

# Handbook

of good practices for work with  
youths with a migrant background



Erasmus+



Transformers  
Migrant's Transition  
to Participation



INSTITUTE FOR  
EASTERN  
INITIATIVES

# Handbook of good practices for work with youths with a migrant background

Krakow, 2015

Publisher: Institute for Eastern Initiatives,  
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This „Handbook of good practices” is the result of the “TRANSFORMERS: migrants’ transition to participation” training course for youth workers, organised by the Institute for Eastern Initiatives within the framework of Erasmus+ programme and financed by the European Commission. The views expressed in this publication belong only to their authors and do not reflect the official opinions of the European Commission, European Union or Institute for Eastern Initiatives

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ISBN 978-83-938388-1-3



# **Handbook**

**of good practices for work with  
youths with a migrant background**



# Introduction

Migration in the modern world is not a new phenomenon. People have been migrating throughout all time, as a survival strategy or simply to make their lives better. However, nowadays migration is much more visible and people move more frequently due to globalisation that gives them new opportunities. In the same time - migration is not only a voluntary act. Often we can observe "forced" migration. In 2002 the UN declared 18th of December as an International Migrants Day in order to ensure respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants.

Currently, in the world more than 215 million people can be declared as migrants, which is more than 3% of the entire population. Those days also Europe is facing a new migration crisis. Many European countries are preparing to host refugees which is a long and complicated process. New waves of migration are affecting not only migrants' themselves but also local communities. Migration is a challenge, but at the same time it is a huge opportunity especially for youngsters. They develop different skills and competences mainly connected with acculturation.

There are many classifications of migration, representing most of the types youth workers meet. In this paper we take into consideration outer migration when a person changes their country of residence, even though there are many "internal" migrants. Typology based on the aim of the migrant is the most widespread one. According to this we can distinguish the following types:

- Economic migrants, temporary workers: people whose main aim of moving was the opportunity to earn more and at the same "climb up" on the social ladder;

- Highly skilled migrants and expatriates: very often we do not take this group into consideration when we talk about migrants but this phenomenon is developing very fast. In particular children of expatriates may face difficulties with identity, and integrating with their peers;

- Irregular migrants (people without permission to stay): this group are the most disadvantaged and very often totally excluded from society;

- Forced migrants: refugees, asylum seekers, internally displaced persons (IDPs);

- Family members: joining family members who have emigrated previously;

- Returning migrants (returnees): people who are coming back to their homeland after many years or generations of migration, yet they are coming back to a totally new reality, very often not knowing the local language and culture.

Even though economic reasons are the most common, there may be others. Among them are: personal, educational, religious, ecological, patriotic, axiological reasons. Special consideration should be dedicated to refugees. Often they move involuntarily and are seeking asylum. The 1951 UN Geneva Convention stipulates the criteria for a refugee. According to this document, a refugee is someone who, "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country".

Migration has a huge influence on not only the individuals migrating but on their families, local communities (both in the country of origin and in the new country) and all societies. It is connected with social status and emotional sphere. The meeting of the migrant and representatives of the hosting country is always an intercultural meeting. Very often youth workers might have an influence on the acculturation strategy chosen by a young person with a migrant background. The body of research in this area shows that the most effective strategy is where migrants integrate, keeping their own culture but at the same time taking elements from the hosting culture. In this case a third optimal culture is developing. This strategy gives young people the opportunity to take part in both cultures and respect them.

In the following Handbook, which is a result of a training course 'Transformers – migrants' transition to participation' we wish to examine different methods and tools that can be used by youth workers in order to face exclusion of young people with migrant background. All the good practices were developed by youth workers themselves and are an answer to the real needs of their target groups. Some of them were already tested and used in the real life. Hereby we express honest gratitude to all the participants involved in creating this publication. In the same time – we do hope that those methods and tools will serve as inspiration and support for all youth workers who also dedicated themselves to work with young migrants.

# 1. Project description

TRANSFORMERS was an eight-day training course for youth workers from eight countries (Azerbaijan, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia Italy, Moldova, Poland and Ukraine) working with young people affected by migration: refugees, minorities, work migrants, IDPs and international volunteers. The project took place in Georgia between 4th and 11th of August 2015. Its main aim was to develop a cohesive methodology for integration of socially excluded migrants. This involved identifying and exploring all issues around migration, preparing them for active participation in civil society and improving their employability.

## Objectives

Migrants are too often regarded only as beneficiaries of actions taken by NGOs, whereas they should be actively participating in improving their position. It often leads to resentment toward any actions assisting them. This is why during the training course youth workers had a chance to:

1. explore and understand the entire process that leads to the social exclusion of people with a migrant background;
2. identify the competences that young people can develop in connection with migration and mobility;
3. break the stereotype of a migrant as a potential 'job-stealer' and person useless in the community;
4. develop methods of youth work that can contribute to increasing the professional skills of migrants on the job market;
5. develop methods of combating the 'reverse-exclusion' process;
6. share knowledge and good practices of work with youth of a migrant background;
7. develop the understanding of Non-Formal education as an ongoing process.

The project was based on the idea that all aspects of migration and mobility help develop natural competences in young people (i.e. flexibility, ability to create close and stable relationships, entrepreneurship, self-management, openness toward intercultural dialogue, ability to resolve conflicts through dispute, leadership potential): these only need to be encouraged and developed to make young people aware of their own potential. Thus the training course implemented the methodology of a survival camp, where all the participants had a chance to experience for themselves, in a form of a field game, the obstacles that migrants are facing in their everyday lives. The game was accompanied by a series of workshops dedicated to explaining the roots of social exclusion, the EU procedures around migration and mobility, the process of 'reverse-exclusion' (migrants toward community), as well as developing a methodology recommended for work with socially excluded people (step-by-step approach, trust-building, conflict resolution etc.). Participants also had a chance to meet with representatives of migrants regarded as socially excluded – the Internally Displaced People in Georgia – and discuss with them the needs and challenges of youth work with migrants.



As a result the youth workers were able to:

- adjust their approach toward people affected by migration;
- develop a new, cohesive methodology for their work;
- create a good practice handbook.

Thanks to the project the need to break stereotypes, integrate migrants with local communities and use mobility as a tool for improving competences related to social inclusion and employability of migrants were addressed. And as a result – like in the popular cartoon 'Transformers' – the position of a migrant as an 'alien' in the society will be transformed into an important role-model and a part of society.



## 2. Good practices

During eight days in Georgia participants identified the main fields of work that should be tackled to combat the exclusion of young people with a migrant background:

1. Empowerment;
2. Inclusion;
3. Conflict resolution;
4. Active citizenship;
5. Work with returnees.

They tried to answer four essential questions designed to encourage more active participation from youth with a migrant background: WHY? WHO? WHAT? HOW? And below there are their answers.



# Empowerment

## WHY?

The main aim of the question is to empower young people with a migrant background through the discovery and re-discovery of their talents. Youngsters need to constantly improve their skills and put them into practice. Disadvantaged youth especially should be given an opportunity to get more involved in their community and society in general. Objectives of the action include:

1. to motivate youth with a migrant background by increasing their confidence, self-reflection, motivation and level of participation;
2. to enable young people to practise their skills and share them with their peers;
3. to encourage youngsters to gain more knowledge, integrate more, get involved and give them a sense of ownership;
4. to improve the social skills of young excluded people and to enhance their decision-making capability.

## WHO?

The target group of the activity includes young people aged 15-20, both with and without a migrant background. After the workshops to be delivered by youth workers and volunteers in NGOs they will have a chance to involve their peers in their own activities.

## WHAT?

The activity conducted by youth NGOs consists of three main actions:

1. a workshop on talent development (once per week);
2. supporting period adjusted to each participant's needs and ideas;
3. implementation of the youngsters' ideas through peer education.

## HOW?

All the workshops will be conducted with the use of non-formal education tools and peer-to-peer education in order to facilitate group learning. Activities will focus on gaining practical skills, enhancing passion and discovering talents. The methodology during the supporting period will include meetings in small groups or one-on-one activities. All the time youth workers will be encouraged to give feedback and monitor the group's progress.

# Inclusion

## WHY?

The main reason for this activity is a lack of knowledge about immigration and immigrants: their needs, intentions, interests etc. Many organisations working with immigrants (either state or NGO related) do not have sufficient data about their target group. This initiative will contribute to increasing the effectiveness and recognition of work with youth with a migrant background.

## WHO?

The activity is directed to two target groups:

1. NGOs, research institutions, associations, informal groups;
2. Immigrants (regardless of the reason for migration).

## WHAT?

This will take the form of a campaign designed to raise awareness about immigration, supported by research about immigrants' needs, living conditions, plans, interests, intentions etc.

## HOW?

The main tools for this campaign will be internet surveys, questionnaires and interviews. The content of the survey should be prepared jointly by activists, government officials and other relevant stakeholders. All the materials will be translated into several languages to enable more people to participate in the research. Questionnaires would be available in public institutions and easily accessible.

# Conflict resolution

## WHY?

More and more often immigrants are faced with both psychological and physical aggression from their neighbours and local communities. The main goal of this action is to engender solidarity and tolerance, prevent conflicts and protect basic human rights.

## WHO?

The target group of this action consists of both migrants and representatives of indigenous local communities – young people and adults.

## WHAT?

- Establishing an information point where employees and associates would come from mixed background;
- Creating a web portal (in several languages) containing information about the cultures and customs of both the places of emigration and immigration. Posting comments should not be anonymous in order to prevent hate speech.
- Establishing a helpline for migrants facing exclusion or aggression.
- Providing the support of a mediator who would help identify the problems and needs of both indigenous local communities and immigrants in order to reach compromise and guarantee mutual respect.

## HOW?

Informational Centre	Mediation	Intercultural presentation
Establishing office	Conducting research	Finding space
Engaging 2 volunteers	Identifying possible problems/conflicts	Engaging communities to prepare presentations
Creating hotline	Establishing space for mediation	
Developing webportal	Inviting groups of immigrants and native local communities	

# Active citizenship

## WHY?

The main aim of this action is to support open and tolerant societies and to break stereotypes about foreign cultures and customs. It will be achieved through: integration during outdoor activities, improving language skills and discovering differences and similarities between cultures through art and games.

## WHO?

The target group consists of youths aged 11-15 both with and without migration background. The activities should be organized by NGOs and schools with the help of facilitators in non-formal education, teachers and volunteers.

## WHAT?

Ten days summer camp for youths from indigenous local communities and their peers with migrant backgrounds.

## HOW?

The camp should be based on non-formal and informal education methods. Young people would participate in various types of games, outdoor activities, theatre plays, manual workshops etc.



# Work with returnees

## WHY?

- To give more information about the benefits and disadvantages of repatriation;
- To start the integration of repatriates in the country of residence;
- To provide help for people who cannot afford to return to their country of origin;
- To enable the returnees to make a conscious decision about their homeland.

## WHO?

The activity should be conducted by non-governmental organisation and target young groups of returnees, aged 18-30.

## WHAT?

The action should be based on delivering all relevant information to the potential returnees (i.e. in a form of infopoint, web portal, workshops and meeting). In the long run, study visits to the desired place of repatriation could also be introduced.

## HOW?

The project should start by identifying and establishing contact with the target group by advertising and using personal contacts. The organisation in charge should focus on family connections and finding relatives. During a second stepphase it should provide workshops and meetings for the potential returnees (focused on language, traditions, customs, opportunities, pros and cons of regular life in the country of origin, education system, job opportunities, taxes etc.)



## 3. Examples

### Camp for IDP children in Ukraine

Center for European Initiatives from Sumy, Ukraine, organised a leisure camp for children whose parents took part in combat in the region of Eastern Ukraine, together with children from Donetsk and Lugansk. Total number of participants were 115 children: 25 came directly from combat zones, 47 were internally displaced persons living in the region of Sumy and the rest were the children of soldiers who were dragged to the army.



Children aged 15-17 participated in different activities related to sports, cinema, theatre etc. They also took part in a simulation game about a group of travellers coming to Earth from four different planets: Aiy, Hilchir, Mansara and Sansit. Participants had their own roles and had to experience different obstacles and adventures connected with migration.

Supporters of the camp were volunteers from medical college who organised activities for the smallest children in the camp. One of the volunteers, herself an IDP from Donetsk, decided to deliver an art workshop that will remind the children about the bright aspects of their lives.





# Summer Camp for Polish diaspora from Kazakhstan

Since 2013 every year Institute for Eastern Initiatives organises summer camps for children aged 15-18 representing Polish diaspora in Kazakhstan. Young people have a chance to visit their homeland, get to know their peers and learn about Polish history, culture and activities. They also have an opportunity to discover new activities that they can later implement in Kazakhstan – the topics of the camps so far were as follows: "Young Leaders", "Young Reporters" and "Young Volunteers".

In 2015 thirty youngsters spent two weeks in Krakow and Zegocina where they discovered the topic of volunteering and social work. They had time to integrate with local community, improve the level of Polish language, share their stories and traditions and to get to know more about their country of origin. As a result they prepared a series of videos aimed at promoting volunteering. Due to newly reinstalled ties with Poland some of them had even a chance to come again and enroll at the local universities.



# 'Galaxy of migrants' simulation game

The role-play game 'Galaxy of migrants' was developed by trainers from Institute for Eastern Initiatives from Poland in cooperation with association DRONI in order to equip youth workers with tools necessary for effective work and inclusion of youth with migrant background.

During the game each player should adopt a different role of a migrant and complete a set of tasks in order to cross the border and settle in his/her destination. The game is based in an alternative world where the entire Solar System is inhabited. The players are citizens of six planets: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto – and they are trying to settle on Planet Earth. Each planet of origin is facing different social, political and economic issues and every migrant has a different backstory.



## EXAMPLE

### Task 3. Crossing the boarder

**Participants:** All together (later divided into 5 groups according to their planets)

**Facilitators:** 6

**Time:** 1,5 h

**Materials needed:** Registration forms/ 1 per participant + 10-15 spare, border guards uniforms, stamps, border points.

**Description:**

During this task facilitators play the roles of border guards and the task for the players is to cross the border. 5 facilitators create their own border control points – each point will be responsible for evaluating applications from citizens from only one planet (Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Neptune). Pluto, which is not considered as a planet does not have a special control point so citizens can apply anywhere. There are no signs which control point is responsible for which planet - it is up to the payers to find it out during the game. Border guards should be passive and rude and should not give any help or additional information to the participants. The group of facilitators should be various in terms of languages they speak. Each of them will also receive registration forms according to their language.

Facilitators are given a lot of freedom in terms of the manner of conducting the border control. They can be rude or polite, they can shout, be silent, leave their post for some time, consult with other border guards, ask for additional documents from the players (proof of sufficient financial founds, insurance, contact details to their family, bribes etc.), organise individual interviews, express threats etc. The point is to create as much chaos and disorientation as possible. It is also important to take into account the origins of the players – refugees should receive different treatment then returnees or work immigrants.

When a player has the stamp in his/her passport he/she can move to the border crossing where the 6th facilitator is waiting. He/she should present his/her passport and after some additional examination can finally cross the border. The task ends when the last player crosses the border.

# PLANET EARTH REGISTRATION FORM

.....  
stamp of the authority accepting the application

year				month		day	

place and date of submission of the application

To  
name of the authority the application is submitted to

## A. PERSONAL DATA OF THE FOREIGNER

1. Surname	<div></div>																											
2. Previous surname (surnames)	<div></div>																											
3. Family name	<div></div>																											
4. Name (names)	<div></div>																											
	<div></div>																											
5. Previous name (names)	<div></div>																											
	<div></div>																											
6. Father's name	<div></div>																											
7. Mother's name	<div></div>																											
	<div></div>																											
8. Mother's maiden name	<div></div>																											
9. Date of birth	<div></div>														10. Sex	<div></div>												
11. Place of birth	<div></div>																											
12. Planet of birth	<div></div>																											
13. Nationality	<div></div>																											
14. Citizenship	<div></div>																											
15. Marital status	<div></div>																											
16. Education	<div></div>																											
17. Practised profession	<div></div>																											
18. Description																												
Height	<div></div>																											



