

# Cultural forum



## Brief description of the activity

Besides a unique personal identity every human belongs to different culture and/or groups, like family, friends, religion or ethnic group. This activity is meant to identify yourself through engaging into conversation and action with people from other backgrounds. One can recognise his/her own identity by the level of understanding of another culture and traditions.

## Cultural forum

### Topics:

Identity is unique personal structure of every individual. It is exactly what human is and what he/she is identified with, define through and what makes him special in relation to others. It is unconscious process based on which we create our thoughts, feelings and actions. Hence, identity could be personal but it also can be common. By common identity we think of various groups, like family, friends, religion or ethnic groups. Every human belongs to particular group and based on that we create particular feelings, findings, facts, thoughts. This common identity comes from culture. As a nation we quickly connect to what is traditional, common to our nation.

By this activity we are intending to discover how our identity is built, is it based on particular culture and acknowledge that behavior may endanger intercultural dialogue, and lastly, obtaining some appropriate actions for successful intercultural dialogue. The methodology used shall be participatory.

### Duration:

The activity is adjustable according to the possibilities of the implementation of the game.

: The entire activity can take up to 7 hours. If such duration is too much, the game phases can be split in different days throughout 1 or 2 weeks.

### Costs:

Not particular costs. All the material is normally at disposal of a youth center

### Location:

The best location would be somewhere in the nature or any outdoor space, but close to the town. It can be a place like playground, meadow, yard or in general somewhere where the group will have possibility to gather without disturbing factors. Indoor place is also applicable, as long as the place has no distributing factors. For the rest of the activity it is im-

portant to be close to people because the research is needed to be done with the help of other local people.

**Materials:**

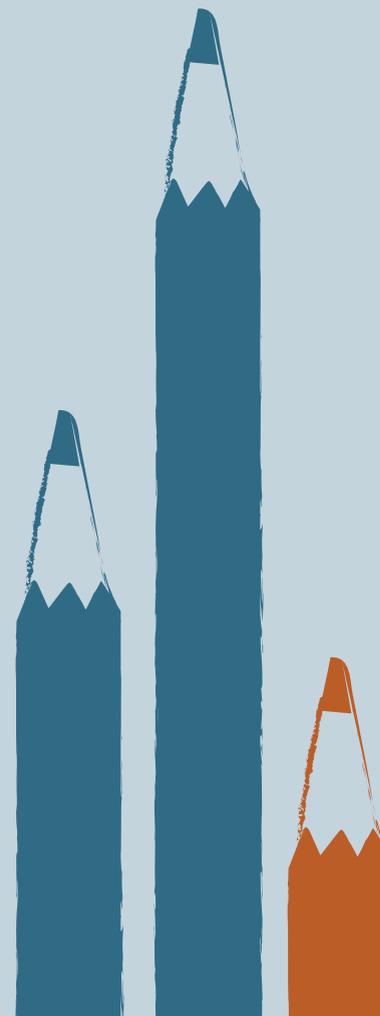
One camera per group, one laptop per group (not necessary but welcomed), projector (not necessary but welcomed), two posters per group, pens and colors, glu, scissors, balloons, post-it of different colours for voting.

**Staff needed and eventual specific skills required:**

At least 2 coordinators are needed to lead the activity but no specific skills required. And someone who will help an actor to edit video.

**Participants involved:**

Between 15 and 30 participants.



## Steps:

### Before

Preparation of the material, setting the place

### During

The participants divide themselves into groups. The coordinator prepares a bag full of little papers different colors after which each participant choose the color. The coordinator divide them into 3 - 6 groups by colors. You can leave this in total to be their own task.

Creating identity. Each group has 30 - 50 minutes to create identity of their group. They are left without any limit. More they are creative within their ideas better it is. They can decide what is their culture and way of behavior. The coordinator must give the rules to the participants as follows:

- You have 30 - 50 min to create your culture and

create your identity

- Decide the name of the group, its origin and era
- What kind of organisation is your group: e.G. Community, individual etc.
- What is your religion, belief, philosophy?
- What are your biggest holidays and how do you celebrate them?
- How do you trade, if you even do? Do you have money or do you trade in another way?
- How do you behave in everyday life: greetings, communication, rules.
- Create symbols that represent your culture - flag, customs or anything else
- But you are unlucky because you do not have enough population, so create the method for pro-

motion with which you will convince others to join you. For this you will have 6 minutes to present yourself, of course in your own way, and get new participants.

After an hour they all meet in the place, they call it 'cultural forum' and it presents the interspace where all cultures meet and are presented.

Cultural forum. When all participants gather in cultural forum, one of the coordinators greet the participants and tell them that they gathered to issue the best presentation of the native culture and identity award. The order is the following: firstly, coordinator choose the group to present first and this group choose the following group. Every group has 10 min for presentation. After the presentations we have 20 min to discuss, open the discussion with questions, give opinions, etc. The coordinator moderates the whole process. If there are no concerns, we can skip this step.

Voting and announcement of the results. The coordinator explains the system of voting. Every individual gets one sticker which he/she can vote with in a way to stick it on the poster prepared for this. The members of each group get the same color of the sticker. The participants of the group are not allowed to vote for their own group. the colors of the stickers prevent cheating. Coordinators count the votes and announce the results. The coordinators try to make it as solemnly as possible and prepare a symbolic gift related to the topic. Maybe a product of local trade. The break follows.

After - conversation in groups. Coordinator make the groups, different than for creation of the culture. The coordinator explains the rules: they have 10 min to discuss in the groups:

- What was the most interesting for me?
- Was it hard to live the role? Why?
- What do i know now about nations which i didn't

know before?

- Which findings surprised me the most?
- What would you be changing if you do the same work again?
- what has been easy to research? What difficult? Why?

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Poster creating. Presenting on the poster the most important findings of the day. The coordinator now invites participants to walk around each poster to read the findings and get new ideas for themselves. The coordinator sets the rules for the next 20 minutes to make the poster:

- What have been the most important findings?
- What has the most surprised me in other groups - what they find out what my group did not?
- How do we see members of other cultures?

- Do you think that all inhabitants who live here are the same? Do they have same culture?

Plenary conversation is led by one of the coordinator who has to lead the conversation in a way not to allow insult and to create constructive dialogue. This conversation is important for the purpose of getting an image of another culture. Did you get another ideas and findings read on posters, what have you learned? What is it that creates culture, identity of the particular nation? Does anyone wish to change his/her actions? If yes, how and why?

## Do's and don'ts

It is not easy to be part of the group that thinks differently, and it is not easy to accept how other people look at you. Some people (like the two participants) have the opportunity to try different cultures. Some of them are respectful and others are not. As the staff

keep observing youngster's behavior, their feelings, level of acceptance and when you feel or see something is not going the right direction, take a moment and pause the whole scenario in order to break the irregularity, disrespect, impatience etc.

## Innovative aspects for the promotion of intercultural

By giving the youngsters the possibility to directly experience different customs, culture and tradition this activity is a power tool for the promotion for interculturality. To get into the shoes of a particular culture and at the same time meet various culture but also giving youngsters enough space to create their own culture and thus see what really is important for them, what aspect is the most bothering to them or most significant.

## Possible follow-up

It is a good a bit longer 'energiser', a mindful game, workshop for any event, or an activity in youth exchange, where the equality, cultural differences, acceptance and similar is the topic. It opens many ideas and it places everyone involved in the shoes of someone else.

## Bibliography

Toolkit 'Do you speak interculturally?' by Alenka Blazinsek, Saso Kronegger, CNVOS, Ljubljana 2008

