

BACKGROUND OF THE SEMINAR

1. Context of the seminar

Context

European societies are shaped, and continue to be shaped, by migration. While this is a reality, many societies struggle with accepting, acknowledging, recognising, appreciating and valorising it. In this seminar, we wanted to deepen the understanding of how societies are shaped by migration, engage with the lived realities of people experiencing structural barriers because of migration, and focus on the daily practices and realities of youth work.

The roots of this seminar lay in the belief that youth work, and using the European Programmes for youth in those places, have the potential to smoothen and support renegotiation and adjustment processes. They can help bridge gaps and improve connections. By bringing together youth workers and persons connected to the field of youth, we wanted to explore this potential and the conditions to realise it.

In the seminar, we started by using the lens of post-migrant societies. The concept doesn't imply that migration has been or should be overcome, it rather describes the aftereffects and how migration shapes and reconfigures the present. The concept of post-migration uses a structural and societal perspective, while avoiding the trap of 'us versus them'.

Aims & objectives

This seminar was held over 3 days in November 2023 and aimed to deepen the understanding of societies shaped by migration and the role Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps can play in it. The objectives were to:

- Explore what it means to recognise societies as shaped by migration and the role youth work plays in it.
- Create a space for peer-learning opportunities on how to do youth work within the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes and at the same time including young people with experience with migration.
- Understand the accessibility of Erasmus+ and Erasmus Solidarity Corps for young people facing barriers within a society shaped by migration.
- Co-create a concrete outcome to make the knowledge in the seminar transferable to the field of youth in general.



1. Context of the seminar

Participant recruitment

This seminar was co-created by an international group of stakeholders, and aimed for an inclusive approach from the beginning.

In recruiting participants, the National Agencies reached out to many networks and third party organisations who have a closer contact with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. By opening relationships, encouraging communication, and offering funding to participate, National Agencies also enabled the increase of awareness of European Programmes to some new and different potential beneficiaries.

For the application process for participants, for the first time we included voice and video application, as well as the traditional approach of apply-online through an written application form. A new system had to be designed and set up for this as an innovative practice, within the existing system of hosting international seminars by one NA, and the other NAs recruiting and selecting participants to send.

The balance of the participant group was also important for the National Agencies who supported the process - having active youth workers, representatives from NGOs working directly from migrants, participants with migration background themselves, individuals with international project experience, as well as representation from different countries and types of youth and community work.

Training style Approach

The training team developed this approach for working sensitively with a mixed participant group:

- Holding space for participants and inviting the sharing of professional and personal experiences about the topic.
- We used non-formal methods as well as empowering language.
- We went through a learning journey together, with a main role for participants.
- The seminar connected to the local realities in Vienna through Study Visits to local organisations, and using the local reality for inspiration as part of the programme thinking.
- We invited participants to contribute to the seminar in the run-up to it through a padlet.

The Communication Support Tool on the next page illustrates this approach used, and can also be transferable in other projects and activities, as a way for different voices to be heard and respected in a group process.

2. Communication support

During the seminar, there were many methods and resources used that could be used more widely. This Communication tool can provide a framework for international groups to work together. It enables us to be gentle and supportive with each other as a group, and to be able to dive into sensitive topics.

I communicate my boundaries

I communicate what I am comfortable sharing or not. I express when something is outside my comfort zone. It's also ok to say 'I'm not comfortable about this right now' without explanation.

I speak about my own experiences

I express things from my own experience and feeling. I don't rely on 'you said' or 'I heard'. It's an authentic way to bring knowledge into the room.

I treat diverse perspectives respectfully

I listen to what others have to say. I don't have to agree with it, but I don't judge it. I explain my own position, and why it is different.

I don't shame anyone

This should be explicit, and a conscious effort, for words and actions of others.

Personal things shared stay in the group

I express things about my own experiences, I help build the trust in the group. I keep personal vulnerable things shared by others close to my heart and not shared indiscriminately. I never share other people's things without permission.

I share silence

I use that time to breathe and think. I allow others the time they need to express themselves. It can take time to voice things, or to get to the point. It can provide a break. If there are pauses, I take that time to reflect on what is happening for myself.

I show agreement by hands shaking

My positive opinion is shown non-verbally in the group plenary space by spinning hands in the air. This helps to get a picture of the agreement within the group.

I focus on my own learning

I take care of myself and what I want to learn, or if I want to get more out of the situation. I take responsibility for my own (learning) outcomes in this seminar.

I respect the use of a non-native language

In this international environment, I am compassionate and empathetic if something is not phrased perfectly. I use simple language that is understandable for others that have different language skills. If something is not phrased in a way that is comfortable, I explain why and provide an alternative phrasing for people to use.

I try to avoid to generalise

I talk about specifics. I try not to stereotype or pre-judge.

I listen actively

I make sure I am physically and mentally present when other people are speaking, to really listen to what they have to say. I am attentive and present to their words, and not focusing on other things that are going on in my head/phone/life.

I take responsibility

I am responsible for the time I take up when I'm speaking and for what I am saying. I am mindful of others in the room that might also want to talk. I am careful of what I say and how I phrase it. Taking a long time to talk means it takes time and space from others.

I communicate the background of my questions

Giving context opens up more levels in communication. It's a tool that can improve connection.

3. Programme

The seminar had 3 full programme days, with free evenings to encourage networking and connection to local reality

Time	19/11	20/11 EXPLORE	21/11 EXCHANGE	22/11 ENACT
9:30 - 11:00	Arrivals	Introduction to the seminar	Introducing Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps	Concepts: youth work + societies shaped by migration
11:00 - 11:30		Break	Break	Break
11:30 - 13:00		Group dynamics	Best practices: peer learning	Challenges + barriers in youth work / with migrants?
13:00 - 14:30		Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
14:30 - 16:00		Mapping local realities	Study visit (break included)	Co-creation of cheat sheet
16:00 - 16:30		Break		Break
16:30 - 18:00		Understanding barriers		Reflection & evaluation
18:00 - 20:00		Dinner	Dinner	Dinner
20:00 - 21:30		Welcoming	Free evening	Dinner out

4. Inclusion & Diversity priority of Erasmus+

Inclusion is often seen as the way to include people facing access barriers or having fewer opportunities. There are several policy initiatives of the European Commission where inclusion is a key objective to ensure more people are included in education, training and youth work.

People should be able to actively participate in the democratic processes and in public life, regardless of their background or circumstances. Modern societies and political systems rely on the inclusion of diverse people. In this respect, participating in European Programmes can contribute to develop a sense of shared citizenship and to foster a greater involvement in society.

Doing youth work and youth work projects in post-migrant societies demands certain approaches and capacities. This seminar aimed to share and learn about these, between a diverse participant group.

Having more and better international youth projects that involve young people living in post-migrant societies is an aim for several National Agencies of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.

There are systems and structures to help make that happen. One of those, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre, provides resources for persons and agencies supporting young people with fewer opportunities. By offering opportunities for training, exchange and reflection on inclusion practice and diversity management, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity works towards the visibility, accessibility and transparency of its inclusion & diversity work and resources, and towards making 'inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities' and 'positive diversity management' a widely supported priority.

This seminar was planned and delivered under this framework.



5. Welcome to the seminar

Welcome from SALTO Inclusion & Diversity

This seminar was organised by different institutions that work for the European Programmes who are cooperating together for the priority of including more and different young people in the opportunities funded by the Programmes for youth.

SALTO Inclusion & Diversity coordinates the Strategic Partnership for Inclusion (SPI). This is a cooperation between 25 National Agencies that aims to increase the participation of young people with fewer opportunities and facilitate access of new organisations in the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes.

This seminar is organised through one of the strands of SPI: “Barriers in a post-migrant society”.

Originally, this strand of the SPI had an objective to reach out to those with migration backgrounds, refugees, asylum seekers, and organisations working with them, using the phrase ‘diverse cultural backgrounds’. However, ‘diverse cultural backgrounds’ is not an individual trait of a certain group of people, nor is it inclusive. The phrase of ‘post-migrant society is now used’ - not only to analyse or understand our societies as they are now, but also as a lens to help us imagine a future of inclusive societies.

European Programmes should be inclusive for everyone. We want to co-create together the conditions that help people to participate. We are shifting from the previous way of offering a package of opportunities, to asking: “what do you need?”. Once we hear what people need, we can start working on it. We can’t do that alone, so seminars and moments of bringing people together provide opportunities to hear more and different voices and to co-create. We want to deepen the understanding of ‘what is a post-migrant society, and what is the role of youth work in it?’

This is the context for this seminar, as the first one in the SPI strand. It aimed to provide a space to share different experiences, expertise and stories and learn from those. We created a space defined by our own rules and our own co-created structures. We can also bring that out to a real society. We can implement small real local changes that then create structural changes. Then we can accomplish a society in which we are all included.

We hope that this seminar will provide a first step for this. The outcomes of the seminar follow in this report, and we hope they will be the base for the future steps of more and different young people from post-migrant societies included in European Youth Programmes.



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