

# *TRADITIONS, ETHICS AND ETIQUETTE*

*Practical and theoretical evaluation of  
the training modules and the acquired competencies  
in Traditions, Ethics and Etiquette for intercultural education in Civics  
Methodology of evaluation*

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## **Project Coordinator:**

**Slovakia**, “Pre edukáciu Sabinova”, Sabinov, Prešovský kraj, Non-Profit Cultural Organization

## **Project partners:**

- **Italy**, Centro Machiavelli S.r.l., Florence, Toscana, Educational centre – Vocational Training - <http://www.training-agency.centromachiavelli.it>
  - **Bulgaria**, Narodno Chitalishte “Nikola Rakitin”1890, Trudovets, <http://www.trudovec.com> Community Culture Centre, NGO
  - **Norway**, Raulandsakademiet AS Senter for Norsk folkekultur, Akademiet 2, <http://www.raulandsakademiet.no> - Educational centre – Adult education
  - **Spain**, INERCIA DIGITAL SL, ALJARAQUE, Andalucía, <http://www.inerciadigital.com>
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## CONTENT

Introduction .....	3
1. Creation and content of Lifelong Learning Programme in the module-based education .....	4
1.1. Structure of the Lifelong Learning Programme.....	5
1.2. Educational modules and programmes – curricular documents .....	6
1.3. Excerpt from the methodology for the curricula in secondary schools.....	7
1.4. Curriculum as a complex programme for intercultural education.....	8
1.5. Two-level model of curricula.....	9
1.6. The creation of School curriculum as a second level .....	10
1.7. Comment.....	11
2. Current status.....	12
2.1. Suggested changes .....	12
2.2. Why are we creating a new Lifelong Learning Programme? .....	15
2.3. What is the function of Lifelong Learning Programmes with regard to the National curriculum? .....	17
2.4. Relevant education systems in other countries .....	18
2.5. Swot analysis of the current state.....	18
2.6. Lifelong Learning Programmes as an addendum to School curriculum and the National curriculum .....	19
3. Lifelong Learning Programmes in non-formal education for acquiring intercultural competencies.....	20
3.1. Goals.....	20
3.2. Intercultural competence.....	20
3.4. Attitudes, Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours .....	22
3.5. Students' competences acquired by introducing the intercultural competence model .....	24
4. Example from the Learning Module.....	25
4.1. Form of education with learning modules .....	26
4.2. Learning module.....	26
5. Evaluation system.....	29
5.1. Internal evaluation system .....	30
6. Educational outputs .....	31
6. 1. Basic steps in creating an education module .....	31
6.2. Contents of the educational modules .....	32
7. Evaluation form - self-assessment of the learner .....	33

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## Introduction

The current methodology contains the parameters for creating a program for interdisciplinary training in civic education, incorporating the traditions, ethics and etiquette, and involving methods of non-formal education with the inclusion of the visual techniques of comics. The methodology is intended for application both in extracurricular forms of education and in dual education to prepare students for participation in internships in European countries.

In creating the project and testing the methods we cooperated with four institutions from Italy - Adult Learning Centre, Norway - Cultural Education Centre, Bulgaria - Community Cultural Centre and Spain - Organization with experience in organizing online and face-to-face courses in civics education. Partners shared their experience and participated in the development of Intellectual Outputs.

During the development of the methodology we were guided by the experience of educators and researchers in the field of non-formal intercultural education, human rights and the study of traditions, ethics and etiquette in the curricula of philosophy and civics education in Italy, Bulgaria, Norway and Spain.

In addition, in preparing the methodology, we came to the conclusion that the educational programmes designed to present traditions, ethics and etiquette are insufficient. That is why a new curriculum is needed, which can be introduced as a separate subject, training in extracurricular forms or in seminars of youth exchanges under the Erasmus + program.

In the proposed methodology we offer non-traditional solutions for getting acquainted with the traditions, ethics and etiquette of European countries through the visual techniques of comics for acquiring competencies in intercultural communication, perception of otherness, appreciation of cultural diversity and European values.

Moreover, the methodology includes interdisciplinary links between philosophy, civic education, education for democratic citizenship and human rights education, applied in both formal and non-formal learning settings, while the theoretical part is suitable for self-study – informal learning.

The creation of the current document is necessary to unite the results of the joint activities between the project partners on Intellectual Product 1 - Comics, presenting the peculiarities of the traditions of European countries and Intellectual Product 2 - Developed topics in the field of human rights, ecology and civic education.

The programme presents a portrait of ethics and values aiming at building an intercultural competencies and equipping trainees with the knowledge of using an innovative method for working with youths, parents, so that the visitors to the web site and the users of the pedagogical resources (OER) can understand the universal values, human rights and norms of behavior connected with etiquette and friendly relationships, in a wide perspective: presentation of values to the society by comics in a theatrical, comic way (IO1), composition of stories around 9 topics about traditions, intertwined in an ethical behavior (IO2) and creation of an OER – a Course about ethics, etiquette in the philosophy context (IO3).



## 1. Creation and content of Lifelong Learning Programme in the module-based education

Every person, at every stage of their lives should have lifelong opportunities to acquire the knowledge and skills they need to fulfil their goals and contribute to their societies.

According to UNESCO Educational Strategy 2014-2021, the entire education system is designed to facilitate lifelong learning and the creation of formal, non-formal and informal learning opportunities for all people.

The concept of lifelong learning requires a paradigm shift away from the ideas of teaching and training towards those of learning from knowledge-conveying instructions to learning for personal development and acquiring competencies necessary for living in a contemporary multicultural environment.

Bulgaria and Slovakia followed a model of education which gave priority to particular fields and contents focusing on knowledge acquisition. Most school curricula are treating adult education as a child education and there was a decline in the participation in programmes for general personal needs and insignificant support to lifelong civic education that emphasizes learning about European traditions, ethics and etiquette.

The acquisition of knowledge, skills, competencies and attitude, that lifelong learning offers are numerous. The developed educational programme can be adapted to all forms of education for mastering intercultural competencies, acquired by the implementation of a modular form, combining the methods of formal, non-formal and informal learning.

The modular lifelong educational programme for introducing traditions, ethics and etiquette for acquiring intercultural competencies can be incorporated in the school curriculum for civic education and the Education for Democratic citizenship.

Education and learning encompass various types, methods, settings and approaches of learning. Even if it is generally understood to be non-formal learning/education, it also includes elements of informal learning and is sometimes very close to formal education.

The experience of youth organizations in non-formal learning/education is based on learning objectives, learning time and specific learning support, and it is intentional. It successfully uses modular form of introducing the teaching units leading to a better recognition of the individual learning outcome.

The Strategies for Lifelong Learning in the partner countries set out the strategic framework of the state policy in education and training and aim at achieving the European goal for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. Lifelong learning is a factor for the success and competitiveness of the citizens, the institutions, and organizations by providing the conditions to achieve higher educational objectives, ensuring equal opportunities for all individual and collective stakeholders to exercise their rights and duties arising from their participation in various and multiple forms of lifelong learning, which take place in diverse socio-economic contexts, including all spheres where activities take place.

The modules will consist of theoretical part, instructions and non-formal educational methods for acquiring intercultural competencies: Socratic circles, storytelling and Forum theatre. There will be included in each module brain storming, energizers, pair and group work and group presentations.



## 1.1. Structure of the Lifelong Learning Programme

### Parts of the model:

- Identification data of the Lifelong Learning Programme (title of the educational programme, code and name of the specific course of the programme, type of education, gained qualification, length and form of the course, year and place of the certificate, the validity of the professional training).
- Setting up the objectives and outcomes of the education.
- Graduate's profile.
- Characteristics of the further education programme (description of the course, duration and form of the course, language, form and parameters of termination of the course, handing out the certificate)
- Curriculum.
- Course modules for acquiring intercultural competencies by learning about traditions, ethics and etiquette
- Resources (material and technical conditions).
- Conditions for the realization of the course (material, personnel, organizational conditions, and conditions for safety in the educational process).
- Internal system for monitoring and evaluating course participants. The programme can also be international, provided that it is carried out upon a written consent of the Ministry of Education and in compliance with the principles and objectives of the education and training according to the Education Act. When preparing your own training programme you will only follow the steps according to the individual part of our education programme.

### Problems which can occur:

- The Slovakian Ministry of Education will not accept the concept, because it was created by partners from other European countries
- Although the proposals of the methodology are open for discussion, we see a possible problem in too much theorizing.
- Teachers will not want to get further education and will not want to share their experience.
- Responsible people are not aware of the insufficient preparation of teachers to incorporate in their extra-curricular or their subjects the intercultural education.

- Secondary vocational schools providing professional training could also raise objections for preparing their students for employment in another country
- In the initial stage there may also be insufficient number of teachers who would participate in the course.

### **Obstacles that might hinder the accreditation and the validation of the programme**

An obstacle in the case of including intercultural education by learning about traditions, ethics and etiquette as a part of democratic citizenship programme of the EU Commission may be anything which prevents or hinders either the initiation or progress or completion of the educational programme. These obstacles may emerge because of the following:

- Ignorance or lack of adequate knowledge in relation to creating intercultural competencies and in interpersonal relations, human rights, literacy, cultural and social institutions
- Negative attitudes on the part of individuals, institutions or within the target group to effective intercultural training: lack of openness to others, unwillingness to accept cultural differences, lack of readiness to share and to work as a member of a team, unwillingness to trust, poor commitment to truth and hope, little or no respect for others
- Lack of skills and competencies necessary to successfully initiate learning about traditions, ethics and etiquette by introducing interactive methods supported by the comics visualization tools.
- Absence in belief in essential values and little commitment on part of some of the participants

## **1.2. Educational modules and programmes – curricular documents**

The educational modules are based on the outcomes of the project TRADITIONS, ETHIQUE AND ETIQUETTE that presents a portrait of ethics and values aiming to building an intercultural competencies and equipping trainees with the knowledge of using an innovative method for working with youths, parents and the general public, including mentally disabled people, so that the visitors to the web site and the users of the pedagogical resources (OER) can understand the universal values, human rights and norms of behavior connected with etiquette and friendly relationships, in a wide perspective: presentation of values to the society in a theatrical, comic way (IO1), composition of stories around 9 topics about traditions, intertwined in an ethical behavior (IO2) and creation of an OER – a Course about ethics, etiquette in the philosophy context (IO3).

The proposal encompasses the contemporary features of lifelong learning, including the methodology of non-formal education paying attention to the learning process.

A reform of the civic education is proposed in which intercultural education for understanding traditions, ethics and etiquette is at the centre of the curriculum.

The proposal suggests the application of the following training methods in the modules:

- Socratic circles

- Story telling
- Forum theatre
- Experiential learning by simulations and role plays

Apart from these tools a visualization activities will be included where comics will be discussed or created for further understanding cultural peculiarities connected with traditions and etiquette.

The suggested modules can be adapted by the teachers depending on the trainees age.

**The new objectives of further education / education of adults will make for achieving the following results:**

**Individual learning outcomes** are geared toward developing understating in culture, diversity and inclusion through looking at some of the following:

- Meanings and definitions
- Ways that cultural diversity contributes to competitive advantage
- Unconscious bias in decision making and how to remedy it
- Different cultures' ways of thinking, acting and communicating
- How the above is affected by values, attitudes and beliefs
- How different people of different cultures adapt to new cultures

**A person who has completed the Curriculum will be:**

- More effective and efficient in dealing with people from diverse cultures on a day to day basis
- A better manager of diverse teams
- More capable of building respectful relationships
- Ready for further training
- Able to better understand and appreciate diverse cultures in everyday life
- Benefits of doing the program
- The programme helps organizations and individuals build capability around cultural diversity.
- For organizations, the program is a cost-effective and scalable way to train large or small numbers with consistency. In doing so, diversity and inclusion can be turned into a competitive advantage. This is also a great foundation for further activities and training.

### 1.3. Excerpt from the methodology for the curricula in secondary schools

The Education Act introduces new curricular documents – educational programmes, which represent the beginning of a new progressive phase of the development of our education as part of Education for Democratic Citizenship.

**At the process of working on this methodology we also followed the strategic document called Milenium.**

The Milenium is a basic strategic document issued by the government of Slovakia, which focuses on education: Milenium: National programme for education in Slovakia in the following 15 – 20 years (Ministry of Education, 2002).

The key points from the Milenium:

The development of key competences belongs to main objectives of education. Competences are described as the ability of a person to use their knowledge, skills, and capability in a practical activity. Competences exceed one subject and their realization is linked more with a learning process than the content of the syllabus.

According to the key competences stated in the document we focused on development of the following areas:

- **communication skills and competences**, which means the ability to communicate in oral and written form, to explain, to read with comprehension, to find information, to store and use information, and to provide information in a native and even a foreign language
- **Intercultural competencies** – accepting differences and appreciating cultural diversity
- **personal and interpersonal skills** include self-confidence and performance skills, ability to rationally and independently learn, control and regulate their own lives, including self-development, the creation of progressive interpersonal relationships, the ability to work in a team, the assumption of responsibility, the ability to look after their own health and the environment, be tolerant, respect for human ethical values, the recognition of human rights and freedoms, etc.
- **ability to creatively and critically solve problems**, identify them, analyze, propose solutions to refine them and learn from them, know how to work even in difficult, stressful conditions

#### 1.4. Curriculum as a complex programme for intercultural education

Curriculum will be understood as a complex programme of goals, content, methods, and forms of educational process, strategies and methods of assessment, organization and management of education.

The development of educational programmes is an open process of planning, implementation and realization of the institutional education and requires decision-making and practical solutions on three levels: the state, school and class.

Thus the association of unions together with their educational objectives will create a two-phase system of creating curricula.

In June 2007 the government of Slovakia ratified a concept of a two-level model of education programmes in vocational education and professional training courses.

Its essence is a creation of curricula documents on two levels – the state and school. The strategic goal of the two-level model is to enable a flexible specialization of graduates in compliance with the needs of the state, regional labour market, school conditions, development of learning subjects, competences and interests of learners, and to provide education reflecting individuality of each pupil as a person, citizen and professional.

**The National Curriculum** represents the first level of the system established on the national level. It represents the highest and generic pedagogical-curricular document which defines the requirements common to the whole group of related specializations.

## 1.5. Two-level model of curricula

**Curricula documents** can be traced in many countries in Europe. By the means of such documents the states regulate the congruence between professional training and the labour market, specific organizations and the content of the syllabus in accordance with requirements formed by the labour market, methods, forms and means of verification and acknowledgement of qualification.

National curricula are therefore the first step in the line of education programmes, which enable to adapt all the education programmes according to above mentioned educational goals.

The programmes of professional training should primarily focus on the needs of the labour market. They represent a pedagogical document, which defines common requirements for a whole group of specializations. National curricula define the minimal requirements of the graduate, which is educated in one of the specializations of the whole group of related specializations. The characteristics of the National curriculum, its application, purpose, function, and principles are a part of a particular National curriculum.

We can find them in a specific form in many European countries. They serve as a means through which at the national level the state ensures the interconnectedness of the formulated qualification requirements of potential employees and their professional competencies. National curriculum lays down a mandatory framework for state-guaranteed education for individual levels of education and a group of education specializations. It sets out the basic target requirements for the competencies of graduates and derived performance and content standards of the general and vocational component of education, the profile of the graduate, the basic conditions of the program implementation, clear rules and principles for the creation of school educational programmes and other rules.

It ensures the comparability of levels of education and qualifications at a given level of education. Therefore, the common goal to be followed by education is to gain competencies

important for lifelong learning, for life, for work, for social communication - the key competences as a complex of knowledge, cognitive and practical skills, attitudes, emotions, values and ethics, motivation corresponding to age and educational opportunities for learners for whom they are intended.

Key competencies are the core of the state education programme. The National curriculum is approved and issued by the Ministry of Education of Slovakia. In the system of secondary education, conditions will be created for the application of basic development trends, new educational approaches at school and regional level, which are in particular:

- 1) development of key competences and being ready to lifelong learning,
- 2) integration of intercultural education in the Education for Democratic citizenship,
- 3) emphasis on the broad profile of graduates, able to adapt to different cultural environments
- 4) development of progressive ways of designing the training programme (modules) and teaching methods implemented in non-formal education: Socratic seminars, Storytelling, Forum theatre, Experiential learning accompanied by group work, brainstorming and energizers.
- 5) adaptation of training to the requirements of the unified multicultural European labour market

The path to this goal is a system of mutually transferable and follow-up education programmes at national and regional levels with a flexible structure that will allow to correct or refine the choice of career during education and will allow graduates, after completing a partial or comprehensive training program, to obtain a certified output so that nobody leaves school without a basic intercultural competences. National curriculum at the same time expresses the change of pedagogical thinking and brings it to the life and work of schools, integrating education for democratic citizenship, including intercultural training by learning about traditions, ethics and etiquette.

## 1.6. The creation of School curriculum as a second level

The creation of School curriculum as a second level of the programme system will represent a significant change in the education policy of the schools, as it will strengthen their autonomy and responsibility for the processing and quality of school educational programmes. The schools will create school curricula in accordance with their intentions and the needs of the region. It is a document that contains organized school activities, learning objectives, teaching content, and learning outcomes.

The School curriculum is governed by the National curriculum requirements. It is created by

adding to National curriculum specific needs based on the ideas and needs of the region, businesses, parents, pupils, and other involved. The School curriculum is to ensure compliance with the regional needs of the labour market together with active participation of employers at regional or local level. This will increase the prerequisites for better employment and employability of school graduates. The School curriculum is approved by the school head after their consultation with state administration authorities and employers.

The compliance of the School and National curricula will be assessed by the State School Inspectorate. The creation of a two-level system of educational programmes at the state and school level strengthens not only the autonomy and responsibility of schools, but also builds education on the key competences integrated in the National and School curricula. The interdependence of key competences with the content of education guarantees the strengthening of the interdisciplinary approach in education and study fields, understanding of learning outcomes and curricula based on the activities carried out.

### 1.7. Comment

In essence, it is possible to agree with the given citation from the methodology. There are, however, several directions with which the methodology has not been considered.

1. Intercultural education introduced in the Education for Democratic citizenship by introducing Traditions, Ethics and Etiquette
2. It talks of lifelong learning, but the form of education with state support is not included as the interactive methods used by the non-formal education.
3. There is insufficient interconnection between the requirements of the European labour market for intercultural competencies.
4. The current orientation of schools to the requirements of the labour market do not take into consideration training for acquiring intercultural competencies by introducing the interactive experiential learning by simulations, project-based learning and group work.
5. The funding of secondary schools by the regional governments is not enough for introducing the training of democratic citizenship that includes intercultural competencies and human rights.
6. Lectures are preferred and only knowledge is introduced regardless of learners' competencies acquirement.

What needs to change in the National curriculum?

The population decline and the constant struggle of schools for students gradually reduce pupils' and students' knowledge standards in all schools, which negatively affects the development of society itself. Unnecessary trade unions and the support of general education schools do not contribute either to competition or to the development of schools.

## 2. Current status

Training in democratic citizenship focusing on intercultural competencies acquisition by the implementation of the methods, developed by the non-formal education, are not introduced in the school curriculum. This sphere of education is left to youth workers and the Erasmus+ Youths projects. So, students living in remote rural areas with teachers without upgrading qualifications for introducing interactive methods in the traditional classroom are left behind the contemporary educational methods. Students are discouraged and they leave school becoming NEETS (Not in Education, Employment and Training). Due to financial problems village authorities are not able to organize training for the NEETS. In this way the pupils who left school without proper training become a burden to the social system and are not able to integrate into the labour market neither at a national nor at an international level.

Another negative tendency and obstacle for the career development of the students is the lack of introducing national traditions and linking them to European values. If one does not appreciate national cultural traditions he will not be able to appreciate the cultural traditions of the other European countries.

The quality of education has fallen to a minimum level of requirements towards student and is primarily focused on obtaining student grants and keeping schools in the education system at all costs. The ICT sector needs not only technically competent workers but people that can be successfully integrated in any cultural environment, appreciating cultural diversity being able to communicate and take part in a democratic society respecting human rights and participate in the decision-making process.

Intercultural education and studying the traditions, ethics and etiquette are not part of the teachers qualifications for primary and secondary schools.

### 2.1. Suggested changes

The proposal of the education system in Slovakia could also look as follows: establishing intercultural education introducing the methods proposed by the partnership in the project “Traditions, Ethics and Etiquette”

Intercultural competence refers to the real world in which we live and act; the world we have created together and continue to recreate on a daily basis. Scientists and writers have often understood culture either as an iceberg or as an onion. What the two metaphors share is that culture consists of both the visible part and the invisible, but nevertheless essential parts. Like onions, culture can include the outer layer or what people associate primarily with culture: the visible reality - behaviour, clothing, food, language, housing, etc., as well as hidden layers containing norms of behaviour and values that society also has deeper layers of basic worldviews. Culture is considered to be a way of life of a certain group of people in a specific situation, people who - because of their culture - are considered members of the same group and are different from other groups.

Modern markets for goods and services, global media structures and migrant flows have led to increased cultural exchanges and the disappearance of many traditional life forms. Local cultures change and combine with others in new and unusual ways. The boundaries between the familiar and the foreign are becoming increasingly blurred. Many societies around the world have become culturally diverse. What was once foreign can now be found next door. The members of once largely homogeneous groups live with immigrants, with their languages, religions, attitudes - they have all become part of local communities. At the same time, geographical location is less decisive for cultural affiliation. Culture in this sense is perceived not as a static, hermetically sealed system, but as currents with constantly changing meanings.

It follows that intercultural competence is neither a static state nor can it be acquired through a visit to a foreign country or through additional education and training. Acquiring intercultural competence requires lifelong learning and is part of current personal development. That is why we need to learn to master the ability to cope with changing cultural diversity.

We also propose to engage in international organizations to share knowledge and especially to offer exchange for students, participation in Youth mobilities of the Erasmus+ programme.

From the point of view of lifelong learning and its funding, the most important issue is financing. We propose to introduce requalification opportunity at least twice during the active life of a citizen.

### **Justification:**

The development and the needs of a society and of an individual change over the life time. In the project, we proposed a possible modular education in the field of intercultural education, but this procedure is also applicable to the education for democratic citizenship.

### **Pedagogical aspect**

The Lifelong Learning Programme (LLP) should be a system for evaluating graduates of intercultural education (but also self-assessments according to established criteria from practice at different levels of quality and achieved knowledge), so they would be able to evaluate financially themselves and at the same time would also facilitate employers to evaluate the quality of employees.

### **National identity aspect**

With a constant demographic decline, in which schools compete to attract pupils, it is necessary to think about the education system. What we see is the decrease of demands we require from pupils and also pupils themselves often find out in adulthood they want to study or work in a different sphere, and the acquired knowledge is inadequate. Even universities face this trend and people are often educated in sectors which are not applicable in the labour market.

Intercultural competence is manifested in the interaction between the participants in intercultural situations, in the joint implementation of activities, in cooperation to achieve common goals, with the intention of transforming public areas into more attractive places for entertainment.

One of the attitudes useful for intercultural learning is the general openness and appreciation of cultural diversity and the ability to meet and deal with people from foreign cultures in an open, curious and unbiased way (ie by refraining from ethnocentric judgment, reflection on their own spontaneous feelings, reactions, etc.). This openness and appreciation of cultural diversity requires special efforts and has its psychological limits. Therefore, acquaintance with foreign cultures should begin at an early age, when children are not prejudiced and have not adopted negative attitudes towards the differences of their ancestors.

Nevertheless, constructive openness can be encouraged, for example, through cultural education or the study of languages, songs and dances. Cultural blindness to foreign languages and / or cultural backgrounds can, in turn, lead to a wide range of insecurities, fears and anxieties that can lead to self-protection and disruption of the identity of others, to escalating conflicts, missed opportunities

and untapped potentials. A key factor in intercultural competence is, ultimately, that when uncertainties arise, participants remain open to unfamiliar situations and tolerant of otherness.

## 2.2. Why are we creating a new Lifelong Learning Programme?

*What should we offer to attract people to study at our institution to gain competencies in intercultural learning?*

LLP should act as a bridge between theory and practice for learners, entrepreneurs and their goals, as well as for regions or institutions that could cooperate. It provides the opportunity to profile the school in a customized way, i.e. according to the needs and interests of the people, specific conditions and traditions of the school, according to the intentions and development programmes of the region, the demands and needs of the labour market and employers, etc.

We have developed Intercultural competence development that includes "knowing what" and "knowing how". The key elements of comprehensive cultural knowledge depend on the field of action, the context and the situation:

- understanding the views, values, norms and way of life of others;
- understanding the role and impact of cultural elements on behavior and communication;
- understanding the historical, political and religious context;
- sociolinguistic awareness of the relationship between language and meaning in a social context.

However, experts attach much more importance to certain behavioral communication skills than to explicitly knowledge-related elements. The most important of these basic skills - which allow you to continually increase your overall cultural knowledge - are to listen, observe and interpret, as well as the ability to analyze, evaluate and relate cultural elements. Creating opportunities for intercultural communication of young people and children from an early age is a prerequisite for appropriate interaction - be it through a change in their learning environment, interaction with people with different values, travel abroad, internships or other learning measures with experience. The creation of such innovative educational programs offers a wide field for potential activity, participation in European programs and meeting successful representatives of minority groups would lead to the gradual building of intercultural competence.

The development of Lifelong Learning Programmes (but also National curriculum) must build on and take into account not only the current set of related intercultural learning but also the

preservation and development of cultural traditions, connecting theory to production and promotion of European traditions and values.

### **Another excerpt from National curriculum**

This process must be legislatively consistent and should be transformed into practice. Education and training under the Education Act is based on the following principles:

- free education at elementary schools and at secondary schools established by the regional government, the central state administration or local authorities (hereinafter referred to as the "state school"),
- equality of access to education and training, taking into account the educational needs of an individual and their co-responsibility for their education,
- the equivalence and inseparability of education and training in the educational process,
- lifelong learning,
- the free choice of education, taking into account the expectations and assumptions of children and pupils in the ranks of the educational system,
- improving the education and training process according to the results achieved in science, research and development,
- preparing for responsible life in a free society in a spirit of understanding and tolerance, equality of men and women, friendship between people, ethnic and ethnic groups and religious tolerance,
- control and assessment of the quality of education and training and the quality of the education and training system,
- integration of the educational system of the Slovak Republic into the European educational space with awareness of its own experience and traditions,
- enhancing the education aspect of the educational process through all teaching subjects, as well as specific educational activities aimed at the development of feelings and emotions, motivation and interests, socialization and communication, self-control and self-regulation, moral values and creativity,
- balanced development of all aspects of pupil personality in school education,
- a ban on the provision or disclosure of information or the misuse of information which could lead to moral distortion or incitement to national, racial and ethnic hatred or other forms of intolerance,
- equal status of schools and school facilities,

- the equivalence of education acquired in state schools, in schools established by a state-recognized church and a religious school (hereinafter referred to as the "ecclesiastical school") and in schools established by another private person or by a legal person ("private school")
- prohibiting the use of all forms of corporal punishment and sanctions in education and training

### **School education programmes are based on the following principles:**

- are an important curriculum of lifelong learning,
- create a pluralistic, competitive learning environment and promote the autonomy of schools,
- emphasize learning outcomes, although the learning aspect of the teaching is also extremely important,
- they are formed for a specific study or professional training in a given group of professions,
- are set up by their schools according to the National curriculum and the rules set up therein,
- regulate the educational conditions in that school,
- accept the needs of the regional labour market and the development priorities of the school,
- the head of the school is responsible for their preparation and approval,
- compliance with the National curriculum will be monitored, reviewed, assessed and evaluated by the State School Inspection

Addendum: The National curriculum mentions lifelong learning programmes, but it does not work with putting it into practice and linking the different types of schools that could form lifelong learning modules.

### **2.3. What is the function of Lifelong Learning Programmes with regard to the National curriculum?**

In the Lifelong Learning Programmes approval process, the Ministry of Education and Culture should play a key role.

**According to the methodology we are based on, we have designed a training program for democratic citizenship including intercultural education and getting acquainted with traditions, ethics and etiquette of the partner European countries.**

We created the programme on the basis of the experience of the partner countries and their education systems, but mainly on the needs of the future generation, who also expressed their ideas at international meetings through presentations of project outputs and in free discussion.



## 2.4. Relevant education systems in other countries

### Education systems we based the proposal on:

**Bulgaria** - educational institutions based on the Finnish model where the role of the educational institution was taken over by the state, but with low private sector participation. Similar education institutions are also in Lithuania, Latvia or Estonia, but are significantly more linked to educational institutions.

**Italy** – Intercultural learning activities are included in the curricula of the International Language centre, the partner of this project. This educational institution has achieved practical and exemplary cooperation with private producers, craftsmen of traditional souvenirs and local or state governments. They include introductory visits to artisans' shops and create intercultural cooperation of the international students that are involved in their training programmes.

**Norway** – the most progressive partner where besides secondary schools, there are training centres for craftsmen. In the national economy, the high-level of traditional souvenirs, cloths and carpets is making a significant percentage of GDP. The size and traditions of Norway plays an important role, and the support from the state is considerable, but they are experiencing a similar lack of interest from young people like us. The biggest tradition of manufacturing is kept by family businesses.

**Slovakia** - we are successfully pursuing the introduction of non-formal education in Youths NGOs that take part in European Youths mobilities and are involved in international projects implementation. There is developed a considerable expertise in youth workers competencies on intercultural training. Still, the activities are not well-introduced in the school curricula.

**Spain** – the Spanish partners are constantly developing new resources on intercultural non-formal education and are integrating the training in online courses with NGOs and schools from all over Europe. They approached the task of intercultural training by developing a Competence Model for Youth Workers to Work Internationally.

## 2.5. Swot analysis of the current state

### Strengths

- Schools and NGOs are actively taking part in Erasmus+ programme and developing European projects establishing partnerships with children, youths, youth workers and teachers from EU partner countries.
- people at working age change their habits and are interested in lifelong learning

### Weaknesses



- poor support, or none in lifelong learning, especially in the case of dual learning
- excessive administrative burden
- insufficient state funding
- almost no cooperation between institutions, such as museums, primary art schools, and schools with the private sector
- There is specific intercultural learning programme that introduces human rights education at schools implementing non-formal educational methods in extra-curricular activities
- absolute lack of concern of the state to maintain the traditional crafts because we first have to know where we come from and then open our eyes and minds for the world heritage.

### Opportunities

- the possibility of transformation of the existing secondary schools into lifelong learning institutions and expanding cooperation with museums and local craftsmen
- participation in Erasmus+ projects
- broad cooperation between the private sector, regional government and educational institutions

### Threats

- lack of interest to solve the problem of adult education from the state and regional government
- insufficient funding of training modules for democratic citizenship including intercultural and human rights education.
- inability to communicate between entities that should be involved in intercultural education

## 2.6. Lifelong Learning Programmes as an addendum to School curriculum and the National curriculum

The project itself points to the need to restructure vocational education / professional training and, in particular, interconnection and mutual cooperation between institutions and the private sector. We created modules to build on the overall needs of youth workers as adult learners. The target group were young people and teachers who needed to acquire intercultural competencies by introducing Traditions, Ethics and Etiquette in an interactive methods.

It is necessary to introduce a new speciality in our schools called “Non-formal education for Youth workers”

One of the basic problems of creating such education programmes is poor state funding for composition of new textbooks and training of teachers. We see the problem also in the reluctance of teachers to introduce interactive methods in the classroom activities. Some teachers still prefer the old methods of teaching by lecturing and focusing only on the knowledge, not of the intercultural competencies.

We created the modules based on accreditation requirements valid in Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Bulgaria and Italy have different conditions, an important factor is the interconnection between the youth NGOs and the learner. In workshops for young people, they have plenty of time to introduce group work training, student centred approach and intercultural competencies development.

### 3. Lifelong Learning Programmes in non-formal education for acquiring intercultural competencies

#### 3.1. Goals

1. **Social goals** – development of creativity and raising the awareness about cultural diversity
2. **Institutional objectives** - development and cooperation between institutions dealing with intercultural education in preparing youth workers for appreciating cultural heritage and achieving international cooperation
3. **Specific objectives:**

**Educational goals** are the acquiring of intercultural competencies, appreciation of other cultures and ability to work in multicultural environment.

#### 3.2. Intercultural competence

The intercultural competence is the ability to support successful communication and collaboration among people from different cultural contexts and backgrounds. The student has to address and deal with attitudes and behaviours behind this intercultural competence in international training. He/she approaches ‘culture’ from an identity perspective and understands ambiguity, human rights, self-confidence, acceptance versus own limits, and how geopolitical conflicts influence one’s understanding of these aspects. The teacher has to take these intercultural dimensions into account in their work.

Developing intercultural competences has become increasingly important for young people to work internationally, and this development is on the agenda of the European institutions. Schools



providers of non-formal learning, training and education entities, as well as Erasmus+ programme participants are today also paying closer attention to these competences.

Intercultural competences are always connected to a specific context (intercultural work, youth work, social work, etc.). This makes them challenging to explore and assess. For this reason, competence development frameworks vary according to target group and work context.

### 3.3. Non-formal learning integrated in the intercultural competence model

The principles of non-formal learning behind the intercultural competence model are:

- Students' centredness (a focus on their development)
- Agreed on learning objectives between teachers/trainers and students/trainees
- Transparency
- Attention to content and methodology
- Voluntariness
- Participation
- Empowerment
- Democratic values and practices

Our proposed competence model offers the opportunity to develop training strategies, training courses and will allow students to analyse their own competences and address personal challenges. The competence model is a good basis for peer-support, peer-review and (self-) assessment. It gives impulses that will encourage teachers, students and youth workers to try out new things and invest in personal and professional development. The model adds an international dimension and it should be introduced in all school curricula.

It focuses on working in international teams and on supporting young people in international learning mobility project. This competence model also helps institutional stakeholders determine youth workers' occupational profiles and the recognition of this profession by society.

In our model, work in an international multicultural environment has the following characteristics:

- Work is done together with international colleagues, often using a foreign language as a lingua franca,
- In a value-driven context, e.g. European programmes promote participation, inclusion, democracy, human rights, etc.,
- Mainly in a residential setting, because living and working together 24 hours a day influences non-formal and informal processes,
- And with a link to the wider political context (European or global).



The competence model consists of the following eight competences:

- 1 Facilitating individual and group learning in an enriching environment
- 2 Designing programmes
- 3 Organising and managing resources
- 4 Collaborating successfully in teams
- 5 Communicating meaningfully with others
- 6 Displaying intercultural competence
- 7 Networking and advocating
- 8 Developing evaluative practices to assess and implement appropriate change

### 3.4. Attitudes, Knowledge, Skills, and Behaviours

In the intercultural competence model, we focus on the following four dimensions: attitudes, knowledge, skills, and behaviours.

- Attitudes are the pre-requisite, the foundation for competence development.

They lead to • knowledge (gained through experience, books, the Internet, etc.)

and • skills (ability to perform a task, to apply knowledge and turn attitudes into actions),

which will then lead to • appropriate and contextual behaviour.

#### ATTITUDES

- Being open towards the unexpected and towards ambiguity in the group & in the learning process
- Openness and willingness to look at identity, culture & related aspects from different perspectives
- Readiness to confront others and be confronted in a respectful & constructive way
- Willingness to support & empower individuals and groups
- Being careful not use methods which implicitly reinforce stereotypes and discrimination mechanisms
- Being aware that culture is a dynamic & multifaceted process

#### KNOWLEDGE

- Knowledge of the notions & concepts of acceptance of ambiguity & change
- Knowledge of identity-related mechanisms & theories (with a focus on cultural contexts)

- Knowledge of the theories & concepts of power relations
- Knowledge of the mechanisms linked to stereotypical constructions of reality
- Knowledge of discrimination mechanisms & how to address them
- Knowledge of human rights, human rights education methods
- Knowing how to speak at least one foreign language

## **SKILLS**

- Being able to deal with ambiguity & change
- Being able to deal with tension & conflict
- Ability to raise awareness about each other within the group
- Ability to work with interrelated dimensions of culture and identity
- Being able to initiate critical reflection
- Being able to address human rights topics through different methods (human rights education)
- Being able to recognise discrimination & to understand the related mechanisms in order to react properly
- Being able to conceptualise, apply, analyse, synthesise & evaluate information about or in the group
- Being able to speak at least one foreign language

## **BEHAVIOURS**

- Reflects on theories, concepts & experiences & applies these with regard to ambiguity & change
- Explicitly wrestles with his/her own biases, assumptions & behaviours regarding stereotypes
- Uses appropriate tools & methods to support the group in deconstructing & reconstructing reality (wrestling with stereotypes, prejudices, assumptions, etc.)
- Encourages young people to reflect on their own identity & related elements
- Explores the complex connections, among others, between identity, politics, society & history
- Identifies and deals with issues of power in & with the group
- Facilitates awareness-raising with regard to conflicts that exist in the society & how they relate to intercultural dialogue

- Recognises and interprets words, body language & non-verbal communication in a culturally-appropriate manner
- Encourages self-confidence & demonstrates [a framed] flexibility in cultural & communicative behaviour
- Is willing to speak a foreign language & overcomes resistances and inhibitions
- Encourages young people to reflect and exchange ideas regarding issues such as solidarity, social justice, promoting/protecting human rights, discrimination, dignity & equality

### 3.5. Students' competences acquired by introducing the intercultural competence model

#### General Competence

- recognizes the need for their autonomous learning as a means of self-realization and personal development,
- can reflect the process of learning and thinking in learning and processing new knowledge and information; applies different learning strategies,
- can critically evaluate the information and its source, creatively process it and use it practically,
- critically assesses their progress, receives feedback and realizes their further development opportunities, social communication competencies
- can use all available forms of communication when processing and expressing information of different types, has adequate oral and written representation of the situation and purpose of communication,
- effectively utilizes available information and communication technologies,
- knows how to present themselves and the results of their work in the public, uses professional language,
- applies appropriate methods for solving problems based on analytic-critical and creative thinking,
- is open (in solving problems) to acquire and use different and innovative procedures, formulate arguments and evidence to defend their results,
- can recognize their pros and cons of individual solutions and is aware of the need to consider their levels of risk,

- has the prerequisites for constructive and cooperative conflict resolution

### Civil competences:

- realizes the basic humanistic values, the meaning of the national cultural heritage, applies and protects the principles of democracy,
- fully understands their personal interests in connection with the interests of the broader group or company,
- is able to reflect on one's own identity at an appropriate level, builds their own autonomy / independence as a member of the whole,
- knows how to set goals and priorities according to their real abilities, interests and needs,
- understands the principles of business and considers its prerequisites when planning,
- can acquire and use information on education and employment opportunities, competencies towards initiative and entrepreneurship,
- is able to innovate widespread disrepair in solving tasks, plan and manage new projects with the intent to achieve goals, not only in work but also in everyday life, competencies to perceive and understand culture and express themselves with the tools of culture,
- can express themselves in foreign languages and achieve friendly communication
- recognizes the importance of cultural communication in their lives and in the life of society as a whole,
- Appreciates the cultures and traditions of other nations

### Graduate's profile

In the graduate's profile it is necessary to include, besides the acquired competencies, also the goal of education. The competences obtained are approximately the same in all modules. In addition to intercultural competencies, communication and interpersonal skills are also gained. The individual modules by their topic and content directly determine the individual acquired the competences of the graduate resulting from the training module.

## 4. Example from the Learning Module

The aim of training programme is to prepare graduates to acquire multicultural competencies by learning about different traditions, ethics and etiquette.

The aim of the training is to involve the trainees in workshops for becoming young leaders, youth workers or people that are ready to work in multicultural environment.

They will acquire a new professional qualification in the field of international project implementation.

#### 4.1. Form of education with learning modules

##### General conditions

Modules are compact separate teaching units that include:

- module name,
- the school year and module validity date,
- hours of module study,
- module goal,
- learning outcomes that represent performance standards,
- the content of the education to be produced for each individual educational output,
- description of methods and forms of teaching and strategies of learning,
- learning resources to be available to the learner if they wish to master the given content of the module,
- description of the individual learning outcomes, including the methods and means of evaluation and the assessment of the performance of the learners.

#### 4.2. Learning module

The most unobtrusive activities for building intercultural competencies is the tools for team building. When trainees are asked to do something together, to have a task that has to be fulfilled in a short period of time, then the participants start to cooperate and “neglect” any cultural differences. The individuals are evaluated on their contribution to the team work.

##### Module I - Team building

**Goal: To understand differences between individual and team work.**

- The need for teamwork
- Why the organization and individuals need teamwork
- Team types

Students are asked to write the first word that comes to their mind when they see the figures (just one word or several words) and take the picture as they are able. The trainer approaches each participant and reads the words they write. Everyone writes almost different words. How different are different views on the same figures. A team is needed to assemble such different views.

Then show another picture and ask each person to draw it. Everyone draws a different image, according to his or her own abilities. Again make the conclusion that individuals can see differently but these separate pictures can contribute to making a more realistic drawing.



## Session A

**Goal:** This is a creative building exercise in which participants build towers from LEGO blocks in teams. The aim is to support team work and collaboration.

**Instructions:** The objective of the two preliminary formed groups is to build the highest tower with LEGO blocks.

Introduce the objectives of the activity and how to get the most out of it and enjoy it too. Propose listening, trying things and not taking it too seriously. Ask them if they have understood the task or have anything they want to add. Introduce brief discussion, what do people do when they work effectively together? Some suggestions can be offered: For example, everyone having an opportunity to contribute perhaps and ask for more ideas from the group. You might list these on a chart and display them.

Introduce the practical exercise. Groups of four to six people each build a Lego tower. It is a mini-project. Each group has the same number and type of "bricks" they have up to 20 minutes to build the tower and make a profit by doing so.

The "profit" is calculated as follows. Profit in Euros = height of tower in cm multiplied by 3, minus planning time in minutes multiplied by 2, minus construction time in minutes multiplied by 5, minus 50 cents per brick which is not used.

When you are planning you can look at and handle the "bricks" but not put them together! The tower must stand by itself for a minute. It is possible to build a very respectable tower reasonably quickly and make a profit.

Do the exercise and calculate the "profits". This is quite quick; you can just count the bricks left over. The other indicators are easy to be measured.

Review the learning from the exercise in each group. People could refer to the list they created at the beginning of the exercise and see how they did against the things they thought were important for people to work effectively together. One person in each group could make sure everyone has time to speak while everyone else just listens.

Repeat the tower building exercise, as before. Calculate the "profits". You might consider splitting groups and forming new ones to maximise the opportunity for team building across a the whole group.

Review in groups, as before. There will be new learning about using experience. You may also find it helpful for people to identify the assumptions they made.

Here are some additional things to notice about each group.

- Does the group use its expertise? (Some people may have built Lego towers before.)
- How does the group handle disagreement? (Do they face it openly, use voting, or suppress it. What are the consequences of their choice)
- How do they make decisions? (By consensus, by one person or a pair, by voting, or do they avoid making them. What are the consequences?)
- Do they listen to and follow the instructions or just dive in? (People differ in their learning style, activists tend to do first and think later, theorists prefer to think first and do later)



- How does leadership emerge? How involved is everybody in the activity? Do others bring people in or is it everybody for her/himself?

### **Some thoughts on structuring the exercise.**

Consider how you divide the larger group into two teams. You can divide people randomly by alphabetical order of first names. You could also divide people by putting the "noisier" people in one group and the "quieter" people in another. This can be very interesting as the noisy people learn what it is like to have to shout to be heard and the quiet people learn that they can make a valuable contribution when they have the space to do so.

Consider having one person in each group keeping time and noting when "construction" starts. This is when anyone joins two pieces of Lego together.

Consider asking each person or some people to observe one of the "things people do when they are being effective together" as it happens in the group as well as taking part in the activity. This will help people learn about how to observe what happens in a group as well as take part. This is a very useful skill. The "things people do" will be quite simple. They might be: Agreeing what the objective of the task is. Making sure everybody has a turn. Listening and not interrupting is the group work will make participants more self-reliant. If you want you could add a bonus payment for flair or aesthetic appeal.

Reviewing learning: When you review the learning from the exercise, ask each person what she or he learned about working together effectively and give everybody the opportunity to speak without interruption, before moving on to more general points.

## **Session B**

### **Goal**

To observe how teams work and give them space to learn from their own mistakes

### **Instructions**

You put one bucket in one place and some water in it. You explain participants that it is poison. You can add some more information like if this poison drops anywhere all the creatures around us will be died. You make line around the bucket (3-4 meters area) You call this area dangerous area. You can use stop-bands or other resources to sign dangerous area.

Next step is to give participant some simple resources (like sticks, ropes, paper, something that can be joined to each other etc.) You give short time to the participants to take bucket from the dangerous area without dropping the poison. Make announcement that they have only one chance. Observe what is going on and take notes. Make time pressure or give them very short time to do that.

### **Evaluation:**

Ask question: What did they feel? What happened and why it happened so? If they succeed ask why? What was their strategy? If not ask the same things and evaluate the reason of the results.

Expected results: They will learn about the importance of team work and the decision-making process. Probably all of them will try to fix the task or vice versa. At both circumstances it will be good activity for learning by doing and understanding the importance of teamwork.

## **Session C**

## EARTHQUAKE ESCAPE

Objective: to build trust and to learn to work together in a situation in which people's abilities and needs are different.

Group Size: 6 to 10 participants (or break large groups into small groups of 6 to 10 each)

Description: Explain to the group that there has just been a major earthquake and that many of the group members have sustained injuries. Select different group members to have different injuries and instruct them to act out these injuries during the course of the activity. One person may be deaf with cotton balls in his/her ears; another person is blind with a blindfold on. Someone may be unconscious and must lie on the ground. Others may have broken legs or arms with splints made out of cloth strips and cardboard or wood pieces, or you may tie someone's arms to his/her side. You may or may not appoint one or more people to have no injuries. You can also stay with difficulties which participants have.

Once each person is set up with his/her injuries, tell the group you just got word that we are expecting earthquake and they are in a dangerous area and must move to safety.

Designate an area that has been declared safe at least twenty meters away. Prior to the activity, set up obstacles such as tables, overturned chairs, and other objects between the danger zone and the "safe area".

The group must move everyone to the safety area without causing any further injury.

### DISCUSSION PROMPTS:

1. How did you feel when helping others get to safety?
2. How did you feel if others had to help you?
3. Do you have any difficulties that require you to accept help from others? If so, how do you deal with this?

The session will end with reflection on the activities which are organized in different countries. Participants start sharing their experiences in team-building games and activities integrated in their countries' school educational system.

## 5. Evaluation system

The evaluation itself was prepared on the basis of a sample of the evaluation form and at the same time, through the demonstration of modules from individual sessions, so that students can share what competencies they have acquired. At the same time, besides the evaluation of the graduates themselves, it is necessary to introduce evaluation of the ability to work in a team, to observe human rights, to be tolerant and be able to appreciate cultural differences. It is necessary to identify the minimal standards, learning modules and training sessions.

In such a form of lifelong learning, it is expected that learners have a real interest in learning and acquiring intercultural competencies and not just getting the certificate or title as youth

worker. Therefore it is inevitable, that truly competent students with good communication skills and human attitudes to learning must be involved in this form of learning.

### 5.1. Internal evaluation system

We would use recommended forms of assessment, both formative and summative. Format rating is used to improve the quality of education and training. Summative evaluation is used for decision-making. The following methods can be used to evaluate the pedagogical and professional staff:

- observation
- interview
- results of the learners who the teacher or youth worker trained (including acquired competencies)
- evaluation of the results of pedagogical staff in the field of further education, creation of teaching aids, educational modules and team-building games
- evaluation of teaching and professional staff by the institution's management
- mutual assessment of teachers (which also requires mutual observations and "open hours")
- assessment of teachers and youth workers by the learners

### Long-term projects and international cooperation

The training module itself and its superstructures have been developed on the basis of international cooperation. These results can be used by general public and serve as a basis for further possible development of institutions and craftspeople.

We used the following didactic principles when creating the modules:

- principle of sequence (from simple to more complex learning)
- principle of proportionality (adapted for each learner)
- principle of continuity (even distribution of curriculum)
- principle of durability (applicability of education and its use in action)

Educational outputs were formulated for:

Learning outcomes as a result of modular learning can be determined during the teaching period at different levels of education and at the end of the training as follows:

- after completing a single thematic module
- after completing two or more related thematic modules

- after completing a workshop task
- as a summative result of education - at the final presentation of the output: the final work

## 6. Educational outputs

The main goal of the learners is to master the modules at least at the base level compared to the professional youth workers and professors.

### 6. 1. Basic steps in creating an education module

Modules are compact separate teaching units that include:

- module name,
- the school year and module validity date,
- hours of module study,
- module goal,
- learning outcomes that represent performance standards,
- the content of the education to be produced for each individual educational output,
- description of methods and forms of teaching and strategies of learning,
- learning resources to be available to the learner if they wish to master the given content of the module,
- description of the individual learning outcomes, including the methods and means of evaluation and the assessment of the performance of the learners

**Within the project, we implemented nine modules.**

Modular education is a complex integrated system in which education is divided into independent teaching units - modules. A study programme made up of shorter units is more attractive and motivating. The module learning arrangement will ensure that all modules, courses and programmes are formed according to a unified methodology. This determines the interconnection between modules, courses and training programmes. The modular system is flexible and allows the institution to respond quickly to innovative processes and flexibility, related to the way, form and time of study, to the learner's individual abilities.

The module is:

- a separate part of the curriculum,
- a binding and comprehensive training unit,

- defining what the learner will handle,

Project modules have a higher time allocation due to the difficulty of mastering and acquiring practical skills.

Within modules we defined basic:

- material conditions – items that will be used for the team-building activities
- personnel conditions - the quality of the trainer
- organizational conditions - individual time grants and length of training
- conditions of work safety and health protection in education and training, they are legally relevant regulations, professional supervision of practical training, maintenance and periodic inspection of buildings, hygiene regulations, compliance with fire protection, etc.
- assessment standard for learners

## 6.2. Contents of the educational modules

Ethics, etiquette and philosophy course is primarily focused on:

- Basics of polite behaviour,
- Etiquette,
- Tolerance and
- Brief history of philosophy which will be explained using examples from practice.

The training is oriented on work in groups, non-formal educational methods and games focusing on explanation of cultural peculiarities.

The following topics are included:

1. Basic human rights and freedom issues,
2. Status of women in society,
3. Unwritten rules of polite behaviour,
4. Religious tolerance and ecumenism,
5. Attitudes of majorities to minorities and migrants,
6. Environmental preservation,
7. Tourism and etiquette of travelling,
8. Bioethics issues,
9. Culture and traditions of our countries.

Each topic will be accompanied with comics that will depict the peculiarities of everyday culture in Slovakia, Italy, Bulgaria and Spain and the traditions followed by the citizens in our partner countries.

Traditions define our attitude toward ethics as a philosophy of moral values and human rights observance. Understanding traditions, ethics and etiquette will lead to developing intercultural competencies.

This will be done by implementing the following methods of non-formal education:

- name games,
- team building games,
- ice breakers,
- role-play,
- brain storming,
- pair work,
- group work,
- special education methods- simulations, community learning, reflection
- Theater techniques: breathing exercises, tongue twisters and body exercises.

Learning by doing will engage the trainees to compose short stories which they will make into photo stories about universal values, ethics and human rights and diverse cultural traditions.

## 7. Evaluation form - self-assessment of the learner

We will present a self-assessment form with yes / no answers. In this self-assessment a learner or a graduate should assess their progress in achieving intercultural competence by getting to know the Traditions, Ethics and Etiquette. The form can be supplemented as needed.

The second example of evaluation can be a questionnaire on the information in the topics.

