the onion. Aspects visible and aspects hidden (even for oneself)
Complexity of the identity. It is much more complex and cannot be explained with an onion, but the model helps us.
 • Is the identity stable?
 • Internal part of identity: difficult to change.
 • External part of identity is easier to be changed.
 • The identity as a dynamic complexity.
 • In the core of the identity: common humanity.
 • How do I construct my identity?
 • Identity as social construction.
 • Sense of belonging to cultural groups.
 • How am I perceived in the community?

TITLE WORKSHOP
THE BLOG AGGREGATOR

○ GENERAL DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW)

Through the design and creation of a Blog aggregator, participants discuss, share, select and present in small groups the main issues related to intercultural dialogue in their communities.

150 minutes for a group of 20-30 participants.

○ OBJECTIVES

To have a learning experience on cooperative blogging.
To develop intercultural communication competences.
To reflect about the role of social media, its potentialities and pitfalls, to contribute to intercultural understanding

○ DESCRIPTION

A blog aggregator is a web portal that aggregate content from different blogs, and it is used as a fast tool to access content from different sources at the same time. In this workshop we ask participants, divided in small groups of 4/5 people, to design and present a blog aggregator. We ask participants to identify the most problematic issues related to intercultural dialogue in their own communities, and to identify a number of real or imaginary stories to include in the common blog aggregator on these topics, in the form of headlines, images, small texts, representing different blog posts, or news items.

The group will have to decide together which information will be included in the common aggregator, and in this way each participant will be able to present to the group the most pressing issues in his/her community. In the process of putting these experiences together and deciding for a priority in the way they are presented, we are in fact generating a new intercultural experience. It is recommended to make regional groups of participants coming from neighboring areas. The realisation of how the same facts are perceived in a different way is an essential part of the exercise.

Allow at least 60 minutes for preparation of the content in the subgroups, and 30 minutes for preparing the presentation part. Start the presentations with 5 minutes presentation plus 5 minutes for questions and clarifications for each group.

○ DEBRIEFING

If the group is too exhausted after the presentations and clarifications, allow a break and later return shortly for a debriefing on the exercise.
-Was there anything that shocked or surprised you in the presentations?
-Something new?
-Was anything in common or very different among the groups
-How the groups made the choice on what will be in their blog aggregator?
-What are the elements that appear more often on the blogs? Are they appearing in a similar way in real ones?

Consider as well time for the groups to explore:
-the group process (how was to work in this group, how did you choose what was in or out? Did you achieved easy agreements? How? Why? If not, why not?)
-the presentation (were you clear enough in your message? What were the values transmitted?)
-the outcomes (is there anything that you may consider for further work?)

○ MATERIALS

Each subgroup of bloggers will need a working space, a large flip chart paper, colour pens and any other available material. Laptops and tablets can be made available to participants to look for news and information online.

○ TIPS FOR FACILITATORS/COMMENTS FOR TRANSFER/VARIATION

This exercise has a lot of potential for variation, feel free to use your creativity to stress different aspects that you would like to address: the issues addressed (cultural diversity, human rights, gender issues,...), the technical part (allowing spaces for external participation, web2.0 interactions).

∂. Creating Experiences:

As we will see in the next part, the proposal is not only to generate new group experiences but to complete as well the cycle of experiential learning. As facilitators and trainers we should ensure that there are joint common experiences.

TITLE WORKSHOP
'CODE OF ETHICS' FOR INTERCULTURAL BLOGGERS

○ GENERAL DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW)

An important component of blogging for intercultural dialogue relates to the principles and 'deontology' that bloggers and social networks users follow. The purpose of this exercise is to reflect with the participants about the practical implication of blogging for dialogue, and discussing in an intercultural environment the shared and different values that could be a base for intercultural blogging. The outcome of this exercise is to develop a code of ethics for blogging for intercultural dialogue, composed by a number of guidelines and orientations, that would be developed by participants and symbolically adopted in their future work.

The code does not intend to be a set of rules on how to blog or what to blog about, on the contrary it should constitute a guideline based on the personal experiences of all the participants of the training, regardless of the subjects and opinions that he/she expresses in his/her blog.

○ TECHNICAL: TIME, GROUP SIZE

For the whole exercise dedicate around 120 minutes, for a group of 20-30 participants.

○ OBJECTIVES

To reflect together on what it means to contribute to dialogue and mutual understanding through the everyday use of blogs and social media, and which are the different perspectives and sensitivities on the use of these tools when we are in an intercultural environment. Another objective is to reflect on what are, if there are, limits to the freedom of expression, and the balance between expressing own opinions and respecting others point of views and sensibilities.

DESCRIPTION

At the beginning of the workshop participants will have 20 minutes by themselves to write on a piece of paper 4 guidelines that they consider important in blogging for intercultural dialogue. The list of 4 guidelines should be based as much as possible on the previous experience of participants. For example, they could look at one of their previous posts, or at a post from another blogger that in their opinion contributed positively, or negatively, to intercultural understanding. Laptops and tablets can be used for this purpose.

After 20 minutes, participants will be divided in 3 groups, as much as possible from different geographical and cultural backgrounds. In these groups, participants will present briefly in turn the guidelines they wrote. At the end of each presentation the other members of the group can ask questions and clarifications. At the end of the presentation the group will have to agree on 4 common guidelines from those presented, and write them on flipchart paper. This part of the workshop will last 60 minutes.

In the last part of the workshop, of around 20 minutes, participants will be sitting all together in a circle and a representative from each of the three groups will present the outcomes of the group work, with the 4 guidelines developed. At the end of the three presentations, all the participants will be asked to vote for each of the points in the three lists, the ones with the majority of votes will be included in the final list of guidelines, which could be limited to 4 guidelines or include more if the participants feel it is necessary.

DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION

The debriefing of the workshop will last around 20 minutes. Participants will be asked if they feel that their original ideas, or the work of the group, have been kept in the final list. They will be asked as well if they consider that these guidelines can be applied in their practical use of social media in their daily life. If any of the participants is not satisfied with the final outcomes it is important to give him/her the possibility to explain their reasons and discuss them in the group.

MATERIALS

For the workshop you will need pens, A4 papers, and large flipcharts papers. Participants can use laptops and tablets to take inspiration from past blog posts written directly by themselves or by others. Examples of already existing ethics codes for bloggers are available as a compendium at:
www.cyberjournalist.net/news/000215.php
www.rebeccablood.net/handbook/excerpts/weblog_ethics.html

TITLE WORKSHOP
A MOSQUE IN SLEEPYVILLE
(Adapted from the Achtung (+) Toleranz-Wege demokratiscer konflikt-lösung. Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung

○ GENERAL DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW)

Through a role game simulation referring to a contemporary situation in European societies, generates an experience to reflect about the complexity and the interconnection of intercultural dialogue, conflicting human rights and citizenship.

○ TECHNICAL: TIME, GROUP SIZE

3 hours for a group of 20-30 participants

○ OBJECTIVES

To develop understanding of intercultural learning as a complex social education process.

To develop critical thinking about intercultural dialogue and conflicting human rights in an Euro-Mediterranean context.

To explore the fragility and exposure of a commonly built system of values as basis for decision-making process.

○ DESCRIPTION

This activity simulates a dispute over the building of a new mosque in a traditionally Christian area.

The structure proposed follows these steps (indicative time)
- Introduction   10'
- Getting into the roles   30'

- First session: presenting the main arguments for each position   20'
- Reflection Time (coffee break and lobbying?)   30'
- Second session: open debate/dialogue   30'
- Final Vote   5'
- De-roling   5'
- Debriefing   60'

Introduction:
Read out the description of the problem in the handout. Explain that all participants are members of Sleepyville and all are troubled by the problem of whether a new mosque should be built on a piece of derelict council land.

Hand out the role-cards and the description of the problem and indicate where people and groups can meet up beforehand, and where the 'Council Meeting' will take place later on. Explain the rules of debate that will be used during the meeting.

Use the preparation phase to set up the space for the Council Meeting. Ideally people should sit in a semi-circle or horseshoe shape, with the Mayor at the front, in a slightly elevated position. Parties or groups should be able to sit together, and you should place their name-tags on the tables in front.

Getting into the roles:
Group participants ideally in pairs for each position role. Allow some time for participants to read, discuss their position and to develop their roles as they see them. After 30 minutes, the Mayor calls the citizens for the first session. He/she should remind people of the basic rules of debate and give a short speech to introduce the meeting.

First session:
The first session of the city council should serve to present the main argumentation for each position. The Town Council first session last only 20 minutes, therefore there is very little time for speeches because of the number of people attending. For that reason, they should try to prepare

just the main points that they want to make.

Reflection Time:
This time can include a coffee break and the different delegations are invited to reflect on the argumentations they heard, elaborate questions or new elements for further discussion and lobbying, if they deem it necessary.

Second session:
The second and final session of the Town Council should allow for an open debate/dialogue
of the different positions. There is 30 minutes time to have as many speeches as possible.
At the end of this session the final vote will take part.

Final Vote:
When the votes have been counted and the result declared, you should announce the end of the activity, and invite people to bring their chairs into a circle for the debriefing.

○ DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION

De-rolling from the exercise:
 • Invite everybody in a circle and ask one by one to take out and throw away the role indicator (colour papers) while saying aloud own real names.
 • If the role simulation went very heavy consider making a steaming-out energizer.
 • For the debriefing is important as well to change the setting of the sitting place in the room.

Reporting and Reflection on the Experience:
 • In circle go for a round of feelings in one word
 • What happened? (if you had to explain to somebody that was not in the room)
 • Were you surprised by the result of the vote, and did it reflect the position of the person you were playing?
 • How easy was it to identify with your role? At this moment every group read aloud their specific roles.

 • Did you follow all the arguments of your role?
 • How did you construct your role? What images did you use? (stereotyping?)
 • How much influence do you think you (in your role) had on the result?
 • Did interaction with other people or groups make you alter your approach or your attitude towards the problem?
 • Who used the materials provided (UDHR, ECHR; Cairo Declaration…)? Which ones?

Conceptualisation:
 • Explain that it is a role simulation
 • Do you think that this situation could arise in real life? Can you think of any similar cases?
 • How would you react if this case arose in your town / place of residence? Did the activity alter your attitude at all? Did it bring elements/arguments that you have never considered before?
 • What will be the outcome in your reality? What are the main arguments in your community?
 • What human rights were considered for the exercise? What else did you consider as argumentation? (ICL, info about religion, gender issues,…)
 • Did you achieve dialogue? Did you achieve intercultural dialogue?

○ MATERIALS

As a role simulation participants should be able to design their own clothes/identifications/logos keep it in mind and provide all possible needed materials.

It is important as well to think about the materials and equipment for the city council setting. Name-tags, flip chart paper, a watch or clock and small bell for the Mayor

○ BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

European Convention on Human Rights, Article 9:
1. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 18:

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance (...)

Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 30:

In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.

○ TIPS FOR FACILITATORS/COMMENTS FOR TRANSFER/VARIATION

Set up the order of intervention of the different positions (alternating), first the Muslim community explaining why they want / need the mosque.
Set up the physical space: in one side supporting the proposal and in the other against it. In the middle the swinging ones.
Some roles need to be given the option completely open.

The mayor needs to have very clear procedure:
Could be good to provide clear guidelines on:
Time for debate: 2 minutes maximum for speech
Participants should keep roles but should be able to change position/vote if they consider that their role character has been convinced by the arguments

Include a final round with the final statement for each group
Final vote: 1 person-1 vote

○ ADAPTATION:

Think about other possible adaptations depending in the context and the group of participants you have (construction of a church in a Muslim town...)

○ THE MAYOR OF SLEEPYVILLE

You are the Chair of the assembly and it will be your role, once the meeting starts to welcome the participants and remind them of the rules of debate.
During the meeting, you should try to give everyone the opportunity to speak - and should not allow anyone to speak for too long!
Read attentively the procedure guidelines for the whole City Council meeting. You will need to know them very well in order to explain them to all the Council members when starting the meeting. Start asking the Muslim community organisation to present their position.
At the start of the second meeting you may ask individual citizens to express their concerns and questions.
This second meeting may finish with a final round of speech by all groups (30") ending with the Muslim association.
You are very worried about the bad publicity that this case has been attracting and you plan to try, before the meeting, to speak to some of the groups to try to persuade them to soften their position.
You belong to the Populist Party, but as good populist you do not necessarily stick to the party position.

○ TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE TRADITIONALIST PARTY

You represent the Traditionalist Party on the Town Council, and you are strongly opposed to the Mosque. You do not think it is right that council land and council resources should be spent on a place of worship that does not respect the traditions of this country and this town.

You feel that immigrant families are privileged to be allowed to live here and that they should not try to impose different lifestyles such veiled women, marrying 4 women on a country where they are guests.

You are also worried that the Mosque could become a meeting area for fundamentalists using democracy to undermine the system and prepare terrorist attacks. You are very much aware of the recent news on police detentions of terrorist cellules that were created in similar mosques in other cities. Even if you don't want to be alarmist you prefer to be cautious.

○ TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE HUMANIST PARTY

You represent the Humanist Party on the Town Council, and you are opposed to the Mosque, but not for the same reasons as Traditionalist Party. You consider that it took centuries of bloody conflicts to get a secular state based on human rights and the clear separation between public and religious spheres.

You have strong suspicions that the money supporting the construction of the Mosque and its religious guides are mainly from a very conservative country and represent the most conservative version of Islam. As promoter of tolerance and respect you have often agreed with your colleagues from the Diversity Party, but this time you realise that by giving support to this initiative Diversity party is facilitating the most radical and intolerant ideas to be back in our society.

○ TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE POPULIST PARTY

You represent the Populist Party on the Town Council. You supported the original decision to have the Mosque built on the land, partly because you realise that the Muslim community has been very good for the economy of the town and you do not want to alienate them.

But you have been very worried by complaints from residents and do not want to create an unnecessary conflict in the community. You are also concerned about your seat in the next council elections, so you will probably support whichever option appears to be least controversial.

○ TOWN COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE DIVERSITY PARTY

You represent the Diversity Party on the Town Council. You believe that the relatively large proportion of people from different parts of the world has enriched the culture and interest of Sleepyville and you have felt it unfair that the town has deprived many of these people of the opportunity to practise their religion for so long.

You can also see that the land is causing social problems in the town and that the Council does not have the money to develop it themselves.

○ MEMBERS OF THE "PAST AND PRESENT" ASSOCIATION OF SLEEPYVILLE

You are one of the main groups opposed to this mosque. Your members are from traditional (non-Muslim) communities in Sleepyville, and you think it is very important to keep the ancient character of the town, where most of you have lived all your lives.

The site that is proposed for the Mosque is very central and it would be visible from most places in the town centre. In particular, the Mosque could block out the view of the Cathedral from the town square, and generate noises 5 times a day even at night for the call for praying. You will not like to see city centre full of veiled women.

You feel that the character of your hometown is being completely changed by a community that arrived here only recently. You do not see why people who arrived in this country from somewhere else should not live by the same rules as you have here.

○ MEMBERS OF THE "MUSLIM ASSOCIATION OF SLEEPYVILLE"

You have been asking the Council for years to provide a place of worship for the Muslim community, but it has always been refused on financial grounds.

You feel that it is unfair that the Muslim community is being asked to fund 10% of the building costs, when economic conditions are so harsh for most people, and when the Christian

community has 11 different places of worship and these are used by far fewer people than the mosque would be, and in addition when the new synagogue was constructed few years ago nobody complained.

You feel that the contribution that your community has made to the town is not appreciated, that people in your community are unfairly discriminated in various aspects of their life, and that in refusing to allow this Mosque, the council is denying members of your community their fundamental right to religious worship.

You consider that the mosque will help to keep the cohesion of your community against all aggressions.

WOMEN SLEEPY ASSOCIATION

Your group was set up to promote the inclusion in the community and equal opportunities of young women in Sleepyville.

Even if you understand the need of the Muslim community for a place of worship, you see the building of the Mosque as the biggest challenge to Muslim young women integration.

You are aware that in neighbouring villages the construction of a Mosque has been directly linked with the radicalisation of the community and the end of opportunities for young Muslim women to participate in social activities.

HUMAN RIGHTS SLEEPY ORGANISATION:

You fully support the construction of the mosque for the Muslim community. As members of society and human beings they have the right to practice and express freely their religious beliefs.

You have been working hard with several members of the community in developing programmes of intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

You would like to see the construction of the mosque not as a challenge but an opportunity to bring the communities together to engage in intercultural dialogue. You are sure you will reach consensus on that point.

CITIZENS OF SLEEPYVILLE

You are worried about the conflict that seems to have taken over the town of Sleepyville and you want to go to the extraordinary City Council in order to listen, to speak to all the different groups, to form an opinion and to influence the position of your representatives in the city council that will make the final decision.

You will have the chance to put questions to the Council representatives at the beginning of the second session, but you are not allowed to vote in the final decision.

YOUNG SLEEPY SPORTS CLUB:

You represent the active young people of the city. You are against the construction of the mosque. As members of the community you promote the idea of the healthy way of life for young people, and sports as tool for social inclusion.

You have been demanding for years the construction of a sports centre with swimming pool in the neighbourhood; the area is very suitable for this installation as the all the community could enjoy it as it is easily accessible.

You are sure you will reach consensus on that point.

A MOSQUE IN SLEEPYVILLE

You live in the picturesque town of Sleepyville, a town of about 80,000 people. In the last 30 years the population has changed radically, partly because young people mostly try to move to larger cities as job opportunities there are better, but also because the region has seen the arrival of a large number of immigrant families, many from Muslim countries.

Some of these families have been here for 2 generations, but they are still treated with suspicion as 'newcomers' by many people in the town. They now make up almost 15% of the total population.

The issue that is now dividing the town is the desire of Muslims in Sleepyville to have a Mosque built on a piece of derelict land belonging to the city council.

This land has been undeveloped and has been a source of complaints to the council for years: it is near the main shopping street and is an area where vandalism and drug taking have been a regular problem.

So when a rich businessman offered to take the problem off the Council's hands, the Mayor thought his/her lucky day had come!

The Council readily agreed to give up the land and to fund 20% of the construction costs for a new mosque on the site. The remaining 10% of the building costs, which the businessman could not cover, were to be found from among the Muslim community.

Building was meant to start this week… but the Council has been flooded with complaints from angry residents who object to the project. They have called for an extraordinary city council meeting, to which all are invited, to finally resolve this issue.

TITLE WORKSHOP
BLOGGARNGA (adaptation from Thiagarajan and Steinwachs 1990)

○ GENERAL DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW)

This simulates real cross-cultural encounters, where people initially believe they share the same understanding of the basic rules. In discovering that the rules are different, players undergo a mini culture shock similar to actual experience when entering a different culture. They then must struggle to understand and reconcile these differences to play the game effectively in their "cross-cultural" groups.

Difficulties are magnified by the fact that players must not speak to each other but can communicate only through gestures or pictures. Participants are not forewarned that each group is playing by different rules; in struggling to understand why other players don't seem to be playing correctly, they gain insight into the dynamics of cross-cultural encounters

○ TECHNICAL: TIME, GROUP SIZE

2,5 hours 20-30 participants

○ OBJECTIVES

To provide participants with an experiential learning exercise to realise that despite many similarities, different cultures perceive things differently, to learn that we must understand and reconcile these differences if we want to function effectively in a cross-cultural group.

To enlighten the close relation between diversity and intercultural learning.

To provide a personal experience in how we can become actors of exclusion and discrimination towards minorities.

○ DESCRIPTION

Participants play a simple card game in small groups, where conflicts begin to occur as participants move from group to group.

Launching the play
Set up (approximately) 5 tables (about 4-5 people per table), depending on the number of people participating. On each table there should be a copy of the rules for that table per player plus a deck of cards (use only A-10, no face cards). To start, let the participants play a few rounds with the rules and with talking allowed.

Play continues with everyone at his/her own table. From now, talking is prohibited.

After allowing a few rounds without talking at the home table, participants must switch tables. The person who wins the most tricks moves clockwise to the next table, the person who loses the most tricks moves counter-clockwise to the next table. What the players do not know is that each table has learned a different set of rules.

Allow enough rounds for participants to realise that something is wrong and plan (or not) communication strategies to overcome the difficulties. The whole exercise can take around 60 minutes depending on the size of the group and the number of tables.

Call participants back from the simulation and open the first part of the debriefing that should include reporting, reflection and after steaming out conceptualisation (links with real life)

○ DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION

Some guidelines to support the debriefing:
- Describe the game with one word (round for everybody)
- What did you expect at the beginning of the game?
- How did you feel when you moved from the first table? Was everything fine?
- (If observers: What did you observe?)
- When did you realise that something was wrong? How did you feel?
- When did you realise that the rules were different? How did you deal with it?
- What happened when you returned to the initial table?
- The fact that you were not able to speak, how contributed to what you were feeling?

Steam out with the entire group:
Continuation in a second step (useful for making the link with multiculturalism issues of identity, group, sense of belonging, representation):
- Generalisation (see the connectors) from the game to the reality the participants know.
- Identify the elements of the game (the Table, the Rules, movement among tables). What do they represent these factors in your reality?

- Reactions and Strategies identified by participants
- Presence of these issues/strategies in youth work

○ MATERIALS

Room big enough, 5-6 tables
5-6 packs of cards
paper and 5-6 pens

○ RULES FOR THE CARD GAME GROUP I

- Players are dealt 4 cards each
- Whoever wins the most tricks will move clockwise to the next table
- Whoever loses the most tricks will move counter clockwise to the next table
- Everyone else stays at the same table
- Ties are resolved by paper/rock/scissors
- Each round will be about 5 minutes long and each round will consist of any number of games that the time allows. You should keep track of the won and lost games to move the right people to right sides.
- After the initial round, players will not be allowed to see the rules or speak to each other. Gestures and pictures are allowed, but players are not allowed to use words.
- The dealer can be anyone at the table, the person right to the dealer starts the game
- Ace is the highest card, there is no trump,
- The first player for each trick may play ANY suit. All other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit). For each round, each player plays one card.
- If a player does not have that suit, a card of any suit must be played. The trick is won by the person with the HIGHEST card of the ORIGINAL suit
- Who has won the trick, plays the next card.

○ RULES FOR THE CARD GAME GROUP II

- Players are dealt 4 cards each
- Whoever wins the most tricks will move clockwise to the next table

- Whoever loses the most tricks will move counter clockwise to the next table
- Everyone else stays at the same table
- Ties are resolved by paper/rock/scissors
- Each round will be about 5 minutes long and each round will consist of any number of games that the time allows. You should keep track of the won and lost games to move the right people to right sides.
- After the initial round, players will not be allowed to see the rules or speak to each other.
- Gestures and pictures are allowed, but players are not allowed to use words.
- The dealer can be anyone at the table; the person right to the dealer starts the game.
- Ace is the lowest card, diamonds are trump.
- The first player for each trick may play ANY suit. All other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit). For each round, each player plays one card.
- Only if a player does not have that suit, trump should be played, if the player does not have trump, a card of any suit must be played. In this case the trick is won by the person with the HIGHEST card of the ORIGINAL suit.
- Who has won the trick, plays the next card.

○ RULES FOR THE CARD GAME GROUP III

- Players are dealt 4 cards each
- Whoever wins the most tricks will move clockwise to the next table
- Whoever loses the most tricks will move counter clockwise to the next table
- Everyone else stays at the same table
- Ties are resolved by paper/rock/scissors
- Each round will be about 5 minutes long and each round will consist of any number of games that the time allows. You should keep track of the won and lost games to move the right people to right sides.
- After the initial round, players will not be allowed to see the rules or speak to each other.
- Gestures and pictures are allowed, but players are not allowed to use words.
- The dealer can be anyone at the table, the person left to the dealer starts the game
- Ace is the lowest card, clubs are trump,

- The first player for each trick may play ANY suit. All other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit). For each round, each player plays one card.
- Only if a player does not have that suit, trump should be played, if the player does not have trump, a card of any suit must be played. In this case the trick is won by the person with the HIGHEST card of the ORIGINAL suit.
- Who has won the trick, plays the next card.

○ RULES FOR THE CARD GAME GROUP IV

- Players are dealt 4 cards each
- Whoever wins the most tricks will move clockwise to the next table
- Whoever loses the most tricks will move counter clockwise to the next table
- Everyone else stays at the same table
- Ties are resolved by paper/rock/scissors
- Each round will be about 5 minutes long and each round will consist of any number of games that the time allows. You should keep track of the won and lost games to move the right people to right sides.
- After the initial round, players will not be allowed to see the rules or speak to each other.
- Gestures and pictures are allowed, but players are not allowed to use words.
- The dealer can be anyone at the table, the person who has the lowest trump start the game.
- Ace is highest card, clubs are trump,
- The first player for each trick may play ANY suit. All other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit). For each round, each player plays one card.
- Only if a player does not have that suit, trump should be played, if the player does not have trump, a card of any suit must be played. In this case the trick is won by the person with the HIGHEST card of the ORIGINAL suit.
- Who has won the trick, plays the next card.

○ RULES FOR THE CARD GAME GROUP V

- Players are dealt 4 cards each
- Whoever wins the most tricks will move clockwise to the next table

- Whoever loses the most tricks will move counter clockwise to the next table
- Everyone else stays at the same table
- Ties are resolved by paper rock scissors
- Each round will be about 5 minutes long and each round will consist of any number of games that the time allows. You should keep track of the won and lost games to move the right people to right sides.
- After the initial round, players will not be allowed to see the rules or speak to each other.
- Gestures and pictures are allowed, but players are not allowed to use words.
- In the first round the dealer can be anyone at the table, starting from second round the dealers change, the person sitting next (clockwise) to the dealer of each round becomes the dealer.
- The dealer of each round starts the game.
- Ace is the lowest card, there is no trump,
- The first player for each trick may play ANY suit. All other players must follow suit (play a card of the same suit). For each round, each player plays one card.
- If a player does not have that suit, trump should be played, if the player does not have trump, a card of any suit must be played. In this case the trick is won by the person with the HIGHEST card of the ORIGINAL suit.
- Who has won the trick, plays the next card.

e. Applying to reality:

To close the cycle we invite you to consider the step where participants conceptualise the learning achievements and make a link to their reality, hopefully developing some action to put it into practice.

TITLE WORKSHOP
ONLINE CAMPAIGNING

○ GENERAL DESCRIPTION (OVERVIEW)

Online campaigns are a phenomena which appeared with the birth of social networks and blogging. It is similar to a real campaign in the reasons and the objectives but different in the sense that it is an online community who runs it online for a specific goal and time and zero cost financial implications. Online campaigns against violence, wars, discrimination and supporting dialogue and reconciliation are particularly relevant to this tool-kit.

○ TECHNICAL: TIME, GROUP SIZE

Time: An online campaign usually lasts for a limited period of time from one day to more than one month depending on the cause it is preaching for. Usually it is a one-shot campaign aiming at generating traffic around a specific topic on the web on a specific symbolic date or anniversary.
Group size: The online campaigns are open to everyone who uses social networks or has a blog. The more the better.

○ OBJECTIVES

- Raising awareness around a topic related to intercultural dialogue by generating a maximum of positive messages on the internet on a specific date or a period of time
- Reaching the hearts and the minds of the internet users on a specific topic related to intercultural dialogue
- Convincing other bloggers and social networks users to adopt the cause you are defending
- Creating an online dialogue and discussion which can make a buzz and reach the traditional media and other mediums.

○ DESCRIPTION

This activity should be run in working groups of 4 to 6 bloggers with different tasks:

- **Writing Group:** In charge of transforming the cause you want to defend into a statement and a text that addresses other people to join the campaign. Usually they would come up with a motto for the badge and a text to be sent on mailing lists.

- **Agenda Group:** This group should choose the dates of the campaign and the agenda of the campaign, for example planning specific events online in relation to offline events (i.e. gathering on the 12th December to donate blood.)

- **Media Group:** This group should design the badge of the campaign that the bloggers will put on their blogs and social networks and invite their blogroll friends to wear. Also in some Campaigns there are specific websites which need to be designed for the action or public advertisement and videos to be produced. The media component is open to all creative ideas.

- **Dissemination Group:** This group will have to gather mailing lists and design a strategy on how to disseminate the message using images, sounds and pictures on the web.

The participating bloggers should agree and amend the work of the four working groups. On the day of the one-shot campaign or on the period of the campaign the bloggers should wear the badge on their profile pictures and blogs and should send mailings and write blog posts on the topic.

DEBRIEFING AND EVALUATION

The evaluation of the online campaign can be done by examining certain indicators such as the number of blog posts produced, the presence of the campaign on the search engines, the number of bloggers and internet users engaged in the action.

MATERIALS

Computers equipped with internet and images and film editing programmes when necessary. We advice to search for partnerships with online journals or portals who can wear the banner/badge of the campaign for a better diffusion of the message. Although it is possible to have a specific website or a blog for the campaign, you should not neglect the role of the blogs of the participants, since each of them have already a faithful readership. Therefore, try to put badges on the bloggers websites and a link to the campaigns's website.

Pay attention that a campaign shouldn't be dictated by the organising institution but emanating from the group of bloggers themselves if you want it to work.

f. Transversal Elements

This is the last part of the activity and it is very important as it serves both participants and the team to overview the whole process and to evaluate its aspects from a personal point. Evaluating ideally would be done not only at the end of the course but in a continuous way along it.

Besides the main blocks that we propose you there are other aspects that are transversal to the development of the course and that we invite you to consider.

- Energisers
- Learning spaces
- Evening programme

Energisers: These are short quick activities that are run with the group for regaining momentum after some hard sessions/discussions.

They should be participatory, enjoyable and whenever it is possible actively engage body and mind.

Learning spaces: We suggest when possible, especially in longer activities, to have spaces of self and group reflection about learning achievements and about setting new learning objectives.

These spaces should support an ongoing evaluation of the process and at the same time provide support for reflection on individual and group learning processes

Evening programme: Informal moments are an essential part of the learning happening in an intercultural experience. To propose informal, interactive and self organised spaces in the evening could boost this process.

Beyond the first evenings, when is better that the team coordinates them, these spaces should be delegated for participants to self organise, develop creativity and take responsibility for the programme.

This part aims at presenting success stories and best practices of blogs and initiatives using social media and especially blogs to promote intercultural dialogue and understanding:

○ THE BEST OF BLOGS

The BOBs are the world's largest international awards for Weblogs, podcasts and videoblogs. Born in 2004, the BOBs have grown to include 11 languages. The winners of each year's awards are decided by both an international jury of bloggers and through online voting. Got a favorite blog? Nominate it for the BOBs.

The Blogopedia is the international online catalogue of weblogs, podcast and videoblogs. Each blog is entered into the database according to a variety of criteria from topic to country of origin to language. Looking for music podcasts in Brazil or food blogs in China? No problem! Just type your keywords into the search feature or browse through the categories and Tagcloud. Then join the thousands of other bloggers who have submitted their blogs, podcast and videoblogs into the Blogopedia. The best of blogs is organised by the Deutsche Welle.
http://www.thebobs.com

○ TAKINGITGLOBAL

Taking It Global is a collaborative learning community which provides youth with access to global opportunities, cross-cultural connections and meaningful participation in decision-making. TIG serves youth primarily between the ages of 13 to 30 through an online community and initiatives that focus on enabling actively engaged youth and an education programmes geared towards middle and high school students.

TIG offers a global online social network and hub for civic participation, content and tools for educators to facilitate rich, interactive learning experiences, as well as outreach and collaboration tools for events, networks, campaigns, and causes and many other online services. So far TIG reached 4 million young people in 2008 and over 14 million since launch in 2000. The platform engagement is in 12 languages, and in every country and territory in the world.
http://www.tigweb.org

GLOBAL VOICES

Global Voices is a community of more than 300 bloggers and translators around the world who work together to bring you reports from blogs and citizen media everywhere, with emphasis on voices that are not ordinarily heard in international mainstream media.

Global Voices seeks to aggregate, curate, and amplify the global conversation online - shining light on places and people other media often ignore. They work to develop tools, institutions and relationships that will help all voices, everywhere, to be heard. Their international team of volunteer authors and part-time editors are active participants in the blogospheres they write about on Global Voices. Global Voices is incorporated in the Netherlands as Stichting Global Voices, a nonprofit foundation. It does not have an office, but works as a virtual community across multiple time zones.
http://globalvoicesonline.org

SOLIYA

Soliya is a pioneering non-profit organisation using new technologies to facilitate dialogue between students from diverse backgrounds across the globe. The flagship programme, the Connect Program, uses the latest web-conferencing technology to bridge the gap between university students in the Middle East, North Africa, Europe and the United States. In a time when media plays an increasingly powerful role in shaping peoples' viewpoints on political issues, Soliya provides students with the opportunity, skills, and tools to shape and articulate their own viewpoints on some of the most pressing global issues facing their generation.

Soliya's Connect Program is facilitated by a cross-cultural team of young leaders drawn from over 25 different countries. To prepare these facilitators to fulfill their role, Soliya offers an 18 hour facilitation training course, via Soliya's custom-made web-conferencing application. The training provides facilitators with transferable collaborative leadership and conflict resolution skills that they can use both via Soliya's programs, and in other contexts at a local, regional, and global level.
http://www.soliya.net

LIVEMOCHA

Livemocha is an exciting e-learning Web 2.0 startup founded by a group of experienced and successful entrepreneurs based in the Seattle area. Livemocha addresses a huge worldwide language learning market fueled by rapid globalisation, immigration and travel. Livemocha is a first of its kind web based language learning solution integrating online instructional content with a global community of language learners interacting and teaching each other.

Lesson plans include over 160 hours of beginner and intermediate level content teaching everyday conversational language along with a full range of practical reading, listening, writing and speaking exercises. Livemocha also leverages the native language expertise of its members by allowing them to enhance the content with grammar tips, alternative phrases and colloquialisms. Members all over the world can utilise their native language proficiency to teach and learn from other members of the community. Users have the option of practicing structured conversation exercises with a native speaker or submitting a writing or an audio sample of an exercise for a native speaker to edit or correct. These community-based interactive tools in Livemocha help build a strong engaged language community.
http://www.livemocha.com

MEEDAN

The Arabic word 'meedan' - ميدان – means a town square or a gathering place. Meedan.net is a digital town square where you can share conversation and links about world events with speakers outside your language community. Everything that gets posted on meedan.net is mirrored in Arabic and English – whether it's the headlines you read, the comments you write, or the articles you share.

Meedan was founded in 2005 and incorporated as a nonprofit charitable organisation in 2006. It has been working since 2005 on technologies to improve cross-cultural tolerance, understanding and citizen's diplomacy between web users in the West and the Middle East. Meedan is the first social network explicitly built to facilitate collaborations across languages. In the process Meedan have built formidable assets, thanks in large part to a three-year research and development

partnership with IBM's Computational Linguistics group. It is this combination of technology and community which underpins Meedan vision for a new beginning for global civic participation and Arab World-Western relations.

http://news.meedan.net/

SOCIAL MEDIA EXCHANGE

Founded in May 2008, the Social Media Exchange team provides training and consulting to civil society and nonprofit organisations in Lebanon who seek to use media to advance their missions. They plan to expand their reach into other countries in the Middle East and North Africa.

SMEX's mission is to make sure that the internet lives up to its promise to expand each individual and every community's agency over their own lives. SMEX believes that to make this happen they must partner with those who are already working for positive social change and sustainable development and help them strategically integrate new, affordable media into their programmes and projects as means of self-empowerment and self-advocacy.

http://www.smex.org/

ABSOLUTELY INTERCULTURAL

Absolutely Intercultural is the first podcast in the world to deal with intercultural issues since its starting in March 2006. The collective blog of Anna Fox and Laurent Borgmann offers new episodes regularly every second Friday, looking at all intercultural aspects of human communication. The scope of this Podcast includes for example interviews asking students to share their intercultural experiences on foreign work placements, asking how teachers can make use of intercultural exercises and simulations in their classroom.

Audio-files are between 20-30 minutes long. The topics are not so much about passing on information but more about starting an intercultural dialogue between the makers, the contributors and listeners. The Podcast won the 2006 EduBlog Award for Best Audio and/or Visual Blog as well as the Deutsche Welle Radio Podcast Award 2007.

www.absolutely-intercultural.com

1.HOW TO SET UP A BLOG

This section includes a number of tips and guidelines on how to set-up and manage a personal blog in 8 steps. It is adressed at trainers and facilitators who want to work with bloggers but are not familiar with these kind of tools, or at anyone inteterested in starting a personal blog. Blogs are very important tools of communication and self expression, and the work for intercultural dialogue in the region can benefit from a greater number of people involved in blogging on these issues.

These guidelines, not intended to be exhaustive on the subject, refer to an easy way to create a blog through existing blogging systems. These systems offer you the tools needed to set up a blog directly online, for free, and in an easy way. However, other systems are available and allow a deeper level of control of the blog, but require as well a more deep IT technical knowledge.

8 steps to start your blog

1. Chose your blogging system. The main online systems for blogging used at the moment are Wordpress (www.wordpress.com), Blogger (www.blogger.com) and Tumblr (www.tumblr.com). The three systems have some differences, but offer similar features in settings and functionalities.

2. Register a user. The first step to set-up a blog consists in creating a user, associated to an email address, a username and a password. From the user profile settings you will be able to control which information you will show in your blog (i.e. your real name, biography, contacts, or none of these) and upload a picture, called 'avatar', that will represent your identity in the blog.

3. Register your blog. Once you have created your user and accessed the system with your username and password, you can register your blog. Usually the procedure consists in choosing the name of the blog, a short description (and/or a 'tagline') and the blog domain name, or 'URL' (i.e. www.myblog.wordpress.com or www.myblog.blogspot.com).

4. Chose a theme for your blog. All the blogging systems offer a range of ready-made and free-of-charge graphic templates called 'themes'. The theme of a blog controls the general layout (number of columns, header/footer) the graphical elements of the blog (font types, background,

main picture) and often includes a choice of 'widgets', additional tools and boxes that can be added to your blog to enrich it, usually in the side columns. You can browse through the different themes offered by the blogging system and chose the one that you feel more appropriate for your blog.

5. Personalise your blog. You can personalise most of the blog themes, which usually includes the possibility of changing the fonts and colors of the blog, the header image, the background colors and which widgets are included in the blog. Examples of widgets are the integration with the twitter and flickr accounts (displaying the content that you publish on these sites), the user avatar image and biographical info, the archive of old posts, a 'blogroll' with links of other recommended blogs. The more the blog is personalised by a user, the more it will look original and unique.

6. Promote it through social media. The main blogging systems allow you to link your blog with your social networks. For example, when a new blog posts is published, the system can automatically publish the information on your twitter and facebook accounts. This integration helps your blog to be read by your contacts and friends, increasing considerably the outreach of your posts. In addition, you can actively promote your blog by participating in online discussions in your social networks, by replying to the comments you receive in your blog, by commenting on other people's blogs or by joining platforms that group together different bloggers (like Global Voices www.globalvoicesonline.org , or the EU blogging portal www.bloggingportal.eu). All these activities will contribute to promoting your blog and to create a group of followers that regularly read and comment on it.

7. Publish your first post. A standard post is composed of a title and the main text, with the possibility to add links, pictures and multimedia materials, that helps your blog to be more engaging and interactive for your visitors. The addition of catagories and tags in your posts will facilitate people in finding you when looking online for information on the topics you cover in your blog.

8. Post regularly. A key element for a successful blog is the regularity of its updates. Whether you post every day, every week or every month, it is important to post regularly. In this way readers will know when to expect to find something new in your blog, and will not get frustrated by accessing it often without finding anything new to read. Posting regularly will help you as well to define further the style of your blog and to expand the group of readers that follow you.

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'Mapping the Arabic Blogosphere: Politics, Culture and Dissert', Bruce Etling, John Kelly, Robert Faris, John Palfrey, Berkman Centre Research Publication number 2009-06, June 2009

'White paper on Intercultural Dialogue: Living together as equals in dignity', Council of Europe, May 2008

'Handbook for Bloggers and Cyber dissidents', Reporters Without Borders, March 2008

Useful links

Report on EuroMed Intercultural Trends
www.annalindhreport.org

Anna Lindh Intercultural Library
www.euromedalex.org/trends/publication-search

Compass – Manual on Human Rights Education, Council of Europe 2002
http://eycb.coe.int/compass

SALTO - Toolbox for training and youth work
www.salto-youth.net/tools/toolbox/

Best of Blogs – Deutsche Welle Blog Awards
www.thebobs.com

Technorati – blog search engine
http://technorati.com

EMAJ Magazine – made by the Academy of Young EuroMed Journalists
http://emajmagazine.com

The Global Experts – Analysis on Demand
www.theglobalexperts.org

Credits