



*GUIDEBOOK FOR*

# YOUTH EXCHANGES

*FOCUSING ON DIVERSITY*

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# INTRODUCTION

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## The Guidebook

This document is a collection of learnings from the implementation of 2 Youth Exchanges (henceforth YEs) by ELIX, focusing on Diversity. It aims to serve as a guidebook to enable others to learn from and build on our project. It contains detailed descriptions of methods and activities, with evaluations and tips. This guidebook is informed by and builds on the evaluation of this project.

## Aim and objectives

The project aims to promote intercultural awareness and diversity, while supporting the development of young people as global citizens, through the creation of a safe space for interaction. Participants will have the chance to experience, share and exchange as part of an intercultural group of young people coming from different backgrounds and realities.



### The Project

“YOUTH Exchanges for Diversity - #YEs4Diversity” was our response to a demand from young people for the development of quality educational activities supporting and promoting intercultural awareness, recognition of the value of diversity and understanding of the importance and meaning of peaceful societies.

The project consisted of **two youth exchanges**, one in Athens (YE1) and one in Corfu (YE2), and **two advanced planning visits** (APVs). The project was designed to include more than 60 participants in the planned activities.



## Objectives of the project

- ❖ Increase participants understanding of topics such as **diversity, social inclusion** and **intercultural awareness**; This includes:
  - ▶ helping them gain the capacity to recognise inequality, injustice, racism, stereotypes and prejudices.
  - ▶ giving them the knowledge and the abilities to challenge and try to change these mechanisms whenever they have to face them in society.
- ❖ Develop a common understanding about the importance of **peaceful societies** and the promotion of **human rights**;
  - ▶ increasing an understanding of the reality of an interdependent world and encourage action coherent with that reality.
- ❖ Explore possible methods to enable diverse groups to be more effective in **working together** and **spreading richness of diversity**;
- ❖ Experience **active citizenship** and facilitate young people's interest in current **European and global issues**;
- ❖ **Develop young participants' commitment** through the development of future actions and active engagement in existing campaigns and practices such as the Raising Peace Campaign;
- ❖ Experience **interaction with local communities**, through the exchange of experiences, lifestyles, motivations and interests;
- ❖ Develop participants' **communication skills** and **self-confidence**;
- ❖ Develop basic facilitation skills on **intercultural learning** and **human rights education**;





# VALUES

## Sustainability

In whatever we do, it is one of our aims to be more environmentally sustainable and to raise awareness of the importance of sustainability wherever we can. This includes an emphasis on **reducing, reusing and recycling** as well as promoting a **vegetarian diet**. This can be tricky during the youth exchanges, because there are many things to consider and sustainability can sometimes seem to fall to the side, especially if the main focus of the project is social inclusion (see below).

It is always possible to do more with respect to sustainability and it is difficult to find a balance, considering the impact that humans are having on this planet. There are two aspects to this:

- ▶ sustainability of the YEs themselves
- ▶ sustainability beyond the YEs

We can and should use this opportunity to raise awareness of these issues on global scale and **we recommend dedicating some specific time to discussing sustainability issues during the youth exchange.**



### Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

We recommend active measures to reduce, reuse and recycle our waste. If you have a caterer for the meals, you can negotiate with them to deliver food in more environmentally friendly ways. It is also important to try to **reduce food waste** by drawing participants' attention to this repeatedly. You can also create a **recycling system** in the venue or do an action related to the topic on **Action Day** (e.g: cleaning a local area).

Again, it's good to remember that this is an important part of the **education for participants**, and not just about the sustainability of the YEs themselves. This may sometimes discourage us from putting the effort in to bring this issue up - **thinking long term helps.**



## Plant Based Diet

"Avoiding Meat and Dairy is the [single biggest way of reducing our impact on the earth](#)". For this reason, our projects are almost entirely **vegetarian**. This is a big step to making the YE more sustainable. It is sometimes difficult for participants to understand and as such, it was important to actively promote the vegetarian diet - that is, **explaining** why you have chosen to have a mainly vegetarian diet during these projects. Beyond the direct reduction of our impact during the project, one can also consider that for many participants it might be the first exposure to a vegetarian diet and some of them may more actively consider it. If you are not preparing the meals yourselves it is important to clarify this in detail with the host beforehand and to provide assistance.

## Gender Equality

We believe that youth exchanges are places to **meet a variety of people in an equal way**, no matter our gender or sex. We want to use our projects to raise awareness of gender-based discrimination, sexism, sexual harassment and LGBTQI+ phobia and make clear that **it is not tolerated**.



### Common Agreements

The common agreements is a good opportunity for topics of gender discrimination and harassment to come up, be clarified and condemned. This makes it easier if issues come up later, to refer back to common agreements.



## Specific Activities and Discussions

There are many aspects to this issue that are worth discussing and it can be very valuable to give participants time to raise their own questions and discuss them with the aim of **finding practical solutions** (World Café activity). But also give them the chance to **experience** Gender Discrimination in a controlled environment with reflection and discussion afterwards (World Market and Theater of the Oppressed). It is always worth thinking of how to bring awareness on this topic into different activities.

## Social inclusion

A central aspect of YEs is the diversity of participants, in terms of educational background, socioeconomic status, race, gender and perception of gender roles, religious beliefs, dietary habits, linguistic skills, confidence levels and all the way to different perceptions of what makes for a fun evening. On this foundation, it is especially important to create an **inclusive space**, where participants can benefit as much as possible from this diversity. In order to do that, it is important for participants to be made aware of this diversity and to understand that many of the differences are not visible, especially not on the first



## Iceberg of Diversity

This activities enables creating an inclusive space (see activities below). In order to be understood by the whole group, it is important to give it a lot of weight, both in terms of time and in terms of its direct relationship to the diversity of the group. In discussing the topic of diversity it also simultaneously shows the **diversity of opinions and perceptions in the group**. Creating this connection between the discussion of diversity and the group should be part of the activity.



impression. We need to create a space where our propensity to **judgement is reduced**, where we **actively listen** and are aware of how much space we take; a space where we appreciate those around us.



### Tools to create an Inclusive Learning Community

A variety of other tools, activities and processes can be used in order to create a more inclusive space - from discussing the **non-formal education** principles (with a focus on active listening) to the creation of the **common agreements** (re-emphasising active listening and being aware of the space one takes), using **consensus decision making** and creating self-organising teams to allow a variety of participants to take a role in shaping the youth exchange. The **theatre of the oppressed** is another opportunity for participants to share personal stories and for them to understand each other better.



### Organised Free Time Activities for the first nights

We also suggest that leaders prepare organised free time activities for the first nights (where they should also be present), choosing participants more carefully can be helpful (have a clear profile and ensure participants understand the purpose of the YE) and that common agreements are given a more prominent role and are renewed, if needed.



# METHODOLOGY AND STRUCTURE

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## Our Structure

### APV and Organising Team

The organising team is:

- ▶ composed of team leaders of the different groups
- ▶ mainly responsible for the smooth implementation of the Youth Exchange
- ▶ facilitating collectively the Youth Exchange
- ▶ modelling collaborative work and learning

The Advanced Planning Visit should:

- ▶ have **clear and realistic aims and objectives**
- ▶ **plan the first two days** of the YE in details (but be aware it is important to make changes depending on the group and the context)
- ▶ work on getting to know each other and **create a team**
- ▶ tackle the principles of **non formal education** and the **values** behind a youth exchange

It is important to work on creating a team where **concerns can be expressed openly** and where leaders are there to **support and learn from each other**. In some cases this also means that leaders with more experience should help in explaining and maintaining basic values and principles of successful facilitation in non-formal education and thus guiding the leaders and the youth exchange as a whole.

### Suggestions

Many aspects can be improved to increase the value of the APV, but maybe a digital APV or an early arrival of team leaders could lead to a better balance between resources used and value added to the project.

**Organisation:** **Daily meetings** of the organising team are a huge value: it creates a more horizontal and supportive team.

## Suggestions

Overall, it seems that one oughts to find a balance between these two different approaches, which could also be further assisted by having some of the central activities planned. Also, one could provide reflection methods to the leaders to speed up the reflection process and limit the time of leaders' meetings. One suggestion is also to replace one evening reflection with walk and talk the next morning.

The organising team should meet every evening to **reflect on the day, share the reflections of the participants, analyse the group dynamics** and the **needs of participants** and **plan the following days**. It also allows the team to bond, to be flexible and it creates a rich educational experience responding to the needs and desires of the participants.

These meetings also create a framework that lead to a much **richer learning experience** for the leaders themselves, which should not be underestimated. It is great for leaders to have an opportunity to take a step back and reflect, to support each other in doing so and to improve themselves in the process.

## Things to keep in mind:



- ▶ *It can create some level of separation between leaders and participants*
- ▶ *Issues may arise and not be dealt with in a constructive manner without leaders being present*
- ▶ *It requires a lot of energy from leaders*

## Participants' Teams and Free Time

One of our aims for the project is for all the **participants to contribute to the organisation**. To facilitate this, we propose that participants split up into different groups contributing to different parts of the project. Below you can find a description of the role of these groups and their responsibilities during the week.

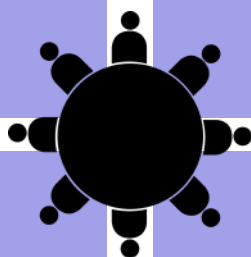


### ETHICS TEAM

Aiming to propose ways to make values, such as inclusion, sustainability and gender, visible in the duration and environment of the Youth Exchange.

### COMMUNITY TEAM

Facilitates and reaches out to everybody to see what the group wants to do in their free time and making decisions that are as inclusive as possible.



### OPEN SPACE TEAM

Planning the open sessions based on the preferences and interests of the participants. This provides space for the hot topics that people want to propose for discussion, and challenges participants to find creative ways to facilitate educational activities.

### HARVESTING TEAM

Gathers materials (film, foto, tangibles) throughout the project, and presents the results with the group and on social media to widen our reach (preferably in creative ways)

These groups are serving and making decisions for all of the participants, and should consider them in the process. The discussion with the group should be **participatory** and **democratic**, it should be **inclusive** and **consensus**, rather than rule of the majority should be the basis for decision making. If possible, it should also aim to include the opinions of those who are not part of the group.

## Structure of the week

|           |                                | Day 1                  | Day 2                                     | Day 3                               | Day 4               | Day 5                     | Day 6                         | Day 7                          | Day 8  | Day 9     |
|-----------|--------------------------------|------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|-----------|
| 8.00-9.15 | BREAKFAST                      | ARRIVAL                | BREAKFAST                                 | BREAKFAST                           | BREAKFAST           | BREAKFAST                 | BREAKFAST                     | BREAKFAST                      | BREAKFAST  | BREAKFAST |
| 9.30      | MORNING                        |                        | Introduction & Getting to know each other | Mapping Peace                       | Debate Introduction | Study Visit               | Forum Theater ~ Warm up       | Preparation #1Table4All        | Make your own action: Presentations & Tips and hints |           |
| 11.00     | Social break                   |                        | Social Break                              | Social Break                        | Social Break        |                           | Social Break                  | Social Break                   | Social Break   |           |
| 11.30     | MORNING                        |                        | The YE and Non-formal Learning            | World Market                        | Debate              |                           | Forum Theater ~ Image Theater | #1Table4All                    | Erasmus+ Youthpass PROJECT EVALUATION                |           |
| 13.00     | LUNCH                          |                        | LUNCH                                     | LUNCH                               | LUNCH               | LUNCH                     | LUNCH                         | LUNCH                          | LUNCH  |           |
| 15.00     | AFTERNOON                      | Teambuilding           | World Market Debriefing                   | How media influences our perception | Free Afternoon      | Forum theater Act it out! | Make your own action          | Results of the Harvesting team |  |           |
| 16.30     | Reflection Groups              | WELCOME Practicalities | Reflection Groups                         | Reflection Groups                   | Reflection Groups   | ---                       | Reflection Groups             | Reflection Groups              | Last activities together                             |           |
| 17.00     | Open Sessions & Working Groups | ----                   | Our common understanding on the topic     | Planning the Open Sessions          | Open Session        | ---                       | Open Session                  | Open Session                   | Farewell   |           |
| 20.00     | DINNER                         | DINNER                 | DINNER                                    | DINNER                              | DINNER              | DINNER                    | DINNER                        | DINNER                         | DINNER   |           |
| 21.00     | EVENING                        |                        | Community Time                            | Community Time                      | Community Time      | ---                       | Community Time                | Community Time                 |  |           |

Example of Programm

- ▶ **Three planned daily sessions:** In the beginning it will be necessary to have full days and go beyond the limit of three sessions so it is recommendable to give more free space to the participants after.
- ▶ **Open Space is left to the participants** in the afternoon: It can be used or left out according to the needs of participants.
- ▶ If participants complain in the first days of being tired it can help to refer to the overall structure and explain why the **group bonding process and establishing community life is essential** for the rest of the YE.

- ▶ Making sure activities start on time and **keeping track of time** during the sessions.
- ▶ Being **flexible** to a certain extent while working with big groups is needed.
- ▶ Keeping in touch with the participants needs and **asking for feedback** is recommendable (see Reflection Groups).

## Facilitation

The facilitation plays a crucial role concerning the success of single activities and the YE as a whole. That's why it is worth thinking carefully about the role of a leader and facilitator beforehand. If there are multiple facilitators it is useful to share advice and give each other feedback during the YE.

For most of activities: **two leaders** facilitating the process with **assigned clear parts** to each facilitator and leaders **supporting each other** during the activity.



### Challenges that could be found

- ▶ Starting on time
- ▶ Explaining tasks in a structured and clear way
- ▶ Receiving the group's full attention
- ▶ Keeping track of time
- ▶ Dealing with sensitive topics
- ▶ Doing an inclusive debriefing at the end of activities

- ▶ **Leaders should be aware of their influence to the safe space:** Not only through verbal replies to participants but also, through body language and facial expression, they can contribute to a positive learning environment.





## To help face the challenges

- ▶ Elaborated preparation before the activities
- ▶ Staying flexible and being open for the needs of participants
- ▶ Staying calm if things do not work out
- ▶ Reflecting on how the facilitation can be improved for the next time.
- ▶ Use different educational methods, such as small group work, having a talking ball (etc.): to be as inclusive as possible
- ▶ Hold a safe space for participants to express all kinds of thoughts and ideas

## Principles of Non-Formal Education (NFE)

At the start of each YE, it is important for the project to clearly outline the principles of NFE; for the participants but also for the leaders, who could be unfamiliar with it.

Engaging with these principles provides a basic understanding of the methodology of NFE, which has a positive effect on the success of the YE (or at least plays a crucial part in supporting the project's success).

### Safe Space

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

For a good learning environment, a safe space can be considered as essential. People should **feel free to express, ask questions** and **do mistakes**. Since the team of participants can be very diverse, it is especially important to respect differences in opinions, knowledge levels and English skills.

To establish a safe space for the group, it is important to emphasise on the **team bonding** and getting familiar with each other in the beginning of the project. This includes not only icebreakers, name games and team building activities but also setting **common agreements** and **discussing the importance of the safe space** itself. Concrete agreements can be made, including for example active listening, no judging, no laughing at others and expressing not understanding through a non-verbal sign. The organising team can also always emphasise the safe space while facilitating activities or reflections.

HOW DO WE  
ESTABLISH  
IT ?

## Take-away and Suggestions



Discussing the safe space and creating concrete rules everybody agrees on is the foundation for a successful establishment. As a facilitator or organising team it is important to keep track of the compliance with the agreements. In case of observing that the safe space is not provided it can be helpful to talk with the whole group about it.

## Reflection

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

Reflection can be seen as a chance for learning. During the YE the participants take part in a variety of often very engaging activities that **need to be processed**. While formal education often focuses on conveying facts, non formal education works with experiential learning or “learning through reflection on doing”. **The experienced will be discussed and put into context.** Reflections from others can help to understand a bigger picture and widen the own horizon.

After every major activity it is important to debrief and reflect the experience as a group. Moreover, the national teams are supposed to come together at the end of each day to **discuss and reflect**. Each member of the organising team can join one national team for daily reflections. Afterwards, the organising team can come together and **discuss the feedback of the day**. The leaders should also reinforce a reflection culture where everybody has space to **talk without interruption**. Some specific questions could then be provided, in order to create a frame for reflection.

HOW DO WE  
ESTABLISH  
IT ?



## Take-away and Suggestions

Reflections are very helpful for the learning process of participants but also for the organising team. There should be a set and reasonable time for reflections in the daily schedule. The organising team should help in facilitating reflections and provide a frame. This does not have to be the same every day. It is good to provide some tools that allow reflections to be shorter. To have a day where there is individual reflection time. And a day where the evening reflection is replaced by a morning walk and talk with reflective questions.

## Self-Organisation

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

One of the biggest potential for learning during a YE is the diversity of participants. People with different backgrounds and ideas can exchange valuable knowledge with each other. Self-organisation helps participants to benefit from this diversity and to "develop a common understanding about the importance of peaceful societies". Participants learn to **live in a community, make common decisions** and **create a space where everybody can grow and learn**.

Aside from creating common agreements through a consensus decision making process, participants take responsibility for **co-creating the YE**. In different teams (Harvesting, Community, Open Space and Ethics Team), they can have space to be creative and implement activities (see Structure above).

HOW DO WE  
ESTABLISH  
IT ?

## Take-away and Suggestions



It is important not to overload the program and have a fixed team meeting time in the schedule. Aims and objectives of the teams should be very clear with members of the organising team **present at least for the first meeting**. Participants should have a clear visible description of the tasks they can go back to. Furthermore participants should be encouraged to bring in missing content or share existing skills. It is important to remind that common agreements should be regarded during self-organisation.

## Experiential Learning

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

Experiential Learning allows people to learn through experience. It is concerned with **concrete issues** related to the learner and the learning context. The learner plays a more active role compared to formal education, which leads to a rich learning experience, both emotional and intellectual.

Different methods can be used: Simulations (e.g. *Take a step forward, World Market*), theatre, debates, etc. Experiential learning also goes hand in hand with **reflecting on these experiences** (see Reflection).

HOW DO WE  
ESTABLISH  
IT ?



## Take-away and Suggestions

Discuss the principles of non-formal education and the benefits of experiential learning with the group. Also make sure that voluntary participation is understood. Always reflect on experiential activities afterwards. **The reflection plays a very important role in the learning outcome.** Encourage people to find facts and numbers in self-organisation and present them to the group if this is an interest that comes up.



Source: IFM-SEI ©

## Voluntary Participation

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

Participation in the YE and its activity programme is voluntary. **We do not force anybody to attend activities** and make it clear to the participants that they can opt out and pass if they don't feel comfortable at any point. At the same time we encourage them to challenge themselves. We use this principle to emphasise that while they have already taken the first step to participate in the project, how much they can take away

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

from the YE depends on how much they engage with the project (this applies to the educational activities and the organisation of the free time). Many of the activities are based on experiential learning, where **engagement plays a dominant role in determining the learning outcome** - ranging from fairly insignificant observations to life changing understanding of other people's realities (see world market activity).

In practice, clarifying this principle of voluntary participation means that some people feel more comfortable not to participate in some of the activities when they don't feel like it. Overall, not many participants will make use of this and most will participate actively in the majority of the activities, which reaffirms a common desire to learn from this experience. However, if some participants are repeatedly disengaging and their contributions might at some points be negatively affecting the group, it can be discussed by the leaders and decided whether or not it is preferable that they don't participate. Anyhow, it is important not to encourage this behaviour and **set a framework**. For example, they should communicate non-attendance to the leaders and avoid affecting/influencing the rest of the group.

HOW DO WE  
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## Take-away and Suggestions



Clarifying this principle is valuable to the project. **Sometimes non-attendance of some participants is preferable**. At the same time it is important to not encourage this behaviour and to set a framework for it. Secondly, **leaders should be active** in discussing participation and engagement with their participants and, where appropriate, encourage them to participate.



## Learning From Each Other

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

The leaders and facilitators provide a framework and structure for learning, but the majority of the learning comes from other participants of the YE. Many arrive with the intention of meeting people from different countries and different cultures and as such are **ready to learn from others**. It is important to re-emphasise this by including activities that bring out the **diversity of the group** and discussing the tools that are important to achieve this learning.

The main emphasis here is **active listening**. This practice is fundamental to learn from others and for many people this is new and difficult. **Bringing it up** and then placing it in the **common agreements** has a positive impact on the group. Even though it isn't always successfully followed, significant changes can be observed in some participants' behaviour throughout the course of the week.

You should also emphasise the **importance of reflections and debriefing** as a way to learn from what others have learned throughout the day. It is also the occasion for participants to remember of other things that happened during the day and to discuss further, and thus deepen their learning.

Another aspect that is important to mention here is the **inclusion of participants that are affected by the topics of the youth exchange**. It is greatly beneficial for other participants to hear from people directly affected and for the participants that are sharing, to be heard (see Social inclusion).

HOW DO WE  
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## Take-away and Suggestions

The concept of **active listening** is crucial to enable this principle to work. It is good to encourage participants to keep this in mind throughout the week. Perhaps one could revisit common agreements. Another suggestion is that, in debriefings, the method can also encourage active listening - rather than listening to respond (e.g: passing the ball/talking stick).

## Group Learning

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

A YE is much more than just the educational activities. It is an often diverse group of young people living together and learning together. This brings with it certain experiences and dynamics that allow individual participants to grow a lot. Three of those learning opportunities are:

- ▶ Self-organising and collective decision making (see above)
- ▶ Resolving conflicts in a non-violent way
- ▶ Multiplying learning through shared reflection

One core reason why the YE creates an environment where we learn quite a lot from being part of a group, is because we create a space where **the group as a whole is important** - we emphasise this over and over from the start. For most participants this is an unusual environment, which is visible from the moment where we discuss common agreements. For many, this is the first experience of collective decision making. The aim of this project is to **create a model of an inclusive space**, both explicitly (by emphasising this many times and discussing it both in the common agreements and as part of the NFE activity), but also implicitly through structures (common agreements, facilitation, self-organised teams, topics of our activities) and methods (reflection groups, debriefing methods, selecting groups in a way that would allow less confident people

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to express themselves with more space). This means that, from the start, this project places a high standard on people's behaviour towards the other participants and is creating awareness amongst the participants of these issues, thereby creating a fertile ground for group learning.

Regarding conflicts that might occur, it is important that a space would be provided in order to talk about them. The resolution can be facilitated by the leaders, **without resolving the situation**. This can range from simply providing the opportunity for participants to respond to a situation, to providing a method and structure, for the group as a whole, to deal with a situation. If there are tensions, it can lead to **many opportunities for group learning** - starting from reaching a common agreement on the smoking area policy to finding a way to discussions in the community team about finding inclusive evening activities that would not involve alcohol. It can also be decided to only subtly encourage reflection of the participants without actively interfering with group dynamics. It will provide them the opportunity to resolve these conflicts through **open discussion**. However, it can appear to be difficult to have an open discussion of issues since it affects the group. Therefore, participants might not want to offend others or to be the ones that bring up an issue.

It seems that keeping this principle in mind is very important for YEs, given that they are such **a great environment for group learning to take place**. Many of the other principles of NFE play into this, because the **situation of the group as a whole will affect how much the other ways of learning are supported**.

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ESTABLISH  
IT ?



## Take-away and Suggestions

Firstly, it is crucial to give the participants time to **reflect on group dynamics** and make space to discuss it with other participants. Secondly, it would be beneficial for the group to have a **space to deal with arising conflicts** and other difficult situations in a constructive way. Finally, it would be important to convey to the group more clearly the **value of dealing with issues in the group in terms of the process** and not just the outcome. On an individual level, one could observe this in the group with several constructive conversations taking place about interpersonal conflicts, both between participants and leaders.

## Action

WHY IS IT  
IMPORTANT  
?

Action should go hand in hand with reflection. **A week of learning and reflection without action is incomplete.** The focus in NFE is already on doing; the activities are interactive and experiential. However, this doing and experiencing mostly remains within the group, while the learning is usually bigger than the group.

An Action Day can be planned towards the end of the YE with the aim to **synthesise the learnings of the week** and turn them into a collective action that has a positive impact on the local community and beyond. It can be linked to a national or international campaign.

HOW DO WE  
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IT ?

## Take-away and Suggestions



It is important to make it clear from the start that this will be part of the project. It also gives participants a sense of direction throughout the week (see Action Day).

# ACTIVITIES

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## Warm Up/Energisers/Ice Breakers

Before starting an activity with a group a Warm Up/ Energiser/ Ice Breaker can be very beneficial. It helps to **bring energy and focus** to the group and moreover, **creates a feeling of community and trust**.

Especially for the start of a project we recommend to dedicate enough time for the group to connect with each other. Knowing names and a few facts about other participants and having laughed with each other can enormously help to create a friendly learning environment. Activities where the group connects through physical contact enrich the feeling of trust and belonging.

In the following we present you some Warm Ups/ Energizers/ Ice Breakers.



### Tips

- ▶ Have a variety of Energisers
- ▶ Make sure you take time in the beginning to learn each other's names
- ▶ Start with easy Warm-Ups and increase the level of trust that is required
- ▶ Leave space for participants to propose energisers
- ▶ Don't stop doing Warm-Ups even though the group might lose a bit of their motivation along the way
- ▶ Don't overdo Energisers. Stop them after a reasonable amount of time

## Walk around the Space

Coming from theatre, this activity suits perfectly for the very beginning, when a group doesn't know each other yet. The goal is to explore the space and to become aware of oneself and the others in the shared space. One advantage of this activity is that it is very adjustable. The facilitator can be very creative in their instructions.



### Tips

Let the group explore the whole space, avoid people only going in circles. Repeat the *Walk around the Space* and choose more advanced group tasks (e.g. stopping all together).

### The Steps

- ▶ Walk through the space in whatever pace feels comfortable for you
- ▶ Be aware of the room, fill all the gaps, be aware of your body, your steps
- ▶ Stretch your body
- ▶ Be aware of others, make eye contact, nod
- ▶ Touch others with specific body parts
- ▶ Introduce yourself with a handshake with a person coming along
- ▶ Hug and thank each other for being here today
- ▶ Become faster all together, stop all together



## The Flower



### Tips

The facilitator can encourage the participants to be active in the game by going first and be a good example. People should feel free to express all kind of happy sounds.

The game is an adaptation of the game *Hi Ha Ho* or *The Samurai*. The goal is that people overcome inhibitions and expose themselves in a playful way.

### The Steps

The group is in a circle and one player begins with the play. The idea of the game is to pass an imaginary flower around.

- ▶ First player throws the imaginary flower at another player with a sound of love "-haaa".
- ▶ Player 2, happy about receiving this gift, raises their hands in the air and makes another sound of happiness "-oahh".
- ▶ The two players next to them extend their arms towards the receiver and make another sound of happiness "oahh".
- ▶ Player 2 passes the flower to the next participant and everything continues after the same principle.

## Zip Zap Boing



This game can be used as warm up to gently start moving and speaking in the morning. It has many names, depending on the words that are used when playing.

### Tips

This activity can easily be adapted to a name game. Instead of Zip Zap Boing people pass around their names.

### The Steps

We throw an imaginary ball (of energy) around the circle, clapping with our palms toward one person.

- ▶ The ball is thrown to one of the closest persons with the word "Zipp".
- ▶ The ball is thrown to one of the persons at the opposite of the circle with the word "Zap".
- ▶ The person who does not want to receive the ball raises both hands in front of themselves and says "Boing". The ball is then returned to the person who sent it.

## Name and Movement



### Tips

After one round the same names/movements can be repeated faster or in a rhythm.

This Ice breaker can be used at the beginning to get to know each other and learn all the names.

### The Steps

- ▶ In a circle one person starts to introduce themselves with "Hello, I am ..." while he/she is doing a movement.
- ▶ The group replies "Hello [Name]", while copying the person's movement.
- ▶ It goes on until everyone said their name.

# Introductory activities

## Introduction to Non Formal Education (NFE Activity)

This activity is good to be done before the common agreements, as this is likely to feed in. Facilitators can also make an explicit link between the two.

### The Steps

- ▶ Make cards with the **principles of non formal education** on them, with a **visual representation** of these principles and some **word associations** or questions.
- ▶ Hide these cards around the room.
- ▶ **In groups**, participants look for these cards and once they have found them, they study and discuss these cards **answering three questions**.
  - 1) What is the principle on your card/What does it mean?
  - 2) Why is this principle important?
  - 3) How can we ensure that we follow this principle? AND/OR Please give an example to illustrate how this principle works. Consider the order of the cards - ideally you can write a number on them.
- ▶ Then each group presents their card with each member of the group answering one of the questions.

## Portrait

This activity can be done in the first day to get to know each others. You will need music, papers and colour pens.

### The Steps

- ▶ Each participant writes their name on a piece of paper and puts it upside down on the floor.
- ▶ Music starts and participants move around the space.
- ▶ When the music stops participants grab a sheet of paper and draw the face of the person the paper belongs to.
- ▶ Then they hand out the paper to the owner. Everyone carries his own paper now.
- ▶ Music starts again and people move around the space.
- ▶ When music stops each participants pairs up with a partner.
- ▶ The facilitator provides a question that couples discuss about. Each person writes the answer of their partner on their piece of paper (Anne writes Peter's answer on Peter's paper, Peter writes Anne's answer on Anne's paper).
- ▶ When the music starts everybody carries their own paper again and moves around the space until music stops again. People find a new partner and are provided with a new question.
- ▶ In the end portraits can be hung on the wall.



## Tips

Participants should have interactions with different partners. Instructions can be confusing, therefore it is important for the facilitator to make it clear but it is also an activity that can be understood by trying out.

When the music stops the facilitator should **wait until everybody listens** before providing the new question. He/she can choose how long will be the process of drawing. It can be split in **several rounds** (first draw nose, then eyes, then mouth etc.).

We recommend to provide 4-5 questions (examples: place of birth, age, favorite dish, 3 things you care about, if you won in the lottery today what would you buy first...). Choose **interesting/deeper questions** so the participants really learn something about each other.

## Silent Lines

### The Steps

The game is played in silent. The goal is that participants arrange themselves in a certain order while leaving a strip (tape) or imaginary line on the floor. People have to find "alternative ways" to communicate and work together as a team.

Examples of arrangements:

- ▶ The alphabetic order of the group names from A to Z
- ▶ The age order of the team (birth year and month and day!)
- ▶ Hours travelled to YE
- ▶ Eyes colors



### Tips

People tend to speak during this game. Facilitators should try to motivate people to communicate without words. A time limit can bring more focus.

Facilitator can make up a story around the strip on the floor ("You are on the bridge over a deep cliff. The bridge will fall if you don't arrange yourself in the right order within 2 minutes").



## Hopes, fears and contributions balloon



### Tips

Facilitator can do a small meditation with soft music playing before notes are taken down.

Participants are asked to relax, think of the travel and arriving, the last hours.

Talking about hopes and fears of the upcoming time shared together is a valuable introductory activity. It is not only interesting for the organising team, to know with which mindset participants enter the YE, but can also strengthen the bond within the group.

### The Steps

- ▶ Draw a big air balloon on a Flipchart.
- ▶ Sticky notes, in preferable 3 colours, will be handed out to the participants.
- ▶ With notice to the metaphor of the hot air balloon, the participants are supposed to reflect on their **fears** (symbolised by sandbags), their **contributions** (symbolised by the fire that drives the air balloon) and their **hopes** (symbolised by the balloon) and write them down on the sticky notes (one colour per category).
- ▶ After some minutes in silence, people are invited to share their thoughts with the group and pin their sticky notes on the Flipchart.

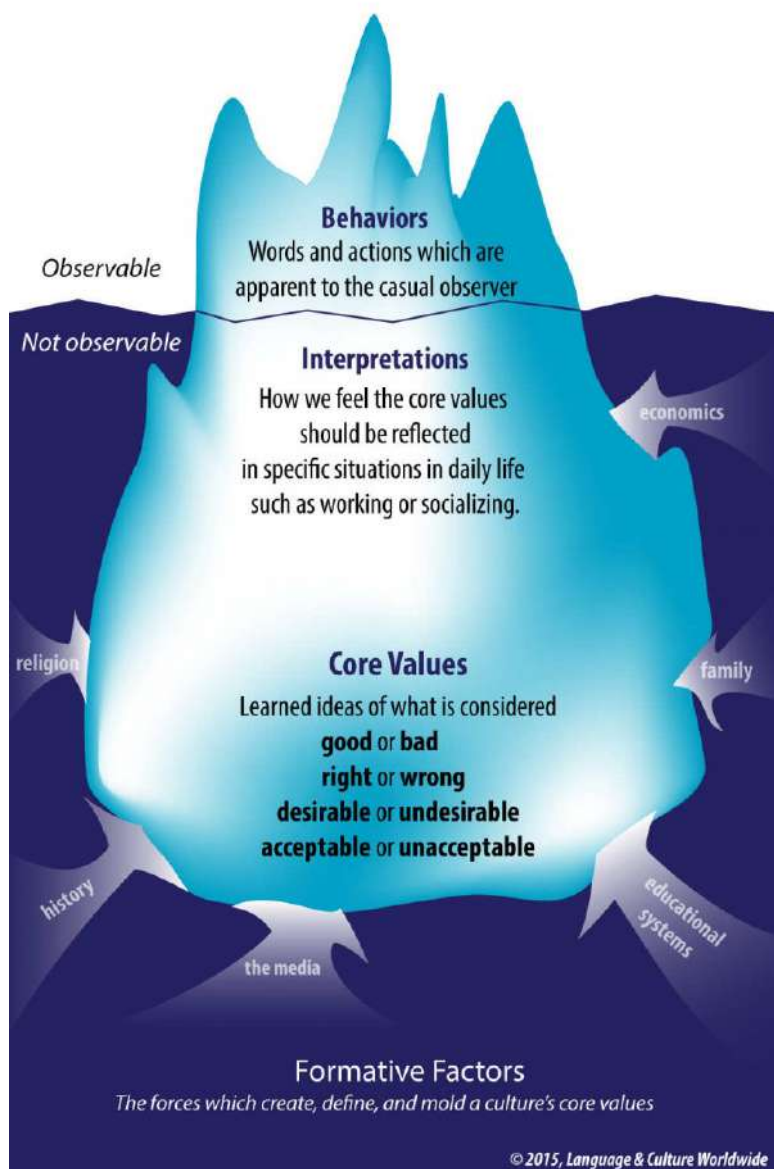
## Iceberg of Culture

When we see an iceberg, the portion which is visible above water is, in reality, only a small piece of a much larger whole. Similarly, people often think of culture as the numerous observable characteristics of a group that we can "see" with our eyes, be it their food, dances, music, arts, or greeting rituals. The reality, however, is that these are merely an **external manifestation** of the deeper and broader components of culture - the complex ideas and deeply-held preferences and priorities known as attitudes and values.

Deep below the "water line" are a culture's **core values**. These are primarily learned ideas of what is good, right, desirable, and acceptable, as well as what

is bad, wrong, undesirable, and unacceptable. In many cases, different cultural groups share similar core values (such as "honesty", or "respect", or "family"), but these are often interpreted differently in different situations and incorporated in unique ways into our daily lives. Ultimately, our interpretations of our core values become visible to the casual observer in the form of **observable behaviours**, such as the words we use, the way we act, the laws we enact, and the ways we communicate with each other.

It is also important to note that the core values of a culture do not change quickly or easily. They are passed on **from generation to generation** by



numerous factors which surround us and influence us. These **formative factors** are powerful forces which guide us and teach us. The things our educators and parents teach us - the opinions and ideas we see and hear in the media, the way our laws and social norms structure our world - all of these things (and many more) mould us and our cultural values. Cultural change is never quick and forces, ideas, and **beliefs**, both new and old, **continually impact our way of seeing the world** and deciding what matters to us (our core values), what that means in our personal and professional lives (our interpretations), and how we ultimately act (our observable behaviours).

So, like an iceberg, there are things that we can see and describe easily. But there are also **many deeply rooted ideas** that we can only understand by **analysing values, studying formative factors**, and in many cases, **reflecting on our own core values**.



### Tips

Provide them with a list of features and let the group arrange them on the Iceberg. You can see some examples for features, from more visible to invisible, on next page.

Examples for features from more visible to invisible:

| Surface Culture  | Unspoken Rules   | Unconscious Rules  |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Language</li> <li>▶ Currency</li> <li>▶ Art Style</li> <li>▶ Cooking</li> <li>▶ Music</li> <li>▶ Holidays</li> <li>▶ Fashion</li> <li>▶ Literature</li> <li>▶ Sports</li> <li>▶ Religion</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Business Etiquette</li> <li>▶ Social Etiquette</li> <li>▶ Modesty</li> <li>▶ Symbolism of objects, colors, and individuals</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Verbal and non-verbal communication</li> <li>▶ Sense of time</li> <li>▶ Physical Distances</li> <li>▶ Gender</li> <li>▶ High context vs. low context</li> <li>▶ Concept of death</li> <li>▶ Age</li> <li>▶ Class</li> <li>▶ Physical Space</li> <li>▶ Thoughts on what makes good leadership</li> <li>▶ Concern about the present, or the future</li> <li>▶ Emotional responses</li> <li>▶ Concepts of right or wrong, and good or bad</li> </ul> |

## The Steps

- ▶ Prepare, according to the group size, several flip charts of an outline drawing of icebergs (recommendable are 3-5 people per iceberg).
- ▶ Explain that metaphors often help us understand big ideas by relating something we don't know to something we do know. Show the model of the iceberg and ask if they can tell what the picture shows. Ask participants what they know about the size and shape of icebergs. How much of an iceberg is above the water? How much is underwater?
- ▶ Make the point that only about one-eighth of an iceberg is visible above the water. The rest is below. **Culture is very similar to an iceberg.** It has some aspects that are visible and many others that can only be suspected, guessed, or learned as understanding of the culture grows.
- ▶ Divide participants into small groups and provide them with the copy of an outline drawing of an iceberg with a clear line delineating the part of the iceberg that is above the water's surface and the larger part that is below the surface.
- ▶ Provide them with pens and have them fill out the Iceberg. They should discuss in their groups which features of culture they think are visible and which are invisible.
- ▶ After the groups having arranged the features, have each group pair with another group and compare their placement of features. Participants should exchange why they placed a particular feature where they did.
- ▶ Ask in plenary if it was easy in the group to agree on arrangements. Ask participants whether they see any item below the water line that might influence or determine any item above (e.g., ideas about modesty might affect styles of dress; religious beliefs might influence holiday celebrations, painting, and music)
- ▶ Conclude by asking what people took from this activity; How can they connect the model of iceberg to the youth exchange (living together, understanding each other, diversity)?

## Take a minute

### Tips



The facilitator should discuss with the group why punctuality is important for the shared time together during the YE.

This activity should help to understand that sense of time is something very relative. That's why our time system helps us to organise ourselves.

### The Steps

- ▶ Participants sit with closed eyes on a chair.
- ▶ Everyone counts up to 60 in their heads.
- ▶ Once they reach 60 they have to stand up quietly and open their eyes.

## Main activities

### Take a Step Forward



We are all equal, but some are more equal than others. In this activity participants take on roles and move forward depending on their chances and opportunities in life. The activity can raise awareness about inequality of opportunity, helps to develop imagination and critical thinking and fosters empathy with others who are less fortunate.

For this activity, you will need an open space (a corridor, large room or outdoors), a tape or CD player and soft/relaxing music, a hat, and [role cards](#).

#### Tips

If you do this activity outdoors, make sure that the participants **can hear you**, especially if you are doing it with a large group. You may need to use your co-facilitators to relay the statements.

In the imagining phase at the beginning, some participants may say that they know little about the life of the person they have to role-play. Tell them this does not matter especially and that they should **use their imagination** and to do it as best as they can.

The power of this activity lies in the impact of actually seeing the distance increasing between the participants, especially at the end when there should be a big distance between those that stepped forward often and those who did not. To enhance the impact, it is important that you **adjust the roles to reflect the realities of the participants' own lives**. As you do so, be sure you adapt the roles so that only a minimum of people can take steps forward (i.e. can answer "yes"). This also applies if you have a large group and have to devise more roles.

## The Steps

- ▶ Create a calm atmosphere with some soft background music. Alternatively, ask the participants for silence.
- ▶ Ask participants to take a role card out of the hat. Tell them to keep it to themselves and not to show it to anyone else.
- ▶ Invite them to sit down (preferably on the floor) and to read carefully what is on their role card.
- ▶ Now ask them to begin to get into role. To help, read out some of the following questions, pausing after each one, to give people time to reflect and build up a picture of themselves and their lives:

*What was your childhood like? What sort of house did you live in? What kind of games did you play? What sort of work did your parents do? What is your everyday life like now? Where do you socialise? What do you do in the morning, in the afternoon, in the evening? What sort of lifestyle do you have? Where do you live? How much money do you earn each month? What do you do in your leisure time? What you do in your holidays? What excites you and what are you afraid of?*

- ▶ Now ask people to remain absolutely silent as they line up beside each other (like on a starting line)
- ▶ Tell the participants that you are going to read out a list of situations or events. Every time that they can answer "yes" to the statement, they should take a step forward. Otherwise, they should stay where they are and not move.
- ▶ Read out the situations one at a time. Pause for a while between each statement to allow people time to step forward and to look around to take note of their positions relative to each other.
- ▶ At the end invite everyone to take note of their final positions. Then give them a couple of minutes to come out of role before debriefing in plenary.





## Tips

During the debriefing and evaluation it is important to explore how participants knew about the character whose role they had to play. Was it through personal experience or through other sources of information (news, books, and jokes?). Are they sure the information and the images they have of the characters are reliable? In this way you can introduce how stereotypes and prejudice work.

This activity is particularly relevant to **making links between the different generations of rights** (civil/political and social/economic/cultural rights) and the access to them. The problems of poverty and social exclusion are not only a problem of formal rights – although the latter also exists for refugees and asylum-seekers for example. The problem is very often a matter of **effective access to those rights**.

## Debriefing:

Start by asking participants about what happened and **how they feel** about the activity and then go on to talk about the issues raised and **what they learnt**.

- ▶ How did people feel stepping forward - or not?
- ▶ For those who stepped forward often, at what point did they begin to notice that others were not moving as fast as they were?
- ▶ Did anyone feel that there were moments when their basic human rights were being ignored?
- ▶ Can people guess each other's roles? (Let people reveal their roles during this part of the discussion)
- ▶ How easy or difficult was it to play the different roles? How did they imagine what the person they were playing was like?
- ▶ Does the exercise mirror society in some way? How?
- ▶ Which human rights are at stake for each of the roles? Could anyone say that their human rights were not being respected or that they did not have access to them?
- ▶ What first steps could be taken to address the inequalities in society?

## Image Theatre and Theatre of the Oppressed

**Image Theatre** is a performance technique in which one person, acting as a sculptor, moulds one or more people acting as statues, using only touch and resisting the use of words. **Forum Theatre** is one of the most commonly used tools from Theatre of the Oppressed. It begins with the crafting and performance of a short play that dramatises real situations faced by the participants and that ends with the protagonist(s) being oppressed. After the first performance, the play or scene is repeated with one crucial difference: the spectators become "spect-actors" and can at any point say "freeze" and take the place of an actor to attempt to transform the outcome.

### Introduction

Since many people are not familiar with expressing themselves through theatre it is advisable to give a **small introduction before starting the activities of the day**. Ask the participants whether they have heard about this concept before/ if they have any concerns/ and explain them about the aims of the day:

- ▶ to propose a creative way of expressing yourself
- ▶ to explore situations that come up/ conflicts with diversity and exclusion and to find solutions
- ▶ to raise awareness of our capacity to act
- ▶ to bond to the group and feel more confident and present

### Tips



At the end of Image Theater, a gallery can be created: half of the group presents the images, half of the group walks across them.

One extra task could be that audience can tap on a figure's shoulder and the figure presents its thoughts (otherwise figures stay in silence).

After Warm-Up and Image Theater, leave a break for the participants, since the 3rd working block, Forum Theater, is very intensive.



## Warm Up

Before diving deeper into the topic of oppression and conflict resolution, a proper Warm Up with a variety of different theatrical games is **very important**.

Suggested Warm Up Exercises:

- ▶ **Walk around the space**
- ▶ **Dance in different variations:**
  - ▶ With one body part in focus (for example the body part that you usually use the most);
  - ▶ In pairs (one with closed eyes dancing while the other is checking that the blindfolded person is finding their way through the space);
  - ▶ The whole group (only 3 of the group are dancing while the others are frozen, dancers can tap a frozen person and switch roles).
- ▶ **Mirror Game:**

2 people come together and mirror each other. 1 person starts to be the active person while the other one is the mirror. People can do either abstract movements or movements from daily life.

## Image Theatre

To make the concept more clear it can help to start working on **Group Images** through theatrical games before leaving small groups to work on their own. Image theatre can be seen as preparation for the later Forum Theatre.

- ▶ Divide the group into small teams of 3 or 4.
- ▶ Each group shall present an image of social exclusion/ scene of oppression (preferably a situation that they have personally experienced).
- ▶ Therefore, group members can think of a situation in silence individually and model the other team members into a picture. After everyone in the group has created a picture, situations can be discussed among the group.
- ▶ Each group chooses one image to present to the others.

### Forum Theatre: The Steps

Leave enough preparation time for small groups, of approximately five people, to:

- ▶ Brainstorm/Discuss a topic they want to explore
- ▶ Develop a scene

Leave all groups space to present one after another and then decide by voting (arrangement according to preference) which scene the group would like to work on. According to experience it is unlikely to work on more than one scenes due to time issues.

- ▶ Explain the rules
- ▶ Play the scene
- ▶ Make sure the scene is understood
- ▶ Think about how you can take action
- ▶ Replay of the scene with intervention
- ▶ Discussion of intervention
- ▶ Next intervention



### Tips



In the discussion, it can be very interesting to first ask the actors and actresses how they felt about the intervention and if they were convinced, before asking the audience. An important question in this context is, if the intervention was **realistic**.

In general, the facilitator should try to avoid too long discussion after every intervention, but rather see a few options and then compare them.

In the end of Forum Theatre a **de-roling** (going out of the roles) and take some quiet time is advisable to release tension. Moreover the experience should be reflected. Let the reflection happen in small groups and then come together in plenary to share a few "take aways" or memories with the method of passing a ball around.

## World Market

The World Market is a **simulation game** to explore the global economic system, inequality and injustice, as well as dynamics of cooperation, competition and exploitation.

From experience this simulation can be a very central activity with a big impact on participants. It allows participants to **explore global issues** in a special way - by experiencing a simulation of the effects right in front of them. It is remarkable, how stimulating this simulation is, both emotionally and intellectually, for the participants and that they understand how people's actions are influenced by the structure that surrounds them.

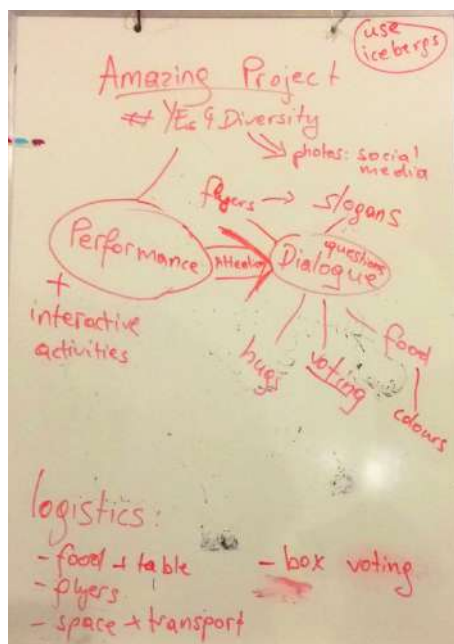
This activity takes time to prepare and to implement and is also complex, therefore you will find more detailed outlines [here](https://bit.ly/2w1k3aW)<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://bit.ly/2w1k3aW>

## Action Day

Have an action day towards the end. The aim is to **synthesise the learning throughout the week** and turn it into a collective action that has a positive impact on the local community and beyond (for example linking it with the Global Human Rights Week and the Raising Peace Campaign).



### The Steps

The day can follow a three part structure:

- ▶ Preparation of the Action (brainstorming)
- ▶ The Action
- ▶ Evaluation of the Action

### Tips

The action can include the whole group or be separated in different actions in small groups.

In order for the participants to learn that, when it comes down to acting, they will have to get going themselves, it can be interesting to give them more freedom and responsibility in their actions. Some instructions can be given, like: Are you familiar with the topic you chose? Do you have enough time today to produce a concrete outcome? Do you think an action on that could have an impact today?

There are different ways to carry out an action, here are some examples: theatre performance, posters, beach cleaning, artwork, etc.

The target group and the different actors and possible partners should be an aspect to think about.



## Walk and Talk

### Tips



This activity allows for reflection outside of the usual reflection groups, creating more connections and more learning. It can be very nicely combined with the human knot. It is not easy to find the right place for this activity, but it seems that it is good to not do it too late, but **towards the beginning of the programme.**

Walk and Talk includes physical exploration of the local environment and allows participants and leaders to **get to know each other** in a way that is enjoyable and with a certain level of depth.

This activity is extremely valuable for **building positive group dynamics** by creating new links between people, increasing comfort, as well as providing a relaxed environment to include discussion of the main themes of the project, such as diversity, social inclusion and migration.

### The Steps

- ▶ Ask the participants to write down questions (personal or related to the topic) and put them into a box.
- ▶ The group goes for a walk together, the facilitator carries the box.
- ▶ Each person finds a partner and picks a question from the box.
- ▶ Partners discuss their two questions.
- ▶ After 5/10 minutes facilitator invites the participants to switch their questions and to choose a new partner, with whom they discuss the new questions
- ▶ After a while, the facilitator takes back the questions and the participants choose new one in the box.



# Closing Activities

## Presentation of the Erasmus+ program

Show the participants all the opportunities the Erasmus+ program gives them. Along with it, there can be a presentation of the YouthPass, the importance of filing it at the end of the project and the use participants can make of it.

## Project Evaluation

### ► Moving debate

Ask participants to stay in the middle of the room and ask them their opinion about the venue, the activities, the free time, the atmosphere, etc. The more they liked it the more they go to the left, the less, the more to the right.

### ► Dixit Cards

Every person chooses a Dixit Card, from the board game *Dixit*, which represents the YE best for him/her. Participants are invited to show card and share a few words about their YE journey

### ► Secret friend ceremony

A game often played in YEs is The Secret Friend. At the beginning of the week, everybody receives a name and will be this person's secret friend for the time of the project. The Secret Friend can provide little gifts or nice gestures. If this game was played, a ceremony revealing the Secret Friend (for example blindfolded and guessing by touching the secret friends face or body) can be held on the last day.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We hope you found our Guidebook useful in the implementation of your Youth Exchange. Feel free to adapt it and make it your own way. We would like to thank the facilitators and leaders for implementing our 2 YEs for our project "#Yes4Diversity", in Athens and in Corfu, as well as Lucy Fischer, Thomas Schafranek and Johanne Boisseleau for the writing and proofreading of this guidebook.

On behalf of ELIX,  
Tilemachos Boni, Project Coordinator



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



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