



MOOC Course “Union of minorities. Educational tools for the European cultural mosaic.”

“Union of minorities. Educational tools for the European cultural mosaic” is a Massive Open Online Course created in the frame of the project “Minorities as opportunity and occasion for chrysalis” supported by Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

The MOOC is designed for educators, youth workers, social assistants and professionals working with cultural minorities and multicultural groups. The online course offers theoretical insights, practical tools, and best practices which will allow learners to build more inclusive educational paths and projects in the field of interculturality and to operate in multicultural contexts.

Description

Content of the MOOC results from the collaboration between formal and non-formal education sectors, private and public organisations and institutions.

In the course, both formal and non-formal education methods are used. Each chapter offers different interactive learning contents which will allow to learn through video lectures, readings, interviews, and reflective activities. Moreover, the course offers learners a variety of well-tested tools, activities and educational materials, introduced by experienced educators, trainers and facilitators, which can be used in everyday work in multicultural contexts. Thus, learners will have the opportunity to improve skills and attitudes useful for working in multicultural contexts and to gain knowledge necessary for creating and implementing more inclusive educational projects and activities.

Video lectures and interviews are multilingual (English, Italian, Catalan) and subbed in English. All the text material is in English.

The course is meant as self-paced based. Learners can therefore choose their approach, by following the order of lectures or by focusing on selected topics. Since this is a self-paced course, the discussion forums will not be moderated.

Structure of the MOOC

The MOOC is structured into 6 thematic chapters:

- Chapter 1: Basic Concepts
 - Cultural Identity
 - Interculturalism
 - Ethnocentrism and colonialism
 - Globalisation, multiculturalism and human rights
- Chapter 2: Challenges
 - Invisibility and prejudices
 - Stereotypes
 - Minorities with and within groups



- Chapter 3: Personal and professional awareness
 - Observation
 - Non verbal communication
 - How to work as a team
- Chapter 4: Competencies, methods and approaches, and networking
 - Creative methods
 - Networking and partnership
- Chapter 5: How to prevent and manage conflict
 - Concept of conflict
 - Dynamics of conflict
 - Alternative conflict management
 - Restorative practices
- Chapter 6: How to assess and evaluate your work
 - Evaluation
 - Methods and tools for evaluation

The core contents of the course were developed by Associazione InformaGiovani, Università degli studi di Palermo, Universidade de Aveiro, Col·legi d'Educadores i Educadors Socials de Catalunya and Savonia-University of Applied Sciences, and enriched by the contribution of partner organisations and institutions experienced in the work with and for minorities: Arcigay Palermo, CAAT Projects, Aventura Marão Clube, Fundacio Privada Ficat, Fundació Catalunya Voluntària, Municipio de Lousada, Comune di Palermo, Roma Capitale, SUDWIND, Service Volontaire International asbl.

Course lecturers: Vania Baldi (Universidade de Aveiro), Elena Mignosi (Università degli studi di Palermo), Hannele Tams (Savonia, University of Applied Sciences), Miriem Solsona and Herman Fernandez Ventura (Col·legi d'Educadores i Educadors Socials de Catalunya).

How to join the course

Learners can join the course by enrolling through the following link:

<https://associazioneinformagiovani.edunext.io/courses/course-v1:associazioneinformagiovani+MOOC01+2018/about>

The course is open for enrollment starting from **31th October 2018**.

Enrollment to the course is simple!

Just click on “Register now” button on the top right of the course webpage. You will be redirected to a registration form (<https://associazioneinformagiovani.edunext.io/register>) to be filled with few information (e-mail address, full name, country, and username and password).

Videos created within the framework of this course will be also available on Associazione InformaGiovani Youtube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/user/InforGiovani>



About the project

“Minorities as opportunity and occasion for chrysalis” (ref.number 2016-2-IT03-KA205-009153) is a 2-year long project, coordinated by Associazione InformaGiovani and supported by Erasmus+ Programme of the European Commission in the frame of Key Action 2 “Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices - Strategic partnership”.

Main aim of the project was to develop a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) gathering together materials from different sources (videos, readings, interviews) and to make them available for social and youth workers, and any professionals working in the field of intercultural and multicultural education.

The project directly involved around 90 youth workers and staff persons from 15 partner organisations (NGOs, Universities, municipalities and institutions) of 7 European countries: Austria, Belgium, Finland, Italy, Netherland, Portugal, Spain.

In the first phase of the project, 7 study visits were organised in each country with the aim to collect tools, methodologies and expertise in this field to be used as a base for the MOOC content. During study visits, more than 50 organisations were visited and around 50 professionals were interviewed and shared with us their expertise and insights.

In the second phase, the content of the MOOC had been produced. A beta-version was tested by youth workers and professionals during a Training course in Portugal, and following their feedback first version of the MOOC has undergone further processing.

Last phase has been dedicated to finalisation of all produced material.

In October, the MOOC ““Union of minorities. Educational tools for the European cultural mosaic” is promoted through dissemination events in all 7 countries involved in the project.

Cultural and educational institutions, youth and social NGOs interested in the subject and willing to have more information or support translation of the course/material, can contact info@informa-giovani.net

CHAPTER CONTENT (summary)

- **Chapter 1: Basic Concepts**

- Cultural Identity

In this lesson we talk about the social, economic, political, environmental, generational, sexual conditions that contribute to forming the identity of each of us. Individual and collective identities are, in this sense, a cultural process always in transition between a specific tradition and the different challenges launched by the present.

A privileged approach to understanding these processes is provided by cultural anthropology, a discipline that integrates different points of view to explain how encounters and exchanges with the diversity constantly form our cultural identity.



- Interculturalism
 - Studying cultural identities allows us to understand how all cultures are the result of an intertwining of cultures. Every culture is always in between different people and groups. We gradually discover that we are different from others, and in the same way others also discover that they are different from us. This diversity is the baggage of our identity. Through different experiences and rites of passage we can understand that cultures are all unique. This is the reason why nobody can consider himself superior to the others. In order not to fall into the trap of cultural supremacy, we must study and enhance social contexts and policies that promote cultural practices based on respect for human dignity, reciprocity and recognition of differences.*

- Ethnocentrism and colonialism
 - Groups and cultural communities often define themselves through power struggles for the defense and/or the prevarication of specific interests. We know that civilising progresses emerge and are better expressed in non-warlike contexts and that social welfare has little to do with a climate of contrast and aggression. However, many cultures tend to try to impose themselves on others.*
 - The conflicting relationships between cultures are often used as a pretext. They do not have, at the origin, cultural reasons, but they hide geopolitical interests. When we observe injustices and social inequalities, we must ask ourselves whether these are the result of the desire for domination or not.*
 - Subordinating other cultures to ours means trying to establish a hierarchy between human groups, values and interests, namely trying to establish who must have more priorities and rights and who, instead, less.*
 - European colonialism is an example of cultural and political prevarication.*

- Globalisation, multiculturalism and human rights
 - Multicultural societies are a reality of our present, and the processes of economic, technological, media and migratory globalisation are the background to this new reality. These scenarios involve the emergence of intense ethical and political challenges for the future of coexistence between peoples and cultures from every corner of the earth.*
 - Multiculturalism is a fact in many contemporary societies, but its characteristics are very ambivalent. The core of multicultural societies is represented by the struggles for recognition carried on by marginalised social groups and cultural minorities that claim equal visibility, legitimacy and dignity within the various public, international and local spheres.*
 - Global institutions, such as the UN, attempt to correct through international conventions the imbalances and discriminations of race, gender, class, culture, religion, language (and more) that make the globalised world anything but the home of all.*

- **Chapter 2: Challenges**
 - Invisibility and prejudices



In this chapter, first, we distinguish minorities from minority groups. Then we establish parallels between minority groups and marginality, due to the social and media representation of these groups.

The social mechanisms of inferiorisation of minority groups are reported. Some of these mechanisms are identified with ignoring and making invisible the instances and the lives of minority groups.

To overcome this state of invisibility and minority, which marginalises and humiliates those who are subject, we must struggle to conquer a space of representation in the public sphere.

Symbolic and discriminatory violence is nourished by such mechanisms, affecting the concrete life of the people involved, and several times, this discrimination is deliberately exercised by speculating on malicious and unfounded prejudices.

We analyse the nature of certain prejudices aimed at reproducing social injustices and we present some observations useful for weakening these prejudices.

- Stereotypes

The stereotype acts as a simplified interpretation of reality and social groups. The stereotype becomes a stigma when one wants to exercise discredit on the quality and peculiarity of people and cultures. The stigma demonstrates the malevolent aspect of stereotype.

Stereotypes are often illogically constructed, and condition our perceptions, memories and feelings. When we are not able to understand the differences and the nuances of certain behaviours, we resort to stereotype that trivializes everything. The stereotype is a shortcut of thought. We can get out of its limitation if we compare ourselves directly with the way of life of those that we classify as "atypical".

- Minorities with and within groups

The videos deal with the issue of relations between minority and majority groups, underlining how the concepts of majority, norm and minority should be considered not in numerical terms but in terms of "power" (power to dictate the rules, political power, and so on).

Then, it is mentioned the concept of group identity which always arises in the encounter and interaction between social collectivities that experience some difference in their respective ways of living and in their forms of association, even when they are or feel they belong to the same society.

Finally, the need to move from the concept of diversity (which indicates a vertical and asymmetric relationship) to the concept of difference is highlighted.

The responsibility of this transition is certainly related to the laws of a country (legal responsibility) but it is above all a social and cultural issue.

In order not to have processes of marginalisation and exclusion but of mutual recognition and exchange between groups on an horizontal level, it is therefore important to intervene at a political and educational level. Only in this way it will be possible to build an inclusive society.

- **Chapter 3: Personal and professional awareness**

- Observation



In this lesson we will talk about the different forms of observation and the different methodologies. The classifications to which we refer with respect to the different forms of observation are the following:

- *Occasional observation and systematic observation*
- *Observation levels: manifest and latent*
- *Direct observation and indirect observation*

The observational methodology takes different forms depending on:

- *the different theoretical perspectives*
- *the strategies used to collect and encode data*
- *the level of involvement of the observer*

○ **Non verbal communication**

In this lesson we will talk about human communication and the role played by non-verbal communication in the interaction.

After defining what we mean by "Non-verbal communication", we will analyse in detail its components highlighting the value of tuning in the exchanges between two or more human beings.

In this perspective we will present the analogical component (relative to the non-verbal and paraverbal level) and the digital component (relative to the content) present in every communication. We will emphasize the function performed by the analogical component on the relational level and, in this sense, we will highlight the importance, for social workers and educators, of self-awareness in psycho-corporeal terms.

Finally, non-verbal communication level will be enhanced for its relevance in intercultural contexts and in situations of difficulty or discomfort, and the ability to use this consciously will be considered as an essential professional competence in helping relationships.

○ **How to work as a team**

In this video, the theme of the work group will be dealt with, identifying its characteristics and ways of functioning.

After a brief theoretical introduction, the work group will be considered in its dynamic complexity, in its rational aspects (given by the task) and in the irrational ones (related to the emotional, affective and relational dimension).

Then, the obstacles to the functioning of the group will be identified and the stages of work group will be analysed.

The need to take into account both the process and the product of the group will be underlined and the fundamental function of the group leader, or group coordinator, within an organisation or institution will be highlighted.

The tasks of the conductor will be studied in detail as a facilitator of the work group, as a guarantor of the process and of the task and as a promoter of the "group mind". In more general terms, a reflection will be made on the importance of a group culture as opposed to a competitive and individualistic culture also for the greater effectiveness of inclusive projects.

- **Chapter 4: Competencies, methods and approaches, and networking**



- Creative methods
- Networking and partnership

Network is defined by a group of actors and the connections between them. Network has common aims, trust and commitment. Beside the common interest and aims, network members can and usually have their own interests. Networking brings added value to participants' work and activities. Partners benefit from belonging to the network. Networking is a continuing interaction process. Partnership has to be beneficial for the partners, otherwise the network will not have continuity.

Partners can be from different fields (education, culture, welfare etc.) and sectors (public, private, third sector), different levels (personal, local, regional, national, global).

- **Chapter 5: How to prevent and manage conflict**

- Concept of conflict
- Dynamics of conflict
- Alternative conflict management
- Restorative practices

This chapter will focus on the conflicts we may encounter when working with minorities, with immigration or with youth. In the first chapter we will explain what conflicts are and what their basic elements are. In the second chapter we will attempt an understanding of the ways in which we respond to conflicts, how these evolve, and what conflict escalation is. In the third lesson we will look at how we can analyse conflicts by taking into consideration all their elements and see different ways of managing them. Finally the fourth lesson will focus on restorative practices and how they can help us to improve communication in groups, manage conflicts and prevent their escalation. Restorative principles offer simple tools to prevent, detect, manage and resolve conflict situations and disputes in different fields such as family, education, criminal justice and community.

- **Chapter 6: How to assess and evaluate your work**

- Evaluation
- Methods and tools for evaluation

This chapter gives an overview of the issues related to the evaluation, underlining the political and transformative value of each evaluation act, especially in the educational and social fields. It is therefore a fundamental operation in every social inclusion and empowerment programme, also because it allows the construction of replicable models.

Evaluation is always, in fact, the expression of a judgment and calls into question the observational and interpretative skills in relation to prefixed objectives. If the evaluator is also the planner or the conductor of the activities, this implies an assumption of responsibility and a rise of awareness regarding the effectiveness of a project or specific training activities. Therefore it is also a self-evaluative act and contributes to the change at the individual and contextual level.

After a first definition of evaluation, the relational nature of each evaluative act is underlined and the summative evaluation is differentiated from the formative one.



The concept of educational evaluation is then introduced as a transformative possibility at a social and organisational level. In this perspective, the evaluator is internal to the context and is involved, together with all the "actors" (the different components) of a given system, in the evaluation process. It is an ecological and systemic perspective and always has a participatory and community value.

Tools for evaluation are introduced: quantitative tools are differentiated from qualitative tools, highlighting how these are particularly suited to a context evaluation because they are constructed specifically in relation to the objectives assumed for a specific reality.