

## Lesson plan 2 DEALING WITH STEREOTYPES

In this lesson plan the students create a mind map representing different (stereotypical) views on other (work) cultures.

Ideally, this activity takes place in all the countries involved in the mobility project.

### EXPERIENCES

Students

- collect information about people and cultures from other countries
- reflect on their perception of other cultures
- reflect on stereotypes in general and particularly in relation to the workplace

### TARGETED COMPETENCES

Students

- can identify cultural specificities (FREPA, skills, S-2.8)
- can talk about certain aspects of their cultures and other cultures (FREPA, skills, S-4)
- are willing to abandon their prejudices (FREPA, Attitudes, A-11)

### PROCEDURE

#### BEFORE



The teacher prepares information/quotations/pictures which s/he thinks describe cultural features of all of the institutions in the different countries participating in the mobility project. Other countries can be included as well. The links presented in the example section provide plenty of information specific to each country. To encourage critical distance, it is important that in their example to the students, the teacher includes information about his/her own cultures/communities as we are not always aware of the way in which other people (stereotypically) perceive our own culture(s). The information/quotations/pictures are discussed in the class.

If the teacher uses pictures instead of quotations, s/he should include pictures of the workplace e.g. /for example offices, canteens, manufacturing space, board rooms, people at meetings etc.



The teacher could perhaps also make the students aware that there might be situations where they will have to leave their comfort zone. Such situations may occur e.g. when the student's appearance does not match the expectations of the host company, or when colleagues have a different understanding about what punctuality is, or else when the student does not have the same understanding of and relationship to authority. The links below to the European Work Placement provide examples of cultural misunderstandings at work. These examples can be used in order to become aware of one's own cultures. It also encourages critical distance towards one's

own (work) cultures.

If you use a specific text which mentions the name of the country/community, and that of its inhabitants, delete these details as well as any other clues that could give away the identity of the country. Different stations are organised in the classroom - each representing one of the countries/communities. You can lay out the location (within the classroom) of each country on a map, so that the students know which station represents which country.



Each student receives some information about a specific cultural aspect of the country they are trying to identify. S/he will decide which station (country) this information belongs to.



Once all students have made their decision about where they belong, they share the content of their information with others and explain why they have chosen this specific country. During the discussion students are encouraged to express their agreement and disagreement. The danger of a stereotypical vision of a country specific culture within the working environment is discussed.



The points of discussion are summarized, e.g. in a mind map.



At the end of the lesson a 5 minute video clip is played, showing examples of life and living in the host country, and students are made aware of the people in the video and their diverse cultural backgrounds. The danger of a stereotypical vision of a culture is explained if this has not been done so already.



For their homework the students are asked to look for statements, pictures, books, leaflets etc. describing the different cultures mentioned during the lesson. They share the materials that they have found about their own and their partners' cultures in class. Students could discuss what they need to know if they work in multicultural teams.



During the next lesson, students prepare cards with specific information about selected countries/regions. The information should be about their own country/regions and the other country(ies)/regions involved. These cards will be used later with all students. Doing this selection, they reflect on and discuss the choices they make. E.g.

Is it really typical?

Is it typical for some people?

Is it important?

Is it interesting?

Is it surprising?

Is it the same or different for all generations?

Is it the same or different in all situations?

Is it the same as in other places, is it different?

...



The students add information to their mind map.

#### **DURING**



The students use the cards with the information/quotations/pictures, which have been prepared in advance by everyone involved, in the same way as in the preparatory phase (i.e. different stations for the countries/regions).

It is important that there is time given for discussion, if necessary with the teacher's help, for any language issues which might arise. It is important that students notice that people can share cultures but that, at the same time there is great diversity. Cultures are not stable but rather fluctuate and change over time. Furthermore, people can simultaneously belong to multiple cultures where they adapt themselves to the different cultural circumstances.

We would like to stress that students need to have a record of their observations either as written notes, photos or audio recordings in order to be able to complete or revise their mind map.

#### **AFTER**



After the mobility project students review the points in the mind maps and discuss any changes in their perception. They also exchange their stories from the work placement.

#### **FINAL PRODUCT FOR THE PORTFOLIO**

A mind map representing different views on other cultures.

#### **TOOLS AND RESOURCES**

Resources:

- Video course European Work Placement: <http://www.immi.se/eiw/training.html>
- Vocationally Oriented Culture and Language: [www.vocalproject.eu](http://www.vocalproject.eu)
- Ready, Study, Go: <http://www.rsgo.eu/>

Links with country specific information:

- <http://www.culturecrossing.net/>
- [http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm)
- <http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/country-profiles.html>
- <http://members.virtualtourist.com/m/1cd25/1/>
- See list of video clips in the example section



## EXAMPLES

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### 1. Sample film clips

<http://youtu.be/lXoa6Zf2GHU> (stereotypes: a Hijab-wearing Muslim is not served in a bakery in Texas, 10:08)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAoa62wmd1A> (perception : a young Chinese man wants to live in Ireland and learns Irish to find out that almost nobody speaks the language when he moves there, 9 :20)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=miUKTDMtTXg> (anti-racism: a “letter home” from a homesick African in Ireland, 1:51)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5sjXyqmWkQ> (street life in Berlin-Kreuzberg, 2:55)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP21EP\\_is4Q](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IP21EP_is4Q) (daily sights in the city of Prague, 5:02)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pQvlfJ-Wdmo&feature=related> (walking in Naples, 6:30)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QlwHotpl9DA> (about the political structure in Belgium (in English), 4:10)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_rfWsAQkb\\_o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_rfWsAQkb_o) (a visit to Belgium (in English), 5:11)

There are many more examples available online– feel free to look around for more video clips about your own country and culture.

2. These modified sample statements came from <http://www.culturecrossing.net/>  
Communication style: *They are direct and say exactly what they mean. Some people may think that they are rude but they are not – it is their culture. [the Netherlands]*

*Greetings: When you meet a person, shake their hands. Good friends and family kiss each other on one or both cheeks. Some men kiss a woman’s hand when saying hello. [Poland]*

*Meetings: Always be on time. They believe that it is rude to be late. [Germany]*

3. Pictures about the target country e.g. festivals, costumes, public transport, supermarkets and other shops, fruit & veg markets, offices, people in work clothes, important landmarks, important people, public spaces etc.

4. Examples of websites that could be used to prepare cards before the mobility project  
[http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/about-eu/countries/index_en.htm)

<http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/resources/country-profiles.html>

5. Example of postcards about European people – clichés – prejudice  
<http://members.virtualtourist.com/m/1cd25/1/>