

THE FLOWER OF IDENTITY

Source

This activity is adapted from SALTO Euromed: <http://educationaltoolsportal.eu/en/tools/flower-identity>.

Themes

- ▶ Identity
- ▶ Culture

Other topics addressed: values, cultural belonging

Competences addressed

- ▶ Attitudes: openness and curiosity towards diversity
- ▶ Skills: empathy; active listening

Complexity : Level 2

Group size : 12 to 30 people, in small groups of 4 or 6

Time : 60 minutes

Objectives

- ▶ To reflect on what defines one's identity and how people define themselves in relation to others
- ▶ To share aspects of participants' identity and look for commonalities and differences
- ▶ To grasp the complexity and variability of the concept of identity.

Materials

Sheets of paper and coloured pencils for all participants.

Preparation

This exercise can be preceded by "Find your group" in order to reflect on how categories are built in society. Cut sheets of paper in the form of petals, one petal for each subgroup.

Instructions

1. Explain to participants that identity is a moving construct and that you will ask them to think of some of the elements that define their identity.
2. Split participants into subgroups of 4-6 people and hand each participant sheets of paper and pens, and the group one big petal.
3. Ask each participant individually to draw on a sheet a flower with petals. In each petal, ask them to write elements that define them. Leave it up to participants to define what "elements" are: participants might put social roles (sister, father, friend), values, activities, etc.
4. Once participants have drawn their flowers of identity, ask them to share them among their group and define a common element for the group. Let them write it on the big group petal. The common element does not have to be taken from the individual flowers, it could be a new element created by the group together.
5. Bring all the groups together to present their big petals.

Debriefing and evaluation

This activity does not need a long debriefing. You can use some of the following questions.

- ▶ How did participants proceed to choose the elements of their individual flower? How easy/difficult was it?
- ▶ In the subgroups, what was the process for identifying the common petal? What did participants appreciate in other flowers? What did they learn about others? And about themselves?
- ▶ Who defined one's identity? What is the role of the other people in this process?
- ▶ What can be said about identity from this activity? Is identity a fixed concept?
- ▶ What is the relationship between identity and culture?
- ▶ In reality, are the different elements of identity separated (on different petals) or interlinked? If they are interlinked, how do they influence each other?

Variations

If under time constraints, some handouts with already drawn flowers could be distributed.

If you have time left, you could get the overall group to write a song based on the elements of the common flower.

Suggestions for follow-up

This activity can be followed by the activity "From exclusion to integration" in order to reflect on the relationships between minorities and the majority and on the power relations in a given society.