

# Europe in transition: Diversity, Identity and Youth Work



# Contents

<b>Preface</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>Refugees (and hate speech)</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>Learn, think and act! New approaches to youth work in post-conflict societies</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Balkan without hate</b>	<b>33</b>	Davor Marko	
		Ajša Hadžibegović			
<b>Identity in Transition</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Challenging hate speech and building tolerance towards refugees</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>The circle of trust: Integrating refugees and redefining youth work and intercultural learning in Greece</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Reflections on regional identity in the Balkans</b>	<b>7</b>	Katerina Boutsia		Mary Drosopoulos	
Barbara Lovrinić		<b>Empowering school students to build inclusive societies</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>Blended learning in a multicultural and multi-ethnic environment</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>Talking ‘bout my generation: new approaches to understanding identity-formation among young people</b>	<b>11</b>	OBESSU		Isabel S. Carvalho and Zoran Zdravev	
András Déri and Zsófia Hangyál		<b>A case-study of self-advocacy initiatives by people seeking sanctuary in Swansea, South Wales</b>	<b>41</b>		
		Eleri Williams		<b>Solutions?</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>Di(ver)sability</b>	<b>15</b>			<b>Looking for diversity, responding to complexity</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>Diversity, discrimination and disability</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>Youth Work and Education in Transition</b>	<b>44</b>	Katrin Jaschinski	
Anastasiia Shevchenko		<b>Cohesion, commonality and creativity: youth work across borders</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>Our creative self and its importance for contemporary Europe</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Tipping point for our mental health: You. Me. Everyone</b>	<b>23</b>	Dr. Annette Coburn and Dr. Sinéad Gormally		Marija Farmer	
Nicholas Morgan		<b>The role of the mediator in mobile social work</b>	<b>52</b>		
<b>From disability to diversability</b>	<b>27</b>	Vesela Mareva		<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>78</b>
Gabi Steinprinz		<b>Intercultural learning in faith based youth work: a case-study</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>Further (general) reading</b>	<b>79</b>
		Aleksandar Trudić		<b>About the editor</b>	<b>80</b>

# Preface

---

## Erasmus+

Erasmus+ is the European Union programme for education, training, youth and sport. It runs from 2014 to 2020 and has a budget of €14.7 billion.

Erasmus+ aims to modernise education, training and youth work across Europe, by developing knowledge and skills, and increasing the quality and relevance of qualifications.

It is open to organisations across the spectrum of lifelong learning: adult education, higher education, schools education, vocational education and training, youth and sport.

Erasmus+ will enable more than four million people to study, train, volunteer or work in another country. Access to international experience not only benefits the individuals involved, but also their organisations – enabling them to develop policy and practice, and so offer improved opportunities for learners.

Erasmus+ has responded to changing circumstances in Europe, and the growing concern for social inclusion, by encouraging new project applications which emphasise the following:

- Reaching out to marginalised young people, promoting diversity, intercultural and inter-religious dialogue, common values of freedom, tolerance and respect of human rights;
- Enhancing media literacy, critical thinking and sense of initiative among young people;
- Equipping youth workers with competences and methods needed for transferring the common fundamental values of our society, particularly to young people who are hard to reach;
- Preventing violent radicalisation of young people.

Given the current context in Europe regarding migration, Erasmus+ also encourages youth mobility projects involving – or focusing on – refugees, asylum-seekers and migrants.

---

## Cultural Diversity

SALTO Cultural Diversity (SALTO CD) is one of eight resource centres in the SALTO-Youth network (Support Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities for Youth). These support the Erasmus+ Youth Chapter by providing non-formal training and networking opportunities for youth workers across Europe.

SALTO CD is concerned with topics such as culture, ethnicity, faith and identity, in order to promote cultural diversity. It has a keen interest in contributing to new approaches in youth work and young people's non-formal learning, and in promoting international partnerships in these areas.

# Blended learning in a Multicultural and Multi-ethnic Environment

Isabel S. Carvalho and Zoran Zdravev

---

## Introduction

This paper reports on a blended course, in which a significant amount of the related learning activities took place in an online learning environment, making it possible to optimise the learning and teaching methodologies and the time spent in the classroom for a short and intensive International Summer Course<sup>1</sup> (ISUM2007) held in Macedonia. Twenty-five students from four different countries (Croatia, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia) with different ethnic and religious beliefs attended the Online teaching Summer Course. This paper addresses the authors' (co-teachers) experience throughout the course and discusses the success of the methodology and online learning environment as well as the students' activities and feedback. The authors (a visiting professor from Portugal and a co-teacher from Macedonia) have different backgrounds, professional experience and research interests.

---

## Learning Environment

The main concerns related to the delivery of the course were: a) The authors had never experienced co-teaching and were not previously acquainted with each other; b) Both authors were not lecturing in their native language for a multicultural and multi-ethnic group; c) The availability of advanced teaching equipment (namely PC rooms and Internet) was limited; d) There was no prior knowledge of the students' background and level of computer literacy, and; e) There was no prior knowledge of the group size or of the level of proficiency in English.

As a result of these factors, expectations regarding the success of the course were not high. However, the students' positive response to a different course layout was promptly noticed through the discussion board postings, fulfilment of online tasks and the use of the Learning Management System (LMS).

The first contact with students was used to introduce them to what was ahead and to collect more information, with the aim of adapting the course to their average level. Planned activities included: a) Filling in the initial questionnaire; b) Opening an account in the LMS and filling in the personal profiles; c) Photographing students and uploading their photographs to their profile; d) Students sending an initial email to assess their expectations and English knowledge.

---

## Course Technology

The reported course, Online Teaching, was prepared at a distance. Although the co-teachers had never met before, they exchanged several e-mails in order to refine the course theme and the way and conditions of implementation. There was also a one-week visit (in Portugal) for detailed preparations – including: defining the title and course structure, preparing a syllabus, establishing the course level and prerequisites and discussing the teaching and assessment methods. The necessary technical conditions were also defined.

<sup>1</sup> ISUM Student Evaluation Report 2007, [http://www.spark-online.org/images/stories/codes\\_of\\_conduct/isum\\_student\\_evaluation\\_2007.pdf](http://www.spark-online.org/images/stories/codes_of_conduct/isum_student_evaluation_2007.pdf) (Accessed: December 2017).

The final version of the course was made available through a LMS. An online course structure, syllabus, daily topics, and a list of required and suggested readings were provided. A simple and straight forward structure was chosen as there was no prior knowledge of the participants' background, structured in a Menu type layout: Course description, Syllabus, Readings (required and suggested), Links and Activities.

The co-teachers had complete freedom in creating the course. It was an advantage that one had prior experience of this type of course – albeit not in the context of a Summer University, with the added challenges of a mixed student cohort, short preparation time and intensive delivery.

Active learning techniques were used to promote a high level of participation and interaction among all course participants, with assignments allocated to individuals and groups.

In the online classroom there is no place to hide; students are expected to be more self-reliant than in a traditional face-to-face environment. Perhaps one of the most important success factors in the online environment is breaking the barriers between the social, cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the students and instructors. At all levels, the course participants were requested to bring their own background, cultural experience and multi-lingualism into the discussions.

---

## Learning outcomes and assessment

Planned learning outcomes were that students should be able to:

- i. Start using active learning (on- and off-line)
- ii. Use synchronous and asynchronous communication
- iii. Create and moderate a discussion forum
- iv. Create a Blog
- v. Start the layout of an online or blended learning course

Evaluation was based mainly on in-class and online participation and interaction levels and on the delivery of two course assignments (individual and group work). For each learning activity, the evaluation criteria were based on purposely built rubrics. The course overall was very well received by the students.

---

## Reflections and lessons learned

After the course ended and for a long time thereafter, the authors identified, compared and analysed the teaching materials and methodologies that were used and which enabled them to create effective lectures and high levels of participation from the students, regardless of their background and computer and English level. The students' engagement and the assessment tools were considered a challenge within the proposed teaching and learning environment. The active and collaborative learning as well as the course projects were designed as learning activities: online and offline participation, individual or team, and appropriately designed rubrics for assessments.

As with any online or blended course, the construction of a learning community was essential. From the start, efforts were directed towards the establishment of a learning community mainly through the full integration of in-class and online learning activities, threaded discussions and collaborative assignments. With this approach, a highly motivating working environment was achieved and secured. The students expressed their satisfaction with;

- a) the instructors and the in-class learning environment;
- b) the technology and other resources (including classroom materials) and their prompt availability;
- c) the learning and teaching methodology;
- d) the variety of face-to-face learning and teaching environments;
- e) the out-of-class communication with both instructors and their peers, and;
- f) the learning process outcomes.

It is important to note that students were asked to provide feedback (in class and online) at a very early stage. This enabled the co-teachers to identify and address key issues promptly and to better support the students in meeting their learning goals.

It should also be noted that continuous effort is needed from both students and teachers in order for the blended learning approach to be successful. In this case, around two extra hours were needed each day to review assignments and progress towards planned learning outcomes. In addition, follow-up communication with students (through online forums) extended in to the evening in order to respond promptly to questions and areas of uncertainty. In a more traditional learning environment, such communication would be spread over at least a week.

This experience of facilitating blended learning was certainly challenging, but also very rewarding for the co-teachers.

The following examples of online feedback illustrate the impact on the students themselves:

*'I think that the topic was good, useful and it wasn't boring at all. With one word: excellent!'*

*'I wish I could have that kind of class in my faculty, but anyway, I have learned a lot more than I expected.'*

*'We were working in a relaxed atmosphere and it was great and I learned it a very interesting way.'*

---

## Conclusions

It is important to acknowledge that actual or potential conflicts in society can be a source of risk to blended learning, as with any other form of learning. This must be taken in to account in preparing the composition of the groups. The objective should be to recognise and to minimise obstacles arising from the learners' cultural, ethnic and political circumstances. With this in mind, the co-teachers in this example made use of a wide range of teaching and learning approaches, environments and tools.

With changing patterns in young people's mobility, cross-cultural classrooms are now increasingly common. This calls for corresponding increases in flexibility in supporting young people's learning – by recognising and responding to differences in backgrounds, experience and preferences.

This example, based on experience at the Summer University (Macedonia, 2007) shows that a blended approach can clearly benefit young people's learning. It also shows the importance of assessing, in advance, whether blended learning will meet the specific needs of the individuals in question.

---

## Reflection questions

- Think about the range of learning methodologies, environments and tools that you could use to support young people's learning (eg. PC lab, classroom, cybercafé, hotel); what are the main factors in selecting these?
- What kind of activities would be appropriate for learning in a classroom or online environment?
- How would you include an intercultural dimension on the learning, in order to reflect students' diverse cultural backgrounds?

---

## About the authors

Isabel S. Carvalho received the Licenciatura in Chemical Engineering from the Technical University of Lisbon; she also holds Masters and PhD degrees in Mechanical Engineering from the same university. Since 1999, Isabel has been Associate Professor at Portugal's Military Institute. Research interests include energy production and efficiency, combustion and effective communication. Isabel has been involved for over 12 years in developing active, collaborative and blended teaching and learning – with students in the humanities as well as in engineering.

Email: [isabel.simoes.decarvalho@gmail.com](mailto:isabel.simoes.decarvalho@gmail.com)

Zoran Zdravev received a PhD in Computer Science from the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Saints Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje, Macedonia. He is currently Associate Professor in Computer Science, Head of the E-learning centre and Head of Information Technologies at Goce Delchev University, Stip. Research interests include: Information Systems, E-Learning Systems, Digital Repositories and Data Science. He has led several international partnership projects in E-learning and Open educational resources, under the EU's Erasmus+ and Tempus programmes.

Email: [zoran.zdravev@ugd.edu.mk](mailto:zoran.zdravev@ugd.edu.mk)

---

### Further reading

Carvalho, I.S. (2009). Active Learning: Why, When and How? Accepted for publication in ID EST, Academic and Scientific Journal of Linguistics, Literature, Education and Culture.

Carvalho, I.S. and Zdravev, Z. (2009). Using Online Tools in a Hybrid Course: Teaching in a Multicultural and Multiethnic Environment. International Conference of Education, Research and Innovation (ICERI 2009), 16 – 18 November, Madrid, Spain.

Felder, R.M. and Brent, R. (1999). FAQs. II. (a) Active Learning vs. Covering the Syllabus; (b) Dealing with Large Classes. Chem. Engr. Education, 33(4), 276–277.

Felder, R. M. and Brent, R. (2005). How Students Learn, How Teachers Teach, and What Usually Goes Wrong. Felder & Brent Learning Styles Seminar-Handout.

Felder, R.M. and Brent, R. (2005). Understanding Student Differences. Journal of Engineering Education, January, 57-72.

McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2006). Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers. 12th Edition, Houghton Mifflin.

Prince, M. (2004). Does Active Learning Work? A Review of the Research. J. Engng. Education, 93(3), 223-231.

Salmon, G., 2002, 'E-tivities: The Key to Active Online Learning', Kogan Page, U.K.

Simonson, M., Smaldino, S., Albright, M. and Zvacek, S. (2009). Teaching and Learning at a Distance - Foundation of Distance Education. 4th Edition, Pearson Education, Inc., p.47.

Smith, K.A., Sheppard, S.D., Johnson, D.W., and Johnson, R.T., Pedagogies of Engagement: Classroom-Based Practices, J. Engng. Education, January, 2005, pp.87-101.

Zdravev, Z. and Dimov, G. (2011) IT for non IT Students--Effective Learning Through Blended Course. In: CiiT 2012 8th Conference on Informatics and Information Technologies with International Participation, 16-18 March 2012, Hotel Molika - Pelister, Bitola, Macedonia.

Zdravev, Z. and Krstev, A. and Serafimovski, D. (2017) Technology enabled flipped classroom tools and methodologies. In: The Eighth International Conference on e-Learning, 28 Sept 2017, Belgrade, Serbia

# Europe in transition: Diversity, Identity and Youth Work

## Copyright

SALTO Cultural Diversity Resource Centre 2017

[www.salto-youth.net/diversity](http://www.salto-youth.net/diversity)

Reproduction and use for non-commercial purposes are permitted provided the source, SALTO Cultural Diversity Resource Centre, is mentioned.

This publication has been funded with support from the European Commission. It reflects the views only of the authors. The European Commission and the British Council cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained within.