

MIGRANTS TELL US HOW **to teach about migration**



Scenarios, good practices and insights
for educators working in the field of
media, integration and migration

BASED ON THE RESULTS OF THE PROJECT:



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More about the Migration Media(tor) project:
<https://migrationmediator.project.uj.edu.pl/>

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Warsaw, 2026

Note from the authors

This manual is the result of collaboration, care, and shared commitment to more inclusive societies. We believe in education that doesn't simplify the world but equips people to live meaningfully within its complexity. In times when migration is often framed through fear, numbers, or polarization, we offer this book as a counter-narrative — one that centers empathy, dialogue, and critical thinking.

The scenarios, exercises, and practices collected here have been tested, reworked, and imagined with diverse learners in mind. They are rooted in the values of human dignity, solidarity, and civic courage. We hope they will inspire not only reflection but also deep conversations and collective action.

This publication wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of educators, researchers, cultural workers, and activists across both in Croatia and Poland. We are grateful for your trust and contributions.





Contents

I. About the Project	15
II. Preparation and Research	18
III. Scenarios	33
IV. Tools and Exercises	70
V. Guidelines and Good Practices	80
VI. Conclusion	93



Introduction

Migration has always shaped human experience, yet the way it is framed in public discourse — especially through media — profoundly influences how we understand the world and each other. The Migration Mediator project, rooted in the values of inclusion, critical reflection, and civic engagement, seeks to equip young people and educators with tools to decode these narratives and build more empathetic, informed communities.

This manual is a practical resource developed within the project framework, intended for educators, trainers, and facilitators working with youth and young adults. It brings together a selection of workshop scenarios, exercises, and good practices designed to:

- Promote critical media literacy in the context of migration;
- Encourage intercultural understanding and dialogue;
- Empower participants to recognize and challenge exclusionary narratives;
- Support inclusive, democratic participation.

How can migrants help us build better education?

Teaching about migration is not simply about transmitting facts, definitions, and statistics. It is about giving people the capacity to understand a complex human reality, recognize the mechanisms that shape public narratives, and build relationships across differences. Effective education in this area requires a shift from talking about migrants to learning **with** migrants — and ultimately, to creating educational spaces where lived experience, expert knowledge, and critical thinking meet.

This publication was therefore created in cooperation with people with lived migration experience, who are co-authors of the scenarios presented here. As part of the project, they also served as co-trainers, using their personal stories to ground the workshop content more firmly in real-life contexts. The young migrants shared with us their ways of understanding their own experiences and their perspectives on mobility and adaptation, thereby enriching this handbook with an emic viewpoint

Young people often encounter migration in the media as a distant, generalized phenomenon. Working with real stories — whether shared directly by migrants or presented through carefully curated materials — helps bring nuance and humanity back into the conversation. Personal perspectives interrupt simplified narratives, and they create emotional and cognitive space for more complex, balanced understanding.

Migrants bring forms of expertise that are impossible to reproduce through external sources alone: navigating bureaucratic systems, adapting to new cultures, facing discrimination, rebuilding a sense of belonging.

When invited as **co-educators**, not symbolic guests, they enrich learning with perspectives that help young people understand migration as a human, political, and emotional process. Their presence also shifts power dynamics — showing that knowledge in the classroom does not flow only from “majority” to “minority,” but is **co-created**.

Young people need to understand not just how the media work, but how the media represent migrants.

Migrant educators or migrant-led organizations can help analyse:

- which narratives dominate and why,
- how harmful stereotypes are built,
- which experiences are silenced or erased,
- how media portrayals differ from migrants' lived realities.

Working with migrants in these activities helps participants see the gap between experience and representation — a crucial step in building **empathy and critical thinking**.

Dialogue becomes transformative when migrants participate as equal partners in the conversation. Such interactions not only foster understanding but also dismantle the “us vs. them” division that often appears in media narratives.

Education should highlight not only the challenges migrants face but also the ways they shape communities, economies, and culture. Migrant speakers and migrant-led groups can present examples of civic engagement, entrepreneurship, activism, and community support. This reframes migration from a “problem to be managed” into a story of human agency. It also offers young people constructive models of allyship, solidarity, and cooperation.

Sustainable, impactful education grows from ongoing relationships with migrant-led organizations, local communities, cultural groups, and migrant professionals.

Long-term collaboration helps migration education remain grounded in real needs, emerging issues, and genuine intercultural exchange.





I

About the Project

The Migration Media(tor) project was created to explore how migration is represented in public discourse and how these representations influence young people's understanding of the world.

Migration Media(tor)

2024-2026

The project Migration Media(tor), carried out under the auspices of the Jagiellonian University in cooperation with partners from Poland and Croatia (the Emigration Museum in Gdynia, the PRO HUMANUM Association, and the Center for Cultural Dialogue), has constituted a comprehensive response to one of the most significant challenges of contemporary Europe – the relationship between migration and the media. Its assumptions have been both research-oriented and educational, while being deeply rooted in the values of human rights, reliable information, and the fight against disinformation. The project has been created within the framework of the EU's CERV (Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values) programme and has been implemented between 2024 and 2026.

At the centre of the project team's attention has been an analysis of how the media – both traditional and social – have shaped young people's attitudes towards migration. The starting point has been the assumption that the media have played a key role in creating the social image of the migrant and of migration as a phenomenon, and that their narratives have been able to reinforce both openness and solidarity, as well as prejudice or hostility.

The project has focused on young adults (18–30 years old) – a group that is crucial for the future of European societies and particularly vulnerable to the influence of media messages.

An integral part of the project has been quantitative and qualitative research, including thirty in-depth interviews with young people from Poland and Croatia, as well as a CAWI survey conducted on a sample of one thousand respondents in Poland. Their aim has been to capture the experiences, emotions, and knowledge of participants regarding migration, as well as the ways in which they have constructed their opinions under the influence of the media. These analyses have served as the basis for designing further educational activities.

Another aspect of Migration Media(tor) has been its educational component, which has taken place in the form of workshops devoted to media and intercultural issues. Conducted by experts and practitioners with experience in working with minority groups, the workshops have aimed to develop competences in critical thinking, media message analysis, content creation, and understanding the complexity of contemporary migration processes. Participants have learned to identify disinformation, to recognise hate speech, and to respond to it in a responsible and knowledge-based way. The workshops have been planned both for minority groups and for groups from the host societies throughout 2025 and 2026.

A special event within the project has been the Summer School – an intensive, ten-day educational programme, which has taken place in September 2025 along the route Gdynia–Warsaw–Kraków–Zagreb. Participants from over 15 European countries (both EU member states and those from the Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkans) have taken part in a cycle of workshops, lectures, meetings with journalists, activists and cultural institutions, and have prepared original texts. The outcome of the school has been the publication of a collection of articles authored by the participants themselves – young people with diverse backgrounds, often with migration experience, who have had the opportunity to tell their own stories and to reflect on the role of the media in their lives.

The project has also envisaged the preparation of open educational materials, a set of good practices, research reports, and academic studies. These resources (also this Manual) should serve teachers, educators, and journalists as tools supporting their work with youth in the field of media, anti-discriminatory and intercultural education.

Migration Media(tor) has been not only a research and educational project, but also an attempt to bring about long-term social change. By amplifying the voice of migrants, promoting multi-perspective approaches to migration, and developing critical competences among the younger generation, the project has contributed to building a more inclusive, solidaristic, and disinformation-resistant European society. Its innovativeness has resided not only in interdisciplinarity but also in combining academic approaches with social activism, non-formal education, and media practice.

The project's website <https://migrationmediator.project.uj.edu.pl>



II

Preparation and Research

*How to prepare yourself before conducting a workshop
regarding media, migration, disinformation or/and
antidiscrimination*

Based on the research

conducted during our project,
we discovered that...

In both countries — Croatia and Poland — the young generation uses media in similar ways: social media is their center of information and entertainment, while traditional media (print, radio, television) are becoming less and less practical, even though, paradoxically, they enjoy relatively higher levels of trust. At the same time, in both samples, we see clear gaps between exposure to content about migration and actual knowledge about migration processes — young people often perceive a lot of emotion and hatred in media coverage, but rarely verify information and have poor understanding of political facts (e.g., the status of EU agreements or the situation at borders).

Similarities

Main sources of information and entertainment

In both countries, social media is the primary medium for young people — both for quickly finding out what's happening and for finding content about migration. Traditional newspapers and foreign websites are the least popular in both samples (around 70% of young people in both countries don't actually use them).

The Trust vs. Paradigm

Despite the low actual use of print media, it (and, in Croatia, radio)

has high trust rates — it's the same paradox: young people trust "slower" media but prefer "faster" ones. In both countries, trust in TV and social media is highly polarized — a large proportion of respondents lack trust.

Verification and disinformation

In both studies, the majority of young people do not regularly verify information about migration. Over 80% of both samples observe hate speech against migrants in the media or social media. They see the problem — but rarely engage in checking the facts behind it.

The influence of the media on attitudes

A significant share of young Croatians and Poles recognize the strong role media play in shaping public attitudes toward migration. In both groups, some young people admitted that their own views had changed after encountering specific stories in the media; an even smaller number said that media content ever motivated them to take concrete action.

Ambivalence towards migration

Ambivalence is visible in both populations: some young people declare they support the right to free movement, while at the same time a significant number agree with stereotypes (competition on the job market, concerns about culture, safety, benefits).

Differences – those worth noting

The scale of personal contacts with migrants

In Poland, more young people report personal contact with migrants (around 40% have a migrant among their friends/family, and a similar percentage have met foreign migrants in the country). In Croatia, the percentage of those with no contact is higher—over 40% say they have never met migrants in the country. This is a significant difference in interpreting attitudes: greater social exposure in Poland may explain some of the subtle differences.

Perceptions of migrants from specific regions

Both studies show different attitudes depending on the origin of migrants, but the directions are slightly different:

1. In Croatia, young people are relatively friendlier towards migrants from the EU, Eastern Europe and the Americas, and more skeptical towards East Asia and the Middle East.
2. In Poland, the greatest favorable attitudes are expressed toward migrants from the EU and North America, while markedly negative opinions prevail toward migrants from Africa, the Middle East, and — significantly — parts of Eastern Europe.

The scale of criticism towards media impartiality

In Poland, half of young people clearly question the impartiality of the media on migration — a higher level of skepticism than in Croatia, where respondents are more divided (a quarter say the media is biased, a quarter say it is impartial, and the rest have no opinion). This could be interpreted as greater polarization of opinion in

Poland or greater confusion, consisting of distrust of the message.

Feeling of “too much” or “too little” information

Both groups feel a lack of information on integration, education-related migration, and diaspora issues. The difference appears in the assessment of the intensity of information about war-related migration: in Poland, one in three people believe there is too much; in Croatia, there is also a sense of oversupply in cases of economic and war migration, but the overall profile of dissatisfaction is broader (with more pronounced gaps in information about integration and the diaspora).

Factual knowledge and specific beliefs about boundaries

In both countries, knowledge of the details of migration policy and current processes is low (many people are unaware of the status of the EU pact). In Poland, however, many young people hold specific — and sometimes conflicting — beliefs about the Polish-Belarusian border. 40% believe illegal pushbacks take place, yet a significant share also believes the military presence and the border wall effectively “protect the country.”

Both studies show that educational work should follow two paths simultaneously: (1) developing practical habits of verifying information (as exposure to hate and disinformation is high), and (2) increasing opportunities for direct contact and experience (dialogue, meetings, exchange projects).

How to prepare

to conduct a workshop

Preparing to conduct classes on anti-discrimination and media education is a much more complex process than simply gathering a few definitions and examples. It's work that requires reflection, up-to-date knowledge, the ability to respond to unforeseen situations, and—equally important—an awareness of one's own limitations. The contemporary media world, especially social media, operates at a pace that even journalists can no longer control, and narratives based on emotions spread faster than any fact-based messages. At the same time, social tensions are rising, stemming from both local conflicts and global crises—political, economic, and migration. In such an environment, an educator approaching anti-discrimination cannot act intuitively. They require a solid substantive foundation as well as psychological and methodological preparation.

The challenge is that conducting such classes involves more than just imparting knowledge about stereotypes, prejudices, and hostile language. It also involves confronting participants with their existing perceptions and beliefs, often gleaned from the media, family environment, or their "information bubble." It involves working with emotions—both their own and those of the group. It also involves situations in which the facilitator must respond to disinformation, uncertainty, resistance, or outright questioning of facts.

Therefore, substantive preparation encompasses several areas: knowledge of the mechanisms of discrimination, understanding how modern media operate, competence in educating against hate speech .

and propaganda, and—crucially—developing critical thinking skills and supporting them in others. These competencies are not acquired once and for all; they must be constantly updated, as both social contexts and manipulation strategies change.

Substantive preparation for conducting anti-discrimination and media training should begin with building a solid theoretical foundation. It's difficult to address prejudice without first having a well-organized understanding of the mechanisms that create and maintain these prejudices. Knowledge of the fundamentals of social psychology is essential: confirmation bias, availability heuristics, the scapegoat mechanism, polarization dynamics, and the tendency toward groupthink. These concepts aren't abstract theories—they appear in almost every media commentary, in every heated discussion, in every dispute over "who's to blame" for a difficult situation. Understanding them helps us better anticipate group reactions and act in a way that doesn't escalate conflict.

The second area is knowledge of the contemporary media ecosystem. The world of information today is governed by a different logic than it was just a decade ago. It's worth knowing the basic concepts related to disinformation and propaganda: misinformation, fake news, astroturfing, deepfakes, the principles of algorithms, and information bubbles. This helps not only understand the origins of negative narratives about various groups but also explains to participants why certain content resonates with them more powerfully than others. It's important to stay up-to-date with current disinformation trends, especially in the context of sensitive topics such as migration, international conflicts, minority rights, health, and global political crises. These are areas where emotional manipulation is particularly potent and is often exploited by political actors or interest groups.



In addition to theoretical knowledge, a grasp of current social and political events is also essential. It's not about following every piece of information, but rather understanding the broader context—what narratives appear in the media, what emotions they evoke, and what consequences they might have in conversations with participants. The instructor should be familiar with a variety of information sources, including more conservative, more liberal, and analytical ones. Such diversity isn't about agreeing with everyone, but rather understanding the informational worlds of participants. This is especially important in situations where the group has diverse worldviews.

It's also important to familiarize yourself with real-world examples of discrimination and strategies to counter it in practice—reports from social organizations, studies on hostile language, and analyses of propaganda and anti-discrimination narratives used in education. This allows for more confident use of examples that participants will find credible and reliable, rather than abstract constructs.

In educational work, knowledge about the history of marginalized groups and the contexts in which they fell victim to media or political manipulation can also be extremely helpful. Understanding that hate campaigns have a logic, that they always emerge in moments of crisis, and that they are rarely spontaneous, allows us to better explain to audiences why negative stereotypes are not accidental but often a tool of influence.

Working with a group that comes to class with their own baggage of beliefs, fears, and experiences requires special attention. Often, individuals are strongly attached to content they've heard on social media or in political messages, especially if this content offered them simple answers to complex issues. In such situations, maintaining a balance between firmness and empathy is crucial. Flatly rejecting someone's opinion can lead to the participant becoming closed off

and defensive, preventing further work. A much more effective approach is based on curiosity: "How do you know this?" "What source says this?" "Have you seen other interpretations?" Such questions not only open the conversation but also demonstrate that opinions are worth verifying—not through human judgment, but through analysis of information.

In situations where participants distrust facts because they've previously encountered disinformation, it's especially important to explain the mechanisms, not just "correct the error." Pointing out that a given piece of content was popular because it appealed to emotions—fear, a sense of threat, anger—allows them to understand why it was so easy to believe. Explaining the context is more effective than simply saying, "That's not true." On the other hand, when discussing difficult international topics, especially those that are highly politicized, it's good to rely on several parallel sources and clearly state that not all information can be immediately verified. Transparency increases the educator's credibility.

When working with a group that is rife with emotion—outrage, anxiety, resistance, or frustration—it's worth using methods that foster a sense of security: principles of dialogue, opening rounds, storytelling techniques, and working in smaller subgroups. Participants who feel pressured in a large group often open up when the atmosphere is less confrontational. This is especially important when sensitive topics are at stake, such as migration, armed conflict, cultural tensions, or minority rights.

In explaining that negative narratives against specific social groups are sometimes deliberately created, it's helpful to reference specific historical and contemporary examples. It's worth demonstrating how propaganda works in practice: through exaggerating problems, creating enemies, manipulating images, selectively presenting information, or building dramatic "us vs. them" contrasts. When participants see such mechanisms repeated across different eras and political situations, it's easier for them to accept that contemporary media messages can also be part of someone else's self-interest.

It's also helpful to emphasize that no one should be blamed for falling victim to disinformation. This isn't a sign of weakness or naivety—it's rather a consequence of the complexity of the modern information system. Anti-discrimination classes aren't about fighting people, but about disarming false narratives and strengthening the capacity for critical analysis. An educator who creates an atmosphere of respect, understanding, and openness can help people move beyond defending their own beliefs to discussing facts, values, and the consequences of how we think about others.

Leading anti-discrimination and media literacy classes is a task that requires knowledge, courage, and humility. It's difficult to anticipate every challenge that will arise when working with a group, but you can prepare thoroughly enough to avoid being caught off guard by the most common mechanisms—both psychological and communication. A facilitator's greatest strength, however, lies not in their perfect knowledge of the facts, but in their ability to create an environment in which participants can safely question their own beliefs, ask questions, and learn how to distinguish information from manipulation.

It's worth remembering that educational work isn't about "winning the discussion," but about supporting the process of understanding. In the instructor-participant relationship, it's especially important not to assume the role of an authoritarian corrector of others' thinking. A much more effective approach is one based on dialogue, in which the educator shares knowledge but also listens, asks questions, and responds to emotions. Then, classes become a space for real change, not another attempt to impose a single, correct narrative.

Some practical tips to help you conduct such classes:

1. Update your knowledge on an ongoing basis.

Media, political narratives, and disinformation trends change rapidly. It's wise to regularly review diverse sources, reports from fact-

checking organizations, and analyses from public and independent media. This allows you not only to know the facts but also to understand the emotions circulating in the public sphere.

2. Build an argument toolkit.

It's not about preparing a list of "counterarguments," but about the ability to explain processes—why certain narratives emerge, what interests political actors have, what emotions are exploited. Participants more readily accept systemic explanations than dry corrections.

3. Use examples that are close to people.

An article excerpt, a short video, a screenshot from social media—these are often more effective than abstract definitions. An example acts as a practical illustration of the mechanism.

4. Open up space to ask questions.

Many people don't share their doubts because they fear being judged. If you create an atmosphere where even difficult questions are treated as a natural part of the learning process, the group will be more engaged and open.

5. Don't be afraid to admit that you don't know something.

Paradoxically, this strengthens your credibility. It shows participants that critical thinking doesn't mean knowing all the data, but being willing to seek it out and verify it.

6. Remember emotions – yours and the group's.

Discrimination, international conflicts, and disinformation are topics they address. Participants may react strongly and may have personal experiences related to the issues raised. Sometimes they need to express their emotions first before listening to the arguments.

7. Emphasize agency.

People are more willing to engage in change when they see that they have an impact – for example, by critically selecting media content, responding to hate speech in their environment, or supporting anti-discrimination activities.

Ultimately, what matters most in this work is not just what is said, but how it is said — with respect, openness, and an awareness of the world's complexity. Anti-discrimination and media education provide tools that help people better understand reality and view each other with greater empathy.

This may not change the world immediately, but it certainly helps transform the way people function in their communities. And that's where every major change begins.



Research...

where to start?

It's essential to take a hard, honest look at your own sources of information.

We all think we do it, but it's surprisingly easy — even for educators — to slip into the feeling that we already know enough or that our sources are automatically reliable. An educator who claims to verify facts while simultaneously use old, unverified or one-sided content easily loses credibility. Therefore, it's worth developing the habit of regularly checking the origins of information we consider "certain": who the author is, what connections they have, what other sources write about a given topic, whether the text uses arguments, data, or merely appeals to emotions. It's also helpful to compare what we read with analyses from fact-checking organizations and media outlets with different ideological profiles. This practice allows us to see how different groups interpret the same events and where simplifications or manipulations may occur. A facilitator who practices information hygiene teaches participants not only tools but, above all, attitudes — mindfulness, cognitive humility, and responsibility for what they share.

Below you'll find a set of tools that can help you check photos, analyze the credibility of sources, and verify potential fake news.

Verification of photos and visual materials

- Google Images – image search

<https://images.google.com>

It allows you to check where a given image has appeared before and whether it has already been used in a different context.

- TinEye – Advanced Image Search

<https://tineye.com>

This is especially useful when Google doesn't find many matches. A good tool for detecting "recycled" photos.

- FotoForensics – Metadata and Manipulation Analysis

<http://fotoforensics.com>

It allows you to check for any image modifications, compression, artifacts, and basic information about how the file was processed.

Browse archives and previous versions of pages

- Wayback Machine (Internet Archive)

<http://web.archive.org>

An indispensable tool for checking pages that have been changed or removed. It allows you to see if material has been edited following a wave of criticism or as part of a disinformation campaign.

Fake news verification and fact-checking analyses

- Demagog – the largest Polish fact-checking organization

https://demagog.org.pl/fake_news/

A database of verified content, analyses of politicians' statements and current disinformation trends in Poland.

- List of fact-checking websites across the globe

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_fact-checking_websites

Try using them during workshops – then participants see that "fact-checking" is not an abstract concept, but a practice that can be implemented daily.



III

Scenarios

This section offers educational scenarios that help groups reflect on discrimination, media, and migration.

The activities encourage critical thinking, raise awareness of stereotypes, and show how media shapes perceptions of migrants.





Migration & media

– basic training

Objectives:

- *Key migration concepts and identifying media sources*
- *Learn core media literacy terms related to migration and disinformation.*
- *Analyze media manipulation in migration coverage.*
- *Understanding impact of misinformation; verifying sources.*

Introduction / Icebreaker activities (15 minutes)

Activities:

- Introduction to workshop topics
- Icebreaker activity
- Expectations of participants – brainstorm – what they would like to learn?

Learning outcomes:

The participant knows and understands the purpose of the workshop, co-creates its content.

Duration:

3 hours

For whom:

High school &
university
students

Min. 10

participants

Knowledge on migration and its sources (20 min)

Discuss key questions:

- What is migration? Young people often confuse terms by using the words "escape", "illegal", "war".
- At this stage of the class you can ask where they get their information about refugees/migrants. Distinguish between emigration and immigration.
- How is it with you? Discussion on how workshop participants learn about migrants - **ideas written on cards and put in order by the facilitator**. Have they ever thought about whether this news shapes their views?
- How much do you know about migration and what is the source of your information?

The participant understands the concept of migration and knows the sources of information on migration

Fake news, disinformation - introduction (25 minutes)

Mini lecture: **Why do we deal with the topic of fake news and manipulation?**

It is very common to encounter false information about migration and migrants (you can refer to the previous question) and to the study - you can quote the study (**reports created within MigrationMediator project**) and display the quotes on the overhead projector.

Introduce new definitions - manipulation, information bubble, viral, scam, clickbait, deepfake, fake news.

Exercise: In pairs or small groups, students are given illustrations or captions with the above slogans. For variety, they can be hung on the way to the workshop room or in envelopes. After entering the room, they try in their groups to figure out the definition of these slogans on their own (they can draw something, add associations). After that they try to match the definition with those prepared earlier by the instructor

The participant knows and understands the concepts of manipulation, information bubble, viral, scam, clickbait, deepfake, fake news, disinformation,





Comment on the workshops at the Emigration Museum in Gdynia, facilitator – Elżbieta Czapka

When speaking about stereotypes, I referred to my book presenting the results of research I conducted in Poland, the United Kingdom, and Serbia (E. Czapka, *Stereotyp uchodźcy*, Olsztyn, 2006). Many of the traits that made up the refugee stereotype in the UK at the time of my research form today's image of refugees in Poland (e.g. criminals, exploiting the welfare system, poor, uneducated).

Since I had worked for many years in Norway, where I also conducted research among migrants, I drew on “migration myths” from the Norwegian context as well. During the pandemic, migrants – especially Somalis – were blamed for spreading the virus. For example, they were criticized for “walking in groups” on the streets. During the workshop, I explained that Somali families are often large, and parents with children may naturally form a sizable group. I also pointed out that migrants had limited access to information about the restrictions being introduced.

Throughout the workshop, I tried to show that many existing myths stem from ignorance, which is why access to reliable information is so important.

I referred to examples from my own “life in emigration.” I emphasized that I am fully aware that I, too, sometimes resort to stereotypes, and I shared situations when, meeting members of other ethnic groups, I ascribed stereotypical traits to them.

- A colleague from Nigeria – “a lazy Black man” – turned out to be the hardest-working participant at the camp.
- A colleague from Tanzania – “a Black woman who must be a great dancer” – could not dance at all.
- A newly met Italian – “all Italians are flirts” – turned out to have nothing flirtatious about him.

I tried to “disarm” or demystify stereotypes, because fighting stereotypes is like fighting windmills. What matters is that we remain aware of their existence, because then it is easier to avoid stereotyping other groups.

I conducted the workshop in such a way that young people would share as many of their thoughts and experiences as possible. I did not want to bombard them with definitions. Instead, I constructed those definitions together with them. It turned out that the most frequently mentioned source of information was TikTok. I introduced the participants to more reliable sources of data/information and explained why they are more trustworthy.

After the first workshop, it became clear that we need more time to work on myths and fake news related to migration and migrants. Very often, young people simply repeat what their parents, friends, or peers say. This has to be approached with great sensitivity, because these are important people in the lives of young people. I tried not to criticize, but to show the mechanisms through which myths are created.

Manipulation in media (35 min)

Each team is given a different example of manipulation about migrants from newspapers - their task is to answer some questions.

Summarize the previous task - a joint discussion:

- What words and expressions do the authors use to increase the emotional weight?
- Underline these words and expressions in the text.
- What impression can these articles make on the public?
- In your opinion, is the article objective?
- What is the prevailing attitude toward migrants and the issue of migration in the quoted excerpts from the articles?

Comment. Return to the question from the beginning of the workshop: what do you associate the words migrants and migration with? Often your views can be influenced by what you have seen on television or the Internet on this subject, what you have read in newspapers or heard on the radio. The media has had, and continues to have, a significant role in defining what it means to be a migrant, and influencing how people relate to migrants - in positive and negative terms. We often hear that emigration/refugeeism is something illegal, an escape, and we link it to poverty, making it surprising that refugees own phones or branded shoes.

How does the media/press manipulate?

- Using a photo that depicts a situation that does not fit the article
- use of emotionally charged vocabulary
- use of colloquial vocabulary, e.g. illegal immigrants.

The participant knows the basic concepts and patterns of disinformation and manipulation in the media, and can recognize them.

The effects of media manipulation (35 min)

Why does such information appear in the public space? **Ask each group to prepare a list of the effects of creating fake news and manipulation online and in the media.** Students write ideas on cards and stick them to the wall.

E.g. different moods and emotions of the public towards migrants; triggering a wave of opinions and comments; influencing choices (e.g. political); mindless sharing of information online by Internet users; false accusations; financial damage to companies (false advertising about products); manipulation; ridicule, e.g. memes; hypocrisy of reality, etc.

Key question: WHAT IS IT REALLY LIKE?

- present the current state of migration in Poland in an interactive form (e.g. arrange scraps of various texts hidden in envelopes, read a summary available online, etc.):
- - what minorities live here, since when,
- -how many Poles live abroad,
- -reasons for emigration and immigration.
- local places of multiculturalism, e.g. Gdansk mosque, restaurants, multicultural centers, etc. - places of knowledge about migrants.
- Examples of media to follow in order to have an accurate picture of migration in Poland.

Add HISTORICAL COMPONENT

You can also show how migrants were seen in the past (American articles talking about Slavs) and compare these articles to contemporary media materials.

The participant knows and understands the process of media manipulation and its effects on the approach to migration

Summary of the workshop (15 min)

Open question - why, according to participants, does the media manipulate the topic of migration? Do they know examples of any good practices / media presenting information fairly? How to use the media to avoid being manipulated?

Trainer's summary.

The participant knows and understands the basic concepts of migration, can verify the facts and reliability of information presented in the media





Contemporary migrations

– facts & myths

Objectives:

- *Understanding Migration and its multidimensional nature*
- *Identifying and analyzing contemporary migration trends*
- *Reflecting on Stereotypes and Migration Language*
- *Recognizing and Debunking Migration Myths*

Introduction / Icebreaker activities (15 minutes)

Activities:

- Introduction to workshop topics
- Icebreaker activity
- Expectations of participants – brainstorm: what would they like to learn?

Learning outcomes:

The participant knows and understands the purpose of the workshop, co-creates its content.

Duration:

3 hours 30
minutes

For whom:

High school &
university
students

Min. 10
participants

Migrations – basic definitions (20 minutes)

Activities:

- Warm-up question: do they have migration experience or someone among family or friends with migration experience?
- Follow-up: how would they define migration?
- Presentation of different definitions of migration from various academic disciplines
- Discussion about the usefulness of these definitions in describing contemporary migration
- Identification of criteria that define a movement as migration

Learning outcomes:

The participant understands the concept of migration and knows its determinants.

Contemporary migration trends (25 minutes)

Activities:

- Quiz presentation on contemporary migration trends, including:
 - Countries with the highest and lowest percentage of migrants
 - Feminization of migration
 - Polish migration
 - Forced migration
 - Climate migrations
 - Etc.

Learning outcomes:

The participant knows the contemporary trends and basic characteristics of modern global migration.

Definitions and stereotypes (30 minutes)

Definition of the terms: immigrant, emigrant and refugee. stereotypes on migrations

- **Exercise 1.:** matching definitions with the term; matching examples of particular groups / cases / stories with the corresponding term
- **Exercise 2.:** Working in groups - creating a concept map: what association comes to your mind when you hear the word: group 1 - immigrant, group 2 - emigrant, group 3 – refugee? After the presentation by each group, a question about how these associations are formed -> introduction to the concept of stereotype - definition, examples, presentation of a short film created by PAH and the discussion on it: Narracje o migracjach cz. 1. O lęku i jego skutkach: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUGOP1AZ35Y>

Key takeaway: Participant knows basic concepts (immigrant, migrant, refugee, Geneva Convention, stereotype, discrimination, marginalization)

Myths about migration (60 min)

Exercise 1. opening question - do they know any myths about migration?

- -> working in 4 groups; each group writes 4 examples of myths / fake news on migration (7 mins)
- groups exchange prepared myths. The task of each group is to find information to dispel these myths (they can use the Internet) - 15 mins. Each group presents the information found and their sources.
Discussion

Exercise 2. presentation of examples prepared by the trainer, discussion and explanation of why they are myths - factchecking

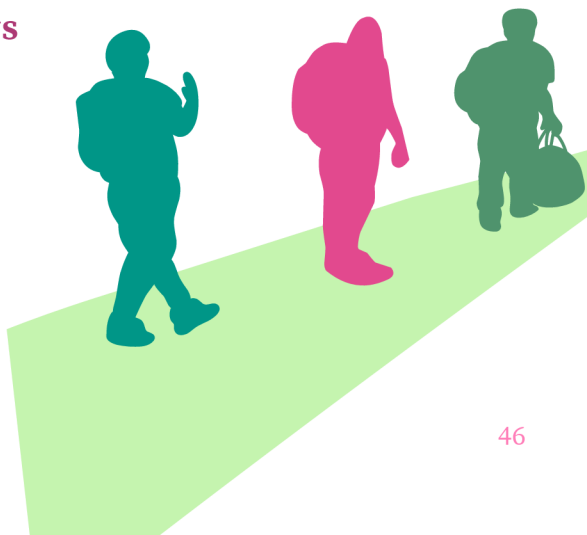
The participant knows and understands the process of creation of myths about migration, can verify information, distinguish facts from myths

Summary of the workshop (15 min)

Open question - why do participants think these myths are created? Who creates them and for what purpose? How do these myths affect the situation of migrants?

Trainer's summary.

The participants knows and understands basic concepts of migration, can verify facts on contemporary migration processes.





Critical Approach to Information

and Micro-Journalism in Social Media

Objectives:

- *Developing critical thinking regarding media messages*
- *Analyzing misinformation and manipulation in media*
- *Learning how to create engaging and effective content*
- *Strengthening confidence in communication*

Introduction (35 minutes)

1. Welcome and Integration (10 min)

Brief participant introductions – name and three associations with media

Establishing group contract, discussing expectations, and noting them on a flipchart

2. Opening Activity – Fake News Challenge (10 min)

Participants receive three short news pieces (real, fake, manipulated) and must identify the fake one in pairs within 60 seconds.

Discuss with the group: How do we recognize reliable information? What influences our decisions? What misleads us?

3. Exercise: "This Could Be You" (15 min)

Trainer distributes images of people in various situations (e.g., a woman at a concert, a young man in dirty clothes, an elderly man at an ATM).

Participants reflect individually (2 min) on questions:

“How could a newspaper headline describe this image?”

“If I were in this image, what (stereotypical) assumptions might others make about me?”

Group discussion of insights

Mini-lecture on stereotypes, their impact on perception, and how they distort information reception.

Duration:

4 hours 35 min

For whom:

Migrants, Mixed groups interested in developing practical skills in storytelling, journalling, critical approach to media

Key takeaway: Photos and short messages are only fragments of reality—never the full story.



Experience – How Media Shapes Our Thinking (45 min)

1. Exercise: "Emotion Map" (20 min)

In pairs, participants receive five headlines about migrants (positive, negative, neutral, clickbait, manipulative).

They mark on a provided chart how strongly each headline evokes emotions.

Discussion in pairs: Why do these headlines affect us this way? What exact emotions do we feel?

Group discussion and conclusions.

2. Exercise: "Disinformation in Media" (25 min)

Participants receive three articles about migrants (real, manipulated, fake news).

Trainer demonstrates how to analyze media content by focusing on:

- Information sources
- Language intent and objectives
- Possible manipulation techniques used on the audience
- Live analysis ensures participants feel prepared for real-world challenges.

Trainer explains terms like clickbait, fake news, and misinformation.

Key takeaway: Media does not always provide the truth. We need tools to analyze them!



Clickbait

Clickbait refers to online content (typically headlines or thumbnails) that is designed to attract attention and encourage users to click on a link, often at the expense of accuracy or depth. The goal is usually to generate advertising revenue. Clickbait may exaggerate, sensationalize, or misrepresent the content it links to.

Fake News

Fake news is false or fabricated information presented as if it were legitimate news, often intended to mislead, manipulate public opinion, or generate traffic and revenue. It can be created for political gain, financial profit, or as a form of satire that is mistaken for real news.

Misinformation

Misinformation is false or inaccurate information shared without the intent to deceive. Unlike fake news, it is often spread by people who believe the information to be true. Misinformation can emerge from misunderstandings, rumors, or outdated knowledge.

Example: Sharing a health tip on social media that has been debunked by scientific evidence, but believing it to be helpful.

Reflection – Group Discussion (10 min)

1. How did we feel while analyzing this information?
2. What surprised us the most?
3. What cognitive biases influence our media perception?
4. What emotions do specific keywords trigger?
5. Why do media use these techniques?

Key takeaway: Media shape our reactions, often by playing on emotions.

Mini-Lecture: Manipulation Mechanisms (15 min)

Topics trainer can cover:

- Confirmation bias and authority effect
- Sensationalism vs. facts – clickbait
- Fake news and how to recognize them
- Taxonomy of thinking
- Paul and Elder's critical thinking model
- Agenda-setting theory
- Message framing (positive vs. negative)
- Disinformation, misinformation, malinformation
- Deepfake – how to spot it?

BREAK – 15 min





Theory – Toolkit for Writing in Social Media (30 min)

1. How to Write Effectively in Social Media? (15 min mini-lecture)

Topics trainer should cover:

- The power of storytelling – how personal stories shift narratives
- Post structure: an engaging headline, clear message, and call to action
- Inclusive language and empathy in communication
- Content optimization for social media
- Brief introduction to free tools for text and visual content creation (Canva, Jasnopis, ChatGPT, DeepL, etc.)

2. Exercise: "Reframing Narratives" (10 min)

Participants receive a negative headline and reframe it into a neutral/positive one.

3. Exercise: "Improving the Message" (20 min)

Participants receive a poorly structured post about migration (e.g., chaotic, aggressive or unclear).

In groups, they revise it using good storytelling principles.

Sharing and discussion of results.



Critical Thinking and Social Media Writing Checklist

Before You Share or Post:

1. Is the information accurate and verified?
2. Is the source clear and trustworthy?
3. Did you read the full content, not just the headline?
4. Is it trying to trigger strong emotions?
5. Could it be clickbait, fake news, or misinformation?

When You Write or Comment:

1. Is your message clear and respectful?
2. Is the language inclusive and free of stereotypes?
3. Are you open to feedback or correction?
4. Did you credit sources or authors?
5. Does your content add value to the conversation?

This checklist helps think critically, write responsibly, and avoid spreading misinformation. It supports respectful communication, builds trust, and strengthens your role as an informed and thoughtful participant online.

Application – Creating Personal Messages (45 min)

1. Exercise: Write Your First Post! (30 min)

Participants choose a migration-related topic from a pre-selected list and write a short post (e.g., personal migration experience, debunking fake news, positive migrant stories, fighting stereotypes, migration education).
Group review: What works well? What can be improved?

Key takeaway: A single powerful sentence can change how people think!

2. Summary and Conclusions (15 min)

What did we take away from the workshop?
How can we use these skills in daily life?
One word to describe the workshop.

Implementation Task – Media Culture: Monitoring Impact (20 min)

At the end of the workshop, the trainer encourages participants to monitor their media consumption for two weeks.
They analyze changes in their approach to media content after attending the workshop.
Trainer share suggested tools for tracking engagement and analyzing audience reactions in comments.
Each participant receives a Critical Thinking and Social Media Writing Checklist for practical application.





Seeing Beyond Labels

Simple, yet powerful

Objectives:

- *Understanding what discrimination is.*
- *Recognizing stereotypes and prejudices.*
- *Building empathy and respect for diversity.*

Facilitation Guidelines

- Create a safe and respectful environment by establishing ground rules at the beginning (e.g., confidentiality, respectful listening, voluntary participation).
- Encourage openness but do not pressure participants to share personal experiences if they are not comfortable.
- Allocate time for both activities and reflection, ensuring participants can connect the exercises to real-life contexts.
- Be attentive to emotional responses, as topics of discrimination may evoke strong feelings.

Duration:

2 hours

For whom:

Universal +15

10 up to 20
people

1. Introduction (15 minutes)

The facilitator introduces the purpose of the workshop, clarifies objectives, and co-creates ground rules with participants. This stage sets the tone for an atmosphere of respect, empathy, and openness.

2. Icebreaker Activity: “Who Am I?” (20 minutes)

Method: Experiential learning through role-play.

Procedure:

- Each participant receives a sticky note with an assigned identity (e.g., doctor, refugee, teenager, Muslim, woman, disabled person, artist, politician, immigrant) placed on their forehead without seeing it.
- Participants interact with each other for 10 minutes, treating others according to the visible label.
- Afterward, participants attempt to guess their identity.

Debriefing questions:

- How did it feel to be treated according to a label rather than your real identity?
- Was it easy or difficult to guess who you were? Why?
- What does this reveal about stereotypes and their influence on our perceptions?

Purpose: To illustrate the power of social labels and how stereotypes affect interactions.

3. Core Activity: Basket (30 minutes)

Method: Structured movement activity highlighting inequalities.

Procedure:

Participants are divided into several rows facing a basket placed at the front of the room. Each row is positioned at a different distance from the basket. Participants in the front row have no restrictions, while those in subsequent rows are placed farther away and are given additional limitations, such as using only one hand, having their legs tied, or being blindfolded. All participants are asked to complete the same task: throwing a paper ball into the basket. Everyone has the same number of attempts, regardless of their position or restrictions.

Debriefing questions:

- What differences did you notice between participants' chances of completing the task?
- What factors influenced success, aside from effort or motivation?
- How does this activity reflect unequal access to opportunities in social and economic life?

Purpose: To foster awareness of structural inequalities and lived experiences of privilege or disadvantage.

4. Group Work: Everyday Discrimination Scenarios (30 minutes)

Method: Small group analysis and discussion.

Procedure:

- Divide participants into small groups of 3–5.
- Provide each group with 2–3 scenarios illustrating everyday discrimination (e.g., a migrant being denied housing, a woman interrupted in a professional meeting, a person with a disability excluded from a social activity).
- Groups analyze the scenarios using the following guiding questions:
 - What form of discrimination is taking place?
 - How might the person involved feel?
 - What constructive actions could a bystander or institution take?
- Groups report back to the plenary for collective reflection.

Purpose: To connect abstract concepts with concrete, real-life situations and to promote problem-solving skills.

5. Reflection Circle: “What Can I Do?” (15 minutes)

Method: Collective reflection and commitment-building.

Procedure:

- Participants stand in a circle.
- Each person shares one specific action they can commit to in order to challenge discrimination in their daily life (e.g., speaking up when witnessing unfair treatment, seeking further education on bias, supporting someone facing exclusion).

Purpose: To conclude the workshop with practical, personal commitments that reinforce learning.

6. Closing (10 minutes)

The facilitator summarizes key insights:

- Stereotypes oversimplify human complexity and cause harm.
- Discrimination is both systemic and individual, but everyday actions can challenge it.
- Respect, empathy, and solidarity are essential for inclusive societies.

The session concludes with acknowledgment of participants' contributions and appreciation of their openness.

If you have more time to work with the group, we recommend the Exclusion Simulation exercise to strengthen the effect. You can find it in the section Exercises and Tools – it is worth dedicating approximately 30-40 minutes to its implementation.







Beyond PRO and ANTI

Gaining deeper insight

Although the main workshop task - developing an integration model - is a serious one, playfulness is the key to engaging participants in the process. Therefore, we suggest inviting participants to step into the roles of young “politicians,” “community activists,” “engaged citizens,” “students,” and similar figures. Taking on a role creates the necessary distance to see the world from a different perspective. The integration models developed during the workshops can be presented on student radio, published on an online platform, or shared during a City Council meeting.

1. Introduction (20 minutes)

- Session plan. Presentation of the session plan and its objectives.
- Getting to know each other (check-in). Introducing the facilitators and participants – using Dixit cards. Questions to ask: Why did you choose this card? What does it say about you? What does it express about your emotions or attitude toward our meeting and its topic?
- Group contract. Jointly establishing the rules for the session to create a safe space for exchanging thoughts, experiences, and knowledge. The contract is written on sheets of paper and displayed in a visible place.

Duration:

2,5 hours

For whom:

Universal +15

10 up to 20
people

2. Warm up (20 min)

PRO- and ANTI-

A rope or a line drawn on the floor divides the space.

Question 1: Would you take part in a pro-immigration demonstration?

For those who would:

Ask (one question per person, quick answers):

- How do you imagine such a demonstration?
- How do you think you would feel during it?
- Who would you meet there?
- Would you invite your (a) friends, (b) classmates/colleagues, (c) family?
- How would they react to your invitation?

For those who would not:

- Why would you not want to take part in such a demonstration?
- Would you follow it on social media? When yes, when no?
- What would need to happen for you to become interested in participating?

Persuasion phase:

- How could you encourage others to come to your side and join the demonstration?
- What arguments would you use to convince others to participate?

Question 2: Would you take part in an anti-immigration demonstration?

(Same scenario as above.)

Group discussion:

- Why do you think we asked these questions?
- How did you feel about them? Were you certain or did you hesitate?
- What's wrong with the "Pro vs. Anti" approach?
- Do you also notice that migration debates often have only two positions – pro or anti?
- Do you agree with that view?
- How can we look at, interpret, and talk about migration in a way that avoids this binary opposition?

2. Beyond PRO and ANTI: Outlining a migration policy model for Poland (1h 30 min)

Form at least two groups – divided based on choices made during the previous activity (pro-, anti-, or mixed). If needed, groups can be formed randomly (e.g., count off by twos). Task: Create an outline of a migration policy model for Poland (or for the country in which the workshops are being conducted. To this day, Poland does not have a working concept of an integration policy. In other countries, it is possible to refer to existing integration policies). Group discussion:

- Short introduction: Why are we inviting you to this task?
- What is migration policy according to you? What are its characteristics?
- Who does it concern? Migrants, refugees, expats, seasonal workers, labor migrants, undocumented migrants, “illegal” migration, the host/ receiving society, the “sending” society, etc. (Establish that the model must include at least three groups.)
- What does it concern? Borders, integration, assimilation, labor market, culture, political participation (voting rights), labor rights (right to strike), etc.
- What timeframe does it concern?

Elements of the model:

(The facilitators prepare cards and guiding questions to help participants make decisions and build their model.)

- Preamble: What is the core value of this policy?
- Policy description: What are its three main goals?
- Target groups: Which three groups does it address?
- Timeframe: What period does it cover?
- Means: What resources are needed to implement it?
- Keywords: Up to five words that describe your model.
- Myths / Arguments for open borders: Include at least five selected and integrated into your model.
- Visual element: The model should combine words and images – expressing your concept.
- (Decide whether to make a collage or a written description.)

Group work logistics:

Groups have 60 minutes to develop their model.

A countdown timer is projected on screen; background music plays (energetic but not too loud).

Groups start by dividing tasks and briefly getting to know one another – supported by the facilitator.

Groups can use:

- (a) 21 Arguments for Open Borders by John Washington,
- (b) 20 Migration Myths by Hein de Haas,
- (c) Images, photos, and magazine clippings (non-political, from pop culture, reflecting various moods – positive, negative, etc.).

Every 20 minutes, one group representative presents progress (1 minute). The timer pauses.

Then, a 2-minute discussion follows (feedback from the other group and facilitators).

Milestones:

- 20 min: Selection of myths/arguments/images, preamble.
- 40 min: Defining goals and target groups.
- 60 min: Final version of the document/collage.

Presentation of models:

Each group has 5 minutes to present, followed by 5 minutes of discussion:

- Is this the model we want?
- What do you like about it?
- What do you disagree with?
- What parts would you sign your name under?

Model selection:

By consensus and group discussion on its feasibility:

- Can it be implemented? Why or why not?
- What would need to change for it to become realistic?

- FILM (10 min)

Who Are You? Genes and National Identity – short YouTube film.

- 4. CHECK-OUT (15 min)

How did you feel during the workshop?

What are you taking away with you?

(You can respond with a single word or a few words.)

USEFUL LINKS

- The DNA Journey: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyaEQEmt5Is>
- Don't Put People in Boxes: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRwt25M5nGw>
- What Is Privilege?: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hD5f8GuNuGQ>
- All That We Share: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jD8tjhVO1Tc>
- All That We Are: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNQOpTUJ1zA>
- No More Deaths: <https://nomoredeaths.org/en/>
- Migration and Tech: <https://www.migrationtechmonitor.com/>

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS THAT MIGHT BE USEFUL

- newspaper headlines from several years ago related to multiculturalism,
- photos of dishes from different cultures, including those from restaurants and food venues located in Poland or in the country where the workshops are being conducted,
- materials depicting everyday life: services (taxi, hairdresser, bank, law office, etc.), public institutions (city/municipal office, court, hospital, school, library, community center, etc.), and neighborhood spaces (local shop, park, bench, etc.)—the more, the better, so that young people can draw inspiration from them,
- other textual and visual materials that have proven effective in your previous work with young people.





IV

Tools and Exercises

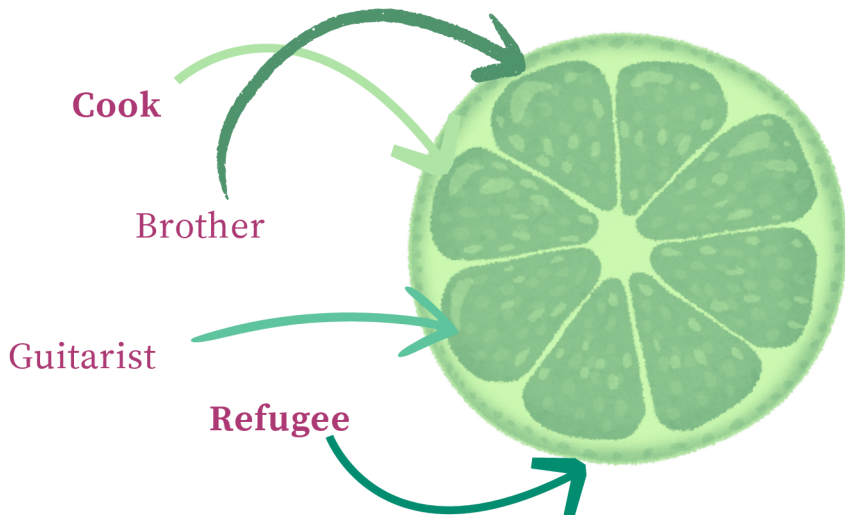
This chapter offers a collection of practical methods that educators can easily adapt to different groups and contexts. The tools are designed to spark reflection, encourage dialogue, and make complex issues around migration and media more tangible.

Exercises for groups

Identity Orange

This exercise helps participants reflect on the many layers of their own identity and recognize the diversity within the group. Everyone has multiple identities — such as nationality, language, hobbies, religion, gender, or family role — and some of these may give them more privilege, while others may expose them to discrimination. By visualizing and sharing these identities, participants become more aware of complexity and uniqueness in themselves and others.

A trainer can facilitate this by asking participants to draw a circle on a sheet of paper and divided into segments (6, 8 or 12), each representing a part of who they are. After a short reflection, they can share one or two elements with the group (if they feel comfortable). To close, the trainer can highlight that identity is never “one thing,” and that acknowledging many identities helps reduce stereotypes and build mutual understanding.



Scaling Stereotypes

Stereotypes are simplified ideas we hold about groups of people. They can sometimes seem harmless, but they often lead to unfair judgments and discrimination. This exercise encourages participants to identify common stereotypes about migrants or other groups, and then challenge them with facts and real experiences.

The trainer can start by inviting participants to call out stereotypes they have heard (not what they personally believe). These are written down on one side of a scale (on a flipchart). In the next step, the group works together to “bust” each stereotype by asking: Who thinks like this? What are they like? Is it true for everyone? What evidence do we have? Can we think of counter-examples? Their role is to convince the trainer, so the scale can be equal on both sides. This process helps participants question their own judgement and understand that stereotypes are incomplete and often misleading.

The activity not only develops critical thinking but also opens space for dialogue. It is effective with young people, as it empowers them to question messages they receive from peers, media, or society.



Role-Play Interviews

Role-play interviews help participants explore bias, perspective, and media representation in a safe, experiential way. By simulating interactions, they can better understand the challenges faced by migrants and the impact of framing in journalism.

The trainer assigns roles: one participant acts as a migrant sharing their story (we can prepare mini-bios for those participants), while another plays a journalist conducting an interview. After the role-play, the group reflects on the questions asked, the language used, and the assumptions made. Participants discuss: Were some perspectives ignored? How could the story be told more fairly?

This exercise develops empathy, critical thinking, and awareness of media bias. It is simple to animate — trainers can provide guiding questions and short role descriptions — and encourages participants to consider how narratives affect public perception and individual experiences.

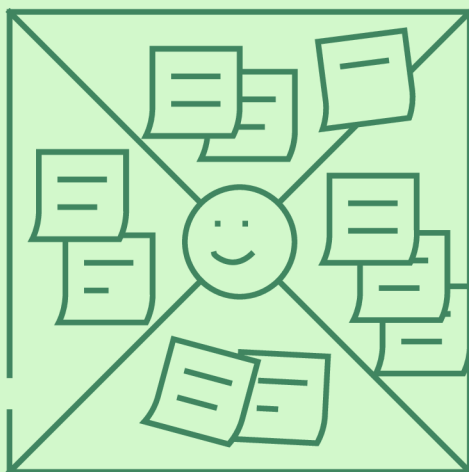


Tool: Empathy Map

Empathy mapping helps participants explore the thoughts, feelings, needs, and challenges of people in migration or minority contexts. By actively stepping into someone else's perspective, participants develop deeper understanding and compassion.

The trainer draws a simple “empathy map” with sections such as Says, Thinks, Feels, Does, Needs. Participants are assigned a persona (e.g., a young migrant, a local youth, a refugee student) and fill in the map based on what that person might experience in a given situation. Afterward, the group discusses insights: What did you learn about their challenges? How does this influence your own perspective? What new information did you discover?

This exercise is good for adults and youth, as it combines creativity, reflection, and social awareness. It encourages participants to question assumptions and consider multiple perspectives in real-life scenarios. It can also be a introduction to Design Thinking or deeper brainstorming session, as it reveals the problems of chosen actors.



Four Corners

Also called Values Voting sometimes is an interactive exercise that helps participants explore opinions, attitudes, and values around migration, diversity, and media critically. It also shows how people's perspectives can vary within a group.

The trainer prepares statements related to the main topic: migration, inclusion, or media representation. Four corners of the room are labeled: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree. Participants move to the corner that reflects their opinion. In each corner, they briefly discuss why they chose it and share examples or experiences. Afterward, the trainer facilitates a reflection on the diversity of perspectives and the reasons behind them.

This activity encourages active participation, dialogue, and self-reflection. It is engaging because it combines movement, discussion, and critical thinking in a simple and visually clear way.



Exclusion Simulation

This experiential exercise places participants in a simulated scenario where they must decide collectively (or in small groups) who is allowed to board a “train” (or other limited resource, like a bus or shelter). The trainer presents a story: a train has limited seats, and a list of characters with specific attributes — such as age, migration status, nationality, religion, ability, or social role.

Participants are asked to make group decisions about who will board and who will not (sometimes under time pressure). After the activity, the trainer leads a debrief to explore how decisions were made, what criteria were applied, and what assumptions or biases influenced choices. Questions for reflection can include: Who was excluded and why? How did it feel to be involved in decision making? How does this relate to real-life experiences of discrimination or social inequality?

Effectiveness: This exercise is powerful because it creates a tangible, emotional experience. Participants see how quickly and unconsciously biases can influence decisions, helping them reflect on fairness, empathy, and social responsibility. It is particularly useful for adults because the scenario is abstract but engages both cognition and emotion.



Tool: Experiment-Type Exercises

Experiment-type exercises are designed to let participants discover insights for themselves rather than being directly taught. They are especially effective for exploring complex topics such as culture, bias, or media, where assumptions and stereotypes can easily mislead. By engaging curiosity and provoking reflection, these exercises make learning more experiential: participants often remember lessons more vividly when they see the gap between expectation and reality firsthand.

However, these exercises carry some risks. If a participant already knows the “answer” or the facilitator’s intended outcome, they may unintentionally spoil the experiment for others. Additionally, exercises that explore identity or sensitive topics can make participants feel exposed if the environment is not safe. To ensure a positive and meaningful experience, careful preparation, clear instructions, and structured debriefing are essential. When managed well, experiment-type exercises foster curiosity, critical thinking, empathy, and a deeper understanding of complexity, making them a highly valuable tool in both youth and adult workshops on diversity, migration, and media literacy.

To keep it short, we like surprises and we tend to remember them for a long time.



Cultural Iceberg – Light Experiment Exercise

This exercise helps participants explore the visible and invisible layers of culture using specific examples. The trainer selects 1–3 cultures in advance and prepares a short description of their visible aspects (like food, clothing, language) and hidden aspects (like values, beliefs, social norms).

The trainer draws an iceberg on a board or flipchart, explaining the metaphor of the visible “tip” and the invisible “underwater” part in relation to culture. Participants are invited to fill in what they know about each culture. The trainer observes: can the group only name visible elements, or can they also identify deeper, invisible layers? After discussion, the trainer reveals the hidden aspects and reflects with the group on why understanding the deeper layers is essential for empathy, reducing stereotypes, and engaging respectfully with other cultures.

This approach makes the exercise interactive while keeping it structured. It encourages critical thinking, discussion, and reflection on how culture goes beyond what we see at first glance.



Creative Storytelling

Creative Storytelling is an experiential exercise where participants create short multimedia stories to explore migration experiences, cultural identity, or encounters with diversity. Instead of being told what to think, participants discover insights by shaping and reflecting on their own narratives around given topic.

Those topics may be simple: My culture; My story; Future hopes; Media influence; or more advanced, such as: Adapting to a new environment; Identity on the move; My migration story;. Participants then use simple tools — photos, drawings, slides, or voice recordings (I personally like using collage or making short videos with groups) — to craft a 1–3 minute story with a clear structure: beginning, challenge, turning point, and reflection.

After creating their stories, participants share them with the group. The trainer facilitates reflection on questions like: What did you learn about others' experiences? How do stories influence our perception of culture and/or migration? How can media shape empathy or reinforce stereotypes?

This exercise is effective because it combines creativity, reflection, and media literacy. It encourages participants to engage deeply with the topic, develop empathy, and critically consider how narratives are framed. At the same time, it carries risks: some participants may feel vulnerable sharing personal experiences, or a participant with advanced tech or art skills could dominate the process. Careful preparation, supportive guidance, and optional ways to share (anonymously or in small groups) help maintain a safe, meaningful and creative learning experience.





V

Guidelines and Good Practices

This chapter provides a set of guidelines and good practices for educators and trainers working with young people. It does not aim to prescribe a single method but to share accumulated knowledge from workshops, research, and reflections across the Migration Media(tor) project.

1. Creating a Safe Learning Environment

A safe space is not simply a classroom where rules are set at the beginning. It is an ongoing practice that requires attentiveness, trust-building, and mutual respect. Participants should feel that their experiences are acknowledged and that mistakes or doubts are treated as opportunities for learning rather than failure. In our workshops, we found that small rituals—such as opening circles, shared agreements, or anonymous feedback opportunities — create a climate of openness. Facilitators should model vulnerability themselves, showing that they too are learners in the process.

It is equally important to prepare for moments when conversations become heated. Migration can evoke strong emotions, shaped by personal histories or polarized public debates. Having clear “safety anchors” helps manage tension without suppressing dialogue.

1. Setting Collective Agreements

Instead of the facilitator presenting a ready-made list of rules, invite participants to co-create agreements at the start of the workshop. Examples include: “We listen without interrupting,” “We speak from our own experience,” or “We respect confidentiality.” When rules are collectively developed, participants are more likely to follow and defend them.

2. Attentive Facilitation

Safe spaces require facilitators to actively observe group dynamics: who dominates, who stays silent, who might be excluded. Subtle interventions — like redirecting the floor to quieter voices, or splitting into smaller groups for those who find plenary discussions intimidating — help maintain balance.

3. Language Matters

Facilitators should be mindful of the words they use. Terms like “illegal immigrant” or “flood of refugees” can reproduce harmful frames. Modeling inclusive, precise language not only sets the tone but also teaches participants how discourse shapes perception.

4. Building Trust Through Transparency

Being clear about the goals of the session, the methods used, and how information will be handled helps participants feel secure. For example, clarifying that “personal stories will not be shared outside this room” reassures those who might hesitate to contribute.

5. Flexibility in Methodology

Not all participants feel comfortable with the same activities. Some may thrive in role-play, while others prefer quiet reflection. Offering multiple modes of participation (visual, verbal, written, performative) respects different comfort levels and learning styles.

6. Recognizing Power Dynamics

Safe spaces are not “neutral.” Facilitators often hold authority, and participants may belong to groups with unequal social privileges. Acknowledging these dynamics openly — for instance, saying “as facilitators we are also part of this learning journey, not above it” — can reduce barriers.



7. Emotional Support Mechanisms

Workshops on migration can touch on trauma or lived discrimination. Good practice is to provide access to support structures — whether it's a quiet room, a co-facilitator who can check in with someone, or referral to professional support if needed.

8. Celebrating Diversity

Safe space is not only about minimizing harm, but also about affirming participants' identities. Incorporating cultural references, multilingual expressions, or creative moments (like music, storytelling, or food sharing) validates participants' backgrounds and creates belonging.



making everyone feel SAFE
because you will change
the World to be a better place
FUTURE PRESIDENT
Best man out there!
Your voice was
enlightening!

You're such
an amazing person!

Thank you for
your expertise, keep
your voice heard
♡

I'll be worried to
speak up, you have great ideas!

GOOD LUCK!

2. Addressing Diversity in Groups

Diversity within educational groups is often understood narrowly, focusing primarily on visible markers such as ethnicity, language, or gender. However, effective facilitation requires a broader lens. Every group —whether seemingly homogenous or visibly heterogeneous — contains a rich tapestry of experiences, perspectives, and hidden identities. These may include socio-economic backgrounds, migration histories, political affiliations, religious or spiritual traditions, and personal encounters with discrimination or privilege. Recognizing and valuing this multiplicity is essential for creating meaningful dialogue around migration and media.

A key principle is acknowledgment without essentializing. Participants should never be reduced to representatives of a single group (“the refugee voice,” “the Muslim perspective”) but invited to share experiences they are comfortable with on their own terms. Facilitators must resist the temptation to treat individuals as spokespersons for entire communities, as this unintentionally reinforces stereotypes rather than dismantling them.

Good practice includes designing activities that allow for multiple entry points. For example, when discussing stereotypes in media, facilitators can invite participants to reflect on stereotypes they themselves have faced—regardless of whether these were linked to nationality, profession, gender, or lifestyle. This universalizes the experience of being misrepresented, while still making space for specific stories of migration.

At the same time, facilitators should remain attentive to intersectionality. A young migrant woman may experience discrimination differently than a male peer; a refugee student with

limited access to technology may engage differently in media literacy activities compared to a digitally fluent participant. Recognizing these intersecting factors helps prevent one-size-fits-all approaches.

Ultimately, addressing diversity is about cultivating an ethos of plurality and respect. Educators must create conditions in which every voice has value, where silence is respected as much as speech, and where disagreement can coexist with empathy. When managed with sensitivity, diversity within groups ceases to be a challenge and becomes a powerful resource: a living demonstration of the richness of human experience in a globalized world.

3. Balancing Facts and Emotions

Talking about migration often feels like walking on a tightrope between numbers and feelings. On one side, there are statistics, legal definitions, and official reports; on the other, there are people's fears, hopes, and personal stories. Both matter. If we rely only on numbers, the conversation risks becoming abstract and detached from reality. If we rely only on emotions, we may lose sight of the bigger picture or fall into manipulation. A good educator learns to hold both.

Facts provide clarity. They help us challenge common myths — like the idea that “refugees are a burden to the economy.” Data and legal frameworks give young people the tools to separate truth from prejudice. At the same time, we have to admit that numbers alone rarely change someone's heart. You can present statistics all day long, but they will not necessarily shake deeply held fears or stereotypes.

That is where stories come in. Hearing a refugee talk about leaving home, or seeing a short film about a migrant family starting over, can open doors that statistics cannot. Stories humanize abstract

concepts. They make participants feel connected to something bigger than themselves. But even here, caution is needed. Not every story should be consumed passively. Educators need to pause and ask: Whose story is being told? Who gets to speak, and who is silent? What emotions are these stories trying to trigger—and why?

The real magic happens when we bring these two worlds together. An emotional story followed by a fact-checking exercise can spark deep reflection. For example, after watching a video about young refugees adapting to life in a new school, participants might analyze how media outlets report on similar cases — what is emphasized, what is ignored, and how language changes perception. This way, emotions become an entry point into critical thinking, not a substitute for it.

And let's not forget: educators are also human. We bring our own feelings and experiences into the room. Being open about this—without dominating the conversation — can show participants that learning is a shared journey, not a lecture from above. Balancing facts and emotions is not about finding a perfect formula. It is about weaving together truth and empathy so that participants leave not only better informed, but also more compassionate and more capable of navigating complex debates in their own lives.

4. Encouraging Critical Media Literacy

For many young people today, the first encounter with migration is not through meeting someone in person but through a screen. TikTok videos, Instagram posts, YouTube clips, and online news feeds often set the stage for how they imagine “migrants” or “refugees.” The problem is that these messages are not neutral: they are shaped by algorithms, political agendas, and the economics of attention. If we want to prepare the next generation to engage responsibly with

migration, we must go beyond teaching “media literacy” in a traditional sense. What we need is critical media literacy—the ability not only to understand how media works, but to question it, challenge it, and even reshape it.

Critical media literacy starts with awareness. Participants need to see that every photo, headline, or viral clip has been produced by someone with a purpose. Asking simple questions — Who made this? For whom? What emotions is it trying to trigger? — already shifts the perspective from passive consumption to active analysis. A tabloid headline calling migrants a “flood” is not just a word choice; it is a deliberate metaphor that frames people as a natural disaster. Helping young people spot such framing is a first step toward resistance.

But awareness alone is not enough. Learners also need opportunities to practice their critical skills. One powerful exercise is to bring in three very different media accounts of the same event. In small groups, participants can analyze the images, the vocabulary, and the framing strategies. What changes when the headline says “refugees saved” versus “illegal migrants intercepted”? How do readers feel differently when the accompanying photo shows a child versus a group of young men? These subtle differences can have enormous impact on public opinion.

Encouraging critical media literacy also means recognizing the media environments participants already live in. Many young people say their main source of information about migration is not newspapers but TikTok or memes shared by friends. Instead of dismissing these sources as “unserious,” facilitators can invite them into the classroom. Analyzing a meme about migrants can be just as revealing as dissecting a newspaper article, because both show how humor, exaggeration, or simplification influence perception.

Finally, critical media literacy is not only defensive — it is also creative. Once participants understand how media can distort, they should be encouraged to create their own counter-narratives. A short social media post reframing a negative headline, or a podcast episode amplifying migrant voices, can be small but meaningful acts of civic participation. These experiences remind young people that they are not powerless consumers, but potential storytellers and shapers of the public sphere.

The ultimate goal is not to turn participants into media experts, but into reflective citizens who can recognize manipulation, seek out reliable information, and contribute to more inclusive narratives. In a world where misinformation spreads faster than facts, this is not just a skill—it is a civic responsibility.

5. Handling Sensitive Topics with Care

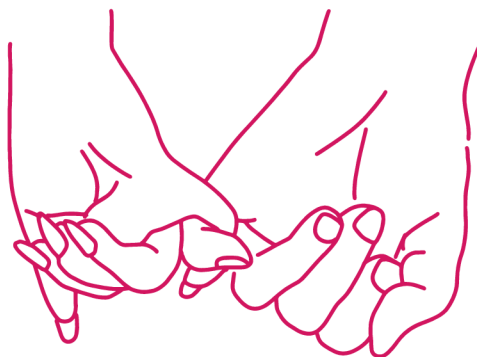
Working with migration inevitably means touching on sensitive ground. Behind the terms “migrant,” “refugee,” or “asylum seeker” are people with complex and often painful stories — of leaving home, of losing family, of facing discrimination. In the same workshop room, you may have participants who have lived through these experiences, and others whose only exposure is through media headlines. Creating space for dialogue without causing harm is one of the greatest challenges an educator faces.

The first step is acknowledging the sensitivity rather than pretending it doesn't exist. Participants quickly sense when a facilitator avoids difficult topics or downplays emotions. Being upfront—“Some of what we talk about today may be heavy or personal, and that's okay. You only share what you want to share”—creates trust. It signals that

discomfort is not a failure of the workshop, but a natural part of engaging with complex realities.

One of the most effective practices is to establish choice. Nobody should ever feel pressured to disclose personal migration histories, trauma, or opinions they are not ready to voice. Instead, activities can be designed with multiple levels of participation: some may speak, others may write anonymously, others may simply listen. Respecting these different ways of engaging ensures that the room remains inclusive for all.

At the same time, sensitive topics often trigger strong emotions — anger, sadness, or defensiveness. For example, a participant might repeat a xenophobic stereotype they have heard at home. Another participant, perhaps with a migration background, might feel directly attacked. In such moments, the role of the facilitator is not to immediately shut down the exchange, but to slow it down, name what is happening, and provide a framework for reflection. Phrases like “I hear that this touched a nerve — let’s pause and take a look at why” can de-escalate without silencing.





It is also important to prepare emotionally as a facilitator. Handling sensitive topics is demanding, and it's good when we don't have to do it alone.

Co-facilitation, access to support networks, and clear boundaries (knowing when to stop a discussion and when to refer participants to professional help) are all part of responsible practice. A good workshop does not try to “fix” trauma in a few hours; it aims to run conversations in a way that is respectful and delivers the intended material.

Finally, sensitivity should not be equated with fragility. Young people are often more capable of grappling with difficult truths than we expect —when they are guided with care. Talking about racism, exclusion, or discrimination can be uncomfortable, but it is also necessary. Avoiding these conversations does not protect participants; it deprives them of the chance to reflect, challenge, and grow.

Handled well, sensitive topics can become transformative moments in a workshop. A participant who realizes for the first time how stereotypes affect their classmate, or who sees their own story validated and respected, often leaves with a deeper sense of insight and responsibility. That is why careful, ethical facilitation is not an optional skill in migration education — it is at the very heart of the work.





VI

Conclusion

Guidelines and good practices...

...are not a checklist to be followed blindly, nor are they fixed recipes that guarantee success. They are more like living principles— to be tested, reshaped, and re-imagined each time they are applied in a new setting. A workshop with a group of teenagers in a big city will look different from one with educators in a rural community. A discussion in a multicultural classroom may surface different tensions than one in a more homogeneous group. The contexts shift, but the values that anchor the work remain constant.

At the heart of this approach are a few essential commitments: to safety, to respect, to co-creation, to critical reflection, and to empathy. These are not abstract words. Safety means creating spaces where participants dare to speak and also dare to remain silent. Respect means honoring the multiplicity of voices in the room, even when they contradict each other. Co-creation means resisting the temptation to deliver ready-made answers, and instead building knowledge together with participants. Critical reflection means asking the harder questions—about power, representation, and the mechanics of media. And empathy means remembering that behind every headline or statistic there are real human lives.

When these principles guide facilitation, workshops become more than educational sessions. They become laboratories of democratic practice, small but meaningful rehearsals of the kind of society we want to live in—open, inclusive, and attentive to complexity. Participants leave not only with new skills but also with a deeper sense of responsibility: to question stereotypes, to recognize manipulation, and to treat others with dignity.

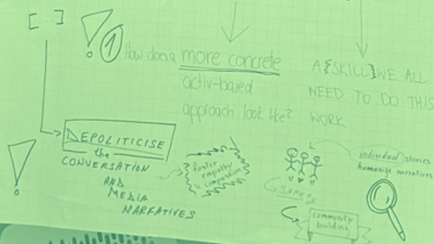


In times when migration is too often framed through fear, polarization, or indifference, these practices remind us that another approach is possible. They show that education can be a form of civic courage: a way of equipping young people to face difficult realities without turning away, and to imagine futures built not on division but on solidarity.



MIGRATION MEDIATION

directly challenging narratives & facilitating accurate, factually-based conversations





[...] it is a great and timely manual, very much responding to the needs of the contemporary public debate on migration. It equips facilitators with all the necessary tools to lead workshops. It can give both teachers and participants a sense of agency in the media world dominated by securitisation tendencies.

Inga Hajdarowicz



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