

C4i

Communication for Integration



TRAINING

ANTIRUMOURS AGENTS

THE CASE OF THE BARCELONA ANTI-
RUMOUR STRATEGY

DOC. 4

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Doc.2 TRAINING ANTI-RUMOUR AGENTS

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1. First Stage (2010)

1.1. Introduction

- Training Anti-Rumour agents is one of the strategic actions promoted within the framework of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Strategy since the year 2010.
- At a first meeting to draw up a working plan for the Strategy, more than 60 organisations attend, showing their interest in taking part.
- Training the organisations and social agents who want to build the Strategy together with City Council is considered fundamental, and this is why it is one of the first actions to be undertaken.
- The Technical Office responsible for launching the Strategy also lacked previous training in this field, which was very specific and innovative within the broader field of intercultural action.
- The Strategy became a matter of immediate interest for the media, and especially the figure of the Anti-Rumour Agent (which had been included in the policy measure of the Barcelona Interculturality Plan of 2010).
- Other relevant details with regards to context:
 - No precedents of anti-rumour campaigns or training courses were known.
 - Social organisations and hosting agents expressed their difficulties in carrying out their work because they were continually accused of favouring only migrant people.
 - There were discourses that fed rumours against migrant people, among the media, some political groups, public administration employees, and so on.
 - There were few sources of reliable information.

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1.2. Beginning steps: Why we started, how and who with

Searching for the Training Partner:

The Technical Office studied the broad range of organisations known to carry out quality intercultural training in the city. The Centre for African and Intercultural Studies (CEA) was chosen and assigned the task of developing the first anti-rumour training course, under the supervision of the Technical Office, for several reasons, among which:

- They had previous experience and knowledge in the field of stereotypes, mass media and cultural diversity.
- Their perspective was very similar to the perspective that City policies were interested in promoting.

- They had previous training experience in the field of interculturality.

The starting point was the collaboration between City Council and a city-based social organisation, which brought together the need to promote an innovative intercultural policy without reference models in Barcelona or elsewhere at the time, with the know-how of one of the leading organisations in the city in the field of cultural stereotypes and media treatment of cultural diversity.

Participants at the first pilot course:

It was decided that the first pilot anti-rumour training course would be carried out with two very large federations of organisations that met certain prerequisites:

- They had taken part in drawing up the Barcelona Interculturality Plan and were engaged in city interculturality policies.
- At the first plenary meeting to create the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network they had shown immediate willingness to take part in the Network and work together on the Strategy.
- These two federations of organisations were located in city districts (Sants-Montjuïc and Ciutat Vella) that are culturally diverse and had lines of work in place to promote intercultural relations among neighbours.
- They brought together a broad variety of citizen-based, community-based and social organisations (shop tenders, neighbours, hosting initiatives...)
- Their structure was ideal for establishing close technical work with professionals working in the organisations (with regards to their drawing power for organisations to attend the training course, evaluation of the pilot experience, evaluation of contents, interest of participants in the initiative, and so on).

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1.3. Initial Methodologies and Contents, and their evolution

Initial design of the Training Programme:

- A structure and contents for the Training course were designed by consensus through proposals and counterproposals between the Training partner and City Council, with the understanding that this was a pilot experience to be improved as the process moved ahead.
- The Training course was intentionally linked to the “First Handbook for dismantling rumours and stereotypes about cultural diversity in Barcelona”, an initial effort to collect the rumours and the anti-rumour arguments. This was the first and only material the Strategy had available at that time.

- The Training course was meant to be the first direct contact with organisations that might want to actively engage in the future Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network.
- May 2010: First training programme of the pilot experience. This was a 9-hour course called “Interculturality: an answer to prejudice and rumours”.

Objectives of the Training course:

- To reflect on the concepts of culture and diversity;
- To analyse the processes by which stereotypes, rumours and prejudice are created and reinforced;
- To offer tools for managing and dealing with stereotypes and rumours.

Contents of the Training Course:

The course was structured in 3 sessions of 3 hours each, with the following contents:

- Session 1: Culture and diversity. Processes by which stereotypes and rumours are created.
 - Culture and identity
 - The construction of diversity in Western countries
 - How we generate and build the image of us and the other
 - Prerequisites for intercultural dialogue
- Session 2: Tools and elements for managing prejudice and rumours (I)
 - The role of stereotypes, rumours and prejudice
 - Brief analysis of spaces and channels where stereotypes, rumours and prejudice are created and spread
 - Differences between stereotypes and rumours, to be identified with specific examples.
 - “Rumours” are at home with everyone (gender, age, hosting population, migrants....)
 - The role of the different agents (politicians, social agents, economic agents, the media...)
 - What can we do? Responses from agents based on the analysis of specific examples of rumours (taken from the Anti-Rumour Handbook)
- Session 3: Tools and elements for managing prejudice and rumours (II)
 - Analysis of experiences in managing rumours
 - The intercultural perspective applied to the management of rumours: how to promote a better degree of information, campaigns, spaces of communication and relations, interaction among agents

- How can we do this together?
- Presentation of proposals for action of the Network of Anti-Rumour Agents and Practical guidelines for the Anti-Rumour Agent.

With the help of a group exercise, participants made contributions as to which actions the city needed to undertake in order to fight against rumours and stereotypes. A total of 42 proposals were made. The result is a document-summary of the participants' contributions "Feedback document of the First Anti-Rumour Training course". This document was subsequently used as the basis for starting work together with the organisations engaged in the first motor group of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network.

Participants:

A total of 56 people attend the first Anti-Rumour Training course. Participant profiles are mainly mediators and social workers as well as City Council and organization employees involved in the field.

Participants' Evaluation:

The first evaluation of the pilot course was crucial for designing the city-wide Anti-Rumour Training Plan that was to be launched. A few issues worth highlighting are:

- **Contents are evaluated positively** for the most part, and are seen to offer possibilities for applying them to the workplace and other contexts.
- **Aspects evaluated most positively are:** chances for interaction and exchange among participants; expectations around creating the future anti-rumour network, and the first session devoted to talking about cultural and cultural identity (this is the only session still in place as such today).
- **Aspects to be improved:** the course is too short to allow for indepth reflection and for familiarization with successful experiences, as well as for discussing and building proposals with participants.

Sessions for reviewing the results of the evaluations were held between City Council's Technical Office for the Strategy and the Training partner in order to redefine and improve the course.

An attendance certificate signed by the Director of Immigration Services is given to all participants.

2. Training Actions and Methodologies (2010-2014)

2.1. Year 2010

In the year 2010, following the pilot experience, 3 more editions were held.

Course contents:

The same programme is maintained, with a few changes. The aim is to link the Anti-Rumour training more closely to the other lines of work within the Strategy. Practical examples of this are:

- A brief explanation is included at the beginning of the course so that City Council's Technical Office for the Strategy could share the other lines of anti-rumour work being developed, mainly the creation of materials and the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network.
- In advertising the Training programme for the course, there were explicit indications that participants were expected to take part in the Anti-Rumour Network after completion of the course.

Participants:

The course is explicitly designed for people who were doing their work in the city of Barcelona.

- Professional employees and volunteers from citizen-based, community-based and social organisations
- People on a personal basis
- City Council employees (only outsourced employees, since civil servants were already receiving intercultural training which now included anti-rumour training)
- Employees from other public administrations

Participants' Evaluation:

It is clearly stressed that Anti-Rumour training must include practical dynamics and exercises (for example, role-playing) in order to address issues involving attitudes and relationships.

The Role of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network:

At this stage, the Network had been constituted (June 2010), its founding members had been trained as anti-rumour agents and the Executive Group had been created, as it was called at the beginning of the structure for work developed by member organisations.

- The Executive Group began its role of extending recommendations and proposals for improving the Strategy and its actions. As regards the Training of Anti-Rumour Agents, they express special concern that the course should offer more practical tools and take the emotional aspects of anti-rumour work into consideration.
- Towards the end of 2010, a pilot experience or brief workshop was carried out based on tools developed within the domain of social theatre, to explore the possibilities of enriching anti-rumour training with this very practical and emotional approach to changing attitudes. Only members of the Network's Executive Group participated in this workshop and the overall positive evaluation of the approach endorses the decision to design and include a new training module based on this methodology.

2.2. Year 2011

In May of 2011, a year after the first pilot experience, the Anti-Rumour Training takes a qualitative leap forward in both content and participants.

Course Content:

First of all, the course is lengthened with a fourth module of 3 hours which finally addresses the demands for a practical approach to the knowledge acquired theoretically in previous sessions. A social theatre company (La Xixa Teatre) was enlisted to collaborate in this module, as they had taken part in the first edition of the training course and had spent a year creating theatre forms for dealing with rumours and stereotype about immigration and cultural diversity. A new objective is added to the course: "To achieve practical anti-rumour skills to be applied in face-to-face dialogue, through an experiential approach". The content of the session is:

- Session 4: (Practical training module): "Putting anti-rumour tools into practice in *real life*"
 - Practical exercises: characters and social roles often found in our surroundings
 - Theatre-forum: experiential approach to three scenes:
 - "My request for a school lunch grant has been rejected...they get all the aid!"
 - "A year's wait to get an operation on my knee....of course, the neighbours on the 4th floor go to the doctor all the time."
 - "The Chinese are buying up all the bars and shops...they're obviously in with the mafia!"

Participants:

The year 2011 starts off with a very high demand from people interested in taking the training course. Secondly, a very clear diversification in the profile of people applying to the course is observed. A few issues worth highlighting are:

- More people register for the course on a personal basis (they don't belong to organisations and don't work in the field)
- The profile of professionals is increasingly diverse (nurses, schoolteachers, actors and actresses, and so on), including people who are interested in this line of work considered "innovative".
- As a result of the previous two points, there was an increasingly heterogeneous level of awareness with regards to cultural diversity. This sets the challenge of having to train without knowing beforehand which concepts and knowledge the group has.

This is why two variations are introduced in the Training Programme and diffusion:

- The Training Programme explicitly includes the indication that the course is designed for people who wish to *"Collaborate in the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Strategy from within their organisations/daily activity, after the course"* and *"Become a member of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Network, and collaborate in its objectives and lines of work, after the course."*
- Applicants are requested to answer 2 questions in the registration form regarding the profiles of participants so that the Training team can be better prepared for their sessions:
 - What are your reasons for taking this training course? (personal, organizational, professional, etc.)
 - How do you expect to apply the knowledge you acquire in this training course? Give an example.

Participants' Evaluation:

Along the same lines as before, evaluations point toward improving the Training Programme in the following aspects:

- More specific tools
- Further work on practical application
- Further work on experiential dynamics and exercises
- Work on specific proposals and how to execute them from within organisations/the workplace

Communication:

Communication about the Training Programme is carried out among contacts and networks familiar to the Immigration and Interculturality Services Directorate. For instance:

- Participants who had taken part in the process of drawing up the Barcelona Interculturality Plan
- Organisations receiving funds for hosting/interculturality projects.
- Organisations within the Barcelona Hosting Network
- City coordination structures and federations of organisations (for diffusion among their partner organisations)
- City Immigration Council of Barcelona
- City District employees: for diffusion among their networks of organisations and civic and community boards (agents working on the neighbourhood level)

The Role of the Anti-Rumour Network:

The Executive Group took part in the Anti-Rumour Training Programme by giving advice on the contents and formats of the “Guide for the Anti-Rumour Agent” in meetings held for this purpose with the expert in charge of drafting the text.

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2.3. Year 2012

Course Contents:

The year 2012 brings a new qualitative leap forward when Training contents are restructured. The Programme reads as follows:

- Session 1: Cultures and identities. Prejudice, stereotypes and rumours
 - What is culture? How cultures and cultural identities are structured
 - Identity and building diversity in Western countries. How we generate and build the image of us and the other.
 - Definition of prejudice, stereotype and rumour and their role in the construction of the collective imaginary about diversity
 - Brief analysis of spaces and channels where stereotypes, rumours and prejudice are created and spread
- Session 2: Anti-rumour initiatives and responses.

- Part 1. Diversity as an anti-rumour tool
 - Analysis of the main rumours about immigration
 - Different fields and dimensions for action: personal, professional, neighbourhood and community, as a member of an organisation...
 - “We are not alone”: initiatives against rumours about immigration
 - Description and analysis of different experiences in the country
- Part 2. Barcelona’s response: the Anti-Rumour Network
 - Description of the Network: objectives, members, participation, organisation, materials, website and activities of the Network
 - Presentation of two anti-rumour initiatives being carried out by Network members
 - Group reflection and practical orientations for generating anti-rumour actions
- Session 3: Communication and emotional strategies for managing rumours
 - Raising awareness about our own stereotypes and prejudice: the importance of knowing oneself.
 - Analyzing and practising communication skills for managing rumours
 - Exploring emotional skills that can be of help when acting upon rumours
 - What does being an anti-rumour agent mean?
- Session 4 (Practical module): “I am an anti-rumour agent: putting anti-rumour tools into practice in *real life*”
 - Experiencing the emotions and feelings involved in dismantling rumours
 - Exploring our own experiences in order to apply them to our practice as anti-rumour agents
 - Detecting what isn’t said, non-verbal language and the varying influence that contexts often have on acting to dismantle rumours or not
 - Achieving practical anti-rumour skills to be applied in face-to-face dialogue, through an experiential approach

Course Activities:

- Practical exercises for work on real and fictitious cases: characters and social roles often found in our surroundings
- Theatre-forum: taking part in four scenes:
 - “Where can we sit on the metro? It’s full of strange people.”
 - “My request for a school lunch grant was rejected...they’re getting all the aid!”

- *“A year’s wait to get an operation on my knee....of course, the neighbours on the 4th floor go to the doctor all the time.”*
- *“The Chinese are buying up all the bars and shops...they’re obviously in with the mafia!”*

Participants:

A 50% increase in the demand, in comparison with previous years. Demand is too high for the offer in place (towards the end of the year, there were editions with up to 50 people on the waiting list). The profile of participants was:

- 80% women
- 75% received the certificate (for a minimum attendance of 3 sessions out of 4)
- Motivation for taking the course: personal and professional reasons. People want tools that they can apply primarily in face-to-face dialogue and very often in everyday life (at work, with family or friends). Then they seek tools and knowledge through the course in order to apply them in their jobs.

Relevant changes in participant profile:

- Participants at the first editions of the anti-rumour training course were mainly people linked to social work: social educators, social workers, intercultural mediators, teachers, hosting agents, immigration employees, amongst others. Evolution toward diversification: people in the field of international cooperation and humanitarian aid, people who work with the elderly, lawyers, audiovisual communicators, employees from other city councils, journalists, nurses, professors, university students...
- Evolution in town of residence: At the beginning of the year, from 8% to 14% of participants don’t live in the city of Barcelona. By the end of the year, the figure is up to 34%.
- At the beginning, 90% of participants are involved in an organisation. Throughout the several editions of the course, the number of people participating on a personal basis (not members of an organisation) increases and the number of people coming as members of an organisation starts to decrease.
- Average age evolution: Average age in 2012: 35 years old. Previous years: 40 and 45 years old. This is due to the rise in university students signing up for the course.
- Evolution in cultural origin: In the beginning of 2010, 5% of participants were culturally diverse. In 2012, 15 %.

In April 2012, an important change is made in procedure for accessing the course:

- As a result of an interadministrative agreement for launching the anti-rumour strategy between Barcelona City Council, the Provincial Council of Barcelona and the Government of Catalonia, 5 places are reserved in each edition for people from organisations and public administrations of other towns. With this, the participation of people from other territories is now formal, though it is a fact since the very first editions of the course (2010). To promote this, diffusion is undertaken through the institutions in the agreement (Provincial Council and Government of Catalonia). The Anti-rumour Training Programme is clearly mentioned.

Participants' Evaluation:

Evaluation forms continue to stress that more time is needed for indepth work, and the sessions about the cultural framework (Session 1) and role-playing (Session 4) are very highly valued. A few issues worth noting are:

- Training as a space for interaction and exchange of experiences: fundamental for building joint strategies
- Training as a space where difference can be valued and acknowledged, where participants can gain awareness of their own prejudice and stereotypes
- The demand that the course include performing a specific anti-rumour action (particularly in the case of participants who aren't members of organisations)

The Trainers:

The training team also becomes more diverse, as it goes from an initial team from the Centre for African and Intercultural Studies to include professionals from the performing arts for module 4, and session 3 is taught by the sociologist who wrote "A Practical Guide for the Anti-Rumour Agent. How to fight rumours and stereotypes about cultural diversity".

New Training Demands/Needs:

New demands and needs in training begin to arise and these are linked to the general evolution of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Strategy. This point will be further explained at a later stage in the document.

Communication:

Priority is given to promoting communication for people from other territories outside of Barcelona, and in the use of social networking.

The Role of the Network:

With the turning point of the First Work Meeting of the Network, where the Plan of Action for 2012-2014 is drafted, the main lines of action are defined (amongst them, anti-rumour training), as are the structures for action within the Network. The Training Working Group is created and takes on the task of working together with the Technical Office for the development of the anti-rumour training line of action: support, advice, monitoring and follow-up, and recommendations to the entire training part of the Anti-Rumour Strategy.

2.3. Period 2013-2014

Course contents:

A new qualitative leap forward and content restructuring takes place in the 2013-2014 period.

- Due to the rise in individual participants not linked to organisations, on the one hand, and the increasing concern with having practical tools for anti-rumour work with the media, the content devoted to the presentation of neighbourhood experiences is changed for a new module taught by the communication expert responsible for this line of action within the Technical Office of the Anti-Rumour Strategy.
- Starting in 2013, the new session is called “Anti-rumour action with the media” and its contents focus on the new communication scenario (media and social networking), the role of anti-rumour agents and how to work in this line of action with the Anti-Rumour Network.

Participants:

- The profile of participants is increasingly diverse, and now includes musicians, professionals in the field of criminology, community mediators, unemployed and retired people. Worth noting is the increase in university students engaged in master’s studies, doctoral theses or research projects.
- 79% of participants are women, and although there has been a slight increase of 10% in men attending the course, the difference is still great.
- About 60% of participants attend the course on a personal basis (not employees/members of organisations or city council departments)
- Age average remains at 35 years old, which is mainly due to the increase in university students.

- 30% of participants are culturally diverse, up from 15% in 2012. In one of the 2013 editions, 13 participants of Chinese origin attended.
- 30% of participants attend the course from 51 different towns, outside of Barcelona, in 2013. This is a significant increase from 18% in 2012.
- Ten editions of the course are held in 2013, with 343 participants attending. There is a slight increase in participants who leave the course halfway, mostly people who are unemployed and get a job during the course. Nearly 70% receive the training certificate for completion of the programme, as participants are only eligible when attending a minimum of 3 out of 4 sessions.

Participants' Evaluation:

- Evaluation of the training course is highly positive, although participants stress the challenge of anti-rumour action on the streets, in the neighbourhoods, in everyday community life.
- The anthropological approach is valued very well, as is the structure and the dynamic approach to contents and exercises. The new communication module rates high, as does the practical and emotional work through tools from social theatre.
- Participants, especially those attending on a personal basis and not linked to organisations or city council departments, continue to express their interest in including anti-rumour action within or connected to the course.

The Role of the Network:

The Training Working Group is clearly in a mature and more solid stage and is now undertaking specific actions linked to promoting anti-rumour training:

- The Working Group's role as advisor or consultant to the Anti-Rumour Training Programme is consolidating as well as its close collaboration with the Technical Office.
- The Working Group takes part in a motor group promoted by the Technical Office of the Strategy together with city council officials engaged in managing cultural diversity on the neighbourhood level in the area of small commerce (basically, small shops, bars, etc). The objective is to work together with City employees in designing and developing a specific anti-rumour training course for this sector (2013). One result is the new anti-rumour initiative taking place now in 2014 with the Network and District employees involved in Anti-Rumour action for small commerce in several neighbourhoods of the city, with the support and guidance of the Technical Office of the Strategy.
- The Working Group is now taking part in a new initiative focusing on rumours about cultural

diversity in the field of healthcare. The methodology for action is adapted from the experience with small commerce, and is the result of joint action with professionals from the field (2014).

- The year 2014 has the Training Working Group of the Network centering on two important areas of interest:
 - Finding strategies to increase the cultural diversity of participants in training;
 - Adapting the training programme to the needs and characteristics of the different districts and neighbourhoods (territories) in the city.
- The Network's concern about reaching a wider diversity of people from different cultural origins is shared by the Technical Office of the Strategy at City Council. Specific actions and tailored diffusion strategies are being explored to engage more community-based organisations and institutions. Contacts with Casa Asia, for example, which is a reference centre for Asians in Barcelona and those interested in Asian culture. This sort of action results in a sharp increase in participants of migrant origin, but several challenges have yet to be met in order to make the course accessible to varying levels of language fluency and previous education. Effective channels must be found for diffusion, contacts must be made among community leaders, and ways of adapting the course to other profiles of participants must be considered, especially with regards to the language in which training is held.

New Training demands and needs:

- The increase in participants from a large number of towns, mostly in the Barcelona metropolitan area, brings both the Federation of Cities and the Association of Cities of Catalonia into the interadministrative agreement for joint institutional anti-rumour action with City Council of Barcelona, the Provincial Council and the Government of Catalonia.
- The demands for participation in anti-rumour action, especially on the part of those attending the course on a personal basis, poses an added challenge in designing and promoting ways of engaging trained anti-rumour agents in action on the streets, in the neighbourhoods, in places of everyday community life. The Project "Anti-Rumour Agents in Action" is being developed to this purpose. Small pilot experiences in city streets during festivities and neighbourhood festivals in 2013 and 2014 are a good breaking ground for the new anti-rumour agents as well as for Network members in the context of their community work. This project aims to strengthen the ties between trained anti-

rumour agents and the Anti-Rumour Network, by promoting exchange and broader participation in anti-rumour activities throughout the year.

- Anti-rumour training in its general format mostly caters to people who are already sensitized with regards to cultural diversity and have an interest in improving and achieving more effective skills through anti-rumour action. There is an increasing demand among trained social agents for contents and methodology to be further adapted for application on the neighbourhood level.

Anti-Rumour Training adapted to Districts and Neighbourhoods:

Territorial adaptation of Anti-Rumour Training is one more tool within the global territorial strategy of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Strategy, which aims to develop other anti-rumour activities adapted to specific territories in the city in order to develop more indepth work and engage a broader diversity of citizens and agents present in a neighbourhood or district. Training is adapted to the reality of each neighbourhood in contents, format, methodology, duration, even rumours. This allows for a very day-to-day approach, with the closeness of community life and the participation of neighbours from all walks of life. One course in 2012 was adapted to the District of Sants, and of the many demands in 2013, two courses were developed in the neighbourhood of Ciutat Meridiana and in the District of Horta-Guinardó.

- Anti-Rumour Training in the neighbourhood of Ciutat Meridiana: The course was designed by the Technical Office together with the Neighbourhood Community Development Plan. Participants were neighbours of different cultural origins, and the sessions were closely adapted to their profile. The main objective was awareness-raising through anti-rumour theatre training, as a step to engage people in work to improve community relations in the neighbourhood focusing on rumours, stereotypes, cultural diversity. Worth noting are the activities participants carried out on the streets, engaging passers-by in spontaneous anti-rumour dialogue. Links between previous internal migrations from the 60s in the area and present migrations were established. Other neighbourhood agents, such as the library, the civic centres and schools collaborated in the initiative. After the training course, the group together with the Community Plan took part in other anti-rumour actions in their neighbourhood with the support of the Technical Office of the Strategy: an anti-rumour theatre festival; the annual neighbourhood summer festivity; a cultural activity at the library. This group slowly begins to participate in other neighbourhood initiatives, such as the neighbourhood council. Now they are engaged in another training initiative, specially aimed at capacity-building for participants interested in becoming anti-rumour agents in their neighbourhood.

- Anti-Rumour Training in the District of Horta-Guinardó: Community workers from a District programme specially designed for engaging newcomers in community life are active members of the Anti-Rumour Network and take part in the Working Group for Anti-Rumour Neighbourhood Actions. This synergy was the point of departure of an anti-rumour training project with elderly people in the neighbourhood. Anti-rumour theatre is the training tool par excellence here, with a special focus on the idea of “theatre of reminiscence”. Three District centres for the elderly joined in the initiative with up to 40 people taking part, most of them originally from other regions in Spain who migrated to Barcelona in the 60s. Prejudice was strong against newcomers from other countries and training contents were played down considerably in order to make a smoother and less demanding introduction to anti-rumour awareness-raising. A new edition of the course is being developed in 2014, focusing on anti-rumour tools. This is a strategy to create a small group of elderly anti-rumour agents for action in the neighbourhood.

Anti-Rumour Training adapted to specific sectors:

Sectorial adaptation of Anti-Rumour Training is one more tool within the global Barcelona Anti-Rumour Strategy, which aims to reach specific sectors in the city for more in-depth work and to engage a broader spectrum of areas involved in improving intercultural communication and interaction. Training is adapted to the reality of each sector, in contents, format, methodology, duration, even rumours. This stems from joint work with city employees and professionals in the field interested in developing specific strategies for anti-rumour work in schools, health centres, and small neighbourhood shops. Several initiatives have provided good experiences in 2012 and 2013, and new courses are underway in 2014.

- Anti-rumour training for education professionals: In the year 2012, the first anti-rumour course was specially adapted to the needs of teachers, secondary school professors, and youth leaders. Another course was held in 2013 and yet another in 2014. This training is developed in collaboration with the Education Consortium of Barcelona (City Council and the Government of Catalonia) and has experienced several reformulations in its original design. Some contents have a more practical approach and propitiate debates and reflection applied to varying school contexts. Tools and recommendations are being specifically designed for anti-rumour work with students, such as practical exercises and guidelines for using anti-rumour comic books in class. The course is now called: *New challenges in education: How to dismantle false rumours and stereotypes about cultural diversity*. Evaluation is positive although these are hard times for teachers, who are seriously

overworked as a result of severe government cuts in education, and anti-rumour work is not generally a priority among most. Some, however, have started small actions, like requesting a special presentation of anti-rumour action on the part of the Technical Office for their Social Integration Students (technical training at the high-school level), who then designed an anti-rumour activity to raise awareness about cultural diversity among their peers and younger students in the school.

- **Anti-rumour training in the commercial sector:** Another very challenging and interesting process is being carried out in adapting anti-rumour training to the commercial sector, with small shops in culturally diverse communities as a focus. This is being done since mid-2013 through interdepartmental collaboration with the area in charge of economic promotion. Training needs were identified in two meetings through the creation of a motor group of city employees involved in working with small shop tenders and general community work, who wanted tools for designing and developing anti-rumour activities in this sector. Proposals for contents were also collected and a training programme was specially designed within the general framework of the anti-rumour course contents. Tailored contents focused on the main characteristics of the commercial sector from a comprehensive perspective, identifying stereotypes and rumours specific to the commercial sector, tools and role-plays for understanding and exploring the challenges of “diverse commerce”, and identifying ways to design anti-rumour actions in the sector on a neighbourhood level with a comprehensive perspective through networking. The course was extremely successful and has developed into a space for collaboration and exchange between professionals in the field with periodic training and work sessions for more in-depth capacity-building for anti-rumour action. Joint activities are now being planned in different neighbourhoods, together with the Network’s Working Group for Anti-Rumour Neighbourhood Action. This process is innovative in anti-rumour training because although most previous initiatives have been closely planned with key collaborators, this course was generated through a shared process and with a strategic training perspective in mind: to promote joint and synergic anti-rumour action between people working in the sector and with agents at the neighbourhood level.

Training for trainers of anti-rumour agents:

This first training for trainers held in Barcelona aimed to bring anti-rumour training closer to the neighbourhood level through people from organisations and city departments involved in community work. The first edition was held in autumn of 2013 and included 18 hours of class sessions and 6 more

hours of tutorials and guidance after the course. Fifteen people participated who were chosen because they had shown a special interest, they proved to have the capacity and context for replication on a neighbourhood level, they had already completed the general anti-rumour training course and most of them were actively engaged in the Network. Contents focused mainly on increasing and reinforcing the capacity of Network members to adapt the general anti-rumour training programme and city-wide anti-rumour actions to the neighbourhood level. Special work was devoted to developing skills for engaging people of culturally diverse origins in community and neighbourhood organisations. And, of course, an important part of the course centred on pedagogic strategies and tools for anti-rumour training in order to promote the design and development of collective action on the neighbourhood level. Due to the success of this training experience for all those involved, future plans are to keep working with this group in periodic work sessions in order to find alliances in neighbourhoods to strengthen the training programme by making it more accessible and available through the agents involved in community work. The “Anti-Rumour Agents in Action” project is a good place to start. Of the participants who completed the training course, 5 have already replicated it in their neighbourhoods with guidance from the trainers and the Technical Office. This was a prerequisite for acceptance to the course. A second edition of this Training for Trainers of Anti-Rumour Agents is planned for October 2014 with some changes regarding practical tools for designing training projects adapted to neighbourhood contexts.

3. Training materials and their evolution (2010-2014)

3.1. First training materials (2010):

- Glossary of terms and concepts: rumour, stereotype, prejudice, culture, interculturality, intercultural approach/perspective
- Basic guidelines for the anti-rumour agent: tools for dialogue, ongoing training, working with specific communities, networking
- Concepts powerpoint presentation: rumours, stereotypes, prejudice
- Presentation sheet for proposals: for the brainstorming exercise on tools and actions for anti-rumour action
- Summary of the Anti-Rumour Handbook: a summary of the main rumours about immigration and anti-rumour information and arguments
- Bibliography and links of interest
- Course evaluation sheet

3.2. Training materials (2010)

Same as the previous course, but this one includes:

- More extense bibliographic references (as a result of broader research on the subject)
- Materials about immigration profiles in the 60s (Spanish internal migration to Catalonia) in order to identify similarities in the native population's perceptions of the migration phenomenon then, and now
- Materials for intercultural communication exercises: different scenes interpreted from different cultural perspectives (a specific behavior doesn't only have one meaning; it means whatever the observer interprets according to his or her cultural values and belief)

3.3. Training materials (2011)

Same as above, except for the presentation sheet for proposals which was used as the starting point for work with the motor group involved in the Network's first steps. Also included were:

- Document with exercises on intercultural skills (to assess to what degree we are aware of our cultural filter and our ability to dialogue with people who have other cultural codes)
- Material with exercises and examples for critical reflection in the treatment and replication of information ("Socrates' triple filter", etc.)
- News published in mainstream newspapers that dispel rumours (headlines like "they contribute more than they use", etc)
- Materials generated by the Anti-Rumour Network: Comic books 1 and 2, and the anti-rumour pocket brochure
- Anti-Rumour Network member registration form

3.4. Training materials (2012)

- The Handbook summary is substituted for a more basic document of anti-rumour argumentation: quantitative data is primarily useful in giving the anti-rumour agent more confidence ("now I'm sure that what people are saying is false"), but from a practical point of view very clear and specific information is required, not a long list of arguments supporting the anti-rumour philosophy
- "A Practical Guide for the anti-rumour agent. How to fight against rumours and stereotypes about cultural diversity" is drafted by an expert in sociology with advice from the Network and under supervision of the Technical Office

- Materials generated by the Anti-rumour Network: Comic books 1 and 2, and the anti-rumour pocket brochure
- Document with basic arguments for the anti-rumour agent (rumour/antirumour information)
 - Basic guidelines for the anti-rumour agent: tools for dialogue, ongoing training, anti-rumour work with specific cultural communities, networking
 - Anti-Rumour Handbook summary: a summary of the main rumours about immigration and anti-rumour information and arguments
 - Glossary of terms: rumour, stereotype, prejudice, culture, interculturality, intercultural approach/perspective
- News published in mainstream newspapers that dismantle rumours (headlines “They contribute more than they use”, etc.)
- Extense bibliographic references and links of interest
- Anti-Rumour Network member registration form
- Course evaluation form

3.5. Training materials (2013-2014):

- “A Practical Guide for the anti-rumour agent. How to fight rumours and stereotypes about cultural diversity”
- The Anti-Rumour Handbook as a resource for training is turned into a document with practical and simple chapters called “Did you know that...?” These chapters are a summary of the main rumours about immigration and the anti-rumour information and arguments. During this period, the chapters have centered on the areas of Health, Small Commerce, and Social Welfare Services. Chapters on Education, Community life, and Employment will be ready during 2014.
- Comic books 1, 2, 3 and 4; anti-rumour badges, cups, bookmarks
- Basic argumentation document for the anti-rumour agent (rumour/anti-rumour information)
- Glossary of terms: rumour, stereotype, prejudice, culture, interculturality, intercultural approach/perspective
- Proposals for inclusive language in the media, drafted by the Catalan Board for Diversity in Audiovisuals
- The Guide for Management of Cultural Diversity in the Media, published by the Professional Association of Catalan Journalists

- The Anti-Rumour Network's protocol for viral response and contacts for challenging malpractice in managing cultural diversity in the media
- Videos of malpractice in the media with regards to treatment of cultural diversity
- Presentation dossier of the Anti-Rumour Strategy and other lines of action in the Barcelona Interculturality Programme
- Extense bibliographic reference and links of interest
- Anti-Rumour Network member registration form
- Course evaluation form
- Some materials are no longer distributed because they require updating and some have been substituted by others that are more in accord with the evolution of the Strategy itself, which has brought important changes over time in discourse, argumentation and the ways in which rumours are best dismantled.

4. Evaluation of the Anti-Rumour Training

A global evaluation of the Barcelona Anti-Rumour Strategy was carried out for the first time in 2013. Two of its important sections were devoted to the anti-rumour agents and the training programme. The final report was presented early in 2014 and is being adapted for transference purposes within the framework of Barcelona's role in the C4i project. One important conclusion is how highly trained anti-rumour agents working within organisations or in city departments value their training experience as empowering and enriching in their efforts to manage cultural diversity on the neighbourhood level, in schools, civic centres, community development plans, etc. The main request for change as regards the training model is finding ways for linking up to the Strategy once training is over. Most trained anti-rumour agents not involved in organisations or community projects state that they would like to play a more active role. Two proposals are made along these lines: participation in the Strategy through territory proximity and social networking. This is one important challenge facing the Strategy at present, which projects like "Anti-Rumour Agents in Action" and the anti-rumour training initiatives adapted to neighbourhood contexts hope to meet. The potential of these agents and the potential impact of their collaboration in the anti-rumour task cannot be wasted.



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