

Module 2:

Developing intercultural competence

▶ **SESSION 1:** **INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND TOLERANCE OF AMBIGUITY**

■ **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of the session learners will:

- Understand the key concepts related to intercultural competence and intercultural communication;
- Be able to identify potential sources of intercultural misunderstandings;
- Increase awareness of their own tolerance of ambiguity.

■ **RESOURCES NEEDED**

- Slides on intercultural competence;
- Computer with access to internet, video-projector and screen;
- Supporting documents on intercultural competence;
- Hand-out on cultural dimensions.

■ **STRUCTURE AND METHODS**

- a. 20 min: Introductory presentation on intercultural competence;
- b. 50 min: Exercise and presentation on sources of intercultural misunderstandings;
- c. 20 min: Exercise on tolerance of ambiguity based on video.

■ PROCEDURE

- a. Intercultural competence.

Present the key concepts using the slides. Allow participants to ask questions and make comments.

- b. Sources of intercultural misunderstandings.

Divide participants in groups of 3–4. Ask each group to go through the descriptions of the cultural dimensions and identify concrete situations of interaction with migrants (preferably from their own professional experience but also from personal life or even from books or movies) where intercultural misunderstandings can be explained by different positioning on one or more cultural dimensions. For each example, the group has to discuss:

- What was the source of the misunderstanding?
- What can be done to prevent or overcome the misunderstanding?
- What elements of intercultural competence need to be mobilized to address the situation?

Each group presents the examples identified and the other participants are invited to comment.

At the end remind that the cultural dimensions are just tools that can help in structuring our understanding of cultural differences and potential sources of misunderstandings, but they should not be used in a deductive way (if that person is from country x, she/he must have a certain positioning on cultural dimensions). Point out that various elements of intercultural competence can help us overcome or prevent potential misunderstandings generated by cultural differences.

- c. Tolerance of ambiguity.

Present the definition of tolerance of ambiguity and show a brief video showing someone in a situation characterized by a high degree of uncertainty and ambiguity. One example is the video available at www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiQnH450hPM

Ask participants to comment, by referring mainly to:

- What indicates the level of tolerance of ambiguity of the person in the video? Is it high or low?
- What alternatives did the person have in that situation? Was any alternative better than what the person did in the video?
- What would participants do if they were in that situation?

Then ask participants to reflect individually for five minutes and then share examples of situations where they displayed tolerance of ambiguity or of situations where they now think they should have had a higher level of tolerance of ambiguity.

■ ASSESSMENT

The assessment of this session will be done during the first part of the second day of training, together with the assessment for the following session and for the task.

■ COMMENTS

If participants find it difficult to identify an example during the work on groups, give an example from your own experience.

During the discussion about the video, you might need to play it again to clarify the comments or to play again some parts of it.

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▶ **SESSION 2: OVERCOMING STEREOTYPES AND DEVELOPING EMPATHY**

■ **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of the session learners will:

- Have increased awareness on how stereotypes work and how they can influence us against our will;
- Be able to identify and analyse the elements of intercultural competence helping is to overcome the negative effect of stereotyping;
- Have enhanced empathy and understanding of the perspective of migrants.

■ **RESOURCES NEEDED**

- Computer with access to internet, video-project and screen;
- Supporting documents on intercultural competence.

■ **STRUCTURE AND METHODS**

- a. 30 min: Presentation of a video in two steps and discussion;
- b. 30 min: Exercise on empathy;
- c. 30 min: Exercise on understanding barriers faced by migrants.

■ **PROCEDURE**

- a. Presentation of a video in two steps and discussion.

Present the video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=crbEwQJMZC8 but stop it at the minute 5 and 23 seconds, without mentioning that you are going to play the end later.

Ask participants to describe what they saw. Some of them may want to make judgments or express opinions but you should make it clear that you want them to describe first what they saw, as if they were talking to someone who did not see the video. Then ask them to express what they think about it.

SESSION 2: OVERCOMING STEREOTYPES AND DEVELOPING EMPATHY

After all those who wanted so expressed their opinions, tell participants that in fact there are a few more seconds at the end of the video and it is important to see how it ends. Then play the rest of the video, until the very end.

Ask participants what they think now. Most probably the end will make them reinterpret totally their perspective on what happened. Ask them to explain why in the first place they had a different perspective. Show the video again and ask them to spot elements which, if they paid attention to, would have allowed them to guess the end.

Then ask why these elements were ignored when they first saw the video. If the situation in the video would be reversed between the two main characters, would they have reacted the same way when the first part of the video was presented? Bring the concept of stereotypes in the discussion and explain how stereotypes help us simplify the reality but can also determine us to make wrong judgements. Ask them to share examples when stereotypes led them or colleagues of them to make wrong judgments and decisions.

b. Exercise on empathy with migrants.

Ask participants to picture in their mind a migrant. It can be someone they know, someone they heard or read about, or even an imaginary person. Ask them to close their eyes and recall the main elements about the migrant: age, gender, country of origin, level of education, languages spoken and other relevant elements.

Put a relaxing music on the background and go into a guided visualization with the following sequence of statements and questions (read the statements and questions slowly and clearly, allowing time between statements for participants to process them):

- You are going to see things from the perspective of that person now. Remember important moments of your life in the origin country. How were things during your childhood? Picture the members of your family, friends, and other people in the community.
- Recall the first time you arrived in this city. How and where did you arrive? What were the first things you saw? You are walking on the street and watching people and buildings around you. What were you thinking? What were your feelings?
- What thoughts make you feel comfortable and good and what thoughts make you feel anxious and worried?
- How do you see the future? What are you thinking of doing in the following days, in a year, in five years? How is this thinking about the future make you feel?

Leave a few seconds of silence, for participants to go on with their thoughts. Ask them to slowly open their eyes, stop the music and ask them to be aware of here and now and of who they are, to step out from the perspective of the person they were thinking about and be themselves again.

Ask the following questions for debriefing:

- Was it difficult to pick the person? Was the choice good finally?
- Was it hard to get into the perspective of the migrants? What was most difficult and why?
- How did you feel in different moments? Why?
- Any other feelings and thoughts to share?

Conclude by pointing out the definition of empathy as a skill, involving both a cognitive and an emotional component and emphasize that it can be developed through practice and reflection.

- c. Exercise on understanding barriers faced by migrants.

Distribute the role cards below and tell participants that they should keep for themselves their content and not share it at this stage with the colleagues.

Put a relaxing music and ask participants to think about the person on the card: picture in your mind the daily life of that person, the memories that person is having, things that the person likes, people he/she is interacting with, their attitudes and feelings towards him/her, his/her feelings and attitudes towards them.

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ROLE CARDS

Cut and distribute one to each participant the role cards below; if you have more than 16 participants, duplicate some of the cards; you may also choose to modify some of the cards; replace local with the nationality of the country where you work:

You are a refugee man from Syrian Arab Republic, arrived in Europe a week ago. You have been a teacher of history before and speak only Arabic	You are a young woman from Somalia recently arrived, without education and without relatives in the host country	You are a young man from Nigeria. You have basic education and speak English. You know some other Nigerians who arrived before you	You are a middle-aged man from Western Balkans experienced in agriculture and some relatives already established in host country
You are a local history teacher	You are a local business consultant	You are a retired local engineer	You are a local young woman
You are a woman from Ukraine looking for work	You are an African migrant living in the host country for five years and sending money to family in the origin country	You are a migrant shop-keeper, with a wife and four children	You are the wife of a small business owner and came with your husband from a Muslim country
You are a local young man who just graduated university	You are the wife of a local small business owner	You are the daughter of the mayor, employed as social worker	You are a Roma migrant with no education and are learning the local language

Have participants stand in a line, having in front of them an empty area where they can all make at least eight steps. Explain that you will read a series of statements. If, from the perspective of the person on their card, the statement is correct, participants will take a step forward. If not, they will stand still and wait for the next statement. They should not talk during this process.

Read the following statements:

1. You feel good when you think about the past few years of your life;
2. You have a place to live which is comfortable enough and you own it;
3. You have money of your own and you decide how to spend them;
4. When you go shopping you think about what you need, not about how much money you have;
5. If you get sick, there will be someone to take care of you;
6. You meet regularly people with whom you can share your thought and feel supported;
7. You can go abroad for holiday with your family or friends at least once a year;
8. You are convinced that your children will go to university.

Ask participants to look around and see the position of various group members. Ask them to reveal the content of their cards. Then ask them to get out of the role and think back from their own perspective, not from the perspective of the person on their card.

Have participants sit in a circle and discuss about:

- Their feelings during the different phases of the activity;
- Who were those most advanced and those left behind;
- The reasons of the differences and the statements for which they could not move;
- What was surprising in the way the positions evolved;
- The main barriers that migrants risk to face.

■ **ASSESSMENT**

The assessment of this session will be done during the first part of the second day of training, together with the assessment for the previous session and for the task.

■ **COMMENTS**

Depending on the size of the group and their involvement and needs, you might also do only one of the exercises on empathy and take more time to discuss it. Several alternative options for videos with a similar content with the one indicated above are available online.

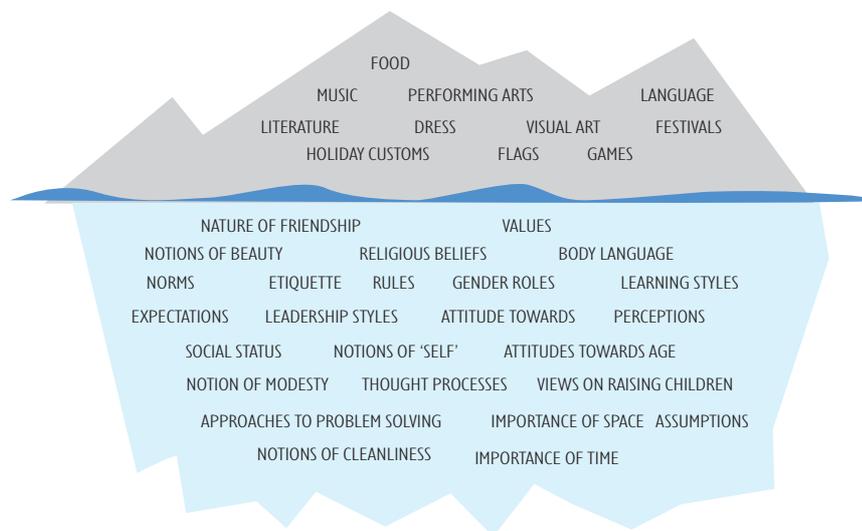
The exercise on understanding the barriers faced by migrants is also a good illustration of the concept of structural discrimination, as explained in the module on non-discrimination.

▶ HANDOUT: INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

In order to understand intercultural competence, it is important to clarify how culture is understood and what an intercultural encounter is.

■ UNDERSTANDING CULTURE AND CULTURAL AFFILIATIONS

Culture can be understood in many ways and the fact that it is a multifaceted concept is often a source of misunderstandings. According to UNESCO, culture includes “knowledge, beliefs, arts, morals, laws, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by [a human] as a member of society.” Culture can also be seen as referring to a “fuzzy set of attitudes, beliefs, behavioural norms, basic assumptions and values that are shared by a group of people, and that influence each member’s behaviour and his/her interpretations of the “meaning” of other people’s behaviour” (Spencer-Oatey, 2008).



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In fact, the two definitions concern different levels of culture and if we consider both of them we can see culture like an iceberg. The “iceberg model” of culture emphasizes that there are visible expressions of culture but that there is also a much more extended set of hidden elements that influence people but are not explicit and are often unconscious.

The definitions of culture mentioned above refer to society and groups, not to countries and nations. Various groups and subgroups, including groups defined based on ethnocultural criteria, but also on geographic, professional, ideological or other criteria, may be described using this model. This means that, when looking at the world, we should not see it as a puzzle, where every piece has its place near other pieces, but as a complex and multi-layered aggregate where parts may overlap and where borders are not always clearly visible.

When analysing any two groups, one can find similarities and differences at the visible or at the invisible levels. Also all larger groups have internal cultural variability, which may make members of two subgroups more different between themselves than compared with somebody from another group.

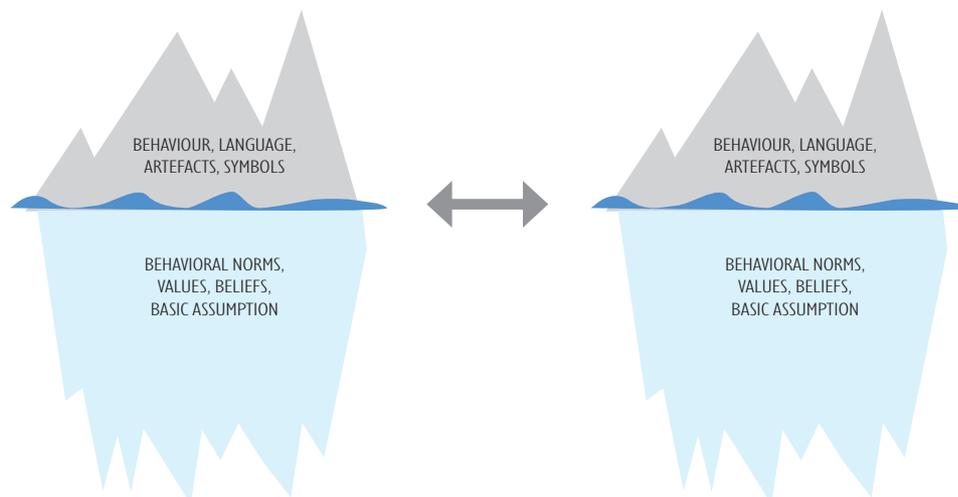
One should not infer that a person living in a certain country, or region, or belonging to a specific ethnic or religious group, must necessarily correspond to the pattern of beliefs and behaviours usually associated with these groups. People have different personalities, with features that may contradict certain cultural prescriptions. Also, any person belongs simultaneously to a variety of groups and the specific attitudes and behaviours in a certain context may be determined by a conscious or unconscious choice of a reference group for that context. Moreover, many persons feel that they belong simultaneously not only to different groups defined by different criteria, but also to several groups defined by the same criteria (multiple cultural affiliations). Thus, considering the complexity of the elements described above, it is preferable to speak about cultural affiliations of people than of cultures.

The cultures of all groups and societies are permanently in evolution. Some change very slowly and may be perceived as static, but changes occur everywhere. In some cases, changes are encouraged and supported, while in other cases they face resistance and are labelled as a loss of authenticity. A major source of cultural change is represented by the interactions between people with different cultural affiliations.

■ INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTERS

We can speak about an intercultural encounter when people who perceive themselves or are perceived as having different cultural affiliations interact.

Such a situation can be represented by the interaction between two icebergs:



It is obvious that if the interaction is analysed by looking only at the visible elements, it will not be properly understood. But looking at the invisible elements is also not easy because in many cases those involved are not aware of the underlying elements affecting their visible attitudes, thoughts and behaviours.

■ UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES

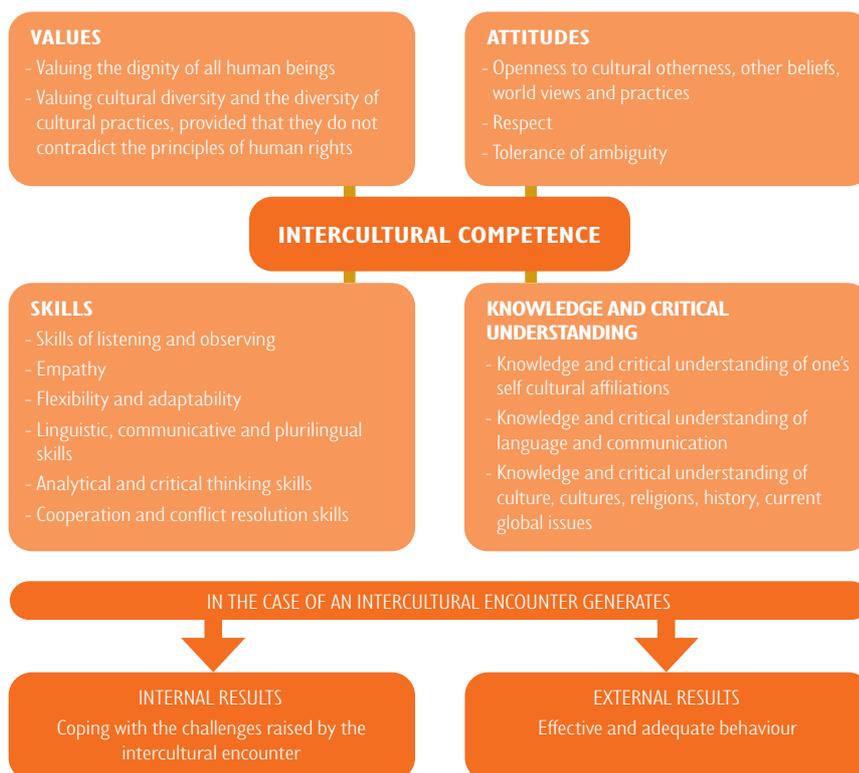
What are, more precisely, these invisible elements that are perceived as cultural differences? One approach to answering such a question is to use the models developed around the concept of “cultural dimension”. These are just tools helping in making sense of what elements of difference exist. They should not be seen as labels but as continuums. A certain group or society can be located anywhere on this continuum. There are several models of cultural dimensions and the list below is based on a combination of some of these models (Hofstede, 2001; Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner, 1997; Hall, 1989).

1. **Low context / high context** – People used to live in a low-context society expect to receive detailed and explicit communication, to be given clear information and guidelines, while people used with high context environments do not consider important to make explicit a lot of elements in their communication because the other people are expected to share them from past experiences. An institution where rules of behaviour and procedures are clearly defined and decisions are made based on information provided explicitly in documents is an example of a low context environment, while family is an example of a high context environment.
2. **Low / High Power Distance** – the extent to which there is acceptance of an unequal distribution of power in society. High power societies are strictly hierarchical and the decisions are taken by those in a position of authority. Changes in the hierarchy are usually not welcome and although people may move to a higher position, moving down to an inferior position is considered as problematic. Low power distance means egalitarian relationships and decisions made by consultation and deliberation. Positions of authority are considered temporary and anyone can take the role of leader at a certain moment and under certain circumstances.
3. **Individualism / collectivism** – From an individualistic perspective people are expected to stand up for themselves and to choose their own affiliations. They are presumed able to make their own decisions and take care of themselves, while bearing the responsibility for the decisions made. A collectivistic view sees individuals predominantly as members of a group to which they belong for life and which provides security and protection but will demand loyalty and compliance with internal norms.

4. **Masculinity / femininity** – refers to the values associated in most societies with gender roles. So called ‘masculine’ cultures value competition, assertiveness, ambition, and the accumulation of wealth and material possessions, whereas feminine cultures place more value on care for others, positive relationships and quality of life. Feminine cultures also consider that there should be little differences between the social roles of men and women.
5. **Uncertainty avoidance** – reflects the extent to which people attempt to cope with anxiety by minimizing uncertainty. High levels of uncertainty avoidance mean favouring structured circumstances and importance is given to rituals and procedures in various areas of social life, from religion, to food, strict planning of activities and belief in the existence of a single and absolute truth. On the contrary, uncertainty acceptance is associated with more tolerance of different opinions, with preference for as few rules as possible, and with a relativist position, allowing for the coexistence of different beliefs and religions, side by side.
6. **Long-term / short-term orientation** – describes a society’s “time horizon,” or the importance attached to the future versus the past and present. Values associated with long-term orientation are thrift and perseverance while values associated with short-term orientation are respect for tradition, fulfilling social obligations, and protecting one’s ‘face’.
7. **Achievement / ascription** – Is recognition given based on deeds or associated with social status? People with a background in a society where achievement prevails will expect recognition and appreciation based on their performance and individual merits. People with a background in societies based on ascription might expect that recognition and appreciation are a function of social status and not of the individual achievement.
8. **Sequential time / synchronic time** – Do we do things one at a time or several things at once? People belonging to cultural groups with a preference for a sequential approach to time, are used to treating time as a commodity, as something to be saved, spent or wasted. Time is used to bring order and set limits. On the other hand, in cultural groups which tend to see time synchronically, time is seen more holistically and interconnected. Synchronic cultures tend to value priorities more than a predetermined time limit. They will do what is perceived as the right thing to do at the moment, even if that contradicts the initially set schedule.
9. **Internal control / external control** – Do we control our environment or are we controlled by it? People in societies valuing internal control tend to believe they can bend nature and the future to their will. An obstacle to what is desired doesn’t change the goal, only the way to achieve it. People in societies which assume external control seek to live in harmony with the reality as it is, rather than trying to fundamentally change it.

■ INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

We define intercultural competence as the ability to mobilize and deploy relevant values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and critical understanding in order to respond appropriately and effectively to the demands, challenges and opportunities that are presented by intercultural encounters.



This model of competence is based on the ongoing work of the Council of Europe and has several distinctive features compared with other models of intercultural competence. At a structural level, unlike most of the models which are focused on knowledge, skills and attitudes, this model includes values and associates critical understanding to knowledge. An intercultural competent person needs all the four elements (values, attitudes, skills and knowledge and critical understanding) and not just knowledge about other cultures as it is often assumed (Council of Europe, 2016; Deardorff, 2009).

Although all the elements of the model deserve a more detailed clarification, we present here only some elements regarding one attitude (tolerance of ambiguity) and one skill (empathy):

Tolerance of ambiguity is an attitude towards situations which are uncertain and subject to multiple conflicting interpretations. People with high tolerance of ambiguity evaluate these kinds of objects, events and situations in a positive manner and deal with them constructively, while people with low tolerance for ambiguity adopt a rigid single perspective on unclear situations and are inflexible in their thinking about the world. Faced with a situation where not all elements are known or clear and where there is a high degree of uncertainty and potential multiple interpretations, people with a low level of tolerance of ambiguity tend to refrain from doing anything and are blocked until they receive clarifications, while people with a higher level of tolerance of ambiguity are ready to go along, explore and adjust as things evolve.

We often expect from migrants to have a high level of tolerance of ambiguity and move on in their integration path, despite the fact that many elements might not be clear for them.

Empathy is the set of skills required to understand and relate to other people's thoughts, beliefs and feelings, and to see the world from other people's perspectives. Empathy involves the ability to step outside one's own psychological frame of reference (i.e. to decentre from one's own perspective) and the ability to imaginatively apprehend and understand the psychological frame of reference and perspective of another person. This skill is fundamental to imagining the cultural affiliations, world-views, beliefs, interests, emotions, wishes and needs of other people.

Three different forms of empathy can be distinguished:

- i. Cognitive perspective-taking – the ability to apprehend and understand the perceptions, thoughts and beliefs of other people;
- ii. Affective perspective-taking – the ability to apprehend and understand the emotions, feelings and needs of other people;
- iii. Sympathy, sometimes called 'compassionate empathy' or 'empathic concern' – the ability to experience feelings of compassion and concern for other people based on the apprehension of their cognitive or affective state or condition, or their material situation or circumstances.

It is important to note that here empathy is understood as a skill, not an attitude or an innate attribute, and that, from this perspective, this definition does not include "emotional contagion", which implies actually experiencing the same emotions and feeling along with the other person.

Anyone can develop intercultural competence by becoming aware of the influences culture has on our own behaviour and on the behaviour of others, as well as by paying special attention to interaction situations taking place in an intercultural setting.

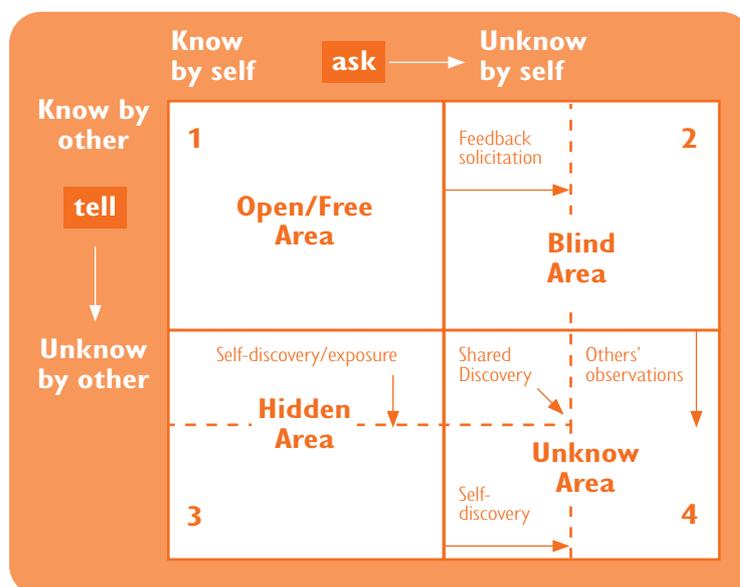
■ INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE

In an **intercultural setting**, when people engaged in communication do not share the same cultural background, like it is the case in your work with migrants, special attention is necessary to ensure that communication is effective.

Communication is effective to the extent that the person interpreting the message attaches a **meaning** to the message that is **relatively similar** to what was intended by the person transmitting it. Stated differently, *communication is effective to the extent that we are able to maximize understandings*. In most cases, we have tendency to interpret the messages received during an intercultural communication process on the basis of our own reference framework. An additional challenge in intercultural communication is the fact that the people involved might even not realize that there are differences between the initial message and the interpretation we have given it. Therefore, the capacity to identify and correct wrong interpretations in an intercultural communication setting is an important intercultural competence.

During an intercultural encounter, individuals generate explicit or implicit strategies for making themselves and the others aware of their interpretations of reality and of their reactions to a certain situation, with their cultural determinations. This “negotiation of reality” involves also the ability to expand the usual range of reactions and identify those that are most appropriate to the specific situation. Everyone can develop such abilities through training and experience.

A simple model used in classical psychology, called the “Johari Window” can help define more precisely what strategies can be used to enhance the effectiveness of intercultural communication in a diverse group of learners and between learners and teacher/facilitator. As shown in the diagram below, each of us has elements known by us and also displayed to the others, elements known by us but not displayed to others, elements that others see about us but of which we are not aware, as well as elements of which we are not aware and which are also not visible to others.



As opposed to the case of a situation of communication where participants share a common cultural background, in an intercultural communication situation the open/free area is smaller, while the other areas are bigger. A bigger number of elements which we know about us will not be visible or understandable to others, while many things they see about us and interpret with their own cultural references will remain unknown to us.

Therefore, obtaining effective intercultural communication means first of all **making communication more explicit**, making the effort to explain and provide details about issues which appear obvious in a mono-cultural setting, as well as making sure that what is being perceived by others is interpreted in an appropriate way. That means insisting in a conscious way on processes of **self-exposure**, **feedback solicitation** and **shared discovery**. Indeed, by doing so we will, not only enhance the quality and effectiveness of communication, but we will also contribute to the development of positive relationships within the team and we will learn new things about ourselves.

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Module 3: Non-discrimination

▶ **SESSION 1: TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION AND WAYS TO ADDRESS IT**

■ **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of the session learners will:

- Be able to express critical understanding of discrimination in its various forms;
- Have increased abilities to prevent and address situations of discrimination in their work environment;
- Have enhanced awareness of the negative effects of discrimination and of their responsibility to take action against discrimination.

■ **RESOURCES NEEDED**

- Supporting document on non-discrimination;
- Slides about non-discrimination;
- Computer, video-projector and screen;
- Table with types of discrimination cut in pieces;
- Examples of direct and indirect discrimination (optional);
- Case studies of discrimination of migrants (optional).

■ STRUCTURE AND METHODS

- a. 35 min: Introduction to the concept of discrimination. Types of discrimination;
- b. 15 min: Legal provisions regarding discrimination at EU and national levels;
- c. 40 min: Analysis of case studies of discrimination of migrants.

■ PROCEDURE

- a. Ask participants to share words that come to their mind when thinking about discrimination. Write the words on flipchart for further reference.

Distribute randomly pieces of the table with the types of discrimination and ask participants to stand up, move around the room and group together with those having pieces from the same line in the table. For example, the person with the label Indirect discrimination should get together with the persons having information about how indirect discrimination is manifested and how it is explained. If examples are prepared, those having examples of indirect discrimination should also join this group. Particularly for a larger group, it is advisable to prepare a few examples of discrimination (at least direct and indirect), very specific and relevant for the work and social context of the participants. For example, if participants work in refugees' centres, examples should refer to that environment.

Present slides on types of discrimination. Recall the discussion about stereotypes from session 2.2.2. and explain the connection between stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination. Comment the table and respond to the questions of participants.

- b. Present the part on legal protection against discrimination at EU level. Allow participants to ask clarification questions and make comments. Present the way the anti-discrimination directives are implemented into the national legislation. Introduce the national anti-discrimination body by presenting its website and, if possible, some discrimination complaints involving migrants addressed by the respective institution. Mention also the procedures to contact this institution and the procedures to appeal against its decisions.

Ask if anyone knows a case of discrimination, confirmed or not, which was addressed by the national anti-discrimination body. Discuss the cases with the whole group.

- c. Recall the activity on barriers that migrants are facing, done in session 2.2.2., as a way to understand structural discrimination and explain that the next part of the session will focus on direct and indirect discrimination.

Divide participants in groups of maximum 5 participants. Each group will have 20 min to perform the following task: formulate four examples of situations (real or imagined) related to their work environment:

- a. An example of direct discrimination;
- b. An example which may appear as direct discrimination but in fact it is not discrimination;
- c. An example of indirect discrimination;
- d. An example which may appear as indirect discrimination but in fact it is not discrimination.

Each group will have to find examples from each category in such a way as to make it difficult for the other groups to identify the category. They can consider both situations of discrimination of migrants by public or private service providers and discrimination within migrant groups or communities (e.g. based on gender, ethnicity, language, cast/social status, religion, etc.).

Then groups present their examples in a random order and the other are asked to assign them to a category and explain why.

An alternative option for this activity is based on examples from the four categories prepared in advance by the trainer and distributed to the groups to analyse and then share and discuss.

For each example, the group is asked to reflect on what can be done to prevent such situations or to address them in an appropriate way when they appear.

Discussing sensitive situations and reflecting on how to address them will allow participants to understand the complexity of discrimination, the risks associated with misunderstanding it and the opportunities and responsibilities they have as professionals to address this topic.

■ ASSESSMENT

Sitting in circles, participants take turns in asking one peer a question about the content of the session. One person can formulate one question and one answer. An option can be to have each participant ask the question to the whole group and participants can volunteer to respond. The same principle of one question and one answer per person should be kept.

■ COMMENTS

- References can be made to the national anti-discrimination legislation and institutions but it is useful to mention that there is a common European reference on this matter;
- A connection should be made also to the ok-ok framework presented in module 5: for example, emphasize that the discriminator is in the position I am ok – you are not ok and the victim of discrimination can be in various other positions and this generates different dynamics of the interaction;
- At the end, refer also to the keywords listed at the start of the session, comment and ask participants to reflect on how the session increased the knowledge and awareness of the topic.

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▶ **SESSION 2: DISCOURSE ABOUT DISCRIMINATION AND DISCRIMINATION THROUGH DISCOURSE**

■ **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

At the end of the session learners will:

- Understanding the ways in which discrimination can be propagated through public discourse;
- Develop analytical and critical thinking skills and ability to resist manipulation and applying them to public messages regarding discrimination of migrants;
- Develop critical understanding of the messages that mass-media and social media transmit about migrants and migration.

■ **RESOURCES NEEDED**

- Supporting document on non-discrimination;
- Slides about discursive discrimination;
- Computer, video-projector and screen;
- Case studies of mass-media articles or social media posts regarding discrimination of migrants (optional).

■ **STRUCTURE AND METHODS**

- a. 15 min: Discursive discrimination;
- b. 30 min: Analysis of case studies of discursive discrimination of migrants;
- c. 45 min: Response to opponents of non-discrimination.

■ PROCEDURE

- a. Present the concept and the typology of discursive discrimination. Take clarification questions and explain with specific examples, as close as possible to the local context, each of the four main types of discursive discrimination.
- b. Divide participants in groups of 4 and ask them to analyse specific media texts in order to identify types of discursive discrimination. This can be done by providing case studies of mass-media articles or social media posts, preferably different ones to each group, or by asking each group to search online (on laptop, tablet or phone) and identify at least one example of discursive discrimination (or one example for each of the four types).

Groups present their analysis and all participants comment. Stimulate participants to compare the examples and to reflect on which groups are more often target of discursive discrimination.

- c. Recall to the whole group that over the past few years, often in relation to migrants and migration, many ordinary people, but also politicians, journalists and other opinion leaders dismiss the non-discrimination discourse as being just political correctness. Is anti-discrimination an ideology based on political correctness which ignores reality and limits the rights of the majority (e.g. free expression)?

In small groups, ask participants to list some of the arguments usually formulated against a non-discrimination approach and to formulate counter-arguments. Then, groups take turns in sharing their arguments and counter-arguments. After each argument, the other groups are asked if they had something similar or if they want to add to the argumentation. Then another example from another group is chosen, until all groups shared all the ideas discussed.

■ ASSESSMENT

Each participant is asked to share one thing learners during the session and which was perceived as surprising.

■ COMMENTS

This session should be done after session 2.3.1. because it implies that participants have an understanding of discrimination in general and of related concepts. It can be done also instead of 2.3.1. if participants have already a good background in non-discrimination, for example, if they attended in the past a training course or an information session on this topic.

▶ HANDOUT: NON-DISCRIMINATION

■ TYPES OF DISCRIMINATION

The table below presents the three main types of discrimination:

Type of discrimination	How it is manifested?	Why it appears?
Direct discrimination	<p>Classical direct discrimination</p> <p>A person is treated less favourably than others in similar circumstances or has limited or no access to something, because of belonging to a certain category or group.</p>	<p>The main source are beliefs based on prejudices. Prejudiced people rely on stereotypes and ignore actual information about the persons concerned.</p> <p>Discrimination may be justified for example by the belief that members of certain groups are unable to perform certain tasks, generate risks, or deserve unfavourable treatment.</p>
	<p>Discrimination by perception</p> <p>People who look or behave like members of certain groups may be treated less favourably because of being perceived as such, regardless of their actual situation.</p>	
	<p>Discrimination by association</p> <p>People who appear connected or are in a situation together with members of a discriminated group may suffer from discrimination by association, even though they do not belong to a group target to discrimination.</p>	
Indirect discrimination	A rule, requirement, policy or procedure that disadvantages members of certain groups as compared to others, while not being reasonably justified.	There may be hidden direct discrimination, when there is intent to discriminate but also awareness that direct discrimination is prohibited, or unintended discrimination, due to ignoring the effects that the respective rules, requirements of policies have on members of certain groups.
Structural discrimination	Members of certain groups have less possibilities, opportunities and chances in society than members of dominant groups and find themselves in a position of inferiority. In theory, each member of a disadvantaged group can get succeed, but in practice, there is a strong effect of a vicious circle of discrimination and exclusion.	<p>Inequality is often inherited and reproduced with every generation, considered normal and unchangeable.</p> <p>Members of the dominant group consider the society as fair and often do not see a need for change, while members of dominated groups may either perceive the society as oppressive and unfair, or internalize and unconsciously confirm the perception of inferiority.</p>

While direct and indirect discrimination can be addressed on a case by case basis, structural discrimination can only be addressed through longer-term policies. However, being aware of its existence is useful for professionals working with vulnerable groups, such as the migrants.