



FEEL TO CONNECT: EQ FOR INCLUSION

AN ERASMUS+ YOUTH EXCHANGE PRACTICAL HANDBOOK & BOOKLET

**A unified resource for youth workers, educators and
young change-makers, designed and co-created during
the youth exchange in Eger, Hungary.**

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Section I: Introduction of the Project

The **"Feel to Connect: EQ for Inclusion"** project is an Erasmus+ Key Action 1 Youth Exchange that recognizes Emotional Intelligence (EQ) as a transformative tool in developing inclusive environments where young people from diverse backgrounds can thrive and connect meaningfully. Within today's European communities, youth often face challenges of exclusion, misunderstanding and conflict rooted in cultural differences and limited interpersonal skills. This project directly addresses these issues by equipping participants with essential competencies to understand and manage their emotions while building strong connections with others.

Project Overview Table

Project Title	Feel to Connect: EQ for Inclusion
Activity Dates	November 11 to November 19, 2025 (Including travel days)
Venue & Location	Eger, Hungary
Hosting Organisation	Fiatalok Tere Egyesület / Square of Youth Association (SOYA) – Hungary
Partner Organisations	Hellenic Youth Participation (HYP) – Greece Spazio Etneo – Italy Asociación Multideportiva Euexia – Spain
Total Participants	38 people (32 young participants, 4 group leaders and 2 facilitators)
Participant Profile	Young individuals aged 18 to 30 with a strong interest in EQ



Core Project Objectives

- Enhance Emotional Intelligence: To develop participants' emotional intelligence (self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills) as a foundation for creating inclusive spaces.
- Empower Change-Makers: To equip young people with practical EQ tools to bridge social and cultural divides and become proactive agents of positive change in their communities.
- Establish Intercultural Respect: To encourage mutual understanding, active citizenship and appreciation for European diversity through shared non-formal activities and intercultural evenings.
- Promote Collaborative Co-Creation: To support the co-creation of materials (like this merged booklet and participant-led workshops) that showcase youth creativity.

1**Self-Awareness**

Recognizing & understanding your own emotions and triggers.

2**Self-Regulation**

Managing, controlling, & adapting your emotional responses.

3**Motivation**

Harnessing internal drive to achieve goals with resilience.

4**Empathy**

Understanding & sharing the feelings and perspectives of others.

5**Social Skills**

Building strong bonds, influence, & navigating conflict.

Section II: The 8 Core Topics & Workshop Methods

This section serves as a practical manual for youth workers and trainers. Each topic represents a core thematic block of the youth exchange program.

Topic 1: Intercultural Connection & Team Dynamics

Session Objective: To dissolve initial social barriers, establish group expectations, build mutual trust as well as encourage verbal and non-verbal expression in multilingual environments.

Method: "Picture Language"

- **Materials:** A4 paper sheets, colored markers, pens.
- **Duration:** 45 Minutes.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - Provide each participant with an A4 sheet of paper and markers.
 - Ask participants to decide on 5 important topics to illustrate about themselves (e.g., favorite food, hobbies, music, hometown) and draw them using zero words.
 - Split the participants into small, intercultural groups.
 - One by one, each person explains their drawing to the group using only their mother tongue.
 - The other group members must guess what each drawing represents, relying purely on the visual drawings, facial expressions and the tone of the foreign language.
 - De-brief on the challenges of cross-cultural and non-verbal communication.



Topic 2: Foundations of Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

- **Session Objective:** To introduce participants to the scientific and practical framework of Emotional Intelligence, highlighting its five primary components.

Method: "Mental Health Professional Interactive Seminar"

- **Materials:** Projector, presentation slides, whiteboards, sticky notes.
- **Duration:** 90 Minutes.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - A structured interactive session focused on unpacking the core components of EQ: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills.
 - Instead of a passive lecture, the facilitator introduces practical case studies of interpersonal conflict and emotional stress.
 - Participants write down their immediate emotional reactions to these scenarios on colored sticky notes and classify them under the 5 EQ categories (find above) on the whiteboard.
 - The facilitator leads a discussion on how these patterns manifest in daily personal and professional life, presenting concrete, scientifically-backed coping mechanisms.
 - Small group discussion breaks down the fears and distance among participants.
 - **IMPORTANT:** If someone doesn't feel comfortable to share or even to participate, don't force it. But if they are trying, support them (language wise, etc.).

Topic 3: Self-Awareness – Discovering You

Session Objective: To guide participants through deep self-reflection, helping them understand their internal emotional triggers, personal values, also cognitive boundaries.

Method A: "What's Your Values?"

- **Materials:** Handouts with lists of potential values (honesty, family, freedom, success, equality, etc.), pens, notebooks.
- **Duration:** 60 Minutes.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - Provide each participant with the values handout.
 - Instruct participants to individually select and rank their top 5 core values.
 - Ask them to write a reflective paragraph in their journals on how these values currently dictate their behaviors, life decisions and responses to interpersonal stress.
 - Form pairs and have them discuss how self-awareness of values can help them make more intentional, authentic choices.

Method B: "Emotional SWOT Analysis"

Materials: SWOT templates (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats), markers.

Duration: 45 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Explain that SWOT analysis is not just for business but is a powerful tool for personal EQ assessment.
- Participants fill out a SWOT grid focused specifically on their emotional habits:
 - **Strengths:** What emotional skills do I excel at? (e.g., active listening, keeping calm under pressure).
 - **Weaknesses:** What emotional habits hinder me? (e.g., suppressing anger, difficulty expressing sadness).
 - **Opportunities:** Where can I practice improving my self-awareness?
 - **Threats:** What external environments trigger my worst emotional responses?
- Participants share their reflections in pairs to brainstorm personalized strategies.

Topic 4: Self-Regulation – Mastering You

- **Session Objective:** To build participants' capacities for emotional control, stress reduction and healthy cognitive reappraisal.

Method A: "Mindfulness Meditation & Breath Awareness"

- **Materials:** Yoga mats or comfortable chairs, quiet indoor or outdoor space, soft background music.
- **Duration:** 45 Minutes.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - Have participants sit or lie down comfortably, keeping their eyes closed.
 - The facilitator guides them through a 20-minute breath-awareness meditation, focusing on deep diaphragmatic inhalation and exhalation.
 - Participants are guided to observe any rising physical sensations, thoughts, or emotions with curiosity and zero judgment, allowing them to pass.
 - Following the meditation, participants sit in a circle and write down their state of mind, discussing how mindfulness can serve as a daily tool to manage stress.

Method B: "Scenario Role-Playing"

- **Materials:** Written conflict cards (e.g., a workplace dispute, a misunderstanding with a friend, an encounter with public bias).
- **Duration:** 45 Minutes.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - Divide participants into groups of 3–4.
 - Hand each group written scenario cards describing an emotionally volatile situation.
 - Ask them to act out the scene twice:
 - Round 1: React with immediate, unregulated, high emotional volatility.
 - Round 2: Pause, apply self-regulation techniques (taking deep breaths, active listening, cognitive pause) and resolve the issue constructively.
 - Debrief on the physical and mental sensations experienced during both rounds.



Topic 5: Motivation – Defining Direction

Session Objective: To cultivate inner motivation, build resilience and establish realistic goal-setting frameworks.

Method: "The Goal Ladder"

Materials: Markers, rulers, A3/A4 paper sheets with drawing templates.

Duration: 90 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Instruct each participant to select a single personal or professional goal they want to achieve.
- Have them draw a physical ladder on their A3/A4 sheet, with the bottom rung representing their current starting point and the top representing the achieved goal.
- Participants break down their major goal into smaller, realistic and highly manageable steps, writing one step on each rung of the ladder.
- Beside each rung, they must explicitly write down what motivates them at that specific stage, including prospective barriers and how they intend to overcome them.
- Participants present their Goal Ladders to partners for mutual encouragement and accountability.

Topic 6: Empathy – Walking in Another’s Shoes

Session Objective: To develop cognitive and emotional empathy, dismantle stereotypes and explore the realities of social exclusion and systemic discrimination.

Method A: "Walk in My Shoes"

Materials: Pre-prepared character cards representing diverse, marginalized and/or challenged individuals (e.g., a refugee struggling to find employment, a young parent facing financial distress, an LGBTQ+ youth dealing with family rejection, a teenager struggling with severe anxiety).

Duration: 90 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Hand out a unique, confidential character card to each participant.
- Ask them to spend 15 minutes silently reading and embodying their character, thinking about their thoughts, fears and daily routines.
- For the next hour, participants remain in character while engaging in normal group tasks, social dialogue and simple structured games.
- They must make decisions and respond to others as their character would.
- Gather the participants in a circle to drop their characters and share their emotional insights, reflecting on the systemic difficulties and challenges of discrimination they encountered.

Method B: "Empathy Mapping"

Materials: Flipcharts with a blank Empathy Map template (divided into four quadrants: What does this person Think? Feel? Say? Do?), markers.

Duration: 45 Minutes.

Step-by-Step Instructions:

- Divide participants into small mixed groups.
- Assign each group one real-life scenario of social exclusion.
- Using the Empathy Map template, the group brainstorms and documents the emotional reality of the excluded person:
 - Think: What worries or hopes are in their head?
 - Feel: What emotions are they experiencing?
 - Say: How do they express themselves verbally?
 - Do: What behaviors or coping mechanisms do they display?
- Groups present their maps to the wider audience, highlighting how understanding different perspectives can lead to more inclusive, compassionate actions.

Topic 7: Social Skills – Active Communication

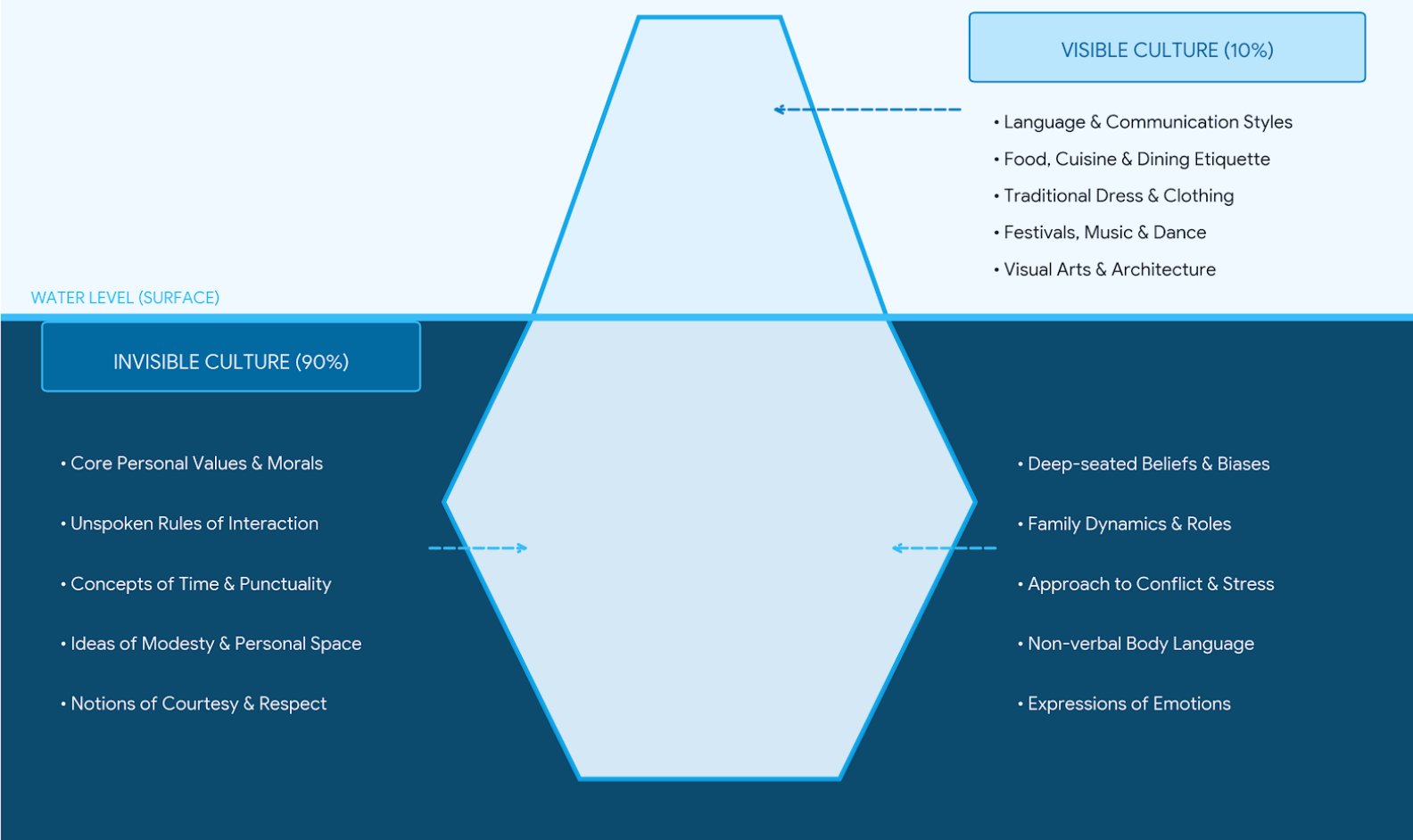
- **Session Objective:** To improve collaborative problem-solving, develop active listening as well as build constructive verbal coordination within diverse groups.

Method A: "Perspective Switch"

- **Materials:** Notebooks, pens.
- **Duration:** 45 Minutes.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - Put participants into pairs.
 - Have each partner share a personal opinion on a neutral, non-volatile topic (e.g., the value of digital detox, remote work versus office, urban versus rural living).
 - After both have spoken, swap roles: each partner must now explain the other's perspective as if it were their own.
 - They must represent their partner's viewpoint accurately and empathetically, trying to convince a listener.
 - This develops cognitive empathy and active listening.

Method B: "Blindfolded Trust Maze"

- **Materials:** Blindfolds, simple obstacles (chairs, cones, soft boxes).
- **Duration:** 45 Minutes.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - Set up a simple obstacle path in the outdoor area of the session room.
 - Pair up participants: one partner is blindfolded, while the other acts as the guide.
 - The guide must direct their blindfolded partner through the path using only verbal instructions from a distance, without any physical touching.
 - Swap roles once the course is completed.
 - Debrief on the necessity of trust, clarity of language, also clear non-verbal cues in building secure relationships.



Topic 8: Fostering Inclusion & Co-Creation

- **Session Objective:** To apply EQ competencies to active community work and design educational workshops that spread emotional intelligence for social inclusion.

Method A: "What's Under our Iceberg?"

- **Materials:** Large flipchart paper, markers.
- **Duration:** 90 Minutes.
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - Draw a large iceberg on the flipchart with a visible waterline.
 - Explain the concept of "the cultural iceberg": 10% of culture is visible above the water (e.g., language, food, traditional music), while 90% is invisible below the water (e.g., notions of modesty, non-verbal rules, family values or even concepts of time).
 - Participants work in national and then mixed groups to list their own cultures' elements above and below the water.
 - They discuss how cross-cultural conflict and social exclusion occur when we judge others solely on visible elements without empathy for what lies beneath.

Method B: "DIY Workshop Creation & Presentation"

- **Materials:** Flipcharts, markers, post-its, scissors, tape and creative materials.
- **Duration:** Day-long process (Design, Preparation and Facilitation).
- **Step-by-Step Instructions:**
 - Divide participants into small, international teams.
 - Task each team with designing their own 30-minute interactive workshop.
 - Each workshop must focus on teaching or practicing one specific element of EQ (e.g., active listening, stress management, self-awareness) to promote social inclusion.
 - The facilitators act as mentors, guiding teams through the design, timing and methodology.
 - Teams present their workshops to the larger group, acting as actual trainers.
 - Following each session, the group provides constructive feedback to support peer learning and professional development.



Daily Three-Step Reflection Cycle



Section III: Evaluation & Reflection

To ensure high-quality learning outcomes, structured self-assessment and group reflection were built into the program.

The Three-Step Daily Reflection Cycle

- **Individual Reflection:** At the end of each day, participants spend 15 minutes engaging in quiet self-assessment, documenting their insights, challenges and developed skills in a physical daily reflection journal.
- **Small Group Dialogue:** Participants regroup into national teams. This ensures they feel comfortable expressing complex emotional reflections in their native languages. Group leaders support the sessions and record key observations.
- **Facilitator & Leader Alignment:** Each evening, the group leaders meet with the project organizers and facilitators to share the feedback, address participant needs and refine the program for the following day.

Youthpass Integration

On Day 1, participants are introduced to the Youthpass framework through an interactive game called "Escape Room: The 8 Keys". On the final day (Day 7), participants evaluate their personal growth against the European Key Competencies, culminating in a celebratory Youthpass ceremony where learning is formally recognized.

Section IV: Project Summary & Legacy

Impact and Sustainability

The "**Feel to Connect: EQ for Inclusion**" project goes beyond short-term youth exchange activities. The methods presented in this booklet are designed to be shared, replicated and scaled up by other organizations across Europe and further.

- **For Participants:** Development of key soft skills, including conflict resolution, self-awareness, intercultural communication and empathy, boosting long-term employability and active citizenship.
- **For Organizations:** The project strengthens cooperation between European partners and enhances their capacity to integrate emotional-intelligence-focused methods into grass-roots youth work.
- **Dissemination:** This booklet, as the practical handbook material is made freely available on the SALTO platform to maximize local, national as well as international impact.



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