

2020

FACILITATORS OF INTERCULTURAL COHESION

An off- and online
peer-to-peer training
concept for young
refugees & Europeans

developed within the project
**TABADOL - Transnational youth
initiative in the Italian-German
context**

realized by



Erasmus+



Empower!

*My Europe!
Your Europe ?
OUR Europe!!!*

Exchange

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Want to get active?
Useful links and tips.

WHOM IS THIS TRAINING CONCEPT FOR?

We believe that this training concept will be of interest for you, if...



Our training concept is based on a pilot exchange-project of young Europeans and refugees in the German-Italian context.

→ **you are a young person with or without refugee/migration biography** wanting to make a change in your community or simply learn more about your rights and opportunities in Europe

→ **you are a youth worker/educator/cultural mediator** that works with young people and/or refugees and wanting to learn more about alternative teaching and learning methods, in particular in an intercultural context and involving young people with fewer opportunities more actively, f.ex. young refugees.



Want to give us Feedback?

We are happy to improve this training concept together with You!

info@migrationmiteinander.de

WHO AND WHAT IS TABADOL?

About us & our approach

We want to share the (em)power(ment) we experienced in working together and learning from each other during the project Tabadol because we believe that only through an **exchange at eye-level and through peer-to-peer learning**, we can foster the cooperation between migrants and locals and **empower each other** effectively to get active (European) citizens to build up together a **society based on mutual understanding and support**.

We are a group of **young people with and without refugee / migration biography**, living in Germany and Italy.

We are active in the youth sector and want to make a change in our community at local and European level.



Therefore, and within the framework of the project **TABADOL**, we developed together a **peer-to-peer training concept for young refugees and Europeans**. We are all part of the two organizations, migration_miteinander e.V. (Germany) and Associazione Interculturale Universo (Italy) that gave us the platform for our project Tabadol.

On the next page, we want to introduce them shortly to you:



MIGRATION
MITEINANDER



WITTEN,
GERMANY



founded in April 2017 by a group of young people, the association follows **3 main objectives** - always in the intention to strengthen Europe and to raise international understanding:

Promotion of a European identity and exchange between European citizens

migration_miteinander reacts to the need of European solutions and intra- European solidarity. Mostly young Europeans shall come together and receive the tools to have an impact on their Europe.

Empowerment of migrants

Through orientation programs or advice offers, migration_miteinander wants to provide migrants with the necessary information, knowledge and skills for a self- determined life in Europe. This shall make possible a full participation in and contribution to the host society as regards both social and in particular professional integration.

Lay the foundation for a positive living together of migrants and host society

based on mutual learning and appreciation: The association will realize different offers to promote exchange and to train both sides for an equal citizenship.



BOLOGNA,
ITALY



Universo is an intercultural non-profit association based in Bologna, Italy since 2002.

Universo also organises language literacy classes, basic computer knowledge classes, mediation during the search of different vocational trainings, a Job search Center, recreational activities for occupying free time, counselling and help services- all in the scope to empower the migrant population and facilitate intercultural dialogue, training young graduates as actors in intercultural guidance and integration facilitators for private and public institutions.

Thanks to a tenacious and persistent culture of dialogue, Universo has constructed a positive process of socio cultural exchange amongst actively engaged actors laying a platform for collaboration in mutual respect. With patronage and co-projecting with the Bologna city council, Universo has formed migrant citizens into active social workers and requalified different areas of social distress in the city.

Universo actively promotes the provision of a platform for living together and mutual getting to know each other between the local and migrant population.

Context and background: Why Italy and Germany?

The current situation in Europe can be characterized by the lack of adequate responses when it comes to shaping a living together and migrants and locals being poorly prepared for this. Mutual exchange, appreciation of the other's cultural background and experiences remain low. The paradigm of the "others" and "us" determines the perception of foreigners. This often leads to the point where migrants are being perceived as a threat instead of as potential active citizens that can enrich European societies. Furthermore, national hosting societies often feel left behind by European decision makers. As a consequence, the idea of a unified European society where everybody takes an active European citizenship gets more and more replaced by nationalistic movements and xenophobia.



THE PROJECT TABADOL

At the same time, young refugees lack information and orientation to build up a self-determined life in Europe, being often pushed into a passive role by the current national and European asylum system. Coming from completely different cultural and historical contexts, sometimes combined with an individual low educational background, most of them have only a rudimentary knowledge of the European Union: its history and mechanisms, the European idea and the opportunities and it offers to its (active) citizens are unknown to a recently arrived refugee. Additionally, many refugees in the EU tend to be rather confronted with the limitations the European framework (keyword: Dublin Regulation, sanctioning of secondary movements) has on their lives. Contribution to the European idea is almost impossible in these conditions.

*Tabadol is Arabic
and means: exchange.*



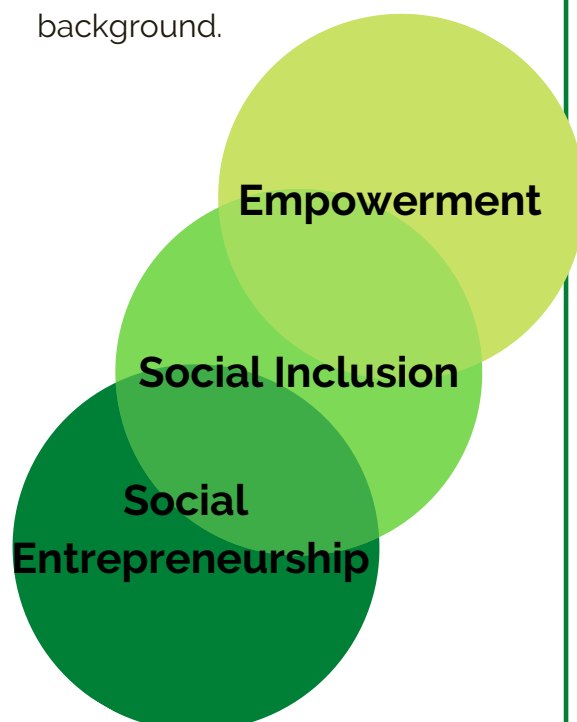
Youth exchange programs often are not accessible for disadvantaged youth, due to socio-cultural or educational barriers or to financial reasons. Furthermore, many projects try to involve displaced youth, but often carry out a “helpers mentality” where young refugees are “victimized” instead of being empowered. Only a few projects try to create an exchange between young refugees and young locals at eye level.



With TABADOL, we wanted to get active and create such an exchange platform together with other young people in Europe, in order to actively shape the positive living together of local and migrant populations.

With TABADOL, we follow a holistic and truly European approach, where we want to promote a European identity among young people with(out) migration biography and raise awareness on migrants' potential to contribute to European societies as Active Citizens and to propose new forms of involvement thanks to their background.

In cooperation with our Italian partner team, our main activity was to carry out the development, implementation and management of an empowerment exchange program for 30 young refugees in Witten, Germany and Bologna, Italy. Thanks to the transnational approach, we were able to learn from and support each other during the project development and implementation, which allowed us to achieve important non-formal competences and skills in project management. Thanks to additional training and seminars, we became "Facilitators of Intercultural Cohesion" and change-makers promoting active European citizenship among other young Europeans and refugees.



Empowerment

Hand in hand, we achieved together the necessary skills to take an active role in shaping our living together. We self-empowered us through experiencing together the positive impact we can have on our local communities by realizing our own project. We acquired the knowledge and tools to assume a role of changemakers that promote empowerment and exchange among other young people with(out) refugee biography.

In TABADOL, young people from different social and cultural backgrounds worked hand in hand together. In order to bring together local and migrant populations and overcome prejudice, we organized public events.

TABADOL promotes social entrepreneurship among young people in Europe. We acquired project management skills and important key competences for the work in an intercultural contexts and with disadvantaged young people. Some of us plan to become social entrepreneurs and to develop own projects.

3 MAIN ELEMENTS OF TABADOL



Social Inclusion

Social entre- preneurship

TABADOL PEER-TO-PEER TRAINING CONCEPT

Why a peer-to-peer training concept?

For this training concept, we didn't start from zero, but learned from our Italian partner organization Universo. In fact, this training concept builds up on a 3-year experience of Universo in conducting ESOP (European Structural Orientation Program for Migrants), an empowerment exchange program for migrants in Italy and Europeans,



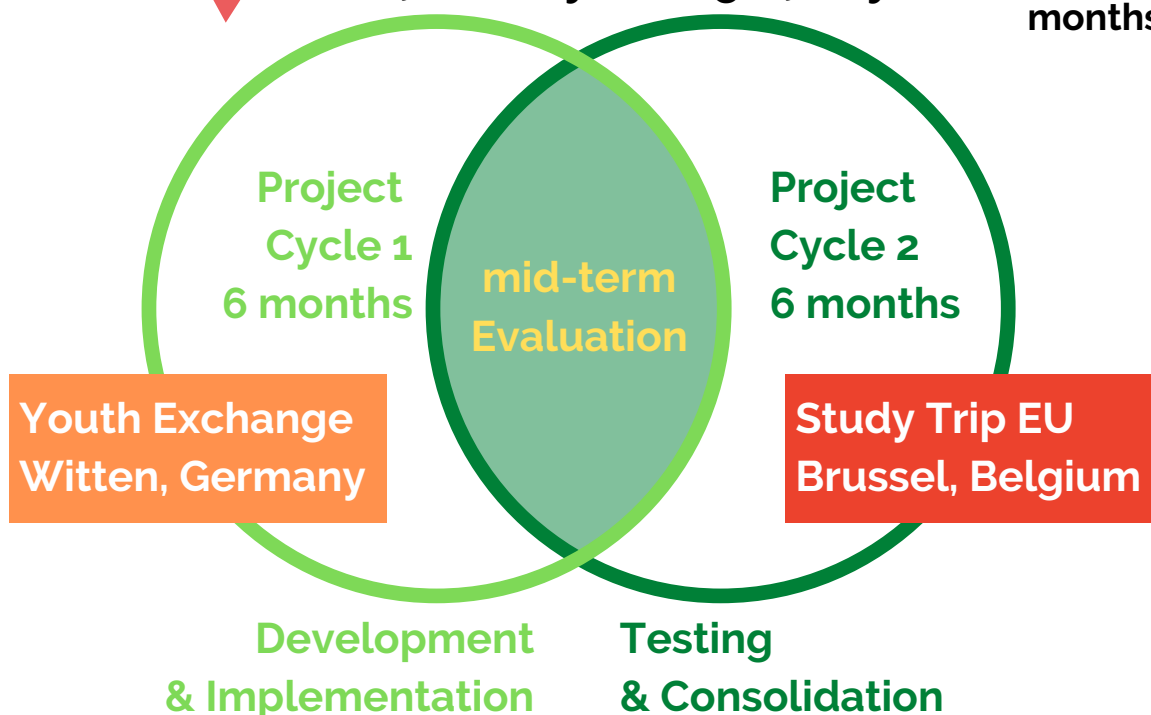
We want to share the (em)power(ment) we experienced in learning from each other because we believe that only through an exchange at eye-level and peer-to-peer learning, we can foster the cooperation between migrants and locals and empower each other to get active (European) citizens and to build up together a society based on mutual understanding and support.



Witten, Germany & Bologna, Italy



months



Why is this training concept innovative?



- **Peer-to-peer training and learning at eye-level** of young people Europeans and refugees
- **holistic** approach
- **adapted to the needs of participants** in our local context(s)
- Combination of **online/e-learning** sessions combined with **offline (in-person)** sessions
- Combination of **formal and non-formal learning** methods
- Get people out of the “helper” (local community, Europeans) and “victim” (asylum seekers/refugees) position
- Promotion of **self-organization and social entrepreneurship**, as the whole training is developed and tested by the participants themselves
- **European approach**: comparison of two different contexts (Italy and Germany) and promotion of active European citizenship

Our practical tips, which contain concrete exemplary methods and strategies for empowerment and training, depend on the chosen target group and the characteristics of the respective group of participants as TABADOL's general framework takes diversity into account. We consciously chose a replicable structure and approach that can easily be adapted to other EU contexts and settings.

METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

empowerment

peer-to-peer
TEAM

Needs-based
approach



Empowerment



TABADOL acts in the promotion of active integration and social cohesion through the **empowerment of migrants and the European host society**. Through TABADOL, migrants receive the necessary instruments to shape their lives actively and to become participating and contributing members of the host society instead of finding themselves in a state of passivity.

TABADOL focuses on two complex factors to be able to effectively talk about empowerment:

How to empower?

Consciousness

each participant elaborates on her/his personal motivation for being a member of a team and how to (re-)define 'help' from (often) a concept of doing things for the other as to guiding the other in doing it on her/his own. e.g I have independently chosen to be a member of a team, therefore my point of view must be shared with my team.

Patience

the ability to recalculate objectives requires a gradual and often time-consuming process. Giving the space to people to (re-)discover and develop their capacities instead of "quickly doing it for them" requests plenty of patience and self-discipline. e.g My team needs to print a flyer. I have to consequently share my digital skills with my team, even though it would take up some of my time before I create the flyer.

asylum seekers as participants:

be aware of the field of tension they are exposed to: European asylum systems tend to push asylum seekers into a passive role, make decisions for them and oppress their autonomy. Thus, participating in a program that all of a sudden requests their active participation and contributions can lead to team frustration. Only clearly addressing and discussing these facts can help them to be able to proceed in a serene atmosphere.

Empowerment



START THE PROGRAM WITH...

a training with all participants/members of the group, **based on their expectations and motivations for joining**, to detect a possible "helper syndrome" and for having a group discussion about the concept of empowerment through short role play activities ("Support in filling out a job application → how do you proceed?"...)

If possible, organize a (digital) encounter with former participants of TABADOL/ESOP to sensitize the European participants to the role of the asylum seekers/refugees and characteristics of their daily life in the host society.

Practical Tipps



Involvement of former participants

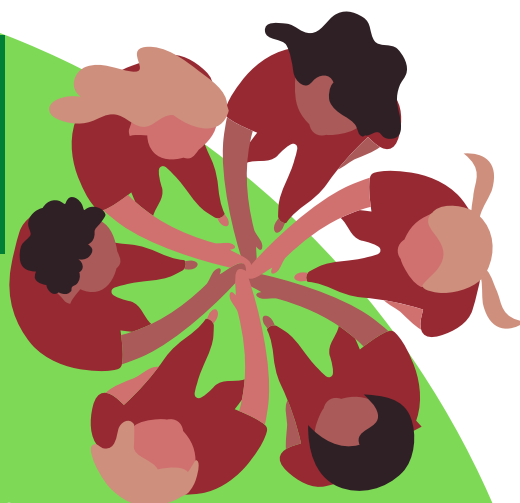
Every cycle of TABADOL lasted about 6 months and was done with one fixed group of participants. From the 2nd cycle of the project, former European interns, volunteers and former migrants participants switched their roles and joined the coordination team. Having a group of young people, who have already experienced the implementation of an empowerment project and who share the chosen approach, is a clear contribution to an empowerment and exchange project such as TABADOL and remarkably helps to increase quality.



Involvement of former participants

Coordination Team

TABADOL's team was composed of a multinational coordination team of five members. In Italy, most of the team members were former participants of Universo's empowerment project ESOP, most of us were already part of one of the two organizations and thus brought precious experience in the project's approach. Our coordination team was responsible for the organizational framework during the whole cycle and thus assumed tasks such as dissemination, selection of interviews, organization of the preparatory weeks and the formative part, evaluation and monitoring.



Training Activities

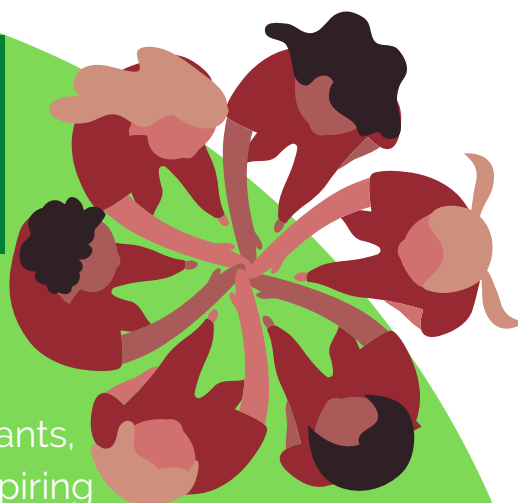
Besides the involvement in the coordination team, participants were invited to get involved actively and to take the role of trainers. This kind of responsibility can range from taking over or assisting in a whole program unit to being responsible for single workshops. Testimonies of former participants presenting their experiences after the first cycle of TABADOL or from the ESOP project and talking about new opportunities in their lives were an asset. The presence of former migrant participants in the coordination team and among the trainer had a very positive impact: Switching from the participants into an expert and leader role is an important act of acknowledging and increasing autonomy and orientation, and confirms the possession of new instruments and skills thanks to the participation in TABADOL. As a result of this experience, the participants gained new skills such as team management, guidance, didactic skills.

Involvement of former participants

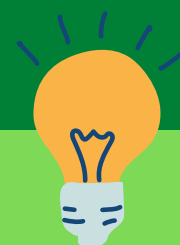
Training Activities

Furthermore, for current migrant participants, to see other migrants in these roles is inspiring and increases their trust in the project.

TABADOL's migrant coordinators often have a higher sensitivity to the needs of the migrant participants, hence their closeness to the target group. It is important, however, that not every migrant participant (and the same is valid for the European team members/participants) is appropriate for such a role. In order to avoid damages for the program and for the persons involved, the selection of responsibilities shall be done carefully and the necessary guidance during implementation (plus an initial training at the beginning of the project) shall be given.



Practical Tipps



To keep the coordination team together and to ensure that the project is implemented following its principles, it's recommended to meet at least once per month within the coordination team.

Constitution of the participant team



Dissemination

The constitution of the participants team (migrants and young Europeans) is fundamental for the successful implementation of the project. The **creation of a diverse group** with different needs and competences is the basis for a fruitful exchange and a peer-to-peer learning.



The **coordination team is responsible for the dissemination** of the program. In the case of TABADOL, dissemination is done through traditional flyering/posters and by using social media. However, in many cases, the most important is **mouth-to-mouth** propaganda done by former participants or volunteers of the organization, as it makes it possible to reach people that otherwise would not have been reached or wouldn't have taken the decision to apply.

Given that the target group of the dissemination material is represented by future participants (and not social workers etc.), it should be **available in the language of the host country and at least in English and another important language of the migrant community** so that possible candidates can gain information autonomously.

Another useful tool is the **organization of an information evening** that gives enquirers the possibility to ask questions and to learn more about the program.

The **experience of the former participants** is a crucial component during the dissemination period. The diversity of the selection group provides an easier access to the potential candidates.

Constitution of the participant team



Make program as accessible as possible!

- Use **videos in different languages** (create additional trust + give info to those people that don't have a high level of reading skills (yet).
- make **direct contact** possible (social media, WhatsApp)



Dissemination

Selection Interviews

The main objective of the selection interviews is to have an open application process in which potential candidates are welcomed to fill in the application form personally. This gives a first idea of the level of their comprehension and confirms the empowerment approach. The selection interviews then are done by two members of the coordination team. The presence of migrants in the team is a fundamental asset for the interviews and reduces the risk of potential cultural misunderstandings. The following points should be taken into account for the implementation of an empowerment and exchange program such as TABADOL:

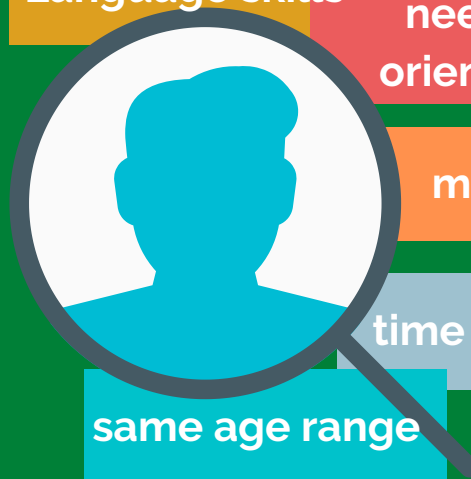
Language skills

need for orientation

motivation

time capacities

same age range



Selection of participants

A **diverse team of individuals with different needs and competences**, each of them having different cultural backgrounds and gender balance are essential. But for the constitution of the final team of participants, it should also be taken into consideration that for different reasons (change of residence, finding a job, participation in other projects...) not all the participants will stay until the end of the project. **Experience shows that from the very beginning of the project, some people tend not to show up. To be able to implement the project with the desired group size, we recommend to accept at least +25% of the candidates.**

The selection process of European interns and volunteers is very similar and focuses on the willingness to get involved in the process of mutual learning.



Practical tips



Following an **empowerment approach**, the first person of reference should always be the participant herself/ himself.

Decisions should be taken with and not about them.

However, we advise not to exclude social workers. They are responsible for the integration process and might supervise other activities designed for the potential participants. If the participants or the coordination team do not communicate their will to take part in the project to the social worker, their efforts will be useless.

Needs based approach

common definition of project structure

Introductory phase;

Before the formative part, the introductory phase (1-2 weeks) is an important opportunity to bring all of the participants of the project together (European and migrant participants) and to prepare them for shared experiences.

Definition of common rules

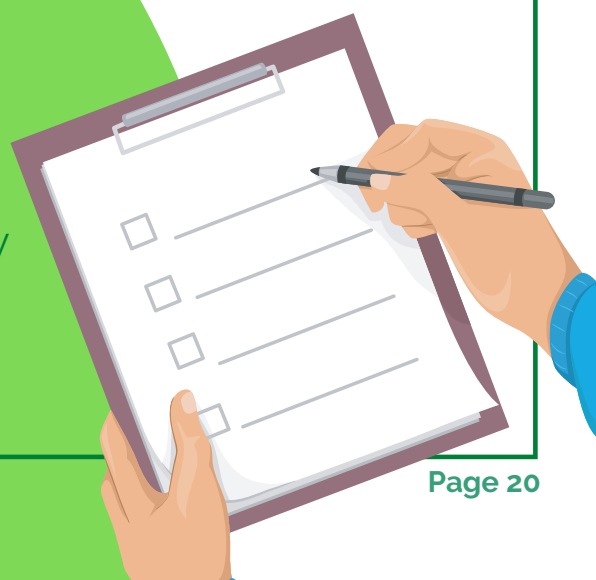
Laying down the rules together that are valid for the whole period of the project and for all the participants, is one possible activity. **The rules should not be imposed by the coordination team but developed together** and **compromises** have to be made. It's very important that these guidelines are then kept by all participants.

An **active involvement** of the participants from the very beginning and a **needs-based approach** should characterize every empowerment project.

Practical Tipps



One topic of relevance is the use of smartphones during the sessions. Small rituals such as collecting the smartphones of all participants (including the European interns and volunteers) at the beginning of the lesson, can be a useful instrument to tackle this topic.



Needs based approach

Needs analysis

It has to be clear from the beginning that **the migrant participants are the experts of their lives.**

Practical Tipps



Make a round of individual written **brainstorming** followed by a group brainstorming to collect the ideas and desires of the migrant participants.

It's fundamental that before this activity, the respective program unit is presented as clearly as possible to avoid misunderstandings.



The **provision of orientation and developing new skills** to the migrant participants for an autonomous life should be the overall aim of empowerment projects. For this reason, a **profound needs analysis** is fundamental to offer content that truly satisfies these criteria. It is important to **be aware of the fact that every group of participants is different** and that needs and approaches defined for a preceding group might not be appropriate for the current one.

At this point, a session on every planned program unit only has to define the general topic in order to collect ideas, questions and knowledge to help the responsible people to prepare a program that reacts to the needs of the group. A possible challenge here is the role of those who want to empower those who have to learn to listen to others instead of imposing their opinion on them.



Needs based approach

Team organization

Monthly team meetings with the whole group

are good opportunities to talk about how the project implementation is going and how individuals proceed with the project. These kinds of meetings are the right moments for the coordination team to discuss practical information and/or to remind the participants of the project's guidelines.

During the formative part

regular encounters with the migrant participants are fundamental to reflect the realization of the project. They are useful for monitoring the project's implementation and for evaluating the progress that has been made. Giving voice to individuals that are often not listened to in their daily lives and taking their opinions into consideration are important acts of empowerment. All participants shall be sensitized to the fact that they are part of the project and that they can shape it.

The **mid-term evaluation** should go beyond the regular monthly group meetings and at least 4 hours should be dedicated to it.

Similarly to the monthly team meetings, these are important moments to reflect on previous events and to develop solutions for existing problems together and to make proposals for improving the program. A possible challenge is that giving open and honest feedback might not be natural for many participants for cultural or other reasons. To prevent this, many different methods can be used, including smaller feedback groups (instead of expressing one's opinion in front of the whole group), giving written feedback, using the traffic light method (and other playful techniques).

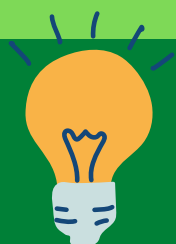


Practical Tipps

We recommend a simplified version of the “Future workshop” that stimulates groups to develop proposals for a better project implementation in an assumed world without restrictions.

Characteristics of training units

An empowerment program, with the aim of having an impact on its participants' life, shall be structured in a way that permits ongoing adaptation of program components to the needs of the participants. Furthermore, they can have a stronger empowering effect if **active participation** is encouraged because the activities ask for the contribution of migrant participants (and European interns and volunteers), for their opinions and for their experiences. **Another didactic instrument with a high potential is elaborating on the content and on the results of the activities of the different program units.**



Practical tips



Develop your own counter proposals when talking about the current legal framework/codes of conduct. This stimulates creativity and raises awareness to the existing one. For instance, after discussing the German/Italian Constitution, the migrant participants developed one, imagining the project as a state.



Resorting to and promoting the resources of the participants

In TABADOL, we simultaneously **apply a needs-based and resources-based approach** since we are aware of the fact that we are working with adults that have already developed important expertises and competences during the course of their life. The **appreciation of one's resources** is a fundamental part of an empowerment program. Migrants, asylum seekers in particular, are often not believed to have something to offer that can enrich European cultures. Guiding them in (re-)discovering their resources increases self-confidence and supports people in building up their future in a new life context based on what they already knew.

Hi!

嗨

assign responsibilities

Hola!

ask participants' experience

organize intercultural events

benefit of linguistic richness



Besides **promoting individual skills and experiences**, the appreciation of cultural diversity is another important characteristic of an empowerment process. Once again, **active listening** and activities that require active participation can guide those who empower the participants in understanding their resources and potentials. However, discovering these resources might be challenging as the target group itself might not be aware of possessing them.

Peer-to-peer exchange of young people with(out) refugee biography



Besides being an empowerment program, TABADOL wants to provide a **platform to facilitate (intercultural) exchange between young Europeans and migrants**. Combining these aspects in one project proved to bring very promising results and triggered the learning processes not only of the migrant participants but of the European interns, as well.

The role of young Europeans (in other empowerment programs it might be the role of people from the world) can vary from participating in the shared activities to becoming responsible for single program units or assisting in the program units. One of the objectives of TABADOL is to promote **mutual learning that is based on a peer-to-peer approach**.

On the one hand, this has a strong empowering component as the migrant participants are not only put in the role of those who learn but as well of those who teach and react to certain learning needs of the group of Young Europeans. On the other hand, such an approach creates a **long-lasting bond between all of the participants** of the project.



Peer-to-peer exchange of young people with(out) refugee biography

Preparatory week(s)

This necessary step before the beginning of the program should be done by qualified personnel in order to prepare interns and to give them an insight into what kind of challenges they might have to face during the program. During these interactive training, they might already face intercultural challenges which should equip them with possible problem-solving skills for the future.

Supervision sessions with experienced cultural mediators can lead to valuable results and can trigger awareness-rising processes.

Training and awareness raising of young locals

The basis for such an exchange at eye level is the ongoing training guidance of young Europeans. These training are fundamental to sensitize them to their own learning needs and prepare them for peer-to-peer learning.

As a tendency, many young people with interest in the migration sector want to help the target group and are not aware that help in the common sense of the word might not be needed and that they need to learn certain skills themselves. Preparation before the actual activities with the migrant participants and ongoing accompaniment during the common activities prepare young Europeans for their tasks and sensitizes them to their own learning needs.

Ongoing training during the implementation of the formative part

During the implementation of the project, various workshops and further education trainings take place on a regular basis.

Expert trainers pay attention to the relevant experience of the interns in intercultural education. The workshops enable the interns to acquire the basics of intercultural communication and allows them to deal with various problems in everyday situations. They help them to gain a fundamental understanding of possible complications and potentials while offering ways to handle them.

Shared trainings

Besides the training for the group of European volunteers and interns, there are training and activities for the whole group, including migrant participants. These are fundamental for the peer-to-peer approach, for mutual learning and for getting to know each other. However, in order to achieve these objectives, it's crucial to choose the right methods with awareness about the diversity of the group and about possible sources of tension.

**Use creative workshops
on migration and
diversity
f.ex. theatre, handicraft**

During the trainings participants discuss topics, such as the shaping of an enriching coexistence, migration or gender equality. Problems are presented in the form of role play to help participants recognize problematic situations.

**Use simulation games
on multiculturalism and
intercultural
communication
(f.ex. The Dardians)**

These activities also include applying various **problem-solving strategies**. A possible challenge is to develop trainings that are appropriate for a very diverse group of participants with different socio-cultural backgrounds and with different levels of education. Codes of conduct have to be taken into account when choosing the right approach for the respective group to avoid frustration and the splitting of the group. The trainers (and facilitators) should pay particular attention to respect the peer-to-peer approach.

**Raise awareness
with legal training
on refugee rights**

Shared activities

Shared activities that take place in an informal context are another place for the young participants to come together and to promote peer-to-peer exchange. To ensure that these objectives are achieved and that the activities are implemented at eye level, the guidance through cultural mediators or exchange facilitators is fundamental.

Organize Intercultural Events

- team work
- group spirit
- interaction with locals

Cooking together is a powerful tool to bring different people together

Organize interactive city tours where participants take over the role of city guides

Practical tips



The informality of the setting gives space to getting to know each other but comprises at the same time the risk of the formation of cliques.

Awareness about this tendency, particularly in the team of young European and the integration of group activities in the tours (e.g. games and picnicks) help to prevent this phenomenon.

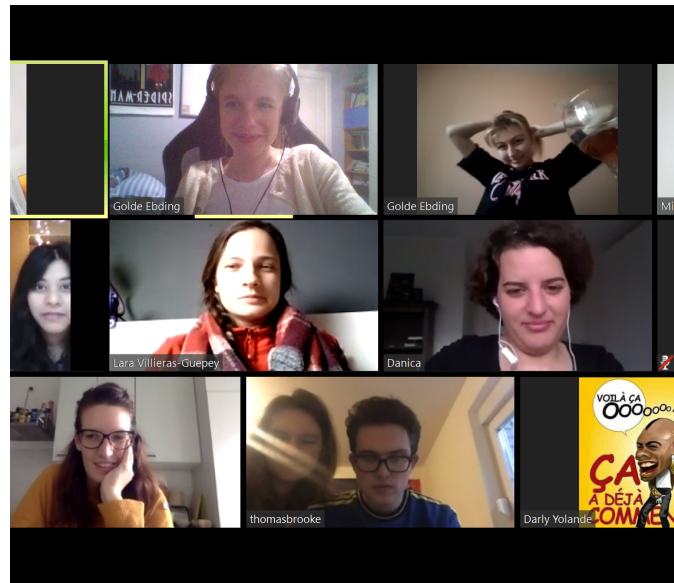


E-LEARNING

in-person learning

Tabadol was composed of in-person and e-learning activities which made our exchange with the German/Italian partner easier and allowed us to get an insight into our work on a regular basis. Also, this offered a platform for all participants to contribute. Participants not in possession of necessary electronic advices were provided with laptops and therewith assigned the responsibility to take care for the devices.

e-learning activities are easy accessible, in particular for young asylum seekers that normally cannot travel. Tabadol could continue during Covid-19 pandemic thanks to e-learning sessions.



Biggest Success

Study Trip to Brussels

Biggest success of Tabadol in terms of training, peer-to-peer and non-formal & informal learning was our common trip to Brussels in February 2020.

Why?

- Experience the EU institutions in first hand
- for many refugee participants first time to participate in a mobility meet, exchange, discuss and analyse critically
- experience European citizenship first hand



WANT TO GET ACTIVE?

Useful links
and tips.



Erasmus+

We hope this short guide for a peer-to-peer training concept involving young people with and without refugee biography was helpful for you and will support you to become facilitators of intercultural cohesion in your own context!

ICE BREAKER, GROUP ACTIVITIES AND GAMES

...can be found on our website!

Want to give us
Feedback?

We are happy to
improve this training
concept together with
You!

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