

## Let's include each other

### Case study

A group of young people from Israel, Germany and Hungary explored how different identities are shaped by language, history, culture and social structures. While these aspects of our identities often separate us, we explored ways to use our own language, culture, and history as tools leading to empowerment and inclusion. The group journeyed together to different communities, exploring language, culture and history by meeting with elders and experiencing youth communities.



First encounter: October 2018, Hollókő, Hungary

Our main goal with the first encounter was to provide a space where participants could share opinions, emotions and knowledge on multiple levels: through games of intercultural and self-reflection, movement exercises, group challenges, creative processes and discussions in small groups. We worked on the topic of oral history with forum theatre tools: on the moments when politics or history enters the personal life of our participants.

### Milestones of the group's process:

- dance nights, where learned popular/folk dances from each other (Hungarian, Palestinian dances and French ones)
- spider-web exercise, where the whole group had to cooperate mentally and physically, finding strategies together despite the language barriers
- the first presentations of war scenes performed by the Palestinian group as personal memories
- brief historical presentation of our participants of Jewish origin on the Israel-Palestine conflict. This ended up in intense emotional sharing in the whole group, as members the Palestinian group listened to their personal story through the historical facts and remembered their families that they haven't seen for years because of the Israeli occupation
- The German group presented scenes about how migrant families' culture is conflicted with German culture
- The Hungarian group shared a story based on a real happening caused by corruption on a local school level
- Our visit and the presentation of the scenes we worked on in a local school in near-by Szécsény was a very exciting insight into the Hungarian educational system that enabled participants to reflect on how Hungarian students share their opinion on topics they have presented
- Talent show and the intercultural night was a peak point of the training where participants shared something that was very important and personal for them

The main difficulty we met during the training was the language barrier: both the Palestinian and the Hungarian group had participants who barely communicated in English. Therefore, we had to work with double translation of almost all our instructions, which required a high level of attention, commitment and patience of the whole group. We managed to create an atmosphere where we could work this way. The group learnt a lot through these challenges about how to communicate with body language, high level of understanding and attention towards each other's culture and habits.



Check out our [short documentary video](#) as well

## Second encounter: April 2019, Givat Haviva, Israel



- The aim of the second encounter in terms of the content of the project was to share each other's context and history through personal stories based on the participant's intergenerational relationships.
- In terms of group dynamics, we aimed to make the group work more in international small groups and that enable participants to connect with more people from other countries.
- We put focus on theatrical forms that are less verbal and help people to connect in a nonverbal way.

### Stories and intergenerational relationships

The participants got the homework to make an interview with either their grandparents or an elderly person they are in touch with. They were asked to record a song that these elderly people sing. In the Palestinian group the format of interview making did not work out so well, instead they recorded videos about old Palestinian ladies talking with each other and singing. It can be interesting to understand why this happened. Maybe it can be because it was less comfortable for them to have very personal talks with their grandparents.

The way of sharing the stories from the interviews was to create short scenes. In the beginning based on Image Theatre from the method of Forum theatre. Later, they could add sound and in the end they could do scenes with some speaking in it.

It was a very successful sharing because the participants really learnt a lot about each other's history and culture through the elderly people's personal stories and about themselves. We worked a lot on what are their own relationships related to these stories. They did not only get to know interesting stories about the second world war in Germany or in Hungary or about Muslim habits amongst Palestinians, but they also learnt what is their relationship to their own contexts. For example, how would a participant do things differently from their grandmother. Another interesting aspect was that the participants not only learn about each other through the stories but also through the way of working.



One could clearly notice that even those Palestinians who can speak English very well prefer to express themselves through action and music, dancing rather than speaking. Some of the Germans were confident at expressing themselves verbally and they needed to discuss things further on a verbal level. They learnt that identity has so many non-verbal layers as well. Some people had a lot in common even though they come from different cultures. There were also a lot of common threads in grandparent's stories related to love, career patterns or family. These similarities or differences gave us a lot of opportunities to reflect on these topics.

### Group dynamic

Although it was not easy to rebuild the trust in the group, on the 3rd, 4th day we succeeded. Because of logistical, organizational difficulties the group had difficulties to feel secure and calm and feel ready to work. We had issues about translation, as one of the participants had to translate for the group, which was very demanding for the translator as well as the rest of the group.

Thanks to sharing these deep stories and working in diverse groups nonverbally and in a more structured way after a while they could feel more connected. The evening activities, games were

also a big part of that. The patience of the team leaders and their attention and contribution also helped a lot. Doing physical missions together made the group stronger.

One exercise, the Blindfold Maze strengthened the group, as they worked in two diverse groups, where each of them had to cross a tricky maze full of obstacles with the help of the others. There everyone had to take risks in front of each other. And no one was better than the other.

### Forms

We used elements of physical theatre, some clown exercises, character building, forum theatre elements and improvisation during the week. We also used mobile phones to take pictures. The physical, nonverbal parts were the most successful parts, as well as scene making. They were very creative with making scenes and a lot of people enjoyed acting too. It was a great choice to make the group work more structured and having directors and actors so they could work more clearly and efficiently.



### Third encounter: July 2019, Westernsee-Kiel, Germany



- The aim was to give the participants the opportunity to imagine their personal future, their country's futures taking into account topics such as family, religion, home, love and profession.
- The pedagogical aim in comparison with the two other encounters was to give more responsibility to the participants and encourage them to initiate much more their own ideas and facilitating their own process. They presented their solo, individual videos, which was a huge step about sharing, opening up and not hiding to be vulnerable.
- In terms of methods, we strengthened their videomaking skills and combined video with theatrical tools.

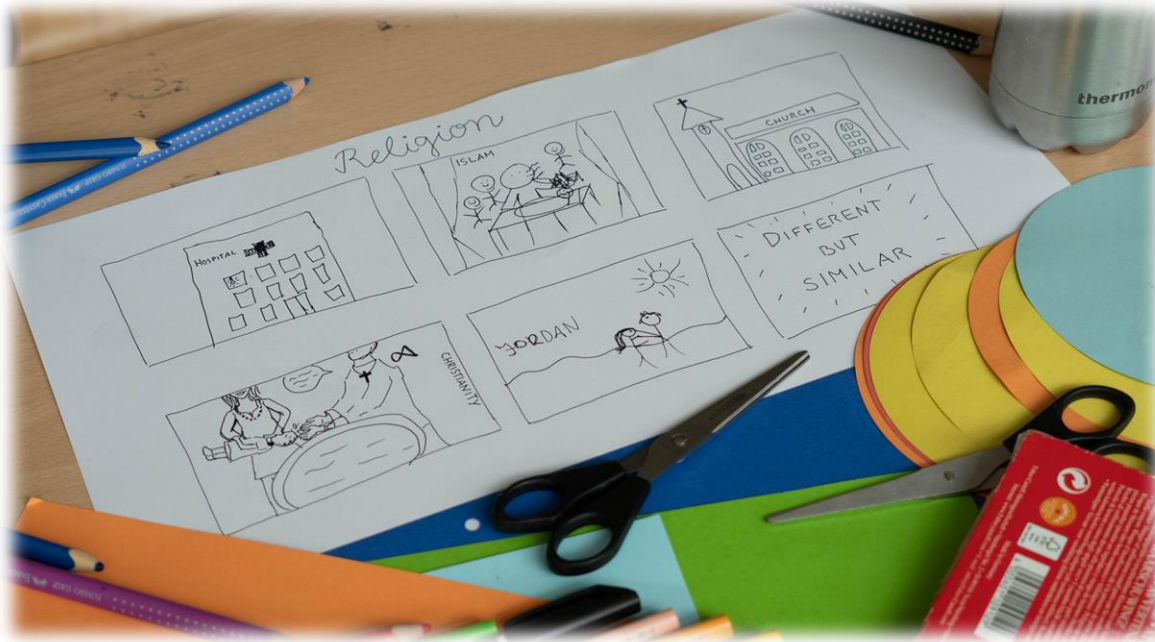
### Topics

We worked on the topic of identity this time focusing on future plans. To imagine the future, we needed to understand our present times. Day one was about trust building. We worked in pairs and in smaller groups, and the groups had to present short performances. On the second day we worked on the topic of home, what are the most important things, people, circumstances that the participants need to feel home. It was very interesting to see the intercultural differences and similarities about what people mean by home. We worked with a fictional story after the personal sharing, that allowed the participants to go even deeper in that topic and thanks to the fiction they were able to project a lot of emotions and feelings of theirs into the fictional character using techniques of Drama in Education. This fiction enhanced their creativity which they could use in the introductory tasks about video making. We showed them a sample storyboard and they had to shoot and edit their own movies based on it. On the



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third day we organized a World cafe where we discussed questions related to religion, home, love and family. We showed them 4 techniques of stop motion movie making: using clay, using bodies, using drawings and using papercut. They created short story boards in international groups, and then made four different stop motion movies. This was hard work and they learnt a lot about how much patience and collaborative approach they need to be able to finish a film like that.

On the fourth day we started to work on the idea of how the participants future self will be like. Our starting point was physicality and focusing on the body and then taking it to the cognitive level. They got the writing task to think about what they would ask from their future self who is 10 years older than now. They wrote interview questions that they used while shooting in pairs a “Me and Me in the future” video interview.

In the evenings we watched movies made by participants, shared the personal Vlogs that was their homework before

the encounter.

We had an intercultural open mic night, when they could share their talents of music, dance, poetry and stand up.

### Group dynamics

We needed to build trust and confidence again as unfortunately there were a lot of new participants. Some of the Palestinian participants did not speak English, which made a lot of difficulties. On the other hand, nonverbal communication in the group became very important. Participants really payed attention to each other and made sure that no one is left out. This process was supported by the “Angel game”. We also had an international love story which was one of most beautiful intercultural bondage at this encounter. During the week we have also spent some time outdoor at the lake and in Kiel city and these activities also helped the group to connect in a less structured way.



Check out the movie about the project! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTRMmIVdyBM>

## Case study questions

- Seeing the nature of the project and cooperation needed to carry it out, which points would discuss with the project partners upfront?
- What would be the most important skills, knowledge and personality of the trainers and facilitators? Write a call for trainers!
- How would you solve the problem of lack of English knowledge among the participants while having no resources to pay a professional translator?
- Based on the testimony of the participants, which program elements served their intercultural learning the most?
- How would you approach the media in order to make them interested in the project?

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