## Unit 2 – Case studies and simulations on intercultural competence of adult educators

**Recommended duration:** 15 hours

**Description:** In this unit, learners are introduced to case studies of real situations that happened in formal, non-formal, and higher adult education institutions in Romania, Lithuania, Greece, Spain, Italy, and Cyprus. They describe intercultural misunderstandings, how they were dealt with and solved, and different alternative suggestions on how to avoid or solve these types of misunderstandings. In this unit, there are also simulations/role-play exercises provided for developing role-play participants' intercultural awareness and skills. These simulations could be used in adult education settings as written or could be modified according to each trainer's and their learners' needs.

**Methods:** For each topic, a variety of methods and tools are recommended to be used. To start, a warm-up activity is designed to set the context of the topic (quotes or discussion questions) and/or test the learners' prior knowledge of that particular subject. After that, the main content of the topic is presented using text/reading paragraphs, diagrams, and illustrations. Comprehension and "Think and discuss" questions are recommended during parts of the main content and after it. Each topic ends with references, recommended links to additional materials, resources, and videos that could be used according to adult educators' needs. The provided resources are merely a recommendation. Adult educators are encouraged to supplement this material with their own resources and additional sources of information. And finally, after each set of case studies and simulations, an evaluation form is provided to be used by trainers after conducting a training session of the given case study and simulation.

At the end of the unit, learners may complete a self-evaluation form in order to reflect on their progress and comprehension of the material of the unit.

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

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

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**Most simulations in this unit will follow a common procedure:**

1. If necessary, remove all furniture from the centre of the room. Learners will need space to move around. Explain to the class that they will adopt the cultures of two unfamiliar groups A and B, interact with each other, and then examine their reactions. At this point, the *Background* information would be read to the participants.

2. Divide the participants into small groups of 4–6 (more than one group can participate at once). Each group should have 2–3 members from group A and 2–3 members from group B. You could also assign two or three participants from the whole class to act as observers. Give participants in A and B groups a copy of the appropriate briefing sheet (i.e., A or B).

3. Ask the observers to watch closely as two different cultural groups A and B interact. They may move among the participants, but they may not touch or speak to them. Their observations will help the class view the lesson with a wider perspective during debriefing.

4. Separate participants into two rooms (or two opposite corners of the room): one for group A, the other for group B. Allow them several minutes to read the information on the briefing sheet. Then take a few minutes to acquaint the As and the Bs with their new cultures and to discuss their new norms among themselves.

5. Visit the As and the Bs separately and clarify their values. Emphasize the importance of staying in character.

6. Be sure to emphasize the goal of the interaction between the two cultures as stated in the briefing sheets.

7. Begin the exercise with setting the scene and inviting the members of both groups to enter the room.

8. The instructor and student observers should walk among the groups, looking for behaviours that can be described and discussed during debriefing.

9. After 10 to 20 minutes, call time and end the interaction. Ask the learners to meet once more in different rooms or opposite corners of the room and to make notes for their intercultural interaction.

10. Call all learners back into the room for debriefing.

Case study and simulation in non-formal adult education institutions in Romania

### ▣ Warm-up

- Have you ever participated in an international course as part of your Continuing professional development (CPD)? Think of an intercultural interaction that you were part of or witnessed. Share it with us. Did you encounter any problems? How did you react?
- What are the barriers trainees may face in participating in international courses?
- What are the barriers trainers may face when delivering international courses?

### ▣ Case study – Training of trainers delivering international courses



**Introduction**

Non-formal adult education institutions promote and organize national and international programmes and projects that offer access to new skills and knowledge to a large percentage of people. International training courses that run within the framework of European programmes and projects are very popular as such courses can contribute to the continuing professional development of staff working in a multicultural context. Participants receive a focused and useful/adequate learning experience while also enjoying the benefits of different social and cultural environments.

In the culturally diverse learning environment, trainers face a great challenge in accommodating culture-determined differences. Existing research suggests that cultural differences can have a negative effect on participants' wellbeing and engagement in such courses, delivered either face-to-face or online (Liu, S. et al.,

2010). The question is: How do cultural differences in organising international courses affect the success of these courses?

**Background**

Our institution is a non-governmental organisation involved in European projects. Our long experience in organising national and international training courses taught us how important it is to consider and bridge cultural and linguistic differences, communicate successfully across cultures and establish meaningful relationships with and among adult trainees. Trainers' abilities to deal with these differences establish the success of the course, participants' wellbeing and sometimes the prestige of the institution organising the course.

**Problems**

- **Language barriers**

One of the problems we had was participants' language level. All our courses were in English and sometimes trainees' language competences were low. As a result, those participants did not understand the content and felt ignored and isolated. Having a colleague translate the content was not a solution (*Q1*).

*Alternative*

One alternative was for trainers to do detailed planning and preparation and use more audio/visual aids.

*Solutions*

To help ease the language barriers, trainers also gave trainees the course structure, its detailed plan and materials to study before the start of the course. Participants were able to better prepare for the course by going through the materials before each session and get familiar with new vocabulary. Trainers also used the flipped classroom approach. Thus they provided trainees with video clips introducing and explaining the main concepts and summarising the main ideas. The trainees watched the videos at home at their own pace and as many times as necessary. This approach not only helped them to understand the course content but also allowed them to review the content several times in order to overcome the language barriers.

To raise participants' awareness about the difficulties that people face when overcoming the language barrier the trainer can initiate the Language barrier game.

- **Little relevance of the content to participants' context**



Another problem trainees complained about was that the course content had little relevance to their cultural context. In one of our international courses the participants complained that the content we were delivering was

not relevant to their country and, therefore, they could not apply what they had learned to their context. Thus, they requested that the instruction cases be tailored to practical issues faced by their companies, which was difficult to implement in a group with participants from eight countries.

*Alternatives*

We realised that the course needed to balance the use of local and global cases to meet participants' needs. To this end, we included multiple sources and approaches in the course content to present a balanced view. We even invited local experts in the field to have QA sessions with participants and present their perspectives. However, these strategies did not work because they were all implemented from our viewpoints. The sources selected and the experts all presented the same local perspectives (*Q2)*.

*Solutions*

We knew that the trainer must elicit from trainees what they know about the topic and build on this. In order to balance diversity and localization, we realised that we needed to consider both the micro and macro levels of cultural learning and come up with ideas to integrate diverse experiences in order to foster intercultural understanding (McLoughlin & Oliver, 2000). To our knowledge, the best courses which solved the problem of the relevance of content to context were those when trainees were invited to contribute to the content with their own experience and knowledge. This strategy that asked the trainees to share personal cases from their cultural contexts was also a better way to ensure equal participation in the course. The lesson we gained was to critically evaluate the curriculum and create learning materials that go beyond the limitations of local structures, scaffold learning and organize learning activities that enhance active participation and encourage trainees to contribute to the teaching/learning process.

Trainers' lack of knowledge about trainees' prior knowledge and skills, participants' familiarity with the teaching methods or interaction of the course, 'rigorous learning' vs 'learning with entertainment' are other problems that trainers should reflect on when organising an international course (Q3).

**Recommendations**

Trainers should:

- Anticipate, value and accept differences among learners and ways of learning in order to create a safe atmosphere based on trust.
- Model and encourage non-judgmental sharing of experience/opinions on cultural issues commonly agreed upon.
- Identify risk factors and barriers trainees may face in participating in the course.
- Facilitate discussion among students with a variety of communication styles.
- Provide feedback across cultures in a variety of ways.
- Create opportunities for interaction among diverse trainees.
- Discuss the roles of trainers/teachers and learners across cultures.
- Integrate content and learning resources in courses that represent diverse perspectives, paradigms, or disciplinary approaches.
- Organise learning activities that encourage trainees to explore difference and practice perspective-taking.

(Adapted from Dimitrov, N. & Haque, A. (2016) Intercultural Teaching Competence, https://teaching.uwo.ca/teaching/itc.html)

> **Think and discuss:**
>
> Could you think of any other reasons why the mentioned problems exist?
>
> How can trainers customise messages to audiences with different levels of linguistic ability and thus get their message across?
>
> Can you think of other solutions to balance the use of local and global cases and make the content relevant to all participants?
>
> What other problems may come in an international course? How would you solve them?

## ◙ Answer questions

1. What were the main problems described in the case study?
2. How far do you agree with the solutions given to language barriers?
3. What are the most suitable methods which would meet participants' needs and expectations related to the relevance of the course content?

## ◙ Reflect

- What are the challenges that trainers encounter in international courses?
- How can trainers develop their intercultural teaching competence?
- What types of learning and teaching experiences allow them to enrich their training skills?
- How far do you agree with the following: "intercultural teaching competent instructors are open to diverse ways of knowing, are reflective in their approaches to assessment and curriculum design and promote multiple perspectives when they select content, readings, and learning activities"?

## ◙ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *Council of Europe*, *https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/language-barrier*
- *Dimitrov et. al., Centre for Teaching and Learning, 2016. Intercultural Teaching Competence.* A Multidisciplinary Framework for Instructor Reflection. *https://teaching.uwo.ca/teaching/itc.html*
- *Liu, S., Magjuka R., 2010. Cultural Differences in Online Learning: International Student Perceptions, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/220374832_Cultural_Differences_in_Online_Learning_International_Student_Perceptions*
- *McLoughlin, C. & Oliver, R. 2000. Designing learning environments for cultural inclusivity: A case study of indigenous on-line learning at tertiary level, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229439470_Designing_learning_environments_for_cultural_inclusivity_A_case_study_of_indigenous_on-line_learning_at_tertiary_level*

## ▣ Simulation – The banana peel

**Time required:** 60 minutes

**Participants:** two groups, 4-6 per group

**Materials:** 1 banana (or one for each trainee)

**Objectives:**

- Trainees will gain skills in observing and describing behaviour.
- Trainees will develop an understanding of how culture influences and shapes our behaviour, performance (e.g., peeling a banana) and attitudes towards other groups whose behaviour is different. What we usually consider the only logical thing to do, "common sense", is often "cultural sense", shared with those who learned the same pattern of behaviour.
- Trainees will learn that everything can be seen and perceived from different angles and perspectives. "My way" is neither the "only way" nor the "best way" to do a task. Our life is enriched when we embrace alternatives and diversity; knowing more than one way to do something is an invaluable asset in our lives.

**Procedure:**
Give each of them a banana (check for allergies).  (Face-to-face) Ask trainees to peel their bananas and hold onto the peels. Invite them to eat the bananas if they feel like it. If this is not possible (online), you can demonstrate the process (by peeling the banana) and discuss the procedure you adopted with the trainees.

**Discussion and further suggestions:**

- Ask trainees how they peel their bananas.
- Ask trainees who taught them to peel bananas and how they learned to peel a banana. When was that? Where? Explain to them that this is the way culture is learned. Culture is our "common sense," (learned behaviour, habits) which helps us to make decisions and interact.
- Ask trainees if everyone in the group peel their bananas the same way. There will be, at least, two different ways they usually peel their bananas (from the stem end or the top).
- Ask trainees if they have ever thought that other people peel their bananas differently. If they have not, why not? Why couldn't they see the difference? What assumptions did they make?
- Ask trainees if they consider their way of peeling a banana better than another way. You can organise a debate where participants present their pros and cons of the different methods of peeling; ask them to justify their arguments; don't accept them if they aren't justified.
- Discuss the conclusions of the *debate* (look into the analogy between banana peeling and culture).  Note that people tend to be perfectly happy with gained habits that everybody shares in their context and hardly ever question the way they learned to do things (e.g., peeling a banana). The same process happens with culture. We think "our" way is the "only" way or the "right" way of doing things. Later, through our experience and interaction with other people, we discover there are other ways of doing things. Elicit other examples (differences) trainers came across (e.g. which must come first: the family names or the first/ Christian names?; how to write the date).
- Summarize the main points, e.g., that differences provide us with alternatives and add salt and pepper to life. Instead of feeling threatened by differences we should learn from them and choose what works best

for our team, family or organization. Discuss the training course situation and its cultural problems (e.g., differences in teaching/learning methods/ activities).

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *Intercultural learning Classroom activities – guide. http://intercultural-learning.eu/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ICL@School-Toolbox-final-1.pdf*
- *Bloxham, J., Icebreakers and energisers in cross cultural training. https://www.agcas.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/Resources/ITG/Icebreakers_and_warmers.pdf*
- *Hill, M., Trainer Resources – 6 Ice Breaker Exercises for Intercultural Trainers, Available at https://culture99.wordpress.com/2015/04/02/trainer-resources-6-ice_breaker-exercises-for-intercultural-trainers/*

Videos:

- *Classic Intercultural Simulation Activity - Five Tricks, https://youtu.be/b-Y5wiSzWIM*
- *Simulations in non-formal education, https://youtu.be/3tikJrB5beo*
- *What is INTERCULTURAL SIMULATION? What does INTERCULTURAL SIMULATION mean? https://youtu.be/pmpEBWolRIk*

## ▣ Evaluation of the case study and simulation

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.*

|  |  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Case study** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.1 | The situation described in the case study was relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.2 | The content of the case study was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.3 | The proposed solution and alternatives described in the case study were relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.4 | The case study could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **2** | **Simulation** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1 | The simulation's objectives were clearly defined. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.2 | The simulation's objectives were achieved. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.3 | The content of the simulation was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.4 | The simulation experience could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Case study and simulation in higher education institutions in Romania

### ▣ Warm-up

Teachers will present themselves and the disciplines that they are teaching. They will express their general opinion about teaching activity during the last 12 months and how it influenced their personal, familial and professional life.

Few questions addressed to participants will guide them to point the differences between working with national and international students groups (especially those who are teaching separated groups – teaching international students in national language OR teaching in English language).

A pre-questionnaire will be delivered to the teachers that must fill-in before starting the activity.

Please answer to the following questionnaire rating your answers from 1 to 5 where:
(1) totally **disagree**……………………………………………………….. (5) totally **agree**

| Item | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I consider that the online activity is much more difficult to carry out than the activity in the classroom | | | | | |
| 2. I consider that I invest more time than before to prepare the course support for the online activity | | | | | |
| 3. I consider that it is much more difficult to evaluate foreign students through online platforms | | | | | |
| 4. I changed the way I teach notions for online courses | | | | | |
| 5. I changed the way I evaluate students for online exams | | | | | |
| 6. There are cultural differences in the way international students participate in the course | | | | | |
| 7. I believe that online activity has a positive impact on the level of assimilated knowledge of students | | | | | |
| 8. I believe that online assessment has a positive effect on students' academic results | | | | | |
| 9. I think that online activity has a negative effect on the teacher-student relationship | | | | | |
| 10. I encountered difficulties in working online with international students because I did not have computer skills | | | | | |
| 11. I encountered difficulties in working online with international students because they did not have computer skills | | | | | |
| 12. I believe that online assessment does not really reflect the student's level of knowledge | | | | | |
| 13. The number of unethical behavior amng students increased during online meeting | | | | | |

Age _____
Gender_____
Discipline that you are teaching _____
Years of experience in teaching international students: _____
Conducting theoretical lectures: Yes    No
Conducting practical stages: Yes    No

**Introduction**

On 11 March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the COVID-19 a pandemic. By 31 July 2020, COVID-19 had spread across 217 countries and territories, with almost 17.1 million confirmed cases and 668,073 deaths. America then had confirmed 9.15 million cases, Europe 3.31 million, South-East Asia 2 million, Eastern Mediterranean 1.53 million, Africa 0.75 million, and the Western Pacific 0.31 million cases.

As of 1 April 2020, the number of learners required to stay at home due to the closure of their educational institution on all levels reached a peak of 1.598 billion from 194 countries, as some studies estimated. The pandemic has had a big impact on higher education students' practices regarding:

- academic work (e.g., the switch to online lectures/tutorials, closed libraries, changed communication channels for teachers' and administrative support, new assessment methods, different workloads, and performance levels. etc.),

- daily life (the limitation of physical and sort activity, limiting hobbies, waiting for special context to reach food or medical suppliers, wearing masks, stopping seeing family members or staying away from grandparents etc)

- social life (closed dorms and therefore moving back home, no meetings with friends, university colleagues or relatives, no parties, no traveling, remaining trapped abroad, etc.)

- personal financial situation (loss of student job, worries about their own financial situation, future education and career) and emotional health (fears, frustrations, anxiety, anger, boredom, etc.),

- experiencing limitation in their academic activity due to online activities (the need for more computers in the family, internet connection, environmental problems like noise, family members in the same room etc)

An important category of students was represented by international students. Apart from the problems experiences by their domestic colleagues, international students experienced more difficulties. The most important one was the impossibility to reach their country of origin while academic activity pass to online: air travel was canceled; public transport was restricted and travel between countries was done only with the consent of the authorities. Also, the trip to a European country imposed, for many months, to self-isolate in a location for a period of 14 days. For many of them, spending too much time in the host country (even during holidays) determined important financial problems (accommodation, food etc).

After six months from the beginning of the COVID 19 pandemic, in the beginning of the new academic year, some universities proposed online lectures for theoretical knowledge and in site stages for practical one. Human medical studies, veterinary medical studies and many others had to mix online and onsite classes. Many international students, especially those from specialties that are supposing to have a lot of practical stages, especially during their last years, choose not to live the host-country being afraid that, at their return from the holiday, they will be obliged to spend 2 weeks at home so they will miss practical stages.

**Background**

Many studies conducted during the first months of pandemic period proved that, in all universities in Europe, confinement and social distance restrictions were applied. Students were not allowed to live in campuses or to come to school and all academic activity passed through a transition from onsite to online lectures

The only category of students who was continuing to develop practical stages were medical students from different specialties (general, medicine, pharmacy, kineto-therapy etc) who were asked to be in frontline of fighting COVID 19. So, many medical students enrolled themselves and worked with infected patients or helped overloaded hospital to provide medical services for different type of patients.

A limited number of scientific articles proposed some guidelines for academics and institutions about online activity. After several month of experience, researchers pointed out some conclusions:

1. online learning cannot produce desired results in **underdeveloped countries**, where a vast majority of students are unable to access the internet due to technical as well as monetary issues. (Adnan & Anwar,

2020) Students from undeveloped, remote, and rural areas had problems with poor Internet connectivity or even a lack of electricity. We also **cannot ignore poverty; with the final result they hold a negative attitude to the online mode**.

2. there are five high-impact principles for online education: (a) high relevance between online instructional design and student learning, (b) effective delivery on online instructional information, (c) adequate support provided by faculty and teaching assistants to students; (d) high-quality participation to improve the breadth and depth of student's learning, and (e) contingency plan to deal with unexpected incidents of online education platforms. (Bao et al, 2020)

3. There is a great need for **online use for teaching and learning, including webinars to disseminate research** and for international students and student mobility, which had been heralded, up to Covid-19, as a victory of globalization and an essential revenue stream for tertiary institutions. (Tesar, 2020)

4. During the COVID-19 pandemic, **teaching and support staff have played a key role in maintaining students' satisfaction with the university**, as established by the highest positive and highly significant coefficients for satisfaction with the teaching staff. Also, students from Europe may have 16.1% higher chances of attaining better overall satisfaction with their university compared to students from other continents, keeping the other variables constant in the model. During the lockdown, students were (on the global level) 'most of the time' or 'all of the time' worrying about their professional career in the future (42.6%) and study issues, e.g., lectures, seminars, practical work (40.2%). European students were the most concerned of all regarding leisure activities, e.g., sports and cultural activities, parties, hanging out with friends, etc. (32.1%) (Aristovnik et al, 2020)

5. On the global level, 86.7% of students reported that the **onsite classes had been cancelled** due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The most dominant forms of online lectures were real-time video conferences (59.4%), followed by asynchronous forms: Sending presentations to students (15.2%), video recording (11.6%), and written communication using forums and chats (9.1%). The rarest form was audio recording (4.7%).

6. **Studying from home** commonly requires greater self-discipline and motivation to follow through online lessons, particularly in the earlier period when students are getting used to the new system, which might affect the feeling of an increase in study obligations. On the other hand, lecturers unfamiliar with the new mode of delivery could overload their students with study materials and assignments – THEY ARE DIFFERENTLY REACT TO TASKS, HOMEWORK

7. The use of **technology for both teachers and students**, in the sense of making sure that students are equipped with the skills needed to use those online platforms (supposing that teachers were instructed how to use and develop technology and tools for their activity)

8. **Lockdown in countries where they are studying** – away from families for a long period of time,
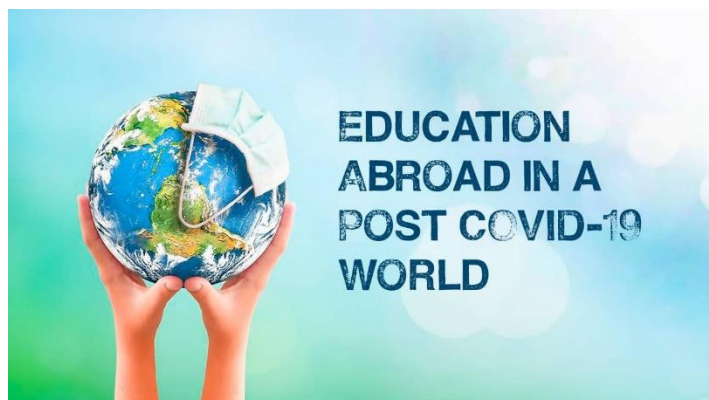
**Think and discuss:**

What were the restrictions imposed by different governments in the European countries?

What were the restrictions imposed by universities during the first year of COVD-19 pandemic?

How international students were affected by the restrictions?

What changes in their personal life were determined by COVID-19 restrictions?

What was the impact of COVID-19 confinement on their physical and mental life?

What changes in their professional life were determined by COVID-19 restrictions?

Who was more prone to experiences difficulties related to the COVID 19 restrictions?

What factors could increase the risk to develop physical and mental problems related to COVID-19 restrictions among international students?

How could universities help international students in need?

How teachers working with international students could help learners to better cope with COIVD 19 restrictions that impact their personal and professional life.?

What were the most difficult challenges that teachers had to deal with working with multicultural and multilingual students?

**Alternatives / Proposed Solutions and Recommendations –** they will be mentioned by working the following Worksheets.

## WORKING SHEET 1

## Difficulties encountered during online activities with international students

Identify difficulties that were characterizing your **online academic activity with international students groups** focusing on: a) student's activity (4 examples), b) teacher's activity (4 examples), and propose some solutions or practices that prove to work (*see e.g.*)

| Problem | Negative impact | Solutions |
|---|---|---|
| *Disruptive internet connection* | *Information was not delivered in a proper way with great impact on student's knowledge.* | *PPT support was more detailed and supplementary material was sent to all students at the end of the lectures.* |
| **1.** | | |
| **2.** | | |
| **3.** | | |
| **4.** | | |
| | | |
| **1.** | | |
| **2.** | | |
| **3.** | | |
| **4.** | | |

### WORKING SHEET 2

### Providing help to international students throughout academic activities

Confinement affected international students' life. Identify the most 6 important problems and explain how teachers could help students in need during their activities. (*see e.g.*)

| Challenge | Negative impact | Solutions/practices |
|---|---|---|
| *Social distance restriction* | *Some students living alone could experience **depression due to self-isolation*** | *-	proposing tasks/projects in small groups over the weekend,* <br> *-	working in breakout rooms to let them connect better* |
| **1.** | | |
| **2.** | | |
| **3.** | | |
| **4.** | | |
| **5.** | | |
| **6.** | | |

**WORKING SHEET 3**

**Unethical behaviours of international students and strategies used by teachers**

Teaching and evaluating activity during online meetings registered a seria of unethical behaviours practiced by students. Please mention 4 examples and pint how you succeed in dealing with them.

unethical behavior during teaching activity

unethical behavior during online evaluation
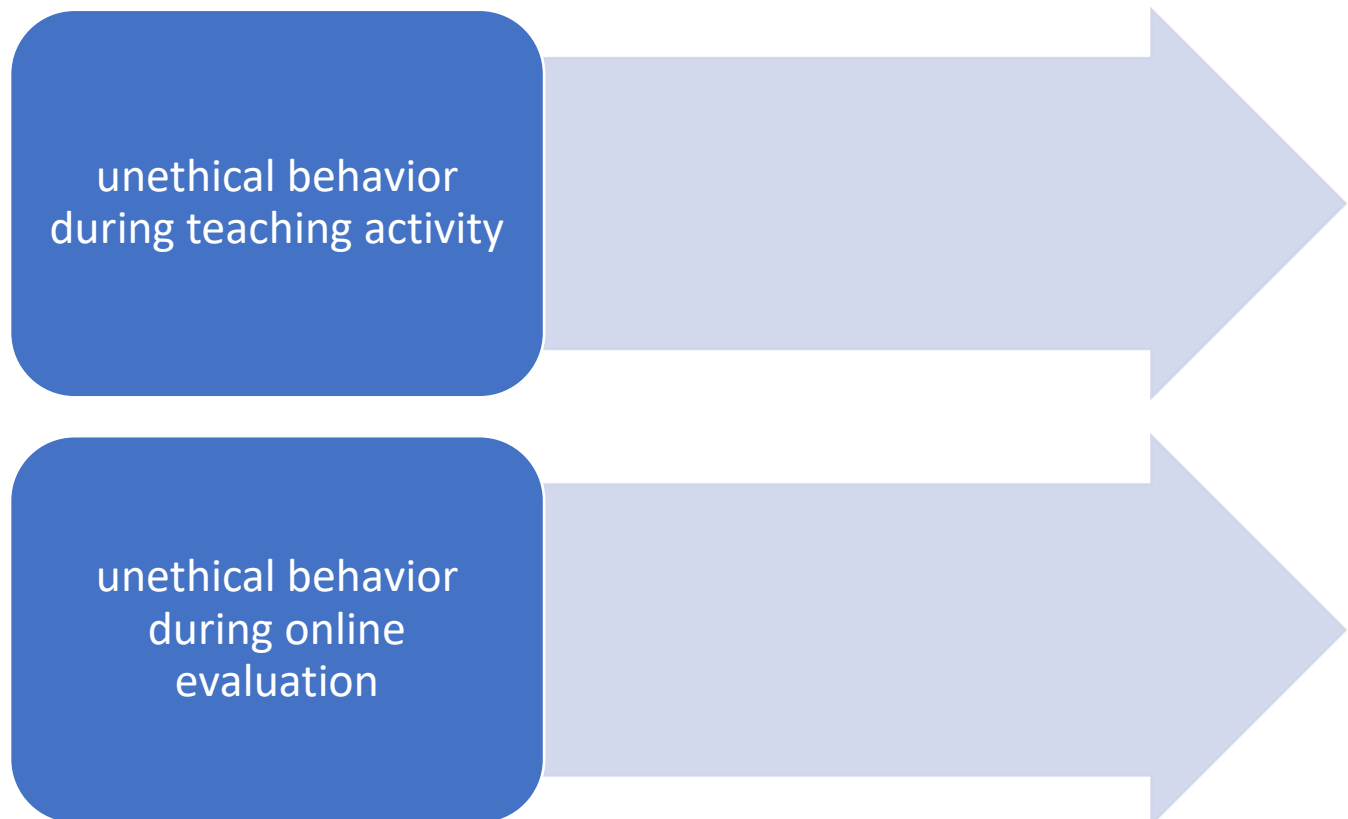
**WORKING SHEET 4**

**What institution, teachers and international students did to adjust the academic activity to the new context of online learning**
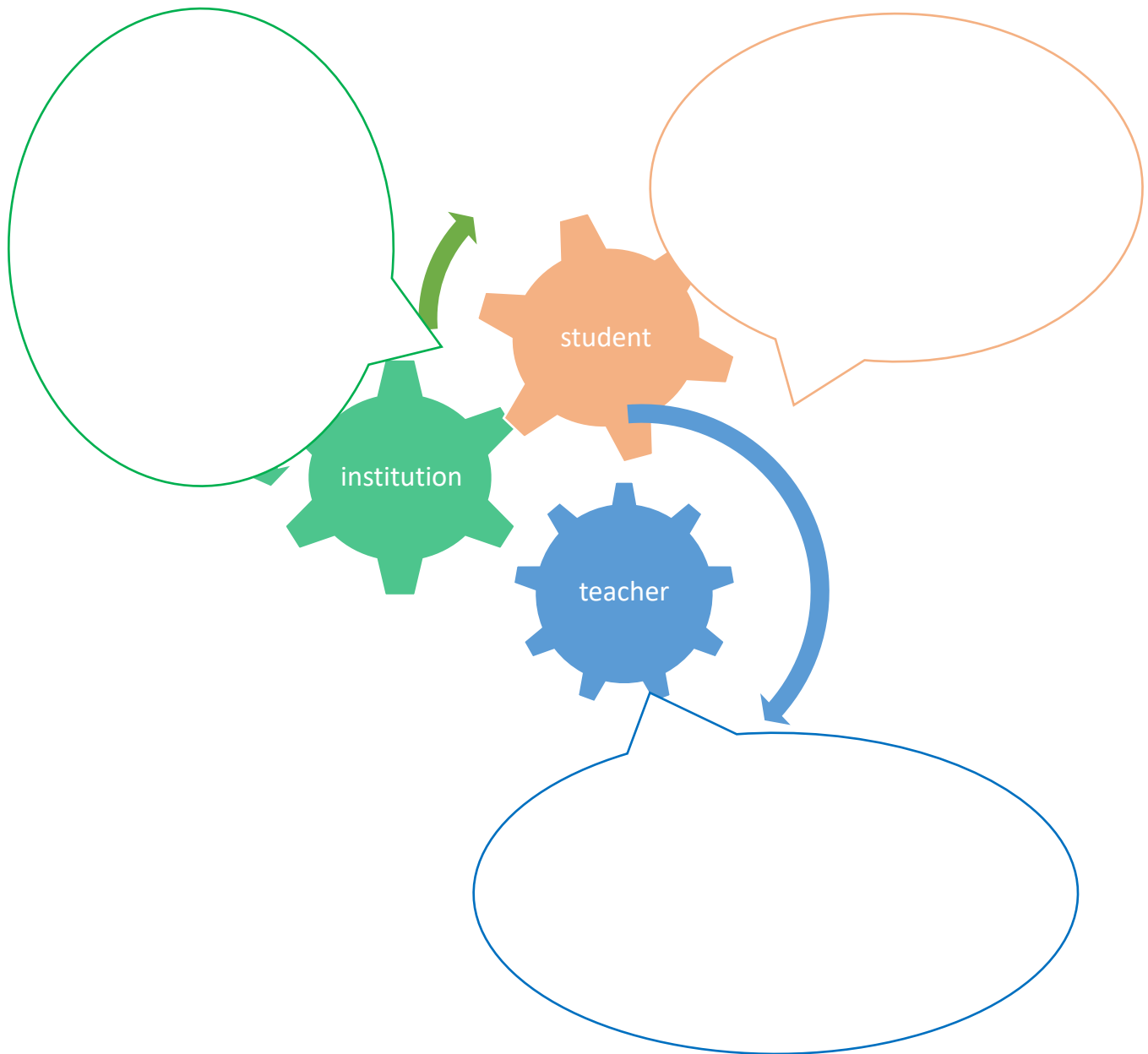
## ◉ Answer questions

1. How pandemic period and online activity improved skills in using technology devices?
2. How pandemic period determined teachers to change their teaching and evaluating activity?
3. What factors disturbed online activity with international students?
4. In what measure the academic achievement was affected by pandemic restrictions?
5. What ethical problems you identified during online activity?

## ◉ Reflect - Will we ever be able to return the genie back into the bottle?

- What were the most challenging problems of teachers in working online with international students?

- Identify strong and weak points in online activity.

- What activities/methods/practices/behaviors were newly applied, and you consider that must be kept for future academic activity (at school)

## ◉ Learn more

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## ▣ Simulations

**Activity 1**

Working groups – 10-12 teachers
Time – 45 minutes/per activity

Teachers will create a list with the most occurred situations in which they were during their classes and now considered that could do better.
(ex: a) one of the students sustained that his/her religion was better than the other's;
b) some students don't agree with the video connection during online exams and with the identification of their faces by teachers, etc.)

-   Teachers should give examples of how they could solve the issues (closing the dispute between students) with no more than 3 stepts.

**OR**

- <u>Teachers could split themselves into 3 smaller groups and organize a scenario play the role of students//teachers/classmates and create a role-play session (not long than 3 mins).  In this case; the play role could be video recorded to be seen and analysed after the presetation.</u>

**Activity 2**

Working groups – 10-12 teachers
Time – 45 minutes/per activity

A table-list of countries will be delivered to the teachers – countries that are represented by students from UMF. Teachers will be separated in small groups of 4 persons, and they should fill in the table – to associate **to each country** some **positive characteristics, names of: historians, scientists, painters, celebrities, researchers, singers, sports-players, monuments,  etc.**
Teachers could use any resources that they need.
Both activities will generate new ideas for collaborating with students in difficult situations related to cultural and linguistic particularities - situations specific to activities with international students.
Teachers will be asked to make, together, a sheet entitled **TIPS for TEACHERS** in which to gather all the ideas that can be put into practice (those resulting from their own experience but also those resulting from discussions and work activities carried out together during the training) then when working with multicultural and multilingual groups.

| TIPS FOR TEACHERS<br>WHEN WORKING WITH MULTICULTURAL AND MULTILINGUAL GROUPS ||
|---|---|
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## ▣ Evaluation of the case study and simulation

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.*

|  |  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Case study** | | | | | |
| 1.1 | The situation described in the case study was relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.2 | The content of the case study was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.3 | The proposed solution and alternatives described in the case study were relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.4 | The case study could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **2** | **Simulation** | | | | | |
| 2.1 | The simulation's objectives were clearly defined. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.2 | The simulation's objectives were achieved. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.3 | The content of the simulation was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.4 | The simulation experience could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Case study and simulation in non-formal adult education institutions in Lithuania

## ◉ Warm-up

- Do you know how many adults are involved in non-formal education in Lithuania every year?
- Do you know how many of them are foreigners?

## ◉ Case study – The Case of Mistaken Assumptions

**Introduction**

While every year Lithuania sees an increase in its international students in higher education, the number of foreign adult learners in non-formal adult education institutions is also increasing. If we look at Lithuanian language courses, only in the capital Vilnius there are about a dozen non-formal education institutions to choose from.

With the number of foreign adult learners growing, so does the number of challenges and previously unforeseen situations related to intercultural communication. One of them is the mismatch between teaching and assessment methods used by Lithuanian adult educators, and the teaching and assessment methods expected by and familiar to the foreign adult learners. One such case that will be described here happened in the context of Lithuanian language courses in a non-formal adult education institution in Vilnius, in a group of multicultural learners, some of whom were from various African countries.

This study will highlight the importance of clear communication and the mistake of making assumptions.

**Background**

This case with African adult learners happened in 2016 when they were taking a Lithuanian language course in one of the non-formal adult education institutions in Vilnius, Lithuania. There were 3 African students in a group of 8. Other learners were from Russia, Ukraine, and United Kingdom. At the beginning of the course, there seemed to be no issues or disagreements with any of the students. In fact, the African learners were particularly active in class, asking questions and participating readily in all language practice activities in pairs, groups, etc.

Throughout the course, the students were given short written homework assignments. Although the African students never submitted them, and other students did, the teacher did not find this strange or unusual – after all, homework is something adult students can choose not to do if they wish so. However, she noticed the first signs of miscommunication after a more important, essay assignment. All students had submitted their homework except for the ones from Africa. There seemed to be a pattern among the African students of not completing any of the written assignments. In the meantime, they remained active and positive. So, it came as a shock to them when the teacher asked them about the missing written assignments. They thought that they had already reported on the given topic… orally! It had not occurred to them that they actually needed to submit the assignment in written form because they never had to do that back in their countries. And in no way could the teacher have assumed that the form of submitting an essay should be clarified to anyone.

Moreover, since all the other students had sent their essays to the teacher by email (not on paper during class), the African students thought that they were the only ones who were required to submit written essays. This unpleasant "special treatment" from the teacher in their minds could only have been explained by the fact that the teacher (and consequently, probably all Lithuanian people) was racist and prejudiced against them.

*Source: https://s18670.pcdn.co/wp-content/uploads/work_place_conflict.jpg*

Here are the key problems and issues of this particular situation:

- The teacher did not clearly explain the form of assignments that needed to be submitted nor the assessment procedure to the students.
- The African students did not know what assessment methods would be used by the teacher and so they did not expect them to differ from the ones used in their respective countries.
- These students incorrectly assumed that the language course requirements were different for them than for other foreign students.
- They mistakenly assumed the reason for these different requirements – they believed the teacher to be racist.

The main reasons for the listed issues were ignorance about other cultures and education systems, and miscommunication on both sides. The existence of these issues is quite natural and understandable – neither side had had any experience with the other culture before.

However, the implications of such miscommunication and consequent misinterpretations could have a serious impact on the organization, adult learners, adult educators, and even society. Both the educators and the learners could develop a false view of the other, which would impede the teaching and learning process. The negative view of each other's cultures could influence the development of prejudices in society. The adult education institution would also suffer negative consequences of losing the learners' trust and damaging its reputation.

**Alternatives**

There were several things that could have been done to prevent this situation from ever developing:

- The teacher should not have assumed that all students understand her instructions equally. What one person considers to be obvious, is not that obvious to another. As they say, "common sense is not common".
- The African learners should have asked questions about the form of the assignment. Just because things were done in a certain way in their countries, does not mean they are done the same way abroad.
- The African students should not have assumed that the requirement to write the essay was applied only to them nor should they have jumped to the conclusion that it was racism.

**Think and discuss:**

What do you think happened in the end? What would be the best thing to do?

**Proposed Solution**

However, one cannot change the past, and the teacher, as well as the learners in this situation needed to find a way of mending the trust and helping each other succeed in the educational process and in the process of developing intercultural communication competence.

How this particular situation was resolved was, the teacher clearly explained that the African students were valued just as much as the other students and all of the students were equal in terms of requirements. She continued to say that all students needed to submit their written assignments in writing, which is the usual way of submitting all tasks in most formal and non-formal adult education institutions in Lithuania.

On a more interesting note, the teacher sensed that the African students may have exaggerated their outrage against the perceived unfairness, especially when they accused her of being racist in front of other adult learners of the institution. She recognized this as possibly being a way of trying to get out of doing the written assignment. However, she did not voice this suspicion and in a clear and calm manner reassured the African students of their equal position in the group.

In the end, the students were reassured and content with the teacher's words, their doubts and suspicions were cleared up, and they were happy to go on doing the written assignment and continuing with the course. In fact, their rapport with the teacher and consequently, their trust in the Lithuanian society grew.

**Recommendations**

There are plenty of similar situations in formal and non-formal adult education institutions in Lithuania and around the world. Most of them can be avoided or resolved by all parties keeping an open mind about others and listening. In this particular situation, there was a miscommunication about teaching and assessment methods. Therefore, these should be stated clearly by the educators at the beginning of the educational process.

In general, though, these tips should always be kept in mind when dealing with people from different cultures:

- Research other cultures in advance.
- Ask questions when having doubts.
- Learn from your mistakes and apologize if you offend anyone.
- Listen and observe, repeat or confirm what you think was being said.
- Pay attention to nonverbal communication.

**▣ Answer questions**

1. What were the main problems described in the case study?
2. How did the teacher resolve the situation?

## ▣ Reflect

- Do you think she was correct in not accusing the students of trying to get out of doing the assignment? Why?
- What similar situations have you experienced or heard about? How were they resolved?
- What would you do in a situation like this?

## ▣ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *[White Teachers, Here's How to Handle Being Called Racist (educationpost.org)](educationpost.org)*
- *[10 Tips for Improving Intercultural Communications - Blog - Perficient Latin America]*
- *[(705) How miscommunication happens (and how to avoid it) - Katherine Hampsten - YouTube]*

## ▣ Simulation – Time for Values

**Time required:** 45 – 60 minutes

**Participants*:*** teams of 3 people

**Materials:**

- *Secret instructions* to participants A and B, printed.

**Objectives:**

- Learners will increase awareness of how external pressure can come in conflict with their values.
- Learners will learn to identify conflicts in values.
- Learners will learn to solve problems and suggest ways to avoid conflicts in values.

*Source: https://www.financegurukul.in/what-is-time-value-of-money/*

**Background**

Not only people from different cultures have different values, sometimes there is a variety in values among people in the same culture. We have all experienced situations when we were under pressure to compromise on our values, such as work, family, religion, recreation, etc.

In this role-playing exercise, participants will be asked to put each other under such pressure in order to test their ability to identify conflicts in values and to solve problems and suggest ways to avoid conflicts in values.

**Summary of simulation**

- All participants are divided into 3 groups.
- Ask group C to leave the room.
- Participants from groups A and B are paired off to form sub-groups of two people, who are given the secret instruction below.

- After the sub-groups of two people have read the secret instruction, the facilitator pretends to change the plan and tells participants from group C that they will join the existing pairs, thus creating sub-groups of 3 people each.
- Each group try to agree on the time for meetings.
- The facilitator reveals the secret instructions to group C. All participants convene to compare and contrast their experiences.

**Debriefing**

The facilitator reveals the secret instructions to group C. All participants convene to compare and contrast their experiences. When all participants have joined in one large group, ask the following questions:

1. (For participants C):
    a. What was your experience like?
    b. What value or values were in conflict, such as work, family, religion, recreation, etc.?
    c. How did it feel to be pressured to compromise on your values?
2. (For all participants):
    a. How could you have balanced participant C's values with the project?
    b. What situations have you experienced in which your values came in conflict with external pressures or the values of others?
    c. What strategies can you suggest for avoiding conflicts in values?

### Time for Values

### Secret Instructions to participants A and B

Tell participant C that you will be working on a group project together, such as researching the culture of another country. This project is imaginary. You will need to meet regularly to work on this project. Ask participant C when he or she can meet, and more importantly, absolutely cannot meet. Be sure to ask about weekdays, weekends, and evenings, 7 days a week, 6 a.m. to 11 p.m., etc.

After receiving availability information from participant C, participants A and B tell participant C they can only meet at the time that is least convenient for participant C. Be specific and realistic – e.g., Sunday mornings at 7 a.m. Engage participant C, but remain stubborn and unyielding. Continue the discussion as long as possible, until:

a) participant C agrees to your request,

b) participant C refuses to discuss any more, or

c) the facilitator decides the role play is complete.

☑ **Learn more**

*Source of this role-play and many more:* *exercises - cultural aware (trainingabc.com)*

☑ **Evaluation of the case study and simulation**

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.*

|  |  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Case study** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1.1 | The situation described in the case study was relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.2 | The content of the case study was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.3 | The proposed solution and alternatives described in the case study were relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.4 | The case study could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **2** | **Simulation** |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2.1 | The simulation's objectives were clearly defined. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.2 | The simulation's objectives were achieved. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.3 | The content of the simulation was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.4 | The simulation experience could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Case study and simulation in formal adult education institutions in Greece

## ◉ Warm-up

1. Do you know the difference between formal education and non-formal education?
2. Do you believe that the training procedure must be adapted according to the age and the cultural characteristics of the target group of the trainees?
3. Do you agree that learning about cultural and historical issues of the hosting country is necessary for faster inclusion in the local societies?

## ◉ Case study – Online Training of Adult Trainers on Greek Culture and Traditions

**INTRODUCTION**

On issues related to the culture and the traditions of a nation, trainers must be able to provide correct information about the older and the recent history, geographical characteristics of the country, the main occupational activities of the inhabitants, local music and dances, recipes, local traditions, etc.

All the above compose the cultural and traditional characteristics of a nation.

To train on the above-mentioned issues, the trainer must enrich the training procedures with audio-visual material in order to make the training more interesting for the adult trainees.

**BACKGROUND**

During the last few years, people from many countries, with different cultural and religious backgrounds, have been migrating to Greece, and the majority of them are planning to remain in Greece and to start a new life there. For a faster and better inclusion of them in the local society they must be informed, among other things, about the Greek culture and the existing traditions in different parts of Greece.

The role of the Formal Adult Education Providers and of adult trainers is very important for adult migrants.

In our organization, we organised a course for 12 adults. Four of them were from Central and North African countries, four from Syria, and four from European countries (Bulgaria, Romania, and Albania).

During the first face-to-face gathering, they were asked by the trainers to present themselves to others.

All the participants reacted positively and presented themselves, their families, and their home places. Duration of this presentation about 90 minutes.

The trainer presented, in brief, the topic and the aims of the course (Greek culture and traditions) and answered the questions of the group. Duration about 30 minutes.

Before they left, they were asked to prepare a short written description about the following as homework:
- why they chose Greece to migrate,
- what their plans for their near future were.

They would be asked to submit this homework to the trainer during their face-to-face meeting, one week later.

Only the students from Africa did not submit their written assignment and they were negative to submit any written documents, although they participated in the group activities.

The students were asked to express their opinion about distance learning using their home computer or their mobile phones and the combination of distance learning and face-to-face training.

They all decided that the second choice will be more suitable for them and they asked the trainer for some more specific information and requested that during the next face-to-face meeting the trainer will help them to organise the distance learning part of their training better.

**KEY PROBLEMS**

Problem 1: Different levels of understanding of the English language.

Solution to Problem 1: For each group of trainees of the same nationality the trainer asked the most advanced in English to help the less advanced, to translate for them the discussions and all the relevant texts and questionnaires.

Problem 2: Different ways for social communication among different ethnic groups.

Solution to Problem 2: this was the most difficult problem for the trainer to solve. He made a long introduction, explaining to each one of the trainees and each ethnic group that the ethnic origin of each person defines and determines a lot, their personal behaviour and their ways of communicating with others and that this is quite normal. He also explained to the trainees that since they have decided to be included in a different society, they must try to change and adapt their customs to the customs of the hosting society's.

Problem 3: Different expectations they had when they decided to attend the training course.

Solution to Problem 3: The trainer explained to the trainees that the training programme and the training procedures are designed by experienced educators for a multinational and multicultural audience, aiming to meet the expectations of all the groups. So, he advised them not to criticize the training procedures from the beginning but to try to be more flexible and discuss with the trainer if the training programme meets their expectations later.

Problem 4: Different experience with using ICT apps.

Solution to Problem 4: When the trainer realised the different abilities of the trainees in ICT applications he decided to spent extra time, after the end of the course, with the less experienced in order to help them acquire the minimum required digital literacy, so they would be able to attend the training procedures with the others.

**KEY POSITIVES**

The key positives of the training procedures appeared from the very beginning until the end of the training courses and were expressed as comments in the questionnaire the trainees completed at the end of the training period.

- The enthusiasm they expressed when they realised how the content of the course would help them to be included in the local society,
- the very friendly atmosphere they created among them,
- the relation they built with the trainer,
- the extensive use of the supporting training material they could use (CDs, Videos, Books, etc.),
- the useful links where they could find updated information.

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The trainer organised for the trainees a Farewell event after the end of the training with local food, traditional music, and dances for a better understanding of the cultural/ethnic differences.

The main positive of the training programme was the continuation of the good relations among the trainees. They decided to continue to meet each other in person and online the first Monday of each month to exchange information about their lives and to propose solutions that will improve the quality of their life in the hosting country.

**ALTERNATIVES**

To prevent the negatives in the training procedures the trainer

- should be prepared about the ethnic differences among the trainees,
- should be ready to replan  the training procedure according to the understanding of the trainees,
- should offer extra time to train separately those trainees who may need extra support.

**PROPOSED SOLUTIONS**

To achieve better final results in the training procedures and after our experience in implementing multinational and multicultural training activities, we may propose the following:

- very strict selection criteria of the trainers,
- very easy and friendly training material to the trainees,
- a very clear description of the obligations and the rights of the trainees during the training procedure,
- for trainers, strict instructions to avoid any kind of discrimination (on the grounds of gender, skin colour, age, etc.)

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

After completing the course "Greek Culture and Greek Traditions for Migrants and Refugees" in our country, having studied similar courses implemented in Greece or other countries in non-formal adult education, and having collected "good practice" examples on similar activities in other countries, we may say that the methodology used in almost all cases is more or less the same and the points which have to be revised by the organisers of the course and the trainers are for all the cases almost the same.

So we recommend the following:

- be informed in advance about the ethnic synthesis of the trainees and their cultural characteristics,
- avoid any kind of discrimination,
- help all the trainees and offer extra help to those who need it, for as long as they need it,
- create a friendly environment among the trainees.

**Think and discuss:**

What are the positives and negatives between distance and face-to-face learning?

What are the main difficulties while teaching multicultural groups?

## ◉ Answer questions

1. If you had known from the beginning the difficulties you would have during the training of a multicultural group, what would you have changed in your training methodology?
2. Is there anything you would have done differently during the training?
3. With which ethnic group did you have the most difficulties communicating and with which one the least?

## ◉ Reflect

- Do you think it is better to use traditional ways of teaching or to introduce digital apps for training multicultural and multinational trainees?
- Which ethnic group reacted better to your training?
- Were the trainees interested to learn about the culture and traditions of Greece?

## ◉ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *https://www.greeka.com/greece-culture/traditions/*
- *https://www.mfa.gr/missionsabroad/en/about-greece/history-and-culture/culture.html?page=8*
- *https://www.greeka.com/greece-culture/*
- *https://www.discovergreece.com/travel-ideas/cover-story/traditions-greece*
- *https://www.definitelygreece.com/greek-traditions/*
- *https://gr.pinterest.com/greekacom/traditions-in-greece/*
- *https://theculturetrip.com/europe/greece/articles/11-cultural-festivals-on-the-greek-islands-to-know-about/*
- *https://www.novinite.com/articles/115027/Greek+Culture+and+Traditions+-+Where+the+West+Meets+the+East*
- *https://www.greecetravel.com/holidays/*
- *https://www.everyculture.com/Ge-It/Greece.html*

Videos:

- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rhh0dEFm678*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EP0QuKs-uDE*
- *https://www.youtube.com/c/greece/videos*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bDrYTXQLu8*
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W8SxfUmgEjI
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0xrLnfFlYGY
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ms-xaTeLt4
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jKEF1HTVRPA

## ◉ Simulation – Different People, Different Cultures, Different Traditions

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**Time Request:** 60-75 minutes

**Number of Participants**: 12 divided into 3 groups of 4. Each group with as many similar characteristics as possible.

**Required material:**

- Books for reference
- CDs and Videos
- CD player, Video player, Laptop

**Objectives:**

- To increase the students' interest in the culture and traditions of the hosting country
- To accept differences among people
- To increase mutual understanding
- To increase the use of the ICT app in people's lives
- To discover new sources of information and knowledge

**SUMMARY OF SIMULATION**

1) The students will be divided into 3 groups of 4.
2) Each group will work for 30 minutes on a different round table, collecting info according to the instructions, using the relevant material provided.
3) After the 30 minutes, the 3 groups will meet together and one representative from each group will present for a maximum of 10 minutes, the information collected by his group.
4) The trainer will summarise the 3 presentations.
5) The students will comment on the procedure.
6) The conclusion of the training, prepared by the trainer and approved by the students, will be disseminated to each student for his file.

**DEBRIEFING**

When all the students meet together again, they exchange their experiences on the previous procedure.

1) How did they manage the time to complete the mission they had undertaken?
2) How easy was it for them to prepare and present the report?
3) How are they going to use the information they got after the end of the work?
4) Do they believe that they got any benefit at the end of this learning procedure?

**▣ Learn more**

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *https://www.theacropolismuseum.gr/en*

- *http://www.visitgreece.gr/en/culture/museums/acropolis_museum*
- *https://www.athensguide.com/plaka.html*
- *https://theculturetrip.com/europe/greece/articles/the-top-7-things-you-must-do-in-plaka-athens/*
- *https://foursquare.com/top-places/athens/best-places-live-music*

Videos:

- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8Z6BXJWBf0*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KA0C26Vzs8*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WtYQBkyfb9A*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0PV_l_HXZt0*

## ◉ Evaluation of the case study and simulation

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.*

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Case study** | | | | | |
| 1.1 | The situation described in the case study was relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.2 | The content of the case study was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.3 | The proposed solution and alternatives described in the case study were relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.4 | The case study could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **2** | **Simulation** | | | | | |
| 2.1 | The simulation's objectives were clearly defined. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.2 | The simulation's objectives were achieved. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.3 | The content of the simulation was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.4 | The simulation experience could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Case study and simulation in non-formal adult education institutions in Spain

### ◉ Warm-up

Spain is at the bottom of the OECD in adult education due to family responsibilities.

Other obstacles are being too busy at work, being expensive to study or not meeting the prerequisites to be able to take the desired course.

It is also affected by the lack of support from the company, that the course is offered at an inappropriate time or place or that something unexpected arises that prevents the training.

Spain has been receiving many immigrants with a low level of skills before the economic crisis and who now have few skills for employment.

The situation of adult learning and education in Spain has slightly deteriorated during 2020, mainly influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic, showing how little digital skills exist among the adult learners so it is crucial to make ICT and other digital technologies available to all of them.

### ◉ Case study – How the digital divide affects adult education of migrants in Spain

**Introduction**

- The digital divide affects adults who still do not have access to the internet or basic digital skills.
- Restriction of mobility has forced them to study or work from home, making electronic devices essential tools.
- But the problem goes beyond the lack of equipment. During confinement, it became clear that these computer skills were more necessary than ever.
- And all of these considerations are even more apparent when it comes to the adult immigrant population.

**Background**

- There is a recent study by a non-profit organisation providing counselling and reception to immigrants and refugees in Spain, which finds that the digital divide has important consequences for the foreign-born population.
- First, migrants may be able to take advantage of digital tools to reduce, to some extent, social inequalities.
- However, the second main finding is that new technologies have the power to amplify existing inequality or even create new forms of discrimination.
- Thirdly, the study stresses the risk related to fake news with xenophobic and racist content. Dis/misinformation has especially damaging effects on society, which can be used to justify prejudices against groups and increase discrimination.
- Effects of the digital divide are immensely felt in many areas, like education, job opportunities, communication, health information, community involvement, and so on.
- Non-formal adult education institutions in Spain have to face the repercussions of this digital divide, as well as other problems derived from the time availability of the students, the lack of motivation, the lack of linguistic competencies and the difficulty of forming homogeneous groups.

> **Think and discuss:**
>
> Does the digital divide exist?
> What has caused the digital divide?
> What are examples of the digital divide?
> Who is most affected by the digital divide?
> What problems does the digital divide cause?
> How does the digital divide affect migrants?
> What is the digital divide in adult education?
> What qualities of the digital divide make it a big issue in non-formal adult education institutions?

### Alternatives / Proposed Solution

- Non-formal adult education institutions should, especially through their teachers, minimize the effects of the digital divide on adult migrants.
- Teachers don't have to stand by and watch as their learners struggle from a lack of adequate computer access outside of the training centre.
- The first step is to understand the problem, it means knowing the learner access (what sort of technology access each learner has outside of the classroom) as early as possible, delivering quality instruction.
- Developing lesson plans with bad access in mind is also an option. The capabilities and learning styles of every learner and every classroom are different, so teachers are already familiar with the need to personalize assignments to fit this variability.
- Teaching digital literacy. If learners have lower digital literacy, teachers can address it by building digital etiquette into their classroom assignments – even if the subject matter is not directly related to technology.
- Helping provide access. Teachers must go beyond the assumption that disadvantaged learners know their options and how they can use available resources to compensate, providing learners with a guide on basic library information such as location, policies and hours, as well as how to maximize the technology already in the home.
- Finally, helping the learners by advocating on their behalf for resources and technology.

### Recommendations

- The availability of free access points, providing both an internet connection and computers, is imperative so that those who do not have the equipment at home can still access the digital world.
- Drawing positive attention to migrants who have significantly contributed to the development of new technologies can motivate those who identify with these groups to join the digital world.
- Digital competency workshops can reduce inequities.
- Non-formal adult education institutions can play an important role by reinforcing a critical view of online content and encouraging people to discern between reliable sources of information and to confront misinformation.

- It is absolutely necessary that all of us, civil society, ICT professionals, training centres, educators, governments, the third sector and technology companies, mobilize to reduce inequalities and ensure that people have equal opportunities in terms of access and use of the Internet.

## ▣ Answer questions

1. How does the digital divide affect non-formal adult education institutions?
2. What steps can be taken by teachers to bridge the digital divide?
3. Are teachers prepared to face the digital divide of their students?
4. How does the digital divide affect adult education in poorer neighborhoods?
5. How does the digital divide impact society?
6. How does the digital divide affect learners as citizens of a global community?
7. Why is digital equity important?
8. What is the best way to narrow the digital divide?

## ▣ Reflect

- Think about the idea that money, language, education or infrastructure creates a gap between those who have access to information technologies and those who do not.
- Is the digital divide widening or narrowing?
- How does age and gender contribute to the digital divide?
- How does poverty contribute to digital divide?
- How is digital divide creating new challenges in society?
- How does digital divide affect economy?
- What steps can be taken by us to bridge the digital divide?
- Who benefits from digital divide?

## ▣ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/adult-education-and-training-79_en*
- *https://countryreport.eaea.org/spain*
- *https://www.magisnet.com/2019/06/espana-a-la-cola-de-ocde-en-educacion-de-adultos-por-culpa-de-las-cargas-familiares/*
- *https://www.lavanguardia.com/vida/formacion/20200616/481813246528/ofimatica-competencia-digital-basica-brecha-digital-herramientas-programas.html*
- *https://observatory.tec.mx/edu-news/digital-divide-older-adults*
- *https://ec.europa.eu/migrant-integration/librarydoc/divides-impact-of-the-digital-divide-on-the-foreign-population*
- *http://www.digitaldividecouncil.com/the-impacts-of-digital-divide/*
- *http://www.digitaldividecouncil.com/top-five-digital-divide-solutions/*
- *https://www.powerschool.com/resources/blog/teachers-can-narrow-digital-divide-classrooms/*

Videos:

– *The Digital Divide: Impact on Education*
  *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ounC6NHCu0k*

– *Closing the Digital Divide: 5 Digital Literacy Strategies to Help Adult Learners*
  *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8CLlqsqDlw*

– *Education continuity in Spain during the COVID-19 crisis*
  *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lMpwz75XBRQ*



*Source: https://www.newsclick.in/Digital-Divide-JU-Professor-Declines-Late-Answer-Scripts-Student-Caused-Mental-Trauma*

## ▣ Simulation – Aid to Minorians exercise

**Time required:** 90 - 120 minutes

**Participants***: two groups, 4-6 per group

**Materials for Minorians:**

- Instructions for Minorians Handout
- Old cloth arm bands from old white sheet (one per person)
- 1 small newspaper
- 1 small grocery bag
- 15 brass fasteners
- 1 ball of string

**Materials for Majorians:**

- Instructions for Majorians and Minorians Handout
- Classy arm bands from fancy fabric (one per person)
- Various colours of crepe paper
- Various colours of tissue paper
- 40 paper doilies
- 2 rolls of scotch tape
- 2 rolls of masking tape
- 4 pairs of scissors
- A new box labelled "Foreign Aid"
- Newsprint flip chart sheets

**Objectives:**

- Learners will gain skills in observing and describing behaviours.
- Learners will develop an understanding of how our cultural values influence the way we view other groups.
- Participants will learn that to bring in aid by outsiders is not the way to start "something".
- Participants will realize that outsiders should not impose their ways on people living in the village.

**Background**

In what ways do power differentials foster feelings of prejudice?

How can bigotry be reduced?

These issues were explored through a simulation developed by Robert Kohls and John Knight known as **Minoria-Majoria.**

Like many cross-cultural simulations, it has four phases: (1) an introduction, (2) intra-group orientation, (3) inter-group interaction, and (4) a debriefing-reflection.

Participants receive an overview of the famous Robber's Cave Experiment. The main point is that inter-group conflict could be reduced by cooperating on common goals. To reduce expectancy effects, little information about Minoria-Majoria is given at this point.

The overall time schedule is mentioned, along with a brief historical note about the simulation.

The Minoria-Majoria raises a number of fascinating questions about how simulations can (or can not) heighten awareness about cross-cultural issues. One final point worth considering is the difference between role-plays, simulations and discussions.

The Minoria-Majoria simulation was designed to get participants to experience what discrimination and rejection felt like first-hand. It deals with raw emotions and sometimes not all participants are able to handle the ensuing anger or frustration effectively.

This simulacrum works best if participants are able to feel engaged in the inter-group interaction phase of the activity, then disassociate from their roles in the final phase. Not all participants can switch roles easily. In this sense, simulations are a good way to stimulate lateral thinking because they require participants to process information in different ways.

**Debriefing**

After thirty minutes or so, a short debriefing session is held. The classic simulation questions are:

1. "What did it feel like to be in X-culture?"
2. "How did you perceive Y-culture?"

Ask each small group whether or not they came to an agreement and what that agreement was.
If a group did not come to an agreement, ask them why they did not.
Then, as a large group, ask the following discussion questions:

3. For the Majorians: "How did you feel about the Minorians and their acceptance?"
4. For the Majorians: "What kinds of cultural differences did you notice in your discussion with the Minorians?"
5. For the Minorians: "How did you feel about the Majorians and their approach?"
6. For the Minorians: "What things did the Majorians do that you found offensive?"
7. What did you observe in the exercise?
8. What did you learn from the exercise?
9. Do you agree with the idea that "outsiders have a tendency to give away a lot of money and materials which will inhibit a project"?
10. Do you agree with the idea that "insiders will accept whatever given but then see as outsiders"?
11. What are the "real world" implications of an exercise such as this one?

Varied responses are noted and possible adaptations of this simulation are discussed. The facilitators write down participant comments on a whiteboard without exegesis. Though a handful of persons from each culture are vocal, some can prefer to be quiet and simply observe. A list of video resources for teaching about racism and discrimination can be distributed at the end of the simulation.

**Summary of simulation**

19. Divide participants into two small groups of 4-6 people each (Majorians and Minorians).
20. Give the following instructions to the two groups together: this is an intercultural communications exercise called "Aid to Minorians" and we will supply all that you will need for the exercise.
21. One group is identified as the Minorians and the second as the Majorians. Have each group's members put on their armbands identifying who they are.
22. Separate the Majorians and Minorians. Allow each group time to read their briefing sheet and learn their task. Briefly train Majorians and Minorians in the cultural aspects that they must demonstrate.
23. Reunite both groups and begin the simulation.
24. End the simulation and begin the debriefing, asking each small group to reveal whether or not they came to an agreement.
25. Ask discussion questions.

**Aid to Minorians**

**Majorians**

You are the fortunate citizens of Majoria.  Majoria's technology, natural resources, and wealth make it a country without peer in the modern world.  Your people have solved the scourges of earlier centuries: epidemics, hunger, limited production, illiteracy, etc.  People in your country worry little about survival and more about opportunity in a land of abundance.

Unfortunately, there are other countries that are far less fortunate.  Many people in your country are concerned about their plight B some out of guilt of having so much while others have so little; others out of the realism that the world will no longer be safe if the current imbalance of technology, resources, and materials continues; some out of a need to find new markets for their own products, which will help the developing nations as well as your own country.  Because of your genuine concern for less fortunate people and your idealism, you have volunteered to go to an obscure little country called Minoria.

Minoria is a poor, underdeveloped nation.  Side by side there are the contrasts: affluence and want, the handsomely dressed leaders and the starving beggars, new buildings and shacks without sanitation, the bespectacled professor and the illiterate country people.  Behind the plush front, the statistics of hunger, disease, and unemployment tell the real story.  Minoria is new among the nations of the world, and its leaders, policy-makers and technicians are inexperienced at their work.  Frequently, things seem to be done at the merest whim and have little relations to the basic needs of the country.

Minoria needs many things.  It is struggling to survive in the modern world.  Many fear it will not. Its primary need is a firm insistence on an ordering of priorities to place the few resources where the greatest need is.  Second, the country needs other resources to supplement its own.  Third, they need technical assistance and foreign investments to make sure what they construct endures and what they have will be used well.

You have ten minutes to plan what you will do to help before arriving in that country.  After your arrival, you will be expected to help the Minorians plan a major project that will benefit their country, and to help execute that plan using the materials you have on hand.

Remember, you will be evaluated on your ability to:

1.  Help them reset priorities which match their needs
2.  Help them use the materials you have brought wisely
3.  Make helpful construction hints and give technical aid on the project that is finally decided upon

**Aid to Minorians**

**Minorians**

You are residents of the country Minoria.  Minoria is not a new country, but a very old one with a noble history and a rich culture.  Unfortunately, your country has been dominated by other nations for so long that you are just now beginning to regain a sense of independence and pride.  You have finally been able to shake yourself free to those countries which had dominated you and exploited you for so long.  And you have great jealousy of your hard-won freedom to run your own country the way you want to.

Unfortunately, one of the problems that beset you is the fact that you have a few natural resources, and because you have been dominated by others for so long, you have not been able to develop the ones you have nor the technology to make use of them.  Poverty is a problem in your country, but it is one you have learned to live with and even to accept as the normal way of life.

This is the anniversary of your independence, and you are searching for some appropriate focus around which the new national pride can develop: perhaps a monument, symbol, or something similar.  Your task is to begin discussing what kind of project will best symbolize the pride and then construct it with the materials and resources you have at hand.  You want (partly out of pride) to use your own native materials to the extent possible, but also because you do not have the money to import materials, and, too, because you do not want to become indebted to outsiders.  You are especially wary of gifts with political strings attached.

You have just received word from the Ministry that within the next twenty minutes a team of people will be arriving from a country called Majoria.  Although you have never had an opportunity to meet any Majorians, Majoria is well-known to you, since it is one of the leading countries in the world.  Its resources seem to be endless. While you are pleased with suggestions and appreciative of the help, you resist any type of patronizing and are anxious to do your own thing. Other nations have dominated you for centuries and you are suspicious of Trojan horses.

After you finish your planning, you will have no more than thirty minutes to execute the plans you have made.  On with your monument!  Long live Minoria!

## ▣ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *https://aib.msu.edu/resources/exercisessimulations.asp*
- *https://carla.umn.edu/culture/res/exercises.html*
- *https://www.ufic.ufl.edu/PD/downloads/ici-Activities/Activities,%20Resource%20List.pdf*
- *https://www.tnewfields.info/Articles/minmaj.htm*
- *https://baringfoundation.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/InterculturalismHandbook.pdf*
- *http://msue.anr.msu.edu/uploads/236/67555/YEA_Issues_book.pdf*

- *https://chenetwork.org/_dvd/03%20CHE%20TOTs/TOT%201/TOT%201-Electronic%20Version/4-TOT%201%20Electives/3-Extra%20Lessons--DC/Short%20Term%20Missions/Short%20Term%20Missions%20Lessons/Aid%20to%20Minorians%20Exercise.doc*

Videos:

- What is INTERCULTURAL SIMULATION? What does INTERCULTURAL SIMULATION mean?
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pmpEBWolRIk
- Classic Intercultural Simulation Activity - Five Tricks
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-Y5wiSzWIM
- Simulations in Non-formal Education
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3tikJrB5beo



*Source: https://www.emprendedores2020.es/news/4-startups-espanolas-finalistas-programa-inclusion-financiera/*



*Source: https://www.michaelpage.es/advice/empresas/desarrollo-profesional-y-retenci%C3%B3n-de-talento/alinear-los-empleados-con-los*

## ▣ Evaluation of the case study and simulation

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.*

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Case study** | | | | | |
| 1.1 | The situation described in the case study was relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.2 | The content of the case study was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.3 | The proposed solution and alternatives described in the case study were relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.4 | The case study could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **2** | **Simulation** | | | | | |
| 2.1 | The simulation's objectives were clearly defined. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.2 | The simulation's objectives were achieved. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.3 | The content of the simulation was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.4 | The simulation experience could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Case study and simulation in formal adult education institutions in Italy

- Where is the Calabria region located in Italy? In the North or in the south of Italy?
- What was the ancient name of the Calabria region?
- Have you ever heard about the so-called "Modello Riace"?

*"Ours is just a little story, but it can be a small step towards a different world", Mimmo Lucano, mayor of Riace*

**◉ Case study – The "Riace model"**



*Source: https://www.udinetoday.it/cronaca/modello-riace-montagna-friulana-pierluigi-di-piazza.html*

**Introduction**

- *Key problems in the current case study: integration of immigrants, depopulation of old villages, loss of ancient traditions and jobs.*
- *"In a negotiation, we must find a solution that pleases everyone, because no one accepts that they MUST lose and that the other MUST win… Both MUST win!". The current case study is a typical win-win situation.*

Once upon a time, there was Magna Graecia, with its prominent characters: **Alcmaeone di Crotone**, father of modern medicine; **Filippo di Medma**, astronomer and mathematician; **Milone di Crotone**, the most muscular athlete of all time; **Pythagoras**, an adopted Calabrian and famous mathematician and philosopher; **Zaleuco di Locri**, first legislator of the modern world. Manga Graecia was the result of several intertwining cultures. Once upon a time, Magna Graecia evolved into Calabria. Some main characters contributed at national and worldwide levels: **Renato Dulbecco**, Nobel Prize for Medicine; **Umberto Boccioni**, noble father of futurism; **Bernardino**

**Telesio**, philosopher and naturalist. Once upon a time, the Calabria region was that. But now, because of economic crises, the Italian gap between North and South, and the chronic insufficiency of infrastructures, the migratory flows towards the North of Italy are drastically reduced. Once upon a time, there was Calabria, but now it is gone. Or better, once upon a time, there was Calabria and, only recently, it started reaffirming once again its identity through interculturalism and integration. The case study we will present represents a win-win situation, in which everyone gains: the local population, the institutions, and, in particular, the school and immigrants. This case study boasts a name recognized worldwide – the Riace model – and a specific author, **Domenico Lucano**, mayor of Riace, named in 2016 by Fortune among the world's 50 most outstanding leaders for his work.

The Riace model began in 1998, with the landing of two hundred refugees from Kurdistan in the small Calabrian town of Riace. On that occasion, the Mimmo Lucano created the **Città Futura** association. The association aims to help newly disembarked migrants by making available apartments left abandoned by those owners who emigrated to the North of Italy. The main goal was to revitalize a municipality suffering from high levels of depopulation. The Città Futura association had the objective of managing the asylum and the hospitality practices of migrants within the Sprar (Protection system for asylum seekers and refugees) project. From that moment on, the town was alive again.

Thanks to its inclusion policies, Riace managed to give hospitality to refugees and irregular immigrants with the right of asylum, keeping vital services of primary importance, such as schools, and financing the Municipality through micro-entrepreneurial activities, e.g. craftsmanship and agriculture. The Riace model promotes the integration of various sectors belonging to the society and, amongst them, formal education has a pivotal role:

**Kindergarten**

While in other small towns near Riace, many schools had to close due to lack of students, the Riace kindergarten, funded by the Calabria Region, currently hosts 30 children, all of the different nationalities, and provides employment to 14 operators.

**Compulsory schools**

Compulsory schools (primary, elementary and middle schools) are now active, multi-ethnic, and guarantee to the children of immigrant people an adequate level of literacy, equal to the one offered to native-born Italian children.

**Vocational secondary schools**

Vocational high schools are attended mainly by children of immigrants, facilitating them to learn job related skills. Also – as further confirmation that the Riace model represents a win-win situation – children of immigrants learn those jobs that Italian people snub or prefer not to do anymore (in bakery, pastry, catering, construction, agriculture).

**Adult education**

So far, what has been done, in the framework of the Riace model, for the children of immigrants? What happens to their parents, including in adult education? The Municipality offers vocational training courses to adult immigrants.

The courses aim to update skills the immigrants already acquired and brought from their home countries. The courses can also foster the acquisition of new skills relevant in new social contexts.

After completing professional courses, most adult immigrants are employed in work activities allowing them to work side by side with the local population. The result is an improvement of the integration process. Furthermore, immigrants earn salaries guaranteeing subsistence and autonomy. The work activities in which adult immigrants are involved are the following:

- Educational farm, inaugurated in 2018, where local people work together with migrants in raising animals and cultivating land products through fair and sustainable methods;

- Commercial activities: Many migrants found employment in local shops, trying to revitalize disused and vintage crafts and traditions. Over the years, several workshops in ceramic and textile products have been held addressed to immigrants. An old mill, intended for the production of olive oil, has been renovated with modern equipment.

- Widespread hotel: with a loan of 51 thousand euros, granted by Banca Etica, the Municipality restored several apartments belonging to local people who moved to the North to host tourists from all over the world. Through the recovery of the abandoned apartments (about twenty), a total of 100 sleeping places are available.

Until now, we have seen the advantages for immigrants. On the other hand, what are the advantages for the local population?

- Avoiding depopulation;

- Traditional crafts and trades, which were close to disappearing, have been saved;

- Creation of new jobs: in addition to the activities mentioned, the Municipality hired seventy cultural mediators to facilitate migrant integration.

According to foreign journalists, the Riace model – which doubled its population in twenty years – represents a positive story. In 2011, the BBC underlined the "virtuous circle" triggered by apprentice artisans coming from distant countries to revive the forgotten job practices. In 2013 "The Guardian" described immigrants / new citizens' commitment to road maintenance and waste collection. The "New York Times" recounted the story of decayed apartments in Riace to illustrate the condition of many remote Italian villages threatened by demographic change and abandonment.

> **Think and discuss:**
>
> Could you think of any other solution to solve the problems mentioned in the case study above?

### ◉ Answer questions

1. What was the role of adult education in the Riace model?
2. What were the main problems described in the case study?
3. What is the name of the association created in 1998?
4. What is the name of the Riace mayor?
5. What was the role of adult education in the Riace model?

## ◉ Reflect

- Do you know any other situations similar to the Riace model?
- In your opinion, how could the Riace model be implemented in other towns and in other countries?
- Do you know of any other win-win situation in managing intercultural issues?

## ◉ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *The Riace Model on the BBC*
- *The Riace Model on The Guardian*
- *The Riace Model on The New York Times*

Videos:

- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwYpwOL8j7w*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zV31KZqp2xM*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1doeV9QUobY*

## ◉ Simulation – Thinking in other cultures' shoes: opening a kebab shop in Vicenza

**Time required:** *45 – 60 minutes*

**Participants***: 2 per group (multiple groups can participate at once)*

**Overview:**

Everyone has a culture. It shapes how we see ourselves, others, and the world. Behaviour is affected in large part by cultural beliefs, values and – sometimes - stereotypes. Culture is like an iceberg: some aspects are visible; others are beneath the surface. Invisible aspects influence and cause the visible ones.

**Objectives:**

Participants will gain skills in observing and describing behaviours. Students will develop an understanding of how our cultural values and – sometimes – stereotypes influence the way we view other groups.

*Source: https://www.italiaatavola.net/articolo.aspx?id=6397*

**Materials:**

- Cultural-norms sheets (below) for the Egyptian culture and the Italian culture (a specific culture belonging to a geographic area and a political affiliation): half of the players will receive Egyptian sheets and the other half Italian sheets.
- Links related to the concrete situation to be put on performance:
  https://www.thelocal.it/20170508/venice-cracks-down-on-takeaway-food-with-new-law

https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/may/05/venice-bans-kebab-shops-preserve-decorum-traditions-city

**Background**

This exercise simulates an intercultural exchange between:

- Two Egyptian guys living in Italy and interested in opening a kebab shop in Vicenza.

- A couple from Vicenza, looking for people interested in renting the building they have always been using for their work.

In particular, the two Egyptian guys – with legal residency permit – moved to Italy 10 years ago, opening a successful kebab shop chain entitled "The kings of Kebab". After careful market research, they discovered no kebab shop was open in the city of Vicenza. So they moved there, looking for a building to rent for their kebab shop. They identified possible premises in a facility for rent belonging to a couple - two senior citizens (husband and wife). They are 60 and 59 years old, never had children, and have consistently been voting for political parties overtly against immigrants. The building for rent used to be their primary business, as they possessed a laundry. But, because of the lockdown imposed by COVID19, the laundry is not working anymore, and they would prefer renting out the building. Once the two building owners were talking on the phone with the two Egyptians, they recognized a non-Italian accent. Even worse, according to them, they understood that the persons interested in their building were from the Middle East. The owners decided not to meet with them, as they were not interested in renting to "dirty and noisy immigrants" (that's what they say and what they think, also fostered by some stereotypes and political ideas). Anyway, no serious rental proposal was made to the couple, while the two Egyptian guys seemed to have a solid economic position.

For this reason, they decided to meet with the Egyptian guys to understand the feasibility of a rental relationship. This exercise aims to act out and perform the meeting between the two parties, with group 1 representing the two Egyptians and group 2 representing the couple from Vicenza. Each group should try to think in another culture's shoes, trying to 1) defend the position related to the defined culture and 2) find the best compromise in a dialogue that seems almost impossible.

**Debriefing**

Use questions such as the following to guide discussion on how our own cultural biases and stereotypes influence how we view other groups. Be sure to ask a small group of observers for their views on the participants' attempts to communicate across cultures and maintain cultural norms.

1. How did you feel about the behavior of the members of your group? Of the other group? Did your group use positive, negative, or neutral terms to describe the other group?

2. How well did your group members observe the norms of their assigned culture?

3. What are the real-world advantages of following cultural norms?

4. Ask participants to discuss whether they agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

   - People have difficulty describing the behaviours of other groups in non-judgmental terms

   - People acquire cultural norms fairly quickly

- The same behaviour can be perceived differently depending on your group' norm

- How much was the dialogue between the two groups affected by common stereotypes?

- What are some real-world situations that were illustrated during the game?

5. What lessons from this activity would you want to keep in mind if you were going to start a business in an unfamiliar culture?

6. Ask students to list as many examples of cross-cultural experiences as they can. Remind them that not all cross-cultural experiences occur in other countries or between people who speak different languages or come from different racial backgrounds. Brainstorm ideas about what students can do to encourage clear communication in such situations.

## Summary of simulation

*Write a brief list of all the steps of the simulation. For example:*

1. *Divide participants into small groups of 2 (A and B)*

2. *Allow each group time to read their briefing sheet and learn their task. Briefly train group A and B in the cultural aspects that they must demonstrate*

3. *Reunite both groups and begin the simulation*

4. *After about 15-20 minutes, end the simulation and begin the debriefing; ask each small group to reveal whether or not they came to an agreement*

5. *Ask discussion questions.*

**Cultural norms**

**You are an Egyptian**

- The Egyptians are known for their funny personality. Even in the darkest situations, an Egyptian will make a joke out of it. They are the best people to convert sadness to a source of laughter, and when a massive event happens in the country, Egyptians are the first ones to make a joke out of their struggles.

- Egyptians are the most generous people ever. If you visit an Egyptian at their home, it is guaranteed that they will keep offering you all the food and the drinks they have.

- If an Egyptian saw any tourist on the street, they will randomly welcome them to Egypt. If you haphazardly met your Egyptian neighbour at the door, he/she might invite you for a drink or even dinner.

- Egyptians always have an optimistic look at life. They have a belief that tomorrow will always be better.

- Egyptians are very faithful and religious. They think of God all the time, and they leave everything to God.

- Egyptians are very confident about themselves. Of course, they have the right to be that proud. Ancient Egyptian history is the most remarkable history of all time.

- Egyptians are known for their brave character. They created two revolutions in 4 years. This shows how heroic and adventurous they could be.

- When it comes to family affairs, Egyptians pay special attention to family values and relationships.

- Speaking of parties, Egyptians love celebrations. Close and extended family members and friends gather during holidays and special celebrations. Due to their love of food, all celebrations include sharing special meals prepared for the occasion. Women usually take pride in cooking several dishes and compete among themselves for what makes the most delicious dishes. Restaurants are among the most flourishing businesses as Egyptians like to try new cuisines, and they appreciate a good meal.

- Religion plays a significant role in Egyptians' lives, and it is intermingled with the daily activities of Muslims and Christians living in Egypt. You can see this clearly during Ramadan, Eids, and Christmas, where festive spirits are everywhere.

- Egyptian women are required, according to Islamic law, to cover their bodies in an abaya (black robes and face coverings) as a sign of respect for Muslim modesty laws.

- Men never bring flowers to women, and alcohol is a wrong gift choice for religious reasons.

**Cultural norms**

**You are an Italian**

- Italians gesticulate all the time. One of the main characteristics you will notice when you meet Italian people is that they gesticulate a lot. So, it's essential to understand their body language. Please have a look at our post about Italian hand gestures to discover their meanings.

- Italians speak loudly. This characteristic is linked to the previous one because not only do Italians gesticulate a lot, but they also speak loudly to emphasize what they say.

- Everybody knows that Italians love coffee. However, they only drink cappuccino when they have breakfast, and it's almost impossible to see them drinking it after lunch.

- Italians eat a lot of pasta and pizza. Even if the Italian cuisine is varied, the main dishes in Italy are pasta and pizza. Some Italian people can eat pasta every day!

- Italians like designer clothes and always wear sunglasses, even when it rains. Italian people love brand-name clothes and like wearing beautiful clothes. Most of them also like sunglasses and use them 365 days per year.

- Italians are "mammoni" (mommy's boys). Italians have a solid relationship with their mothers. They usually gain true independence only when they get married, and it generally happens at later ages.

- Italians are very passionate lovers. Many people also agree that Italians are very intense lovers.

- Italians are crazy drivers. Many people also say that Italians are crazy drivers because they don't observe traffic rules and don't respect pedestrian crossings.

- Italians are extroverted. Italian people are usually quite extroverted so that you can establish relationships with them very quickly.

Specific characteristics of people living in the North and voting for political parties against immigrants:

- They are proud of what they have and do not want be share it with other people.

- They live in the myth of the self-made man

- They strongly believe in private property

- They have many stereotypes about immigrants: immigrants are dirty, immigrants are noisy, immigrants steal 'our jobs and our women', etc.

- They are profoundly Christian and do not tolerate any other religion

- They are suspicious of any different culture and any other cuisine

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## ▣ Learn more

Videos:

- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zFeAywYZBCI*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HPg3WHRGk_U*
- *https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6MhMJdQclM*

## ▣ Evaluation of the case study and simulation

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.*

| | | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Case study** | | | | | |
| 1.1 | The situation described in the case study was relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.2 | The content of the case study was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.3 | The proposed solution and alternatives described in the case study were relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.4 | The case study could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **2** | **Simulation** | | | | | |
| 2.1 | The simulation's objectives were clearly defined. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.2 | The simulation's objectives were achieved. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.3 | The content of the simulation was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.4 | The simulation experience could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

Case study and simulation in formal adult education institutions in Cyprus

## ◉ Warm-up

- Do you know if the government offers English language programmes for migrants?
- Do you think that a migrant learner who studies in a classroom with native-born students, faces any difficulties?
- What do you think that a multicultural classroom can do (in terms of students and teachers' behaviour, skills etc.), in order to support a foreign adult learner's educational process and social adaptation in the host country?

## ◉ Case study – The case of monocultural approach

### Introduction

Following the migration crisis in 2015 till now, Cyprus has the most asylum seekers per capita in Europe. Thousands of people are crossing borders to arrive in Cyprus, and later on, continue their journey in the European Union. Most of them decide to stay in Cyprus and apply for asylum. Once their application is approved, they enjoy a range of benefits from the local government which offers services to new asylees, including housing, employment, and more.

In order to apply for job opportunities etc., these foreigners, and in our case, adult learners need, firstly, to learn to speak and write the local language of the host country. The government offers free of charge language courses for migrants. With the number of foreign adult learners growing in Cyprus, a number of challenges and previously unforeseen situations related to intercultural skills appeared. One of them is the lack of intercultural skills by adult educators. One such case, that will be described here, happened in the context of English language courses (as English is one of the main languages spoken in Cyprus, 73% of Cypriots can speak English) in a formal adult education institution in Cyprus, in an advanced level classroom with Cypriot learners and 1 Syrian refugee.

### Case study

Amir is a migrant from Syria currently living in Cyprus. He arrived in Cyprus by boat 6 years ago, in 2015, trying to escape from the civil war in his country. His goal was to go to Germany and find a job there as an engineer as Amir has a Bachelor in Engineering. Cyprus was just a transit country. But when he arrived in Cyprus, he decided to stay and start a new life on the island.

The fact that Amir had very good verbal and written English skills was an advantage, as in Cyprus, the English language is the second most spoken language on the island, after Greek.  When he started applying for job positions, most of the employers asked him if he had an English language certificate. Unfortunately, in Syria, he wasn't able to study and receive an English certificate as he was taking care of his 3 brothers and sisters in his free time.

So, Amir decided to register for English language courses provided by the formal adult education centres in Cyprus and receive a language certificate.

In his class, Amir was the only student with a migrant background. All of his classmates were Cypriots and younger than him. The other students didn't talk to him much, and the teacher was paying more attention to the Cypriots. Amir wasn't disturbed by that, as he knew that his classmates had difficulties in writing and speaking English. Most

of the times, within the classroom, his classmates and teacher made small talk in Greek and Amir wasn't able to understand.

One week before the National Independence Day on the 1ˢᵗ of October, where the Republic of Cyprus celebrates the declaration of its Independence from the United Kingdom, the teacher asked students to make a presentation on their country's characteristics, culture, values etc. She provided them with a set of instructions on how to prepare the presentation, what to include etc.

At first, Amir felt awkward because this was his first year living in Cyprus and he didn't know the island's history very well. Later, he decided that he could find information online and be able to make the presentation. The days passed, and students needed to present their work in the classroom.

During the presentations by his classmates, Amir realized that his presentation included also other information relating to the division of the island and the so-called "Northern Cyprus". He got anxious and wasn't sure if he wanted to present his work. When his turn to present arrived, Amir asked his teacher if he could present the next day so he could modify his presentation and add more information regarding the Republic of Cyprus. His teacher didn't accept his request and Amir, hesitantly, started his presentation. While presenting, students started interrupting him, saying that his presentation was "offensive" and included "unacceptable" terms. The teacher tried to calm down Amir's classmates.  Amir got upset, apologized to his classmates, and then left the classroom.

This case study is an example of the monocultural and monolingual approach that the formal adult education centres have in Cyprus, where the local culture and values dominate.

**More specific in the case study the teacher:**

- Didn't encourage Amir to teach/share within the classroom a few basic words in their national language and use them in the classroom when appropriate.
- Didn't encourage Amir to present his country and culture in order for students to get to know him more.
- Didn't respect the fact that Amir is not a Cypriot citizen and is not well aware of the country, its history, culture and values.

The current situation of monocultural and monolingual approach, forcing TCNs to focus on learning the local language (in our case study- English) and/or culture of the hosting society and not encouraging them to share with locals their culture and values, do not encourage adult migrants to actively participated in adult education and training.

Summing up, in this case study, the migrant learner was asked to present the characteristics of a country, different from his country of origin, and as a result, he made a presentation that included misleading information regarding the characteristics of the Cyprus Republic. Also, the teacher didn't make any effort to help Amir interact with his classmates and didn't respect the fact that Amir is from another country, is not well aware of the characteristics and episodes that took place in Cyprus between Turkish and Cypriots, the culture of the island etc.

**Alternatives**

There were several things that could have been done to prevent this situation from ever developing:

The teacher should not have assumed that a foreign adult learner that has lived in Cyprus for not more than 1 year is well aware of the history of the island and the negative perspectives/stereotypes that Greek Cypriots have for Turkish people.

The migrant learner should have informed the teacher that he would like to do something else or cooperate with a classmate for the presentation.

The teacher should have used specific methods and techniques to make Amir feel welcomed in the classroom and increase interaction with his classmates. Especially, that the students should have tried to interact more with Amir and explain to him why they got upset during his presentation.

**Think and discuss:** Could you think of any other reasons why the mentioned problems exist?

**Proposed Solution**

In order to avoid this kind of events, these tips should always be kept in mind when dealing with people from different cultures:

- Make them feel welcomed in the classroom.
- Ask them to share their stories, culture, values, language.
- Use techniques to bring foreigners closer to native learners (team-building exercises, games, cooperation in essays).
- Encourage migrants to ask questions when in doubt.
- Never assume that a person living in a country different from their origin country is well aware of the host country's history.
- Pay attention in explaining to other learners, the difficulties that a migrant learner can face in a classroom.

## ▣ Answer questions

1. What difficulties do you think Amir was facing in the classroom with his classmates?
2. What could the teacher have done differently to support Amir from the beginning of the lessons?
3. Who is to blame at the end of this situation?
4. How do you think adult educators can support migrant learners?

## ▣ Reflect

- What's your opinion on the approach of adult education centres in Cyprus?
- How could the Ministry of Education and Culture respond to these challenges?
- Have you ever experienced any of the above-mentioned challenges with migrant learners?

## ▣ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

- *Language education in a multilingual city: The case of Limassol: https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1160029.pdf*
- *Gravani, M. and Hatzopoulos, P. and Chinas, C. (2019) 'Adult education and migration in Cyprus: a critical analysis.', Journal of adult continuing education.: https://dro.dur.ac.uk/28192/1/28192.pdf*
- *Glimer project: https://www.glimer.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Cyprus_Language.pdf*

## ▣ Simulation – Interacting with other cultures – A business trip to Limassol

**Time required:** *60 minutes*

**Participants***: e.g., 4–6 per group (multiple groups can participate at once)*

**Materials:**

- **List of handouts and other things that need to be prepared by the facilitator/instructor**,
- Cultural-norms briefing sheets for Group A-Cypriot and Matis cultures (half of the learners will receive the Group A sheets and the other half the Group B sheets)

**Objectives:**

- Learners will gain skills in observing and describing behaviours.
- Learners will develop an understanding of how our cultural values influence the way we view other groups.

**Background**

This exercise simulates an intercultural exchange between Cypriots and a fictional culture. Participants role-playing either culture can learn from the experience. The task is simple, but the cultural barriers are considerable. One of the greatest challenges of this exercise is to teach the cultural patterns to the "Matisse" participants in a short period of time.

In the exercise, the two Cypriots employees working in the sales department of the EAT.CO catering company have to visit Limassol to propose to a Matissian family restaurant to become partners of the catering company. Their boss gives them clear instructions to seal the deal, with the catering company paying 10 euros per person, for each catering event and a 20% pre-payment before the catering event, a beneficial deal for their company. The Matissians, want to seal the deal with 15 euros per person and a 25% pre-payment, but their most important criterion for making the deal, is if they feel that Cypriots are trustworthy and respectful of their culture.

**Debriefing**

Begin by asking each small group whether or not they came to an agreement, and what that agreement was. If a group did not come to an agreement, ask them why they did not.

Then, as a large group, ask the following discussion questions:

1. To Cypriots - "**What kinds of cultural differences did you notice in your discussion with the Matissians?**" Differences exist in the areas of nonverbal communication (lack of eye contact) and values (High Power-Distance and Collectivism), and in the nature of the discussion and bargaining itself (including "haggling").
2. To Matissians -**"What kinds of cultural differences did you notice in your discussion with the Cypriots?"**
3. How did you feel regarding the behaviour of the members of your own group?
4. How well did your group members observe the norms of their assigned culture?
5. What are the real-world advantages of following cultural norms?
6. Ask participants to discuss whether they agree or disagree with each of the following statements:
   - People have difficulty in interacting with other cultures
   - People acquire cultural norms fairly quickly

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- This exercise helps you to understand how people are affected by stereotypes
- What are some real-world situations that were illustrated during the game?
7. What lessons from this activity would you want to keep in mind if you were going to cooperate with people with a migrant background?
8. Ask students to list as many examples of cross-cultural experiences as they can.

**A business visit to Jollof, a Matissian restaurant**

**"Cypriots briefing sheet"**

You and another business associate are sales representatives from a Cypriot catering company. In a team meeting, your director informs the team that different cuisines need to be added to the catering menu as the clients are asking for different food rather than the Mediterranean. Following the meeting, he informs you and your partner, that you need to visit a Matissian restaurant located in Limassol run by Matissians (people from Matis, a big country located in South Africa) and propose to the owner to be part of the catering company's new menu and close the deal with the owner with the lowest possible price.

Currently, you and your family are staying in a building where your neighbours from Matis talk very loudly, organize dance celebrations every Sunday, and there is a constant cooking smell in the corridors. In general, you have never tried to approach them and you do not have a very positive image of them, their culture, characteristics, etc. The only reason you accepted this challenge is that your director informed you that closing this deal would increase your monthly salary by 150 euros.

The day before the trip to Limassol, you found online basic characteristics of Matissians (culture, cuisine, values) in order to convince the owner to be your partner. You read that Matissians are very smiley, hard-working people, and they are very religious (50 per cent of them are Muslim, 40 per cent are Christian, and that the remaining 10 per cent practice various indigenous religions). Regarding food, you learned that they use a lot of spices and chillies and that the most famous dish is Jollof Rice and Pounded Yam. You are also informed by a colleague that many Matissians are victims of discrimination in Cyprus.

Your plan is simple: when you meet the restaurant owners, to make them like you by showing your enthusiasm for Matissian cuisine, your acceptance towards their different culture, ethnicity etc., disapproval against any discriminative practices, etc. Then, you will need to make them want to become part of your catering company. You are going to present to them the company's profits, portfolio of clients, the company's team spirit, benefits of cooperating with the company, the chances of networking with clients from other cities, etc.

Before entering the restaurant, you are thinking about how much your boss expects you to close the deal, which will be a great opportunity for your company but also for you, as you need this salary raise for covering your daughters' university costs. Your goal is to seal the deal, with your company paying 10 euros per person, for each catering event and a 20% pre-payment before the catering event.

As you and your partner walk into "Jollof" Matissian restaurant, you are amazed at the surroundings: traditional African furniture, ethnic artwork, colourful walls, etc. Three people are waiting for you in the inside office (two women and one man), the restaurant owners. You approach them – ready to act in your friendliest manner – and ready to close the deal…

## A business visit to Jollof, a Matissian restaurant

## Jollof restaurant owners briefing sheet

You are owners of the Jollof, a Matissian restaurant located in Limassol. Two representatives of a catering company have requested a meeting. You are unaware of their purpose, status, or rank. One of you is Ibrahim—the founder and current owner of the restaurant. Your wife, Musa and her sister, Alyssa, are the company's associates and head of the kitchen. It is in Matisssian culture, that families are working together. Musa and Alyssa, Ibrahim's subordinates, treat Ibrahim with great respect: never questioning his decisions, and always looking after the restaurant's best interests. Both women will be present at the meeting but are not allowed to talk. Like most of Africa, the Matissian culture, is patriarchal in nature, with attendant unequal gender relations which cast women in a subordinate position. Men make all decisions in both society and their family unit, hold all positions of power and authority and are considered superior. Women's role is primarily understood as mothers, sisters, daughters, and wives.

In Matis, when you meet someone for the first time, except handshake you also need to hug them. If you don't, it can be viewed as being rude and uncivilized. Direct eye contact is also essential. Matissians like to know your background, beliefs, values before closing any business deal. They use this approach as a way to judge the character of outsiders. Last, Matissians consider anyone who criticizes male dominance to be of questionable character and not worthy of being trusted.

You believe that the catering company will ask you to cooperate and cater for their clients' parties, business conferences, etc. You feel proud that your restaurant was chosen, but you also are biased towards Cypriots, because you had some bad experiences with many Cypriot families when you arrived in Cyprus. You and your family were not welcomed and you were treated differently or unfairly because of your race and skin colour. This business is your family's lifetime achievement. You dedicated body and soul to this restaurant, so did your wife and her sister. Most of your clients are foreigners who love Matissian food.

If they ask you to be partners and cook for their clients' events, you will not accept being paid less than 13-15 euros per participant in an event, and a 30% pre-payment before the event takes place. But, if you see that they hesitate, you can accept 13 euros per participants and a 25% pre-payment. If they hesitate to negotiate and insist on their offer, you will not proceed. It is in your culture to refuse any collaboration if your partner is not open to negotiating prices.

However, the basic criterion for starting a partnership with this catering company is how trustworthy and respectful they are of your culture, beliefs, and values. A bonus would be their knowledge of Matis' food culture.

Your guests are entering the restaurant. Musa and Alyssa are welcoming them. Then, they enter your office. Musa and Alyssa will also be present at the meeting but are not allowed to talk. You will show your guests respect by giving them the opportunity to start the conversation. You will listen to them for at least 15-20 minutes, and will always treat them with respect – regardless of their behaviour…

### ▣ Learn more

Links to all mentioned sources and additional materials:

− *"THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN A MULTICULTURAL CYPRUS",* https://www.cyprushighlights.com/en/2013/07/03/the-role-of-education-in-a-multicultural-cyprus/
− *Cyprus periodic report,* https://en.unesco.org/creativity/governance/periodic-reports/2017/cyprus
− *Valiandes, S., Neophytou, L. and Hajisoteriou, C. (2018) 'Establishing a framework for blending intercultural education with differentiated instruction.' Intercultural Education Vol. 29, No. 3: 379-398.*
− *Valiandes, S. and Neophytou, L. (2018). 'Teachers' professional development for differentiated instruction in mixed-ability classrooms: investigating the impact of a development program on teachers' professional learning and on students' achievement'. Teacher Development Vol. 22, No. 1: 123-138.*

### ▣ Evaluation of the case study and simulation

*Please indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below.*

|  |  | Strongly Disagree | Disagree | Neutral | Agree | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | **Case study** | | | | | |
| 1.1 | The situation described in the case study was relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.2 | The content of the case study was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.3 | The proposed solution and alternatives described in the case study were relevant. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 1.4 | The case study could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| **2** | **Simulation** | | | | | |
| 2.1 | The simulation's objectives were clearly defined. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.2 | The simulation's objectives were achieved. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.3 | The content of the simulation was organized and easy to follow. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2.4 | The simulation experience could be useful in my work. | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |