

Issue 4 - June 2001



youth - training - europe

# Coyote

magazine

Becoming a Trainer in European Youth Work

Empowerment Training with Minority Youth Leaders

Training in Global Interdependence

Values, Training and the Environment

Taking Training to the Markets



PARTNERSHIP

COUNCIL OF EUROPE & EUROPEAN COMMISSION

TRAINING-YOUTH

# C o Y o t e

"Coyote - a resourceful animal whose blunders or successes explain the condition of life in an uncertain universe."

*(In: Jack Tresidder, The Hutchison Dictionary of Symbols, 1997)*

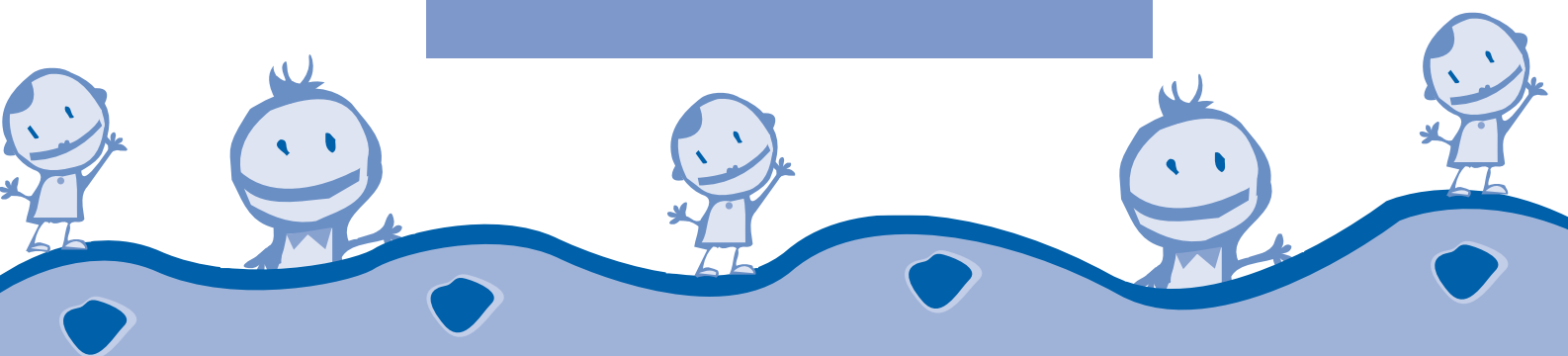
Coyote is a new magazine on issues around 'youth – training – europe'. It is addressed to trainers, youth workers and all those who want to know more about the world of youth worker training in Europe.

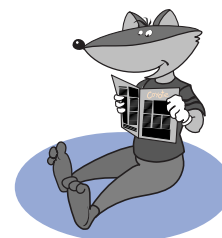
Coyote wants to provide a forum to share and give new insights into some of the issues that trainers face in their work, issues related to the diverse training concepts, methodologies, practices and realities across this continent. It also wants to inform about current developments in this field, especially at European level.

Coyote is published by the Council of Europe and the European Commission within their partnership in the youth field, with the aim to strengthen networking among trainers involved in European youth worker training and to promote the value of European level training for youth workers.

Coyote comes out twice every year: in June and November. It can be received free of charge from the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

**Coyote is also published on the web at <http://www.training-youth.net>.**





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Paper copies of Coyote are available at the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg.

To receive further information about Partnership projects or subscribe to Coyote, please contact the European Youth Centre Strasbourg by phone or fax, or send an e-mail to [info@training-youth.net](mailto:info@training-youth.net). Coyote will be happy to receive your comments and your ideas for future articles. Letters to the Editor can be sent to [coyote@training-youth.net](mailto:coyote@training-youth.net).



# Welcome to Coyote !

2001, this first year of the new millennium and the International Year of Volunteering sees important developments in the youth and training fields of the European institutions which will certainly bring a new dimension to the European youth work scene.

Alongside the now fully functioning new YOUTH programme, the European Commission is placing a stronger focus on a co-ordinated, result-oriented and well-documented development of European youth training within the network of the YOUTH National Agencies and, in particular, the newly established SALTO-YOUTH training and support centres. Inclusion, capacity-building, implementing the YOUTH programme in the pre-accession countries and promoting co-operation with pre-accession countries and those in the South of the Mediterranean (EuroMed) have been defined as priorities for the work of these centres. Priorities have also been determined for training and youth projects that can be supported by the Council of Europe, including human rights education, South-East Europe, non-formal education, and (new forms of) youth participation. In this issue, Coyote informs in particular about the current developments regarding the European Commission and its YOUTH programme (see articles by Frank Marx and Bernard Abrignani). In its next issue, we will complement these articles with an up-date about the Council of Europe's youth training sector.

With the article about Euro-Mediterranean co-operation in its last issue, Coyote gained a more global perspective. The imperative for peaceful co-existence and co-operation, trying to understand and live with our different values, attitudes and behaviours, and our different yet interconnected histories, is more than ever also valid in a global frame. It is also an issue for youth work and training, as we see in the two articles about North-South co-operation in this issue by Ndung'u Kahihu and Davide Tonon and Michelangelo Belletti.

Training for social inclusion, participation and equality remains a focus for Coyote. In this issue several contributors take it up from different angles and look at different target groups. Mohamed Haji-Kella raises awareness of what to consider in European level empowerment training with minority youth leaders. Sylviane Jeanty explains how to make sure training events are accessible for all participants, including those with physical disabilities. Hayo de Vries looks into the existing and potential opportunities for participation for young people in youth care institutions, as a means to increase their personal and social responsibility.

Also this time, besides the above-mentioned issues, a variety of other topics of relevance for European youth work are addressed by the different authors. Coyote follows its usual structure, with one exception: because of the large intervals between the printed magazine issues and the difficulty in defining their exact time of publication in advance, "Flipchart", the section where readers can announce upcoming events, has been taken out and moved to the Coyote internet version. Information about large events that are planned well in advance and are interesting for a large target group can of course nevertheless be published in the magazine in the future.

Finally, Coyote also gives one answer to the question of what training, architecture and being a clown have in common. Coyote met Simona Molari, who tells more about this and other curious and fascinating aspects of the life and profession of a clown.

Enjoy your reading!

*Sonja Ritter*

Sonja Ritter

# A Training Strategy for the YOUTH Programme of the European Commission

★ *The importance of training in non-formal education has never been an issue. On the contrary - many initiatives and projects were started and implemented in the context of the Youth for Europe programme. However, this did not really constitute a strategic approach to this area. The new YOUTH programme, which combines the activities of the earlier Youth for Europe and European Voluntary Service programmes, has paved the way for the further development of non-formal education. The larger budget, compared to the previous programmes, will allow more young people to take part in YOUTH projects. In addition to this quantitative progress, important as it is, qualitative progress must also be made, involving the relevant players and activities.*

To this end, the Commission presented a "Strategy Paper for Training" at the Programme Committee meeting on 18/19 April 2000. This paper met with unanimous approval. The backing of the committee has meant that, since the spring of this year, the necessary steps towards implementation have been taken.

The aim of this article is to introduce the training strategy concept, outline the current state of progress and consider possible future developments. It should be understood, however, that this is an interim report reflecting the situation at the end of 2000/ beginning of 2001, and may be subject to possible changes to the content of the programme.

## I. Concept

The overall objective of the training strategy is to help youth workers, youth leaders and support staff to develop and implement high-quality youth activities that contribute to attaining the objectives of the YOUTH programme and/or its actions.

To achieve this, training activities in the area of youth/non-formal education must be further developed, drawing on the specialist knowledge of the National Agencies and the partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe. To this end, various training courses geared to the political priorities of the YOUTH programme are being created and implemented:

- A basic course on European Citizenship for youth workers wanting to become involved in European youth work and develop and implement projects (developed and implemented within the partnership between the European Commission and the Council of Europe).
- Specific courses with the aim of improving the quality of priority areas of the YOUTH programme. These courses are aimed at youth workers, youth leaders and support staff, who can act as "multipliers" and are in a position to develop and implement

high-quality international youth projects (developed and implemented by the SALTO-YOUTH training centres of the National Agencies).

- Developing and implementing a curriculum for "Training for Trainers". The trainers will be equipped to provide further training for youth workers in the area of non-formal education at European level (developed and implemented within the partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe).

It is also important to concentrate on quality standards and the recognition of non-formal education, to develop educational materials based on these quality standards and encourage the exchange of good practices. It is vital to guarantee the flow of information at all levels and between the various participants in the youth field.

In the medium term, the training strategy will include the training activities of the entire YOUTH programme, as it will also influence the activities of the National Agencies through greater co-ordination within the network. The implementation of Action 5 (Support Measures) of the YOUTH programme will also serve as a source of inspiration and innovation for the training strategy, through NGOs' project applications.

By Frank Marx





## II. A flexible network

The training strategy is being implemented in a network involving the following players/components: the network of National Agencies, the four SALTO-YOUTH (Bonn, German office "YOUTH for Europe"; Brussels, JINT; London, Connect Youth International; Paris, INJEP), and the partnership with the Council of Europe in the area of training. The creation of a flexible network in the training field will first of all contribute to greater transparency in an area boasting many activities at European and national levels. If possible, all activities, materials, etc. developed/performed at European, national or regional level should be publicised within the network. This strategy should lead ultimately to an accumulation of expertise, thus facilitating and improving implementation of the YOUTH programme. The participation of all players is vital to the success of such an idea, and a clear division of tasks is important for reasons of transparency.

The following bodies appear to be suitable for co-ordinating and facilitating the exchange of information between the partners: the Technical Working Party (TWP) is responsible for supervising the partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe; the Steering Group is the most important focal point and guarantees the exchange of information between the partners. An annual training meeting, involving all partners and players, will create a general framework.

### Technical Working Party (TWP) for collaboration with the Council of Europe

The TWP will continue to prepare management decisions for the concrete implementation of the partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission. A representative of SALTO-YOUTH sits on the TWP, in order to guarantee the flow of information between the partners.

### Steering Group

The Steering Group - chaired by the Commission - meets regularly (about three times a year) and contributes to the further development and implementation of the training strategy. It also has an important coordination role. Members are recruited from the ranks of the National Agencies (4), SALTO-YOUTH workers (4), the European Youth Forum (1) and the Council of Europe (1). The Steering Group has the following tasks (not an exhaustive list):

- An advisory role in training in the context of the YOUTH programme; preparing the contents of an annual training event;
- Discussing and proposing priorities for the training strategy in general and for the SALTO-YOUTH training courses in particular;
- The Steering Group also plays an important role in monitoring, following up and evaluating activities performed in the field of training.

### Annual training event

All the partners involved in implementing the training strategy take part in this event, which provides an opportunity to take stock and exchange views. It is also a forum for critically discussing the quality and results of work in the training field and signalling future developments.

## III. Implementing the training strategy

This section gives an overview of the tools available for implementing the training strategy. Each tool has its own function and specific features. It should also be noted that the partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe and the work of SALTO-YOUTH can be controlled directly, i.e. almost in real time. Greater co-ordination of the National Agency network's training activities is, however, more of a medium-term objective. This applies perhaps even more to those training activities that can be subsidised under Action 5 of the YOUTH programme.

### Partnership between the Commission and the Council of Europe

The signature of the third agreement gave a firm foundation to the co-operation between the Commission and the Council of Europe, operational since November 1998, for the continuation of its work until June 2003. In future the partnership will concentrate on training activities of political importance to both institutions, in addition to continuing with its current activities (in particular the "T-Kits" training manuals and Coyote). The plan is to develop training courses dealing with topics not covered by SALTO-YOUTH and the network of National Agencies.

New T-Kits for youth/non-formal education are to be added to the existing range. Last year saw the publication of T-Kits on Organisational Management, Methodology in Language Learning, Project Management and Intercultural Learning. The following are planned for 2000/2001: How to organise a training course; (European) Voluntary Service and Active European Citizenship for young people.

However, it seems almost more important that real political priorities have been set for concrete training activities with the decision to set curricula for a training course on "European Citizenship" and a long-term course on "Training for Trainers". The aim of this work is to contribute to the development and maintenance of quality standards for training. A working group (known as the Curriculum and Quality Development Group), which met in September and November 2000 and includes - in addition to educators and trainers - representatives of the National Agencies and, of course, the Council of Europe and the Commission, has set the following tasks:

- Development of a curriculum for running a training course on "Active European citizenship for young people". The idea for this course comes from the study on active citizenship in the European Union (DGXXII, 1997), which took a holistic approach to citizenship. Active citizenship is seen as a mixture of tolerant and open behaviour towards others that requires communication and social skills; knowledge of, for example, decision-making processes at different political levels and values such as democracy, human rights, environmental protection and so on. These skills are complemented by basic knowledge of project management and other relevant topics.
- Drawing up a curriculum for a long-term training course for trainers, comprising several training phases and a practical component training other participants (learning by doing). Successful participants will be awarded a certificate. These highly qualified trainers (about 20-25 will be attending the course each year) will

also be valuable resources for training courses for those involved in youth/non-formal education.

- Making recommendations for quality standards in the area of youth/non-formal education.

The results of the group's work will serve as a basis for the actual implementation of the courses.

## SALTO-YOUTH

SALTO-YOUTH is a project of four National Agencies offering specialised training courses in priority areas and a range of horizontal services, such as coordination, evaluation and documentation. It has been running since September 2000. As a focal point in the network of National Agencies, it is also represented and active in the training committees and works directly with the Commission. Its tasks are to:

- develop, implement, supervise and evaluate training courses related directly to the implementation of the YOUTH programme;
- collect materials and information and provide services and information to the national agencies, as well as maintaining the flow of information between the national agencies and the Steering Group;
- SALTO-YOUTH is also involved in supervision, evaluation and follow-up to the training strategy.

For more information about the tasks and the courses offered by SALTO-YOUTH in the spring of 2001 see the article by Bernard Abrignani in this issue of *Coyote*.

## Training provided by the National Agencies

The National Agencies for the YOUTH programme run many training activities themselves. It should therefore be emphasised that SALTO-YOUTH was in no way created in order to replace the existing training activities of the National Agencies. Their role in the field of training can be defined as follows:

- The National Agencies will continue to offer training opportunities, but in a more structured and coordinated way, taking into account the Steering Group's recommendations.
- Moreover, the National Agency network should make proposals (e.g. by participating in the Steering Group or making suggestions to the Steering Group or at the annual event).

## Action 5 (Support measures)

The aim of Action 5 is to support projects contributing to the objectives and/or the implementation of the other actions in the programme. Activities from the field of training can also be funded. Projects can contribute to the implementation of the training strategy, in accordance with the priorities of the programme. The potential role of the training activities supported by Action 5 can be defined as follows:

- including youth organisations in the training strategy;
- creating space for innovative training activities.

Information about courses (organisation running them, date and time, innovative aspects, results, etc.) should be made available to the network, in order to facilitate contacts and the exchange of good practices.

## IV. Prospects

The training strategy is being implemented swiftly. SALTO-YOUTH, in other words the four National Agencies that play a special role in the training strategy, has started work. Considerable progress has been made in the partnership with the Council of Europe, with the result that the curricula for the European Citizenship and Training for Trainers courses will be ready by May 2001.

It is still too early to evaluate and sketch the impact of the training strategy in terms of the training activities of the National Agencies. Time and energy will have to be invested in analysing it, making recommendations and coming up with concrete results. At the end of the day, the network has been running training courses and other activities for more than ten years in the context of Youth for Europe and the European Voluntary Service. The same applies - although from another perspective - to applicant training projects for Action 5 of the YOUTH programme. Involving all the many players is an objective that can only be achieved in the medium term. It is a consolation that the YOUTH programme has created a sound framework for the period 2000 to 2006, which should allow considerable qualitative and quantitative progress in this key area for the programme.

The training event planned for autumn 2001 will give a further boost to this work. The plan is for trainers and course participants, representatives from academia, politics and NGOs to participate, in addition to those parties directly involved in the strategy, such as the National Agencies, SALTO-YOUTH, the Council of Europe and the Youth Forum. Workshops, presentations, lectures and discussion forums will all be used to take stock and draw up an interim assessment of the training strategy, as well as coming up with ideas for its further development.

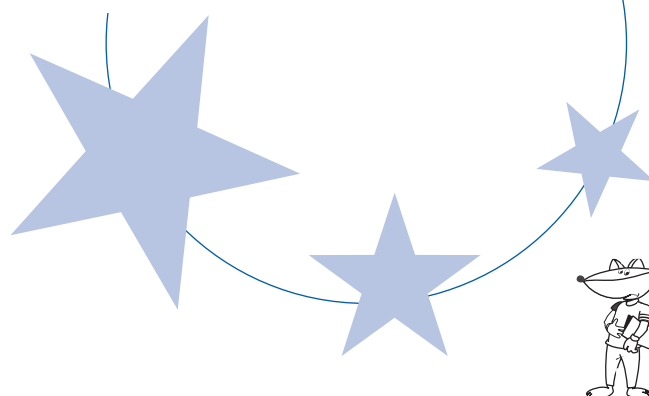
*Author's note: The views expressed in this article do not necessarily reflect the official position of the European Commission.*

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You can find more information about the YOUTH programme of the European Commission on the web at:

**<http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/youth.html>**



# SALTO-YOUTH

## Tasks and Programme 2001

*Within the training strategy of the YOUTH Programme, four so-called SALTO-YOUTH centres were created within the network of the YOUTH National Agencies in September 2000. These centres offer a series of training courses for youth leaders and youth workers, as well as some other tools to increase the quality of youth projects – in particular youth exchanges or European Voluntary Service – run within the Youth Programme. Coyote wants to keep you up-dated about current developments in and around the European institutions. Here is an introduction to SALTO-YOUTH and its offer for 2001.*

SALTO-YOUTH is shorthand for the Support for Advanced Learning & Training Opportunities for the YOUTH programme of the European Commission. In September 2000, four SALTO-YOUTH centres were created - within the YOUTH National Agencies of Flanders-Belgium, Germany, UK & France - to enhance the quality of the projects within the YOUTH programme, through the organisation of specialised training courses and the co-ordination of different training efforts within the network of the National Agencies.

When developing their actions, these SALTO-YOUTH Centres have to act as part of a flexible network of co-operating partners in the field of training. This means being:

- Complementary to the work that is being done in the framework of the co-operation with the Council of Europe.
- In dialogue with the network of National Agencies of the YOUTH Programme, supporting the training needs related to projects realised under the different Actions of the programme

### The training courses

The SALTO-YOUTH courses are part of the training strategy for the YOUTH programme, which aims to empower youth workers and support persons to develop high quality youth activities that contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the programme. These courses hope to serve as a complementary tool that National Agencies or Euro-Med National Co-ordinators can use in their strategies for training as a way to increase the knowledge and skills of key youth workers co-operating with them in the framework of the YOUTH programme.

### The offer for 2001

During the first half of this year, each SALTO-YOUTH Agency is running two training courses. Each course is to be run twice and has places for 25 participants (50 participants over the two similar courses). The topics of the training courses are the following:

- **SALTO-JINT (Flanders, Belgium):**  
"Inclusion – a focus on EVS"  
How to use the YOUTH programme (and more specifically European Voluntary Service) in the work with young people from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- **SALTO-INJEP (France): "Euro-Med Cooperation"**  
How to implement and manage Euro-Med projects.
- **SALTO-JUGEND für Europa (Germany): "EVS & PECOs"**  
How to develop European Voluntary Service in the pre-accession countries.
- **SALTO-Connect Youth International (UK):**

### "Project Management & Capacity-Building at the European Level"

Managing for Quality within the YOUTH programme.

### Profile of participants

Each participant should be involved in Youth Actions (action 1- youth groups exchanges, 2 - EVS, 3 - youth initiatives or 5 – support measures) within the YOUTH programme.

Besides, the common selection criteria are the following:

- Participants should be prepared to share the information, knowledge and skills developed during the training course with others – to act as multipliers,
- they should have the recommendation and support of their organisation and/or of the NA or Euro-Med co-ordinator,
- they should be knowledgeable about their own organisation and its capacity to undertake international projects within the YOUTH programme,
- they should be able to work comfortably in English,
- they should participate fully for the whole period of the training course,
- they should participate in follow-up and evaluation initiatives organised by the National Agency or by the SALTO-YOUTH network,
- They should have a clear need for training and not have taken part in a course with similar content (for example through the Partnership with the Council of Europe).

Every person/organisation interested in participating in SALTO's training sessions has to apply directly at his/her YOUTH programme National Agency. There they can also receive further information.

By Bernard Abrignani





Please note that the selection of participants for this year's training courses has already taken place. Information about next year's SALTO-YOUTH training offer will be available later this year.

## Follow-up

Assessing the impact of the training courses is crucial. National Agencies and Euro-Med co-ordinators have the key role in following up participants and proactively supporting their participation in YOUTH projects and their role as multipliers following the training courses.

Resource materials in the format of course reports or manuals on the different topics will be developed with the course participants, compiled by SALTO-YOUTH-INJEP, distributed to the network of the National Agencies' partners and accessible on internet.

## The transversal roles

In addition to their training role, each SALTO is responsible for a set of horizontal activities:

- **SALTO-JINT (Flanders, Belgium): Organisation of the Training Event, autumn 2001.**

From 15 – 19 September 2001, training officers from the National Agencies and active trainers in the youth field in Europe will meet in Brugge (Belgium) to exchange their experiences, methodologies and initiatives. The Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, the European Commission and the National Agencies will ask targeted trainers to participate in this event.

- **SALTO-JUGEND für Europa (Germany): Creation of a calendar and co-ordination of training activities.**

SALTO-YOUTH JfE provides the youth field with information about European training and development opportunities. The network of National Agencies, the Partnership between the Council of Europe and the European Commission, SALTOs, the European Youth Forum etc. provide information. SALTO-YOUTH JfE acts as a 'gatekeeper' in terms of suitability and timeliness of entries.

- **SALTO-Connect Youth International (UK): Evaluation and follow up of SALTO training courses.**

SALTO-Connect Youth International aims to evaluate the feedback about the SALTO courses, their results and impact. A framework for the collection of evidence, including sources, methods and timing has been established.

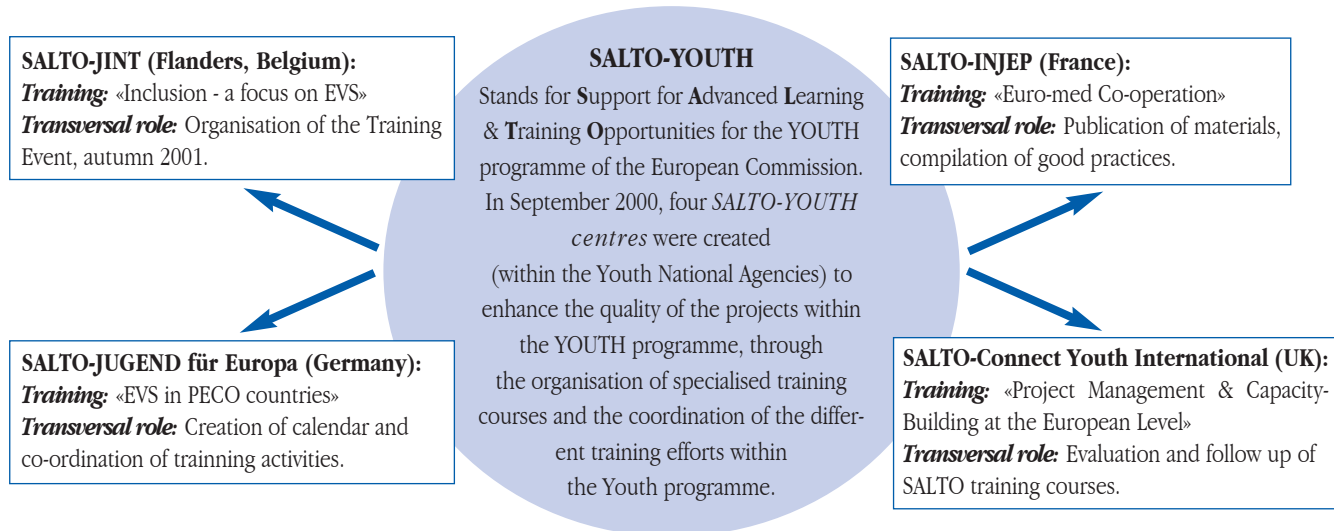
- **SALTO-INJEP (France): Publication of materials, compilation of good practices.**

All National Agencies should send examples of training resources and good practice to SALTO-YOUTH INJEP. The materials, including documents, useful web-sites, CD Roms, videos etc., are catalogued, with a brief summary and details of availability. INJEP also maintains a library of resources as a "common memory". All high quality resources, in any language, are sent with a brief summary of the content in English or French. Any good materials are welcome!

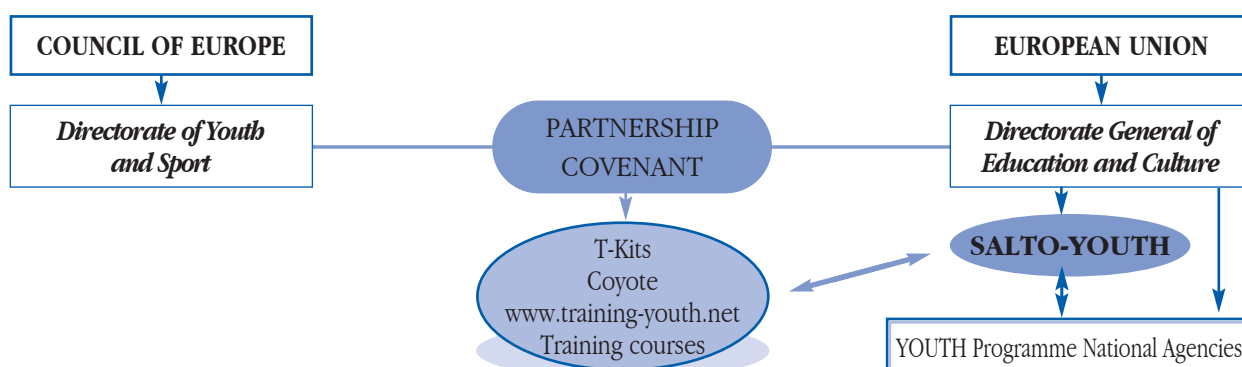
**This programme will continue until 2003. For more information contact your National Agency or the SALTO-Centres.**

E-mail for SALTO-INJEP: [salto@injep.fr](mailto:salto@injep.fr)

## The distribution of SALTO-YOUTH activities



## SALTO within the European Training Strategy



## How to Become a Trainer in European Youth Work...

*The ways of becoming a trainer in European youth work are as diverse as the notions and reality of what it actually means to be one. Coyote asked three "European youth trainers" from different countries and organisational backgrounds to tell their stories of how they got involved in European level training. Underlying their different experiences and motivations are some common elements: some experience in working with young people, the interest to work with the specific dynamics of international groups, curiosity and the conviction that there is a lot that we can learn from each other.*

### "Am I the trainer? But I am the one who is learning!"

by Finn Denstad



How do I think of the term "training"? Training is not about one person teaching and all participants receiving information and learning something. Training is an interactive process! Every time I have participated in a youth activity as a trainer, I am sure I learned just as much as the participants did. Self-development is one of the most rewarding aspects of being a trainer, as is the satisfaction of getting positive and constructive feedback from participants.

To me, a trainer is a facilitator above all else. One's task is to bring people together, make participants aware of their own capabilities and potential, and provide the necessary information so as to realise this potential. Then, of course, training is just as much about how to provide this information in the best possible way, using the right methods.

I grew up in Norway, a thoroughly "organised" society with an average of four NGO memberships per capita (yes, it's true, the statistics say sixteen million memberships in a population of four million!). My first training experience was at the age of 14, and I still remember it as if it were yesterday. For a year, I had been involved in the Norwegian Good Templar Youth, a youth organisation promoting peace and fighting against the use of alcohol and illegal drugs. I was asked to participate as assistant trainer at a seminar for school pupils only a year younger than myself, and I did a session on peer-pressure and the impact of alcohol on young people. I wonder who learned the most from that experience!

Since then, I have enjoyed being involved in different youth organisations in Norway. However, it was not until I was employed at the Norwegian Youth Council (LNU) that I started gaining experience at

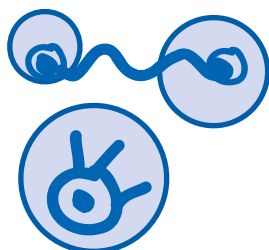
the European level, also as a trainer. My fields of training today correspond well with some of my areas of work in LNU, which are project development and management as ways to improve the work of youth organisations, in particular in Central and Eastern Europe. Reciprocity and mutual partnership are for me key words in international co-operation, and intercultural and active communication are elements which, if they are overlooked, can cause much frustration in, and even the destruction of international partnerships.

Over a number of years, I have developed a great interest in youth work in Central and Eastern Europe, and during the past year I have become more involved in South East Europe on behalf of LNU. To work with youth NGOs and young people in the Balkan region is fascinating, complicated and challenging. Two related fields of training I hope to "dive" more into in order to improve my skills and usefulness in this region are Conflict Management and Human Rights Education. But I have become so interested in the Balkans that I know I will stay involved in this field for years to come.

This brings me back to the starting point of my essay. Who is learning the most from a training – the trainer or the trainees? Hopefully, both categories learn something. For myself, I know that the reason why I keep on is that I learn so much from it!

Since the submission of this article Finn Denstad has taken up the position of Head of Youth Work Development department at the European Youth Forum. You can contact him at:

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# How did I become a European trainer ?

When the editorial team asked me to write an article about this subject, my first thought was: 'So I am a European trainer then?' Maybe this reaction is strange, as I have given training courses at European level since 1996. On the other hand there are still so many possibilities to be a trainer at European level that I haven't tried (or had the chance to try). Until now I thought that this would disqualify me for the title 'European trainer'.

But maybe I should start from the beginning, the first time I stood in front of a group. I was 17, had been back in Germany for almost one year following my exchange year in Norway and was trying to tell an international group of exchange students what life in Germany was like. I had no idea about methods, no idea what I was supposed to do and I absolutely loved it. During the following years I got more and more involved in the exchange organisation that got me into this experience: AFS Germany, in the European youth circus better known as EFIL (European Federation for Intercultural Learning). After several years of local and regional level work I decided that I needed another challenge and became a member of AFS Germany's working group on training. This was about 6 years ago and I am still a member of the group and deeply indebted to the experience in training that I got there. We have two official meetings a year, during which we train ourselves (often with input from trainers from outside the organisation) and discuss matters related to the working group. As a group we are not only responsible for organising training activities, but we also take care of the methods for the two national AFS meetings every year.

Still, this didn't bring me to the European level that I wanted to reach. Because my interests shifted with the years, I took a two-year break from AFS and became a board member of IGLYO (International Lesbian and Gay Youth Organisation). Amongst a lot of (and at times too many) other things, I was responsible for the organisation of several week-long seminars at European level. These training events were really different from the ones I was used to! First of all I had to deal with a budget. In AFS this was taken care of by the board and the secretariat. In IGLYO I was the treasurer and on a lot of occasions the secretariat as well! I did work with international groups with AFS, but those were all well-prepared participants who had been subject to loads of intercultural learning games before they even set foot on German ground. Now I was dealing with a group of young lesbians and gays who sometimes were in a foreign country for the first time, a lot of times had never met so many lesbians and gay men in one room in their entire life and had never heard of intercultural learning. On top of this I had hardly ever prepared anything that lasted longer than a weekend. What can I say, I learned a lot, especially about how different training can be in different organisations and settings.

The rest of the story is simple: Training remains to be my passion and going on with training activities also after I left the board of IGLYO was natural for me. I joined the pool of trainers of the European Youth Forum and the Council of Europe Youth Directorate. It is not always easy to be a trainer at European level if

you are not active in the European umbrella of your organisation, but given the fact that I have been asked to write this article, I seem to have come a long way.

Maybe some last hints for those of you who want to become a European trainer. The most important thing is that others know that you want to be one. The fact that you are reading Coyote right now is a good sign. Stay put and most of all, take every opportunity you can to learn, stand in front of a group and get good feedback to help you further. Good luck!

Oh and one more thing: don't trust anyone who thinks that you are not a European trainer, not even yourself.

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by Henrike Eisfeld



# My Journey to the Planet of Training

(on which the way itself became the objective)

International groups have fascinated me ever since I was first part of one. It was in 1990 that I had my first experience at a huge ecumenical meeting for young people in Prague. I found these groups very interesting and easy environments, because they allowed me for the first time to be different.

Back home, in my native Transylvania, there was little room to be different. But I (as many others in Transylvania, who were coming from an ethnically mixed background) was difficult to classify. My family is Hungarian and Romanian. In the middle of a heated nationalistic discourse, there was strong pressure to declare myself either part of one group and, as such, the enemy of the other, or vice versa. Those who didn't declare their belonging, were suspect, strange and finally caught in the middle. By contrast, I felt, the international group in accepting that I might be different, was allowing me to belong, if even just for the length of an activity.

After my first international meeting, I was so enthusiastic, that I immediately became an organiser for international and local ecumenical meetings myself. It was also not by chance that I became a youth activist within the framework of the newly established Romanian Youth Action for Peace branch: it was the only youth organisation there and then, which intended to work on bringing together Romanian and Hungarian youth. The result: most of the activists of my generation were from mixed families.

The first experiences I had with training were also in international activities. They have also invariably been strong emotional experiences. Never before had anybody asked me how did I feel or what did I think about an exercise. The first time I was asked, I was truly shocked. Then I was amazed, because this sort of education produced very strong results, gave me food for thought for weeks to come. And then, I was curious and enthusiastic, wanting to bring to other people the "Aha" experience I had gone through, and to ask them what they were thinking and feeling.

My youth organisation, back home was an ideal field to experiment. Being such a young branch, there was almost no hierarchy, nor very strong rules. Those of us who were active could initiate almost any sort of project, and if we managed to find the means, we would carry them out. We organised training events for youth from other youth organisations, we visited high schools and organised intercultural round tables. We talked about racism,

nationalism and ethnic hatred, and about why we believe what we believe and how does this make us feel.

Clearly the more training I was running, the more activities I was organising, the more I felt the necessity to get training myself. I started going to training courses, most of them organised by the Youth Directorate of the Council of Europe. The training courses gave me self-confidence to continue and try to develop my own approaches.

After I moved to Germany a couple of years ago, I started to work mainly with international groups. Moving to Germany was a big step into the unknown. I felt so strange and isolated at the beginning, that going to an international activity gave me the feeling of going home, even if I hardly knew anybody there.

I volunteered to be on the team of several Youth Action for Peace activities. In the teams I worked with, most of the time I was working with people with much more experience than I had. I learned a lot from them. Training is something which can't be learned from books. I discovered that experience is very important, but does not prepare you for everything. Sometimes a fresh perspective on a topic takes you further.

I also took up the chance to work on training courses of the Council of Europe. That is indeed an opportunity to meet so many different people and get acquainted to training concepts and traditions developed in a big variety of organisations. Talking with so many people from various backgrounds, I discovered a lot about myself, my values and priorities.

Meanwhile I have worked with many different groups. Each time, I find it challenging and very often I feel the same strong emotional experiences which I had the first time. I also experience that the exchange with the participants is a continuous source of learning.

I no longer think that international groups are easier. If you try to develop really deep communication, there are cultural barriers, language barriers and barriers in the minds of the people to deal with.

And I am still fascinated by the international groups.

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by Nora Ganescu





# Empowerment Training with Minority Youth Leaders at European Level

*Working towards a fuller inclusion and representation of disadvantaged young people in youth work and society is one of the current priorities of the European youth programmes. Empowering youth leaders from minority communities to take up a stronger role in changing their status in society is an essential part of this process. Effective empowerment training at European level, as the author of this article argues, needs to strengthen confidence among the participants but also enable them to recognise and challenge existing forms of oppression at the personal, cultural and structural levels in society.*

Empowerment training with minority young people at European level is a new development in European youth work. It is even valid to assert that it is still not as popular as one may think. There are some reasons responsible for this, firstly most youth organisations particularly those established at European level still do not work with minorities and in most cases have little or no contact with minority communities. Secondly there are still very few structures at the European level that consider this area of youth training as a priority. But with the greater awareness and need for the promotion of human rights and citizenship education there is an implicit value in encouraging "traditional" youth organisations in Europe to widen their scope of work to include young people who are targets of human rights abuses.

If, however, this new awareness is to gain credibility within minority communities, then they should be seen as equal partners in the process. This thus comes with the political will on the part of the institutions and structures to accept the level of oppression faced by minorities and the need to train minorities themselves to become self-fulfilling by constructively challenging such oppression, on personal, cultural and structural levels. This article will attempt to define oppression as perceived by minority communities and how empowerment training with minority young people can contribute to the eradication of such oppressions. Two key concepts will be explored, empowerment and oppression, with the clear objective of introducing a model, which could complement other models already used by trainers at various training levels.

## Why look at oppression?

Many training programmes at national and European levels have been dedicated to anti-discrimination, intercultural and anti-racist practices. While one may argue for the full legitimacy of such training programmes, it can also be attested that they usually look at specific areas of discrimination rather than looking at the wider perspective of the processes of discrimination. The key discourse in minority

youth empowerment training is to embrace the different categories of discrimination, and their interconnectivity through oppression. While discrimination can be defined as the set of processes by which people are allotted to various categories with unequal

rights and opportunities, oppression can be simply seen as the effects of such processes which are constructed at personal, cultural and structural levels. Neil Thompson, an outstanding English writer on anti-oppressive work in human service supports this view by writing: "One of the main outcomes of discrimination is oppression. The relationship between oppression and discrimination can therefore be seen largely as a causal one: discrimination gives rise to oppression". (Thompson 1998. P. 78 - 79)

This is further explained in the diagram below, which demonstrates the inseparable relationship between discrimination and oppression. Minorities in the context of minority youth work could be defined as those who are affected by the various forms of oppression based on race, gender, sex, religion, disability or ethnicity.

### PROCESS OF DISCRIMINATION

Marginalising, Stereotyping, Scapegoating, Stigmatising, etc.



### CATEGORIES OF DISCRIMINATION

Race, gender, sex, ethnicity, religion, disability



### FORMS OF OPPRESSION

Racism, Sexism, Homophobia, Xenophobia, etc.

by Mohamed Haji-Kella





According to Shahid Ashrif, professor and frequent writer on multiculturalism in Europe, oppression is about power and its misuse. He argues that oppression is about collective power of some groups within society to exclude, deny, control and define other groups and individuals that belong to those groups. (Ashrif, 2000).

Oppression occurs at three interconnected levels - the personal, the cultural and the structural. At the personal level, oppression reproduces itself as the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour of one individual towards another. At the cultural level, there is assumed consensus about what is true, right and good and perceived as normal about others, while at the structural level, institutions within society act and perpetuate social divisions, prejudice and discrimination based on the assumed cultural norms. Thompson refers to this as the "PCS model", he argues that personal discrimination takes place not in isolation but within the context of culturally assumed norms in a broader societal framework of structures and institutions. As advocated by intercultural models, empowerment training should challenge not only the personal and cultural levels of oppression, but also vitally the institutions, which support those attitudes and behaviours.

### Oppression and minority youth leaders

Most minority youth leaders who attend empowerment-training programmes clearly demonstrate the effects of their oppression at all levels as described in the PCS model. At the personal level most participants demonstrate a low level of self-confidence which reproduces itself in their attitudes towards trainers. In most circumstances minority youth leaders find it very difficult to accept trainers, especially those from majority backgrounds who they feel are part of the perpetrators of personal oppression within their communities. This attitude is often fuelled by the reaction of the trainers who often see such attitudes as a personal attack on them. The challenge here is how to effectively deal with such participants on the personal level, while at same time conducting the training in a professional manner.

At the cultural level, participants often cocoon themselves in their own community and fail to see the wider aspect of oppression either to other minority groups or to some extent within their own groups. A colleague once commented that it was impossible to work effectively with minority youth leaders who do not work with other minority groups or refuse to do so despite their training. Such behaviour is a direct reaction to oppression at the cultural level - where minorities are put into pigeonholes - and which is legitimised and sustained by the institutions. This effect often exposes itself in training courses where various minorities are formed into sub-groups or makeshift alliances usually not connected to the objectives of the training programme. Such situations often perceive the needs of participants to engage in deeper discussions of their oppressions. Minority youth leaders in many circumstances feel much more confident to discuss certain issues with groups they can identify and feel comfortable with. Some trainers see this as a threat to group atmosphere

and the learning process, but in fact this is not the case. What many trainers fail to understand, is the effect of the cultural level of oppression which often reproduces itself in training programmes. The challenge for the trainer is to try to understand this cultural level and work with the participants to effectively challenge it.

At the structural level youth work and youth organisations are very often formalised, making it difficult for minorities especially those socially excluded to access the services they provide. Such situations often reflect the policies of the institutions which exclude minorities either because of their status, for example refugee children, whose needs are often neglected, or for other reasons. As a result, most of those who access European empowerment training lack basic youth work and youth participation skills. In fact for most of them, European training is usually the first or only training programme they are likely to be involved in while working within their communities. Their needs and expectations therefore often go beyond the planned objectives of the training programme. Time constraints and the lack of youth work skills among trainers often pose a major challenge to the effectiveness of empowerment training.

If minority young people are to become part of our perceived European dream, they should be empowered to confront oppression at all three levels. Empowerment training therefore should be a tool, which gives the confidence and rigour to minorities and their communities to constructively work together, firstly to deal with the mutual prejudices among them and secondly to challenge the oppressions afflicted upon them by majorities within society.

### What is empowerment training?

The concept of empowerment is a rather "dodgy" one, as it is used in every sphere of emancipatory work, in business, welfare and health, in anthropology and most recently by right wing politicians and in youth work. I have started in this way to warn us against the fluidity of the term and its openness to misuse and abuse. For example, right wing politicians have used the concepts to effectively campaign for self-reliance as opposed to collective-reliance or state measures. For the purpose of minority youth training, I will rely on the concept definition of Thomas and Pierson, the two most renowned English writers in human service and anti-oppressive practices, as being "concerned with how people may gain collective control over their lives, so as to achieve their interest as a group, and method by which to enhance the power of people who lack it". (Thomas and Pierson, 1995. P. 134)

This definition clearly follows the line of minority young people and their need for empowerment training. Empowerment training is about providing the necessary tools, which will enable minority youth leaders to work constructively together to challenge oppression and thereby bring about change in a society that is characterised by inequalities and discrimination. It is about personal development, it is about social reconstruction of societal norms and it is about promoting institutional change. Any

empowerment training particularly at European level should address all three levels of oppression.

### PCS model in empowerment training

The PCS model in empowerment training clearly advocates two key principles:

1. Oppression occurs at all three levels and training should be designed to challenge it at these levels.
2. All forms of oppression should be challenged, not in isolation of one from the other.

Both principles further validate the need for a training programme which secures training of minority young people to firstly develop their personal growth, such as developing their interpersonal skills, secondly, raise their awareness about the need of looking at oppression beyond their own cultural or minority boundaries and thirdly give them collaborative skills for working together. The model also advocates for the minorities to stand up against other forms of oppression and not to deny one form simply because they are different (and thus might not feel directly concerned). For example, most blacks believe that racism is a black issue while a Roma young person can tell you that the situation of Roma is unique and should not be equated to any other oppressed group. Or a white gay man might not see how he can contribute to the fight against racism or gender discrimination, when he is neither a woman nor a black man. What is mostly responsible for this is that the cultural level of oppression helps to sustain oppressive divisions among minorities. What this does is disempower the very groups by isolating them from other groups. Anti-discrimination and intercultural learning models have been culprits of such instances, where training is directed towards specific issues, which can only yield short-term results. In using the PCS model, empowerment training should address the following issues at each level.

**Personal:** Participants are supported and trained to gain self-confidence and self-esteem thereby having greater control of their lives and role as youth leaders.

**Cultural:** Participants are trained to understand oppression in a wider context. Given skills to logically comprehend ideologies and oppressive practices of the dominant culture and how to effectively challenge them. According to Thompson, at this level empowerment training is about consciousness-raising. (Thompson 1998)

**Structural:** Participants are trained on collective action for change directed at policy development, constructive criticism of institutions and engagement in dialogue with these very structures.

### Principles in designing and delivering empowerment training programmes

It is usually convincing to conclude that the PCS model is in use anyway. This may equally be true, but what is most lacking in various empowerment training models is the

maximum involvement of participants, especially those specifically designed for minority youth leaders whose training needs are usually described as being complex. Most programmes developed and delivered are designed with the perceived knowledge of trainers who in most cases and with all good intentions have very little or no knowledge of the profile of the individual communities. This is in no way a handicap on the part of the trainers, but the limited time and resources just can not help to plan in advance a constructive and inclusive programme. This fact is rarely identified by trainers. Usually programmes are unsuccessful because of problems associated with time, lack of clear team work, lack of new dimensions in terms of content and methods and in most circumstances the profile and attitudes of participants. Any empowerment training with minority youth leaders should be a partnership between the participants and the trainers based on the following principles:

**Involving:** Training contents and methods should be group directed and not trainer led. The most traditional way to ensure participants involvement has been the identification of participants' expectations and most recently through mid-term evaluations. For minority youth training this may not be adequate or out of context with the actual realities of the participants. A real involving programme should take into account the needs and aspirations of participants collectively negotiated within the programme. Regular feed backs at every stage of the training with clear openness on the part of the trainers are key elements in putting the principles of involvement into practice.

**Motivating:** Where participants feel involved in a training programme, the level of their motivation becomes overwhelming. They are able to question each other's needs, share experience and are open to work together with each other. After a couple of years running motivation workshops, I have had the opportunity of meeting minority youth leaders who become enthusiastic to share their wealth of experiences in working with their communities. What is responsible for this is the method of involvement, which is based on mutual trust, and understanding of their individual needs. A successful empowerment training involves the motivations of participants to pull together their aspirations and experiences.

**Participatory:** Participation is the principle advocate for the active inclusion of the participants at every stage of the empowerment training process. While involvement seeks for their regular feed backs and constructive negotiations of the needs and aspirations, participation occurs when participants are given full control to propose and contribute to programme contents and methods of delivery. For empowerment training this helps to support the professional growth and the feeling of worth among participants which they are often denied. It also helps to bridge the power relations between the trainers and the participants as equal partners in the learning process. The most interesting advantage of this principle is the added value and new dimension it readily brings to the training process. Trainers usually underestimate this wealth of participants'



participation. The easiest and often used means to bring a new dimension into the training is to seek new trainers, who often have little experience with regards to the specificity of the programme and the inherent purpose of the participants. Ragg, an American writer on participatory learning methods argues: "It is not so much matter of adopting new methods and those who facilitate such methods, but establishing the current methods and participants within a new framework... There is nothing inherently radical or conservative in any method. It is the purposes and involvement of those using them that breathe in to them one or the other of these characteristics". (Ragg, 1977. P. 145)

**Empowering:** Training programmes should aim at empowering participants as multipliers. Empowerment itself should be regarded as a process which participants have to go through in a training process. For minority young people the empowering level of the training is the consciousness raising about oppression as a collective problem and is facilitated through self-directed group work. At this level, participants should be able to make visible their own experiences about oppression and be given the tools to collaborate with other minority groups in developing strategies to challenge oppression at cultural and structural level.

The success of any empowerment training relies to a greater extent on how these key principles are taken on board in the planning and delivery of the training. It should be seen as a progression where participants are invited to be aware and become equal partners in the process, as indicated in the diagram below.



## Conclusion

"Empowerment if connected with a notion of oppression... can become a distinctive underpinning for practice, and one which does not become colonised or domesticated in the service of the status quo". (Ward and Mullender, 1993, P. 22)

Mullender and Ward, both Western accredited readers on empowerment, largely summarise the rationale of this article. What I have tried to highlight was the relationship between discrimination and oppression where minority young people are in a clearly disadvantaged position compared to their counterparts from the majority. I have argued that if minority young people are to become equal stakeholders in the construction of a modern Europe, then they should be given empowerment training which will give

them the tools to challenge oppression at the personal, cultural and structural level. To achieve such an ambitious aim, the PCS model, I believe, should be the line that runs through the training programme without prejudice to intercultural learning, anti-racist and anti-discrimination training courses.

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# Client Participation in Youth Care

► Slowed down by underdeveloped education and training of social pedagogues (or social workers)?

*Motivating and enabling young people to participate in shaping the conditions that concern them, as a means to promote active citizenship, is an important aim for training in European youth work. The approach is also of relevance for youth and social workers dealing with young people in situations of social exclusion. Using the possibilities of two actions within the YOUTH Programme - European Voluntary Service and Future Capital - and later also his university studies, the author of this article has carried out some research about this issue focusing on client participation in youth care institutions. In his talks with people in such institutions he encountered resistance to promoting participation. In his article, he traces possible reasons and puts forward some ideas for change.*

## Introduction

During the year 2000 I have enthusiastically investigated and compared the situation of client participation in youth care in Austria and The Netherlands. I see client participation as a form of structural and frequent co-operation between clients and the rest of the youth care sector – from research to practice – in shaping the policy and methodology of this sector. The youth care sector is for me an institution of the modern welfare state aiming at preventing or reversing the social exclusion process of individual young people and to some extent their families as well.

The investigation was in the context of both my studies as well as for my Future Capital project. In 1999/2000 I studied for an MA degree in Comparative European Social Studies course at Hogeschool Maastricht in the Netherlands. Future Capital is part of the YOUTH programme of the European Commission in which volunteers can pass on experiences and skills gained during a European Voluntary Service project to the local community and to other young people, and increase their professional and personal development. In my Future Capital project I exploited my experiences from a European Voluntary Service project that I did in the United Kingdom in 1997/1998. The aim of the project was to prepare a seminar on client participation in youth care institutions. Despite the cancellation of the seminar, the project generated useful information and tools for those involved.

The main part of the investigation consisted of workshops and interviews with a total of more than 40 youth care clients and 25 experts from different

organisations, levels and disciplines in the youth care and welfare sector. The institutions involved were regional as well as local residential and semi-residential youth care institutions in Dordrecht (The Netherlands) and Vienna (Austria). They mainly aimed at helping their clients to deal (more) successfully with different challenges in their lives. The youngsters in these institutions came from very different backgrounds and thus formed a very heterogeneous group. And similarly, they were clients of these institutions for very different reasons. Their problems were mainly family or individual related and ranged from social-emotional to social-psychological problems. They were either experiencing severe problems or causing problems for their surrounding. The age of the interviewees ranged from nine to twenty-one. About fifty-five percent had been a client of youth care for more than three years (sometimes even their whole life!). Most of them had seen more than three different places and tens of social pedagogues, trainers and helpers. They can thus be seen as an expert group on youth care institutions.

This article highlights some striking aspects of client participation in youth care today which I encountered during the process of the project. It seemed that disharmony in the youth care sector has slowed down the development of client participation. In this article I take a brief look at what the possible causes might be and at the end I summarise three possible approaches to these causes.

## Why client participation?

Client participation in youth care is in my eyes, and increasingly in the eyes of others, an indispensable means of modern preventive social care. It is a



by Hayo de Vries





complex topic. Many issues are involved, such as the competencies of the client, national and local youth policy, pedagogic methodology and even the organisational culture of the youth care institutions. Furthermore, social pedagogy and sociology and of course the international and national legal framework are also important dimensions. And in all those areas a solid ground can be found indicating that client participation in youth care is important.

The following perspectives stress the importance of both social and political youth participation. Firstly, social-pedagogically it can be seen as a supplemental means that contributes to combating the vulnerability of youth. Through participation young people can train specific skills and social competencies. These competencies are at the same time essential in dealing with individual social-psychological as well as social-emotional problems.

Secondly, legally it has been determined that young people have the right to participate. This is embedded in both national and international legislation of many nations in Europe. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is a good example. With regard to quality assurance, a third perspective, the youth care sector could use client participation as a method to improve the service. In the Netherlands some unique experiments with this were carried out at the time of the investigation. One example is a joint project of the Dutch Platform for Wandering Young People and the Foundation Youth Participation 2000. Young people living in the streets were trained to interview other youngsters living in the streets. Not only were youngsters given a voice, but also unique first-hand information could be gathered.

And finally, in the perspective of the “democratic deficit of society”, client participation contributes to combating the lack of young people in decision-making processes that affect them directly and indirectly. After the democratisation wave of the 60s, the topic seemed to be out of the picture some ten to twenty years later. A stable political climate appeared to have led to the “de-politicisation” of society. “Politically sensitive issues were not solved through hot conflicts, but in the back rooms of the involved politicians” (Vink 1999). Young people therefore do not see the need to formulate a political opinion, and are not able to participate. Furthermore, according to Rietveld (1999) “...young people with major problems do not become members of youth structures in society”. So, especially to young people inside youth care – and to those outside and in need of help even more so – client participation also gives them an opportunity to work on their participation in social structures. In Central and Eastern Europe, countries are still practising with democracy. Hopefully they are willing to learn from the lessons of Western European countries.

### Different attitudes to client participation

What I increasingly started to notice during the project was that there are different opinions in the youth care sector about client participation. And I could recognise two traditionally separated parties: those who work directly with youth care clients – “the work floor” – and those who work indirectly with youth care clients. In this article I will refer to the first group with “the work floor”. In this case the youth care clients also belong to this group. I will refer to the latter group as “the management”, although in fact, researchers, policy writers and so on also belong to this group.

The “work floor” seemed to be more reluctant to client participation than the management. And to some extent I do not find this surprising. In the interviews most social pedagogues (those who work every

day with youth care clients in practice) find themselves rather limited in organisational resources and methodology. Organisational limitations identified by this group ranged from insufficient time and money to lack of space and a work-overload. Methodological obstacles that were indicated were a lack of knowledge or (positive) experiences with client participation. Many social pedagogues were thus also disappointed as well as frustrated by failure of client participation experiments in the past.

Youth care clients also expressed a negative attitude to client participation. This however had clearly other reasons. They ranged from the very practical to motivational. At first, most clients did not understand what client participation meant. Secondly, despite the fact that clients had already participated in different elements of shaping their “care programme” most of them were still unsatisfied with their participation. It seemed that they also wanted to co-determine issues on which they had no influence. These were very practical things, such as: house rules, pocket money, visiting hours, etc. Thirdly, most clients in fact stayed too little time in one place to feel the need to co-determine the practice of “their” organisation. And finally, clients were sometimes frustrated by the failure of their organisation to help them. A lack of trust was then the main problem.

Referring to the latest international, national, regional and even local developments as successful examples, “the management” on the other hand were unequivocally positive about client participation. They referred to developments such as the ratification of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child, the changed child sociological science paradigm (which has become child-centred), the child rights movement and the increased attention the democratic deficit in society. The contemporary child sociological science paradigm considers society as becoming increasingly demanding for children and adolescents. Consumerism, job-hopping, personal success, a good health, cognitive and emotional intelligence and strong academic skills have become the credo of today. And unfortunately this has widened the gap between the “haves” and the “have nots” (Euro-social Report 45, 1993).

Generally children are thus being considered subject to an increased risk of social exclusion. The “management” in the youth care sector sees youth participation as a means to combat this. It gives the clients a voice so that they can better influence their lives, as well as develop their social competencies. These will then help them to deal better with the demanding society of today. And especially the latter consideration sees client participation as an excellent and modern means of combating the social exclusion process of youth care clients.

### Underdeveloped client participation dimension in education and training

Having asked both “the work floor” as well as “the management” to come up with an explanation for the above, a common thread emerged in their answers. The following trends were recognised:

1. The training and education of social pedagogues (or social workers) does not have a strong client participation dimension. This is mainly a result of today’s socio-political developments, where there is prioritisation of result-oriented rather than process-orientated methods. Curing has become priority. Client participation is however a more preventive tool and thus less compatible or useful for the practice of youth care in its current climate. It is therefore also not so much an issue for social work schools.
2. There is a lack of on-site tools, support, training and material as



well as non-material resources to develop a successful client participation dimension in the organisations.

3. There is a lack of exchange of good-practice and knowledge between local organisations as well as between different levels and sectors in youth care. The sectors being: education, research and practice.

With all the interviewees together, from clients to policy writers, we talked about the possible approaches to reverse these disturbing trends. This exchange either took place through interviews, questionnaires or workshops. The results seem logical as well as obvious:

- Specific training modules should be developed for social work and social pedagogues' schools. There should also be an increase in the possibilities for students to personally experience what it is to participate in their school. Practical work with a client participation dimension should be stimulated. This could be for example setting up or evaluating client participation elements in practice. This will increase their familiarity with the phenomenon of client participation as well as with its dynamics and different shapes and forms. A research report of Foundation Youth Participation 2000, Lelystad, The Netherlands, gives some good suggestions (Gerrits et al, 2000).
- Specially tailored democratic training modules, programmes and projects for individual youth care organisations should be developed. These would aim at stimulating and developing the client participation dimension in these organisations. They should involve everybody in the organisation: from the clients to directors.
- The means of co-operation and exchange of knowledge and experience between local organisations, different levels in youth care and different sectors of youth care (such as: education, research and practice) should be further stimulated, renewed and increased

These possible approaches should not be seen as universally true or valid. They are only based on the comparison of the youth care sectors in Austria and the Netherlands.

However, I think any next step in the development of client participation in youth care should focus on education and training. It should involve both "the work floor" and "the management". In my Future Capital project I have experimented with this and developed guidelines for a workshop for youth care organisations. It still needs to be fine-tuned, but it is, I think, a good start. The results were at least very positive.

I hope this article will inspire people in all areas of the youth care sector that are trying to develop client participation in their organisation. Youth participation seems to be a hype, but we should not underestimate its importance! Besides that I hope that it encourages social pedagogues educators as well as youth care managers to take up a more active attitude towards client participation, if that is not already the case. To those who are still or already working hard, I would like to thank them for all their good work and wish them good luck for the future.

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## Quotes from the interviews

### From social pedagogues (working with the young people in the institutions)

Reserved attitude towards client participation

"... there always has to be a minimum set of not-discussible rules ..."

"... they can talk about anything they want, but in reality they do not take initiative to discuss organisational matters or methodological issues. So why bother them with it? ..."

"... we have tried it many times before, but it always died a silent death ..."

"... they need a structure, because it is hard for them to structure their own lives ..."

"... they are not interested, because they can survive ..."

### From clients:

Somehow reluctant towards client participation

"... We don't know everything for making the right decisions ..."

"... I already have problems enough! ... just let them (the social pedagogues or carers) decide about what should happen ..."

"... I am not interested in the others; I am here for myself ..."

"... Sometimes we can say what we like, but often in the end it is the carer or my parents who decide what is happening. "It is a rule!" they say ..."

### From experts:

Clearly positive about client participation

"... it could be much more ..."

"... we should do some research about it ..."

"... not enough ..."

"... it is in the planning ..."

"... we have just installed a commission to investigate possibilities ..."



# How Small Is the World?

## (A Course in Global Interdependence)

*"In a World where we have all grown even more dependent on each other, we must learn to work together, even when we do not always agree". For the author of this article, this conviction indicates the importance of the training course on global interdependence, which is organised yearly by the North South Centre of the Council of Europe. The course gives 30 youth leaders and youth workers from all corners of the world the chance to learn from and about each other, and to try out the challenges - and the magic - of living and working together. Ndung'u Kabilu is one of the trainers on this course.*



by Ndung'u Kabilu



Once every summer, a group of young people gathers at the CEULAJ training centre in the village of Mollina, Spain for seven days. They are days full of fun, games, making friends and learning from each other. The young people are drawn from the four continents of Europe, Asia, Latin America and Africa, representing every shade of opinion and background it is possible to have outside the United Nations. This is the training course for youth organisations, which the North South Centre of the Council of Europe has been holding annually for the past six years, the only break coming in 1998. Known in short as the North South Centre Training Course, it brings together an average of 30 youth leaders selected on the basis of their interest in issues of global interdependence and cross-cultural understanding. The trainers of this course are drawn from the same regions as the participants and share a similar interest in global issues and youth work. They also share the view that the best teachers are those willing to teach as well as learn from their students. The course is organised in an interactive manner intended to ensure everybody learns with and from everybody else. Beyond this, the contents of the course have grown and changed greatly over the years, most of these changes coming as a result of the feedback that participants are encouraged to give, and which the organisers take very seriously.

The broad aim of this training course is to expose youth leaders to the concept of global interdependence and their possible role in it. It makes reference to the resolutions of the International Colloquy on 'The Role of Young People in Global Interdependence', which was held in Faro, Portugal, in June 1995. The Faro declaration (as it has since been referred to) made a strong case for the equipping of young people with skills that

will enable them to play a positive role in the process of globalisation and the appreciation of global interdependence. Some of the resolutions made in Faro were again reaffirmed by the Braga Youth Action Plan, which was adopted by the Third World Youth Forum of the United Nations System, held in Braga, Portugal in 1998. These two documents have since formed an important input in the North South Centre Training Course, providing clear justification for the effort taken to organise the course itself.

### Course structure

The course structure falls in two broad sections. The first one is devoted to expert discussions on important issues of global interdependence. This provides all participants with a common understanding of the state of global issues and the role of youth and youth organisations in them. Various experts, usually drawn from the world of the EU political and NGO systems, make short but interactive presentations on such issues like 'Peace and Conflict Resolution,' 'The Impact of Globalisation on Development', etc. The second part of the course is then devoted to discussions, projects, plans and activities aimed at responding to such important questions like, 'What is the role of youth and youth organisations in global interdependence?' 'In which concrete ways can young people, together or in groups, play a role in creating a humane though more interlinked world?' In each course the trainers and participants also pose the self-evident question, 'How small is the World?' Despite slight differences of emphasis, the common answer has been that the World is indeed very small and growing ever smaller.

During the training course in November 1999, the

challenge to ensure immediate application of the ideas learned, by developing and later carrying out joint projects contributing to the broad theme of international cooperation was attempted. This had been a suggestion made by participants of previous courses in their feedback. The final impact of these projects is yet to be measured and recorded. However the sheer enthusiasm and creativity that the participants showed for this activity demonstrated that it was the right thing to do. Better preparation will no doubt make this one of the high points of future courses, a way to carry theory from word to deed, to express the goal of interdependence through practical activities. Many people also leave the course with a strong feeling of their own self-worth and capacity to change themselves and the World. This emphasis on the value of individual and group self-appreciation has always been a strong point of emphasis for the trainers of the courses.

### Including current geopolitical issues

In each course we include sessions on a current geopolitical issue that has a direct effect on youth and youth organisations. For each of the last three courses, for instance, time has been allocated to activities expressing solidarity with the people of the Western Sahara. This has been done through talks, discussions, special exhibitions and a cultural Saharawi night aimed at introducing to participants the culture of the Saharawi people and also to some of the people directly affected by the problems of the Western Sahara. This event has, for three years running, been voted the most successful event of the training course. One that participants have talked about long after it was over. Last year a special event to celebrate East Timorese self-determination and to express support for the people of East Timor was organised alongside the Saharawi night. Again this was a great success. All these events have later given birth to many successful joint projects for some of the organisations represented.

One of the unspoken risks of organising such events, which are necessarily partisan in nature, has been the fear that they would divide participants, particularly those from opposed political orientations. After all, no one pretends that our youth participants are non-political beings, unaffected by the vagaries of the nationalistic politics, which have paradoxically become a common feature of the World geopolitical landscape despite the onset of globalisation. We remain sensitive to the fact that participants in the course will not always agree on all issues, and it is not a desired requirement that they do so. We learn as much when we disagree as when we agree, perhaps even more so in the former case. It is made very clear that nobody should feel pressured to take part in the special solidarity events if their political or other persuasions do not allow it. To my knowledge nobody has ever walked out of such an activity in protest, even when they expressed strongly held views in opposition to the cause being explored.

It is also understood that, during the whole course, participants have a right to freely express their own views, even contrary ones, provided they grant the same right to everybody else. This has often been the cause of very animated discussions for instance on the Saharawi issue. One time a youth representative from Morocco admitted that a lot of the information he had received from this event had opened his eyes to a reality that was often hidden to the common citizens of his country. At other times irreconcilable opinions are expressed, with different parties strongly to emerge from such experiences with a broadened view of the World we live in.

By placing real faces behind such issues as the Rwanda tragedy, the East Timor crisis and others, the participants are better equipped to see World problems first as people struggling to make things better, not merely as news events that affect faceless countries far away. Thus we hope that we help young people see that they have an ultimate responsibility to work with their fellow members of the human race to help meet the many challenges that face us collectively. That the problem of one man is the problem of everyman. It is followed by a deliberate effort to give the young people confidence in themselves and their capacity to change things for the better. These are lessons that are all too often lost in the inexorable march of globalisation. The World is first about people and, no matter where they come from; all people are basically the same and share a common fate. Hopefully by thus generating respect for all of humanity, the participants will then feel challenged to expand this attitude towards all of life and all of the Earth. As a special aid towards this, sessions on such global issues like globalisation and sustainable development have become an integral part of the training. They are meant to show how closely we are all linked to each other, to the social institutions that govern the World and to the Earth's biodiversity. With little exception, course participants have demonstrated a great appreciation of this fragile interdependence between man and nature. While in other forums it may be seen necessary to try and shock people into paying attention to the dangers of unsustainable growth and consumption current in developing countries today, this has rarely proved necessary in the North South Centre Training Courses.

### The value of such courses

It is such experiences that have convinced us of the value of holding such a course. Year after year the seven or so trainers and course administrators, fairly young people themselves, drawn from the different continents of the World, volunteer their time, effort and sometimes resources. None of them has ever complained about the hard work or long hours of work that go into the preparation for each course. They all share a common interest and faith in young people and the belief that the key to a better World is through them.



On their side, the youth participants continue to justify this faith through their capacity for hard work, their enthusiastic and joyful spirits and their willingness to share their knowledge and experience without reservation. From them we have learned important lessons. In a World where we have all grown even more dependent on each other, we must learn to work together, even when we do not always agree. We must realise that disagreement, on any issue, is no longer sufficient excuse for war and conflict or for walking away from each other. Rather such disagreements are now the reasons that challenge us to grow beyond ourselves, by creating room where differences can coexist with the knowledge that, in the words of Maurice Strong, 'we shall either save the whole together or no part of it.'

The originators of the first course in 1994 must have felt overwhelmed by the enormity of the work at hand. After all there was no guarantee that drawing young people from such disparate environments would work. Happily all people involved in this course have proved more than eager to make it work. The young people who have walked through the CEULAJ training centre in Mollina have, each in their way, contrived to teach us that the dream we hold of a united World can be realised. In only one week we witness the little miracle of a group of strangers coming together and, by the end of that week, leave united by bonds as strong as those of a family. We are convinced that young people can work similar magic on the World stage if they are given the chance, the skills and the challenge to do so. We have no doubt that the alumni of the North South Centre Training Course will play such a role in their organisations, their countries and the World since we have already seen them do it in Mollina.

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# *Euro-African Network:* A Training Course in Cape Town Opens New Paths for Intercultural Learning and Youth Work

*Going beyond Europe and experiencing the challenges of intercultural learning with youth workers from Southern African and Southern European countries – for Davide and Michelangelo this was an exciting idea. An exploration of their contacts with some colleagues from South Africa led them to run a training course together in Cape Town at the end of last year. In their article, they give a vivid impression of how they lived this experience.*



by Davide Tonon and Michelangelo Belletti

Hi everybody! We are Michelangelo Belletti and Davide Tonon, youth trainers, and with the help of a few words, we would like to tell you about an experience that made a big impact on all our senses, let us start at the beginning....

Xena is a cultural association based in Padova, North East of Italy, in which Davide works and with whom Michelangelo and Vedogiovane co-operate. Founded in 1995, Xena has always tried to run youth projects which are open also to the participation of countries that are not members of the European Union (so-called "Third Countries"). In May 2000 Xena decided to present a project proposal to the European Commission, which would be a training course in South Africa - it seemed like a task from "Mission Impossible".

The idea was born when first contact was established at the end of 1996 during a training course on "conflict resolution" in Bonn, where Davide met Toni Sylvester, a youth worker from South Africa involved in community work in Cape Town. This initial contact slowly developed into an idea: how could we find a way in which to work on intercultural learning, dealing with young people coming from really different cultures?

In 1999 we transformed this idea into a concrete project proposal. Needless to say, we were unsure whether the European Commission would be interested in such a project, involving countries that did not even appear on the eligibility list. It was important for us to follow some steps in order to realise this intercultural exchange activity, especially when working with youngsters. So we tested the interest of the European Commission by first submitting a project proposal for a feasibility visit to Cape Town, South Africa for February 2000. This we considered the first phase of the whole process. And it was approved!

The feasibility visit was a great opportunity to initiate a closer examination of two ways - both African and European - of working with young people and intercultural learning issues. It was also an excellent chance to determine the real interest of the people involved, and to prepare the groundwork for the training course which would follow. The path lay open...and youth organisations from Italy, South Africa, Namibia, Portugal, Botswana, Spain and Lesotho were invited to take part in the "Training Course in South Africa for European and African youth workers in the field of the intercultural youth exchanges", which took place in Cape Town from 2 to 12 December 2000.

The participants of this training course were youth workers coming from 7 countries, with as many cultures and languages, belonging to two continents. It was really a black and white mix. They were almost all quite young. The youngest participant was an 18 year-old member/youth worker of a community in a black township in Cape Town. In general, the Africans were more used to community work with homeless children and poor people, to work camps and scout experiences, and also to leadership building. For the Europeans the most common experience was work in a youth association setting up leisure time activities and mobility projects. Immediately this gave us a picture of the different realities of youth work in European and African countries.





But why set up a training course on youth exchanges with youth workers from Southern Africa and Southern Europe as the participants? And why were we thinking about the possibility of a Euro-African youth exchange? We had a general idea, but for the most part we followed our intuition. The course later, as often happens, clarified our motives....

South Africa is a truly special place to run such an activity: a country where there are 11 official languages (people speak easily 3-4 languages), and many more ethnic groups and a historical/political situation that needs a lot of work to further break down the old prejudices and fences. South Africa is a very particular background against which to develop and deepen intercultural issues.

In the training team we combined the expertise of Stan Henkeman and Toni Sylvester, both from Cape Town, on themes like cultural difference and intercultural mediation processes. We brought to the course our Italian experience in group dynamics and "Youth for Europe" youth exchanges. The team was a good mix, and the participants added fireworks with their motivation and enthusiasm following the team's inputs and provoked reflections within the training team. They enriched the course by sharing their own experiences in the field of youth work, for instance of the methodologies and techniques they use. There was real cultural, human and professional exchange among the participants. It was not only continents, countries and cultures interacting, but it was humans open to "drink" all that was possible from this experience.



Photo : Trust-building

Something that Europeans and Africans will certainly take into account after this experience in the Cape for their future youth work in intercultural contexts is that every culture has its rhythms also in communication. At a certain moment it became almost funny that the interventions were so fast that only the European youth workers were speaking...for the Africans it was too difficult to follow and they were not speaking at all. Until the moment when the Europeans realised they were playing alone...The differences between us were so big that living together from morning till night was in itself a daily experiment in intercultural learning.

We experienced the need for better comprehension and co-operation between these two worlds and the importance of understanding more about our own identity and the cultures we belong to. Africans felt closer than ever before with the other Africans and the same happened to the Europeans (even the age-old friendly rivals Barcelona and Madrid were virtually linked during this training!). We can say that this close contact finally gave us the opportunity to begin to understand the famous "European dimension". And it gave us some ideas on how to work out our complex identities.

A high point of the programme was a visit to the black township of Langa, guided by Toni and Tsere, one of the participants. Langa is a famous fuelling fire of the anti-apartheid rebellion. It was like entering a different world, where the unfamiliar music and the smells carried us in waves through different experiences. We walked among groups of kids, the ruins of the apartheid system, murals against Aids, new amazing cultural-art centres. We looked in the distance to the boys in the bush waiting to become men by making the secret ritual of circumcision... and to the white people worried about their "safari". Hear this. A big black woman came out from the garden into the street and looking at us, said: "I was told that today there were some white people to watch!" During the visit to Langa we met also the "sangoma" (witch doctor). From the intercultural point of view it was interesting to know that if a South African is ill he can choose between the doctor and the sangoma, both paid by the health system.

Other highlights were the "national nights". During these parties we tried to mix Botswana-Italy-Lesotho-Spain-South Africa-Portugal-Namibia food, songs, games, traditions and the result was explosive... we learnt by experience that Africans and Europeans have different rhythms and biorhythms.

One marked cultural difference is that our African friends give a different value to their flag and national anthem. It was difficult to explain that for Italians the anthem is an ugly patriotic song, practically meaningless nowadays, when for South Africans the anthem and the colourful flag are the symbols of the newly recognised dignity to millions of human beings.

On Robben Island, where Mandela and many others were in jail, we heard words that we will never forget, as youth trainers and as people who believe in the importance of mutual understanding in order to build a world of peace. "When we got freedom we didn't look for revenge on white people, because we thought that it was impossible to undo one mistake with another", the tourist guide told us who had spent 20 years of his life in that prison.

During the training course we focused on the need and the importance to develop a network of continuous feedback and sharing in the field of intercultural learning between African and European experiences related to our work with young people. We consider that in this way North and South (however you want to define it) can become a lot closer.

The first step of this ongoing process was to bring a new tool to the African youth workers: the youth exchange in the special "Youth for Europe" philosophy (exchange as a process of empowerment). In return, we received from them knowledge and methods of how to work with cultural diversities that were new to us. Underpinning both of these steps was the increased understanding of our differences and similarities and of how to use these to strengthen future partnerships.

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Photo : Group Work Session

### What are we planning for a follow-up of this training experience

We hope to have a Euro-African youth exchange, possibly in Europe this time. This activity would strengthen the contacts among the organisations and the youth workers of the two continents and could put into practice the common foundation and knowledge acquired in the training course in Cape Town. The three European organisations which were involved in the training course (Xena, Rota Jovem and Nexes) are now in talks with their local institutions in Padova, Lisbon and Barcelona with the aim to promote interest in this unique activity and get the necessary funding.

But it will be interesting to see how many other activities and projects it is possible to think about starting from here: European Voluntary Service with third countries, seminars, further developed training courses, and more. Of course even the nicest ideas will not be sufficient without the needed support...

We are convinced that this process has created the possibility of developing a rich network between Africa and Europe in the field of youth work...so we are now preparing in both hemispheres, under different stars, for a new Mission Possible!



Photo : Intercultural learning game «The Island»



# Values, Training and the Environment

*One of the most common problems encountered in the environmental education process is the emergence of ideological conflicts among participating parties with different beliefs and values about the 'nature vs. humans' relationship.*

*How does one train individuals and organisations to adequately recognise, understand and act upon environmental problems, while being acutely aware of the ideological implications of one's every word and action? Should trainers separate their personal system of values from the environmental education process? Can they? An attempt will be made here to investigate these questions in further depth.*

by Stefan Bužarovski



Values are central to both the theory of environmental education (EE) and the practicalities of the training process needed to achieve it. This stems from the specific nature of the subject, as our societies' perceptions of the causes and solutions of environmental problems have traditionally been deeply divided along ideological lines.

Moreover, the training process in itself reflects and embodies the values of society; indeed, according to Halstead, 'it owes its existence to the fact that society values education and seeks to exert influence on the pattern of its own future development through education'. Hence, every aspect of training—from group dynamics to seating arrangements—necessarily reflects a certain ideology, i.e. 'a world view or system of concepts, beliefs and values'.

Whereas the larger-scale links between training and values have been extensively discussed and analysed, relatively little attention has been paid to the reflection of such interactions at a lower level, within EE itself. As a result, the influence of different value systems on the educational process frequently remains unexplored and/or tacitly accepted, forcing trainers to rely on their 'moral instinct' to make decisions about the aims and structure of each activity. However, this ad-hoc approach may create serious difficulties: not only does it decrease the effectiveness of the exercises in question—considering that the internalised ideas and aims of the trainer might diverge from those of the trainees - but it can also lead to serious conflicts in the execution phase (see Atfield and Dell, 1996).

The author of this article has personally experienced such an event, when a failure to clarify each others' ideological beliefs in the planning stage brought severe conceptual differences and an eventual all-out "war" when the activity was already underway. Namely, the prep team failed to recognise that not only the subject (e.g. air

pollution, energy use or deforestation) but also the form (e.g. open forum, small group discussions, strictly controlled plenary debates) of the activity implies a certain interpretation of environmental ideology on behalf of the organisers, which in turn can influence the outcome of the entire activity in an undesirable way. Thus, when designing the EE exercises planned, the members of the prep team were guided by completely opposing understandings of the social causes of, and solutions to, environmental problems. The major ideological discrepancies within the group surfaced too late - only in the course of the activity—when a number of individuals realised that some of the EE methods used were undemocratic and unfair towards minority groups. However, because others thought that such considerations were not directly relevant to EE - which they saw mostly as a technical concept - the entire educational process came to a screeching halt: instead of serving its intended objectives, the activity turned into a narrow value-based debate led by a few aggressive individuals. Clearly, to prevent such disasters, every trainer has to analyse the context in which EE is carried out, and design his/her methodology accordingly.

So, how would the role of the trainer in an EE seminar of 'The Association of the Young Techno-centrists' differ from the one organised, say, by the "Gaia Direct Action Movement"? Perhaps the first question to be asked is: does this particular activity aim to help the trainees fit into society as it is, or does it have a mission to develop young people who will seek to 'improve' society? The application of its answer to environmental education can lead to three discrete approaches, widely recognised in education theory:

Clearly, it is very difficult to separate ideologies and values from EE, because of the controversial nature of the subject, as well as its inherent ideological link with the wider approaches in education. Clearly, it is very difficult to separate ideologies and values from EE, because of the controversial

**Table 1:** Classification of environmental education relative to its social objective (based on Fien, 1993):

**Education about the environment:** The most common form of EE, which simply emphasises knowledge about natural systems, processes and their management. Is this approach free of ideology, because its methods merely aim to bring out 'objective facts' to the surface? Many would disagree: there is an inherent danger that any uncritical representation of the combination of technical measures and behavioural changes - needed to respond to the global environmental crisis - will implicitly carry an ideological aura with it, considering the lack of a broad consensus about these issues.

**Education through the environment:** The trainees' experiences in the environment can also be used as a medium for education. Such a learner-centred approach adds 'reality, relevance and practical experience to the education process, providing trainees with an opportunity to gain an appreciation of the environment through direct contact with it'. The approach may foster a value-based environmental concern if its aim is to 'captivate the participants with the importance and fragility of ecosystems and landscapes, or if they become immersed in an ideological conflict over an environmental issue'.

**Education for the environment:** Unlike the previous two, this form of EE has an overt agenda of values education and social change. It aims to engage trainees 'in the exploration and resolution of environmental problems, promoting lifestyles that are compatible with the sustainable and equitable use of resources'. Building on education about and through the environment alike, it can help to develop 'an informed concern for the environment, a sensitive environmental ethic, and the necessary skills to participate in environmental protection and improvement'.

Some analysts argue that EE can be realised effectively only when a programme's open intention is education for the environment: training about and through the environment are valuable only as far as they can be used to provide skills and knowledge to support the formative intentions of education for the environment.

In addition to knowing what the aim of EE is, a trainer would also need to develop a coherent set of values and beliefs to guide educational decisions and explain their consequences. In other words, one also needs to know how one's approach relates to the major general orientations of pedagogy, relevant to EE:

**Table 2:** A categorisation of educational ideologies (based on Fien, 1993)

Perspective	Vocational/neo-classical	Liberal/progressive	Socially critical
<b>Nature of knowledge</b>	Objective: 'a public matter; skills and information which have their meaning and significance in occupational or disciplinary contexts; special emphasis on technical/rational/managerial interests of <i>knowledge for control</i> '.	Subjective: 'a private or individual matter; attitudes and living skills which have meaning and significance in the individual's life context and the culture; special concern for the practical/expressive/cultural interests of knowledge for communication, deliberation and refinement'.	Dialectical: 'an interplay of subjective views of the world and their historical and cultural framework. Knowledge is a social construct; therefore it only has meaning in actions or projects whose significance is in specific contexts. Emphasis on the role of knowledge in social action'.
<b>Learning theory</b>	Behaviourism; 'transmission' theories of learning	Constructivist-interactionist; 'the learner builds cognitive structures through interaction'	Social constructivist-interactionist; 'the learner reconstructs a social reality through historical and political processes'






This classification is insufficient if used in isolation, because it fails to address our societies' paradigmatic values and beliefs about the environment. Perhaps the following matrix can be used to provide an overview of the environmental ideologies taken up by the variety of organisations operating under the European youth sky:

Table 3: A synthetic map of environmental ideologies (based on Fien, 1993)			
Technocentrism		Ecocentrism	
Believes that 'the existing structure of political power should be retained, but with a growing institutional responsiveness and accountability'		Demands that 'power be redistributed towards a decentralised economy with a greater emphasis on informal economic and social transactions and participatory justice'	
<b>'Brown' (Cornucopian)</b>	<b>'Light Green' (Accommodationalist/Managerialist)</b>	<b>'Red Green' (Human welfare environmentalism)</b>	<b>'Dark Green' (Gaianist/holistic)</b>
"Technological optimism; all economic growth is good; suspicion of attempts to widen participation in social and environmental appraisal and policy review'.	'Economic growth and resource exploitation can continue, provided that the appropriate economic, legal and institutional measures are undertaken (i.e. taxes, fees, compensation)'	'Faith in the rights of nature; ecological laws should dictate human morality'.	'Faith in the co-operative capabilities of societies to establish self-reliant communities based on sustainable resource use and integration of work and leisure'
		'Lack of faith in modern large-scale technology; rejection of materialism for its own sake; belief in the intrinsic value of nature for defining and sustaining humanity'; 'small is beautiful'	

Whereas this is by no means a precise and comprehensive overview of all the available alternatives, it nevertheless can provide a useful guidance frame when combined with some of the aforementioned ideas:

Environmental ideology		Educational ideology		
		Vocational/neo-classical	Liberal/progressive	Socially critical
<b>Technocentric</b>  <b>Ecocentric</b>	Cornucopian	Conservative education <i>about the</i> environment		
	Managerialist		Liberal education <i>about</i> the environment	
	Red Green		Liberal education <i>through</i> the environment	Critical education <i>for</i> the environment
	Gaianist		Liberal education <i>for</i> the environment	

➔ **Major ideological direction of 'less restrictive definitions and analyses' of education about, through and for the environment (according to Fien, 1993)**

nature of the subject, as well as its inherent ideological link with the wider approaches in education itself. How does a trainer define his/her role in the EE process, considering this issue?

For a start, it might be useful to pay greater attention to the diversity of values in the ever-changing organisations that one serves, as well as their legitimate expectations. Furthermore, the aims and structure of each activity should be scrutinised carefully, to determine what values are embedded in it and to reflect on their justifiability and coherence. Because the statements that may emerge in the end may be ambiguous, provisional and less than totally clear (see McLaughlin, 1994) one may find it useful to compare and locate them in the above matrices. A successful outcome implies that the nature and the amount of ideology used will be balanced with both the aims of the organisation and the most effective educational approach in the given context.

## References

1. Attfield, R. and Dell, K. J. (1996). Values, conflict and the environment. Aldershot: Avebury. This book may be useful for those wishing to gain deeper insight into the importance of ideology

and values in the emergence and resolution of environmental conflicts.

2. Fien, J. (1993). Education for the Environment: Critical Curriculum Theorising and Environmental Education. Geelong: Deakin University. A systematic overview—and analysis—of the generic links between environmental issues, ideology and education.

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4. McLaughlin (1994), "Values, Coherence, and the School", Cambridge Journal of Education, 24, 3, pp 253-70. Although this article is more relevant to those working in a more traditional educational environment, it does contain some important conclusions and guidelines pertinent to the application of ideology in education.

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# Taking Training to the Markets:

## How to Be Looking Good

*If there is something like Billboard charts for training topics, "Marketing & Public Relations" are likely to be in the top ten at the moment. It seems as if more and more organisations and institutions have an increasing need to acquire knowledge and expertise in this field, feeling the competition in their various working areas increase.*

With more and more training activities covering aspects of marketing and public relations, the question arose if and how marketing strategies and techniques could be applied to promote training. I was asked to share some thoughts along that line in this article.

With space being so limited, I decided to look for answers to the following four basic questions:

1. Where can marketing be found in the context of training activities?
2. When and why does it make sense for a trainer to get involved in marketing activities?
3. How can a trainer develop and implement a (personal) marketing strategy?
4. What skills, methods and means for marketing fit a trainer's needs?

### Marketing – the process and its elements

Marketing basically means communication between someone **offering** something, and the people that this offer is targeted at. So it includes **players**, and a **'product'**, and a **'marketplace'** to bring them all together. The basic concepts and theories behind the terms "Marketing" and "Public Relations" have their origin in the profit-oriented business world. Therefore, terminology and examples mostly reflect that 'culture'. It is a smart thing to keep this in the back of our minds to prevent irritations when applying the profit-oriented language to our training realities, which often deal with non-profit organisations. With a little flexibility in the mind, it is not so hard to find the 'product' of a non-profit organisation, or its 'customers', 'markets' and 'resources', etc.

If we try to identify possible marketing **players** in a training context, it makes sense to think in terms of **supply** and demand: Who is **offering** a training activity? Who has **the need** to participate in one? Possible

answers to both questions include

- ✓ an institution.
- ✓ a non-profit organisation.
- ✓ a business company.
- ✓ a political body.
- ✓ a training institute.
- ✓ an individual (e.g. a trainer or a participant)

And what 'product' would be put on this particular 'training' marketplace? Answers include

- ✓ a training activity (workshop, seminar, year course etc.).
- ✓ a training method.
- ✓ a training programme/strategy on a specific topic.
- ✓ a team of trainers/an individual trainer.
- ✓ a report/handbook/publication resulting from a training activity.

On this basis, I think we can answer the first question: Where can marketing be found in the context of training activities? Wherever there is contact/communication between the two 'players' – one **offering** training, the other one **demanding** it – related to the **'product'**. This would include

- ✓ an information brochure describing upcoming training events.
- ✓ an invitation letter to the target group of a training activity.
- ✓ a briefing document for the selected participants.
- ✓ a phone call by a participant to ask for help in getting a visa required for a training venue.
- ✓ a report describing the follow-up activities of a training course, sent to the participants.

### When trainers should care about marketing – and why

If you can accept this answer, then it should be easy to find one for the next question as well: When and why does it make sense for a trainer to get involved in marketing activities?



by Martin Schneider



Well, whenever you - as a trainer - **care** for the respective training activity, its underlying topic and the target group. As long as you are satisfied with the 'product' you offer, and care about it and the goals it wants to reach, you should have an interest in marketing this product. Why? Because you want it to be successful, don't you? So people need to know about this great thing you have to offer, and you should think of ways of making your offer look **attractive** to the people you would like to involve with your training.

## Finding the right strategy for your marketing

That takes us straight to question number three: How can a trainer develop and implement a (personal) marketing **strategy**? In other words: How do you **plan** to let your market know about what you have to offer? You only need to know these three things:

1. How can you express your wonderful product?  
➡ Find your **message**.
2. Who do you want to receive your message?  
➡ Find your **target group**.
3. Through which medium can your message reach your target group?  
➡ Find the right **communications channel(s)**.

If you have a clear idea of these three elements – **message, target group, medium** -, you have the core of your marketing strategy. To help you find the three above elements, I suggest questions like the following to ask yourself. And the best – though trivial – tip: try to think like your target groups do, try to see everything from **their** perspective.

Target group(s):

- Who would have a **need** for my 'product'? Why? (It may be healthy to test your assumptions, as it is common to be spectacularly wrong...).
- How can I define **groups** among those people? And what criteria do I use for these definitions?
- Where **are** my target groups? How can I **reach** them?
- What are their **habits**? How are they different from my own?
- What is my relation to my target groups? And how does that look from **their** side?

Message:

- What is **unique** about my 'product'? Would my target groups agree?
- How can I express this uniqueness in the language of my target groups?
- Is there a special **appeal** (something really attractive; a "goodie") in my product for them? If so, how can I include it in my message?
- Is my message **short and clear** enough? Again, testing would not hurt...

Medium:

- What media reach my target groups? How do I know that?

- What media do I use anyway, and could they transport my message (e.g. an invitation letter with an application form could be included in an already existing newsletter)?
- Who will be **excluded** from my message by choosing a specific medium to transport it?

With these three elements found, you basically have your marketing strategy: **To get your message across to your target group(s) through the selected channels.**

## Putting plans into practice: implementing your market strategy

Implementing a good strategy is often easier than planning one. I suggest to look for every possible interaction between you (the offering party) and your target group(s), and check its potential for your marketing: Every contact is a marketing potential. Try to ensure a clear, understandable and reliable line of communication throughout the whole process, from the invitation letter all the way to follow-up activities. And it is smart to keep in mind: marketing is a specialised form of **targeted** communication, and it is your responsibility to ensure that **your** message was received and understood by your target group(s) in the way you **intended** it.

Besides that, let your product speak for itself: if your workshop is inspiring, if your training performance is motivating, if your seminar created friendships, people will remember, and they will tell others. That's how an image is being created and maintained. Since this particular mechanism works both ways, and people tend to have a better memory for negative experiences than for positive ones, it is always worthwhile putting some quality into your work, your 'products'...

So what does it take from a trainer to get actively involved in marketing activities, what methods and means are there? Most of all, a true understanding of the 'product', e.g. what exactly are the goals of a workshop? Who actually needs it, and why? Further, you need a good feel (empathy) for your target groups (or skills and money for researching them). Add some creativity and the ability to question your own ideas, and you'll have a good chance to enjoy yourself as a successful marketing person.

And what means are out there to be used for implementing your marketing strategies? Probably more than we can think of, including

- The internet: websites, mailing lists, chats, bulletin boards, electronic news letters...
- Print media: local/national media, news letters, magazines, brochures, flyers, stickers, banners, flags...
- Audio/Video: Radio and TV stations, Video tapes, CDs, CD-ROMs...

And not to forget merchandising articles, education fairs, pool meetings, congresses, your letter heads, business cards, propaganda by word of mouth, and a thousand other things.

## And there is a lot more out there....

I hope that these very basic thoughts triggered some further ideas in your heads, reflecting your very own situation, experience and needs. I would have liked to explore some further aspects, such as marketing yourself as a trainer, maybe building a brand and an image, and how to maintain these. Where are your limits in terms of skills, ethics and morals, or simply resources? How do you do marketing towards sponsors, funders, political bodies? What's the difference between marketing and lobbying, or marketing and public relations?

As you see, there are many aspects to explore out there. Please let me know if you find something interesting!

If you'd like to know more about the world of marketing, I can recommend the following publications and websites:

### Books:

- Alexander Hiam (1997). *Marketing for Dummies*. IDG Books Worldwide: Foster City (CA, USA). A great introduction to all important aspects of marketing in a very practice-oriented way. A pleasure to read, with one eye always ironically winking.
- P. Kotler and A. Andreasen (1996). *Strategic Marketing for Nonprofit Organizations*. Prentice Hall: New Jersey (NJ, USA). More on the theoretical side, this publication offers the relevant aspects of strategic, big-scale marketing for nonprofits.
- G.J. Stern, Amherst H. (1994). *Marketing Workbook for Nonprofit Organizations*. Wilder Foundation: St. Paul Minnesota. More on the practical side, it offers ready-to-adapt marketing concepts for nonprofits.

### WorldWideWeb:

- <http://www.dmnews.com> | Direct Marketing via Internet. A competent forum, including a free daily email newsletter to subscribe to.
- <http://www.knowthis.com> | Virtual Library on marketing and advertisement topics.
- <http://www.marketing.org> | Network for business-to-business oriented marketing with interesting resources.

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# Ethics in Training

## Head in the Stars but Feet on the Ground

### *Or How Can the Experience of an International Meeting be Transferred to a Local Context?*



*Of those who have participated in international meetings, who has not felt the special atmosphere of the intercultural group and the sadness of saying goodbye to each other at the end of the activity? International meetings can indeed seem like a world apart, and yet one of their most essential objectives is the transfer of the experience to the participants' own realities and local communities. This article presents some reflections on why and how to integrate the local dimension into international events.*



by Sylvain Abrial

“Leave with a rucksack on light on your back, come back with the weight of it on your shoulders” (Conseil Régional Rhône-Alpes)

An international meeting, whether it is an exchange between young people, a training course or a seminar, is a special forum. It is what we - trainers, leaders or international exchange organisers – try to promote in a more or less intuitive way. Add to that a pinch of intercultural group dynamics, ice-breakers and energisers, animated sessions in work and discussion groups, the farewell party ... There you have the ideal conditions for the course or exchange to acquire that timeless quality which makes it a world apart.

What I mean by that is that you have only to see the emotional, often tearful, goodbyes among participants to realise that, for them (and for us!), the week they have spent together seemed like a different reality, a powerful time of sharing which is difficult to leave behind.

That is the strength of these meetings, but it can also be destructive: we, as trainers and leaders, have the power to gather these human beings in a collective living space and help them do things, think and act together. This oblique power which we have can be

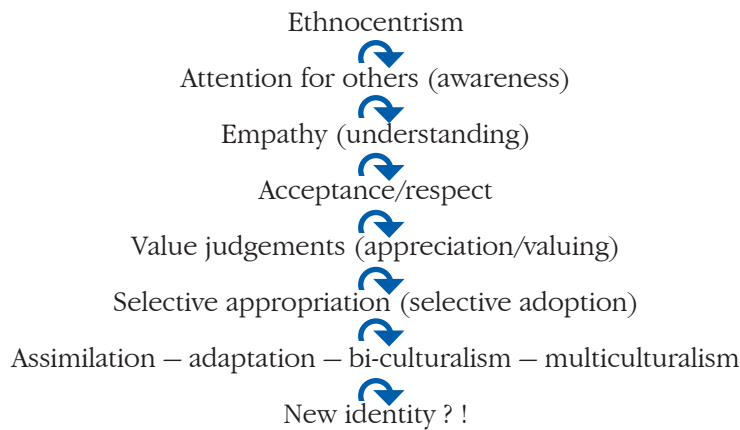
dangerous: since our actions relate to human beings, they affect the feelings and emotions.

Yet what could be more appealing than the concept of an “intercultural learning process” which is so dear to us (see Béatrice Burgherr’s model of intercultural learning below)!? It seems that, in some cases, on the small scale of our week-long meeting or course, some participants move quickly from ethnocentrism to appropriation and, intoxicated by exceptional group dynamics, reach the stage of total adaptation which can lead to the creation of a new identity. Let us take the example of a young participant or trainee who is very enthusiastic, open to others, a little more emotional than the average. If the organising team does its job well, if the group dynamics play their role, there is a good chance that the young person will give him or herself 200% to the meeting, sleeping little, sharing, receiving a great deal. She/he will cheerfully go through the stages of empathy, acceptance and judgment – eventually experiencing a strong feeling of belonging to a micro-society, a family with its own rules, values, joys and sorrows! The only problem is, the micro-society and the new group identity have a short, intense lifetime. And there you are, trainer or leader, a victim of your own success (and especially the success of the group).



## THE INTERCULTURAL LEARNING PROCESS

Source: Overhead projection slide by Beatrice Bugberr, adapted from Margaret Pusch, *A Cross Cultural Training Approach*, Illinois, 1979. In: *Training Courses Resource File Vol. 3, "Intercultural Learning – Basic Texts"*, Second Edition, Council of Europe, European Youth Centre 1991, p. 10.



Structured learning situation necessary?

Is it therefore up to us, at that moment, to deal with the traumas of separation? No, because we are neither psychologists nor psychoanalysts. No, because in the end they have to learn by experience.

It's true! However, it is our duty to place the meeting or training course in context: the week spent together has certainly been very rich in emotions and learning but, after all the emotion, the participants will each individually return to their daily lives, to that which makes them who they are – their local environment, their familiar space. That is the baggage they came with and they take this same baggage - even if it is heavier or newer - with them when they leave.

It is no coincidence that the emphasis in the objectives of the Community programmes is on this local aspect. As trainers or leaders, our role (if need be!) is to accompany the young people – the participants – on their return home. If they do not come through the stage of emotion, their experience will lose its quality as an agent of lifelong learning.

That is why the local dimension needs to be integrated into our teams of trainers and leaders. How?

When determining the expectations and make-up of the group at the beginning of the meeting, asking the participants to describe themselves as individuals by talking about their daily lives, hobbies, familiar environments and their past will help each one understand "why I am what I am" and particularly "what I think I can contribute to the group". Whatever the methods used to define expectations or make individual presentations, it is vital to put them on display, accompanied by the traditional Polaroid photo or other memento. This will remind everyone throughout the meeting that, before being an intercultural group, we are also individuals engaged in exploring and discovering others.

When the final evaluations are carried out, it is essential to refer back to the expectations, look back and ask ourselves the questions "What have we achieved together?" and especially "What individual expectations have you met?", "What frustrations were there?" and "What surprises were there?". In this way, each person will be able to reflect once more as an individual. In short, we can guide the participants towards reflecting on their personal involvement in the meeting: "How much of yourself have you given to the group?", "Do you usually give so much of yourself?", "What was the strength of our group?". By asking these questions directly or indirectly, we can reflect together on the fact that the intensity of a meeting derives not only from the quality of the individuals who make it up, but also from the time factor, the fact that we all know "it won't go on forever". That, unfortunately, is the artificial side of the meeting: this perfect world, this ideal micro-socie-

ty has a particular quality: you feel free there, you've left behind your daily material worries and conflicts... so you can give of yourself 200%!

To avoid being "dream-breakers", we also have to stimulate motivation: for example, suggest to the participants that they organise and host another meeting, an evaluation session – at home in their own region, which will enable them to experience or revive the magic of the intercultural meeting, but also integrating the constraints and challenges linked to their local environment.

We also have to remind the participants of their role as "intercultural ambassadors". If their experience has captured their imagination, a discussion can be conducted with them on the question "How do I apply what I've experienced and learned to my professional life, my organisation, the young people in my area, schools, associations...?" – so as to promote the building of a Europe in which they are the agents. By discussing various methods (photo exhibition, personal report of experience, compilation of methods and resources used), we can also encourage them to make local contacts with different partners who might be interested in hearing about their experiences as part of a Europe day, a local training course, an anti-racism event for children, etc.

When we are lucky enough to be able to stay in touch with some of the participants from our region, we can exchange experiences, see each other again in a more local context and organise a post-meeting review, for example.

Finally, we can use ourselves as an example: "Before being a trainer in an international team, I am French, from such-and-such a place, and at the end of the session I will also go home to my daily life". Let us therefore try occasionally to dispel the illusion of the team of multilingual trainers moving in "elevated European spheres"!

There are many ways of transferring experiences gained in an international group to a local and individual level and it seems to me vital to do so. The international meeting is, above all, a collective experience lived by individuals. To convince the most sceptical of the benefit of such experiences, we must be prepared to share our experiences outside the group, because the individuals in the group have already been convinced.

We should be aware of our power to make and break dreams and allow the meeting to work its magic, but we should also be capable of demystifying if need be. In this way, we will all be able to keep our feet on the ground.

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# Where do You stand ?

You may know this exercise. All participants are asked to come to the middle of the room. On two walls opposite each other are two posters. One says "yes", one says "no". A trainer or facilitator shows the participants a statement dealing with an aspect of a specific subject and then asks them to decide, spontaneously, - do you agree or disagree with this statement? Participants then move towards the poster that best expresses their opinion. Once two groups have formed, they explain to each other why they chose to agree with "yes" or "no" and discuss the issue until the trainer stops the discussion and presents another statement.

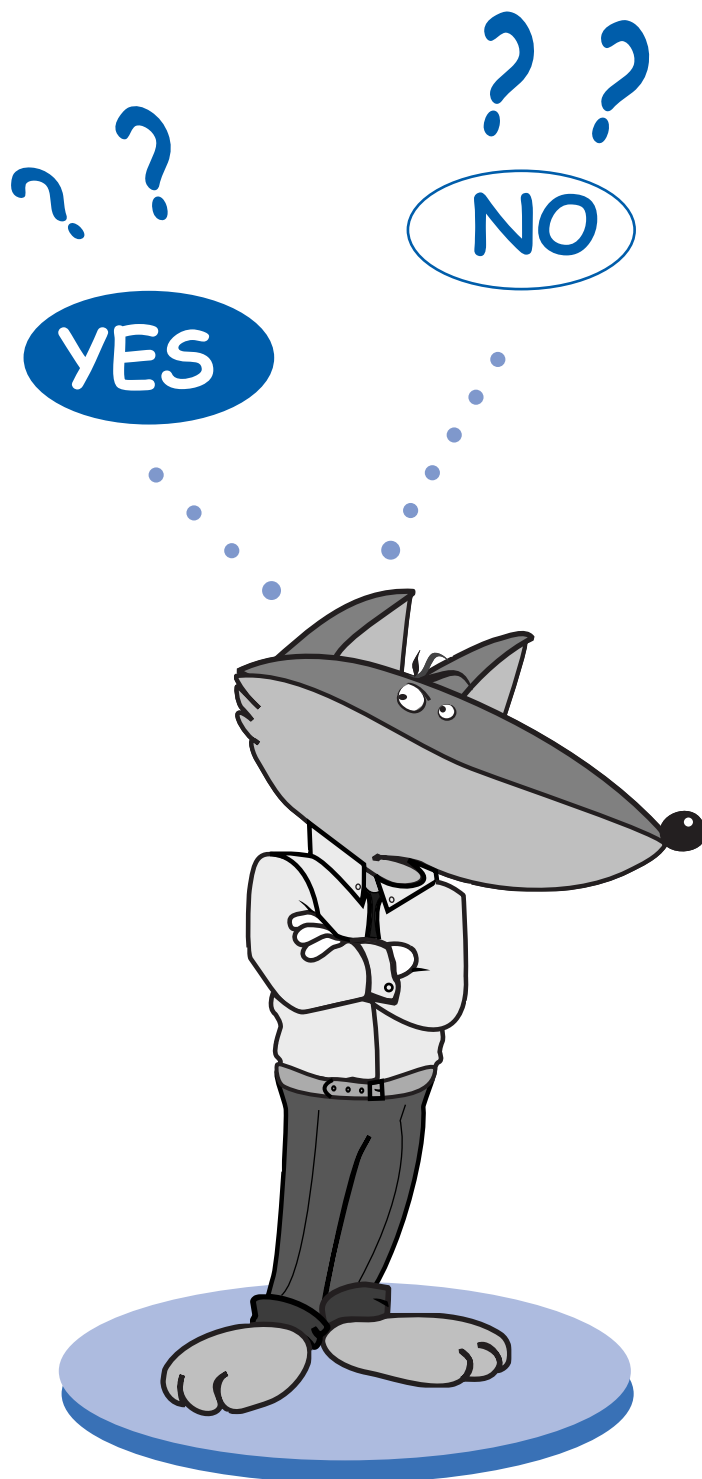
Finding arguments to explain their opinions to each other is a way for participants to start reflecting about a subject and the different arguments presented. This exercise is also about listening to one another, learning more about oneself and taking a stand.

'Where do you stand' is an exercise which, like many, can be played in different ways, with different objectives and on a variety of issues.

## International youth activities: Where do you stand?

1. International meetings are a world apart.
2. The learning effect of an intercultural experience can hardly be transferred to a local reality.
3. It is enough to just bring people together in order to have an intercultural learning process.
4. International youth seminars are only interesting in the coffee breaks.
5. A youth exchange? Better spend the money on a new coffee bar for the youth centre!
6. A sport competition makes the most effective youth exchange.
7. Youth exchanges don't teach you anything you can use in everyday life.
8. International youth exchanges don't have any local impact.
9. A youth exchange is the best youth work tool.
10. Work camps are more effective than youth exchanges.
11. European volunteers use up too much supervision and vital resources to be useful.
12. European volunteers should volunteer in their hometown where they can really contribute.
13. You meet more people on the internet than in international youth activities.
14. Minorities benefit most from international youth activities.
15. Everyone should fall in love during an international youth activity.

Slogans by Sylvian Abrial and Mark Taylor



# Training Methodologies.....

## A Basic Guide to Organising Events for *All*

● by Sylviane Jeanty ●

*Who will be the participants of your next workshop, seminar or training course? How can you make sure that all people, including those with disabilities or reduced mobility, can gain access and feel comfortable during the event? Here are a few tips to keep in mind.*

For anybody organising an event, whether a conference, a training course or a sports event, the prime consideration is how to attract a large number of participants or spectators.

Very often there is a tendency to overlook a whole section of the population which consists of some 37 million individuals throughout Europe. These are Europe's elderly people, people with motor deficiencies, partially sighted or blind people, hearing impaired or deaf people, and people with mental disorders, who are often accompanied by their friends and family.

It is true that catering for these people with so-called reduced mobility requires a little more thought at the organisational level. However, with a degree of good will and an open mind, the obstacles to organising an event for all are far from insurmountable and tackling them may bring a great deal of satisfaction to the organiser and, of course, the other participants.

This kind of approach will also most certainly be appreciated by people with disabilities themselves, who will feel welcome and comforted in their right to be fully involved and subsequently cite the event as an example.

### What to do?

Most countries have organisations run by or for people with disabilities or information centres specialising in this type of issue. These associations will be delighted to give you advice and guidance, provide you with the necessary information or even help you with the measures required.

The information they provide is essential for catering for people with disabilities because it concerns the accessibility of the venue chosen for an event.

"Accessibility is made up of access to the built environment, communication and information. It is not just about providing a ramp for wheelchair users. It is about creating an environment that everybody feels comfortable using. This includes people with impairments, such as deaf, deaf-blind and hearing impaired people, people with learning difficulties, people with mobility impairments (including elderly people), wheelchair users, blind and visually impaired people and people with sensory impairments, epilepsy and dyslexia. It also includes pregnant women, families with children, people with pushchairs, people with overweight or people carrying parcels or luggage.

An environment is accessible provided that everyone can:  
Reach the site and the venue - Get into the venue -  
Use all the facilities." (1)

When people come across the issue of accessibility for the first time, they inevitably have great difficulty in understanding and interpreting this somewhat abstract term.

### What does accessibility mean in practical terms?

An analysis of the accessibility of a site's buildings, fixtures and fittings boils down to a description of a number of key elements such as:

**The car park** - Are there reserved spaces for people with disabilities? If not, is it possible to reserve spaces near the main entrance?

**Signposting** - Is the route to the venue in which the event is taking place clearly marked and easy for everyone to follow?



**The path between the car park and the entrance** - Is the ground flat? What kind of surface is it? Are there any obstacles which might hinder a blind person and could be removed?

**The building entrance** - Steps can pose problems for people in wheelchairs or on crutches, elderly people, people with pushchairs, pregnant women, etc.

Is there another entrance at ground level or a ramp or lift? What kind of doors are there and how wide are they?

**The main room** - How do you get there? If there is a lift, what are its dimensions? Is there enough room between tables? Might it be advisable to move some of the furniture to provide more manoeuvring space? Is information provided in different forms (written, oral, etc)?

**Cafes and restaurants** - Where are they? Is there enough room to move around freely? Are some of the menus in large print?

**Toilets** - Are there toilets for the disabled? Where are they? If not, how are the toilets laid out, what are the dimensions?

**Assistance** - Is someone available to help and does the person have experience in dealing with people with disabilities? How does one contact this person?

...

Once this list has been worked through, certain practical questions need to be resolved:

#### How to reach the target audience?

When advertising the event it will be enough to provide information on the accessibility of the site or include full details on your Internet site. This will enable persons with reduced mobility to decide in full knowledge of the facts whether they feel able to attend the event.

#### What to do if the event lasts more than one day?

Access to transport, accommodation and related activities will need to be taken into account. Transport frequently poses problems for people with disabilities and, unfortunately, individual transport arrangements still have to be made in many cases. Where accommodation is concerned, bathroom and toilet facilities are often the crucial factor.

The initial consideration should always be the accessibility of the built environment, which is fundamental to the integration of people with disabilities. However, there are still a number of "psychological" barriers such as fear or stereotypes which also hamper acceptance of people with disabilities. Ill-considered behaviour can be a factor contributing to their isolation.

Let us take the example of a person with impaired hearing who decides to attend an event. The person in question can get into the building, but if the means of imparting information are unsuitable, this will have serious consequences: he or she will not register information at the same time as the other

participants and therefore will be unable to react promptly to the various situations which might arise. This will add to his or her sense of isolation.

#### How to react to a disabled person?

The important thing to remember is that, once you have got over the first hurdle, the rest is just two human beings communicating. To help dispel any apprehension, here are a few tips which will aid communication with people with disabilities:

- Speak to the persons concerned and not the people accompanying them;
- Learn to communicate without prejudice;
- Focus attention on the persons themselves and not their disabilities;
- Offer help if it is requested, respecting the person's wishes.

**If you bear in mind the few items of advice outlined in this article, it is likely that your event will be a success and that it will have helped you to learn a little more about the issue while gaining an enormous amount of satisfaction from it.**



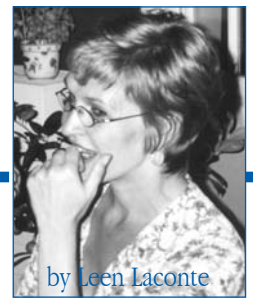
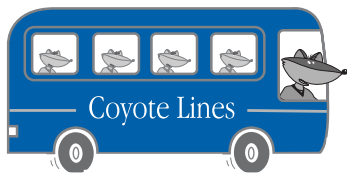
Source: Millennium Access Guide

Contact address: Info-Handicap, PO Box 33, L-5801  
Hesperange, Tel. +352/ 366 466, Fax: +352/ 360 885;  
e-mail: [info@iha.lu](mailto:info@iha.lu), <http://www.info-handicap.lu/>

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Available at <http://www.info-handicap.lu/freedom/>
- (2) Millennium Access Guide, 'people with disabilities' International, European Committee, United Kingdom
- (3) Access, European Youth Forum and Mobility International (editor in chief - Tobias Flessenkemper). Publication on ways of helping people with disabilities to get involved in international youth activities, available from the European Youth Forum.





by Leen Laconte

# Coyote Meets Trainers

*Coyote is a curious little creature and is fond of wandering around Europe to meet trainers in the field. Are you interested in getting a picture on how your colleagues in the field of training think and feel? Then this is your section.*

Simona Molari lives in Torino, Italy and Coyote was happy with that. Torino is a lot like Simona: it has a thousand expressive faces. It has a very clear and beautiful architectural history. It is surprisingly multicultural in a refreshing way. And it is funny, because it has the largest public square with no monuments in Europe.

Simona is funny because she is a clown. She is also a trainer for the European Youth Centre in Strasbourg and a lot of other international training organisations. She studied theatre education, did camerawork and has international experiences for example in the Danish Defence Construction Department in Copenhagen. She is currently working on the street as a clown and finishing her studies in Architecture. After that she wants to go to either Moscow or to Cuba to finalise her clown-studies.

## Interview

**Coyote:** You took part as a trainer in a course called "Constructive problem solution and conflict treatment in multicultural situations" organised by Inter'Act in Bonn. What was the training about and what was your role in it?

**Simona:** The main aim was to train participants in problem-solving systems. Of course during the training, we didn't solve any problem really but we tried out different new approaches to problematic situations, inventing and implying the use of 'other points of view', which in my opinion is fundamental in problem-solving. If you focus only on one problematic case or on your own view, your perception of that case, then your problem will never be solved. The team and other participants tried to see the case in a positive way and tried to give solutions. You could listen and see the 'problem' from another, no 356 different point of views.

We used experiential learning methods and problem-solving simulation games like the spider web, the kind of games where the group has to solve together what a single person is not able to solve by him/herself.

I ran a workshop on creative and physical methods to use in training which are liberating people's fantasy, their power of invention and practical creativity using group dynamics.

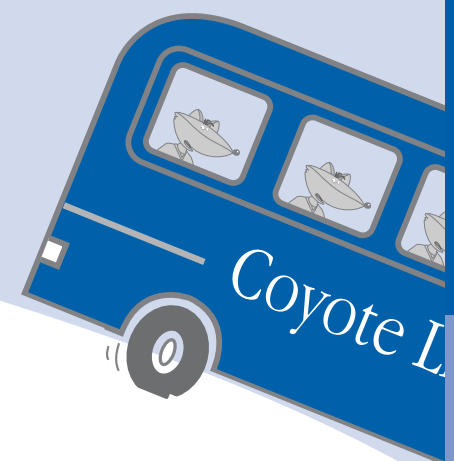
Participants had to take an object and think about all the different possible uses. A ball can be an object to play with but it can also be the world. I asked them to create an imaginative fantastic world in which the object played a central role. I invited them constantly to force their mind to step out of existing thinking structures and to try out new ones. After that I asked them to invent their own games and try to reach what they were looking for in training or in an exchange.... Try to catch the central point with their heart, with a fantasy, with a flexible language...

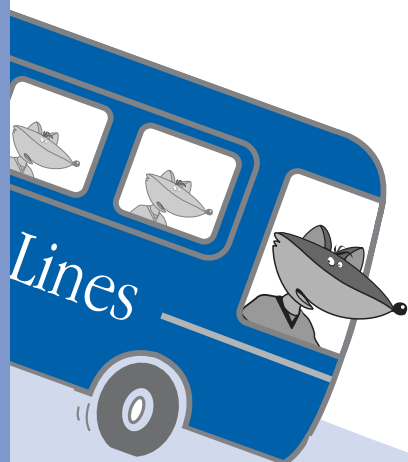
**Coyote:** You are one of the very few people I know who says she is trying to be a clown. Do you see yourself as a clown in a training situation as well or do you change 'hats'?

**Simona:** People get scared when you invite them to a clown workshop. Maybe they believe they all will end up with a red nose. The answer of course is that I as a trainer am not a clown at that very moment and I don't want to train participants to become clowns. I use methods and techniques from my clown background: theatre, movement, mime, pantomime or even just my face. My aim is not to amuse participants but to help them to reach for their own fantastic language. I want to help them to discover that it is relaxing to be open. Humour is another



Simona Molari





language, one that is direct because it is clear and spontaneous. It goes directly to your heart. It is simple and it is free. Inventing that language is discovering yourself.

Instead of fighting shortcomings you have to recognise and accept them. From the viewpoint of a clown, you also laugh with them and you are alright laughing with them. You win in doing so because you can live better with yourself. If you are able to laugh with yourself, then you will laugh with others but in a correct way. For me this is really the philosophy of the clown. So you see I am and I am not a clown in training.

**Coyote:** And do you train your audience when you perform as a clown?

**Simona:** It is therapy to laugh. A very famous example everybody knows is Doctor Patch Adams. He is a clown in a hospital for children. They have cancer and he is trying to make them laugh even in a place where you have nothing to laugh about. It is a universal law that you feel better, liberated if you laugh.

It is obvious that I do not want to give a solution wrapped in a box of jokes for people to open and to solve their problems. I want to show them a mode of intelligence which is a bit more humoristic than reality but not in an indicative way. It is sure however that there are limitations. Humour is not a method. It is a way. It can not resolve problems. It is merely a different approach to a problem.

It is not laughing with everything without taking care, reducing the problem. By laughing with it you do not really make it smaller. But you offer an intelligent way to analyse the problem with irony and humour. The message can never be: Don't care about it. The message is: Analyse it and see the human and thus funny part of it. Just think about Charlie Chaplin when he made 'The Great Dictator', that was even made in the same period as Hitler lived.

I want to create that moment when your tummy surprises you. ... It is when laughter bubbles up and you say: ' (h) aha! She is right. It is true.' You can see the whole thing and at the same time you laugh. You have to be very subtle to be a clown like that.

If you compare it with the training methods... they are always the same. They have the same aims, they are supposed to have certain types of outcomes. They are structured. Humour is not a method because you do it spontaneously. You do not give the key to the solution. It is impossible to make a scheme for humour.

**Coyote:** There might be similar aspects in the way

you as a clown deal with an audience and the way in which a trainer deals with the participants?

**Simona:** I play a lot with people in the sense that I deal with them in the street making a performance. I prefer the direct approach with people as a public. The street is a credo for me. Everything is possible and you can expect anybody; maybe only during one minute but it is possible. Also people that can't pay for a ticket to the theatre can see you. Everybody is on the same level, participating in the same event. In a theatre they have to come in to see you, but then they already have an idea that theatre exists. On the street, if they don't like you, they can go. They can decide to give you a 10 minutes opportunity and they can decide to stay longer. You are so close to the people, you can touch them. After the performance they come and talk to you, question you, invite you and that is incredible. That is the power of the street. It is energy. It is also scary because, imagine, you go in the middle of the street and you say to yourself "Here I will give a performance". You are even the one that has to stop the people to make them see you.

It is a bit the same in training. You look at the people in the eyes; they are on the same level. You can feel their reaction.

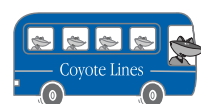
Both in the street as in a training I have to deal with you even if I shocked you. This is a risk. You have to feel the group, how they are, if they want to follow you or maybe they are scared. In a performance, one can choose. But me personally, I feel that I lose if you go. I like to analyse and to feel the public, which is more or less the same dynamic as in training. Playing in the street, I see how people are dressed, how they move, how they walk, if they have children, if they are alone or with somebody: there are a thousand little signs around the eyes alone. You have to look and react and that is hard WORK, work WITH people.

**Coyote:** Do clowns have anything to do with culture and cultural differences?

**Simona:** Humour is culture; it has different religious and political backgrounds in different countries. Monty Python and its black humour is not so recognised here because for Italians it is too much orientated to religion.

Europeans know that a red nose refers to a clown and not only a cold or having had too much wine the night before. But in Africa it has no meaning.

Not everybody laughs with the same thing. Failures are a good example - I want to drink but I am not able to find my mouth. For us failures make us laugh but this might be different in Japan.



In Sicily, colleagues of mine did a show about William Tell. One is told to put the apple on her head, but she eats a piece and then hides the rest of the apple. William then asks the children in the audience: "Where is the apple?" Usually all the children scream: "It is there, she is eating it, she is hiding the apple". In Sicily: silence! They did not want to say because you never know who is in front of you.

There is always a line you shouldn't cross. Maybe you are not aware of it in your own culture. Somebody from outside has to come in and tell you a joke that shocks you and then you know.

But there is also something universal in humour. My friend lived in Belgium for a while and there she found out that the Belgians tell the same jokes about the Italians as the Italians tell about the carabinieri, the Italian police.

It is not the single act that makes people laugh. It is when you are on the same level as they are and people see you and recognise that. In that case you can communicate directly with them and they feel that and it makes the people participate and laugh. But of course you have to be good. It is not easy to make people laugh. It is easier to make them cry.

In Italy we have Dario Fo. He re-invented a non-language called Grammelot which came from the Commedia dell'Arte. He tells stories without saying anything but you understand perfectly. He uses an invented language. He is speaking but there are no words as we know them, just sounds and intonations. And everybody can understand it. What is the key? I think it is the simplicity of seeing the world, the curiosity and the ability to discover: that might be the universal thing that makes everybody laugh.

**Coyote:** Suppose I would ask you to create a clown performance on the topic Training, to be used in a seminar for European trainers. What would you do?

**Simona:** I would create a pantomime and would try to describe the typical situation from the participants' point of view and comment on a certain type of trainer or a certain learning style. I would like to represent what is going on from the participants' point of view. But it would be my main aim to humanise the trainer, to show that he worries, he is doubting, he tries and fails. It might be funny to represent what is going on before in their heads and hearts. Or I might comment on the fact that a lot of training courses repeat themselves: there are always the same getting to know you games, evaluation methods, ... Another thing is the language problem. My mother tongue is not English. So I always have to think about the other language. But when I do that in an intense situation like a training, something happens to me. I have no

more the clear 'sequenza di pensieri'. I don't know how it is possible but I even forget the 'things' in Italian, my mother tongue. Then I say to myself: "Stop thinking in another language and come back to Italian." But nothing comes. Why? If you think about the language you lose the point you want to make. That would be a nice subject for a clown's performance don't you believe? I even could use Fo's Grammelot.

**Coyote:** Is there any humour in architecture? No, seriously, looking at your educational background, I was wondering about the relation between architecture and your intercultural experiences. Is there any comparison possible, any place the two can meet?

**Simona:** If you build a house, you have to think about different things: in what kind of situation do we build it? What are the possibilities? The shortcomings? What does it mean in this culture, this climate? What do people consider to be a 'home'? Does it have a lot of windows? Is it open or closed? Does it have a lot of green around it or not? A house in Finland is not the same as a house in Spain. So to be a good architect you have to be able to communicate with people and to be sensitive to cultural backgrounds, because you represent somebody else. You have to take care of the culture and the country.

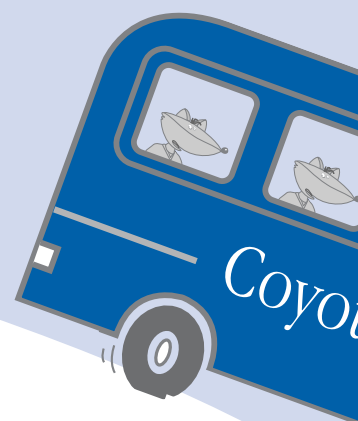
**Coyote:** What is your star sign and does it fit to you as a trainer?

**Simona:** I am Aquarius and have as an ascendant Aquarius; I am practical on the clouds. It is true that I am a dreamer with a lot of fantasy. But at the same time I keep my feet on the ground. That is why I contradict myself a lot. ... I am chaotic. As a trainer in a group I am very much in the group and this can be dangerous, because if you are too involved you can not be a good trainer. I don't know if this is Aquarius but it is I.

**Coyote:** BASTA COSI. Grazie Mille, Simona.

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This interview was conducted by Leen Laconte.



# marker

*"Marker" is a regular column in Coyote, written by Mark Taylor, looking at issues in training and hoping to encourage debate. Feedback from you will be really welcome, whether as a participant, trainer, observer or something completely different.*



## "Leave them alone!?"

### **All that input – where does it go? What do they make of it?**

Let's talk in extremes. At one end of the scale there are those trainers who talk of "measurable learning outcomes" and "SMART objectives" (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timeable), at the other end of the scale there are those trainers who talk only in terms of "processes" and the insurmountable difficulties attached to any type of measurement or assessment. Wherever we may place ourselves between these two extremes, we still face the question: how do we know if anything we have done in the training course actually changes anything in the behaviours, skills or knowledge of the participants? All those inputs, lectures, exercises, discussion groups, etc – what do they amount to? One part of the answer can be found in an increasing number of training courses...

### **Participants prepare workshops for each other**

Sometimes near the end of a training course, participants are invited to choose a subject related to the theme of the course they would like to develop for a workshop. Once the ideas have been aired, then the team works with the participants to collect similar ideas together and this then leads to the formation of groups who have the task of creating a workshop for other participants. During the preparation time, the team act as a resource of information and methodological or practical tips for the participants. The reasoning behind this approach is

logical: participants thereby have a relatively safe environment in which to try out the ideas they have learned during the course and to go through an intensive experience of team work. It is a sort of controlled laboratory situation. Once preparation time is over, then comes the running of the workshops with other participants and ...

### **Participation (or observation) and then feedback from the team members**

Some training teams decide to participate themselves in the workshops run by the participants, others decide it is more appropriate to observe. Choosing to observe is usually based on the premise that participating would unbalance the group process as the trainers already have a fairly fixed role in the course. Choosing to participate is often the result of a belief that trainers and participants are "equal" (we learn as much from them as they do from us). Whatever the choice, it would seem to be fairly natural or even obvious that the team should have a close look at what the participants have produced; and the participants should have the benefit of their trainers' feedback and evaluation in addition to those of the other participants.

### **But, maybe....**

Maybe there is yet another way to go about things. Why not just set up the process and the time frame and then LEAVE THEM ALONE... Hearing this idea from a team member I was working with recently on an Alliance training for trainers seminar was a bit of a surprise/shock





to some of us. How will we know what the participants have done? Where is our responsibility as trainers? When are we going to be able to give them our feedback? Behind these questions, I began to realise, lay a few trainer doubts, fears and insecurities, some of which are also questions in themselves:

- Aren't we doing ourselves out of a job?
- Are the participants really able to manage things without us??
- We'll be left out, excluded, not important any more...
- We have managed everything so far - for the participants' benefit – and now we are not even going to be able to see what that all means to them (or to us)
- We won't learn anything from their workshops.

Still, the rest of the team were won over by the idea and the more we discussed, the more it seemed like an exciting thing to try. So, once the groups had been formed and had prepared their workshops, we left them to it. They ran their workshops and they evaluated them and then they evaluated the process. Team members only became involved after it was all over in the daily evaluation groups (see "Marker" in Coyote 1). And the participants produced a report about their workshops and their own evaluation. So...

### What did the participants think about it?

After initial surprise, they found the absence of team members to be a liberating experience – even though the team members were great and supportive, it was also "great" not to feel the possible pressure of being scrutinised and judged. This is an important point to think about in the training we do because, even if we call ourselves "trainers", participants have all spent a large part of their lives being taught and graded by teachers. So, although this is often not talked about, participants have an inner expectation to be judged and given a grade in any educational setting. Here they felt increased responsibility for their own learning, especially as they were trainers wanting to be able to see how they could put things into practice back home. The feedback they received was from their participating trainer peers and that was very important for them. And, the obvious question...

### How were the team in all of this?

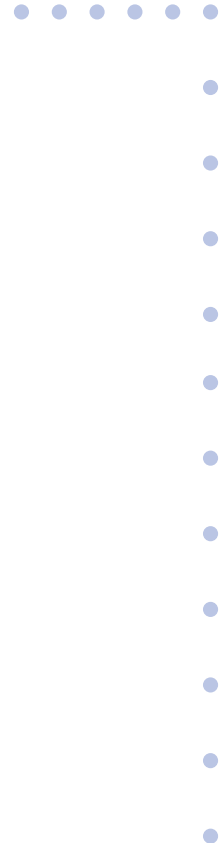
Excited, curious, feeling a bit "left out", but generally comfortable in their new role. After discussions in the daily evaluation groups, team members were able to compare impressions from the whole group about the experiment. Both training extremes seemed to be satisfied: the participants had created successful products in their workshops and they had learned from the process. Such positive feedback left us feeling that this approach could be develo-

ped further. Maybe this approach would not be appropriate for all target groups, and at least one crucial question remains open: what should the team do if one or more of the workshop groups get into extreme conflict with one another. Still...

### What do you think?

And, finally

Thank you to Sam, Xenia, Joanne and Peter of the Alliance team and thank you also those of you who took the time to write to me about my last article – we're still in the Long Now....



Contact address: [brazav@yahoo.com](mailto:brazav@yahoo.com)



# Notes about the Contributors

**Sylvain Abrial** works in the International Relations Department of the Fédération des Oeuvres Laïques de la Loire (Federation of Secular Charities of the Loire), in charge of European projects. He organises and creates youth exchange projects. He has worked as a trainer in different training sessions for international leaders in connection with "Youth for Europe", in the Cocktail 3 team, and in various study sessions in the Council of Europe's European Youth Centres. He is also the local liaison worker for the YOUTH Programme.

**Michelangelo Belletti** is head of the Vedogiovane Training Centre in Borgomanero (Northern Italy), which sets up and runs vocational training events for youth and community workers. Since 1996, he has also been co-operating with the Italian National Agency of the YOUTH Programme as a trainer on intercultural learning, communication and group dynamics. His interest in the intercultural approach comes from his double citizenship (Italian and Argentinean) that makes of him a perfect intercultural product!

**Stefan Bužarovski** is a member of the European Youth Forum pool of trainers. He is currently reading for a Doctorate in Geography at the University of Oxford, having previously acquired a Masters in Environmental Science from the same institution. A native of Macedonia, he has co-ordinated several Balkan and European ecological organisations, notably the Federation of the Young European Greens and the Network of Young Mediterranean Ecologists. Areas of specialisation include: green energy investment, social segregation, Eastern and Southern Europe, NGO development and networking, environmental education.

**Finn Yrjar Denstad** worked as International Officer at the Norwegian Youth Council (LNU) from 1995 to 2000, first as Project Co-ordinator for an exchange programme between youth NGOs in Norway and countries in Central and South America, Africa and Asia. Then in 1997 he became responsible for European affairs, with a special emphasis on co-operation in the Baltic Sea Region and Central and Eastern Europe. Since the beginning of this year he works as head of the youth work development department for the European Youth Forum. His educational background is political science, history and Central and Eastern European Politics.

**Henrike Eisfeld** is a trainer and holds a Master's degree in political sciences and women's studies. She has lived in Germany and Norway and can now be found in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Her training activities focus, amongst others, on minority issues (including lesbian/gay issues), methods for meetings, intercultural learning and project management.

**Nora Ganescu** is a freelance trainer in intercultural learning. She specialises in work with minority groups. She is herself an interesting mix of Romanian, Hungarian and German. She worked for many years with the international youth organisation Youth Action for Peace, promoting non-violence and healthy co-operation. She has a particular interest in frogs.

**Mohamed Haji-Kella** is a Sierra Leonean and resident in the United Kingdom. He has been a trainer with the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport since 1998. He writes and works with various organisations on minority youth participation in Europe. He is presently a programme associate with Minorities of Europe, a pan-European minority youth organisation. Mohamed is also a member of the International Advisory Committee for NGO and youth preparation for the World Conference Against Racism to be held in South Africa from 28 August to 7 September 2001.

**Sylviane Jeanty** is Belgian and has a degree in physical education and physiotherapy. She works for Info-Handicap, a national information and meeting centre dealing with disability in the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg. She is also a co-ordinator for all-inclusive tourism. In 1999, she ran a training course for the European Youth Forum on the subject of "How to organise a conference in an accessible way".

**Ndung'u Kahihu** has been involved in youth development and training work for over twelve years. For ten years he worked for the Kenya Scouts Association and was its Chief Executive Officer from 1994 to 1999. He has been involved with the North South Centre of the Council of Europe as a trainer and facilitator since 1993. He has also taken part in many training courses for youth all over the world. Currently he works as Coordinator for the Kenya Association for the Promotion of Adolescent Health in Nairobi Kenya. Ndungu is married and has two children.

**Leen Laconte** studied Comparative Cultural Studies in Gent. She developed "The Imagination", a national project on youth (sub)culture, the arts and multicultural society. After that she was a lecturer and tutor in a school for social workers (Socia-

le Hogeschool). Until the beginning of 2000 she worked as Project Officer for the Flemish Youth for Europe Agency in Belgium. Leen now works for Villanella, an arts centre focussing on contemporary art, children and young people in Antwerp, Belgium.

**Frank Marx** Frank Marx works as administrator at the European Commission, Directorate General Education and Culture, Unit D.1 - YOUTH.

**Martin Schneider** is a 27 year old Swiss, living in an intercultural marriage in Zurich. He works as CEO and Web Design Engineer in his own web design company, and as a freelance consultant and trainer. Favourite topics include intercultural learning, global education, information technology, project management, motivation/personal development issues, marketing and general communications and media topics, as well as conflict, risk and quality management. He is a member of the trainers pools of the European Youth Forum and the Council of Europe.

**Davide Tonon** works as supervisor of two organisations, Xena (Padova, Italy) and Nexes (Barcelona, Spain), which both deal with European youth mobility programmes. Since 1996 he has also been co-operating with the training team of the Italian National Agency of the YOUTH Programme. With the association Xena he has organised training courses for youth workers in Italy, Cuba and South Africa and is planning a training about "identity" in South-Eastern Europe. His major areas of work include intercultural learning (with a focus on cultures and conflict resolution), trans-national youth projects, group dynamics and organisational development.

**Hayo de Vries** comes from Zeewolde, the Netherlands. He completed a four-year social and cultural educator (work) education in The Netherlands in 1994. He worked for different youth centres between 1990 and 2000 and has complemented these experiences with various international youth welfare and care projects. In the U.K. he worked as an EVS volunteer in an education project with severely socially excluded young people. This experience was the starting point of his initiative to carry out his Future Capital Project. Partly for his work on this project he received a MA degree in Comparative European Social Studies in 2000. He now lives in Budapest, Hungary and is still active in the international youth work sector.

## Coyote editorial team

**Bernard Abrignani** works as a civil servant at the French Ministry of Youth and Sports and as Project Officer at the National Institute for Youth and Community Education (INJEP). He is specialised in youth participation, community development, education, prevention of delinquency, intercultural learning and international youth work.

**Sonja Mitter** worked at the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg from 1995 until 2000. As a member of the educational team she assisted youth organisations in running study sessions at the European Youth Centres and was a member of training teams for various international training courses. Since the end of last year she has been living in Ljubljana, Slovenia, and working as a freelance trainer and consultant. Her main areas of interest include intercultural learning, intercultural team work, project management, training for trainers, Euro-Mediterranean youth co-operation and youth work in and with South East Europe. Her background is in history with a focus on migration issues.

**Carol-Ann Morris** is the Project Officer for Training and Membership Services at the European Youth Forum. She is responsible for the co-ordination of its Pool of Trainers and the training programme. She deals with membership applications and as an information service to the 88 members. Other responsibilities include liaison with the Council of Europe Directorate of Youth and Sport concerning training courses and the ADACS programme; working on the Coyote and T-Kit editorial teams; working with the European Commission in the selection of projects for funding through the YOUTH programme. With a background in counselling psychology, she used the latter as a basis for her training and project work with international and local development organisations in India and the UK.

**Mark Taylor** is as a freelance trainer and consultant. He has worked on projects throughout Europe for a wide range of organisations, institutions, agencies and businesses. In addition to training and consulting activities, he has long experience of writing publications for an international public. Major areas of work include: intercultural learning, international team work, human rights education and campaigning, and training for trainers.



# The adventures of Spiffy



## The Adventures of Spiffy

Mark Taylor - The Big Family

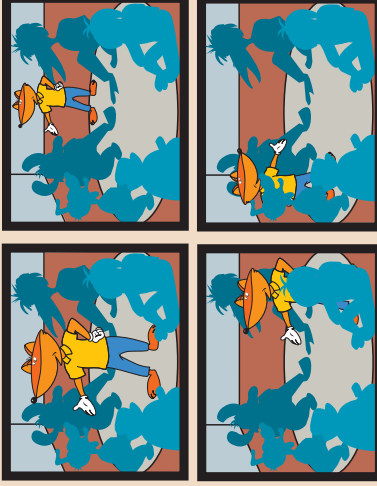
N°3



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