

Intercultural Stimulation - training across cultures and generations.

**Internal good practice by
the Comparative
Research Network e.V.
Berlin, Germany.**

**Intercultural Stimulation
- working on intercultural
skills and digital
knowledge**

The intercultural Stimulation is the longest ongoing program at CRN. The training is organized with different programs and partners, while its curriculum is universal and easy transferable.

The training is designed for persons working in intercultural context. Generally speaking the course looks and feels for the participants as a training on the use of digital storytelling and audiovisual media in their job. This makeup is used to put them into work in small intercultural groups on a certain project, with deadlines, vague instructions and uncertain knowledge. This leads usually to critical intercultural situations, on which the course reflects on later stages. The final product of every group will be thus not just an audiovisual film and skills, but as well experience in intercultural project work and capabilities to handle similar situations in the future work life.



Intercultural stimulation in brief

102 participants from 52 countries

10 times performed since 2011

12 staff involved

Participants age 18 to 76



Since the trainings had not just been performed with around 50 different cultures, but also all age groups, the curriculum was identified as the internal best practice of CRN. The generations work together, exchange knowledge and learn in this courses creatively from each other. The learning process is in both directions, since reflections are done in every generation with its own experiences and shared together in the training.

Digital Aspects of the training

The exchange between the cultures is the main focus of the training. The intergenerational aspects had not been reflected on before the evaluation. After discussing and highlighting those aspects, the organizers could easily see, that the training is working as well in intergenerational context.

The curriculum is based on the so called Kolb Circle, a method commonly used in adult education, to design trainings. Kolb believed that reflection and experience are

the keys for adults to learn. Both - reflection and experience - are quite individual. It is therefore easy to share and compare them. They are connected to generations. The more generations share their experience, the more they can reflect on each other and thus learn from each other. In the design of the training this is a core method. Although it is hidden until the end, when the intercultural impacts are revealed to the participants, it works between cultures but as well between generations.

Since when?

The first training was organized in March 2011. Since then 10 sessions had been carried out. Parts of the curriculum had been as well adapted for conferences, workshops and other trainings.

Target groups, national, international or local focus?

The main target groups are trainers, teachers and experts working in intercultural context. Since the curriculum had been transformed for other context, CRN used it as well for various audiences - starting from

researchers to soldiers, entrepreneurs and learners. The focus of the trainings had slowly shifted from purely intercultural to as well intergenerational use. Recently CRN adapted the curriculum towards inclusion.

The trainings are designed for international groups. Thus it is always locally based and use the advantages and communities present at the location. This means that they take Berlin or Szczecin as a stage, reflecting on the local realities.



Strength, weakness, opportunities and threads of the Intercultural Stimulation

Strength

During the evaluation of the good practice a number of strength had been identified.

- The curriculum is easy adaptable and transferable to other contexts and target groups.
- Learners are trained in two different skills, intercultural and digital competences.

- Participants gain practical knowledge and experience.
- The method is highly creative.
- The method can be used by any participant in his everyday context (work, life, education).
- The tools can be used as well for ice breaking and team building.

- Every single participants is involved in the training and gains individual knowledge.

Weakness

In the evaluation a few weaknesses had been revealed.

- The visibility of the intergenerational and intercultural aspects depends strongly on a skillful de-briefing by the trainers.
- The group dynamics have to be monitored permanently.
- The curriculum needs flexibility, which not every training provider can afford.

Opportunities

If the curriculum is developed, a few opportunities can be met.

- The curriculum can be further tailored for specific intergenerational trainings or for inclusion.
- A de-briefing guide could be developed to secure the visibility of the intergenerational aspects.



Threads

During the evaluation no relevant threads had been identified. The threads are concerning rather funding and internal management than the tools, methods and curriculum.

Which aspects are transferable?

The intercultural stimulation is based on a curriculum, which makes it embedded into other trainings and curricula. Therefore the method is highly transferable. Besides combining it with audiovisual training, other contexts are possible (eg. Project management trainings, leadership trainings but as well other content).

The intercultural stimulation keeps the intercultural team building and competences in the focus. The training might be transformed into an intergenerational stimulation. Both topics deal with reflecting on understanding, exclusion and inclusion. The methods and exercises used, can be de-briefed on both topics.

The intercultural stimulation is designed for trainers. Thus the focus is on easy, hand on

approaches, which should be easily transferred and repeated by different partner organizations. The participants are provided with a digital and an intercultural cook books, summarizing the exercises and most important de-briefing questions.

The methodological flexibility of the curriculum and the cookbooks, which provide the practical tools, make the good practice highly transferable.

A success story of the good practice

Hosting more than one hundred participants - who each individually created their own reflections - make it difficult to find an outstanding success story. A strong Alumni network is created, out of which new projects, trainings and friendships had been born.

Giuseppa for example is a 67 years old former school inspector from Italy. Before she joined the training she was afraid of all "digital stuff" and did not use the internet. Being invited to one of our trainings, she started to go online and use Facebook. During the training she shared stories and

experiences from her life, helping younger to understand the context of migration. She learned how to work with audiovisual media and lost the fear of sharing her stories. Nowadays she is not just active on Facebook sharing her stories, but as well creates wonderful slide shows and films on her garden, hobbies and family.

Much more stories could be told, but this example shows how the intercultural stimulation creates creative pathways in lifelong learning.