



Intellectual Output 4

COLLECTION OF THE PILOT REPORTS ON THE CHANGE AND LEARNING PROCESSES REGARDING DIVERSITY IN 14 ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership Project “Diversity Capacities - Improving the Capacities of Adult Education Institutions to Successful Dealing with Diversity”

Grant Agreement Number 2018-1-AT01-KA204-039271



The publication was developed under the framework of the Erasmus+ Project “Diversity Capacities - Improving the Capacities of Adult Education Institutions to Successful Dealing with Diversity (DivCap)” (2018 - 2021)

The programme is a partnership of the following organisations:

FH JOANNEUM - Institute of Social Work, Graz, Austria

Cramars società cooperativa sociale, Tolmezzo, Italy

DAΦΝΗ ΚΕΚ, Patras, Greece

Fundación Docete Omnes, Granada, Spain

Obrtničko učilište, Zagreb, Croatia

Participatie in Diversiteit, Enschede, Netherlands

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Graz, 2021

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Project Information

Information on the project is available at the project website: <https://www.diversitycapacities.eu/>



The “Intellectual Output 4 - Collection of the Pilot Reports on the Change and Learning processes regarding diversity in 14 Adult Education Institutions“ by the “Diversity Capacities - Improving the Capacities of Adult Education Institutions to Successful Dealing with Diversity - DivCap” (Grant Agreement Number 2018-1-AT01-KA204-039271) partnership is released under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.

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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

EU Disclaimer

The “Diversity Capacities- Improving the Capacities of Adult Education Institutions to Successful Dealing with Diversity - DivCap” project, Grant Agreement Number 2018-1-AT01-KA204-039271 has been funded through the European Commission/Programme Erasmus+ Strategic Partnerships for Adult Education with the support of the Austrian national Agency. This publication reflects the views only of the authors and the numerous participants who engaged with the Project. As such the commission cannot be held responsible for the contents of this publication or indeed the use of the information it contains therein.

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INTRODUCTION

The objectives of Diversity Capacities

The Erasmus+ project Diversity Capacities (DivCap) focuses on the topic of diversity in adult education. Adult Education (AE) institutions operate in a changing and diverse society. This diversity should also be reflected at all levels of AE institutions, if they are to live up to the claim of being an institution for all citizens of a society. The aim of the DivCap project was to support and promote change processes in AE institutions to become more open and inclusive. This was to be achieved by providing concrete instruments and measures that were tested in educational institutions. In this way, the DivCap partnership wishes to make a contribution to anti-discrimination and inclusion, and promote equal access to adult education offerings.

The objectives at a glance:

- Raise awareness and know-how about diversity at the individual and organisational level in adult education institutions.
- Implement concrete measures to promote inclusion and diversity at the organisational level.
- Strengthen the personal competences of staff members in dealing with diversity.

Project activities

Case studies analysing the status of diversity orientation

In each country the DivCap partner organisations worked together with a second educational institution that was committed to making concrete progress in implementing diversity orientation. This means that 14 educational institutions in total were involved across Europe. In the first phase case studies were conducted to analyse the institutions in terms of their diversity orientation. A special questionnaire was developed for this purpose. The reports on the case studies contained recommendations for the implementation of measures. The most important results were also summarised and used to create a tool kit for the analysis of an organisation and initiation of change processes.

Implementation of concrete measures in pilot projects

In the second phase concrete measures were implemented in pilot projects; based on the findings of the case study and a discussion process in the involved organisations. This phase was heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the work in the educational institutions had to be restructured. In any case, the DivCap partnership overcame these challenges by being innovative and creative. The results of the change and learning process in the institutions were documented in pilot reports.

Documentation of the change and learning process in 14 adult education institutions

Pilot reports

The process in each of the 14 adult education institutions was documented in a pilot report. This present document is a compilation of all 14 pilot reports. The individual reports can be found on the DivCap website.

General guidelines

The experiences and findings in the 14 institutions were distilled into overarching principles for the implementation and design of diversity processes in educational institutions. They can be found in the publication “Diversity-Orientation as a process in Adult Education Institutions. General guidelines and recommendations from reflecting and implementing diversity measures in the Diversity Capacities Project.”

The Diversity Capacities Series

A video series portraits seven institutions and shows how each of them addressed and implemented diversity orientation and summaries the experiences gained.

Downloads

- All reports and handbooks can be found on the DivCap project website:
<https://www.diversitycapacities.eu/>
- The videos are published on the DivCap YouTube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDO300zGBv21mn7GVTDNWpQ>

Acknowledgement

Finally, we would like to thank all those involved in the processes in the institutions, managers and staff, for their extraordinary commitment. Without their trust and cooperation, the project would not have been possible.

Helga Moser & the DivCap partnership
(Project Coordinator)

THE PILOT REPORTS

Documentation of the piloting processes in a diverse range of Adult Education Institutions across Europe

The change and learning process regarding diversity orientation in each of the 14 adult education institutions was documented in a pilot report. The findings were discussed with the persons responsible in the involved organisations, but reflect the perspectives and opinions of the authors.

The reports show the broad spectrum and wide range of measures carried out in the educational centers in the seven partners countries. Thereby, also the range of diversity within the partnership and the involved organisations becomes visible and obvious. The processes in the AE organisations were influenced by the different framework conditions, such as the state of discussions on diversity in the institution and in society, the size of the organisation, the educational sector, or whether it is a public or private organisation. Furthermore, during the project implementation, the COVID-19 pandemic had a major influence on the activities.

Structure of the pilot reports

- General overview of the organisation
- Status of the organisation regarding diversity
- The change and learning process: aims and activities
- Summary of the experiences, results and recommendations
- Good practice examples and developed tools and instruments can be found in the Annex and throughout the document
- Throughout the chapters: lessons learnt and statements of persons involved in the processes

Categories: main focus of activities

In order to provide orientation for readers who are interested in particular approaches, the measures implemented were assigned to different categories.

The main topics, on which the pilots organisations focused during the process of enhancing diversity, were:

- ▶ Diversity in Human Resource Management
- ▶ Diversity and structural change
- ▶ Enhancing diversity competences of trainers
- ▶ Diversity sensitive public relations
- ▶ Adaption of educational offers

These topics became apparent during the documentation and review of the different pilot projects. However, it needs to be considered, that change and learning processes are multidimensional and multilevel endeavors and can't be all made visible and seized in its entire scope in a written report. Furthermore, in the reports only selected aspects could be presented. For the purpose of the report and to give readers an overview, implemented activities were highlighted and allocated to specific categories. Beyond that, a lot of further activities, which were carried out in the pilot organisations as well, are described in the reports.

Amaryllis (The Netherlands)

No separation,
but inclusion

- Diversity and Human Resource Management



Human resource
Management
towards a Colorful
and Diverse Future

Illustration 1: website Amayrllis and photo workshop © screen shot: Amayrllis, photo: Shari Merdian, collage created by Jumbo Klercq

The Organisation

Amayrllis is an urban welfare foundation that focuses on all vulnerable citizens. The organization is based in the city of Leeuwarden. As of January 2020 Leeuwarden, has 123,107 inhabitants (source, www.fsp.nl). 21,014 citizens (17%) of them have a migrant background.



Illustration 2: diversity workshop Amayrllis ©photo Shari Merdian

1. Amaryllis an urban welfare organization for vulnerable citizens

Amaryllis as welfare organization is in January 2019 merged with organizations responsible for youth work, family care, neighborhood mediation, refugees with residence permit. This is because of cuts in the budget by the municipality and the policy to integrate specific policy focus on migrants with general policy. The argument of the municipality is to work on efficiency and exchange and strengthen of knowledge of workers.

The current organization has a total workforce of 180 paid employees working at different levels and departments. 80-90% of the services of different departments are used by citizens with a migrant background. Most of the questions of these groups are focused on welfare, care, housing, labor, finance and education. All vulnerable groups can be supported without referral. This includes, for example, support by staff of the social work unit without referral.

By deploying 8 social district teams (including 2 village teams) in the municipality of Leeuwarden, Amaryllis bring help and support close to home. In addition, Amaryllis have teams that deal explicitly with voluntary work, youth work, volunteer aid, status holders, neighborhood mediation, meeting & participating and community work. The most important principle here is that we put the resident's interests first. Amaryllis do not take the question away from the resident, but stimulate self-reliance and focus on cooperation within the social network. Amaryllis as organization is formed on the basis of what is really needed rather than what someone is entitled to. Amaryllis wants to be an organization that is beyond patronizing. Amaryllis work on the basis of trust and anticipate the needs of the environment. The care workers stimulate the self-reliance of citizens and focus on cooperation within the social network. The support is aimed at a multiple living environment.

2. Key findings of the case study: specific versus general Policy

2.1 From Specific Policy to General Policy

In the past, Amaryllis had a specific policy for support of migrants. At that time, activities were focused on integration and participation of migrants in Dutch society. People with different cultural backgrounds received special attention and migrant and refugee organizations were coached and guided by social workers. Due to the merger, hardly any attention was paid to problems for specific minorities, refugees, although the organization has a department for status holders (refugees with residence permits) and social district teams that come to neighborhoods and districts where for the most part migrants live.

The organization underwent a considerable culture change due to the merger. Amaryllis as a merged organization does not have an intercultural policy now. Only professionals with a native background work in the department for supporting status holders. The organization's social workers have no experience in guiding this target group and lack culture-specific knowledge. Professional social workers do not pay attention to these problems. Guidance is left to volunteers. There are no professionals with a migrant background among the staff. There were some staff with non-Dutch nationality working for the organization, but unfortunately most of them have left the organization.

Open versus closed organization



2.2 Loss of Expertise

The knowledge, experience and expertise gained in working with migrants has disappeared partly due to the merger. The organization no longer has free space to reach specific groups with a migrant background. From an open organization, it has become a closed organization. The outreach to migrants and their interest groups has disappeared as a result. This is also the result of the policy of the municipality of Leeuwarden, which is the provider of subsidies to the Amaryllis organization. The organization went from specific policy to general policy because the pressure came from the municipality of Leeuwarden, although 80-90% of the organization's services are used by migrants. There is a high turnover of employees. The employees do not receive training in intercultural work.

“Migrant groups are not reached due to municipal policy”

(PiD facilitator)



2.3 Migrants' relationship network and their organizations

There are no longer specific channels and contacts to communicate with migrants. Also, the social workers who were specifically in contact with migrant organizations belong to the past. The current policy of the municipality of Leeuwarden means that there will be no diversity, intercultural policy in the coming years.

Social workers today know nothing about migrant networks due to the policy of the municipality. What happens to this group and what the problems are, is unknown to most social workers. The staff members who are still involved with migrants plead for a renewed colorful personnel policy and attention to the issue of diversity, migration and inclusion also among the current native staff members.

2.4 No specific means of communication

Amaryllis makes standard use of communication channels (mails, Facebook, internet, brochures, advertisements, etc.). Specific means of communication are not used to reach migrants. Within the organizations which have standard brochures, there are brochures which are developed nationally by the government. Locally, there are no organizations that translate these into their own language when it comes to facilities. The care workers notice in practice that many migrants are not aware of all kinds of facilities and services on the local level. Migrants lack all kinds of information to which they may be entitled. This demonstrates that poverty among this target group is also increasing. Communication with self-organizations and key figures is lacking. Amaryllis no longer has a direct connection and contact with the migrant organizations. Everything that has been built up has disappeared in recent years. Within the organization there is a social network cards, but unfortunately there are no migrant organizations on it, while there are all kinds of Dutch organizations.



The social network card of Amaryllis is a guideline for vulnerable citizens. When they have questions on the level of care, housing, education, tax, and so on the care workers of Amaryllis will connect them with the organizations who are responsible to support them directly and work on concrete solutions. This is a point of attention and an important action point.

2.5 Intercultural competences

Social workers of Amaryllis are not able to identify people with a migrant background in order to do justice to the individual and his situation and wishes. Most of the Dutch social workers do not have enough knowledge and experiences according to the cultural backgrounds of migrants with for instance a Turkish, Moroccan, Surinam, or Syrian background. They are not consciously looking for challenges and are therefore not able to communicate effectively with this group. An important challenge for the social workers is outreach work.

They also lack intercultural competences. Intercultural assistance is becoming increasingly important in this country, due to the migration flow in recent years. According to some staff members, the Netherlands is already familiar with the presence of various migrant groups. Social workers must realise that it is nowadays a necessity in this multicultural society to show a strong sense of empathy in working with migrant groups, having few prejudices and being open to an unfamiliar situation. Also looking for similarities with the other, respecting a client and taking into account his wishes have become more necessary. Amaryllis tries to facilitate the support of all vulnerable citizens, but currently the impression is that some projects do not reach migrant groups in some neighborhoods. In public, the organization presents itself as an open organization for all vulnerable citizens, including migrants. But on the other hand, staff members do not reach migrant groups effectively. It is important that board, management and staff become aware of strengthening the competences and skills of the staff in this area.

The statements of the social workers who contribute in this case study are the most important results. They expressed the view of the knowledge of the Netherlands on immigration history. They emphasize the knowledge built up on specific policy of national and local governments and organizations.

2.6 Human Resource Management

Amaryllis does not have a target group policy. A startup of a specific target group supporting the board of directors, management and employees is necessary to work on diversity on all levels within the organization because there is no diversity or intercultural policy. Employees receive no training on working with migrants. Diversity is not taken into account in the application procedures and in the drawing up of vacancies and recruitment of staff. The average age of staff is between 30 and 35 years. Men and migrants are underrepresented among the staff. Within Amaryllis research should be done on what social workers need in order to work interculturally and deal with diversity issues. Additional research into 'clashing work cultures' due to the merger is needed. In order to grow into a fully-fledged work organization that also sees working with migrants as an enrichment.

3. Intercultural and diversity competences

3.1 Aims and Approaches

3.1.1 Aims of the Pilot Project

The main objective of the pilot is for the board and management of Amaryllis to concretely facilitate a plan of action to realize diversity and inclusion for the entire organization. Due to the merger as a result of the cutback policy of the municipality of Leeuwarden as provider of subsidies, accumulated expertise and knowledge regarding intercultural work and migration has disappeared. Due to the municipal policy the organization has a general policy. There is no specific policy aimed at migrants because everyone is expected to contribute on the basis of their own ability and decisiveness.

The organization talks about vulnerable citizens and many of them have a migration background.



Intercultural and diversity competences are needed!

It is essential that the top, the management and the municipality commit to the mission of diversity and inclusion and increase and strengthen the competences and skills of the employees to this end. The angle is that Amaryllis, as a merged welfare organization, will learn to deal with diversity and inclusion. This was the overall aim of the case study. But this is a long-term process. The call for a renewed colorful personnel policy and the strengthening of specific competencies with regard to working with migrants has become stronger among some staff members.

The vision of implementing a concrete change management process is currently very difficult for the organization. The organization is dependent on the policy of the municipality of Leeuwarden for receiving subsidies. Board and management support the policy of the municipality of Leeuwarden. But nevertheless, some steps towards were made during the start with a workshop with social workers

3.1.2 Recommendations for measures to reach the aim of an inclusive organization

A broad discussion on how to deal with diversity within the organization could lead to reaching the aim of being more diverse and inclusive. A start can be made with practical workshops for the employees endorsed by the top and management as a first step. Through these practical workshops, the personnel policy of Amaryllis, the required competencies and skills for employees and the approach for change are exchanged.

Practical meetings (workshops, work sessions) need to be organized to map out what knowledge Amaryllis has as a welfare organization when it comes to providing information on diversity policy, promoting skills and training employees in intercultural work. Involving migrant organizations and key figures in change is necessary. Possible attention to vacancies in order to attract more immigrant social workers requires changes in personnel policy. The aim would be to have a vacancy policy in relation to recruitment of staff with knowledge and experience in intercultural work, migration and diversity.

In order to achieve inflow of employees with a migration background and to make products and services of Amaryllis more accessible, the design of flyers and brochures in different languages is necessary and would be helpful also for migrant clients. Furthermore, to increase contacts with migrant organizations is recommended. This is necessary to reach the vulnerable persons within the migrant societies. Individual contacts and a face-to-face approach are important for the support by Amaryllis.

A requirement is ultimately support among the board and management, employees for diversity and inclusion within the entire organization. Through this pilot, as mentioned, a start is made with practical work sessions intended for employees of the social district teams. A second action point is to organize a meeting with the board and management to create support for a plan of approach. Extra attention is paid to the new working culture of Amaryllis as a merged welfare organization. During these workshops, the experiences of the employees should also be shared in this area. Important starting points in this process include:

- **reinforcing the training needs of employees to work with migrants**
- **reinforcing the needs of some social workers to create support among employees who see diversity policy as a challenge.**
- **increasing openness, tolerance, communication and manners within the organization.**



This process is seen by the interviewees in this case study as a benefit for the institution and all the people working and learning there. The supportive atmosphere is very useful for the trainers, but also for the participants.

3.2 Diversity Workshops for Social District Team

3.2.1 Diversity Workshops

The strategy has been to organize two diversity workshops for the social district teams. However, due to the Corona crisis, it was only possible in March 2021 to organize a small workshop for a part of one social district team. At the time of writing this report, we hope we can go forward with a second workshop with this group and simultaneously develop a strategy to roll out this kind of workshops further in the organization.

The aim of the workshop was:

- ✓ To broaden knowledge and understanding of intercultural care and to discuss the challenges in counselling migrants and status holders
- ✓ Exchange practical skills which are used in Amaryllis and get acquainted with new methodologies
- ✓ Formal/informal contacts with migrants and refugee organisations
- ✓ Intercultural policy from within Amaryllis



The programme of the diversity workshop was as follows:

1. Inventory of specific questions in the work/care of migrants/status holders
2. Own cultural baggage and the cultural baggage of others
3. Deployment of specific methods to successfully guide migrants/status holders
4. Formal and informal networks of persons of foreign heritage/status holders
5. Attention to intercultural policy/diversity framework from Amaryllis



Working methods of the diversity workshop were as follows:

- ❖ Short power point presentations
- ❖ Exchange and discussion
- ❖ Discussion of a practical case of the social workers (depicting practical cases social workers face in their daily work, see the example in the annex.

Housing group of elderly migrants

Practical case in the diversity workshop

A number of elderly migrants of Surinamese/Hindu origin have taken the initiative to live in a housing complex with a minimum of 16 and a maximum of 20 elderly people of the same origin. It would be nice if the housing complex had its own meeting place. Ultimately, these are homes for the elderly. These elderly people can no longer fall back on help from acquaintances or family members and therefore want to arrange their own care. These are elderly people who are not registered and in need of nursing care. The initiators are contacting the employees of a community center and an elderly people's work group to help them get started. The employees now have the task of supporting the initiative group in their housing needs.

Adiep Autar insert his working methods in how to reach migrants and migrant organizations. He does this on the basis of guiding in-depth questions.

- Do negative feelings have to do with culture? Reflect on your own culture and try to understand other cultures?
- Definition of culture: what is culture anyway? There may be different views among social workers about "culture". What and when does something fall under culture?
- An open attitude is essential for learning about new culture. Being open to new culture starts with yourself and making sure clients feel safe without making them feel judged.
 - Using a PowerPoint presentation, he explains what culture as a concept encompasses and he explains these differences by means of a so-called Maslow pyramid, which boils down to 'I (Western culture) - we (non-Western culture)'. Individual development versus loyalty to the family and community to which you belong as a non-Western migrant.
- • As a professional, you need to have a curious attitude. You also need to show interest in the other person, in his/her cultural backgrounds
- • Migrant organizations/ key figures: Social workers indicate that they are not in contact with any migrant organizations. Amaryllis has more than 70% of its clients with a migrant background, so it is important for Amaryllis to have contact with migrant organizations and key figures.
- • More diversity in social workers. Not only native social workers, but also social workers with a migrant background

Intercultural Work - Intercultural Policy.

The responses to these questions and answer section are outline:

- Empathy is needed
- Show understanding
- Being sincere
- Being able to distinguish between 'us' and 'them'
- The normal, what should be normal in communication becomes narrower
- Acceptance is needed
- Trust is needed
- Building relationships is necessary
- Closing the 'gap' between the urban and the district level is important.



The policymakers expect the residents of the neighborhood to participate. But there is insufficient indication of how this can be achieved. At the district level, the social district teams point out that there is insufficient insight into, for example, how to deal with illiterate people in this process. In addition, social workers are confronted with traumas of refugees that are obstacles to actively participate in Dutch society. This is also understandable and you notice that mental health institutions do not have the knowledge to work with refugees, status holders, for example. Furthermore, barriers in relation to government rules became apparent: Social workers indicate that they are confronted with a certain (government) framework to apply the correct implementation in their work with all vulnerable citizens, including migrants. Nevertheless, according to those present, there are also good examples. We can learn from the past. The time when Amaryllis had networks with migrant organizations, the knowledge of how family systems work was present.

The social workers had a lot of experience in working with migrants who mainly live in the Bilgaard and Vrijheidswijk neighborhoods. It is precisely that knowledge that they had according to reach migrants and that can be used again. The attending staff members have knowledge of how to work in a problem-oriented way. This ultimately leads to solutions.

Adiep Autar reflects on this exchange of staff experiences through the powerpoint presentation which he handed out. He presents some number of methodologies, such as TOPOI model, the dialogue and the Ujamaa method.



TOPOI MODEL

The TOPOI-model is used for a better analyzing and understanding of intercultural communication and to unsee cultural misunderstandings according to five areas: Language, Order, People, Organization and Effort. The TOPOI model is developed by Edwin Hoffman.

DIALOGUE METHOD

(entering into a conversation based on equality)

Advices

- ✓ Be aware that you are looking at things through your own cultural lens;
- ✓ Know your own values and standards; Recognize that these may differ from those of other people;
- ✓ Have developed a degree of intercultural sensitivity;
- ✓ Have mastered several intercultural competences;
- ✓ Communicate clearly;
- ✓ Have developed tools and skills to overcome any barriers in communication;
- ✓ Be respectful towards your interlocutor;
- ✓ Do not judge but listen actively.



UJAMA METOD

(involving family, key figures) to reach migrants.

UJAMAA stands for unity and cooperation. The feeling of togetherness and solidarity. Ujamaa has also been given the meaning of 'matters that need to be resolved jointly and for which one joins forces'.

Questions for the participants

If you want to strengthen intercultural work, how do you think you can achieve this in your organization?
What else should be changed within the organization?

Summarizing the workshop, in the end, it is all about awareness within the organization.

A workshop like this is necessary. Fortunately, the organization offers that space for their employees to participate in this workshop.

The participants are aware of taking their own fields of expertise open to discussion.

Share the problems in this field with each other is the advice.

More of these awareness-raising activities will have to be organized. It does need to be facilitated by the organization. But as indicated, luckily there is room for it. Again: in the end it is about understanding each other, learning from each other's cultural backgrounds. We can start with a small group and use it locally.

The question from the participants is 'what next' after this.

It is important to organize intercultural and diversity workshop through organizations that are certainly directly involved with migrant communities.

Bringing this to the attention.

Learning from each other is the starting point.

3.3 Practical cases as examples for reflection on work of social workers

Outline of the situation

Some elderly migrants of Surinamese-Hindu origin have taken the initiative to live in a housing estate with at least 16 to a maximum of 20 elderly people of the same origin. It would be nice if the housing complex had its own meeting place. Ultimately, these are homes for the elderly. These elderly people can no longer fall back on help from acquaintances or family members and therefore want to arrange their own care. These are elderly people who are not indicated for care and in need of nursing care. The initiators are contacting the employees of a community center and an elderly people's work group to help them get started. The employees now have the task of supporting the initiative group in their housing needs.

ASSIGNMENT

How do we go about this in a planned way?

Focus area

1. Setting goals: What will the employees do? What choices do we make? Does everyone feel involved? Does everyone feel that the organization really cares?
2. Planning: How are we going to do it? This applies to the board, management, staff and volunteers,
3. Staff, employees and volunteers. Executing: How do we ensure that everything happens?
4. Evaluating: How do we learn from what we have achieved? How do we go further?

Implementation

Time: 30 - 45 minutes

Reading the case: 5 minutes

Discuss, write down results and present: 40 minutes

Supporting tools: flip charts, pens

4. Analysis of the change and learning process and Recommendations

4.1 Analysis and Experiences

Amaryllis is a monocultural organization, while its clientele consists of 80-90 % migrants. The board and management follow the policy of the municipality that provides the subsidies.

The organization is not a reflection of the colorful community in the municipality of Leeuwarden. The staff is currently entirely indigenous and consists largely of women in the age group of 30-35 years. The board and management will have to be aware of a colorful personnel policy, intercultural work, diversity and inclusive policy.



Managing and coaching HRM policy

Vision and policy development in Human Resource Management (HRM) in this area is required. Steering for diversity and inclusion automatically implies steering for HRM policy. Before the merger, Amaryllis was an accessible welfare organization for migrants since part of the professional staff also had a migrant background. Current staff members of the merger organization can learn from the knowledge and working methods that these employees had. In order to make changes, you need people with knowledge, experience and expertise. Professionals see that they are part of a large organization, but that the organization does not reflect society. In view of changing government policies and what is required of all citizens, including migrants, it is necessary to cooperate as much as possible. Without such cooperation, no intercultural organization can be built, in which sometimes specific approaches but also adjustments from within the organization are needed. Immigrants must be able to recognize themselves and feel safe within an organization. If 80-90% of the clients of Amaryllis belong to the migrant groups and there is no employee anymore who has the knowledge and skills to work with and support the migrant groups, the service activities of Amaryllis cannot reach the migrants

4.2 Recommendations change and learning process

The analysis of the experiences of part of the staff of Amaryllis has led to the recommendation to reflect on the vision and work and transparency with regard to diversity policy and change management within the organization by all staff members, starting with awareness among the board and management and the municipality as provider of subsidies.

It is necessary to reformulate the mission of the organization. The concretization of the mission to reach vulnerable groups includes migrants and reflection/evaluation of the communication process on the values of the organization is important. Nowadays, no migrants are reached.

Reflection on the substantive vision of the work

Awareness raising among the board, the management and the municipality



An HRM expert is essential and urgent, and an external process facilitator to support all employees of the organisation in addressing the diversity policy as a challenge to their own workload and skills to serve migrant clients



Upgrading and continuous development in competencies and skills is necessary.

4.3 Recommendations for staff

Need for Training and Updating intercultural Skills of Staff

The facilitation of a support package of a mix of activities such as survey/practical research, workshops, training, education focused on diversity policy and intercultural work is needed. The possibility of organizing a workshop on the theme of diversity policy, intercultural work on a small scale in three neighborhood teams is a start.

Social workers need to be able to identify the competences and skills needed to work with migrant/migrant organizations.

How to deal with cultural differences, knowledge of the world and backgrounds of migrants, strengthening the empathy of staff members, how to deal with other cultures?

Trainings and workshops are a tool for this.

What does it mean for the educational process?

Improvement of the training policy within the organization aimed at diversity and inclusion

4.4 Needs of the clients

Learning organization is about daring to make choices and working in a small context. Especially people with a migrant background need a lot of time. People with a migrant background want:

- Be treated equally
- Try to get everybody in a learning organization
- Take into account the way of communication
- Professionals need insight into specific skills and competences.

4.5 Possible impact on the organization and the management?

Reflection on the aims of the organization and the need to reflect their own competences in terms of getting better qualified staff and better performance for the benefit of the public and especially improving cooperation with migrant organizations.

New challenges and being better prepared to deal with the knowledge of diversity policy and skills



New challenges and being better prepared to deal with the knowledge of diversity policy and skills is an enrichment for the merger organization. Without such cooperation, no intercultural organization can be built. Migrants must experience the feeling of welcome of Amaryllis as a welfare organization also for migrants. Finding people from a similar culture in the organization makes them more familiar with it.

As described above, the organization is still subject to many external influences and it is sometimes difficult to cope with all the changes. Rules and laws certainly play a role, preventing the organization from making choices and initiating changes. These rules and laws are edited by the municipality of Leeuwarden, from which Amaryllis receives subsidies.

Start with a think tank!



Starting with a small working group, a think tank would be very useful. From here, movement, action plans and gradual growth can be worked on. Working on an agreement with the board and management for creating the support package of activities is necessary.

Building a network relationship with migrant organizations is a must!

In addition, it is important to think about the importance and necessity of the migrant organizations for the challenges and innovation within the organization. Adaptation of the current means of communication used and alignment with the target group of migrants should be ensured. In the coming period, contact will have to be made with migrant organizations and key figures. The target groups and their self-organizations are the representatives of the Surinamese Hindus, Turks, Moroccans, Syrians, and Somalis communities. Next, you can investigate which specific knowledge the organization can reach and use. Organizing meetings and approaching people personally could also be successful. Organizing meetings in cooperation with the mentioned target groups on how to deal with cultural differences, bridging cultural gaps would be very valuable.

4.6 Role of local Authorities

Adaptation of the current means of communication used and alignment with the target group of migrants should be ensured. In the coming period, contact will have to be made with migrant organizations and key figures. The target groups and their self-organizations are the representatives of the Surinamese Hindus, Turks, Moroccans, Syrians, and Somalis communities. Next, you can investigate which specific knowledge the organization can reach and use. Organizing meetings and approaching people personally could also be successful. Organizing meetings in cooperation with the mentioned target groups on how to deal with cultural differences, bridging cultural gaps would be very valuable.

Revaluing social networks, a social map with migrant organizations is urgent for innovation within the organization to serve clients with a migrant background.



Craft College (Croatia)

Heading Towards Multiculturalism

- Diversity and structural change
- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers



Formulating the Mission and Vision statement

Tackling Human Resource (HR) Development and

Competences of staff, trainers/trainers and learners/ Knowledge Management

The Organisation

Craft College (Obrtničko učilište/OU), founded in 2006, is an institution for adult education located in the City of Zagreb.



1. Connecting Vocational Education with the Economy and Regional Development

Craft College (Obrtničko učilište/OU), founded in 2006, is an institution for adult education located in the City of Zagreb. It was founded by the Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts (HOK), the Chamber of Trades and Crafts Zagreb (OKZ) and the Association of Craftsmen Zagreb (UOZG) for the provision of formal, informal and non-formal adult education; with a goal of linking the needs of trades and labour market and adjusting educational programmes to European standards.

The tasks of the College of Crafts are: conducting formal and non-formal education, connecting vocational education with the economy and regional development, establishing a network system with companies and other educational institutions, taking an advisory role for educational institutions and companies in the region, encouraging innovation in crafts, providing advisory services and information for students and parents, future participants in the craft educational process and European cooperation.

The main activities are defined by the Statute:

- secondary education of adults: programmes for secondary qualifications, lower qualifications, retraining, training, training and master exams
- learning foreign languages
- IT education programmes at primary and higher level

The Crafts College carries out adult education as a public service for programmes carried out on the basis of verified curricula for which permits are issued by the Ministry of Science and Education and the Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education. In accordance with verified programmes, it issues public documents.

Adult education is provided as a public service for programs conducted on the basis of verified curricula plans and programs.

Formal general adult education contains foreign languages based approvals- English, German and Italian - grades A1 to C2; digital skills development and informal courses: EBCL entrepreneurship skills and Croatian language and culture courses for the fastest possible integration of migrants into our society.

The Crafts College (OU) employ 21 persons and has more than 150 associate professionals in teaching fields. It operates in Osijek and Rijeka through branches.



2. Harmonizing educational training programs according to EU standards.

Craft College, as mentioned, was established by the Croatian Crafts System with an increase in the needs of the crafts and labour markets to harmonize educational training programs according to EU standards. The Craft Collage improves the knowledge and status regarding diversity by working with the different groups in adult education. For staff this means improving personal development and becoming familiar with the work and practice of middle and senior management of different EU institutions that teach adults in the non-native language, promoting the cultural diversity of educational groups and working in intercultural classrooms.

2.1 Inclusion and diversity through projects

The College has participated and is actively participating in several projects for the strengthening and integration of asylum seekers, in cooperation with the Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS), public institutions and foreign partners. As we have already been positively evaluated for intellectual results on countless occasions and in the evaluation lists in the implementation of training programs and informal courses, we are further strengthening our own capacities in this area. In recent years, a large shortage of labour has been felt in Croatia due to a combination of economic circumstances, for which organizations that care for the labour market through employment or self-employment have given recommendations on the employment of asylum seekers, foreigners and other marginalized groups.

The biggest challenge remains language competences, but also the combination of different cultural groups in one educational group, which requires greater engagement by increasing the interactivity of teaching and understanding the students and the diversity of the educational group from teachers and support staff.



Since 2016, Craft College has been involved in the education of migrants and then asylum seekers by organizing courses in Croatian and English. To improve the service and access to education for migrants and asylum seekers, we joined the Erasmus+ KA2 project "Refugees in vocational training" (2016-2018) in which we developed cooperation with associations and institutions that care for refugees in the Republic of Croatia.

Then, as project partners, we joined in this follow-up project “DivCap” with the aim of raising awareness of diversity issues at the personal and organizational level in adult education organizations. We are also partners in the implementation of the Erasmus+ KA1 project INTERZIL in which we conducted job shadowing and a structured course on the topic of English language acquisition for migrants and asylum seekers and intercultural competences. The College is also a partner in the ESF project “Education for Better Integration of Asylum Seekers”, which aims to train and organize a Croatian language course for 40 asylum seekers. Through the current implementation, 3 target groups participated in the project.

As part of the ESF projects, we implement projects that focus on marginalized groups - asylum seekers, unemployed people, women under the age of 30 and older than 55 and persons with disabilities. In addition to the above-mentioned project "Education for better integration of asylum seekers" with partners JRS and the Initiative - Center for Culture, the College is a partner in the project "Become active Roma and Get a Job - PARIS "and conducts training and strengthening of Roma in the area of Zagreb and Zagreb County. Through the projects of the Local Partnership for Employment in Zagreb and Zagreb County, we conduct training and the Employment Club for the long-term unemployed, women under 30 and older than 55, the disabled, etc. We also conduct training for the unemployed through tourism education projects for catering occupations in which before COVID, and hopefully after, a very high employment opportunity.

2.2 Human Resource Management

The age span of employees in OU is between 21-59 years. Some employees come from urban area of the capital city and some come from coastal part and rural part of Croatia. The education structure also shows variety: there are employees with different educational background, i.e. there are different professions present, multilingualism is present in the institution and the level of knowledge and the approach to work is also different by every employee.

Although there is attention for diversity present in the institution, sometimes the staff is not aware of diversity because they often consider all the diversities as “normal”. In other words, the opportunity is given to all kinds of different people whether it is in the working area (people who are working together, colleagues) or in the education (students).

People within the organisation at all levels are aware that diversity is a characteristic of adult education and believe that groups of students are becoming increasingly diverse and multicultural and that people within the organisation must constantly develop multicultural perspectives at all levels of the organisation.

Considering migrant students, they need individual approach and the staff needs to deal with them by completely adapting to each participant because they also have diversities between them (country where they come from, religion, strictly religious, less strict about religion, education background, age, etc.).

Leadership is more focused on diversity within the organisation itself, while teachers and administration focus more on issues of diversity in terms of learners.

The leadership looks at differences (in terms of working with migrants) structured from the moment they enter the country until they become our trainees (through the development of projects). However, staff members think more about how they will work/teach migrants when they come. They are more driven by relationships within the organisation that reflect on working with diversity in a positive way.



In general, cooperative behavioural and social cooperation is present in OU. It does not exclude the motivation of individuals and individual identities, but rather that they are transformed from the personal to the group level. It is noticeable that employees at all levels of the organisation are characteristically well known, respected and accordingly trusted and tolerated by each other.

2.3 Networking - open access

Craft College cooperates with different partners (non-governmental sector, institutions - mainstream and adult education, regional and local self-government units, business support institutions, Croatian Employment Service, etc.). Activities and cooperation contribute to the development of a common education system that provides open access, new educational opportunities, as well as transitions between educational fields.

The organisation does not speak the language of learners (migrants). For reaching out to these groups, an oral, personal approach is used through cooperation with the organisations that work with them (JRS, Croatian Employment Service) whose employees directly strength and thus improve our further work with migrants and asylum seekers.

Participation in projects made possible to exchange of experience and networking; strengthened our own capacities and international dimension and improved cooperation with existing partners (e.g. we continue our partnership in vocational education in adult education); became aware of the importance of quality system and educational management. We focused our activities on "internationalization at home" in our institution by transferring positive experiences, developing intercultural skills for work and reducing prejudices, misunderstandings and ethnocentrism, getting to know different cultures (lifestyles, manners, gastronomy, etc.) and organizing incoming mobility and guest lecturers.

2.4 Education

Craft College is one of the leading institutions for adult education in the field of craft and entrepreneurship in Croatia, with local, regional, national and international effects. Educational service is based on quality of content, student and experience-oriented programmes and transversal skills. For the implementation of the education program, we cooperate with approximately 70 external associates in the field of vocational education.

Basic information education programs are attended mainly by the more mature population (above 50) while advanced courses are attended by younger participants. Courses such as business communication, market positioning through modern marketing tools, time management and organizational skills or use of IT tools, are conducted in an non-formal form for craftsmen and small entrepreneurs (mostly over 45-50 years). Non-formal Croatian language courses are attended by migrants (20-60), coming from different countries and cultural backgrounds.

In 2017, the College began working with migrants and later with asylum seekers. Working with migrants showed us all the problems and challenges that employees and teachers had not encountered before - other cultures, other languages, very poor knowledge of English, different ways of thinking, communicating, learning and reacting. Employees and teachers began teaching Croatian as a non-mother tongue in adult education for the first time. All this affected the teaching, its course and dynamics, the adoption of materials, the adoption of the Croatian language, group dynamics, but also the condition of the teachers themselves faced with major changes that disrupted the "traditional" and regular teaching.

Educational staff has many categories of diversity considering their age, profession, knowledge, approach to work and working with diverse education groups. Some teachers however were not so keen to adopt working with migrants.

In other words, they lack the ability to adapt their courses to migrants, specifically by speaking too fast which is not suitable for them since their knowledge of language is not at such level. The teacher needed to implement some special methods of giving lectures which were shaped for migrants to be able to understand them.

Through work experience, but mostly through Erasmus+ KA2 projects concerning persons of other cultural backgrounds, the College has identified the need to improve the following activities through piloting:



1. Teaching methods
2. Intercultural approach
3. Language as a means of integration


The case study conducted in the first phase of the DivCap project has shown in general the positive attitudes of employees towards migrants as well as the desire to include all persons in the education process. However, the negative sides or challenges are the high stress of teachers, higher workload and greater additional effort in the implementation of teaching for people with other cultural backgrounds, but the inability to adapt and the inability to go beyond traditional teaching. The case study highlights the need for innovative approaches to education that go beyond traditional teaching methods, enable the bridging of cultural differences, the creation of an inclusive classroom and the relief of teachers' stress for better adoption of Croatian as a second language.

2.5 Commitment with diversity policy

The institution is open for cooperation in many different fields. That can also be seen through the EU projects we conducted. EU funded projects brought to our institution many partners from many different countries what also implied diverse experiences and exchange of practices.

OU equally engages employees and managers, reduces micro-management and other restrictive approaches, and promotes organisational and individual success. OU is a horizontal organisation that creates an environment of genuine collaboration, respect and openness.

It gives everyone more freedom to express unconventional ideas or to work on issues that are not visible in organisational goals, even though everyone is aware of them; including those talking about diversity. In an organisational framework, diversity therefore refers to the making use of and leveraging human differences by organisational efficiency and productive business goals that maintain a high-performing workforce.



3. Horizontal change into multicultural organization

The case study using the 7-stages model ranging from a monocultural organization to an intercultural organizations, has shown that the College finds itself at stage 4. Stage 4 is characterized by an inflow of migrant workers and people with different cultures (migrants, asylum seekers and representatives of other cultures, e.g. Roma), but there are no appropriate competencies among employees, teachers as well as guidance. The need for „change“ thus follows the need to:

- ✓ develop diversity management for all staff and external associates - changing the attitude of staff positively affects the participants and improves the teacher / trainer-student relationship
- ✓ develop a collaborative relationship based on trust and understanding
- ✓ monitor trends in adult education,
- ✓ adopt and apply new methods and approaches in the acquisition of key competencies (staff participation in workshops aimed at raising the level of transversal skills of participants: communication skills, teamwork, creativity etc.)
- ✓ develop competencies to motivate participants from different groups so that they do not give up learning
- ✓ share tools and methods in teaching and working with people of different cultural backgrounds in order to apply good practices
- ✓ develop modern and innovative adult education programs
- ✓ monitor and use different teaching methods that move away from traditional methodologies (on the principle of diversity and dynamism, coordinated reaction, expediency, integral action and achievement control)
- ✓ increase staff competencies in working with diversity in order to improve intercultural skills, develop empathy
- ✓ insufficient competencies of teachers for the application of multicultural classroom components (content integration, reduction of prejudice based on educational equality and social justice)

Commitment for change in this sense is horizontal. Horizontal change will help OU become more adaptable, more collaborative and innovative (more closely to 7 stages model - intercultural organisation) which is vital in today's highly competitive and ever-evolving adult education; having in mind that personalisation, collaboration and informalisation (informal learning) are at the core of learning in the future.

OU will be better off if they all shifted to an outward mindset. But this would be possible only if some are willing to change even when others don't – and to sustain the change whether or not others reciprocate. The leadership of the organisation is therefore focused on making people work together because of their differences. More specifically, it attempts to manage diversity in a way that directs people within an organisation with different perspectives and identities to work well together despite their differences. This also fosters the ability to collaborate and learn from different stakeholders, including employees, customers, partners and communities. They use what they learn to explore how they can perform their organisation's work more efficiently.



Change for organisation means horizontally building strength through diversity and inclusion; and accomplishing an organisation-wide shift in mindset.

Similarly, OU is equally open in the organisation to relationships with colleagues and trainees. This is, on the one hand, a reflection of the organisation's management, however the fact that the organisation is in daily contact with diversity plays also an important role.

These relate not only to ethnicity and cultural background which is the theme of this project, but also include other dimensions of diversity such as sexual orientation, intellectual abilities, age, socio-economic background, geographical differences, linguistic, literacy, difficulties and disability.

3.1 Aims and Approaches

The DivCap project is important to our organization because no matter that we have guidelines for development in the context of European cooperation and internationalization focused on adult education in dealing with diversity, we want with this project to raise awareness about issues of personal and organizational diversity in adult education organizations. This is only possible by introducing concrete mentioned measures to promote inclusion and diversity at the organizational level (from management, management, teachers and administration) and increase the personal competencies of adult learning organizations' staff in dealing with diversity.

The case study has shown that Craft College is open and participatory in working with migrants, asylum seekers and representatives of other cultures, but there are no appropriate competencies of staff, teachers and leadership.

Therefore, the goal is to create an environment in the College where persons with a different cultural background are appreciated, supported and empathy and inclusion is encouraged in order to enable them to learn and be responsible.

Creating an inclusive multicultural classrooms, the College wants to strengthen motivation, confidence and a positive attitude, which is one of the steps in a better inclusion in Croatian society.



Change is an open step into learning situation which is developing process of different perspectives constantly changing (wide shift in mindset) towards bringing individuals uniqueness together.

Sustainability is of paramount importance to our organization, as it ensures the sustainability and longevity of the positive changes that come with the implementation of the project, but also ensures that project activities and outputs are placed in the context of our country and organization. In particular, we wanted to improve the knowledge and skills of staff working with diversity to improve their personal development and to familiarize themselves with the work and practice of middle and senior management of various EU institutions teaching adults in a non-native language, promoting the cultural diversity of educational groups and working in intercultural classrooms.

The target groups of this piloting are teachers (external and internal) staff and management, while the indirect target groups are learners, migrants, asylum seekers and refugees who, as end-users, have a positive impact on skilful diversity management in organizations.

3.1.1 Selection and prioritisation of recommendations

It all started with the preparation for pilots. In OU we had a meetings inside College and started to think about which recommendations can be implemented and on what level (educational, non-educational staff, managers) based on the case studies. We agree on which diversity measures can be implemented in the pilot projects based on individual and general recommendations.

According to the colour thinking model (used in analysis for the case study), based also on other models, and the recommendations from the case study, a range of workshops was organised for all employees, including also external teachers and representatives of partner organisations working with migrants. The aims of the workshops were to learn from each other and exchange viewpoints, to create more involvement and have a good time together, resulting in a written plan of approach. The workshops we did in piloting we can separate in two parts:

- **Workshop formulating a new mission and vision**
- **Workshop introducing knowledge management**

When the preparation plan was over, we started preparing materials needed for the ADA workshop. The Applied Diversity Awareness (ADA) Workshop was developed in the DivCap project. The aim of the ADA Workshop is to raise and deepen awareness of diversity and connected issues through personal experiences, (self)reflection and theoretical inputs. The underlying idea of the ADA Workshop is to deepen the understanding of diversity through making concrete personal experiences. . In order to make diversity and its concepts "alive", experimental learning settings are implemented in the ADA workshops. Based on the curriculum of the ADA workshops, the material was adapted for educational, non-educational staff and managers into Croatian language. Furthermore, it decided that we will have a diversity workshops at the mentioned three levels.

3.2 Activities

3.2.1 Workshops introducing Knowledge Management

Workshops for teachers and trainers strengthening intercultural competencies

A workshop on "Strengthening Intercultural Competences" was organized at the Craft College on December, 2019. The workshop was attended by employees of the College of Crafts who conduct formal and non-formal education and representatives of the English Language and Culture Initiative and the Jesuit Refugee Service.

During the workshops, the facilitators introduced the participants to the concept of multiculturalism and the inclusion of people from other cultures. Participants were introduced to some of the tools and methods for breaking down and raising awareness of stereotypes and prejudices, intercultural communication and inclusion. Participants expressed satisfaction with the content of the workshop, as all three institutions actively work with refugees/asylum seekers and include them in society through various types of activities and education.

This was the first step after presentation of the case study at increasing awareness on issues of diversity at the personal and organizational level in OU, introducing and promoting inclusion and supporting it.



"Positive attitude towards collaborative learning"
(Teacher from Craft College)

The goal that was achieved; changing the attitudes of those working with students to realise students' opportunities for learning and find clear aims and methods for reaching these. But, also accepting their role of educators as a facilitator of intercultural understanding and appreciation, as well as a connoisseur of students' developmental specifics but also of their traits, especially intellectual abilities and sources of motivation that determine their engagement and perseverance in learning.

Teaching with a multicultural perspective

Based on the ADA curriculum, OU in May 2020 organized a workshop for teachers/mentors and trainers (external and internal) with the following topics:

- ✓ concept of diversity through perspectives of culture, legal issues, social issues and number/statistics
- ✓ diversity dimensions (diversity wheel) through local, regional, national and international parameters
- ✓ definition of diversity based on theoretical input on diversity and personal experience
- ✓ differences between structural, institutional and individual discrimination
- ✓ reflection and Self-Assessment methodologies and its evaluation

The teachers were rehearsing, evaluating and modifying changing classroom situations pointing out effective reflection on teaching approaches in heterogeneous classes. They also made recommendation for language learning strategies when engaging in collaborative learning in class as well as the benefits of creating personalized study plans for learners.

They all said that they have increase their level of personal competences in working with diversity, learn useful tools and will adjust ADA curriculum in order to make changes in their further transfer of knowledge.

Workshops for learners

As a part of piloting, Craft College also did a workshop with learners - asylum seekers from Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The workshop was based on the curriculum of the ADA workshop developed during DivCap. As we are participating as a partner in the implementation of the project "Education through better integration of asylum seekers" we had learners (asylum seekers) participating in education and training activities through individual phases in order to better compete in the labour market and more successfully integrate into Croatian society.

We were already developing and implementing programs of linguistic and cultural integration for them and they have already been in process of learning languages, so the ADA workshop was a mix Croatian and English language. One part of the workshop where exercises based on ADA Curriculum in DivCap project and the other part was on establishing their needs and feedback. For the workshop design and exercises, see the annex.

Furthermore, a "Food and Culture" workshop was organised, you can find the description of the workshop in the annex.

3.2.2 Formulating a new/improved mission and vision statement

OU was fully committed to the mission statement and diversity policy of the organisation (which was existing, but not formally) at the beginning of the change process. The diversity policy was at that moment more a set of the rules which are normal behaviour of the employees. It was not written in form of a document, but it was a part of company usual behaviour during the contact and working with students or colleagues.

Although the mission statement was showing openness; our motivation (student's satisfaction, further development and better results to ensure that Craft College will be one of the best educational institutions in Europe) changed the view (based on the case study research) on how the mission and vision statement should be formulated.

The first step of formulating the new/improved mission and vision statement was to establish the goal of OU. Why? Because in this process of change we realised that we are missing the main point, the “soft” component and that we did not include diversity that we have as a within all structures of our College.

In a workshop that included our staff, management, education and director, we came to this conclusion regarding the missing parts in our thinking about changed mission and vision:

GOAL OF CRAFT COLLEGE

By improving the quality of teaching, continuously contribute to the development of adult vocational education in accordance with EU guidelines, develop key competencies of students (literacy, digital skills, entrepreneurial competencies, initiative), as well as language competencies (Croatian for foreigners and foreign languages) that encourage cross-border communication and mobility.

The second step was to rethink individually and then in group about our values as an organization. We now have them:

COOPERATION

The College of Crafts encourages cooperation with institutions, associations, organizations, local and regional government bodies, craftsmen and entrepreneurs in the Republic of Croatia and internationally.

OPENNESS

We are open for cooperation with partners.

We are open to new ideas and ways of working in achieving the set goals.

RESPECT

In our daily work, we show mutual respect and appreciation of the needs of students and partners.

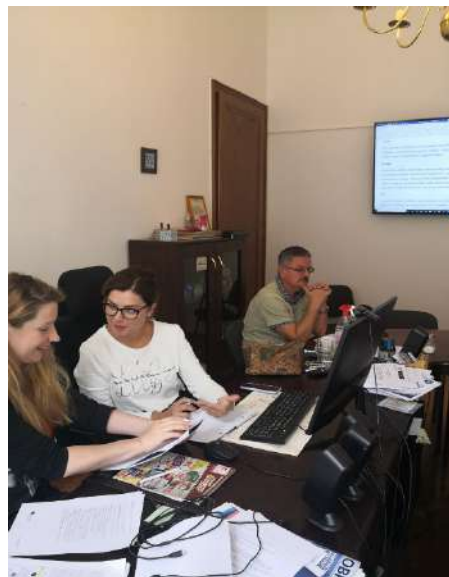
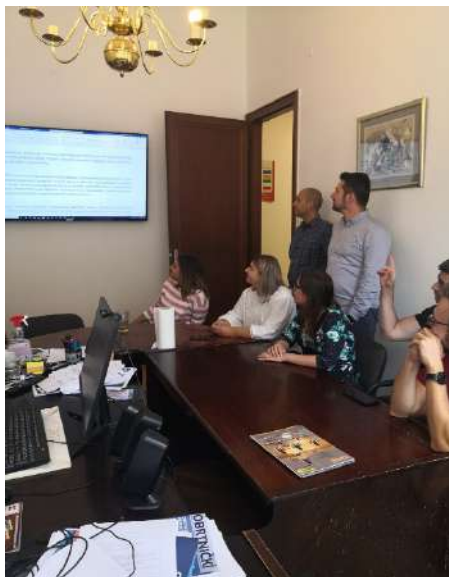
INCLUSIVENESS

Respecting diversity and multiculturalism, we educate adult learners who, due to their social, cultural, educational opportunities, ethnic differences and origins (migrant), are subject to social exclusion and marginalization.

EXCELLENCE

We are focused on excellence in every respect (teachers, educational programs, equipment, etc.).

Illustrations 2 and 3: internal workshop
© Craft College



Then in pairs we reduced the general goal, having our values in mind, and connect it to development strategy of OU, so now the development strategy of the College of Crafts is focused on sustainable development through 4 main goals:

- Lifelong learning
- Partnership
- Tolerance and diversity
- Sustainable development

Employees of the College of Crafts (director, heads of departments and professional associates) participated also in the needs analysis and development of a plan to improve the work of the College of Crafts.

The College of Crafts is among the leading institutions for vocational education and training of adults in the field of crafts and entrepreneurship.

Through international cooperation and based on examples of good practice from EU countries, the offer of education will be based on the quality of content, modern programs oriented to participants and their experience, and the development of transversal skills. The aim is to become an incubator of ideas and a multiplier of examples of good practice for the modernization of crafts through the modernization of vocational education and lifelong learning. The College of Crafts will be based locally, regionally structured with national and international influence.

VISION of Craft Collage is to be a leading institution for adult education recognizable by the quality of work and competencies that participants in educational programs acquire, develop and implement educational programs according to the needs of the labour market for crafts and entrepreneurship

*“Lifelong learning is a journey,
travel with us”
(Principle of Craft College)*



MISSION STATEMENT

Craft College - institution for adult education educates, prepares and empowers participants with the aim of achieving their educational, career and personal goals in craftsmanship and entrepreneurship and promotes lifelong learning.



*„Lifelong learning is a basic element of the European education area and an ongoing process for personal development, the acquisition of new knowledge and more efficient adaptation to the labour market and new life circumstances.“
(Project managers of Craft College)*

Following its mission, the Craft College defined its role in vocational and adult education, guided by national and international standards of adult education and international experience. The goal is to become a recognized institution for its teaching and professional achievements based on modern knowledge of the profession, available resources, accepted programs, contributions to the development of crafts and entrepreneurship and sustainable development.

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4. Heading towards multiculturalism

“What we learned about what we want as a multicultural organization?”

The Craft College wants to achieve the set goals consciously and measurably, through the development of a quality assurance system in all areas of the College's activities. By realizing our new/improved mission, vision and strategy and set goals, we want to strengthen, develop and spread recognition in vocational education and adult education with which future and students that finished education will identify and be valued by employers and the community.

The College implements continuous staff empowerment by hiring qualified and competent teachers according to the principles of excellence. The College encourages its own employees and associates to teach and professional development and advancement, their connection with crafts and other educational institutions in the country and abroad.

Piloting as a good guideline for the future “changing” process



Processes that affect quality are continuously monitored, improved and enhanced by the exchange of information through a system of evaluation and self-evaluation. Constant growth and supervision quality, competitiveness and competitiveness of professional work are important and permanent determinants of the development of the College.

The satisfaction of our students motivates us every day to further develop and achieve even better results and to secure our place among the best educational entities in Europe.

Diversity management - learning from experience

What did the change bring? What did we learned?

- new improved mission and vision statement which will be visible on our new website (May 2021.)
- developed curriculum based on the ADA Workshop curriculum for intercultural classes for students, teachers and staff in English
- advancement of knowledge and skills, pedagogical, didactic and methodological in dealing with diversity with a focus on diversity and equality

- improvement of intercultural competences must focus on communication in dealing with diversity, respecting learners status, culture, way of learning and following, the level of knowledge of the Croatian language and understanding of the working environment they need for motivation for further learning
- teachers are already accustomed to work in heterogeneous teaching groups, but through piloting they were able to identify risks and obstacles, cultural biases, stereotypes and prejudices and adjust teaching strategies to create an open non-discriminatory development environment where continuous development is supported, revised and key competencies built
- external teacher can give correct recommendations on what should be done and have the autonomy to negotiate intercultural competence with providers
- participants strengthen their competencies in developing emotional intelligence which is very necessary for migrants and asylum seekers and diversity in the classroom as it strengthens empathy in teachers, and accompanying self-awareness, self-control and self-acceptance of students
- positive attitude towards diversity is integrated into the teaching process, applied by all coaches, teachers - evaluation
- special support was provided in a way that migrants were treated with individual approach in order to be able to adopt the necessary knowledge. The individual support is needed from the teacher to be fully able to adapt to each person in the migrant group, regardless of the country they come from, religion, culture, age or educational background which were all quite diverse.

Change in a term of establishing a climate of acceptance, promotion of a positive self-concept promoting recognition, understanding and acceptance of cultural diversity and individual uniqueness; with awareness of the need to adapt objectives to actual capacities and needs of learners.



Multicultural classrooms are a progressive approach to transforming education based on educational equity and social justice. Necessary components of a multicultural classroom are content integration, reducing prejudices and social culture. In doing so, teachers should master diversity management, define individual learning styles, encourage trainees to be proud of their own cultural background, and eliminate prejudice and discrimination.



Change is inclusion in the terms of attitudes, beliefs and behaviour of /administrative staff/management who support all students and colleagues, value diversity, possess collaborative competencies and take responsibility for their own lifelong learning.

It is also key to realise that:

- intercultural approach is inevitable in the work of the employees of the College in order to reach the desired level of multicultural institution
- employees have the knowledge to work in a multicultural classroom that accepts that diversity is a certain kind of advantage
- employees are now able to multiply the experience gained with other employees and outsiders working in the teaching process
- the acquired knowledge and skills (tools and methods) can be directly used by employees in working with asylum seekers
- external collaborators strengthen their skills and prepare for further work with migrants and asylum seekers

4.1 Recommendations for educational staff

- promoting the academic, practical, social and emotional learning of all learners applying the components of the multicultural classroom (integration of content, reduction of prejudice based on educational equality and social justice)
- participate and conduct intercultural training among new employees and external associates
- further ensure inclusive and quality education for all and to promote lifelong learning opportunities respecting cultural diversity

„Be trendy with development“



- improving material conditions (equipment, learning platform) and
- developing digital competences of teachers and trainers for distance teaching in order to connect staff and participants in different locations with the use of new tools that will be developed
- use of English in teaching (to help with Croatian language and culture courses for migrants)
- flexible way of continuous training of collage staff in the field of cognitive flexibility
- flexibility and openness to change (e.g. Covid-19 impact) through development of hybrid teaching model (combination of classroom teaching and distance teaching)

- raising awareness of diversity and multiculturalism and better understanding of asylum seekers and migrants, in order to create an intercultural classroom. In such classrooms, individuals strengthen their affiliation while contributing to the class in many ways - through personal advancement and motivation that they pass on to other participants
- strengthen the use of ICT in informal and formal training aimed at asylum seekers and migrants
- improve the individual approach (especially to participants with various disabilities or migrant backgrounds)
- developing student individual education learning plans that follow individuals' opportunities

4.2 Recommendations for educational staff

- strengthen the competences of foreign languages of administrative staff and intercultural competence in order to follow the guidelines of internationalization in the home in this segment
- developing approach for diversity management staff (define individual learning styles, encourage them to be proud of their own cultural origins, and eliminate prejudice and discrimination)
- increase the competencies of staff in the field of inclusion and implementation of informal programs - work in an open and creative atmosphere of informal learning
- skills development (communication, empathy, collaboration and adaptation) to create an inclusive environment
- teamwork of employees on designing and organizing e-learning environments (e.g. different roles and competences of employees, online evaluation, etc.)
- development/improvement of the existing platform for distance education

Change is about building awareness of the need for change and creating desire among employees.



4.3 Recommendations for managers

- ensure the development of teachers and staff primarily for the development of communication, empathy, cooperation and adaptation in order to create an inclusive classroom
- improve competences for managing diversity at the organizational level and ensuring quality systems in adult education
- continuously monitor the performance indicators of education and training programs (multiculturalism, Sustainable Development Strategy - questionnaires, interviews at the level of trainers and participants) and take appropriate measures for improvement
increase motivation for continuous training of staff
- join an intercultural training on how to improve intercultural cooperation or leadership
- getting acquainted with the work and examples of good practice of various organizations dealing with diversity, which teach adults in a language other than their mother tongue and get acquainted with other cultures and strengthen their intercultural communication and understanding of other cultures

Change for management means aligning, developing shared decision-making, creating a mutual culture of feedback, fostering autonomy and maintaining a collective learning environment.



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5. ANNEX - Good Practice Examples

5.1 ADA Workshop for learners

EXCERCISE “THE STORY OF MY NAME”

This is how we broke the ice, and it was the most important exercise we did. Why? We made connection with each other. This was not just because we have by explaining the origins of our names acknowledge diversity, we actually made trustful connection for further conversation. We all (starting with teacher) included personal information in stories. This was important: they knew the classroom, mentors, staff, director of OU, project leaders, each other, but the teacher for ADA workshop was someone new. True and humoristic story that the teacher told first, build the atmosphere that reflected a safe space and the group where feeling comfortable also to share their personal stories.



Illustrations 4 and 5: Photographed in a workshop with migrant participants © Craft College



We also talked about name discrimination and stereotypes attached to names; e.g. gender dimension, or a distinct foreign-sounding name may be a significant disadvantage on the job market; and it was good to hear that so far they haven't experienced nothing like that in Croatia, but they face it in their home countries.

Then as a sequel we did the exercise DIVERSITY SURVEY and learned more more about what participants think about the topics of diversity and discrimination.



Changes towards improvements in the quality of life for immigrant adults

EXERCISE “WHAT ARE MY NEEDS?”

This was the last exercise- we talked about their needs now and before coming to Croatia and consequently their plans in the future. We also wanted to find out what “change” means for them?

Respectful
support,
empathy,
involvement



They are all grateful for the opportunity to strengthen their expertise as unemployed persons and willing to develop soft and transversal (transferable) skills by participating in our targeted mentoring programs and workshops. Their goal is integration into the labour market and ultimately our society thereby reducing the risk of their social exclusion and poverty - this all interacts with the needs they named.

5.2 Workshop “Food and Culture”

Food plays an integral role in our lives. Food (and drink) are as much a part of culture as art, architecture, clothing, or human behaviour. **Even today, nutrition is considered one of the most important elements in defining ideological, ethnic, political and social barriers or, on the other hand, one of the most commonly used means of getting to know other cultures, mixing civilizations and trying to create intercultural approaches.** In fact, food is a mechanism for discovering ethnic, cultural and social identity. Food may be the initial means of contact between different cultures, given that eating the food of others seems easier - at least seemingly - than decoding their language.

Therefore, we organized a workshop “Food and Culture” at the College of Crafts on Friday, June 26, 2020. **The head chefs were asylum seekers from Syria, Afghanistan and Pakistan who prepared national specialties kibbeh, tabuleh, dolma and Pakistani salad.** The employees of the College had the opportunity to socialize with the students, get to know them as well as their culture and in an informal way help them master the Croatian language and get acquainted with our culture.

Illustrations 6 and 7: From a workshop “Food and Culture “ © Craft College



Cramars (Italy)

Recognising Diversity
and corporate values,
the starting point for
the Cramars of the future

- Diversity and structural change
- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers



Illustration 1: © freepic <https://pixabay.com/>

Definition of the institute's values, a process shared and recognised by all staff members!

The Organisation

Cramars is a Social Cooperative born in 1997, aimed at implementing personal services. The main objective of the organization is to train people, even in a disadvantage condition, to allow them to find employment and improve their condition.

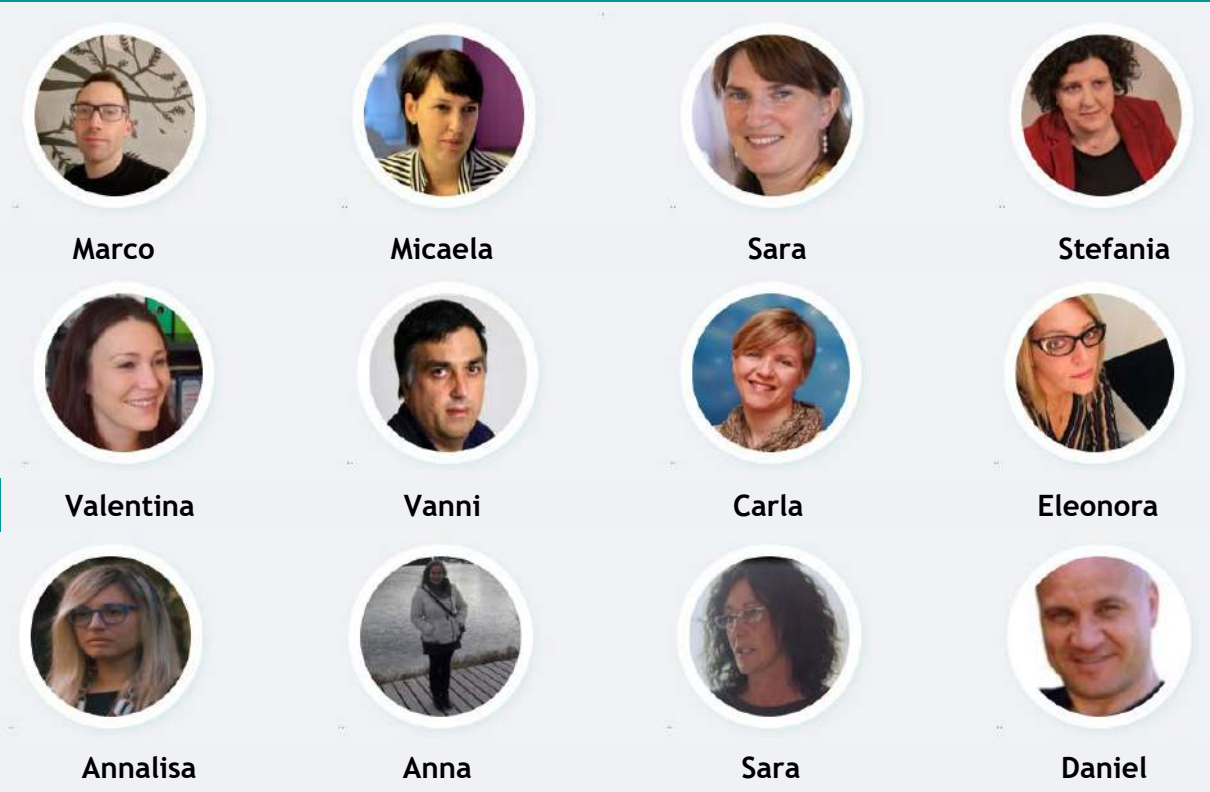


Illustration 2: screenshot of Cramars webpage © Cramars

1. An adult education provider through local development and social innovation.

Cramars is a Social Cooperative type A born in 1997, aimed at implementing personal services. The main objective of the organization is to train people, even in a disadvantage condition, to allow them to find employment and improve their condition. Cramars is located in Tolmezzo, a town in the North of Italy, in a modern building with 4 teaching rooms and computer labs. The company has established and applies a quality management system for the design, preparation and implementation of educational services in accordance with ISO 9001.

Cramars employs 11 persons, all working members of the institution that is characterized by the stabilization of the financial and human resources. The board is composed of 5 representatives, also working members of the co-operative, including the president and the vice-president (who also act as legal representatives).

Cramars has the main object of carrying out of all those activities necessary and finalized to the realization of the professional training and to the professional elevation of the workers, the development of human resources and marginal areas. The institution manages vocational training courses, acts as a career guidance centre for companies/schools and aims to act also as a local development Agency. Activities carried out are addressed mainly to employed and unemployed people offering also Lifelong learning services. Cramars has a strong European project management know-how: it has participated in numerous EU projects both as Lead and project partner, working in partnership with private and public institutions, Universities and European Associations.

Resources

1. The Social Cooperative is a particular form of Cooperative introduced and regulated by Law 381/1991 and Decree 112/2017 as a Social Enterprise. It qualifies as a particular form of Cooperative Society aimed at pursuing the general interest of the community in human promotion and social integration of citizens. Social Cooperatives, unlike other types of Cooperatives, can also have voluntary members (a maximum of half of the working members) and if of type B they must have at least 30% of disadvantaged workers who, if possible by virtue of personal conditions, must be associated.

2. The difference between type A and type B social cooperatives is A: they deal with the management of social-health, training and lifelong learning services; B: dealing with the management of activities aimed at the employment of disadvantaged people in the sectors: industry, commerce, services and agriculture.



To follow the main purpose, in the last two years the institution planned the development of two new areas that are strictly related to education and development. One is the SOCIAL INNOVATION, experiences of change processes based on strategies and ideas that Cramars proposes to the territories; the second is the LOCAL DEVELOPMENT, projects involving local communities to act, react, plan and manage complex situations.

Cramars is an independent institution. It has a legal subordination as social cooperative and for this reason it must follow the legal provisions regarding its administrative / financial management and the type of target to be involved in the activities provided for by the statute. There is no written statement of the company's mission but these legal subordinations determine its main objectives.



It is clear that although there is no written mission, in Cramars there is an opening towards "the other" and everyone within the cooperative is tolerant and shows a positive attitude towards the neighbor.

(an ICT freelance teacher working sometimes with Cramars)

The main project activities were dedicated in the past to research activities, innovative vocational training courses, skills certification services, impact evaluation on marginal areas, guideline services and good practices spreading. The aim of these projects is always to implement internal knowledge and know-how in order to facilitate the development of competences of the target group of the institute, which deals with adult education involving people from 18 to 65.

2. Status regarding diversity in the organisation - An institute that follows the regulations but is open to new experiments.

2.1 The starting situation

The main premise to be made in specifying Cramars' position in relation to "diversity" relates to the context in which it works as adult educational center. By working in an autonomous region, it deals with the roles of the region to implement courses funded by the ESF. In most cases, only the unemployed have access to it, other courses are also for employed. But in all cases students are between 18 and 65 years old. To access the courses people must be resident or domiciled in the Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG) region, but there is no discrimination on the origin of the students.

The main diversity that the FVG region envisages is whether or not one person is employed.

Cramars evaluates the composition of the class group only when there are limitations foreseen by the fund: minimum / maximum age, entry knowledge, diploma / degree possession, etc.

Only a few specific calls focus on activities specifically related to being in refugee status, generally the fact of being migrants has no influence.

Cramars has carried out only some specific training activities for immigrants / refugees in collaboration with social services and with host organizations such as the Caritas Diocesana and the Balducci institute.

The courses completely dedicated to migrants, in Cramars represent about 0,5% of the total courses offered (but the percentage changes from year to year), but mainly people with immigration background participate in "normal" course with an average that does not exceed 10-15% per course.

In some cases, specific actions to support migrants are available, e.g. the cost of the means of transport is reimbursed; where possible, attempts are made to propose lesson calendars that allow them to participate in face-to-face classes; some teachers made additional lessons if they had difficulties in understanding; we try to locate the course closest to the users.

In fact, when identifying which "diversities" are confronted on a daily basis during the development of training, support or guidance activities, other specificities such as gender, age, basic training, access to IT tools, etc. emerge.

There are also specific calls or accompanying measures. These services (not to be discriminatory) are offered to all users in difficulty, independently if they have or not a migrant background.

Cramars' showcase is its website www.coopcramars.it, which is constantly being updated to propose new courses and also to display videos and images of the activities implemented.



Illustration 3: © Cooperativa Cramars 2019 | Design By Treativa.com

It is not translated into other languages because it makes use of the possibility of instant translation into the languages available in the google translate application.

2.2 Human Resources Management

Cramars employs 11 permanent employees and a total of about 50-70 a year as external collaborators (who are mainly teachers or consultants).

Among the Cramars employees at the moment there are no people with a migration background, but having such a background does not lead to discrimination in the workplace of Cramars; the evaluation for recruitment is based on the competences obtained, in the case of request of work, the call is made in a neutral manner and followed by a selection made with a defined structure and based on contingent needs.

No special treatment is provided for foreign staff. From a religious point of view Cramars is a lay institute and refers to the national collective agreement regarding national holidays. The office is officially closed 1 or 2 weeks in August and during the Christmas holidays, the choice of these two suspension periods is determined by the influx of users into the offices and also coincides with the official closure of public schools.

2.3 Networking

The institution collaborates with social services, with associations that deal with the reception of migrants. Whenever possible Cramars sponsors associations and actions that favour migrants (e.g. sponsoring the ship called *Mediterranea*).

The statute includes the reference to collaboration and agreements with migrant associations and organizations, obviously what we can do, in accordance with the Statutes, concerns only the training and the possible integration of migrants at work, asylum seekers or political refugees, through generic or specific training internships.

2.4 Education

The external Cramars staff who deals with training, is mostly Italian (if there are foreigners, only language teachers are involved or technical and engineering professionals, that are living and working in Italy for a long time). The staff, especially the external one, before entering Cramars is evaluated in its specific competence for the subject he/her teaches.

The classes are almost always mixed (Italians and migrants) and the external staff that is contacted and to whom a second or third contract is made, must pass the assessment of the students, that includes taking into account the needs of the class and be professional.

With regard to the support given to migrants, in some specific courses they were given assistance from a cultural mediator, in others a linguistic help, in some cases the teachers performed extra hours to help the group of those who could not understand the topic (migrants or not). The support given is not a common practice for all participants, (unless it is decided by the fund that pays the course) but it is decided and defined by tutors and coordinators when a problem arises.

2.5 Conclusion



Things that are taken for granted are often underestimated!

Cramars has not defined a specific public declared mission, which is therefore not available on the website. It is taken for granted, following a social co-operation scheme and the institution statute, that the target group it addresses is open to all possibilities. In some cases, the most classic "diversities" emerge in the proposed website images.

The definition of corporate values could be the key, firstly by the Cramars staff and then by the beneficiaries, to bring out the choices concerning the value of the training design and offer made available to the public, and to motivate the staff and the training participants.

3. The change and learning process - From the values to the mission.

3.1 Aims and Approaches

Cramars is an institution in which "diversity" is not a topic dealt with on a formal level. The institution offers service to a wide target group including migrants. If we talk about the migration target, Cramars does not have a high number of foreign "customers". This is the reason why the organization does not have a policy aimed at improving sales or services to migrants and, while opening the selection of possible candidates to all the public, there were no opportunities for hiring foreign staff.

In recent years, however, although not specifically targeting immigrants, the Cramars staff have also been confronted with other types of diversity that are no less important and that have somehow stimulated the management to participate in this project. These were mainly targets related to disadvantage, marginality, gender and age diversity or economic status.

While working with this kind of target groups, in this organisation there has not been an intercultural training on how to improve intercultural cooperation or leadership and there is no intercultural personnel policy.

For this reason, the aim of the piloting was precisely that, starting from the basics of identifying, in a shared way, what are the values that underlie the work that the staff carries out in Cramars, in order to make them public and on the basis of which to define a Charter, useful, afterwards, to address the future objectives and define a long-term mission in which the staff can participate in a mode of co-design and recognise the aims. Obviously taking into account also and above all the "diversity" that staff deal with on a daily basis but that is somehow underestimated or not recognised.

On this last point, therefore, the second objective of the piloting was to make staff participate in making them responsible for the "different", first of all through its recognition.

The case study identified two possible areas for change at Cramars:

- definition of a shared charter of values
- training in diversity

The staff should somehow take responsibility without always referring to a superior who solves problems, this is one of the main aims of the pilot. In order to do so, the staff must recognise the values on which to build and at the same time have the tools to deal with difficulties, a manual with case studies or good practices would be needed to allow, in the event of problems, to understand how the problem was addressed and solved.

That is useful also for the external staff and trainers to which Cramars' referents should provide specific rules, a job description and a mission that is clear and well defined.

The approach was therefore to work for the staff but with the staff to allow, as defined in the Cramars website, which talks about who we are, to leave an indelible mark for what we do, but also for how we do it.



"We have been working in the mountains for more than twenty years and have left an indelible mark not only in what we do but also in how we do it".

Da oltre venti anni lavoriamo in montagna ed abbiamo lasciato un segno indelebile per quello che facciamo ma anche per come lo facciamo.

3.2 Activities

3.2.1 Commitment with management

As we have said from the beginning, one of the main value elements of this piloting activity was undoubtedly the involvement of all the Cramars staff in co-creation mode.

For logical reasons, however, the initial input and willingness had to go through the Cramars board and the approval of the management, which was mainly due to the fact that, being a process, it foresaw the commitment of human resources and therefore took place also on ordinary activities of the institute. The management also participated in the first phase of the project by taking part in the definition of the case study, through the meetings held to answer the initial questionnaire aimed at describing the current situation and the needs of Cramars.



The project contact person then shared the results of the case study and the specific recommendations and, together with the president of the Cramars, short- and long-term objectives were defined with the aim of getting the institute at least one step further along the long path towards a management that actually takes into account and benefits from "diversity".

This phase was useful for defining a small working group to be involved in order to carry out in practice all the activities defined later in the plan. This phase was rather simple, due to needs that the board had somehow brought out during previous meetings and in relation to activities carried out with a target group of disadvantaged people, and because the president is also an equal opportunities expert and therefore sensitive to the subject.

3.2.2 The Plan

The plan structured by the core group was to work with all the Cramars staff, and by the middle of 2020 to define the Cramars Charter of Values, first through a common sharing, then in a core group.

Next step foreseen from the Charter of Values was by the end of 2020 the mission and, at the same time, create monthly dialogue tables in specific groups to share problems and solutions related to the issue of diversity in order to create "notebooks" of good practices to be shared later also with external staff and freelancers working for Cramars.

The plan also envisaged a training phase, but this was still to be defined in relation to the results of the working groups and specific needs.

Stopping sometimes helps to think more clearly, to define new developments and to devise change.



We take advantage of this time to carry out activities outside training with our trainees.

(The President of Cramars)



Then covid-19 got in the way and, from March 2020, we had to restructure the plan without a specific timetable, but always with the will to go through this transition and internalise it. The president of Cramars decided that piloting had to continue anyway.

The priorities have changed, the timeframe has multiplied, it has been necessary to completely restructure the offices and move all the training online, and also to find a new way of sharing the working groups, moving from staff meetings in person to those at a distance, with communication taking place more by e-mail than directly, thus losing all the emotional involvement deriving from sharing in person. The activities were therefore resumed in distance mode from June 2020, thus extending the initial timeframe.

3.2.3 Implementation

As a first step, a meeting was arranged with all the staff to tell them about the project, summarise the results of the check list and illustrate the resulting recommendations.

With this first step, the intention of Cramars to work on the topic was communicated, feedback was obtained from the participants and the names of those who wanted to be part of the small group that in practice would carry out the activities planned for the piloting, were collected.

On this occasion the way forward was broadly defined.

The Charter of values

The defined Core Group met several times to define:

- The best way to collect data from staff
- The key points to start with
- Roles within the working group
- Timing

The decisive and most delicate action in this phase is certainly to define how to involve the staff. In fact, the need to collect data on shared values obviously stimulates emotions as well, so that the participants have to reflect not only on the values determining the work, but also on their personal values.

In order to facilitate this process, the managers decided to take advantage of a fundamental document for a social co-operative: the social report.

At first, it was decided to give the staff free rein by asking them to email a list of values that they considered important for defining a charter of values, but this decision did not yield good results.

In order to solve the situation, and also because of the isolation due to Covid-19, the core group decided to define a questionnaire to be completed anonymously online. This allowed the respondents to think calmly about the possible answers and not to be emotionally involved in a group discussion. In this first phase, the focus was on individual reflection, so that each staff member could have a voice and make his or her own personal contribution to the document, without being involved and influenced by the ideas of others. The questionnaire required a minimum of three "values" to be defined for each question, which then had to be broken down into a detailed explanation.

A contact person from the group then collected the results and sent them to the working group for an initial check. These values were then grouped together until they became common.

The explanations of the values were the useful tool to define a draft of the common Charter of Values which was then shared in the extended group of Cramars staff.

The definition phase of the draft was not an easy process, as the small working group had to meet in several meetings and divide the tasks further in order to arrive at a "decent" document to present to everybody. The online search for details and the comparison with other Charters of Values certainly facilitated this phase.

The comparison of the draft therefore marked the final stage of the process. The discussion organised through a meeting with all the staff allowed some critical points of the document to emerge and to define what the working group could accept as the CRAMARS Charter of Values.

The Charter of Values will have to pass the check of the board in order to be published and become a shared tool through the company website and the reference point for the definition of the long-term mission. Working tables to this end are being developed.

Need for staff training

In the first development plan, outlined after the case study was drawn up, the activities were based on the mission statement, which in the development process became first and foremost a charter of values. Because it was realised that in order to define a mission, it is necessary to have a clear idea of the next business plan, and to do so with a focus on diversity by setting it in a specific territory, involves much more "scientific" work.

During the process, when meeting with colleagues and discussing development possibilities, the need to train staff in relation to diversity emerged. During the meetings it was realised that the topic of diversity has a thousand facets and that in order to deal with it, it is necessary first of all to know it and then to circumscribe it, always in relation to the context where Cramars acts and works.

At the same time, this phase was also discussed with the second pilot organisation, Ires, which had the same problems. Therefore, we decided to join forces and, taking advantage of the Corona virus and the fact that all courses are now conducted remotely, we decided to look for external experts and run the course for both institutions, with the approval, contribution and partly also the participation of the group of stakeholders, the supervisors, involved in the project.

The added value of this initiative is not only that of having involved two training organisations, discussing together the various areas and points of view on diversity, but also that of having invited external lecturers, freelancers, to participate in the training, which in some ways give a sign of the sensitivity that both organisations show to the problem and also a mark of how they want to deal with the subject, with professionalism and seriousness.

The stakeholder group also suggested various training courses on the subject, and in some cases, individually, depending on interest or available time, some staff members wanted to participate. E.g. the workshop on the topic of diversity in the company and the gender pay gap organised by the Bocconi University of Milan.

In detail, the Cramars project contact person has explored, also with the suggestions and help of some project partners, the expertise present in Italy, contacted them asking for information and defining the topics to be dealt with.

In this first training phase the most felt need to be addressed was, in agreement with Ires, the theme of the definition of diversity. Then we went on to deal with hidden stereotypes, working through a role-play and social theatre approach also in relation to how to communicate with the "different" and collecting some good practices.

The course took place online between April and May 2021, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., during working hours, and involved a total of 16 participants, depending on the day. The course was recorded and the contents of the recordings made available to those who, for work reasons, could not attend the course in person.

The aim of the meetings was to show how, in our societies, diversity is affected by power relations aimed at organising it in a hierarchical way. In dealing with diversity, an intersectional perspective was adopted, i.e. not only cultural and ethno-racial background was taken into account, but also elements of gender, class, nationality, ability (etc.). The training, using examples drawn from concrete experiences, aimed to highlight the conflictual aspects linked to the confrontation with these diversities, and to find shared meanings and ways to identify reflexive and conscious interaction practices. Specifically, the workshop focused on diversity in work and service spaces. Particular attention was paid to the interactions between different subjects in working environments - such as relationships within offices and teams - and in contact with the public - such as services involving encounters with heterogeneous users.



During the meetings held on 20 and 28 April, 04 and 11 May 2021, the specific topics covered were: Introduction to the topic of Diversity - experiences and concrete examples; Exploring Diversity with Social Theatre; and Communicating Diversity.

This initial approach led to a specific interest in the topic also on the part of staff participants who, due to their type of contract, do not have direct contact with the "different" - perhaps part of the administrative/financial group, but who surprisingly showed a particular interest in the topic, above all for its farsightedness and transversality, also reflecting on the benefits of an economic nature that the target of the "different" understood as beneficiaries but also within the staff.

The best result is however demonstrated by the participation in the course as, unexpectedly, on the part of Cramars all staff members participated voluntarily and with interest reorganising their work plan autonomously. On the other hand, the management also did its part by deciding to provide the budget for the course and the possibility to run it during working hours.

Other Implementation Activities

During the meetings with the staff, when discussing the "diversity" of the various points of view, differences in their vision emerged also on other topics related to the future development of Cramars. Therefore, taking advantage of the opportunity to meet on this issue, other important topics of business development were discussed, including a long-term vision approach.

Within the small group and following a sharing with the board, it was decided, therefore, as a working practice, first of all to meet in small working groups (training, administration, management of project activities, etc..) to ...



...discuss monthly working methods, difficulties faced, good practices to share and define them into methods to be reported in short workbooks...

...useful to all the other staff to address emerging risks and daily problems that emerge due to "diversity" with groups of students involved in training.

On the other hand, the board, always following the same direction of sharing different perspectives of the staff, has proposed to meet, setting appointments from time to time, with all the staff, to define together the next goals to be achieved, moving the needle of the scales from training (which represents 80% of the budget of Cramars) to "other services" to be defined, among others, services such as animation of the territory, organisation of cultural events, participation in complex projects, matching job seekers and job providers, etc. could be offered.

The round tables have already started and have, at the moment, addressed the issue of the major difficulties encountered during the development of the work (especially with disadvantage groups). Then, starting from the current work, the group listed the network contacts and the needs of the beneficiaries, defined what activities could be developed in the future, thus collecting ideas and needs to develop the business plan and mission of tomorrow.

3.3 Lessons Learned

There are many lessons learnt along the way, so catch it easier we outline them in points below:

- Before involving staff in a sharing exercise, have very clear ideas about the objectives and ways of sharing. Often it is useful to start from a research in the field and from already defined tools, which facilitates sharing - this is the case of the Cramars charter of values where we started from the needs and compilation guidelines coming from the social report document;
- It is always better to define the way of collecting the required contributions with the working group and to define specifically the deadlines to be respected by the group;
- Define guidelines, a questionnaire or other tools for data collection, not to leave it to the free evaluation or will of the participants - this is the example, regarding the charter of values, of the questionnaire addressed to the participants for data collection available under good practices;

- The participation of staff in transversal activities, in this case in training, is more stimulated if carried out in the work environment because, besides contributing to personal development, it also gives it a professional value;
- The commitment of management is one of the fundamental elements for the success of a course and, focusing on "diversity" as a value, already defines the imprint of a company;

Progress requires investment in money,

- Organising activities on the topic of "diversity" but also on other sensitive topics together with competing companies at times and with a view to the future, makes it possible to collaborate on the topic with the same competitors and to establish a recognition of specific expertise;
- A good company is one that learns and progresses along the way. As in the case of Cramars which, on the basis of the needs encountered during the DivCap course, decided to implement it and respond to the needs of its staff with other transversal courses always shared;
- The Covi-19 emergency, which in some ways limited travel, on the other hand allowed the personal development of the Cramars staff, who were able to actively participate, also by virtue of the training organised online, in the contents proposed. This training was also able to involve another training organisation, as it was distance learning, which saved the budgets of both companies;
- Sharing in working groups with the staff, on the topic of diversity but also on other topics, brings to light what are the internal competences and what are the needs, lays bare the needs and difficulties but also opens up the possibility of further developments which, if co-created, facilitate motivation and active participation in the work.

And more in general:

- change cannot be imposed from above, but that it only happens if it is done in a shared way;
- everyone's contribution, be it big or small, is an excellent contribution;
- everyone in his or her own specific job can benefit at various times from the training provided;
- a deeper knowledge of issues coming from "diversity" contributes to work better among the staff and with the beneficiaries of the services offered;
- the example set in favour of "diversity" also facilitates the openness of students participating in the courses and others to what is different;
- in some way it contributes to living in a better society. It is like setting a good example in a family environment and an education, which, in the case of Cramars as an adult education provider, does not only focus on specific skills, but helps to give value to transversal skills, to soft skills which, by direct example, can in some way help to limit the stereotyped view of the world.

4. Analysis of the experiences in the change and learning process, involvement as a key point

4.1 Summary

Evolution is always the result of a process that starts with analysis, passes through awareness and ends with change, this in a virtuous cycle that becomes part of the experience. The experience of changes often cannot be perfectly replicable because it has to take into account the moment in which it develops, the context in which it is realised (local and cultural), the target it involves, the specific subject it deals with.

This is, in summary, the experience lived by Cramars in the context of the DivCap project carried out, but still and constantly in place, in the period between autumn 2018 and summer 2021, a period also crossed by the Covid-19 pandemic and all the consequences, blockages and limitations that it has brought.

The first approach of the project to the institute involved was dictated by the meetings, in the case of Cramars held in a single working group, to define the case study. The meetings involved the president of Cramars, in the role of management, two teachers (one internal and one, interviewed later, external) and two members of the training staff (a newcomer and an older worker). The outcome of the meetings is summarised in the following personal statements:

What I can deduct from the results of this small group meeting is that it is not clear what values we, as Cramars, carry forward with the work we do.

It would therefore be very useful to define together a Cramars' charter of values.

(Cramars' manager)



Even if not defined, within Cramars you can feel this air of openness towards the "other" and the "different", in fact often, as seen by the Cramars tutors, what I once considered "different" now seems "normal".

(a freelance teacher of Cramars)



I cannot define a specific type of "diversity" that I face daily in my work. I had to solve some problems in the classrooms, it would have been useful to have suggestions from other colleagues who have faced the same problems before.

(a tutor of Cramars)



From the outset there was a willingness on the part of the participants to spend time and resources on the topic of "diversity", which facilitated to some extent the development of the activities planned during the piloting.

In order to motivate the resources and work for a common project, it was decided to work on the charter of values by organising a small working group to facilitate the process. The problems that emerged during the meetings on this topic with the Cramars group revealed difficulties relating above all to expertise on the subject, exchange, common responsibility.

In fact, it was decided that it would be very useful to meet in small groups, especially among the training staff (coordinators, tutors, teachers) to share on a monthly basis the problems faced or in progress with particular types of targets - especially migrants, therefore and above all with language problems, but also young NEETs not very motivated to continue with their studies and to fully carry out the commitments made in the training courses. The meetings have and will have the aim of exchanging good practices, finding shared ideas to solve problems, creating synergies with teachers, finding and testing methodologies to work with classes and making sure that all course participants can follow the contents starting from the same level.

Another decision taken during the group meetings, to support the needs of the group, was to organise a short training course on "diversity" in order to discuss the topic with external experts, in our case thanks to the contribution of the ICEI institute in Milan (Istituto di Cooperazione Economica Internazionale), and to align the idea of "diversity" within Cramars. In this case all the staff participated at the workshops.

As we said at the beginning, the contribution of the project was precisely that of acting as a stimulus to activate and plan new activities, linked to the development of the institute in the area of "diversity". This then leads to the need for growth, linked to the philosophy of social, local and egalitarian development, and the need to work on something else to retain staff and make them more and more proud to work in this type of company, a social cooperative.

4.2 Conclusion

Cramars is obviously far from becoming a company that fully applies diversity management above all in its economic sense of the term, but the first contributions made by the project have already made it possible to show how much, in the long term, the right management of diversity can benefit the institution also in the field of economy.

4.3 What worked well?

What could be done better?

The main results of this diversity development project have been the sharing with and between employees within Cramars.

In fact, the project has made it possible to implement a methodology of exchange and internal work that will be constantly implemented in the future, also in other areas.

We realised that ...

contributions, even if minimal, from everyone lead to better results



...and that the staff, by participating actively and feeling part of a working group, is then more motivated to develop their own specific part, and also to be helped by others in case of need.

There are still some difficulties, which do not specifically concern the project, but which emerged during its implementation, in involving and giving a voice to staff who do not work directly with the beneficiaries and who somehow find it difficult to understand the dynamics. In fact, what could be implemented is precisely the element of interaction of all the staff with the general problems of working with "different" beneficiaries.

4.4 Recommendations

Management

- Involve all staff in defining a mission statement that is visible to everyone, especially on the website but also for all internal and external collaborators. In the statement the nonverbal values should be made explicit, the principles we believe in and on which our work as educators is based;
- Increasing the network of stakeholders in the field of diversity, companies should have more contacts and give precise information to associations involving this type of target;
- Define the internal and external communication mode for the "diversity" target group. It might be useful to understand, also from a distribution point of view, in which language to write them and in which places to distribute flyers useful for promoting the courses;
- Talk about it on the board of how diversity becomes an important element to be treated, e.g. include it in the topics of the courses;

- Know in detail the numbers and the type of diversity that the institution hosts (to understand how much the institution can invest in the theme of diversity);
- Find the funds to invest in the best management and education of diversity;

Non-educational staff

- Participate actively in some activities dealing with “diversity” to get better in touch with problems the other staff must confront in the daily work

Educational staff

- Organize training courses on “diversity” - and share the contents with those who cannot attend the courses, now more useful by doing it online;
- Make a list of good practices (not only to be shared in closed groups but also among all workers, through monthly meetings or internal exchanges) depending on the department and the type of work performed, good practices can be of different types, if shared they can give added value and useful answers to all;
- Develop and participate to some courses or training or invite experts to better interact with diversity within the institution and with clients - psychological aspects, contribution to guidance, diversity management, involvement of “different” users in courses, etc.;
- Get feedback from trainers/teachers (external or internal) with the use of an assessment questionnaire to know and share teachers’ problems, how they dealt with the classroom, etc.;
- Ask teachers about their needs to help students considered “diverse”;
- Define together a collection book, in which all the best practices can be added to contribute to all staff resolutions of problems that can be met in working with people dealing “differently”.

5. ANNEX - Good Practice Examples

5.1 Internal questionnaire to define the Charter of Values

Presentation:

The charter of values, serves to clarify who the company is today, how it acts, whom it wants to serve and the culture it cultivates. Values are not abstract words or concepts (respect, flexibility, cooperation, planning, etc.) but guide and direct our conduct and influence our daily experience.

We would like to define our charter of values in a shared way. For this reason, we ask you to answer the following questions, LISTING AT LEAST 3 VALUES for each question and explaining the reason to clarify what you are referring to in relation, of course, to the work we do in or to your personal beliefs (the answer is persona):

Questions	Answers	Added question	Comment
A. What are the first three values that come to your mind when talking about your company?	1. 2. 3.	A.1 Explain your motivation to clarify what you are referring to in relation to the work you do in your company or to your personal beliefs:	
B. What are the three values that an "external actor" (suppliers, pupils, municipalities we collaborate with, etc.) could use to describe your company?	1. 2. 3.	B.1 Explain your motivation to clarify what you are referring to in relation to the work you do in your company or to your personal beliefs:	
C. According to which values are partners and suppliers chosen and how could they be framed in the future?	1. 2. 3.	C.1 Explain your motivation to clarify what you are referring to in relation to the work you do in your company or to your personal beliefs:	

Questions	Answers	Added question	Comment
D. Which behaviours are of value within your organisation?	1. 2. 3.	D.1 Explain your motivation to clarify what you are referring to in relation to the work you do in your company or to your personal beliefs:	
E. Which value behaviours can be introduced in your organisation?	1. 2. 3.	E.1 Explain your motivation to clarify what you are referring to in relation to the work you do in your company or to your personal beliefs:	
F. Which behaviours cannot be accepted within the organisation?	1. 2. 3.	F.1 Explain your motivation to clarify what you are referring to in relation to the work you do in your company or to your personal beliefs:	
G. What are the values you consider to be valid in other companies you know?	1. 2. 3.	G.1 Explain your motivation to clarify what you are referring to in relation to the work you do in your company or to your personal beliefs:	
H. What feedback would you like Cramars to get in the future from the community based on the work done over the years?	1. 2. 3.	H.1 Explain your motivation to clarify what you are referring to in relation to the work you do in your company or to your personal beliefs:	
I. Diversity and inclusion: what has been done and what could be done? (open question)			

Cyclisis (Greece)

**Making diversity awareness
an integral part
of all educational activities**

- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers
- Adaption of educational offers



Bringing people and institutions from both culture and education sector in communication, together with business sector and local communities' representatives.

Illustration 1: The suitcase theater performance of the Together Within Project © Cyclisis

The Organisation

CYCLISIS is a small organisation but very active in the field of social exclusion. Its activities embrace all citizens in question of opportunities for getting involved in non-formal education.



Illustration 2: Pictures from the “Together Within” Cinema workshop where refugees, NEETS, management staff, Volunteers and long term unemployed people of the community got together © Cyclisis

1. Presence in the Community - Diversity oriented

CYCLISIS is a small organisation but very active in the field of social exclusion. Its activities embrace all citizens in question of opportunities for getting involved in non-formal education a message that can be easily clarified by navigating the organisation's website: cyclisis.gr . The interesting issue was that CYCLISIS managed to bring together people from different social strands, natives and refugees in common activities. Due to its small size as organisation, the activities can be organised in cooperation with various peer institutions and settings, in order to allow visibility and the necessary convenience.

CYCLISIS is an independent non-profit institution active in the field of education, culture and environment, located in the suburbs of Patras. They are active on the European and Greek national level, focusing on the promotion of intercultural awareness through research and practice.

Their mission is to bring people and institutions from both culture and education sector in communication, together with business sector and local communities' representatives. CYCLISIS aims, according to its statute, to contribute, through lifelong learning, to the development of the community as an advanced knowledge-based society, with sustainable economic development, and greater social cohesion, whilst ensuring adequate environmental protection for future generations.

CYCLISIS aims in particular at enhancing exchanges, cooperation and mobility between education and training systems in the community as a point of quality. Furthermore, the organisation wishes to contribute to the development of intercultural dialogue and awareness-raising activities of the local community on racism and xenophobia, to promote equality of opportunity and to combat discrimination of all kinds.

It is also upon the organisation to train current and / or appointed teachers in the context of lifelong adult education in culture with a view to dealing with routine or burn out situations.

Along with the above CYCLISIS, works for the creation of integration opportunities for people with special abilities, mental and physical disabilities in actions of culture and education. Networking with local, national and further stakeholders in order to promote intercultural dialogue for a society of equal opportunities, is also stated on the website and various promotional leaflets etc.

Together with their work partners, they conceive, organize and coordinate projects in the following fields: non-formal adult education and training, educational policy, intercultural dialogue, sustainability and innovation.

2. A Journey towards establishing Diversity

Based on the case study carried out through the DivCap project, the status of Cyclisis in terms of diversity is on the level of intercultural diversity management, based on whom they address their services as well as the openness to include and employ people from intercultural backgrounds in the near future. The people involved showed a strong understanding of diversity and interculturality. But nevertheless a lot of steps are still needed to be taken to make sure that this is a continuous and progressive reality.

Diversity aspects can be found in the following domains examined in the case study:

- migrants/refugees
- Roma community
- neurodiverse individuals
- unemployed people, especially young adults



As it was concluded from Cyclisis' staff answer, as well as a research on their activities and statements, it is shown that the organisation addresses mainly people from marginalised/underrepresented groups such as migrants, refugees, Roma communities, systemically excluded individuals and especially women, unemployed youth, long term unemployed persons and neurodiverse individuals.

2.1 The institution in the migrant society

Migrants are regularly addressed through the activities of Cyclisis, but generally all activities can be attended by all interested, which is also an element of Cyclisis' approach in making mixed groups of learners whenever that's possible.

Cyclisis also regularly communicates with relevant organisations such as migrant communities/associations, municipalities / local authorities and housing / accommodation agencies / services / NGOs.

In the last years, Patras (the city where Cyclisis is active at) has been at the center of the migration route due to its connection with Italy. Nowadays Patras receives much less migrants and almost no refugees. Still nearby cities receive them, although since mid-2019 cooperation of migration authorities with small-scale educational centers and non-profit organisations that work for migrants' and refugees' inclusion, have been heavily persecuted by the government thus making the implementation of inclusion activities for newcomers really difficult to achieve.

2.2 Inclusion of cultural/ethnic minorities

Cyclisis has strong and longterm standing cooperation with some small local Roma communities. Many of their activities and approaches are addressed also to the Roma communities, although outreach is still relatively challenging. Rural Roma communities comprise of people that are really interested in learning opportunities, especially in terms of language and writing as well as being part of collective discussions. So far Cyclisis has had few opportunities to systemically contribute to the expressed needs of the community, due to issues with transportation and available infrastructure due to need for face-to-face activities. Nevertheless, it is a goal that they believe they will be able to achieve sometime in the near future and after the end of the Covid-19 pandemic.

2.3 Neurodiverse individuals

In 2017, the staff of Cyclisis took part in a series of trainings concerning neurodiversity in education and society, which lead to a cooperation with some experts on the field of autism. Through this opportunity, the staff of Cyclisis had the chance to research and learn on the needs of neurodiverse individuals, especially autistic persons, which made very evident the need for adapted learning opportunities to also appeal to the needs of neurodiverse people. Neurodiverse people are often excluded from learning opportunities, especially those that require regular support from a carer. For this reason, Cyclisis is offering person-centered planning counselling tools and is also considering at this stage at adapting some of its material to simple language and format for better accessibility.

2.4 Skills development and training for unemployed youth

Cyclisis has had the chance to work on many projects that helped develop a series of tools, strategies and methodologies for providing young adults with information, skills and resources which could help support their integration to the labour market mainly as members of social enterprises. **Young adults (without of course excluding all other ages) are being provided with mobility opportunities, exchanges and support for establishing their own collective initiatives with regards to EU and other grants available.** This category is a more general category, meaning that addresses individuals from all of the previously mentioned categories and they also offer the most inclusive opportunities for mixed learner groups.

3. Making Interculturality a standard Practice

Alongside the Cyclisis team we had to identify thought processes that would better facilitate the needed actions to be taken in order for the organization to stand in its diversity grounds. The Two following thought processes arised:

Blue-print thinking	rationality, not power matters most (rational approach)	The assumption is that change happens only when you analyse first what problem is, suggest the best possible solution, and implement it according to plan. Change is thus deemed a linear endeavour: you think first before you act. The process is expert driven: the activities are executed by those who have the necessary know-how and experience.
Green print thinking	emphasis in on learning (learning approach)	Changing and learning are deemed inextricably linked: they are thought to mean almost the same. The only way forward from a green point of view is to dig deeper: to discover one's limits and expand and deepen the way we see and act in the world.

Given the above suggestion, the team of Cyclisis worked on finding those practices that would serve these approaches. Based on their feedback, this process gave space for many fruitful discussions and potential plans as well as it also lead the people involved to research and study more on the subject and try to detect practices that would be relevant to their way of operation.

Resources

Vermaak, H.; Caluwé, L. de (2018): The colors of change - revisited. Situating and describing the theory and its practical applications. Draft Manuscript. In: Shani, R.; Noumair, D. (Eds) (2018): Research in Organizational Change and Development (vol. 26), Bingley (UK): Emerald Insight, <https://hansvermaak.com/wp-content/uploads/Vermaak-Caluwe-SHARE-VERSION-Colors-Revisited-ROCD-2018-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf> [last access 2020-02-24]



“It was a really nice experience, to research and see different methods that are available to make use of and in a manner that wasn’t strictly defined by a deadline. Yes, the results have to be communicate, but nevertheless this process is a continuous one without a visible end since things always change. We came across many interesting methodologies and we brainstormed a lot. We did get a bit overwhelmed throughout the process because there were so many possibilities and we didn’t know what to prioritise. This is where the blue-print approach reminded to us that we need a rational approach that takes into consideration the things that we have worked on and the experience we carry. New knowledge and new methodologies will be used and integrated on an already specified model. And for this reason, we decided to make intercultural competences an integral part of all our educational activities, not only when and if it is required.”

(P.T. - Board and staff member of Cyclisis)



Eventually, the team, after many weeks of research and brainstorming, they decided to start be following a rational approach. This clarified the need to resurface and integrate prior developed and acquired knowledge and resources to be included in all of the educational activities of the organisation.

The process followed was the following:

1. The team was offered the assessment of their case study
2. The team read the case study findings and assessment and discussed upon them
3. They decided to do some more research, based on the guidelines provided by the DivCap partnership
4. They consulted with the Dafni Kek team for potential concrete actions to be taken
5. After a span of 8 weeks including brief consultations, further research and detection of relevant models, the team decided to review the recommendations in order to reflect on the best approach
6. The team decided on its plan which is currently under way

The decided plan of action focuses on increasing opportunities for intercultural training throughout the organisation’s activities. This applies to two categories:

1. staff of the organisation as well as future external trainers and educators based on current resources and
2. integrating diversity assessment and intercultural competence building in all - when possible - current and existing educational material.

The organisation believes that this way, and with each opportunity provided, diversity awareness becomes more accessible to the learners and it also provides the opportunity to having a constant mentality reminder for future activities.

Cyclisis is currently developing two training programmes where diversity assessment for educational organisations has been integrated in the learning material as training session.

3.1 Aims and approaches

The decided plan of action reflects the current state of the organisation.

As Cyclisis staff mentioned in the bilateral communications with the DivCap facilitator who supported them in the process, the DivCaP diversity assessment process provided them with great insight over the diversity-conscious mentality development. The DivCap assessment process extends the diversity questionnaire and case study recommendations in order to facilitate apt changes in adult education institutions.

Because of that, the team considered it a great asset for some of their current projects where they also had the liberty to include some of the lessons learnt.

At this moment the general approach could be summarised as follows:

- integrate diversity assessment as a regular educational practice
- use reflection and feedback to determine emerging needs and decide changes and updates
- take small and rational steps, assessing the current possibilities
- share good practices with learners



Through this approach, Cyclisis aims to follow a relatively “extroverted” approach. As mentioned above, the current plan is to integrate/adapt parts of the DivCap methodology in their educational activities. This way, and through the free trainings they will be offering in the summer of 2021, the team of Cyclisis aims at “communicating” the diversity assessment and competence development among trainers, professionals and learners.

Through that they aspire to become more understanding of the different worldviews, needs, motivations, fears and challenges that trainers and learners alike find in diversity. This “reporting” will allow for a better planning of measures to be taken to serve diversity in a manner that allows for the co-existence and the co-participation of people from different backgrounds.

Additionally, it would be a great opportunity for the team to find people (while also training them) who could also be future colleagues, based on their approach towards the issue of diversity. Due to the nature of the trainings and the organisation, the people addressed to participate are also people from diverse backgrounds, references and life experiences.

3.2 Activities

Currently Cyclisis is developing two educational programmes where the DivCap methodology is being included, after being adapted to fit their need.

3.2.1. Masterclass for facilitators in Person-centered planning for Autism

The masterclass for facilitators, is a 5 module course addressed to facilitators of autistic individuals. It is based on the person-centered planning approach and along with the PCP System publication and the Guidelines for facilitators, they make up a comprehensive system to support the social inclusion of autistic individuals that require relative to substantial everyday support. The facilitators are defined as any person that is responsible for the support of an autistic individual, regardless of their academic level or cultural, financial, etc. background.

In the framework of this course, Cyclisis developed, among others, two chapters that drew inspiration from the DivCap methodology. These chapters are:

- Organisational change to support social inclusion - Inspired by the ADA Workshops held and documented by the DivCap Project
- Going forward - Assessment and Review - Inspired by the Diversity Questionnaire created by the DivCap project

In the first chapter, the material addresses the mentality of the facilitators either within an organisation or as advocates in the different structures they are part of. The examples provided refer to the case of educational institutions but the material has been adapted to be transferrable to other settings as well.

In the second chapter, the DivCap methodological processes and guidance, as extracted through the piloting process and in relation to the needs of Cyclisis, will be briefly and experientially mentioned while the tools created throughout the implementation period of the DivCap project will be presented as a comprehensive framework for assessing and reflecting on an action, in order to take steps forward for the future.

The content is still in developmental phase and it will be piloted in the period July-August 2021. After the piloting, the results will be available through Cyclisis' website.



Illustration 3: Official Poster of the AUTISM_PCP Project MasterClass © Cyclisis

3.2.2 LIREA project and Diversity Capacities

LIREA - Training for professionals

The LIREA training for professionals is a 7 module course, addressed to professionals involved in the empowerment and social inclusion of migrant victims of trafficking. The course tackles a series of issues related to the phenomenon of trafficking, support for victims, (re)integration approaches and community activities for social inclusion. For the development of the course and its content, approaches from the DivCap project were included in one tailored modules.

Module “Adult Education and Diversity Awareness”

Under the module “Adult Education and Diversity Awareness”, the DivCap project was the basis for the community activities for social inclusion.

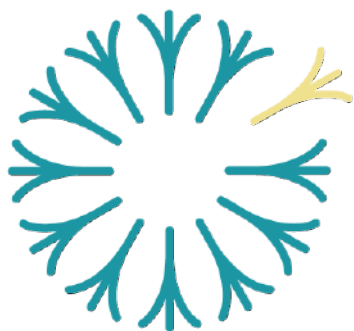
In this module of the LIREA training, professionals are made familiar with the DivCap methodology and approach, always taking into consideration the peculiarities of the trafficking experiences and the need for increased emotional support and empowerment.

The Diversity Capacities of the organisations, the ability to check our privileges and the context upon which access is fostering where key elements of the module.

This course’s approach aims to also act as a reflective and self-assessment basis also for the professionals, based on the knowledge acquired, their experiences and the desired outcome which is the empowerment and personal independence and sense of freedom among victims of trafficking.

The professionals involved were from different backgrounds, including also individuals with migration background and intercultural references.

The content is in developmental/reassessment phase and will be publicly available with open access after the end of the LIREA project through Cyclisis’ website.



LIREA
life is reborn from the ash

LIREA - Psycho-socio empowerment and labour market insertion laboratories

Cyclisis, through the LIREA project, is implementing educational laboratories that are aimed at helping support migrants that have been victims of trafficking, into the labour market thus achieving social and financial independence. These laboratories are further supported by psychologists and cultural mediators, who in their turn assess and further support the learners in completing their participation and better achieving independence and freedom by addressing also their feelings to a trusted professional.

For these laboratories, Cyclisis came in contact, and consequently collaborating, with a migrant women associations network (Melissa Network: <https://melissanetwork.org/>) that comprises of migrant-women led associations and individuals. For the implementation of the workshops, the beneficiaries were reached through the Melissa Network, respecting all their personal data and experiences. Additionally, in order to better tend to the cultural needs, as well as have better impact of the activities, Cyclisis hired two migrant women, a psychologist and a cultural mediator, former trusted beneficiaries of Melissa, who are working on an everyday basis for the implementation of the psychological support and cultural mediation in laboratories as well as labour market insertion.

This direct involvement of people with characteristics of the target group, in equal terms to the “local” professionals, has been a really positive development which not only helps to the quality financial independence of migrants, but also allows for more collaboration and cooperation between migrant populations and local professionals, thus helping integration and diversity among further education institutions. Thanks to the insight provided through the ADA Workshops, Cyclisis felt more confident in involving directly and in equal terms people from its relevant target groups into its activities something that according to the staff and management

“has been proved a really influential practice which has also contributed to us establishing a new network of partners, giving space to hopefully more impactful and worthwhile learning and collaboration experiences in the future”.

<https://www.lireaproject.eu>

4. A motivational process

During the process of increasing the diversity capacities of the organisation, the staff came across many different options that were available to them and learnt a lot of things that made them motivated for the next steps.

As mentioned above, at the beginning there was a feeling of overwhelm, because this occasion brought to the surface many different needs that needed to be addressed.

The staff started with the learning process, taking into consideration the recommendations of the case study and drawing inspiration from the bibliography used in the DivCap project. They came across all the options, approaches and tools, policy establishment, communication strategies and many other aspects that were both really interesting as well as intimidating at the moment.

The final choice, integrating diversity capacities development in their courses seemed like a good idea since it offered a good chance at constantly reworking and reflecting on current practices, while also promoting the diversity mentality.

At this point the team believes that they have learnt many things which can help them built on more effectively in the coming months, making plans along with their local partners (incl. Dafni Kek) on launching some services addressed to people with fewer opportunities. These services will consist of face to face trainings and sessions (given the needs that arose during the Covid-19 pandemic and the extreme impact it had on people with fewer means) as well as using the knowledge both from past experience as well as the DivCap project to train other institutions and workplaces in being more welcoming.

The process left the team with motivation for the next steps since so far the approach has started gaining some popularity and facilitates the connection with other trainers and activities which will involve their target group.

4.1 Next Steps

For Cyclis the next steps upon realizing a truly diverse environment, based on the concrete experiences of the staff and management are going to follow the three following pillars of actions:

Enforce local cooperation with active involvement on all levels (assistance-> employment-> management) of the target groups if the organization namely, refugees, Roma people, NEETS and long-term unemployed.

Cultivate systemic outreach approaches in the organization to invite and involve underrepresented majorities and minorities

Enhance monthly discussions of the staff on matters of representation, diversity, safe spaces for work and others.

4.2 Recommendations for Educational Staff

Through the training process, it became evident that the team of Cyclisis became really motivated by the proposed approach.

In the discussions following the piloting the Educational Staff of Cyclisis along with DAFNI KEK realised formulated the following recommendations on what should be included in the strategy of the institutions:

1. The educational staff has to keep the “pursuit” of knowledge running.
2. New approaches are constantly being developed and are useful for the educator as well as for the learner.
3. Feeling overwhelmed is reasonable, and for this reason the educators should be constantly in touch and communicating with each other.
4. It is also recommended that the educators take the learning approach a little more rationally, studying few resources at a time, brainstorm with the other member and find realistic solutions that enforce problem-solving mentalities.

4.3 Recommendations for non-Educational Staff and Managers

Similarly, to the non-educational staff and Management, this occasion was a nice opportunity for some of them to also dwell on more intellectual work.

The main recommendations that the non-educational and administrative staff came towards throughout the piloting:

1. Non-educational staff play a role in diversity management, and as such training and diversity discussions have to be held concerning them as well.
2. Sometime overachieving may have the opposite results than the ones desired, meaning that engagement with diversity policies and approaches is not a process that can be rushed.
3. Rationalising and building ideologies concerning challenges and states while enforcing diverse voices is crucial.
4. It is also recommended that they support and facilitate the inclusion of people from diverse backgrounds within the organisation.

5. ANNEX - Good Practice Examples

5.1 The Lirea - “Adult Education and Diversity Awareness” Training Module Outline

Module Title: Adult Education and Diversity Awareness

Brief Description:

This course aims to extend the notions of the participants from a national-based social inclusion process (top-down approach) to a wider one (bottom-up approach), composed by both social and economic full integration, carried out by Member States and by European Union as a whole, while socio-economic diversity is a key concept for enhancing the importance of double level of project intervention, on people and on systems.

Units of interest:

1. Raising awareness of diversity within educational context

How can we get in touch with how truly we tackle our capacities as counsellors, educators, organisations or learners in terms of diversity, bias, privilege and others. In this unit we discuss on key themes inspired by the DivCap Project ADA workshops.

1. Assessing diversity capacities

Being aware of the diverse inclinations inside a group of people with similar experiences and journeys is key. The educational context had to constantly be aware of the safety and comfortability status of the participants, as well as enforcing multiple representations.

1. Making a plan to increase diversity

Concrete planning can get us ahead of the challenges that come with fruitful heterogeneities. Organisations, professionals and educators are called in this unit to reflect on their policies and create systemic approaches towards increasing diversity spirits.

1. Updating the organisations diversity policies

In this unit we practically strive for change in the policies and mission statements of our organisations.

1. Trainings on diversity

Diversity management and awareness is an ever expanding process that can only foster in environments of tactical and systemic training. In this unit we aim to create feasible plans for continuing trainings on matters of diversity awareness in institutions working with victims of trafficking.

Dafni KEK (Greece)

Invention and re-invention in a small adult education organisation

- Diversity and structural change
- Diversity and Human Resource Management

"For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other."

— Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed



Illustration 1: © Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the oppressed

The Organisation

DAFNI KEK is a non-profit education and research centre for adult education (formerly a Vocational Training / Lifelong Learning Centre) which is located in Achaia, in Western Greece.



Illustration 2: From the archive of Dafni Kek (2017): Outreach Empowerment Diversity (OED) Workshops for Institutions and Educators in Adult Education © Dafni Kek

1. Staying Up-to-date with Societal Issues

DAFNI KEK is a non-profit education and research centre for adult education (formerly a Vocational Training / Lifelong Learning Centre) which is located in Achaia, in Western Greece.

Due to recent reforms and major state budget cuts towards courses for disadvantaged groups and adult education in general, the organisation has shifted towards an inclusive research centre. The centre offers open access materials for self-education, one to one counselling sessions, diversity communication events where people from different social and cultural groups can get together and exchange ideas, learning processes and future plans.



Learning is “the process of making a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of an experience” - Jack Mezirow (1990)

1.1 Guided by Freire’s Teachings

The core team of the organisation thinks that the statement of Paulo Freire that is prominent in the organisation’s website as well as hanging in the walls of their offices, really covers the essence around working against social injustice, including injustice towards diverse groups of people from different cultures and countries, and that is:



“...there is no transformation without action... Progressive educators need to convince themselves that they are not only teachers--this doesn't exist--not only teaching specialists. We are political militants because we are teachers...Our job implies that we teach subjects with sobriety and competence, but it also requires our involvement in and dedication to overcoming social injustice.”

PAULO FREIRE - Teachers as Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare Teach

Having the above quote as a guide and self-assessment reminder, the core team of DAFNI KEK is trying to stay up-to-date with societal issues and position itself and services in such a way to support the society, starting from the locality.

Resources

Mezirow, Jack and Associates (1990): Fostering Critical Reflection in Adulthood - Chapter 1, Jossey Bass . Publicly available copy can be found through the Cmap subdomain of Florida Institute for Human & Machine Cognition (IHMC), in the link: <https://cmapspublic.ihmc.us/rid=1LW0610V6-26428MK-1Z64/Mezirow's%20chapter,%20How%20Critical%20Refletion%20Triggers%20TL.pdf> [last accessed: 15/6/2021]

Freire, Paulo (1998): Teachers As Cultural Workers: Letters to Those Who Dare Teach



DAFNI KEK employs 6 people on a regular basis and has a pool of around 50 external professionals that could work occasionally on a contract based work relationship depending on the needs and requirements. In terms of their potential beneficiaries, these are mainly people that are unemployed, migrants, disabled, Roma, ethnic minorities or people from rural areas, so diversity orientation is an integral part in order to better serve the diverse needs of their beneficiaries.

1.2 Current Activities and Aspirations from the DivCap Project

For the last few years DAFNI KEK works mainly with projects funded by the European Union. This allows them to work and develop research and open access materials in English and Greek language for their learners/beneficiaries as well as to implement open workshops and small scale blended courses. Due to its previous assessment by EOPPEP*, DAFNI KEK makes use of the relevant qualification and certification frameworks to assess and update its work to the end users. They believe that this way, apart from the empowering aspect of adult education, the users also have the ability to showcase their involvement in such a way that it could practically count towards their qualifications and competences.

It isn't always a successful process because an empowering process requires a disempowering reality which can initially be draining for everyone affected by it - directly or indirectly. Nevertheless, it is a process that rather takes time and its effect becomes more understood and effective as the time goes [...] Firstly involves the core team reaching a point of mutual understanding and more or less a co-decided approach on some issues.
(statement made during Dafni Kek staff meeting)



Within the DivCap project, DAFNI KEK aims to increase their diversity capacities and communicate their services more effectively and in a more accessible way to the diverse needs of their diverse learners/beneficiaries. For this case, they aim as a first step on the mission statement, by changing some articles in the statute to reflect this commitment and in a later time to develop all these statements and plans for action and communication that would allow the even greater articulation of this change.



Notes

* EOPPEP: Transliteration of the Greek acronym ΕΟΠΠΕΠ which refers to the [“National Organisation for the Certification of Qualifications & Vocational Guidance”](#)

2. Status regarding Diversity in the Organisation | Key Findings

2.1 Summary of Case-study Findings

Based on the questionnaire-based study conducted among staff members (including educators/trainers, administrative, technical and management members) of Dafni KEK, the organisation has the following operational elements.

DAFNI KEK is a private, non-profit and independent organisation that works in a direct, horizontal and collective way among its members, where family links are also present. There is an evident background on knowledge, work and reflection on the importance of diversity within the organisation, but there is a lack of specific measures which could be attributed to the size of the organisation.

From the answers of the staff it is obvious that learners have an impact on the organisation and its approach.

There is are a few monocultural/monolingual elements, but also some multicultural references and there is a need for further communication of the diversity approach.

Based on the assessment, the organisation could benefit from the “greenprint” approach of the De Caluwe & Vermaak colour model. Additionally, it is suggested that they develop as a first stage of their diversity policy change the following measures:

- (a) an action plan with steps and timeline of the intended actions and
- (b) involving new persons with migrant background in task-oriented contract and
- (c) an external critical “supervisor” to support and provide feedback.

2.2 Analysis of the key findings

Based on the findings mentioned above, there are some elements that need to be further explained.

Concerning operational aspects, as stated above, Dafni Kek is “an independent organisation which works in direct, horizontal and collective way [...] where family links are also present”. This aspect makes it clear that the decision to promote diversity, as well as the necessary actions to be taken, is a process that doesn’t require a complex intervention procedure in terms of approval, but mostly depends on the commitment and constant learning of the people involved.

Resources

Vermaak, H.; Caluwé, L. de (2018): The colors of change - revisited. Situating and describing the theory and its practical applications. Draft Manuscript. In: Shani, R.; Noumair, D. (Eds) (2018): Research in Organizational Change and Development (vol. 26), Bingley (UK): Emerald Insight, <https://hansvermaak.com/wp-content/uploads/Vermaak-Caluwe-SHARE-VERSION-Colors-Revisited-ROCD-2018-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf> [last access 2020-02-24]



As for the second point, the fact that the people involved show elements of understanding of the need and importance of diversity, as well as seeming experienced in working with diverse groups, it is an element that can assist better this diversity-increasing process. As it is stated though, there is a lack of specific measures which need to be taken in order for the process to be effective.

Thirdly, the case study mentions that the staff showed that learners have an important impact on the decisions taken by the organisation in terms of changes and moving forward. This allows the organisation to provide educational services that reflect the actual needs of the local society and can be really helpful in their contact and collaboration with migrant organisations/associations.

Finally, the case study mentions that there are “monocultural/monolingual elements but also some multicultural references and a need for communication of the diversity approach”. This assumption stems from the fact that Dafni Kek, up until recently, was based in a location which has more rural than urban characteristics and which can be considered as relatively monocultural, since for many years, the main context of reference was the rural areas of Achaia.



We believe it is somehow justifiable that Dafni Kek has some monocultural aspects in its operation, since for many years its educational projects were targeted towards these [urban] populations with these specific characteristics.

Of course, it is also true that rural areas also include people with a migration background, since in many cases (especially for economic or seasonal migrants) rural areas have been one of the first options to look for work. Given though the monocultural aspects of these areas, promoting diversity related approaches wasn't something that was taken seriously by the majority of people and trainers up until some years ago that technology helped bring to the surface the importance of the issue.

Here is also a good place to make a bit of a criticism on our previous approaches. For many years, members of our organisation or even ourselves, we weren't so open as we have been the last few years that we were given more opportunities to listen and learn, so if we knew then what we know now, maybe we could have supported interculturality more through our activities.

(statement made during during staff meetings)

Since 2011, the organisation has been involved in EU projects which has helped increasing the intercultural aspects, as well as through implementing ministry-supported Greek language preparation for certification addressed to migrants residing in Greece (2011-2013).

Especially during the language preparation courses, it became very clear that trainers, no matter how many qualifications and official experience they hold, if they lack intercultural competences they cannot achieve the intended learning outcomes and the students end up not returning to adult education.

In terms of interculturality, the team of Dafni Kek also reflected on the experience working with the Roma community, which was a really influential experience that showed them the importance of listening to one's learners and adapting the learning methods based on their wishes.



The experience with the Roma community, was very influential, since it helped us to realise that learners, especially those that come from socially disadvantaged environments, have a very loving approach towards education because they really miss it. For some context, many Roma communities in Greece live under extreme poverty and/or social exclusion, which affects the education of the younger generations - despite the fact that officially they are “welcome” to schools. For this reason, the adults, especially when they are given the chance to participate in adult education, they prefer - from our experience - at least at the beginning, the use of school-like techniques, such as working on desks with books, notebooks and pens, like they would do in a regular school.

Concerning the communication of a diversity and intercultural approach, this is where the team of DAFNI KEK claims that the experience in EU projects has taught them a lot and has provided them with many tools to take more concrete steps. The main issue in this case is mostly of a managerial nature, since in their opinion:

“...A good and effective communication strategy is a full-time job by itself. When trying to communicate with people we want to make sure that our actions have been noticed and it would make people ask for more information. This suggests that there should be a staff member that is knowledgeable on an informational level of all running activities, is able to work with our approach and can communicate with people directly while also receiving their feedback and interest for participation. Direct communication is key in our case, since it is the most used means of communication between our organisation and our learners, especially those from socially disadvantaged groups.”

(statement made during staff meetings)



2.3 De Caluwe and Vermaak Colour Model Suggestion

The proposed approach for the staff and management of Dafni KEK, is the “green-print thinking” approach. This approach gives “emphasis on learning” (learning approach) and based on its description *“Changing and learning are deemed inextricably linked: they are thought to mean almost the same. The only way forward from a green point of view is to dig deeper: to discover one’s limits and expand and deepen the way we see and act in the world.”*

The focus at this stage is to strengthen the practices of reflection and self-assessment among the staff, and make more structured efforts for all involved to come together, be critical and try to adapt/change practices based on realistic standards. An important issue is to actually concentrate on making consistent small steps and slowly but steadily implement these actions that will enhance the diversity at the workplace.

3. Implementing Change

3.1 Aims and Approaches

The main goal of the change process is to become more focused on the issue of diversity and address the services of Dafni Kek to their intended target groups in a manner, that makes them feel included and understood. To achieve that, the staff needed to find those elements that act as barriers as well as develop a better communication approach.

The aims of the DAFNI KEK team will be presented below divided by short, medium and long-term goals.

The short-term activities are:

- Statute update: provides commitment on the most central level of the organisation and also acts as an accountability aspect for next steps and actions
- Create a mission statement: Dafni Kek lacks public documentation that supports their mission and approach, so they decided to also include it in this phase
- Transfer the general approach in the form of policies: as seen through the case study, there is a stable knowledge and approach towards diversity which isn’t clearly stated publicly - similarly to the mission statement
- Appoint a “Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador”: given the current situation in terms of the abilities of the organisation as well as the general public needs, the team decided to increase its staff by appointing a “Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador” which is a person that comes from any of the diverse target groups that the organisation aims to reach

Resources

Vermaak, H.; Caluwé, L. de (2018): The colors of change - revisited. Situating and describing the theory and its practical applications. Draft Manuscript. In: Shani, R.; Noumair, D. (Eds) (2018): Research in Organizational Change and Development (vol. 26), Bingley (UK): Emerald Insight, <https://hansvermaak.com/wp-content/uploads/Vermaak-Caluwe-SHARE-VERSION-Colors-Revisited-ROCD-2018-FINAL-DRAFT.pdf> [last access 2020-02-24]



Medium term activities:

- Development of intercultural and diversity competence training for old and new staff and external colleagues (professionals that work occasionally on fixed term contracts)
- Collective overview, reflection and feedback strategy
- Communication strategy based on each person's abilities (supporting mechanisms for learners to enhance social inclusion)
- Learning and critical mentality / Reading list

Long term activities:

- Knowledge management: the team of DAFNI KEK expressed the need for resurfacing educational material that contribute directly (content) or indirectly (means) to the diversity of the organisation
- Upgrading and better formulating actual learners/staff outreach, inclusion and retention strategies
- Actively support labour-market inclusion for socially under-represented groups with promoting job positions that are also open to people from diverse groups. This action has been influenced by the work of an NGO based in Athens that does exactly that.

The activities presented are not exhaustive and they are bound to change. They mostly represent the first ideas of the team of DAFNI KEK, as they emerged through discussions, and which are still at their very first stages of implementation so new needs haven't yet arisen.

For the needs of this report, they will focus on the development of a mission statement which is followed by tangible examples of the implementation process.

3.2 Statute Update

Analysis

Through the DivCap project, the team of DAFNI KEK, decided to make changes that will enhance the diversity of the organisation starting from the basis of the organisation, its statute. By updating the statute, the team and managers of DAFNI KEK aim at taking the issue of diversity seriously and even try to hold themselves accountable for future steps.

The diversity aspect will be reflected initially on the levels of services, cooperations and employees. In the future it could also be extended to the Board of Directors, but that is something to be decided in the future depending on the organisation's progress.

Another issue for this change is, that the statute has remained in its core unchanged for the last 25 years since the establishment of the organisation (apart from the changes in the persons involved) despite the changes in approach and operations in the last years.

Approach

Concerning the document by itself, it is a neutral-tone legal document, with phrases that do not reflect any kind of social orientation and priorities in terms of target groups.

The plan concerning the changes was to reassess and rewrite Article 3 (Scope/Mission), add three other articles concerning cooperation with other organisations, the description and circumstances for appointing a Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador and finally a provision for operational policies (including references to diversity, anti-discrimination and a monitoring system for receiving and tracking complaints).

Process

To do that, the involved persons from Dafni Kek have determined the following process of updating the statute:

- a. Re-read the statute
- b. Make notes on crucial aspects that are missing
- c. Research publicly available statutes from other non-profit adult education organisation, including NGOs, associations and cooperatives and make a list of good practice examples
- d. Read the example statutes in terms of diversity and use them as inspiration for making the statute updates
- e. Make a draft example and review it with the whole team (staff and management)
- f. Make adjustment according to feedback and share the final document with a legal professional
- g. Final document is submitted to the relevant authorities for sealing and is uploaded also on the website

3.3 Mission Statement

Analysis

The mission statement is present on the DAFNI KEK website, under the name of “Profile”. Yet it is still an outdated text, since it reflects the organisation’s approach as it was operating 10 years ago. Since then many things have changed in the operation and approaches of those involved, things that need to be reflected through the mission statement. This is important because the mission statement is generally the first resource used by people to determine whether they like the approach and see if it fits their standards and it also plays a role in cooperation with other organisations. In any case, it showcases how an organisation perceived themselves (or aspire to be) and how they want to be perceived. There is though the case of the Freire quote on the website of the organisation as well as the main offices which help make the approach more prevalent, but nevertheless the mission statement still needs to be updated because in some aspects it clashes with the more critical education side that Freire suggests.

Approach

Although a mission statement is generally a small text, it needs considerable thought and review before going public. For this reason, the team of DAFNI KEK has researched and collected some examples of mission statement from similar or relevant organisations, in order to detect those elements that could also fit for their case.

The specific elements that they want to achieve through this mission statement, is to reflect the values and objectives that the organisation has and aspires to achieve, while also be accessible. Accessibility in this case means to not have an overcomplicated language and long sentences but giving emphasis to those points that matter. In this case, there is the risk for overgeneralising, something that they want to avoid, but also the risk of using words that could be perceived as overly emotional and with a bit of a “savior” syndrome, which again they want to avoid. These risks have been detected in some cases of mission statements from the examples found.

Finally, one last aspect that the team wants to make sure through the mission statement is, that the motive to make this statement is the DivCap project, so an important part of the mission statement should reflect the diversity aspect of the organisation. What though needs to be also obvious, is to reflect all the other aspects of the organisation, as perceived through the activities and projects carried out.

Process

The process described in terms of developing the mission statement is as follows:

- a. Research examples publicly available from other organisations, which will help inspire the structure and the content to be reflected
- b. Review all ongoing and past works of the organisation and make a list of prevalent approaches, themes and societal issues tackled throughout the years
- c. Review feedback from the diverse target groups addressed throughout the years and try to assess issues that have not been tackled in order to give extra focus on those (if possible)
- d. Determine main and secondary aspects to be reflected
- e. Make a draft that will be assessed by all involved
- f. Format it and publicize it

3.4 Diversity-related policies

Analysis

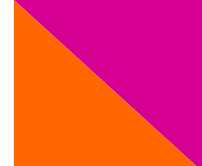
As it has been mentioned in the section “Statute Update”, DAFNI KEK’s board has decided to make an integral part of its operation the provision for the existence of concrete policies that support the Diversity and Intercultural approach.

These policies will be published in the website of the organisation, in an accessible way so as to help all people involved to be knowledgeable of the boundaries and obligations towards one another. These policies will also help monitoring incidents of non-compliance which will help to better address them and solve them so that they will not be repeated.

Approach

As in all previous actions, for this process the DAFNI KEK team has researched and gathered several examples (publicly available) from similar or relevant organisations, to find inspiration for their policies in terms of cases covered as well as phrasing and emphasis.

These policies will act as a code of conduct and they are made internally, considering the severity of the statements while also trying to convey the importance of the attitude rather than the consequences. As they state:



“We want to avoid the idea of “policing” our environment but there is an important need to make clear that some things cannot be tolerated. Creating a safe space for expression and education is our foremost priority, so it is our obligation to defend it and provide the best opportunities possible for all of us to work that way. The policies are here to help defend all parties’ rights and obligations and will help us to make our learning and operational interventions, hopefully, more respectful and equal.”
(statement made during staff meeting)



The aim of the team is to use the policies to address issues of diversity, non-discrimination and cooperation.

Process

The process followed is very similar to those described above. An important aspect to address here is also the critical review by a legal professional. This review apart from allowing the organisation to protect themselves and their learners, it is also a great opportunity for familiarisation with relevant laws which can also benefit the learners in their future steps.

3.5 Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador

Analysis

This intervention reflects one of the latest developments that the team of DAFNI KEK made. The “Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador” is a position that will be occupied by a person that themselves represent diversity of any kind. At this point, the role of this person will be to contribute to the communication of the activities with other organisations and people and to assess certain functions in terms of approach, phrasing, means of delivery and accessibility. This development is part of the mission of the organisation, which is to promote visibility, representation and opportunities based on equity.

Approach

The main approach for this role is to have a person that represents diversity of any kind and depending on current activities of the organisation, to keep the relevance with the target groups.

This position has the potential of periodic movement, meaning that in case there are specific incidents that arise, this position will be assumed by a person that will be codecidedly allocated within the group.

For example, if the Ambassador represents an ethnic minority but there is an incident or upcoming activity concerning people with disabilities, then the current Ambassador will return to work as regular staff and the position will be assumed by a person representing disabilities (if they want).

Of course, this depends on whether there are people available with these characteristics and whether the organisation has the ability to hire a new person. This is still a new position that has just started being put to practice, so all descriptions are still on a conceptual level and haven't been tried in all their spectrum.

Here, it would also be important to mention two significant aspects: a) the potential for **tokenism** as well as b) **positive discrimination** (which are interconnected in a way but will be analysed separately) and for which the team is also aware of as potentials.

The **tokenism** aspect could be attributed to the fact that a person of a specific profile is being used to make the position of the organisation more favourable as a diversity conscious organisation. The team is aware of that, but they justify their position by saying that the Ambassador is a staff member and their identity is not exploited but rather recognised and given importance in the communication and outreach of the organisation. They are not being idolised or exploited for marketing purposes but serve as representatives of their communities instead of being overlooked and have this position assumed by someone that has no such life experiences but they would have this position because of their studies/academic background. The position of the Ambassador is a position that needs to be assumed by a person that has these life experiences and which can better address people with similar experiences.

The second aspect is that of positive discrimination. As the team mentioned, when trying to add a new staff member, a lot of importance will be given to their social profile, approach and social interests rather than their actual academic status or previous experience. This happens for many reasons, which as they state are:



“We understand that social exclusion of certain groups of people has a very direct impact (in most cases) on their academic and professional achievements. It would be unfair to compare two people with completely different life opportunities, the same way. Additionally, by prioritizing a person from a specific group as a potential employee we believe that we can contribute to their feeling of inclusion as well as give, through them, incentives to their communities to engage in educational activities. It is also our duty as adult educators (especially considering the influence of Freire and critical pedagogy) to promote inclusion and distribution of representation and economic inclusion to those mostly in need of it. Finally, we do not support extreme competition (corporate culture) when it comes to work. We want to promote healthy working relations among staff as well as among learners and make the working experience a learning one (and vice-versa). This doesn't mean that people that do not fit in the “diversity” characterization are not welcome, on the contrary we want to achieve a good balance between the different identities in order to bring people together and learn from one another.”

(statement made during staff meeting)

Process

This position, for our organisation is “directly influenced from the opportunities given by Erasmus+ projects and other EU grants” in order to ensure funding and support. For the needs of other organisations other kinds of funds could be allocated towards similar positions

The staff of Dafni Kek have mentioned a lot throughout the discussions, that the opportunities that the Erasmus+ provides can be really beneficial in implementing actual inclusion and integration.

This is especially relevant in the case of innovation where organisations have the chance to involve representatives of the groups they address, not only as beneficiaries or respondents in research and implementation of trainings, but also as the staff being actively involved in the job that is addressed to them.

These employment opportunities can be adjusted to the abilities of each person but they also aim to inspire academic growth.

These positions are not guaranteed for life, so they can be temporary, nevertheless they allow in building experience and overcoming social exclusion. It doesn't mean that it can solve all issues, but they believe that, based on current reality, it can have a positive impact.

3.6 General Conclusion

As a general observation, the team appeared to have a very careful approach towards the above mentioned changes, because as it is evident from their answers, they are also addressing potential criticism points that can be made through this public positioning process. It could be considered a bit defensive from their side, but probably it is reflection of their interactions with their general environment.

Medium and long-term Goals

In this section there is a brief description of the process of the previously mentioned medium and long-term goals to better communicate diversity and interculturality.

Development of intercultural and diversity competence training for old and new staff and colleagues

This action is heavily influenced from the DivCap Applied Diversity Awareness (ADA) Workshops and it includes the activities from the workshop as well as good practices that the organisation is familiar with through the [“Outreach Empowerment Diversity” \(OED\) project series](#).

Apart from the regular staff, these workshops will also be addressed to external collaborators that participate as trainers in educational activities, for reasons such as those mentioned in the “analysis of case study findings” as well as for better addressing the needs of all involved. So far, the team of DAFNI KEK has scheduled the implementation of the ADA workshops during the summer of 2021, in the framework of Erasmus+ partner’s meetings.

Collective overview, reflection and feedback strategy

This is based on an already implemented action, that of gathering the staff and sharing issues, ideas and feedback on actions. The reference to “strategy” is there to make sure that diversity issues become a constant subject of these meetings and that concrete issues and measures are being addressed and suggested respectively.

Communication strategy based on each person’s abilities

Although this position is partly covered by the “Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador”, their work is more focused towards quality related aspects compared to strictly communicative ones. The communication strategy, as also mentioned in the “Analysis of case study findings” aims to assume a very active role among staff members and their communication with the learners/external trainers/etc. and should achieve effective outreach with the intended target groups. It also includes all those means that will be used to specifically address relevant organisation (such as migrant associations) while also acting complementary to the approaches for collaboration as described in the statute and the relevant policies. It also includes the strengthening of cooperation with other associations, NGOs, cooperatives and other kinds of organisations/institutions/workplaces.

Learning and critical mentality / Reading list

The learning and critical mentality are constituting clear references of the team of DAFNI KEK. Nevertheless, combined also with the “Green print thinking” suggested by the case study assessor, the team decided to start creating a repository of relevant readings or films, that will be used to increase the diversity competences of the staff. Depending on the circumstances, they aim to have one highly recommended reading every three months followed by the rest of the resources shared for anyone interested based on their abilities and time.

Knowledge management

Throughout the organisation’s history, there have been a lot of tools created that address diverse needs and professional skills. The organisation’s website can act as a medium to republish many of these tools while also promote tools and methodologies, openly accessible from other organisations that favour diversity and they can

address both the needs of the educators and the learners (which could also turn educators at some point). This also brought forward the need for a restructuring of their website in order to make access to resources easier based on someone's needs and (social) characteristics as part of the whole, while also recognising and representing the different identities, being inclusive and open with a "focused accessibility".

Upgrading and better formulating actual learners/staff outreach, inclusion and retention strategies

Highly related to previous actions of the short and medium term goals, this goal reflects the changes and possibly transferrable innovations to be achieved around the aspects of outreach, inclusion and retention. It is still on a very conceptual stage and it will be better formulated depending on the results and feedback from the other relevant communication actions.

Actively support labour-market inclusion for socially underrepresented groups with promoting job positions that are also open to people from diverse groups

The inspiration of this action is the "Job Adverts Thursday" which is run by the NGO "Generation 2.0 for Rights, Equality & Diversity" (G2RED). As they mentioned, this is a very interesting idea and they are looking forward to also try to implement it in their local context along with their sister organisation, Cyclisis. This action would be used to promote job positions that openly encourage applications from people from diverse groups, while also supporting the intercultural competence training of many local businesses.



"Our strategies emerge from the objectives we set complemented by the experience we had with our learners and our involvement and monitoring of the current affairs in our context and around social justice. As adult education providers, we ought to be up to date with current affairs and try to be as holistic as possible to help battle social pathogenies of our environment but also as individuals"

(Statement made during staff meeting)

Notes

For more on the "Job Adverts Thursday" by G2RED visit this link:
<https://g2red.org/category/job-adverts-thursday/>

3.7 Challenges

DivCap related activities

As the team mentioned, the original plan of the activities they had planned for the piloting, drew a lot of inspiration from the Applied Diversity Awareness (ADA) Workshops developed during the DivCap project and specifically they wanted to implement the following activities and use the findings as the basis for their change process. These activities are:

- The story of my name
- Diversity survey
- Diversity work

Due to Covid19, they were unable to implement them as they intended - face-to-face - and combined with the new reality of working from home, they lost track of this process. So the main activities that allowed them to make the pilotings was reading the material provided by the DivCap project, doing extra studying and research on individual level and having informal and unscheduled discussions on the matter using as an occasion other issues that would emerge that would give a good trigger to also consider the issue further.

Through these processes, they came up with some draft plans which tend to change due to new knowledge or new circumstances arising, so they needed to make sure that they don't lose focus of the intended actions. For this reason, they tried through their experience all these years, to find those practices that hinder the communication of their work and outreach of the learners and they understood that there are some organisational aspects that need to be solved before implementing the communication in the way they want it.

In their case, they used an alternative route to determine their approach and they tried to find which are the bad practices that they see either in themselves or other organisations, when it comes to communicating diversity. By understanding or defining the problematic aspects in terms of means, ways and approaches, they felt more ready to use or adapt existing good practices in their communication approach.

Organisational challenges

Task division - Time Management

Due to the nature of their work, which includes a lot of research and creative thinking (while also including the usual bureaucratic aspects as all legal entities), the team members tends to assume many different roles. There are of course distinctions and more specific tasks that one assumes, but all are interested in contributing less or more in the research and development phases even by just reading/testing and providing feedback.

Through the process for determining the action plan for increasing their diversity mentality, they were really enthusiastic and with a lot of ideas. But they realised that this is a common “mistake”, because it causes overwhelm when added to all running projects. For this reason, the team decided that they also need to become a bit more structured and better manage their time during this time that they all work from home, if they really want to achieve their diversity goals.

Setting boundaries

Another organisational challenge to take into consideration, is setting boundaries to their plans and the services they offer because there is a tendency to address all requests they receive.

General challenges

Impact of the Covid pandemic

Due to the pandemic, there is a confusion created throughout the society, because temporary measures have become almost permanent (at least for the last year) which doesn't allow for a good evaluation of the actions that need to be taken and be effective. For this reason, as well as the psychological, mental and/or physical exhaustion combined with the complete uncertainty that the whole society faces right now, it was almost impossible to start active implementation of the discussed measures. This means that the intended changes in statute and mission statement have remained in draft stage, due to difficulties and delays in submitting and receiving approval from relevant authorities (in the case of the statute). Concerning the mission statement, it is closely tied to digital updates that need to be implemented before the publication of the mission statement. Accessibility and open resources are an integral part of the mission statement, so they need to be also implemented before the new mission statement is made public.

Restricted access to online infrastructure of target groups

As mentioned above, the greatest challenge at this time is the uncertainty that is created by policy makers because of the pandemic. Initially, when the pandemic started the idea was that DAFNI KEK could transfer everything online. But the challenge in that is that the target group of the organisation in many cases doesn't have (continuous) access to the required infrastructure in order to participate online. For this reason, part of the mission statement and policies of DAFNI KEK is to try and establish open hours where people, who have no access to technological infrastructure, can come inside (respecting all safety measures) and use the technological equipment for their learning needs.

4. Looking forward

4.1 Summary of the experiences during the pilots

During the process for defining the change process and starting its implementation, the Dafni Kek team concluded that practically promoting diversity through the organisation's actions require active involvement and constant reflection. In their case it was important to review all their previous experience and by assessing what went wrong and what went well, they tried to find that giving actual time and space for communication while avoiding the instrumentalisation of the communication channels, to achieve just quantitative indicators, was the most important aspect for their approach. Communication is the means to promote their work and offer their services to the intended target groups. This requires that they have dedicated days and hours to address the needs of the learners (existing or potential). For this reason and considering the peculiarities of their working conditions and the general conditions, a realistic goal that they want to achieve is to make space and time in their schedules and organise communication weeks with learners, external colleagues and other organisations to find better ways for them to be part of the activities of the organisation, while at the same time addressing and taking into account the diverse needs that emerge.

To better achieve that, they needed an “**accountability**” tool which is reflected through the statute changes, the mission statement rewriting and the establishment of policies that clarify the obligations and commitment of the organisation.

4.2 Lessons learnt

Going into this process of change, the Dafni Kek team was “really thrilled and enthusiastic with the material provided” to make all these changes. All staff members have been provided with the material for an initial study and discussion afterwards. The material gave them a lot of ideas of the things they could implement in their case, but it also made clear that there are still many things they do not know. Given the current situation and the fact that DAFNI KEK's responsibilities increased, the whole team didn't have enough time to fully implement the process as they would wish. So they drafted an action plan, which they used as a base for the changes that they can implement little by little, as well as write down ideas for discussion for the next group meetings and finding ways to make time by being a bit more consistent with the working and non-working hours.

Change through small steps

Another important lesson they learnt, is that change is more likely to happen through small steps (as it was also highlighted by the assessment of their case study) that can be implemented in a small time frame, rather than larger scale actions, that require a lot of preparation and end up being indefinitely postponed for when there will be time available, as well as avoiding ambitious plans that overwhelm. Again, this aspect seems a little challenging to the team, since so far all processes described require considerable amount of work and co-planning which takes a lot of time. Despite that, it is obvious that the team wants to be present in all aspects of the change process and they prefer to have an active involvement, instead of delegating the task, in its whole, to an external expert.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the process for the diversity change has been a process that brought to the surface the need for some structural changes that hadn't been considered before. It became evident to the team that one of the basic reasons why the communication activities do not have the dynamic they wish. For this reason, and taking the project's outputs as inspiration for the next steps, as well as the resources provided both by the DivCap Project and other resources they found themselves and they defined their process.

4.3 What worked well

They believe that the current action plan has been devised taking into consideration experience of many years, combined with more knowledge and references on relevant practices from different contexts and collective decision. Given the size of the organisation and the way they work, being independent and working in a horizontal and collective way, they consider it a good practice to be transparent with actions and critical of themselves and their work in a constructive way that helps detect problematic aspects and correct them when possible. It is also really important to give time as individuals to be up to date with current events and emerging societal needs in order to remain as relevant as possible.

4.4 Recommendations

DAFNI KEK, as already mentioned, is a local entity dedicated to offer easy access opportunities to everyone with no barriers. Due to the size of a Small-Medium Enterprise (SME), they believe that each member of the staff should have a global understanding on the decisions making, priorities and directions to follow. Each one of the members is responsible for a specific domain, but ready to assist the rest, if needed to make things work effectively.

In this context of daily practices and in the process of review and self-reflection, the following recommendations have been made by the team themselves:

Staff and management

- should not overlook small changes and be patient
- should become more visible and available to the broader community timewise
- need to take communication more seriously by adopting a more cohesive communication strategy
- should remain and be even more inclusive, open and respectful
- take time when they feel overwhelmed
- reflect and self-assess

FH JOANNEUM (Austria)

Including Diversity Perspectives in the "Continuing Education in University Didactics" Course

- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers



Exploring and enhancing the competences of trainers

Illustration 1: © Created by Freepik
<https://www.freepik.com/>

The Organisation

FH JOANNEUM is a University of Applied Sciences in Graz, Austria. It runs the course “Continuing education in university didactics” (Hochschuldidaktische Weiterbildung / HDW) for teaching staff.



1. Introduction

The goal of the DivCap project is to promote inclusion and diversity in adult and higher education organisations. In the first phase of the project, in each partner country two educational organisations were analysed regarding the status of their diversity orientation¹. In the case of Austria, the case studies were done at FH JOANNEUM - University of Applied Sciences (FHJ) at the Institute of Social Work (ISA) and the Institute of International Management (IIB). Based on the findings, recommendations were developed. One of the recommendations related to further spread, intensify and strengthen measures to promote diversity across FHJ. Therefore, for the implementation of activities during the second phase of the project, the topic of diversity was explored in the context of the course “Continuing education in university didactics” (Hochschuldidaktische Weiterbildung / HDW). Through this approach, faculty staff across FHJ could be reached, and the awareness raising wasn’t limited to staff of two institutes. In addition, however, staff members of both of the involved institutes during the first phase of the project, also took part in HDW. Hence, the collaboration between the institutes and dealing with diversity issues, was also pursued further. Special thanks for the cooperation also go to the Head of IIB, who is also the scientific director of HDW.

Resources

1. For further information, see the DivCap project website:

<https://www.diversitycapacities.eu>



2. High-quality teaching as one of the key missions of FHJ

FH JOANNEUM - University of Applied Sciences (FHJ) is a higher education institution in Styria / Austria. FHJ consists of six departments with specialisations in computer science, engineering, environment & society, health, management and media & design. It runs 50 bachelor and master degree programmes. Around 4.800 students attended the programmes in 2019/2020. Additionally to teaching, the university's key mission also includes research and continuing education. FHJ has 746 employees and 1.180 external lecturers².

When dealing with diversity orientation in an educational organisation, different levels and areas should be considered, such as the institutional framework, human resources, or the educational process (see the [questionnaire](#) developed for the analysis of diversity in adult education institutions during the DivCap project)³.

At FHJ, as a tertiary educational institution, one of the main purposes is to educate students in different fields and study programmes. In the following, the focus will be on the role of the teacher. The teachers or lecturers need, besides their professional expertise, didactic competences for successful teaching. In particular, good teaching skills are required, and FHJ offers several programmes to ensure a high quality of teaching. For example, each year at the “Didactics Day” aspects of university teaching are addressed and selected FHJ teachers are honoured with the “Teaching Awards”. The division “ZML - Innovative Learning Scenarios” supports and advises staff as well as students, in all fields of online teaching. Due to the COVID-19 shift to distance learning, the demand from teachers for their services was very high and they offered indispensable support. In particular after the shift to distance learning from one day to the next in March 2020; but also in the following months, since distance learning had to be carried out in the winter and summer semesters 2020/21 as well.

Resources

2. FH JOANNEUM (n.d.): Wir machen unsere Zukunft FH JOANNEUM. Annual Report 2019-2020, Graz/Kapfenberg/Bad Gleichenberg, p. 16

3. For further information see the DivCap project website:
<https://www.diversitycapacities.eu>



2.1 The Course “Continuing education in university didactics / HDW”

One key component for ensuring good teaching at FHJ is the course “Continuing education in university didactics” (Hochschuldidaktische Weiterbildung / HDW). The programme supports lecturers in optimising their teaching. It lasts for three semesters and is organised on a part-time basis, to enable faculty staff to complete it alongside their teaching and research responsibilities. It is a mandatory programme for faculty staff, newly employed lecturers are automatically registered for the course. Recognition of previous knowledge in didactics can be requested. Usually each year a new cohort of max. 16 participants starts.

The programme consists of three modules:

- Basic Module A: Planning of University Teaching (3 ECTS)
- Basic Module B: Implementation of University Teaching (6 ECTS)
- In-depth Module C: Reflection on university teaching (dealing with conflicts, diversity, ethics of science) (3 ECTS)

Also, before the COVID-19 induced distance learning and working from home, the programme was organised in a combination of attendance days and e-learning with self-taught units.

3. Diversity @ HDW

3.1 Aims and approaches

The DivCap team member and facilitator for the implementation of diversity orientation aimed at enhancing awareness about diversity issues in teaching amongst the participants of HDW. She did this in two different roles: in the cohort of HDW 15 she was a participant herself, while in the cohort of HDW 14, she acted as a speaker in Module C. To reach the aim of enhancing awareness, discussions and reflections were initiated and concrete approaches how to include diversity perspectives in the teaching were developed and presented.

Through adopting a diversity perspective, consciousness about diversity in the lecture room is generated, by naming and recognising differences. By addressing the issue, the aim is to raise awareness of the fact that the backgrounds of students at FHJ are diverse. This is emphasised by the statement of Leah Carola Czollek & Gudrun Perko:

“There are no gender-neutral spaces. There are no homogeneous spaces. The fact of gender and diversity (plurality, heterogeneity) should therefore also be taken into account in didactic.” (Czollek / Perko 2008, p. 7, translated into English for this report). Considering the background of diverse students would contribute to a more inclusive access to Higher Education (HE). It aims at promoting equality of opportunity for all people and students, regardless of their age, gender, religion, skin colour or socio-economic background.

Resources

Czollek, Leah Carola; Perko, Gudrun (2008). Eine Formel bleibt eine Formel... Gender-und diversitygerechte Didaktik an Hochschulen: ein intersektionaler Ansatz. Alker, Ulrike; Weilenmann, Ursula (Eds.): Schriftenreihe Gender Mainstreaming und Diversity Management, Band 1. Wien



3.2 Module A and B: exploring diversity

The DivCap team member was a participant of the cohort HDW 15 in the winter and summer term 2020/21. 16 faculty staff members from different institutes across all of the six departments of FHJ participated in the course. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, most of the workshops that are usually conducted on site at FHJ, had to be held online.

Module A and B took place with the focus on the planning and implementation of higher education teaching. Here the DivCap team member was able to introduce the topic of diversity orientation in discussion forums and exchanges. And the topic of teaching heterogeneous groups was also briefly addressed by one of the HDW lecturers. Different positions became visible in the discussions and exchanges. For some of the participants it was the first time they had dealt with the issue. Some were reluctant to see the relevance, since in HE institutions standardised requirements prevail and no differentiation can be made. It was not seen in the responsibility of the lecturers to take different skills levels into account or meet the students, where they are. Furthermore, it was stressed that there are too few time resources for such differentiated preparation of a course. On the other hand, some lecturer acknowledged the relevance of the topic and shared their approaches.

Relevance of specific diversity dimensions

When dealing with diversity, the question which diversity dimensions are relevant and should be considered, needs to be answered in relation to the context. When it comes to awareness about diversity dimensions, perceived dimensions that were addressed in discussions during the HDW course, were gender and the educational background.

For example, an exchange took place on the topic of gender. It was noted that female students often stay in the background and that the male students take over the leading positions, such as presenting the results of working groups or taking over the group leadership. Here one suggestion was to rotate the roles in a group and that each student has the experience of leading the group.

In particular at the beginning of the studies in the Bachelor programmes, students bring with them different knowledge, depending on the schools they attended before higher education. In Austria the upper secondary school system leading to a general higher education entrance qualification (Matura) distinguishes between two main paths: Academic Secondary Schools (Allgemeinbildende Höhere Schulen / AHS) and Colleges for Higher Vocational Education (Berufsbildende Höhere Schulen / BHS) such as Business Colleges or Technical Colleges.

Therefore, for example students of technical courses who attended a Technical College, already have prior knowledge of the subject, just like students in management courses who attended a Business College. Usually, lecturers are confronted with students from different schools mixed in one course.

The heterogeneity is even greater among part-time Master students, where in addition to the different educational backgrounds, there are also different professional experiences.

One strategy shared is to inquire about previous experiences and knowledge of the students at the beginning of the course. And the further planning of the course is adapted to the result of the survey. Another approach is to facilitate peer learning. This can be done in group work, where the group assignment is done consciously, e.g. students with less and more previous experience work together in a group and learn from each other.

Strategies for dealing with heterogeneous groups that have different levels of previous knowledge:

- Inquire about the previous knowledge at the beginning of the course and adapt the further planning according to the result of the survey
- Facilitate peer learning (e.g. through mixed groups)



Including diversity perspectives in the design of a Master Course

Module B is concluded with final presentations of the participants at the HDW conference at the end of the summer semester. Two participants from the Institute of International Management and the DivCap team member from the Institute of Social Work decided to focus their group presentation on diversity orientation in teaching. Based on theoretical considerations, they shared a concrete example how diversity-conscious teaching can be taken into account through the example of a Master course.

The online conference of HDW 15 was an open event, the invitation is sent out to all staff members and students at FHJ. During the HDW conference, the team gave a 20 minutes presentation. And then during a 45-minute session participants of the event could “visit” the speakers at their “market stall” and an open discussion took place.

Rationales for the relevance of diversity in HE teaching

At first, the presentation set out the reasons why diversity perspectives are relevant for teaching in HE. Since the society is heterogenous, also the lecture rooms are composed of students with different backgrounds. Different diversity dimensions should be considered, as laid down in the "Four-Layers of Diversity Model" by Lee Gardenswartz and Anita Rowe (1998). Considering the background of diverse students would contribute to a more inclusive access to HE.

Furthermore, it is a contribution to professionalisation and part of quality development (Czollek & Perko 2008). HE institutions are required to take the anti-discrimination legalisation as well as policies for HE development and strategies into account (Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Wirtschaft / BMWFW 2017).

Real case example: Business Lab & Company Dialogue

As a real case example, the team chose a new course to be held in the new Master Programme “Global Strategic Management”. The “Business Lab & Company Dialogue (B-Lab & CD)” will take place in the 2nd semester starting in winter term 2021.

The B-Lab & CD is a project lecture that aims at supporting students on how to link the knowledge gained within previous lectures with skills learned in the practice. Students will collaborate closely with companies and apply their gained knowledge in the 1st semester with a focus on their chosen study tracks, as well as the fundamentals of project management and digital teamwork in practice. In (digital) project teams, students will work on projects and experiments, develop potential solutions and prepare pitch decks or presentations to be presented in front of public audience.

The B-Lab & CD was selected, since the course includes a variety of elements that might be relevant for other lectures as well. It is a combination of instructor-coaching lecture, company interaction, individual and group work, and presentations.

"Setting our minds to include diversity perspectives in a more pragmatic way in our lectures, brings not only value to the students, that I am positive will feel themselves seen and belonging. But it opens up to us teachers, a great opportunity to learn from the diverse student population we have in our classrooms".



Statement of the HDW 15 team member
“Diversifying the Business Lab”

Based on a literature review and theoretical approaches, the team developed strategies how to consider diversity in selected elements of B-Lab & CD.

Four elements were chosen to be addressed for the case:

- Company Selection & Interaction
- Team Composition for Group Works
- Leadership & Engagement of Team Members in Group Work
- Methods & Materials

In the following a short summary of the results is given on how to consider diversity in these elements. The power point presentation and handout are available for download, see the Annex for the link.

Considering Diversity in Company Selection

- Step 1: Identification of relevant diversity dimensions
- Step 2: create a short list with companies considering the selected dimensions and contact the companies to invite, align and fix the project / case
- Step 3: develop a code of conduct, for creating a good, safe and stimulating work and study environment

Considering diversity in Team Composition

- Step 1: Identification of relevant diversity dimensions for Team Composition
- Step 2: Pre-Lecture anonymous survey for the students
- Step 3: Team composition done by lecturer based on received survey results

Considering diversity in Team Leadership & Engagement

- Rotation of team roles
- Mixed-assessment (individual & group)

Considering Diversity in Methods & Materials Selection

- Use a mix of different methods
- A toolbox with categorized learning materials by prior knowledge level
- Resources from male and female experts, authors from different cultures / continents

“Our lessons learnt during the process of our engagement with the topic of diversity-conscious teaching:

- The definition and selection of the relevant diversity dimensions in relation to the actual context we are dealing with, is crucial. This should be the starting point of the process. It is important, to define the relevant dimensions for the specific lecture and class room setting.
- Furthermore, we realized that what we learned during HDW Modules regarding planning of HE teaching and method implementation is also relevant for diversity-conscious teaching. Using a variety of methods and materials is helpful and supports an inclusive approach to teaching.
- Moreover, we realized that we have already integrated elements that support diversity in our previous teaching. But that was done more intuitively. Now we can base and explain our teaching practices on theoretical understanding.
- These learnings are based on the planning process of the course. The Business Lab will be run in the next academic year, so we have no concrete results yet regarding the actual implementation.”

Statement of the HDW 15 team “Diversifying the Business Lab”



3.3 Module C: reflecting about diversity

Module C of the “Continuing education in university didactics” is a lecture series on three topics: dealing with conflicts, diversity, and ethics of science. Furthermore, structured reflections and peer coaching are also part of the module.

Two DivCap team members facilitated the course on diversity in the summer semester 2021. First, a lecture introduced the topic of diversity, covering definitions, diversity dimensions (incl. visible and hidden dimensions, social attributions and stereotypes associated with dimensions), reasons to consider diversity, different levels (strategic HE planning, concrete course level), as well as different approaches of awareness (cognitive and emotional level).

In a second part, in small groups the participants had the opportunity to reflect about their personal experiences and approaches on two levels: regarding diversity aspects of their students and diversity aspects in their role as a teacher. See the concrete reflection questions in the Annex.

Some points raised in the plenum discussion were:

- Finding a balance between recognising differences and colour-blind approach
- Diversity dimensions are not an issue, the academic performance is the main focus
- Students speaking in regional dialects of German and associations made with the dialects
- The younger generation is used to operating in diverse groups
- Students lack of language proficiency in German, which leads to problems in their academic performance
- Discrimination of students in searching for internships because of their ethnic background

“We have started a new module on diversity in the framework of our mandatory program on professional education for lecturers called “Hochschuldidaktische Weiterbildung”. From now on, the topic of diversity will remain a core topic in the program on didactics and learning and teaching.

Through this new module, the awareness of our faculty on the issue of diversity has grown, and throughout the next years all faculty members will have to attend and actively participate in the module on diversity in our university.”

Statement of the scientific director of HDW



„Successful academic careers need inclusive environments and speakers with the ability to adjust to diverse audiences. Therefore, special formats are essential to guide professionally through this complex world of multidimensional individualism.“

Statement of the DivCap member involved as speaker in the diversity session in Module C



4. Elements in the teaching process for a diversity-conscious approach

Different elements in the teaching and learning process need consideration and were explored regarding diversity orientation during the piloting in the Modules of the course “Continuing education in university didactics”:

Students

A reflection about the composition of the students regarding diversity dimensions was initiated. The aim was to enhance the awareness, that students are diverse in lots of different aspects. One dimension that was considered in particular important is the previous knowledge and experiences students bring with them. Furthermore, the gender dimension was noted. Other dimensions were not in the focus of attention, but would need further exploration, e.g. migration background or disability. One reason might be the often homogeneous composition of the students. Another, that there is little awareness of different experiences of minority groups.

Teachers

The previous experiences and approaches to the topic of diversity and diversity orientation of the teachers were reflected and discussed. Besides personal experiences, the professional culture and the self-image as a university teacher also play an important role with respect to the attitude towards diversity-consciousness.

Course

Different approaches for an inclusive teaching and learning environment were explored. Taking into account diversity orientation in each stages of the teaching process is important. Already in the first stage of the planning, during the designing of the curriculum or choosing assessment practices. Furthermore, when selecting teaching contents and materials, diversity considerations should be taken into account. These considerations also should guide the second stage, the implementation, the concrete interaction with the students. Didactic principles that also promote inclusive teaching are e.g. variety of methods and activation of students.

Through the real case of a Master course, an example was explored how to include diversity perspectives for a concrete lecture. For those who are interested in exploring approaches for their own courses, further information can be found in the reference section of the handout. It would go beyond the scope of this report to go into more detail here.

Framework conditions

The conditions under which the planning and implementation of teaching is carried out, need consideration as well. Time resources are often scarce. Therefore, differentiated preparation and addressing different needs is often considered not feasible. And on the other hand, the standardised procedures in a formal educational institution also limit the scope for differentiated approaches. The way forward will be to explore, find and create space for new solutions, and creative possibilities.

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6. ANNEX - Good Practice Examples

6.1 Presentation and handout “Diversifying the Business Lab”

Sandra Meier, Helga Moser, Ligia F. Pasqualin (2021): Diversifying the Business Lab. Including diversity perspective in the design of a Master course.

The presentation and handout for the Online-conference 15. Hochschuldidaktischen Weiterbildung / Continuing education in university didactics are available for download at the DivCap website:
<https://www.diversitycapacities.eu/pilot-reports/>

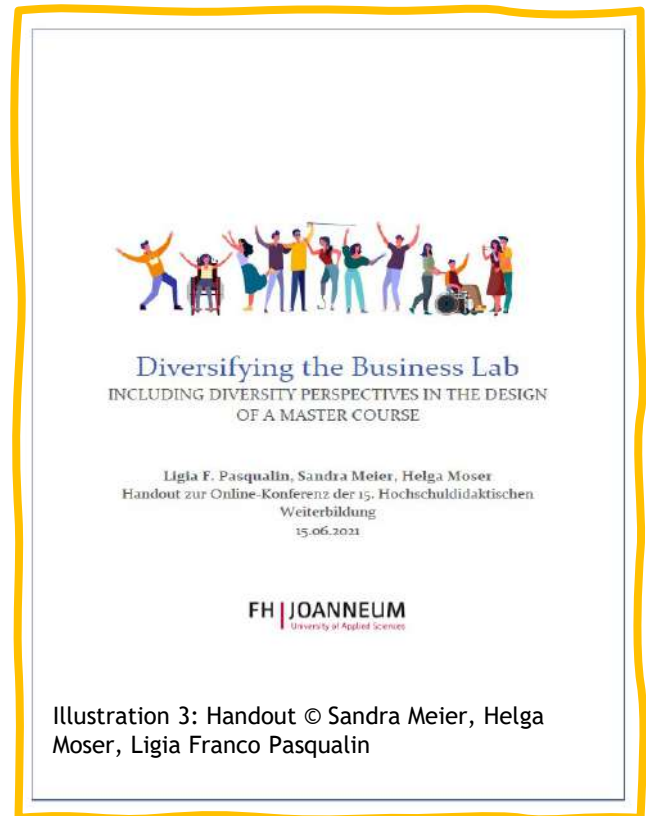


Illustration 3: Handout © Sandra Meier, Helga Moser, Ligia Franco Pasqualin



Illustration 4: Presentation © Sandra Meier, Helga Moser, Ligia Franco Pasqualin

6.2 Reflection Questions for lecturers

Diversity @ Students

- ✓ Which diversity aspects characterise the students in my course?

Diversity @ Teachers

- ✓ Which aspects of diversity characterise me?
- ✓ How do I perceive my role and function as a teacher?
- ✓ External perspective: my assumptions about how students perceive me?

INSTITUT FÜR SOZIALE ARBEIT

Fragen für Reflexion & Austausch Diversität im Lehrsetting

FH JOANNEUM
University of Applied Sciences

Diversität @ Studierende

- Welche Diversitätsaspekte kennzeichnen die Studierenden in meiner LV?



Diversität @ Lehrende

- Welche Diversitätsaspekte kennzeichnen mich?
- Wie nehme ich meine Rolle und Funktion als Lehrende*r wahr?
- Außenperspektive: meine Vermutungen, wie mich die Studierenden wahrnehmen?





Illustration 5: power point presentation slide with reflection questions © Helga Moser

Humanitas (The Netherlands)

Making a start: towards a more colourful HRM Policy

- Diversity in Human Resource Management



Structural Change
Diversity policy is an
ongoing process

Illustration 1: Collage from Humanitas PR resources © collage created by Jumbo Klercq

The Organisation

Humanitas is a national association that focuses on the departments of TWENTE. In the beginning of the project we found that the organisation has several migrants among its clients and is therefore moving from a monocultural to an intercultural service.

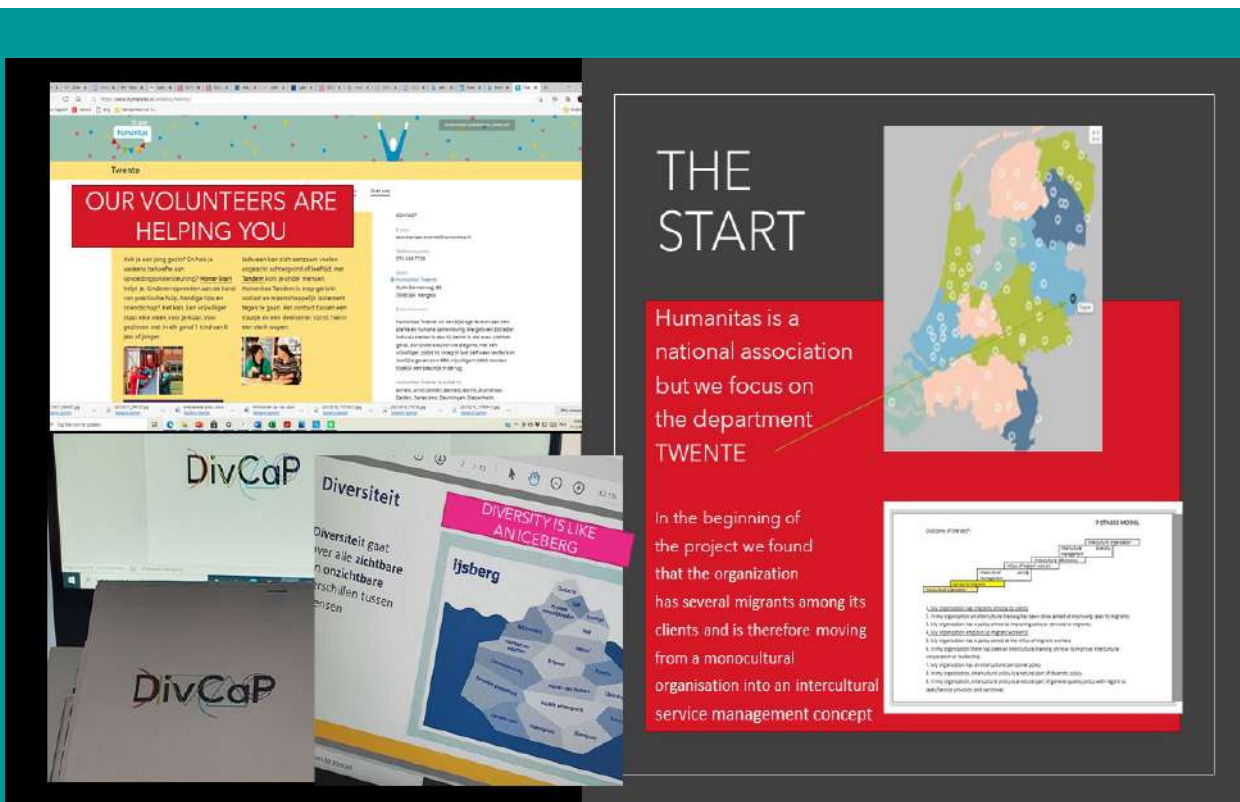


Illustration 2: screenshots of Humanitas website © collage created by Jumbo Klercq

1. Humanitas is a national volunteer organisation with an association structure

Humanitas is a membership association working with many volunteers and professional support managed by the director. She is accountable to the Executive Board. A council of (elected) members supervises the Executive Board.

Therefore, Humanitas can be seen as a volunteer organization in the sector of non-formal adult education. The national office and the national Executive Board are based in Amsterdam. Through its activities, Humanitas wants to contribute to a strong and human society (mission). Humanitas believes that each individual is stronger than he or she thinks.

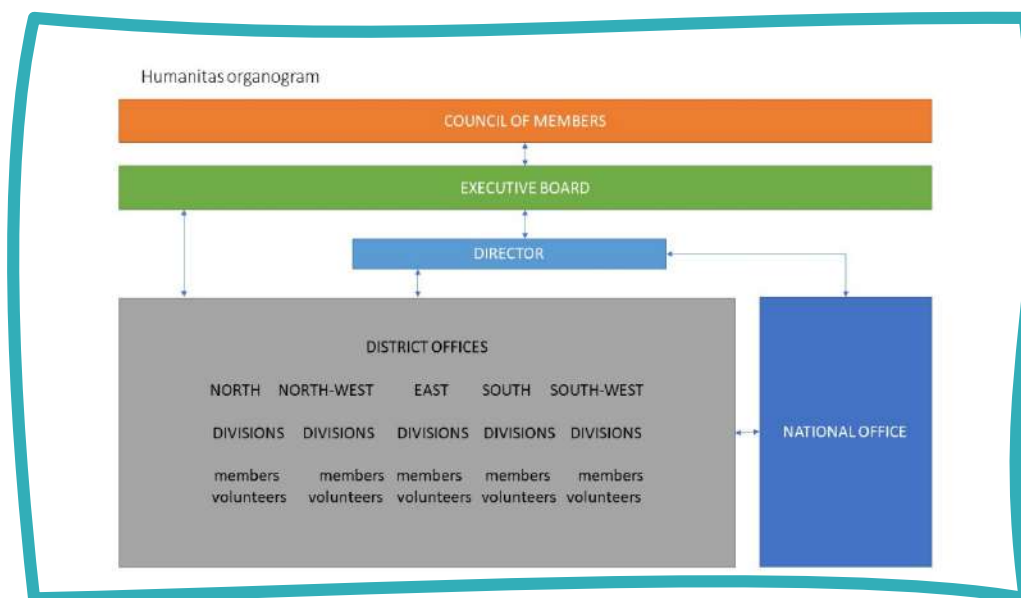


Illustration 3: Humanitas organigram © chart created by Jumbo Kiercq

The total number of participants in Humanitas projects and activities is 74,000 and is supported and carried out by over 19,000 volunteers. Humanitas has three types of volunteers:

1. operational volunteers with mentoring and counselling tasks
2. volunteers with coordinating tasks
3. volunteers with administrative and supportive tasks

The activities are organised by local branches throughout the country, in 12 provinces.

The activities are divided into six themes:

1. making social contacts
2. dealing with mourning and loss
3. education and parenthood
4. having a good childhood
5. living during and after detention and
6. putting the administration in order, e.g. debt structuring.

Many of the employees at Humanitas are volunteers. There is a big difference in paid professional work and volunteer work. Not only in tasks and status, but also, in terms of remuneration.

At the moment, a new form of voluntary work is being considered with standard voluntary contracts and remuneration.

Humanitas Twente, which falls under the national association structure, is based in Hengelo in the province of Overijssel, the Eastern district. Humanitas Twente is one of the five divisions of this district alongside Deventer, Hardenberg Ommen, Raalte and Zwolle. The local divisions use various services of Humanitas facilities of the district East and the national office in Amsterdam. The services vary from education, training, subsidies, human resources and data systems. The divisions have their own administration and board.

Annually, 650 volunteers of Humanitas Twente support 2400 people who temporarily need a helping hand with regard to questions such as home administration (such as helping to keep a household book), family and parenting support. A good example of a project aimed at supporting people with a migrant background in actively participating in Dutch society is the Active Together project. Humanitas Twente receives financial support from municipalities, funds, businesses and sponsors.

In 2020, Humanitas Twente has initiated the issue of diversity and inclusion in the organisation, parallel to the development of the DivCap project. Both the national office (Amsterdam) and the Humanitas Twente department (Hengelo) are aware of the fact that competences of employees regarding diversity and inclusion should be strengthened.

A development process has been set up in which active core teams get to work to strengthen diversity and inclusion in the organisation at both the organisational and operational levels. Workshops have been organised to be an organisation where diversity and inclusion are self-evident.

The majority of the people (people seeking help) supported by Humanitas are people with a migrant background. The professionals and volunteers who work in this field are strengthened in their competence to empathise with other cultures and the way in which migrant groups should be reached and help provided. This is part of the issue of diversity and inclusion for the entire organisation.



2. Coping with diversity - key findings of the case study

2.1 Staff and Policy Diversity

The Humanitas organisation arose from charitable aims and focuses on social issues. Volunteer work plays here an important role and the work is often coordinated by paid professionals. Professionals and volunteers have different opinions about who should pick up developments in society and which signals to pay attention to. Issues such as diversity, migration and inclusion nowadays also receive a lot of attention. For example, the ratio of men to women for each project is quite unequal, both in the group of professionals and among volunteers. Women are generally in the majority. There is not active policy to involve more men. At Humanitas Twente, diversity and inclusion have not yet received sufficient attention in the area of staff policy. The composition of the staff is not diverse. The staff composition is not a reflection of a Dutch Twente society which is more diverse. Therefore, the workforce is not colourful. During the case study, part of the staff expressed the opinion that the organisation is on its way to becoming a diverse and inclusive organisation. In this respect, the team of staff and volunteers of the Active Together project is diverse. Service provision for people with a migrant background is part of the policy of the project. However, this depends on conscious choices to be made by the board and management.

2.2 Necessary Skills for professionals and Volunteers

Knowledge about (other) cultures and specific skills are necessary for professionals and volunteers to help people with a migrant background who ask for help from Humanitas Twente. This applies to both professionals and volunteers with a Dutch or non-Dutch cultural background. **The unfamiliarity with Dutch norms and values is mainly based on the individual as a person who has to take care of himself, shows responsibility and performs himself (I-culture) versus collective norms and values (We-culture) as they are found in many migrant communities.** The motto in migrant communities is 'caring for and with each other'.

The professionals with a Dutch background do not sufficiently meet the norm of 'working with people from a migrant background and diversity'. This also applies to the Dutch volunteers. Knowledge of diversity and other cultures is also lacking as a norm for volunteer work. This is also lacking in the educational level of the professionals. Many staff members in the organisation believe that diversity will bring more dynamics into the organisation and will also have positive impact into the teams that do the work.



2.3 Need for a conscious choice for inclusion

The general impression about diversity in the organisation is that a conscious positive choice for diversity and inclusion would enrich the organisation. Insufficient knowledge about diversity, migration and inclusion leads to unintended distance between people with different cultural backgrounds. Having this knowledge contributes to awareness, which in turn leads to good relationships with others to learn from them.

Despite the fact that in most projects there is a homogeneous group dominantly present, professionals also like to work with people with a diverse and migrant backgrounds. However, there is still insufficient attention for diversity at different levels of the organisation. As a result, the organisation remains stuck in the awkwardness of acting and unintentionally excludes people who could benefit from the services and products of Humanitas Twente. It is necessary to have more reflection on diversity policy in the organisation. This automatically leads to new insights and ideas in the existing organisational framework. A conscious choice for diversity policy contributes to a better match between services and the care which people really need. So, there is a gap when it comes to diversity and inclusion.



Questions like 'how do we increase the accessibility of migrants', 'how do we strengthen the skills of professionals and volunteers' are constantly discussed. The additional question is 'what is needed to bridge this gap?'

(Discussions during the piloting)

To bridge this gap, a start has been made with paying attention to the issue of diversity in recruitment and application procedures. When recruiting staff and in the preparation of the vacancy text or call for applicants, more attention should be paid to intercultural competences of applicants. The issue of diversity and inclusion has been put on the agenda at various levels throughout the organisation and has now gained support. A conscious choice was made to set up a diversity and inclusion development programme. This has been initiated by the Executive Board since November 2020.



3. The Change and Learning Process

3.1 Aims and Approaches

3.1.1 Piloting Objectives

The main goal of the DivCap pilot is to advise and support Humanitas as an organisation to become a diverse and inclusive organisation in the long run. An organisation where professionals and volunteers have sufficient knowledge and skills to consciously deal with issues of diversity, migration and inclusion.

3.1.2 Diversity on the Agenda

The call for specific knowledge and improvement of skills and competences leads to the need to train professionals and volunteers in the future in dealing with the issue of diversity and inclusion and applying it in their actions. The (national) board and management has become increasingly aware of this issue and there is now a conscious focus on improving the work of professionals and volunteers.



Diversity must be visible in all layers of the organisation and not only at the level of project implementation by, for example, volunteers. Therefore, a change and learning process has been initiated by the national Executive Board.

The general conclusion is that Humanitas as a voluntary organisation will increase its efforts to develop policies aimed at diversity and inclusion in the organisation. Partly due to active participation as a pilot in the DivCap project, the attention of the board, management, professionals and volunteers for diversity and inclusion has been put on the agenda. A positive development is that people are more aware of the need and that diversity is seen as an enrichment for the organisation. The board, management, staff and volunteers experience it as a challenge, an opportunity to immerse themselves in the issue and to improve their skills in this area for the benefit of the executive work.

3.1.3 The approach to change: Humanitas as a learning organization

The approach to change requires care and attention. Critical reflections from society on the organization are desirable. This automatically brings movement within the existing framework such as new insights and ideas. It also leads to communication about the organisation's current values and a critical look at the organisation's mission.

There are good preconditions for a change process:

- There is no denial and no anger, but acceptance of change among employees. People see new opportunities. There is no tension but positive energy on both sides.
- Humanitas Twente already employs some professionals and many volunteers with a migration background.
- The general opinion is that a consistent diversity policy should be developed, but there is a lack of sufficient knowledge to do so.



“What challenges do you expect during the implementation of the pilots?

- New management - extra time
- New middle management - with many assignments
- Financial concern / unforeseen urgent developments”

(Manager)

Further circumstances during the pilot: there is a fairly new board (80% new), there are financial concerns, as a result of which there is a reorganisation, there is a new interim manager and the measures in the framework of Covid-19 must be adhered to. This led to the fact that diversity as a theme was not immediately given the desired priority. The financial situation of the division was more important.

From asking a specialist to collective learning

A not unimportant factor is that at Humanitas Twente staff member with a migration background, who is actively involved in the DivCap project, is 'seen' as 'the' specialist. When questions are difficult to answer, this is passed on to this staff member - as far as questions from migrants are concerned - instead of seeing the Active Together method as a good example of practice that can also be applied in other parts of the organisation.

The pitfalls of such an approach can be superficial understanding, a laissez-faire attitude, suffocation and the avoidance of conflict. However, there is positive energy to want to change. Humanitas staff endorse this. Possibly, the initiated development process for change offers something to hold on to for everyone. Among other things, core teams are going to work on the issue.

A start was made with the so-called track book, an outline memorandum on the issue, supported by activities such as a diversity workshop for employees and volunteers. Promoting expertise / training in the field of interculturalisation provides inspiration and recognition for diversity and inclusion, and ultimately anchors it in the organisation.

It is important to create environments for collective learning and to create space for spontaneous evolution in order to stimulate people in the right way in a process of exchange in which people develop and create a motivating solution (the best 'fit'), which is a catalyst for new initiatives. It must be a pathway of interventions such as coaching, open systems planning, open space meetings, self-managing teams, assessment and rewarding, social gatherings, led by sense-making personal facilitators and external facilitators, in collaboration and supported by HRM experts and managers who coach people. The result is not aimless, but it is anticipated and finally, in the long run, outlined but not guaranteed, but it is assured by self-organisation, dialogue and healthy relationships.

3.2 Activities

Below we will describe the key activities implemented during the pilot period in more detail. First, we deal with the Active Together project. Furthermore, we pay attention to the improvement of communication materials and the intensification of the contact with migrant organisations. Finally, there is the Diversity Roadmap and a future workshop.

3.2.1 Active Together as an example for other projects

Humanitas Active Together offers support to people from 18 years of age with a migration background, both within and outside the EU, who can use extra support in actively participating in society.

What we do

The support provided by Active Together is used to increase people's qualities and capabilities. This is done in their own language if necessary. This usually involves people who depend on third parties for their existence due to a lack of

- knowledge and information about legislation and regulations
- insight into the organisation and functioning of the social system in the Netherlands
- skills such as social skills, language skills, self-reliance.

The value of our support

The volunteers who are deployed offer support in several areas of life through weekly home visits for one year;

- Self-sufficiency: Organizing mail. Making use of relevant facilities;
- Work: Familiarisation with the system of work and income and useful time activities that can improve the rhythm and structure of the participant's daily life, such as voluntary work;
- Living and socio-cultural-social: Exploring one's own street, neighbourhood, city and stimulating active participation in activities in one's own living environment. In addition, increasing the mobility of the participants;
- Care: lowering the threshold towards assistance and educational institutions, gaining insight into cultural differences, growing up and raising children between two cultures.

What we want to achieve

By providing support, participants become familiar with and/or actively participate in Dutch society.



3.2.2 The Active Together project shares knowledge

How to deal with diversity, people with a migration background and inclusion in a work organisation that should be diverse? Humanitas Twente staff find it positive that Active Together operates as a specific project within Humanitas Twente. It is an example for the other projects of Humanitas. There should be more connection between these projects when it comes to working with migrants.

Thanks to the professionals and volunteers of the Active Together project, more and more clients with a migration background are making use of the services and products of Humanitas Twente. This increases the reach of people with a migration background by Humanitas Twente. The knowledge and working methods in this project are therefore shared with professionals and volunteers of the regular projects that people with a migration background also use. One of the coordinators, who is also a board member of PiD, played an important role in this process.

He has extensive experience in intercultural work, intercultural training, courses, consultation and advice. He also has experience with management tasks, setting up and supervising projects and learning new fields of work. He is an enthusiastic, analytical, coaching, visionary, people-oriented and result-oriented adult educator. His tasks in the organization are:

- Operational management of the group project volunteers
- Conducting intakes
- Recruitment and selection of participants and volunteers
- Training and improving the expertise of volunteers
- Matching participants and volunteers
- Guarding the quality and the limits of volunteering
- Building and maintaining a network with relevant organisations
- Taking care of the publicity of the project
- Recording and reporting relevant information

Thanks to his internal position, his involvement as a PiD board member in the DivCap project and his professional competences and skills, he was and is able to interest and motivate others, to broaden their horizons and to create support within the organisation, locally, regionally and nationally: observing, recognising and valuing qualities, making connections between internal and external, realising set goals together with colleagues, thinking and acting strategically and policy-wise. This enabled him to develop the concept behind Active Together within Humanitas, simultaneously piloting the DivCap approach.

3.2.3 Information material in different languages and relationship management with migrant organisations

There is widespread communication with the public through social media, newspaper articles, flyers, etc. Despite these means, people with a migrant background are not yet sufficiently reached. This group is generally easier to reach through direct contacts, personal approaches and through their trusted networks. For example, in order to improve outreach to and communication with customers with a migration background, information materials about the organisation, its services and products have been translated into Turkish, Arabic, etc.

An interpretive telephone service is also used or training is provided to improve services to customers with a migrant background.



Awareness of the unwritten communication rules that apply in the collective cultures of migrants provides scope for establishing contacts, other than formal conversations and business approaches, which is common in the practice of Dutch professionals and volunteers.



Here, there is a case of first making an appointment and then inviting people for an interview.

The professionals and volunteers of the Active Together project maintain contact with these organisations at management level. In the past, only this project has held several information sessions in different languages at different organisations. For the coming period, this project is again planned to approach and have a dialogue with key figures and the boards of the migrant organisations.

In addition, there are plans to participate with a market stall in activities of migrant organisations when organising a public event and/or a festival. In this way the threshold is lowered for a conversation with visitors to inform them about the work and services of the organisation as a whole. Contacts with migrant organisations, information in own language, key persons and network-relationship management of migrant organisations are necessary.

3.2.4 The Diversity Roadmap: Core teams diversity development tracks

Humanitas Twente is aware of the necessity of diversity policy, inclusion and the work for and with people with a migrant background. A member of the Humanitas Executive Board is responsible for the diversity and inclusion portfolio and the so-called Core Teams Diversity Development Tracks. The best way to describe "developmental tracks" ("Ontwikkelsporen") in English is "different pathways into diversity". In the core teams Diversity Development Tracks, the theme Diversity & Inclusion at Humanitas was investigated and included in the recommendations to the Executive Board. With this, the Executive Board of Humanitas consciously shows that Humanitas has to become more inclusive and diverse in all layers of the organisation.



Diversity Development Tracks and core teams (diversity and inclusion)

DivCap's case study report has been included as a recommendation for the national board and the board of Humanitas Twente. This as part of the change process of the so-called track 'Diversity and inclusion'. In a White Paper and an accompanying long-term plan that was discussed on 27 November 2020, the subject is therefore included in the Council of Members. So, it has the attention and Humanitas is on the move for diversity and inclusion.

3.2.5 Future Workshop

For inspiration, a future workshop was held for the South West department including the diversity theme. Directors, managers, professionals and volunteers were not only asked questions about how they experience the future services and products of Humanitas, but also about the issue of diversity and how they think they can actively contribute to this.

"What are your strategies to overcome these difficulties?"

"Staying in contact and conversation, continuing to explain necessity and benefits"

(Member of the Core Team Active Together)



Participants of the workshop were asked to answer some questions on post-it stickers, which were collected on a whiteboard. Here are some results.

These are answers of Humanitas staff expressed during the workshop
Question:

We are entering a new phase with Humanitas. What do you wish for Humanitas?

Answers

- reach a healthy 100 years of age
- many volunteers
- much more diversity
- stable subsidy
- development, nice funds, many volunteers
- calmness, wisdom, strategic approach
- decisiveness, diversity, stability
- future-proof, clear course, powerful association
- an inspiring Humanitas with active volunteers
- innovation, financial stability and support as many people as possible
- Inspiring, motivating, innovative



Question:

More diversity and inclusion are a spearhead in the long-term agenda. Where can we find core team members who meet these?

Answers:

- ask in the departments
- use networks
- via the volunteers
- approach organisations we work with about this
- why limit to core team members, also outside!
- religious centres such as mosque
- work together
- volunteers, participants
- approach people more actively
- make connection between administrative and executive volunteers
- create space within own organisation
- focus more outwardly and look for cooperation
- together we have a large and diverse network
- welcome for everyone, requires good personal reflection
- in any case, we can involve executive volunteers more
- ask participants to become active
- train participants to be volunteers
- act inclusive themselves



4. Analysis of the Changes & Learning process and Recommendations

In the following pages, the change and learning process is summarised and recommendations for further actions are made for different groups within the organisation.

A basis for change has been laid at Humanitas, focusing on competence development among the entire staff. Now, the focus is shifting on strengthening and increasing the range of services for migrants. This leads to a conscious human resources policy that does not consider diversity, migration and inclusive work as a matter of discussion. The board, management, staff and volunteers endorse this. However, the question is what the ideal design process could look like (plan of action) and what people themselves bring in and what their own experiences are.



Managing and coaching for diversity and inclusive work

In fact, all those involved are going to change something in the field of communication process and service provision in relation to migrants. This requires different skills and competences of staff members. The proposed change process to create support and commitment at board and management level has been achieved as a first step.

4.1 Support for the process on different levels of the organization

There is support for the change and learning process in the organisation. The question is whether the regional Humanitas Twente pilot project will eventually also be secured for the national Humanitas organisation. Recently, an internal Diversity and Inclusion Committee has been established at national level, of which the PiD's board member working as coordinator in Humanitas Twente is one of the committee members.

At the regional level, a conversation has taken place with the districts manager about the recommendations from the case study. A follow-up meeting has been planned to calmly discuss the possible activities to be undertaken within Humanitas Twente and to formulate concrete actions.

The national Diversity director has suggested to start on a small scale and to involve the regional manager and the consultant and to build this up slowly. The regional board has been approached to legitimise these activities.

After presentation of the DivCap case study, attention was paid to recommendation in this report. The board of Humanitas Twente is enthusiastic about the approach of this case study and will discuss what the role of the board in this may be. The regional manager ad interim believes that there is a legitimacy to this approach of important and relevant recommendations and has put these on the agenda of the management meetings.

Moreover, the district to which Humanitas Twente belongs, has answered our call for attention to diversity and forwarded the report also to the district management. Finally, the national office has formed a committee Inclusion & Diversity. The PiD employee working as staff member at Humanitas Twente is asked to participate in it.

Factors that it worked well were:

- ✓ *Relevant people were notified from the beginning and informed about the process and results achieved from the start to the end of the study,*
- ✓ *Theme diversity brought in at every opportunity as a focal point and named with emphasis on benefits, yield and dynamics that entails.*
- ✓ *Not imposing and demanding only emphasizing the opportunities and possibilities, discussions held*

(Members of the team Active Together)



4.2 Impact on the Staff and Volunteers

The new chair of the board has interviewed the staff member and was enthusiastic. The old board member who was interviewed is going to communicate with the new board member on how to deal with the case study report and recommendations and the manager ad interim is putting the recommendations forward into the organisation.

For staff and volunteers this means that they have to work together to bring in their own issues and that they have to be willing to improve their skills (training, courses, work sessions, sharing knowledge etc.). It is also indicated that it is important for administrative staff to have intercultural skills.

A two-track strategy has been developed and adopted:

Large-scale --> Nationwide - participation in committee on Inclusion and Diversity, informing the national board about the DivCap case study report about Humanitas Twente

Small scale --> Determine at the level of the Twente region which recommendations should be followed up and implement them within the organisation



“What we see as a challenge is that the board makes a statement about diversity policy and that the work organisation also works on this. That in the recruitment of personnel the color of the personnel file is explicitly looked at.”



(Humanitas volunteer)

More focus is needed on strengthening diversity competences of staff. The question if there is more market for diversity products and services of Humanitas needs to be explored more in-depth for Humanitas. Contact with networks of migrants outside Humanitas needs to be intensified.

Need for training and updating intercultural skills

For the educational process, it means a need to develop and implement specific staff training aimed at diversity and specific care (culture- and context-specific care programmes).

A need to develop and implement specific staff training aimed at diversity and specific care

Treatment and learning of intercultural methods in training and courses is necessary. The management is asked to create preconditions and facilities to make an internal change process possible that is supported by all. The first step by Humanitas has been taken with the example of a development track and working with core teams diversity and inclusion, organising workshops (knowledge exchange and sharing), processing results in outline memorandum and sustainability in staff policy/HRM policy (inclusive policy. By means of a diversity and inclusion workshop as a result of this pilot, a start has already been made on the development track in November 2020.

Linguistic knowledge and cultural differences in dialogues also require knowledge and intercultural skills of the professionals and volunteers. Language is an important issue.



Training in intercultural communication is crucial to support the change process

Therefore, training in intercultural communication is crucial to support the process of change. As mentioned above, intercultural policies aim to provide services to clients with a migrant background and/or intercultural training opportunities.



Apprenticeship Workshops

Opportunities must also be provided to create apprenticeship workshops: places where low-skilled people in education can gain experience, so that less educated people also have the chance to improve their competences. Focus on the level of secondary vocational education. Offer trainee posts and internships.

“What positive achievements and experiences do you expect?”

- *Multiple colleagues from diverse cultural backgrounds*
- *A number of workshops on intercultural work for professionals*
- *That volunteer pool of other projects than Active Together also has a diversity of ethnicity*
- *Within six months there will be an open day where people can talk/dream about what Humanitas Twente will look like in five years' time, based on the idea that we want to be an organisation that reflects society“*

4.3 Impact on the Learners



Make sure professionals have knowledge and understanding of multicultural aspects in dealing with different groups

For the clients of Humanitas, being learning participants, the change process means confidence and improvement of their own qualities. Services and help are not a one-way process, but a we-us process: a win-win situation. Learners from migrant backgrounds differ in many ways: cultural background, social and societal norms and values, language skills and knowledge, education, background, experienced socialisation, influences of different cultures in education and training.

This also determines the shape of the migrant learner's perspective. They act from that perspective and the general view is as follows:



- *Being treated equally*
- *Taking into account the pace and ability to learn, depending on the language level*
- *Environment is aware of differences in We and I cultures*
- *Feeling at home, being appreciated and not enforcing or imposing anything*

4.4 Impact on Board and Management

The board and management of Humanitas have been asked to create preconditions and facilities to make an internal change process possible. The national office has made a start with a change and learning process on diversity and inclusion. The process at the regional office (Twente/Hengelo) can be seen as a pilot for the national organisation and the other departments. While Professionals do not master the language of migrants and find it very difficult to empathise.

Products, services and staff should be much more migrant-oriented and diversity-oriented



Human Resource Management should develop guidelines for the recruitment of new staff and volunteers, including more consistent attention to intercultural competences



4.5 Specific Activities

Roll out of Active Together

Active Together is a good example that can be rolled out and used for knowledge development for other projects.



Expand Networking

Add internal networking by exchanging experiences of people working in the 5 project areas and Active Together



Investing in Networks

Investing in networks is strongly recommended to develop more structural contacts and co-operation with international women's centre, refugee work, asylum seekers centre etc.



A better balance in the composition of the project staff

How to establish contacts with migrant organisations on all levels besides management level: making contact with key persons and join working groups and committees.



4.6 Impact on Entire Organisation

The impact for the organisation will be an improved organisational culture and structure with regard to service provision to migrants and knowledge improvement by, for and with migrants. The development track initiated by Humanitas, however, also requires consistent management and coaching in order for the organisation to be a reflection of society in terms of staff composition, policies and services.

Due to this pilot, the Humanitas national office and the regional Humanitas Twente department have started the change and learning process on diversity, migration and inclusion. A plan of approach has been developed.

To support this plan of approach, which consists of components such as training courses and workshops for staff, intensive management and coaching is needed. This is a recommendation for the board and management to eventually become an organisation where diversity, migration is an integral part of the total organisation, the personnel policy.

*Intensive management
and coaching is needed*



“Roadmap for the future:

- In the short term, try to attract and keep more people with a migration background when recruiting new staff.
- Create a diversity policy for Humanitas Twente
- Give shape and content to the entire diversity policy within one year.”

Institute of Social Work (Austria)

Enhancing Diversity Orientation

- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers
- Adaption of educational offers



Illustration 1: © <https://alphaplusmagazine.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/2014-06-11-Food-for-Thought-1.jpg>

The Organisation

The Institute of Social Work (ISA) is part of FH JOANNEUM - University of Applied Sciences (FHJ). FH JOANNEUM. The ISA runs different degree and certificate programmes, as well as research projects. The content of the teaching and research in itself focuses on issues related to social work, as expressed by the name of the institute.



Illustration 2: © FH JOANNEUM

1. The Institute of Social Work at FH JOANNEUM

The Institute of Social Work (ISA) is part of FH JOANNEUM - University of Applied Sciences (FHJ). FH JOANNEUM - University of Applied Sciences (FHJ) is a higher education institution in Styria / Austria. FHJ consists of six departments with specialisations in computer science, engineering, environment & society, health, management and media & design. It runs 50 bachelor and master degree programmes. Around 4.800 students attended the programmes in 2019/2020. Additionally to teaching, the university's key mission also includes research and continuing education. FHJ has 746 employees and 1.180 external lecturers.

The Institute of Social Work (ISA) is part of the Department of Building, Energy & Society. The ISA runs different degree and certificate programmes, as well as research projects. The content of the teaching and research in itself focuses on issues related to social work, as expressed by the name of the institute.

Study programmes

The Bachelor's degree programme in Social Work (SAM) is a full-time programme and lasts for 6 semesters. The Master's degree programme in Social Work (SOA) is a part-time and lasts for 4 semesters. There are two certificate programmes running under the head of ISA. The students of certificate programme "Academic Youth and Community Worker" (INJUG, Akademische Jugend- und Gemeinwesenarbeiter*in) are persons working in youth work, as well as child and youth welfare services. The programme lasts for 3 semesters and is work-friendly. The students of the certificate programme "Academic Peer counselling" (PEER, Akademische Peer-Berater*in) are persons with physical and psychical disabilities. The programme lasts for 3 semesters, and it is work-friendly. The graduates are qualified to connect their own experiences with competences in counselling as basis for successful Peer Counselling.

Research projects on social inclusion

The research projects at ISA cover different facets of social inclusion. Recently completed and current research projects deal with the following topics: Diversity in Social Work organisations, Safety in organisations for the disabled, Digitalisation and Social Work, Health care in rural areas, Social Work and Policing, youth participation in rural areas, Girl's Poverty, and the project at hand DivCap. In the past, interdisciplinary projects with the other institutes of the Department were conducted. There is an interest in further interdisciplinary cooperations, and there are considerations and meetings for the initiation and planning of potential joint projects.

Resources

FH JOANNEUM (n.d.): Wir machen unsere Zukunft FH JOANNEUM. Annual Report 2019-2020, Graz/Kapfenberg/Bad Gleichenberg, p. 16



2. Status of diversity orientation at the Institute of Social Work

In the first phase of the DivCap project, a case study was conducted, to identify the status of diversity orientation at ISA (see the DivCap website for the report). A desk-research, interviews and a focus group discussion with ISA staff were carried out. With reference to the main categories set out in a questionnaire developed by DivCap (see the website for download), structural aspects were inquired, such as the institutional framework or networking connections with the wider community. Furthermore, the conditions for students and staff were researched. Regarding the level of students, a specific focus was put on the application procedure, the composition of students, and the situation during the studies. Regarding staff, the prevailing conditions regarding human resource management and composition of staff were examined. Furthermore, motivation, motives and approaches of staff towards diversity were explored.

Structural aspects

ISA is part of the big organisation FH JOANNEUM with different departments, administrative units and decision-making bodies. Through the analysis of the structural framework it becomes evident, that laws regulate the work environment and formal requirements prevail. A lot of different entities are involved in the running of FHJ. But there is also scope for flexibility responding to the needs of diverse students and staff, e.g. promoted by the Equality and Diversity Office when it comes to needs of applicants or students with a disability for example. Or special requirements and conditions applied for to certificate programmes, which needed to be specified in the formal documents of the programmes.

The mission statement and its implementation

The findings show, that the institution is on an advanced level in their diversity orientation. Formally there is an advanced diversity policy at FHJ. In the mission statement a commitment to diversity is stipulated. Measures are taken, when it comes to equal treatment for women. There is a commitment by the University of Applied Sciences (UAS) board's regarding the Advancement of Women. Structural measures are in place that support equality, e.g. the "Working Group on Equal Treatment Issues" of the UAS Board and the "Equality and Diversity Office". Moreover, a training to raise awareness and knowledge about diversity was organised for staff by the Equality and Diversity Office. But further steps for implementing concrete measures and enhancing diversity on the level of FHJ and ISA could be made.

Composition of students

There is some diversity amongst the students in the Bachelor programme. But the data situation is poor, only for some diversity dimensions information is available, based on estimations and results from the interviews and focus groups. Further research would be needed here. Regarding gender, there are more female students, in average in the cohorts 10 - 20% are male students. Most of the students are between 18 and 24 years old (most of them come directly from a secondary academic college or higher vocational education). Regarding the geographical background, the majority of the students are from the province of Styria and other parts of Austria. Very few of the students with an Austrian school leaving certificate have a migration background (1-2 per cohort). Regarding international students, some students per cohort are from Germany. Very few students have a visible disability. Regarding the educational background, the majority have a school leaving certificate. For a successful admission, applicants need to have previous experience in social work and related fields (e.g. Volunteer Social Year / Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr or Civilian Service / Zivildienst). No data is available regarding socio-economic background.

In the Master programme, the situation is similar, there is some diversity amongst the students. The majority of the students are from the province of Styria and other parts of Austria. Very few students have a migration background (1-2 per cohort). There are more female students, about 1/4 to 1/3 are male students. The cohorts are heterogeneous regarding age, ranging from BA graduates to students who are 30 or 40+. There are no students with a visible disability. The educational background is diverse, there are graduates from the BA programme Social Work, social academy graduates (social academy or Sozialakademie is a predecessor of the degree programmes at the Universities of Applied Sciences), and degree holders from other disciplines such as sociology, science of education, cultural anthropology, etc.

Application procedure

Formal requirement for the admission to the BA programme Social Work (SAM) programme is a general qualification for university entrance, a university admissions equivalency test or relevant professional qualification with additional examinations. For the admission to the MA programme Social Work (SOA) a relevant bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification is needed. Each year between 300 - 400 students apply for the 55 places at SAM. There is also competition for SOA, but at a lower level, about 60 -70 persons apply for the 28 places per year.

The admissions procedure for SAM consists of three parts: the application, a written assessment test and a personal interview. The admission process for SOA consists of a full set of application documents, an assessment of the concept for the Master's thesis, an interview with the admission committee, an overall assessment of relevant previous qualifications, and an assessment of professional experience in the field of social work. For specific programmes such as the certificate programmes, the requirements for admission are more flexible and correspond with the target group that should be attracted to join the programmes. For applicants with disabilities to the degree programmes, the Equality and Diversity Office at FHJ offers support to participate equally in the admission process and studies.

Regarding the admission interview, it was suggested in the case study, that the admission commission should have a diverse composition, here one measure could be to invite external lecturers or experts. Furthermore, the questionnaire could be supplemented with diversity-oriented questions and by considering diversity dimensions and categories. In addition to the individual selection of applicants, an overall review of the degree programmes in terms of heterogeneity of students could be made and considered when doing the final selection.

Conditions during the studies

Regarding the conditions during the studies, the fact that there are no tuition fees for students (from the EU, the EEA and Switzerland), was positively noted. The small group size of the cohorts is a big advantage. There is an open-door policy and individual support both by the head of the institute and lecturers. This support encompassed study-related, but also psycho-social needs. Compared to other tertiary institutions, support for students is therefore much better. This is also expressed by the fact that most of the students at FHJ and ISA complete their studies. Furthermore, if necessary, there is the possibility to take leave during studies. It was suggested that the already existing support for students by lecturers could be supplemented by an institutionalised mentoring or buddy system.

The certificate programmes could be used as good practice examples for open and inclusive programmes aiming at attracting students with diverse backgrounds and enabling them to study at a higher education institution.

Composition of staff

The staff of ISA consists of 21 permanent staff (head, teaching, research, administration) and 59 affiliated lecturers (teaching). Most of permanent staff members are Austrian citizens, 4 have a migration background from another EU-country (Croatia, Germany, Italy, UK). The majority of the staff is female (16 are female and 5 male). Staff is heterogeneous regarding age, ranging from end 20s to 60+. And also regarding “professional age”, staff is diverse. There are no visible disabilities present (except in external teaching staff for the PEER certificate programme). The professional and educational background is diverse, ranging from social workers (social academy and FH) with work experience in different fields of social work to higher education institutions. The academic background is diverse as well, ranging from graduates of sociology, science of education, cultural anthropology, language studies to law. The affiliated staff are professionals with work experience in different fields of social work and higher education institutions.

Motives and approaches of staff towards diversity

At ISA, there are different levels of awareness regarding diversity. Amongst the interviewed during the case study, there is a wide range of understanding and knowledge regarding FHJ mission statement, diversity and diversity policies. On one side, amongst some there is low consciousness regarding diversity and concrete policy at FHJ and ISA. On the other side, there is staff that has a high awareness about diversity and equal treatment issues. Some are also dealing with these issues in their teaching and research. But there is a lack of resources perceived to develop towards more inclusiveness. In particular time and financial resources are highlighted. Furthermore, formal requirements and regulated processes in a higher education institution in general and at FHJ are seen as barriers as well (e.g. the procedure for the admission is determined FHJ wide and there is only limited scope at the level of the institute).

The case study found that in general, employees meet the topic of diversity orientation and equal treatment with favour. However, the time resources are scarce and organisational structures are not conducive for an exchange about the content and a necessary deepening of the subject matter. Therefore, resources and spaces for exchange should be made available. In order to be able to realistically implement this, ideas could be collected, how these could be integrated in already existing structures and formats.

3. Enhancing diversity orientation

3.1 Aims

Promoting diversity at ISA and at FHJ in general, has a more inclusive organisation as its goal. This would be beneficial for applicants from diverse backgrounds, who were at a disadvantage in the past to gain access to ISA. Furthermore, it also would improve the experience of students during the educational process, leading to a successful completion of their studies and contribute to equal opportunity. Furthermore, through the process and dealing with diversity issues, the awareness of staff regarding the heterogenous composition of the cohort of students they are teaching, should be enhanced .

Rationales for promoting inclusive access

The aim of promoting a more inclusive access to higher education would lead to a diverse composition that reflects the composition of the population and includes underrepresented student groups. Furthermore, the objective can be seen in connection with the goal of having more diverse social workers. The rationale for the objective can be linked to the professional ethical principles of Social Work, epitomised in the global definition of social work that stipulates that “principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversity are central to social work.” (IFSW/ IASSW 2014).

Furthermore, professional debates on intercultural/diversity-oriented opening (e.g. Schröder 2018) call for a representation of clients and staff in relation to the composition of the population and reflect societal relations. A further aim is to create and facilitate access for all, therefore the question needs to be asked, where potential barriers restricting equal access can be identified. Another line of argument refers to the National strategy on the social dimension in higher education, a document developed by the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy (BMFWF 2017). The paper points out the need to consider the social dimension in higher education, aiming at the common goal that students should reflect the composition of the population in access, participation and completion of higher education at all levels.



3.2 Presentation of the case study, the planned way forward, and the COVID-19 Pandemic

Presentation of the case study

The findings of the case study were presented by the DivCap facilitator to the head of the Institute of Social Work in February 2020. As a result of the case study, a list of recommendations was developed and short- and long term measures specified. The recommendations tackle questions of mainstreaming of already existing measures, and measures on the level of students and staff.

- Making the FHJ mission statement livelier and more specific for ISA.
- Diversification of the composition of students through making the admission process more inclusive, and setting up networks with migrant organisations to target applicants with a migration background.
- Supportive conditions for diverse students & staff dealing with diverse students through promotion of inclusive teaching and assessing methods to promote equality amongst diverse students.
- Diversification of the composition of staff

Since there is high performance pressure and lack of time in the daily work, new measures, ideas for improvement and change need to be linked with already existing routines and structures



Planned way forward

The recommendations were discussed and the way forward was agreed. An interest was expressed to further work on enhancing awareness of diversity orientation. A further development of the mission statement should be linked with principles developed during the last institute conference with faculty members. It was decided that the topics of raising awareness of diversity orientation and promoting inclusive teaching methods should be linked, to have a practical outcome and ideas for transfer for staff. The concrete format for implementation would need to be further explored, whether a specific workshop on the topics could be held or synergy effects could be used, by incorporating the topic in other staff meetings. Regarding admission procedures, the concept for the Master's admission procedure has been redeveloped and should be presented to the SOA admission committee members in April. The DivCap facilitator could contribute and bring in the diversity topic in this forum, as well as in the preparation meeting of the SAM admission committee.

The recommendation to consider more supportive measures for students was received with great interest. This linked with the already existing idea of the head of the institute to introduce a tutor system for students. It was agreed that a survey should be undertaken among students to find out where they see a need for support and what challenges they experience in their studies. The findings should be presented in the institutes staff (faculty members and external lecturers) conference in autumn.

Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the implementation

But then in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic got in the way and the plans for implementation had to be rearranged. In Higher Education, the institutions were asked to switch from face-to-face to online teaching from one day to the next and everybody had to work from home. The concepts, didactical approaches and implementation of the courses had to be redeveloped to meet the needs and requirements for online teaching within a few days. Furthermore, the technical equipment and tools for online teaching had to be installed and crash-courses were offered so that the lecturers and students could get familiar with them and were able to use them for their teaching and learning process. Everybody had to get used to work in home-office from one day to the next, getting the required equipment, and good internet connection. In addition to the challenges of the professional adjustments, the uncertain situation, the health threat of the Coronavirus disease, the restrictions in the private life, were enormous strains. For adjusting to the new situation, many efforts had to be made and tied up lots of resources.

Therefore, most of the foreseen measures of the DivCap project couldn't be implemented as planned in the intended time period. But wherever possible, an attempt was made to combine upcoming necessary tasks and needs with the concerns of the DivCap project, and the issue of diversity orientation was brought into institutes meeting, whenever possible. In order to focus resources, activities were centered on the support for students and the admission interviews.

3.3 Support for Students

Studying at a higher education institution required skills and abilities to successfully meet the requirements of an academic setting. The requirements can be distinguished between performance-related requirements (e.g. writing seminar papers, oral presentations, exams) and those in the organisational area (e.g. work planning, self-organisation, time management). Some students have acquired relevant skills on their previous educational pathway, some need support.

Furthermore, in particular for first-generation and non-traditional students it is not easy to orientate themselves in an academic setting and institution and find their way around. Here support systems such as mentoring programmes can serve as an important aid.

Therefore, support for students was the topic of one of the recommendations in the case-study. In an HE organisation, necessary support measures can be distinguished between study-related support and psycho-social support. During the COVID-19 pandemic and distance learning, the need for support became even more eminent. Especially, vulnerable groups and students from disadvantaged backgrounds found it more difficult to cope with the situation. Here in particular, besides study-related support, psycho-social support systems were necessary.

During the pilot project in the framework of the DivCap project, research was done regarding concepts, already existing measures and dissemination of the information regarding support systems. Furthermore, the DivCap facilitator set up or got involved in initiatives to support students.

Psychosocial support for students - Initiative at the Institute of Social Work within the framework of the DivCap project

In line with the approach to respond to current concern and link it with recommendations made in the case study, in March 2020 the DivCap facilitator initiated an exchange amongst ISA staff about the need for support of students and possible options how to assist. First an exchange was facilitated in the institutes' Moodle forum. Information was collected regarding the following questions:

- Needs: Is there a need for psychosocial support on the part of the students? What are the current concerns of students? In particular also thinking about student groups that are not so visible and keeping in mind the different needs of different groups (age, gender, professional situation, etc.).
- Collection and dissemination of information regarding existing initiatives: on FHJ and ISA level, from student representation, and informal peer support among students.
- Concrete support measures for students - contribution on the part of the institute: in the teaching, but also beyond.
- Concrete support measures for employees: survey, whether there was a need for further support amongst staff.

Regarding support for ISA staff, several measures were in place, e.g. there were exchange forums such as the Moodle and the institute meetings as well as e-mails and meetings in pairs, information was provided by the head of the institute, and through newsletters by the FHJ, support regarding online didactics and technical questions was provided by ZML - Innovative Learning Scenarios.

Five colleagues expressed their interest to form a small working-group and these questions were discussed in an online meeting. As a next step, the DivCap facilitator contacted students' representatives to explore their view on the current situation of the students. An online meeting with the first-year students' representatives took place at the beginning of April 2020. The agenda of the meeting was two-fold, to hear their assessment regarding the study situation under regular and under the current COVID-19 conditions.

Student representatives' feedback in April 2020, a few weeks after the sudden switch to distance learning:

- Need for improvement: more clarity is needed, keep changes to a minimum, appropriateness of workload
- Positive feedback regarding MS Teams online lectures and teaching videos produced by the lecturers, as well as formats of exams such as open book exams



The most important points of the discussion during the meeting were then shared with the ISA staff. General concerns regarding the situation during their studies were expressed by the student representatives. But the focus was on the current situation due to COVID-19 and particular regarding online teaching: a big need for clarity was expressed. They experienced a lot of changes induced by the switch to distance learning regarding the course outline as well as the usage of different tools and platforms. These changes should be kept to a minimum. Furthermore, considerations were expressed regarding the appropriateness of the workload. Positive feedback was given regarding teaching and assessment methods such as MS Teams online lectures or videos with PowerPoint Presentations and audio file, or open book exams. Furthermore, the students expressed in a self-reflecting way, that without a fixed structure it was more difficult for them to learn continuously and to work through the provided course material independently. The idea to provide an additional Moodle platform for support and information, was not considered as useful, since there were already many new online forums within the study programme. However, there was the suggestion, that tips for dealing with online learning and home isolation should be posted on the FHJ Instagram page.

Additional, to the results from the exchange with the students, links and information for dealing with the current situation were distributed amongst the staff; and they were invited to forward the information to the students. It was decided not to create an additional forum or information sheet, but use and disseminate the ones already available, e.g. the "studyonline and stayhealthy" section at FH Website, the factsheet "Tips and Tricks for Online Learning" or the info sheet "COVID-19: How to survive domestic isolation and quarantine" by the Professional Association of Austrian Psychologists.

Initiative "Studying together in times of COVID"

In the winter term, after a short period of in-classroom teaching, all the lectures had to go online again. In November, at FHJ "Studying together in times of COVID" was launched as a joint initiative of the directors of FHJ, the UAS board, and the student's union. The DivCap facilitator also was engaged in the preparation and implementation of the initiative.

The shift to online teaching was very challenging. The personal contact with lecturers and fellow students was lacking. These contacts fill studying with life in the first place. Therefore, the initiative offered the students some ideas and opportunities to get in touch with other students, and initiated and encouraged these contacts. Different measures were proposed such as tutorials and study groups. The aim of these groups was to organise joint activities that increase the joy of studying and make studying more successful. Tips were collected and disseminated how to organise these study groups. Furthermore, a coaching for these groups was proposed and the DivCap facilitator was one of the contact persons for students interested in an exchange.

Representatives of a few groups got in touch and a joint exchange meeting was considered. But since the response for such a meeting finally was not very big, this did not take place. The study groups seemed to be running well without additional external support needed.

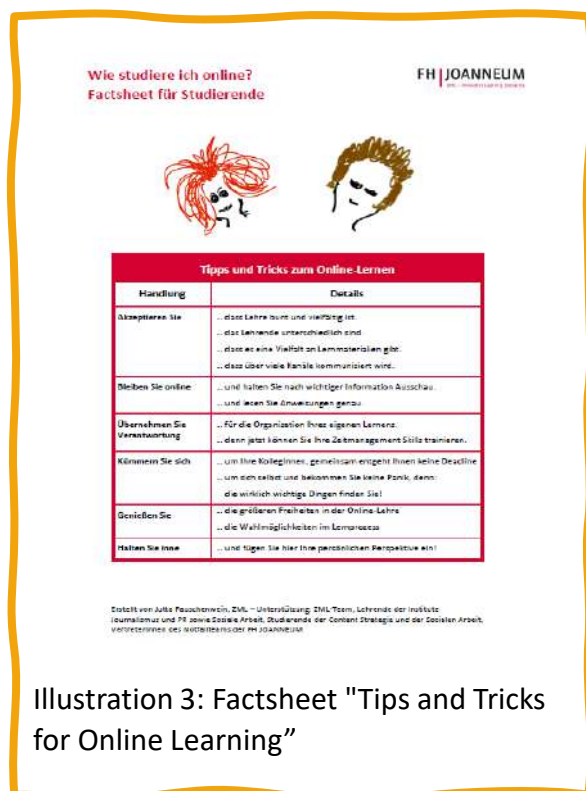


Illustration 3: Factsheet "Tips and Tricks for Online Learning"

Furthermore, peer counselling was suggested as a further measure. Peer counselling is offered by students to students who are experiencing stressful times. Students who were looking for advice, could approach designated contact persons. And students who wanted to get engaged as peer advisor could get in touch for an introductory training session. There was some interest and two training sessions took place.

And third, in the framework of the initiative, information about the services and offers by the Psychological student counselling (Psychologische Studierendenberatung) was distributed.

The aims of the initiative to promote a supportive environment for students to successfully cope with the strainful times during their studies meet with the aims of DivCap to promote a conducive environment and awareness for students needs and propose concrete support systems. In particular vulnerable groups and students from disadvantaged backgrounds found it more difficult to cope with the situation. Therefore, the proposal of concrete measures was a relevant step to support students to successfully deal with the situation and continue their studies, despite all challenges. This can be considered as an important contribution to becoming an inclusive organisation.

”During the period of complete lockdown and exclusively online teaching and learning, it was not possible for students to simply meet before or after courses, chat, informally exchange information about their studies, talk about day to day worries, etc. Head of institutes were worried that some students would not be able to cope with this phase of online learning and experienced this situation as extremely critical. Therefore, peer counsellors were trained together with the Austrian Student Union. Some degree programmes organised tutorials. So that students could help students not to become lonely, to keep up their motivation for their studies, to make everyday life more communicative. Offering relationships in times of digital communication was an enormously important resource.”

(Vice Head of the UAS Board)



Buddy programme organised by SAM students

One of the agreed measures for the DivCap pilot project was to do desk research regarding support system for students and develop a concept for a mentoring or tutoring system based on the findings. During the project period it became apparent, that this approach is of relevance and that there is a need, since the students at the Bachelor programme SAM organised a buddy programme on their own initiative and in a self-organised manner. Also, in previous years, peer programmes existed, and there was networking and exchange amongst the cohorts of different years. The contacts were made mainly through interactions and meetings directly at the FHJ, e.g. through a welcome party organised by 2nd year students for the 1st year students. Since the COVID-19 restrictions didn't allow events and most courses were held online, personal contacts were not possible. Therefore, at the beginning of the winter term 2020, a buddy programme was initiated by 2nd semester students. Through the programme they wanted to offer the 1st semester students the opportunity to get to know fellow students from another cohort. Those were available in a one-to-one buddy relationship to answer questions related to the studies and beyond, e.g. life and events in Graz. In a first step, the initiator and three fellow students met to develop a concept for the buddy programme. Important topics discussed and agreed upon were:

- The programmes should be a buddy system, in the sense of a peer to peer approach. And not a mentoring system, since this would imply a hierarchy.
- Duration: for one year (until the end of the summer term)
- Commitment by the buddy for the entire period (unless there are some serious reasons to end before and/or both sides are not interested in the continuation)
- Equal distribution: One buddy is responsible for two or three students.
- Distributions of students to the buddies: different systems were considered, but the final decision was to do the allocation in an anonymous way through a drawing. And not based on common interests or already existing acquaintances.

"In my eyes the Buddy program had shown its importance through the COVID-19 Pandemic and its social impact. We as students felt the urge to get in contact with our fellow students to support and share our experiences and fears regarding this crisis and our studies."

(Initiator and leader of the buddy programme)



- Mode of first contact: the buddies make the first move and get in touch with the assigned 1st year students.
- In a first meeting between buddies and students, expectations, responsibilities and the shape of the buddy relationship should be clarified.
- Swapping to other buddies was possible, if there was a lack of sympathy, but had to be clearly communicated.
- Two 2nd year students took part in the programme, but without taking the role of buddies themselves, their task was to be responsible for questions or if conflicts arise. One of the “complaint persons” was male and one female, to consider potential gender issues. Furthermore, a messenger group was set up to discuss and support each other, if sensitive issues came up during the programme.

The working group presented their ideas to fellow students interested in the programme, and after a discussion, the concept got finalised. The buddy programme was presented to all 1st semester students during an online lecture. The response was overwhelming, 40 of the 55 students expressed their interest. The groups were formed and developed into various forms. The main focus was on exchanging information about study related topics, e.g. exams, study material, or internships. The complaints persons didn’t need to get active, since no conflicts were brought to their attention. A mid-term meeting was planned, but due to the busy academic schedule and COVID-19 restrictions, that meeting was postponed and a big get-together with all buddies and students was scheduled for the end of the summer semester.

The concept of the buddy system is available in a written form and will be handed over to the student representatives of the 1st year. It is optional whether they continue the programme next year (see the concept paper in the attachment).

The DivCap facilitator attended the course where the initiative was presented and also had a meeting with the initiator at the end of the summer term, to hear about the experiences and lessons learnt. Diversity aspect were not a specific issue that arose, since the composition of the cohort was perceived as quite homogenous by the students, when it comes to e.g. socio-economic background (see chapter 2 as well regarding the composition of the students). Nevertheless, it was deemed important to engage with the buddy programme, since the initiative is an important contribution to a more inclusive study environment.

Examples of other mentoring programmes

Some research was done regarding mentoring programmes at other institutes. The findings showed that there are different models of programmes in place at FHJ and beyond.

Lecturers as mentors

At the Institute of Energy, Mobility and Environmental Management, a mentoring system is run. Each faculty member is responsible for a group of 5-6 students. The lecturer acts as a contact person for questions or problems arising during the studies. Twice a semester personal meeting (online during COVID) with the group take place. Topics discussed are exams, course material, or feedback regarding lecturers and the quality of courses. If issues arise, the mentor brings the topic to the attention of a colleague or it is discussed in the institute conference.

Students as peer-mentors

At the Institute of Information Management, a mentoring programme is run in the Bachelor and Master programme. Initiated by the Institute, students from the 3rd semester act as mentors for the 1st semester students. The programme has been running for 10 years, initially for the Bachelor, but then extended to the Master programme. The programme is very successful and also reduces the dropout rate. At the Institute one staff member is entrusted with the task of managing the programme. A call for students interested in acting as mentors is made by the Institute. For those interested, an information session is organised and approaches, role and duties are discussed. At the beginning of the semester, when the composition of the mentor team is fixed, a get together with the four mentors and the person responsible takes place. The meeting over coffee is paid by the Institute, to show appreciation. Furthermore, the mentors receive a small allowance and a certificate. Regarding the composition of the team, it is important for the organisers to have two male and two female students. In the first week of the new semester, the mentor team visits a lecture attended by the entire cohort, usually it is a lecture conducted by the head of the study programme. Here they present the mentor programme. The further implementation is in the responsibility of the mentors. The group size is between 15-18 students. Topics covered are study-related questions, but also settling in and finding your way around a new city. At the beginning of the semester, an excursion to a wine tavern is organised, paid for by company sponsoring. These events are considered important for bonding. The experiences of the mentors are documented and passed on to the team of the following year. Furthermore, students from the 5th semester act as senior mentors supporting the 3rd semester mentors if questions arise. Also, the person responsible for the programme is available for questions.

Peer-mentoring for first-generation students

An interesting programme with a specific focus on diversity issues is implemented at the University of Graz. The teaching and study services run a peer-mentoring programme for prospective students and students who are the first in their family to study (“First Generation Students”) or with a migration biography.

For more information see:

<https://lehr-studienservices.uni-graz.at/de/studienservices/>

Dissemination of information regarding study-related support measures

The research done regarding support services for students’ regard performance-related and organisational requirements showed, that there are several institutions that provide support services in this regard, but they are not widely known. Therefore, the DivCap facilitator aimed to make these offers better known, by sharing the information in institutes meetings and courses.

At FHJ, the division **ZML - Innovative Learning Scenarios** offers the workshop “Learning how to learn.” Topics such as motivation, time and stress management, or effective learning strategies are covered. The three-hour workshop is free of charge for FHJ students. And if lecturers are interested, they can invite the ZML trainers and integrate the workshop content into their course.

Furthermore, the **Psychological Student Counselling** (Psychologische Studierendenberatung) provides several offers related to academic performance and personal challenges. The counselling centre offers support by telephone, e-mail or by prior arrangement via video telephony and chat. Personal counselling is also possible after making an appointment by telephone. Furthermore, group counselling is available. On their website lots of helpful tips and information are provided. For more information see <https://www.studierendenberatung.at> (also in English).

At the **University of Graz**, the **Writing Centre** offers workshops and consultations on academic writing, writing strategies and working techniques are taught, and it initiates exchange and dialogue about writing. The Centre offers workshops, as well as individual coaching and arranges for peer-to-peer writing tutors. On their website lots of helpful resources are available, e.g. video tutorials. For more information see <https://schreibzentrum.uni-graz.at>.

3.4 The admission interviews & diversity perspectives

As mentioned above, the admission procedure for the Bachelor programme SAM consists of three parts:

- the application,
- a written assessment test and
- a personal interview.

In 2021 344 persons applied for SAM and after taking the test, the first 190 with the highest scores were invited to the personal interviews. A first selection already takes place here - or even before: the question must be asked who applies for a place at the study programme for Social Work?! This points to the issue of pre-selection mechanisms during the educational path and school systems for different groups. Other factors are the educational choices of different groups and the role of educational guidance. Furthermore, the image of Social Work in the wider society needs to be considered as another influencing factor. And in a second step, the question needs to be pursued, who has passed the test; which relates to the selectivity of the test.

Although these questions are highly relevant, in the framework of the piloting for the DivCap project, a focus had to be chosen. This needs to be seen in the light and context of available possibilities during the COVID-19 pandemic; staff working from home, and scarce (time) resources because of additional work load for the staff of FHJ, evoked by e.g. preparation of distance learning courses, which is more time-consuming and exhausting. Furthermore, the feasibility to address far-reaching issues and to introduce wide-ranging changes in the framework of a project with a fixed and time-limited schedule needs to be considered. Moreover, some of the fields are not within the FHJ's direct sphere of influence. Therefore, the focus was put on the admission interviews.

Including diversity perspectives in the admission interviews

At the institute, the interviews with the applicants are carried out by committees that consist of two members of permanent staff. In a preparatory meeting, the process and the conduct of the interviews are discussed. During the online meeting of the members of the admission commission of spring 2021, the DivCap facilitator gave an input about the DivCap project and enhanced awareness about diversity orientation.

At FHJ some measures already exist regarding facilitation of access for disadvantages groups, e.g. for applicants with a disability the Equality and Diversity Office offers support. And at ISA specific consideration is given to applicants with a first language other than German (with a foreign school leaving certificate).

The standard interview procedure is as follows: The interview is structured by questions related to six dimensions that have been predefined in the interview guidelines. In spring 2021 (as well as in 2020), because of the COVID-19 pandemic and related measures, the interviews had to be held online. The duration per interview is between 20 to 30 minutes. After the interview has been conducted, the team decides on points awarded for each dimension, and observations and interpretations are discussed.

Proposing the “Diversity wheel” as a tool for reflection

Regarding perceptions, it may be assumed that a high level of reflexivity is prevailing amongst the members of the committee. But nevertheless, the question needs to be asked, whether unconscious bias still operates. As a tool for reflection, the diversity wheel (four layers of diversity) by Gardenswartz & Rowe was proposed (see the annex). This should help to enhance the awareness about different diversity dimensions of the applicants. The proposal was, that in addition to the standard procedure, an exchange is done amongst the committee team regarding the issue of diversity dimensions and how they could influence their perceptions and judgements. For this purpose, a questionnaire was proposed.

The suggestions were discussed in the meeting. The importance of taking diversity into account and reflection was stressed by the committee members. But contradictions were highlighted as well, e.g. regarding some dimensions sensitivity is required, and some dimensions are not allowed to be enquire in the interview. One group cannot be advanced in particular; this would need to be laid down in the formal regulations of the study programme. A discrepancy between the standardised procedure and requirements for equal treatment versus measures to promote equity were highlighted. Furthermore, more empirical evidence regarding the interview procedure and its results was requested. Moreover, the situation for non-traditional students should be the topic of further investigations. Another issue was the limited scope of action for the institute as part of the FHJ, since to a great extent, the admission procedure is standardised across the FHJ. Moreover, it was emphasised that students also need support during their studies, in particular for non-traditional or first-generation students or for students whose first language is not German.

As a result of the meeting, three diversity dimensions were specified that are of particular relevance, namely gender, migration and age. Committee teams that want to participate and use the questionnaire for reflection, should send their feedback in a collected form to the DivCap facilitator.

Important points when considering diversity orientation

- Balance of the ambiguity between the importance of considering diversity dimensions versus diversity dimensions as a sensitive issue which can't be enquired in interviews
- Standardised procedure to promote equality versus support measures to promote equity
- Determination of relevant diversity dimensions for a specific context
- Heterogeneous students will need support during their studies
- Need for empirical evidence regarding the interview procedure and situation of first-generation and non-traditional students



Experiences with the diversity wheel as a tool

The diversity wheel enhances the awareness about diversity dimensions

Despite the time constraints that characterise the daily work routines, members of the committees took their time and used the proposed tool for reflection. In the feedback received it was voiced, that it was interesting to consciously reflect diversity dimensions and the role they play in the interviews. Diversity dimensions such as gender, age, sexual orientation, regional origin, hobbies, language and accents, social background (of the parents), or appearance (clothing) were noticed and mentioned. It was also stated, that religion didn't play a role. In particular the educational background and previous experiences in the field of social work and related fields are deemed as important. This is linked with the importance attributed to previous experience and the ability to express knowledge about the field of social work. Furthermore, it was voiced, that it is good that the interviews are conducted by a team in order to notice areas where they may have an emotional reaction or a subconscious prejudice, due to the own biography and experiences.

Diversity dimensions versus assessment criteria and dimensions

Diversity dimensions are consciously - or unconsciously - noticed. But in the interview and the assessment, the focus is on the 6 dimensions of the assessment form. Therefore, diversity dimensions could not be taken into account in the assessment and attributing of points. E.g. when it comes to gender and the goal to have a more mixed cohort regarding gender. Some committee members expressed that they noticed the gender of the applicants. But if the male applicants couldn't show their knowledge and experiences in social work and demonstrate their suitability as future student of social work and social worker, they didn't fulfill the requirements and their assessment and the scoring did not turn out so well. Discriminating positively against "gender" is not part of the assessment procedure. This is true also for other dimensions such as age or educational and professional background. Here the principle of equality and not equity is applied.

In general, the observations were made that the applicants are not very diverse - that means either the diversity dimension is obvious or so hidden that it is difficult to ask about it. The feedback and reflections received from the members of the committees show that composition of the applicants is not very diverse. The majority of the applicants apply soon after they passed their leaving certificate, directly or respectively one or two years afterwards. Most of the female applicants did a voluntary social year (Freiwilliges Soziales Jahr), and the male applicants did their compulsory community service (Zivildienst).

Complexity of the topic requires multidimensional approaches

After the completion of the admission procedure, the diversity topic was on the agenda during an institute meeting with all staff members at the end of the summer semester. The DivCap facilitator summarised the feedback received and the results were discussed. The main points and topics raised were:

Consideration of different levels

It was deemed that only focusing on the level of perceptions during the admission interview is falling short of a comprehensive treatment of a complex topic. The consideration of three levels is important: before the application to the study programme, the admission procedure, and during the studies. Furthermore, the issue needs to be seen and addressed not only on the level of the Institute, but also on the level of the entire organisation. In addition, the responsibility of management to promote diversity was pointed out.

It was stressed that regarding conditions before applying to the study programme, mechanisms in the school and educational system prior to tertiary education need to be considered. Moreover, the need to bear in mind where the study programme is promoted, was expressed. One strategy could be more networking with relevant stakeholders to advertise the Social Work study programme to diverse groups. This could change the situation of a homogeneous composition of the applicants.

Consideration of the formal requirements of the admission procedure

Regarding the admission procedure, it was stressed, that it should be about selecting the most suitable applicants, regardless of diversity dimensions. It was expressed, that experiences with the diversity wheel showed, that addressing diversity dimensions has no impact on the scoring; it was underlined, that age or gender are not relevant for the ability to be a good social worker. If there is an aim to promote specific groups, this needs to be made explicit. If a decision is reached, e.g. if prioritisations of specific target groups are made (e.g. regarding gender or migration background), then the approaches and targets need to be specified in the formal document that sets out the framework and regulations of the study programme. One idea voiced were quota places for specific groups, e.g. for persons that have proven themselves in practical work in the field of social work. An example regarding this idea was put forward, there are quota places at the degree programme in Vienna.

Consideration of the situation during the studies

If the composition of students becomes more diverse, the situation during the studies needs specific consideration. Conditions, that are supportive for diverse students would be necessary, and preparations and support systems would need to be in place. What would be needed from our side to manage arising divergent needs?! And take care of them during a very busy everyday life in a higher education institution?! And how can these issues of diversity can be dealt with in a higher education organisation with formal requirements? How do those who are characterised by differences, orient themselves and are successful during their studies? E.g. there is some experience with older students: while some find their way, for some it is more difficult to manage. Also, the issue of how students interact with their fellow students (e.g. with disabilities), was discussed.

Conclusive answers have not yet been found to the raised questions. But a start has been made in raising these questions. Concluding the meeting, the head of the institute set up an internal working group to further look into the issue of diversity in the admission procedure. The DivCap facilitator will coordinate the next meetings of the working group.

4. DivCap - offering food for thought and further steps

Change processes need to be seen in a long-term perspective. During the DivCap project period steps towards the goal of a more inclusive higher education organisation were taken. Several concrete activities were implemented to promote diversity-orientation at ISA. These steps were done in a period where the COVID-19 pandemic had its far-reaching impact on all aspects of life, also on the running of higher education institutions. But it has nevertheless succeeded in introducing and discussing impulses that went beyond everyday processes and issues ISA staff has to tackle.

What became apparent is the complexity of the issue. Interrelationships and impacts need to be considered. One important point is that, if you raise the diversity of the student composition, you need to think about introducing support systems for the heterogeneous students, to assist them to find their way, study successfully, and meet the requirements in an academic system. During the piloting different support systems were explored. Two different approaches that can be distinguished are, on one hand approach that promote peer group support, and on the other hand lecturers that act as mentors. During the project duration, initiatives to support students were promoted and knowledge was gathered that can be built upon.

When raising the diversity of the student composition → the introduction of support systems for diverse students is necessary



During the piloting, the awareness about diversity of the admission commission members was addressed through the introduction of the diversity wheel as a tool for reflection. What became apparent is that particular diversity dimensions of applicants can only be promoted, if there is a prioritisation and officially declared promotion of specific target groups (e.g. regarding gender). Therefore, beyond the individual level of the committee members, diversity awareness needs to be lay down on an institutional level. As a first step, the relevant diversity dimensions and criteria need to be discussed and agreed. And then laid down in the formal document that sets out the framework and regulations of the study programme.

Diversity awareness on the individual & institutional level



Important lessons learned in the change process:

- Finding a balance between "justice in the sense of equality for all" and the inclusion of "affirmative action".
- To deepen the awareness of diversity in the study programme and to increasingly include the consideration of diversity in all study-relevant organisational processes.

Challenges in the change process

- Innovations through the project versus standardised procedures and processes in the FH management system.
- Additional task in the admission procedure and insufficient time resources to sufficiently reflect on examples and therefore the requirement of "learning-by-doing". Debriefings and evaluations are planned for a next round.

(Head of the Institute)



Follow-up activities

The DivCap project has offered food for thought regarding diversity orientation during the project duration for the head of the institute and staff. Further concrete follow-up activities to deal with the issues in the future are planned.

At the beginning of the winter semester 2021, a conference will be held with all faculty staff and external lecturers of the institute. The DivCap facilitator will have the opportunity to present and discuss the final results of the international part and piloting at FHJ with the entire team.

Furthermore, regarding support measures, the proposal for an applied research project to implement a support system for students with mental health issues, that was not successful during the last submission, will be reconsidered for submission to relevant funding agencies.

Moreover, the working group on the admission procedure set up by the head of the institute, will have meetings to further discuss diversity orientation.

The DivCap facilitator is member of the Working Group "Social Work in the Migration Society" of the Austrian Society for Social Work (Österreichische Gesellschaft für Soziale Arbeit / ogsa). Because of her initiative, the issue of admission procedures was put on the agenda of the next meeting of the working group in November 2021. The topic was met with great interest by other members of the group, some of them also work at institutes of Social Work at other Austrian Universities of Applied Sciences.

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6. ANNEX - Good Practice Examples

6.1 Concept buddy programme

The document was provided by the initiator of the programme (the original version is in German).

Buddys

minutes of the meeting of the working group

Basic idea

- Contact person for studies (public transport tickets, how to get involved politically, lecturers, etc.)
- Professionalism: anonymous, internal exchange (SAM19 group)
- List with e-mail & main focus /interests

Brainstorming

- Persons selected/assigned
- Deputy buddy? / reflecting partner
- Individual vs. groups
- boundaries
- Limits or (non-)responsibilities are defined personally!
- Complaints system?

Agreement

- Individual relationship
- Internal list of resources (created by xy)
- Whats-App group
- Primary: I give info from expert to buddy
- Buddies are randomly assigned (discussion: take gender preferences into account yes/no?)
- Duration 1 academic year
- No compulsory - voluntary
- Next meeting in December, further meetings as needed
- No leadership. If necessary, this will be agreed individually
- 2 complaint persons (1 male / 1 female) xy & xy;
- Openly handed out FH email addresses
- Idea: if it is possible due to Covid, there should be a joint event.
- Boundaries will be clarified individually with the buddies.
- At the beginning 1-2 times offers should be made, then the buddy decides.

6.2 Questionnaire for admission commission members

Admission procedure SAM, summer semester 2021

Members of the Admission Committee

Name or names of the team: _____

My experiences with dealing with diversity dimensions in the admissions interview

1) Has anything changed in the evaluation of applicants as a result of the awareness of diversity dimensions?

If yes, in what form?

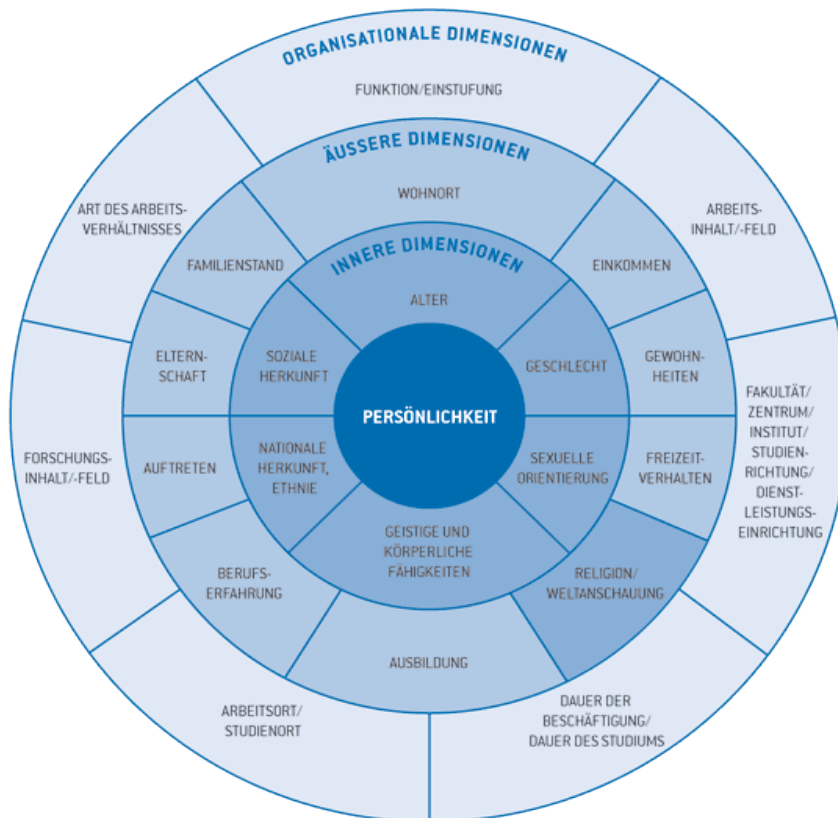
If no, what are the reasons?

2. Did I become aware of anything else?

Diversity dimensions determined as relevant during the discussion in the preliminary meeting of the admission commission, summer term 2021

- gender
- migration
- age

Diversity dimensions according to the diversity wheel



4 layers of diversity by Gardenswartz, L. and Rowe, A.; adapted by the University of Vienna
<https://personalwesen.univie.ac.at/gleichstellung-diversitaet/diversitaet/worum-geht-es-bei-diversitaet/>

Legally protected dimensions according to the Equal Treatment Act or the Federal Act on Equal Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities

- Age
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Ethnic affiliation
- Religion / belief
- Disability

Note:

- **Social origin** has not yet been included as a legally protected characteristic. But in the social sciences, race - class - gender are seen as important structural categories.

Ires F.V.G. (Italy)

Starting with people, employee involvement for an inclusive approach

- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers
- Diversity sensitive public relations

1. An institute that moves from research to executive projects

The I.R.E.S. F.V.G. Institute of Economic and Social Research of Friuli Venezia Giulia, active since 1983, is a Social Enterprise, from about 6-7 years - 2012/2013, a non-profit association with legal personality recognized by the Autonomous Region of Friuli Venezia Giulia. The company deals with training, research and consultancy for companies and public bodies, for the promotion of the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of Friuli Venezia Giulia (FVG). It is an independent company. There are three pillars that characterize Ires, which are: Training, Research and Advice on and for the region. The institute is very attentive to changes in society and keeps its eyes open on transformations.

In fact, a mission statement does not exist but there is a sharing of corporate values among the staff, in daily practice, which arises from the problems that are faced.

The institute works with 35 employees and 15 collaborators (in the area of Udine and Trieste).

Regarding company organization in general, the tools used for the development of activities are based on project advancements, work with objectives and results, identification and achievement of annual objectives. The sharing method is based on internal laboratories to deal with issues, perspectives and proposals, together with all staff members.

The organization adopts the management of diversity for generic reasons, because it is a social enterprise, and this is then concretized with standardized procedures included in this kind of companies.

Regarding the students, being their clients, diversity is more complex as the users of the training services are varied. Often the institution is confronted with various difficulties of the average user, in fact the population of the trainees has been changed.

Participants are not selected for courses, but sent by the national employment centre; mainly they are courses for the unemployed and for this reason users are mixed in age, cultural background, competence, gender, etc.

"Diversity" represents a richness from the cultural point of view and the growth of people, we are talking about a sort of fluid society that is better to manage rather than letting it manage you.
(a teacher)



The basic learner of the institution is already a fragile person, identifying the "different" is almost secondary.

With regard to credentials, Ires is accredited for the implementation of vocational training courses financed by the FVG Region; it is enrolled in the national research registry and periodically draws up and publishes in-depth reports on the main regional socio-economic data; it is qualified as a Proponent at the Fondimpresa Interprofessional Fund and is qualified to present training projects on the Fapi Interprofessional Fund and Fondartigianato; it adheres to the Charter for Equal Opportunities and Equality at Work and to the Pordenone Charter "Media and Gender Representation" - Memorandum of Understanding to promote a representation that respects the dignity of the person in the field of information and communication; it is registered in the National Register of the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies among the bodies that operate in favour of migrants; it is a Test Centre for ECDL (European Computer Driving Licence), law (courses of law and rights) and ICT, EPM (European Project Management) certifications.

2. Status regarding diversity in the organisation - A work in Progress

2.1 The starting situation

There is no specific focus of the institute for migrants or political refugees, but the institution works a lot and in collaboration with the associations that deal with the integration of migrants and political refugees. Ires is involved in training and in inclusion projects and deals with the training of the unemployed including many migrants or people of foreign origin. Its formal context, the fact that it is a Social Enterprise, also addresses its target audience. Greater sensitivity to "diversity" is also reflected in the adherence to the Charter for Equal Opportunities and Equality at Work and to the Pordenone Charter.

Specifically, being a research organization, an analysis on regional migration flows was commissioned to Ires by the region Friuli Venezia Giulia.

In the case of the Trieste branch, it is a border city with Slovenia, therefore involved in welcoming passers-by to the border, specific courses were organized for political refugees in collaboration with Caritas for individual consultancy and entrepreneurial training.

As regards the Udine headquarters, especially about courses for unemployed that include mixed groups, the percentage of attending students with migrant origins cannot be defined, but 10-15% of the total courses (including the Trieste office) is specifically dedicated to refugees (their data refers to the years 2018/2019).

Only in the Trieste office all courses in general involve 40% of people with migratory backgrounds or refugees who are present for about 25-30% in courses for unemployed.

Migrants dropout rate in courses is quite high. As they attend courses exclusively for job placement, but when they understand that Ires is not a temporary agency that can make them work in the immediate future or when they find a job even of short duration, due to contingent needs, they leave the courses.
(an administrative employee)



In general, the courses specifically dedicated to political refugees have short duration (12 hours) and are generally dedicated to linguistic literacy.

At the beginning of the project, the company's website, in reconstruction, did not contain information and images that refer to the involvement of the institution with a focus on migrants; on the other hand, however, the images and information were very neutral so that the diversity of any type (gender, sexual orientation, age, etc.) do not emerge.

From the point of view of the migrant population, fragility lies above all in adapting to the customs and habits of the place with problems relating course attendance, respect for timetables, ways of presenting oneself to others, sharing, great expectations for work, heterogeneous age group, mental health, generic fragility.

The institute does not only work with immigration-related diversity but, especially in recent years, is confronted with diversity related to the new population of students, who are unemployed and find it difficult to enter the world of work. The group includes NEETs, young women from the south of Italy who follow their husbands into short-term jobs related to health care, school, etc. but who cannot find work for themselves in the region, older people who have lost a long-term job and are unable to reintegrate into new jobs mainly because of their lack of IT skills, to mention just a few.

2.2 Human Resources Management

Ires employs a total of 50 internal persons - 35 employees and 15 collaborators (with VAT number/contract) employed with a long-term contract. Furthermore, there is a long list, which changes from year to year, of trainers and external collaborators engaged in the development of training courses. Some are of foreign origin, but none of which has a migration background.

While recognizing the important intercultural competence, there are no elements that make such competences emerge, if not specifically required for the management of particular target groups or users. The institution tends, both externally and internally, to use a neutral approach, so there are no differences, if not related to the competence needed to perform a particular task.

From an organizational point of view, the approach is to work in the field and when a problem arises, solve it in agreement with the service manager.

There is a formal document on equal opportunities. Furthermore, there is a responsible person dealing with the topic, which is available to suggest methods and find solutions, if necessary. The same person twice a year, following a constant monitoring, reports to the assembly about bringing back the results of the work or projects carried out.

Concerning the recruitment, which has not been carried out since 2008, curricula arrived from self-nomination or through the national employment centre and the resumes were usually evaluated in order to follow the neutrality policy that distinguishes the institution. In the search for staff, if a criterion is indicated, it relates only to the skills needed to fill the post required.

From the HR management point of view, especially in recent years, the institute is confronted with internal diversity inherent in the two groups of workers: the founders, those who work on a self-employed basis and in some way manage and have responsibility for the company, and the new generation, people employed on a salaried basis.

2.3 Networking

Ires, pursuing the objectives defined in its statute and due to its status as a social enterprise, has for years been in contact with institutes and associations working in the field of immigration and refugee management. The network has widened considerably thanks also to research commissioned by the FVG region, the Statistical Yearbook dedicated to immigration (2002 - 2008), which enabled the institute to obtain new contacts in this field.

In direct form and for the management of the courses, Ires collaborates with the major referents and associations of the Region such as: Oikos (Organization for International Kooperation and Solidarity), Caritas, Ospiti in Arrivo (an association that support the integration of recent immigrants) and ICS (Italian Solidarity Consortium - Refugee Office). The Trieste group also collaborates with various cultural mediation associations, various cooperatives and above all Slovenian trade associations. For vocational training courses the institution is in contact with shipbuilding companies in the area of Trieste and Monfalcone (where there are employed mainly foreigners) where Ires places migrants for on-the-job training or for internships or training internships.

In the promotion of active courses or entrepreneurship, the institution collaborates with these immigration-related associations for the distribution of promotional leaflets to their users, this applies not only to migrants but also to other types of diversity, in fact Ires maintains regular contacts with centres of mental health, Casa delle Donne (woman's house) and ICS to integrate their users in the training courses they organize.

Usually, from an organizational point of view, only some people of Ires have contacts with such networking, which are the leaders and the coordinators of entrepreneurship courses or company courses.

2.4 Education

The educators differ mainly in specific competence, not in cultural background. No problems have been found.

With regard to support for migrants, reference is made to the tools valid for all courses such as the accompaniment to the course by a coordinator and the availability of a tutor for each problem identified in relation to classmates, trainers, training environment, tools available, information on formalities etc. In some cases, financial data or financial aids are given (purchase of bus tickets, train, contribution for lunch, etc.).

The Trieste branch is able to manage the participants of migratory origins independently, in Udine they sometimes make use of the professionalism of the cultural mediators.

A major support for this target is the use in the classroom of tools facilitated for understanding the topics covered, such as videos, group work, role-playing games, sometimes in some courses the main purpose is not to train people, but to better amalgamate the class.

An important challenge for trainers, who are often professionals in the field they teach (they have their own company) are those of letting migrants perceive the usefulness of the course. Often students are passing through, sometimes with a different destination than Italy and, in some cases, it is difficult to make them understand that it is important that they learn Italian. Another important challenge is specially to emphasize the usefulness of training in the long term, because what generally characterizes groups of foreign users is their "urgency" to be placed both bureaucratically (recognition of citizenship or administrative documents) and at work (must survive).

To deal with diversity, the greatest challenge is the culture, we need to know the "diversity" we face in the classroom to be able to manage it e.g. the economic situation, physical and mental distress, different religion or origin, etc.
(Teachers interviewed)



Teachers do not have specific training on diversity, in most cases, especially freelancers, they are professionals who do training. They often do not know how to deal with certain situations. To try to understand, they often inform and / or ask for advice to other trainers, who had similar experiences of diversity to manage. In certain situations, support is offered by the tutors who follow the courses.

But in general, the institute's employees and its trainers, whether internal or external, have not been trained in diversity management. There is currently no system, no guidelines, no protocols available to help manage certain fragile situations. The positive fact is that there is a very good sensitivity of those who work in Ires towards "diversity", having to deal daily with classrooms where there are many differences.

2.5 Conclusion

Ires does not have a defined mission statement. That is, the mission statement is not published. Its website is in progress and, at the beginning of the project, had a very neutral format, not very visual, with descriptions only in Italian.

From the point of view of HR management, at the moment the staff, although numerous, does not have a cultural background other than Italian, there is no recruitment plan, and no thought has been given to integrating staff from different backgrounds.

The interest in the staff refers rather to the need to involve the current staff on the issue of involvement in the company and the management of "diversity" by working daily with users covering a wide range of diversity from gender, age, origin, etc.

**Communicating with the 'different' is not only a matter of words,
but also of images, gestures and expressions!**

The diversity that is most keenly felt, and therefore treated with reporting and various training initiatives or implementation in projects and courses, is gender-related equal opportunities.



3. The change and learning process - From the values to the mission.

3.1 Aims and Approaches

Ires FVG is an institution in which "diversity" is not a topic dealt with on a formal level. In recent years staff have been confronted with other types of diversity, that are no less important and that have somehow stimulated the management, sensible to the gender diversity, to participate in this project. These were mainly targets related to disadvantage, marginality, age diversity or economic status, although the organization doesn't have a policy aimed at improving sales or services to migrants, there are no migrant workers, no intercultural training on how to improve intercultural cooperation or leadership have been developed, and there is no intercultural personnel policy.

The objectives of the project stimulated a dialogue among the institute's referents on these issues and later, in the discussion with the management, some specific needs emerged that could be addressed in some way to raise awareness and take a step forward in the organisation's stage.

What made the breakthrough and allowed the development of the piloting phase was the great sensitivity of the referents on the topic of "diversity".

We have to consider that Ires is a competing institute with respect to the project partner Cramars. The great advantage is that there is collaboration and mutual esteem, which is why the institute evaluated the proposal to develop the piloting phase as a possibility granted, a possible enrichment and internal development, rather than as a challenge or worrying about sensitive data.

The approach was therefore to propose the piloting to the equal opportunities contact person, who discussed it with the board and together they decided to join the initiative. During the data collection phase for the implementation of the case study, Ires indicated the available contact persons for a personalised interview from which some characteristics of the institution and some possible gaps to be overcome emerged.

A good tool to stimulate the discussion was the contribution of specific data, collected on the internet, from the institute's website or through observation of the premises, by the interviewer. What had emerged in the observation was precisely the lack, on the website or in the premises of the Ires, of references, images, linguistic contributions etc. that could favour on the one hand the interest of migrant users in the services offered by the institute, and on the other hand the possibility for migrants to apply as the experts.

The results reported to the referents through the recommendations allowed an internal exchange and a declination of possible implementation activities of the institute.

The final recommendations were made at a time when the institute was already undergoing change and when some activities were being implemented. This was the case of the staff meetings for the implementation of a shared mission and value model, and the implementation of a new web page. Therefore, the piloting proposal intervened to modify some objectives that the institute had already set itself, namely to:

- Involve staff in a mission definition process (in which the themes of "diversity" and "value sharing" would also be introduced).
- rebuild the institute's website
- In addition, it was necessary to train staff and internal trainers or freelancers on diversity issues.

In fact, the motto that supports the institute's "about us" page is:



KNOW TO GROW

CONOSCERE PER CRESCERE

Because, in fact, in order to deal with certain situations and certain difficulties, it is necessary to first know and understand them, then accept them and finally resolve them.

3.2 Activities

3.2.1 Commitment with management

Initial meetings with referents and the management of the institution indicated the need to have staff involvement in the process. A guided or invited involvement, taking into account the amount of work that the staff has to face on a daily basis in order to perform their functions and services.

Undoubtedly, the first phase directly involved the management not so much in the data collection phase for the drafting of the case study, but above all, once the recommendations had been made available, in the decision-making phase, in the final definition of the activities to be carried out and the objectives to be pursued by participating in the project.

Obviously, the choice has gone towards a process that was already in place, that the management has decided to implement taking into account the objectives and the development keys posed by a diversity management approach.

In this case the will to participate has implicitly determined also an indirect economic involvement to the project for the hours dedicated to the process from the staff involved in the activities commonly approved.

The case study was the first stage in which the management was involved, but only partially to respond to the interview, then instead, in the most active phase, the decision was left to the staff whether to participate in the planned activities.

The project referent person shared the results of the case study and the specific recommendations with the board and within this group, short- and long-term objectives were defined with the aim of getting the institute at least one step further along the long path towards a management that actually takes into account and benefits from "diversity".

3.2.2 The Plan

The Cramars contact person gave feedback on the recommendations at two points in time, initially with a face-to-face appointment with the contact person, for Ires, from the pilot. During this first meeting, various possibilities for implementation were outlined, possible short- and long-term goals were discussed, and timelines and methods were defined for involving the board first, to make final decisions, and the staff later.

In a second moment, the Cramars contact person met, through an online meeting, the board and summarized to them the results coming from the case study, the external observations, the possible recommendations and giving them the time to decide what to do.

The possible implementation coming from the recommendations included:

- work on motivation with staff
- shared definition of company mission statement and values
- share mission statement with the public
- reorganize the spaces in the offices (to get it more open)
- re-evaluate of staff roles in the company
- Rethinking about services provided
- have a more open approach to clients
- communicate better about "diversity", refresh the website

During the discussion it emerged a possible "wish list" to cover such as:

- ✓ Have a manual of good practices, to manage difficulties related to client diversity or that teachers could discuss these issues
- ✓ Share good practices in working groups
- ✓ Have a mission statement that includes intentions related to actions in support of diversity
- ✓ Have a more open website with more images related to diversity and perhaps in other languages
- ✓ Introduce diversity within the workgroup related to contract/responsibility
- ✓ That everyone has a common or shared company-wide understanding of diversity
- ✓ Conduct diversity trainings
- ✓ Re-evaluate roles and responsibilities on this issue company-wide
- ✓ Define together in the long term on this issue what could be the end point and share the methodology

In a third moment, always through an in-person meeting with the Ires contact person for the piloting, the objectives of the plan were outlined.

The company agreed on the results of the recommendations but, because of the tight timeframe and the need, in the process, to actively involve staff, they thought they would focus on 3 points, adding one that was not included in the recommendations, but that they defined and expressed as a need:

1. redefine the content of the website, taking into account the suggestions given by the recommendations
2. continue the process of involving staff in the mission statement and corporate values, also taking into account the issue of diversity
3. and in addition develop a training or discuss through a training activity or workshop the topic of diversity to, as a main objective, introduce and / or discuss the same with the participants to increase awareness on the subject.

They decided to start with the website that was being implemented, as early as November 2019, and then continue with the ongoing activities of employee meetings from January 2020 and, in the meantime, implement training. The training phase needed to be defined in relation to the results of the working groups and the specific needs emerged from the discussions.

By 2020, as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, priorities changed and the project saw a forced suspension.

After several feedbacks with the referents of Ires and Cramars, the activities resumed in September 2020 coming to define and develop the training part in 2021.

3.2.3 Implementation

Ires staff, as a first step, were given information about the project and its objectives. Initially a step was defined, a meeting between small groups of Ires staff with the Cramars representative to tell about the project and stimulate thinking about "diversity". It was thought to carry out this activity through small awareness workshops on the theme of diversity. Covid-19 limited this activity.

The target of Ires to engage was different depending on the activities:

- website - marketing referents and IT technicians
- mission statement - the whole group of newcomers to Ires
- training - those who wanted to participate by inviting all the internal staff and external trainers and freelancers

The process of change, to be effective, must be based on freedom of choice and not be conducted through imposition.



The Institution Website

The implementation of the website was already in progress, when the plan was implemented followed by the recommendations. For this reason, the Ires referent reported directly the suggestions about the platform and the images to the marketing referent who collected the information and outlined in the pages provided by the new Ires website.

The references given concerned above all the neutrality of the institute's web page which, for the referents could also mean equality. From the point of view of the marketing of the services offered, and of the possibility of comprehension of the contents by "different" users, this neutrality disadvantaged a certain target, in fact the website was readable only by certain targets of people, Italian, with ownership of language, understanding of technical text, etc.

The suggestions referred to the possibility of varying the language of the site. Not only transforming it into text to be read (not only in Italian) but also into videos or images to be browsed. Images representing the target category to which the particular service or course offered referred. In such a way that, even foreigners interested in participating in training courses can, at first glance through an image, or a video, or a short simple phrase understand for example which profession a course refers to. And if interested with the contribution of symbols, how to ask for information on where and how to enroll.



Illustration 3: Screen shot of the new Ires website © IRES

In addition, the user should recognize him*herself in the images proposed and understand, through whether a service is for him*her or not, or the degree of formality to be held in the institution, etc.

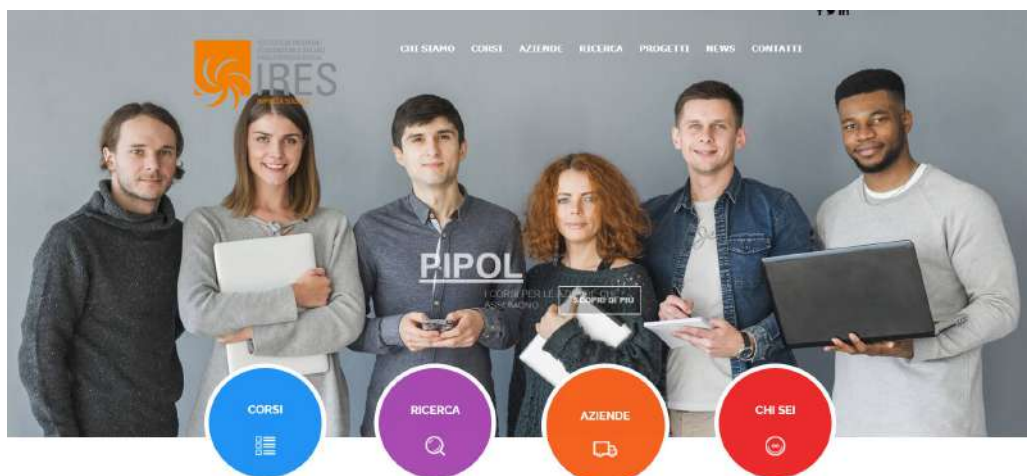


Illustration 4: Screen shot of the new Ires website © IRES

The website must be easily accessible through a mobile phone because, in most cases, this is the only mean of information available to certain categories of users, e.g. immigrants.

The current result shows in fact, an institute open to young people of various backgrounds, directs through the icons to specific career paths and is user friendly. Still missing is the implementation of a language, e.g. English, which would allow easier access to foreigners who do not handle Italian perfectly. But the website is still a work in progress and will soon include the possibility of using content in various languages.

The mission statement/values charter

The definition of a shared mission statement, and the involvement of staff in corporate responsibilities was a process that had already begun at Ires.

The process started already in 2019 but the contribution of DivCap allowed to specify the topics outlining them also in consideration of "diversity".

In order to improve relations between colleagues, actively involve staff, define common goals and values, but also to put different groups and offices in communication, Ires FVG decided to organize Workshops on "organizational improvement".

These workshops, conceived, organized and managed by an Ires member who is part of the board of directors, took place in presence, during working hours and involved almost all Ires employees and workers from all the Udine and Trieste offices.

The program included 3 workshops that were then replicated to allow for broad participation (with a total of 6 workshops). The method used in some of these workshops was that of "strategic problem solving" to try to gather ideas from the working groups.

The topics covered during these workshops included:

- Values
- Communication
- Trust
- Time management
- Soft skills



The **direction** given to the workshops was mainly based on the principles and values reported in the certifications for companies - organizational model d.lgs 231/01 and administrative responsibility of companies. The Legislative Decree 231/2001 introduced in Italy the System of Administrative Responsibility of the Entity. In order to be exempt from administrative liability, the company must demonstrate that it has adopted and effectively implemented an organizational, management and control model.

This model includes, among other things:

- the identification of potential risks and the map of activities at risk;
- the creation of the organizational model (general part plus special part) and the definition of the code of ethics;
- the preparation of specific internal procedures for the various company processes;
- the organization of the system of proxies and responsibilities;
- the definition of the disciplinary system;
- personnel training and information.



For this reason, Ires has taken advantage of this tool to involve staff in the declination of the code of ethics and the charter of values in a participatory manner.

The results of the various labs were reported to the Board or Directors of Ires for the purpose of organizing the continuation of the process and the organization of other sharing labs, which however have stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, these labs were supposed to restart in autumn 2020, but new dates have not yet been redefined.

The next development laboratories have the purpose of relaunching and restarting the ongoing process through thematic workshops that can bring out new ideas and plans for the future.

From the values that emerged during the workshops the theme of Diversity had a central role, this especially due to the fact that in recent years Ires users, who are mostly unemployed, fall, in many cases, in the protected or disadvantaged user group, so employees had to touch problems related to the "diversity" factor.

The results of the completed process have been made explicit, above all, in the social balance sheet of Ires FVG. At the moment, a formal and shared document that is identified as a Charter of Values has not been stipulated. The path made has however gone in the direction of the company organization and, even if linked to the d.lgs 231/01, it has allowed to undertake a path of awareness by the workers that has given many hints that now can be useful to the definition of the charter of values.

A final result at the moment has not been shared or enhanced with the Ires staff or towards the external public with a publication on the website, but the intention is just that, to take up what has been done and reinvest on this activity.

In fact, in the next planning period, and always with the aim of involving but also keeping staff active, Ires has thought of organizing specific thematic seminars/workshops, which from time to time will focus on salient themes regarding the company organization, social cooperation, diversity management, etc., in order to work on a shared charter of values, which will then lead to the definition of the shared company mission.

Need for Staff Training

From the very beginning of the process in the exchange of views with the Ires representatives, during the interviews for the implementation of the case study, and following the first meeting with some staff representatives, what emerged was the need to start with a shared idea of "diversity", shared at least within the company.

It was therefore necessary, even if initially not planned in detail, to determine meetings that could make staff, or part of them, aware of the definition and understanding of "diversity". For this reason, in agreement with Cramars, the second partner in the experiment, it was decided to develop a training/knowledge course/workshop. The definition of the contents was shared between the two institutions, marrying the needs of both. Thus, after several meetings and discussions, the proposal was to work on:

- **definition of diversity - good practices to manage users**
- **diversity applied through social theatre practices**
- **communicating for and with diversity**



To this aim, taking advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic and the fact that all courses are now conducted remotely, we decided to look for external experts and run the course for both institutions, with the approval, contribution and partly also the participation of the group of stakeholders, the supervisors, involved in the project.

Ires indicated all its employees as possible beneficiaries of the workshops, who were invited to participate during office opening hours (therefore also in relation to their work commitments), but the important decision was also to invite all the trainers and experts from outside the organisation who hold courses for the trainees and who therefore, although not directly employed by Ires, have to manage users who sometimes have some integration difficulties.

The added value of this initiative was also the involvement of the two training organisations, and the sharing and discussing about different areas and points of view on diversity. This was a sign of the sensitivity that both organisations show to the problem and also a mark of how they want to deal with the subject, with professionalism and seriousness.

In detail, Cramars project contact person researched, also with the suggestions and help of some project partners, the expertise present in Italy, contacted them asking for information and defining the topics to be dealt with. In this first training phase the most felt need to be addressed was, in agreement with Ires, the theme of the definition of diversity. Then we went on to deal with hidden stereotypes, working through a role-plays approach also in relation to how to communicate with the "different" and collecting some good practices.

The course took place online between April and May 2021, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., during working hours, and involved a total of 16 participants, depending on the day. The course was recorded and the contents of the recordings made available to those who, for work reasons, could not participate directly in the course.

The aim of the meetings was to show how, in our societies, diversity is affected by power relations aimed at organising it in a hierarchical way. In dealing with diversity, an intersectional perspective was adopted, i.e. not only cultural and ethno-racial background was taken into account, but also elements of gender, class, nationality,¹⁹⁵ ability (etc.).

The training, using examples drawn from concrete experiences, aimed to highlight the conflictual aspects linked to the confrontation with these diversities, and to find shared meanings and ways to identify reflexive and conscious interaction practices. Specifically, the workshop focused on diversity in work and service spaces.

Particular attention was paid to the interactions between different subjects in working environments - such as relationships within offices and teams - and in contact with the public - such as services involving encounters with heterogeneous users.

During the meetings held on 20 and 28 April, 04 and 11 May 2021, the specific topics covered, as agreed at the beginning, were: Introduction to the topic of Diversity - experiences and concrete examples; Exploring Diversity with Social Theatre; and Communicating Diversity.

This initial approach led to a specific interest in the topic also on the part of staff participants who, due to their type of contract, do not have direct contact with the "different" - perhaps part of the administrative/financial group.

Surprisingly, they showed a particular interest in the topic, above all for its farsightedness and transversality, also reflecting on the benefits of an economic nature that the target of the "different" understood as beneficiaries but also among the staff.



During the course it emerged that both organisations, dealing with adult education, face the same type of target, even if they work in different territorial contexts. We realized that, although we do not want to, we all have stereotypes, we realized that the diversity management depends a lot also on the position of power from which we start. And we realized that, even though we do not know it, we are already able to manage certain criticalities and have good practices at work.



However, we do not have the time to exchange them, each of the training participant has many competences that are not expressed during the work but that help to face or find a language compatible with the "different."

The best result is demonstrated by the active participation in the course. On the other hand, the management also did its part by deciding to provide the course during working hours so that result as a sort of co-financing.

Other Implementation Activities

The process that goes through or is completed with a "diversity" approach actually allows, among the working group, to adopt principles of awareness and integration within the company.

Equal opportunities, especially gender-related, was not a topic I was aware of before working at Ires. The fact that I had to report on it, that I read annual reports on the topic and that I had a company supervisor dealing with it, made me sensitive to it. Now it has become a topic I know and am interested in. This can also apply to other "diversities" if the company is sensitive to the issue.



As in the case of the workshops and laboratories developed with employees, the topic of diversity is also a key to discussing corporate values, the ethics of the company, which passes through personal recognition and awareness. Sharing the values of the company in some way makes us an active part of the corporate group and allows us to work with a different spirit and involvement, thus increasing the approach to responsibility and commitment towards the company.

3.3 Lessons Learned

Rather than lessons learned, we could call it a great achievement, this is especially due to the fact to have worked with a competing organisation.

Of course, since this is a proposal coming from outside and not from a need or a direct request from the pilot organisation, it is necessary to refer to the whole board group so that the steps of the eventual approved process can be shared together.

The approach to the board is certainly facilitated when one is familiar with the subject matter. Or better to define an approach of shared growth and common experimentation.

The relationship between the pilot organisation and the organising supporting the piloting must be based on a give and take relationship on both sides. It is necessary in this case to clarify that there is not a position of strength of one or the other body but of sharing, this especially for the barriers related to competition.

In our case, it was easy because the IRES representatives immediately approached the proposal with a vision of implementation, rather than a vision of challenge, and this also facilitated communication.

What we have understood most about this process is that by working together, both sides benefit, and that such a meeting also allows for an internal discussion that is broader and takes into account different perspectives that are often not easily discernible except through external observation.



How you approach change depends on many factors, as was the case with Ires and Cramars, although they had the same objectives, in the piloting phase, the way to achieve them was different. Cramars worked in a shared group giving the individuals responsibilities, Ires worked in small groups moderated by a single facilitator who was therefore able to collect and assemble reporting from different perspectives. This was also and above all due to the position of the organisation in the area, the type of users, the number of staff working in the organisation and the services offered.

For this reason, and to better fit the needs of a specific institution, the process of change has to be built in a shared way within the working group and in a way that is acceptable to all, giving a direction, but not an imposition.

„Give a direction, not an imposition”



Sharing is the first important step for involvement

Here in detail a list of lessons learned that can be shared for other implementations:

- since it is a question of working within an organisation, the initial and all the way through management approval is essential
 - it is necessary to identify a contact person within the organisation with whom one can have constant contact, who will then communicate the various steps to the organization responsible persons
 - when defining, together with the decision-makers, the possible developments, always take into account the type of company you are working with, thus having information about the starting point and checking their objectives
 - it will be easier to implement a process on the subject of diversity by involving persons who are sensitive to the subject and who can therefore involve the whole company to which the process is addressed
 - since it is a process, there are specific steps to be taken, we cannot expect an immediate result.
 - all progress and novelties must be constantly shared with the project leader who, in turn, must share them with the top management or the working group
 - before publishing a document, such as a case study, the approval of the body to which the case study refers must be obtained
 - describe the activities in general without including specific names and surnames.
 - constantly collect information and feedback from the entity doing the piloting, on the one hand to avoid missing steps, and on the other to keep the relationship alive.
 - be ready to change course and suggest different paths (see the case of the Covid-19 pandemic), change the route if, in the long term, it does not work or is no longer shared
 - explain to the team and the management that the route cannot lead to success 198
- if it is not desired, if it is imposed.

3.4 Good Practices

On the part of Ires, a process of internal development involving the institution had already begun. The advantage in this respect came with the contribution of the external body, Cramars, which proposed the initiative planned in the DivCap project while this internal implementation was in progress. This allowed Ires to implement the proposal with a view also to "diversity" and to obtain suggestions, with external input, that allowed it to expand the planned development by modifying the ongoing activities and results.

From the point of view of Cramars, while it was easy to intervene, as there was already an idea of evolution within Ires, it was difficult on the other hand to push through the specific changes on an already predefined plan. What facilitated this intervention was the sensitivity of the institution towards the topic and the concrete results brought by the case study document.

In fact, from the first meeting before the initial interviews, the request of the Ires contact person was to test during the interview, whether the respondents were ready or wanted to be part of the change process.

Since I started working with Ires, I have met many "different" users and I realise that, through a long process, I have changed not only in the way I teach, but also in the way I think.

(A teacher)



A second good practice was the comparison between the needs of two similar institutions, Ires and Cramars. In fact, both in the implementation phase of the interviews and in the suggestion of possible implementations, the fact of knowing perfectly the type of users, the training delivery process, the balances linked to legislative and reporting issues, facilitated the drafting of the recommendations.

The last good practice was the shared decision of the two institutions to develop a training course together. On the one hand, implementing and better directing the contents to be offered, on the other hand, saving money in the payment of the trainers; moreover, the comparison of the training results allowed a further implementation of the participants' skills.

4. Analysis of the experiences in the change and learning process, more sensitive and prepared staff towards diversity

4.1 Summary

From the point of view of the implementing partner, Cramars, working with a competitor was both a challenge and an asset. Right from the start of the project, working with Ires was very easy because of the sensitivity of the institute and its representatives towards the subject of the DivCap project.

The training organisations, especially if, as in our case, they have a social enterprise framework, have in their statute the mission to change, first of all the users who are trained in our offices, thus transforming their skills. Implicit in this mission is the principle of accompaniment, guidance, a form of help to improve or evolve. In recent years, the users of these institutions have changed, the economic crisis has increased the unemployment rate, so the objective of evolution has been reinforced.

We have to deal more and more with disadvantaged users who represent "diversities" that are not established or homologated, ranging from gender, age, social status, language, culture, but also from the availability of means, basic skills, the forced need to survive in a world of continuous and rapid change and the difficulty of accepting or confronting such change.

(A teacher of Ires)



Consequently, institutions and their employees have also had to adapt to change and challenges without having the skills to do so.

Ires has undergone a major and rapid change due to the economic crisis, which has seen a drastic reduction in staff and working hours. Somehow, the staff had to adapt, without being prepared, to these changes as well.

Aware of this situation and in order to redefine balances and values, the referents therefore decided to organise meetings that would make it possible to mend relations between the staff, especially those of the two sites in Udine and Trieste, and to work towards the same objectives and therefore to share needs and ideas for implementation.

The change plan also included a change in the external image of Ires, represented by the Institute's website, which needed to be updated in terms of both form and content.

Cramars became part of this evolutionary situation, proposing to add a vision that would also include the complex topic of "diversity" and Diversity Management.

Possible implementations related to the topic of new hires was not an element to be discussed with the company as, in the medium term, there were no perspectives that would lead to such discussions. Even though, in the first meetings and discussions held with the institute's referents, orientation was also made to possibilities coming from different management referring to the introduction and involvement of staff with a different cultural background, due to the large group of immigrant users Ires has to deal with.

The focus therefore went towards working with the staff already present in the company and above all through a process of change or involvement in the company's values and an awareness of the "diversity" dealt with in the company, by its users.

In fact, in this case, it started from the top, from the involvement of the top management, and then worked on the staff.

The approach normally used by Ires, as a research body, is a scientific one. That means first think and then plan, starting from project-based work, strategic analysis, measure to know. But in this case, they choose to use a more involving approach by exchange exercises, motivating for finding solutions that best fits the staff, solutions that people find together by ignoring power and stifling systems.

The participatory approach and the sharing of objectives by the staff was the main approach, so that the staff could really participate and feel they belong to the organisation they work for and share its values.

From a practical point of view, this could be achieved through several meetings, managed by a supervisor which collected the results of the 3 workshops that were then replicated to allow for broad participation (with a total of 6 workshops). The method used in some of these workshops was that of "strategic problem solving" to gather ideas from the working groups covering the topics of values; communication; trust; time management; soft skills. The results were reported to the board of Ires for the purpose of organizing the continuation of the process and the organization of other sharing labs, which however have stalled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The direct approach to the topic of diversity, however, was more introduced by the two most concrete actions in the short term.

The first was the suggestions given for the implementation of the Ires website and external communication. The suggestions were included in the recommendations and also defined directly during the meetings with the contact persons and were the result of an external observation of the website. Changes adopted included varying the language of the site, transforming it into videos or images, use more icons, include other languages, as a minimum English.

The second action was the implementation of training on diversity issues that made the participants, Ires internal and external staff, who voluntarily participated in the training, discuss what diversity is in the company, how to exchange good practices to deal with it (by experimenting it also through social theatre) and how to communicate towards diversity.

During the training it was possible to observe the difficulties and face it in a concrete way. What they found out is that the capacities and skills are already present within the organisation, what is perhaps lacking is a way of constant and regular exchange regarding possible good practices to deal with the "different", this will become part of a future implementation programme on these issues.

In the relationship the way I approached the "different" was to bring other personal skills that are not professional but related to my passions. For example, cooking. This allowed me to communicate through a language understandable by the user who, despite having a different culture, had a passion similar to mine. So, we put ourselves on the same level, we could communicate better from that moment on.

(A tutor from Ires)



4.2 What worked well?

What could be done better?

In entering a process that is already underway, the focus should be on the positive implementation of the process and not on its radical change. For this reason, we can say that what worked, through continuous exchange with contacts, was precisely the inclusion of the "diversity" theme in an approach that first and foremost took into account the sharing of values and objectives for company growth. The input given by the outside observation served Ires to modify and implement an approach in progress and to address issues, including those regarding "diversity" values, that were not foreseen but were important in defining their mission and in validating certain tools suggested by Cramars.

We realized, through this experiment, that it is necessary to listen to external input, because often from the inside we don't pick up on certain nuances that are taken for granted.

This helped develop the process in both entities. Cramars, too, following that path and through each other's vision has changed the approach initially defined for the better. An exchange that was therefore fruitful on both sides.

An example of this may be the implementation of the training that involved both entities and through the exchange, during the training, participants were able to address broader visions and alternatives.

A great way to change is to apply to yourself observations you made to others



Another important aspect that worked well was the spontaneous interest and unforced participation of the staff in the proposals made. What has surprised, in some cases, even the board of Ires.

What could be implemented is, undoubtedly, the element of verification, the constant collection of feedback not only from the representatives of the institution being tested, but also from the staff participating in the process. This is important in order to collect results, that are useful to the project and to its dynamics of results, but also to the institution that is the object of the experimentation that can, through these verifications, constantly modify the path to satisfy and better act on the participants.

Another aspect that could improve the process is to solicit feedback from outside, especially from users who may be considered "different".

4.3 Recommendations

Management

- Involve all staff in defining a mission statement that is visible to everyone especially on the website, but also for all internal and external collaborators,
- In the statement should also be explicitly addressed the nonverbal values, the principles we believe in and on which our work as educators is based without forgetting the focus on “diversity”;
- Ask for external feedback from experts before starting a process of change;
- Take advantage of the network of contacts in the field of diversity, networks and associations of immigrants, NGOs, health companies, etc. to collect data and get feedback on how to communicate and engage the “different”;
- Define the internal and external communication mode for the “diversity” target group. It might be useful to understand, also from a distribution point of view, in which language to write them, and in which places to distribute flyers useful for promoting the courses;
- Knowing what is “diversity” in the company, i.e. taking into account the number of “clients” that may fall into this category and highlighting the economic contribution made to the entity and the possibility of expanding services to this target group;
- Talk about, with the board, how staff from different cultural background could become an important element to be taken into account also from the economic advantage of the company;
- Define a “diversity” responsible that can collect all the information about this subject, useful for the management evaluations and staff needs;
- Work on motivation about this subject with staff;
- Find the funds to invest in the best management and education of diversity;
- Rethink about services provided.

Non-educational Staff

- Involve administrators in “diversity” issues especially for the internal staff management;
- Gather data on the possibilities given by engaging a diverse staff;

Educational Staff

- Have a more open approach to clients.
- Organize training courses on "diversity" - and share the contents with those who cannot attend the courses, now more useful by doing it online;
- Share good practices with other educational staff on how to deal with "diversity";
- Develop and participate to some courses or training or invite experts to better interact with diversity within the institution and with clients - psychological aspects, contribution to guidance, diversity management, involvement of "different" users in courses, etc.;
- Get feedback from trainers/teachers (external or internal) with the use of an assessment questionnaire to know and share teachers' problems, how they dealt with the classroom, etc.;
- Ask teachers about their needs to help students considered "diverse";
- Make use of tools that can best facilitate communication with diverse groups, video, images, etc.;
- Confront diverse groups starting from a position of equality rather than prevalence or superiority;
- Facilitate communication by finding common interests with the "different" person;
- Ask people in need directly what might be helpful to make it easier for them to get involved in the classroom or in the training;
- In the classroom, create situations, role plays, icebreakers, ways to get everyone in the classroom to feel on the same level, even during the first few class meetings;
- Ask for help from other staff, tutors, and management if there are problems in handling difficult situations.

5. ANNEX - Good Practice Examples

5.1 Diversity Training Course

4 online trainings sessions

Duration: 2 hours each

Development: on working hours

Topics:

- Introduction to the topic of Diversity - experiences and concrete examples;
- Exploring Diversity with Social Theatre;
- Communicating Diversity.

Agenda:

Day 1 - 17:00 - 19:00 Introduction to the topic of Diversity

The aim of the workshop is to show how, in our societies, diversity is crossed by power relations aimed at organising it in a hierarchical way.

In dealing with diversity, an intersectional perspective is adopted, i.e. not only cultural and ethno-racial belonging is taken into account, but also elements of gender, class, nationality, ability (etc.).

The training, using examples drawn from concrete experiences, aims to highlight the conflictual aspects linked to the confrontation with these diversities, and to find shared meanings and modalities to identify practices of reflexive and conscious interaction.

Day 2 - 17:00 - 18:00 Experiences and concrete examples

Focusing on concrete experiences on diversity in work and service spaces. Particular attention is paid to the interactions between different subjects in working environments - such as relationships within offices and teams - and in contact with the public - such as services involving encounters with heterogeneous users.

Day 2 - 18:00 - 19:00 Exploring Diversity with Social Theatre

Introduction. What tools does Community and Social Theatre (TSC) offer to talk about diversity? How can the languages and techniques of theatre train us to deal with the theme of "different" in the best possible way and encourage inclusion in relationships with others and in leading a group?

Day 3 - 17:00 - 19:00 Exploring Diversity with Social Theatre

Using the TSC tool, the course aims at a double objective, achieved in parallel:

1. To make the group explore the theme of diversity by exploring its various facets on the basis of each person's experience.
2. To make the group experience inclusive techniques and expressive languages (used for the exploration of the theme and the acquisition of knowledge) that can be acquired and reused by the trainers.

Exploration of the theme "diversity" through expressive languages

- Exploration of the theme "good practices for valuing diversity".
- Elements of group building and management - me and the other, communication, trust
- Elements of planning and conducting activities: objectives and needs; techniques for listening to the group and the individual
- Limits and creativity - two sides of the same coin
- The objective view: critical thinking against inferences and prejudices
- Languages and techniques for the development of socio-affective life skills

Day 4 - 17:00 - 19:00 Communicating Diversity

What is inclusive communication:

- Communicating better to include differences: some data
- Difference factors: gender, age, schooling, background, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexual orientation
- What are Unconscious Biases
- Acquiring awareness: a self-assessment test

Overcoming stereotypes in communication and speaking to all target groups:

The basics: how to speak the language of inclusion

- Internal documents
- Mail
- Signposting

Internal communication

- The correct use of language
- The different linguistic possibilities (from schwa to asterisks to verbal expressions)

External communication

- The use of photos and images
- Social media and website
- Examples of campaigns

La Blanca Paloma (Spain)

Modernisation of diversity mentalities

- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers
- Adaption of educational offers



Fulfilling our founding
mandate to "teach
everyone"

Illustration 1: © La Blanca Paloma

The Organisation

The Blanca Paloma is a Concerted Vocational Training Centre that teaches Basic, Middle and Higher vocational training courses. The Foundation's action is based on respect for the other and on the consideration that everyone must be the protagonist of their own promotion.



Illustration 2: © Francisco Javier Hurtado Martinez

1. General Description of the Organisation

Fundacion Docete Omnes is a centre that is dedicated to the care and training of individuals with special needs. It is the main organisation to which “La Blanca Paloma” school belongs to. The name “Docete Omnes” is derived latin means to teach all. The name summarises the nature and philosophy of the foundation and all its different associated organisations.

La Blanca Paloma is a vocational school located 10km from Granada. The school was formed to help the local population who are generally involved in agriculture to learn different sets of skills and help them to improve their job prospects in the current job market. The demand for courses is high and the centre provides a wide range of vocational training courses such as pharmacy and first aid responders, hairdressing and aesthetics, social integration and care giving and tourism and socio-cultural animation.

The original mission statement was made in 1968 and as with anything things move forward and advance. Modern technology and the world wide web were concepts in their infancy when the mission statement was penned. The project DivCap served as a springboard to push the mission statement into the 21st century and add additional value and worth to an aging mission statement. The college is funded by Junta (local Andalusian government) which in turn is financed by the European Union. Having a policy that holds the values of diversity and equal opportunities for all is important. DivCap has played a role in consciously bringing those ideas and values into every level of the organisation starting from mission statement to the human resource policy and general day to day running of the institution.

The Blanca Paloma is comprised of 20+ teaching staff and 5 administrative staff. The teachers deal with a wide range of students and the level of diversity of the students was highlighted as a strong point for the centre and a starting point from which the centre could take certain learnings and good practices to then later been applied to other areas of the institution.

The students are from the surrounding areas in which there are high unemployment rates, and the most common occupation is that of agriculture. The Blanca Palomas mission statement was to give these students another trade or specialisation through both a solid theoretical foundation and hands-on practice. The centre was innovative in its time as it was one of the first schools to adopt a dual system. In this system students enrolling in their respective courses could both attend the school for the theoretical side of the diploma that they were doing, while doing their internships in companies such as hairdressers, pharmacies or hospitals or social care centres. This dual system has been put under massive strain with the current situation. COVID-19 has forced the digitalisation of the centre and the method that it usually used to carry out the function of vocational training for the people of all ages who would like to acquire a new skill and better job opportunities through the diplomas on offer at the centre.

2. Modernisation of Diversity Protocols in Blanca Paloma's Vocational Training Centre

2.1 The Centre

The Blanca Paloma is a Concerted Vocational Training Centre that teaches Basic, Middle and Higher vocational training courses. The Docete Omnes Foundation, since its creation in 1968, has had as its primary objective to offer help to people in need of training or support to follow their own self-improvement itineraries. As an institution based on the principles of Christianity, we start from the conviction that all people, by the mere fact of being so, are invested with two inalienable qualities: dignity and freedom.

Consequently, the Foundation's action is based on respect for the other and on the consideration that everyone must be the protagonist of their own promotion.

Therefore, to fulfil our founding mandate to "teach everyone", we will try to promote every one of the people who have approached the Foundation with the assurance that we contribute, even if in a minimal part, to the progress of humanity.

2.2 The Centre's Philosophy

From a firm commitment to Quality and Academic Excellence, we understand that our mission is to enable our students to work in the work environment with the greatest human and professional competence and in this way, they can reach the highest levels of self-realization. From La Blanca Paloma, we serve society in general, those who wish to train for the exercise of a profession in different branches of Vocational Training. As well as those that, having their profession, want to be recycled and updated; and others who, without professional qualification, or with poor preparation, want to train for the performance of an activity in certain sectors of labour market.

2.3 Key findings from research

The key findings from the case studied highlighted many issues that management agreed needed to be addressed. The Blanca Paloma school is located 10 kms from the city centre and so the issue of ethnic diversity and migration is not a dominant social issue. Diversity in the case of Blanca Paloma is found in the day care centre "Fundación Docete Omnes" to which the Blanca Paloma belongs.

There already exists a strong connection between the vocational centre and the foundation that promotes inclusive values and collaborative work with students and users in subjects that are compatible such as social integration and socio-cultural animation.

Impressions from the staff interviewed in the case study were positive. The management treats diversity in the centre in a holistic and humane fashion. There is shared working space and diverse group working within it is.

Another important finding is the lack of diversity in terms of staffing. There is only one foreign national working at the centre and after interviews with management some key reasons for this were highlighted. Job vacancies are offered through numerous channels of communication and they are mostly based in a provincial to regional level. The CVs received do not fit the legal requirements for working in an institution with public funding. It is easier from European citizens to get their qualifications recognised and homologised than those from outside the E.U. This is the case of the foreign national working at the centre.

2.4 Current situation and changes introduced

The age profile of the centre averages 50 years and upwards. This is even more prevalent now with COVID-19 and the need for digital competences and telematic teaching. The age profile would certainly help with the transition to digital media and teaching methods. In other terms, there has been a change in the age profile of new hires towards younger employees. And eventually when a level of normalcy returns, that this important tool of the modern age and the modern workplace is not discarded for more traditional methods.

The lessons learnt from the case study were that the centre needed to be modernised in many facets. The first facet was the centre's online presence needed a complete overhaul and to be brought into the 21st century. The webpage layout and design needed to be changed and an effort in incorporate SEO keywords and make the page more visible through the improvement of the social media channels in the centre.

This task needs to be spread among all the staff and the promotion and marketing of the centre needs quality content to be created by staff and students alike. Having an engaged and active social media presence is an important part of a bigger picture which is online presence and marketability. Having a young and enthusiastic age profile in the staff would be hugely beneficial in term of creating the content mentioned earlier.

Having a strong online presence will enable the centre to attract a diverse profile of professionals and open a bigger catchment area of students to the centre allow it to grow and prosper as a centre for inclusion and empowerment of people of all ages who wish to attend.

3. Getting to grips with the digital highway

3.1 Beginning of the process

The process started with individual interviews with all levels of staff from administration to upper management. The interviews were designed to allow the interviewee to feel comfortable and able to express their views clearly and without any fear of offending their colleagues or those in charge of the organisation. Interviews with management were essential to gauge how much willingness there was on their part to accept that there is a need for change and embrace all critical feedback collection by the interview process. These interview techniques were practiced during one of the Transnational Project Meetings (TPMs) for DivCap. Having had practiced these techniques previously was important to help organise and guide the interview process for all participants. The age profile of the management is also quite young and so facilitated the process in terms of participation and acceptance of constructive criticism.

Important techniques for the creation of a safe and comfortable space for the interviewee were highlighted as it would eventually help to improve the level of sincerity and honesty in the feedback that would be collected through the interview process.



The interviews were held on different days and the whole process took various months as there were follow up interviews with staff that had already given feedback on certain topics. They were given lists of recommendations and possible improvements from upper management and then asked to discuss the viability and their personal thoughts on the measures. Having a good rapport with the interviewees was crucial to obtain a quality of constructive criticism and efficacy of putting new measures into motion. Having buy in cannot be underestimated in terms of long-term success. Staff were also aware that through this platform their feedback would reach upper management through the filter of the DivCap project, but they would remain anonymous during the process.

3.2 The interview process

The interviews of the teaching staff proved more challenging to organise with schedules being tighter and it being problematic for them to be able to dedicate enough time to the interview process allowing for the nature of teaching in the centre. The centre has a dual system that has students working in companies and organisations during a certain number of days and then the other days receiving more theoretical material. The feedback from the teachers was mixed and reflected age groups and teaching preferences. All staff were asking to be as honest as possible with every step of the process and in this way the feedback obtained could be a catalyst for change at the centre.

3.3 The professional profile

In general, teachers who worked with students on subjects such as social integration and socio-cultural aspects wanted to have workshops working with diversity training and management. Once there was interest identified in our interviews a second round of communication took place. Face to face meetings were organised with all interested teachers to organise time slots for workshops with both them and the students. The school has many different branches of vocational training and this project has a connection with the higher education courses such as socio-cultural animation and social integration. The other branches and their teachers were not as enthusiastic about the project for their subjects and their interviews in part reflected that. Other teachers were interested in the topic, however, did not wish to participate as they did not see any relevance to their own subject.

3.4 New hiring Mandate

Regarding new staff that have been hired over the course of the duration of the project. The age profile and linguistical ability of new staff can be clearly seen now as higher priorities. The new staff hired average in their late 20s, early 30s and all with proficient second language skills. This change is a welcome one for an organisation that clearly wants to modernise how it educates and who bears the responsibility of that education. The need for this change has also been highlighted by the current events of COVID and the need for teachers with digital competences to handle distance learning and online learning platforms due to the enforced situation experienced by all professionals all over the world.

There does remain a core element to the teaching staff that are not very adept with technology and digital competences. The centre has focused on helping to reskill and upskill its current staff and give them all the knowledge and tools they need to be able to carry out their jobs in the current situation. The centre has recently secured a g suite license so it now has access to all of googles apps and has the permission to use them for the center. The centre is in the process of providing all the students and staff with their own accounts. The process for the younger students has been straight forward as most of them already own a gmail account and understand how to set up another even using the same device their original account is on.

The management have clearly taken on board the topics highlighted by the first round of interviews and feedback obtained from them. As mentioned earlier, the profile of the teachers employed to cover the positions left vacant was in line with suggestions made to the management in the case study developed in the first phase of the DivCap project. Whether this would have happened in the same way if COVID had not of happened, we will never know. That is not important. The most important fact is that change had been identified, discussed, and debated and then implemented.

3.5 Adaption of current staff

The teaching staff has started the process of migrating all the material and other important information that they have uploaded onto their temporary school accounts they used with their students. Having this platform gives the centre not only the tools to allow for digital communication but also doing so in a legal framework as teachers and students alike do not use their own personal emails in the formal setting of school rather, they use the organisations email to communicate with other students and the staff. The GDPR provides strict guidelines for working with students under the age of 18. They are legally not allowed to use their own emails in a school setting. GDPR is the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) is a legal framework that sets guidelines for the collection and processing of personal information from individuals who live in the European Union (EU).

3.6 Digitalisation and how it fits with the teaching methodology in the school

There have been enquiries on the part of staff about the digitalisation of certain projects that occur on an annual basis. The school employs a dual system that means students have both work placement outside and more traditional theoretic learning in the centre. The enquiries centred on logbooks and other evaluation tools traditionally used in a hard copy format now being converted into live online documents that can be edited by more than one user and even in a simultaneous time if needed. It takes time to adapt to new ways of doing things and the centre has been open about the need for change and modernisation.

3.7 Attrition and staff changes

The school has seen more changes to personnel this year than is the last 10 years combined. Many teachers have taken leave for numerous motives such as, rehabilitation from operations, sickness, and maternity leave. The centre was suddenly faced with four vacancies that would need to be filled immediately to cover the courses for the academic year 2020/2021. After the initial meetings held with management, administration staff and teachers, a draft of topics and possible work-ons was created and then presented to management. One of the topics highlighted was the age profile of the staff and also the lack of linguistical ability of staff at the centre keeping in mind that the funding the centre receives is through the local government which in turn is funded from the European Union.

3.8 The next steps to be taken

The process of digitalisation has been a long and sometimes frustrating one. Staff at our vocational training centre have been reluctant to embrace the change. There is also the question of funding that is a constant problem for the school. As the school is semi-private, the staff are paid through state funding, but the centre is privately financed. That means that teachers are obliged to provide their own computer equipment and other digital solutions. While all the classes have projectors, the school needs updating the general set up of the classrooms. Presently, the classrooms have chalk boards and projectors, however, many rooms do not have a deployable projector screen and rely on the wall to do the projecting. The acoustics for online classes have not been contemplated and it makes for an uncomfortable synchronised learning experience with excessive background noise and hindered communication.

Providing the teaching staff with digital whiteboards and an integrated computer system would have facilitated the digitalisation of the learning process in the school. To allow for a synchronised methodology of teaching each classroom would need a microphone installed. This would greatly facilitate communication between students in the class and students at home. Having these installations would allow the school to move into the digital era with the right foot forward. Allowing for current events, it is logical to think that we may one day find ourselves in the same situation as we have been in with COVID-19. But unlike last time, all the infrastructure and installations will be in place and that the school will be prepared for restricted movement of its students. Unfortunately, this is not likely to happen in the near future due to financial reasons, but management has accepted the proposal as necessary but unviable.

One of the key points in the DivCap project is diversity in the workplace. This was another issue highlighted after the interview and the case study phase of the project. There are some legal problems here that need to be addressed. The Blanca Paloma school is a privately run organisation and publicly funded. There are certain legal requirements that must be observed in regards who is eligible for selection and hiring.

If one wanted to become a teacher in the Blanca Paloma school, they would have to possess a university degree or the equivalent and a masters to be eligible for selection. This would be an automatic barrier to many foreign nationals living in Spain that might even possess both of those titles but do not have them homogenised. This is something that the E.U. have been working on to allow easier movement of labour across the eurozone but still requires a lot of bureaucratic savvy to navigate through the red tape and paperwork, well at least that is the case here in southern Spain.

E.U. citizens have the possibility and the theoretical backing to be able to avail of these types of opportunities. The Blanca Paloma has one foreign national currently working at the centre. If we look outside of the E.U. then the possibilities are reduced drastically and now depend on agreements between this country and the country of the possible candidate.

This reality plus the lack of qualified candidates makes the process of diversification of the workplace a difficult task. In the larger cities there would be much more possibilities to diversify staff as there would be a much more varied selection of applicants. The centre cannot change the location of the centre and the reality of the demographics and professional profiles available to the management. All job offers by the centre are offered through national media and in labour exchange. There must be clear and transparent offers to the public, although the management have the final say in the hiring process.

The centre has, as mentioned earlier, decided to look at diversity in terms of gender, age and overall experience and ability when considering new hires and taking into account the current situation and being well prepared for any possibility of a repeat in events in the future.

4. Aims and Approaches

4.1 Key aims

Modernize teaching and refocus on the current job market both nationally and internationally. The foundation was built with the aim of helping those most in need to become fully independent members of society. This focus was of course centered on the premise that we all have the right to work and be treated fairly and with respect. As mentioned in the summary of the organization, the center was created to provide all people from the local community skills and abilities that would help them in the professional careers and break with the cycle of unemployment experienced by people in risk of social exclusion and youngsters who aspire to more than a very tough living made through agriculture.

This vision is now a reality but like all things in lifetimes have changed and the need to complement the services given by the center is crucial to it remaining relevant in years to come. From the 60s onwards most of the western world has begun a process on digitalization and now that reality is here and students to be best prepared for their professional futures must be at least proficient in the use of basic digital tools such as word processors, spreadsheets, powerpoint presentations, email to mention but just a few.

Another vision that is central to our organization is providing students with opportunity to study and work abroad. Our center has been participating in Erasmus+ for over a decade. Giving students the possibility to study or work abroad is of great importance both for the individual and the local community. It helps to foster a deeper connection between citizens of the different nations of the E.U. and opens of the possibility of intercultural learning and can be a catalyst for change in terms of mentality and acceptance of diversity and realization of the great advantage of being a citizen of the E.U.

The aim of the center is to send more students abroad and to add help them in each step of the process while always being respectful in regards of their autonomy to organize their own travel and stay. One key factor to this are language levels in the school which is connected to one of the other recommendations made by the case study report. The recommendation stated that all new staff should have some skills in a second language.

Basing on aims on adding digital competences to all the subjects taught in the school Blanca Paloma has begun to train the current staff on how to use digital tools and has provided all the teaching staff and students with an official school account from google (G-suite). This was one of the recommendations made in after the initial round of interviews and then COVID-19 really changed everything for everyone. On a positive note, our recommendations almost instantly became priorities and so at least from the point of view of the project, COVID was the catalyst for change that although is not an easy process, will leave the center in a better situation afterwards.

Improve the technological infrastructure and digital competences in the center

This is one of the final aims set by our recommendations guide to upper management. To be able to allow for digitalization it goes without saying, that you must have the tools necessary to be able to make that a reality. The school relies heavily on teachers providing their own materials, be it hardware or software. The installations are still quite basic, but there is a functioning wireless network now in the center, capable of handling multiple video calls at the same time. This opens the door to important European endeavors such as E-Twinning, online learning, and many other possibilities.



The cost of modernizing the installations in the center are quite high and management has agreed that there is a need for it, however budget restraints make this a difficult one to calculate just when this can happen.

The focus of our work must implement change when possible and provide a strong support system to all those involved in the process. The means to do so have been varied according to the task that it corresponded to. Our team managed to receive a grant from Google allowing us to use the G-Suite for our center. This process took a lot of time and effort on the part of our I.T. specialist and through his hard work the center now has a platform from which it can start to digitalize its methodology. The reward for this hard work came just in time.

Provision of an official school account for every student and teacher allows for a safe and full communication with students and teachers alike.

5. Activities

5.1 Interviews

The interviews were done over a long period. Thankfully, as mentioned before, we had a training session during one of the TPMs and that helped serve as a template to be used with all the management and staff that we would be interviewing. Having a platform which allowed for open and honest dialogue between the staff and ourselves, was vital to uncovering any perceived problems at all levels of the organisation.

Recording the interviews, with the permission of the participants was also invaluable for the creation of a working plan for management to revise and have their input on the following steps that should be taken.



This trend is becoming even more common with younger generations who take to social media such as YouTube to resolve their doubts or just want to have a visual explanation to the task or problem they are having and that they can control the speed at which they use the information.



5.2 Piloting with Students

The piloting sessions with the students was over a period of months and the emphasis was on qualitative marks instead of quantitative. The goal was to get feedback from the students on the material created by the project and have them test it with collectives also. The collectives mentioned are PWDs people with disabilities. This highlighted the need for case studies and practical application guidelines for the students.

5.3 Piloting with Teachers

The piloting with the teachers was straight forward. The teachers who had subjects which highlighted the need for attention to diversity were quick to accept the invitation to participate in the project. The feedback from the teachers was that to incorporate the material into their class planning, further didactic documents needed to be created so that they could tie them in with their own curricula.

Transition phases with digital technology

Identifying the need to communicate to collectives such as the student body and collectives in risk of social exclusion was a technical and technological problem that the organisation had from the start. The centre was not prepared, as was the case in many centres for distance learning. The process of creating school accounts took over 2 months to complete and there were many teething problems along the way.

FAQs

- ✓ How can we work with different groups in a synchronic way?
- ✓ How can we communicate interpersonal skills and emotional competences, if there is distance between the students doing their practice and the target groups?
- ✓ How can we involve members of the collective that have been isolated due to Covid?
- ✓ Student is having problems making their account work, how can this be resolved?

Problems and solutions

Not all these problems have been resolved but step by step the teachers and management have put a framework in place that will be especially useful going forward. Allowing teachers and administration staff to be involved in the process of change, also changes the focus of ownership for purely a managerial problem to an organisational problem. This makes for a more united front when the solutions to key issues are addressed and then resolved. The final word will and should always be with management but if change is to happen the more all members feel a part of the process the more likely for a successful outcome is.

6. Seat belts ready for the information highway

The piloting with both teachers and student served many functions. It was a constructive critical filter for us to have the material of the project looked at from a more objective point of view. The students over the space of numerous sessions worked through all the material on the webpage.

The following are the recommendations that came out of the whole process.

Management Recommendations

The recommendations for the management were based on four areas:

- hiring policy
- diversification awareness and analysis
- creation of digital infrastructure and
- finally the digitalisation of the company especially focused on the teaching process carried out in the centre.

Hiring policy was the first highlighted issue addressed after the first round of interviews. The profile of the staff was discussed and a clear need to improve certain areas was analysed. The age profile of the employees was at the forefront of the issues discussed and that the hiring policy needed to take that into account when new staff were to be interviewed. The average age of current employees at the centre was over 50. If the centre was serious about improving all aspects of its teaching and general methodology at the centre, then this was something that would be necessary to facilitate that. Language skills was also highlighted as a positive added value for all new hires and that those candidates with higher language skills would be given priority over less qualified applicants.

Due to the COVID situation this recommendation was implemented quickly, and all the new hires were in their late 20s or early 30s. All the new hires had at least a B2 level of English.

Diversification awareness was something that management was aware of already, but the project helped to link the ideas of diversification and productivity in way, that had not been explained before. The term diversity is very general and, in our centre, it was focused on a few major areas; age profile, ethnicity and finally language abilities.



The creation of a digital infrastructure was another recommendation made to management; however, this requires a substantial economic investment that the centre cannot afford. A compromise between the staff and management was reached, that staff would use their own devices while teaching at the centre. Here the key was the dialogue between management and staff and all sides were willing to reach a compromise for the greater good.

The digitalisation process was the responsibility of the organisation's technician. He was able to get a grant from google allowing the centre to use G-suite for free. This hard work gave the centre a host of tools from which it could provide every student and teacher with their own google account and corporative email address. This is something the centre never had and signals a transition from the older ways of organising to becoming a modern centre ready to prepare students for the job market with all the skills they will need.

Staff Recommendations

Staff who were involved gave feedback to the project. Their students were positive about the own experience with the material and in particular the case studies. Having case studies according to the students helps to give practical examples of the material and main idea in action.

Staff were recommended to take their time with the process and many of them have taken parts of the material created by the project and added it to their own curricula. Staff have also been advised to use the new corporative email as the main via of communication with the students. Before obtaining the licence for GSuite the centre did not have an organised and formal way of getting in contact with the students.

Improvement of language skills is also another of the recommendations made to the teaching staff. If the centre tries to diversify its student profile some language knowledge would have facilitate the process of the students integrating into the school.

The last staff recommendation was to include a wider range of diversity in the curricula for the academic year. This is already compulsory by law with regulated teaching. The participants have will have access to the material created by the project and can use it freely and at their own discretion.

Student Recommendations

Students were given access to the material but not given any instructions at first. This was to test how accessible and logical the layout and organisation of the material was. After that process, the students were then guided by teachers through the material focusing on case studies and promoting of debates about the content and material created.

Students in the Blanca Paloma school will become future care workers and animation monitors, hairdressers, pharmacists, and auxiliary nurses. The topic and importance of diversity and how to deal and manage it will give them an added layer of knowledge when they begin their professional careers.

The idea of bi-yearly workshop was proposed by the students themselves and management has taken their suggestion on board. The workshop will be focused on dealing with diversity in the work environment and how to deal and management various different situations that may arise while working with a diverse collective.

Samobor (Croatia)

Diversity and connecting with key institutions

- Diversity and structural change
- Adaption of Educational Offers



Effective and Structural Change
in order to Adapt Educational
Offers

The Organisation

Pučko otvoreno učilište Samobor (POU Samobor) - the open university
is located in the center of Samobor where visitors pass.



Illustration 1: Academy of Art Zagreb, Exhibition of the International Festival of Artistic
Flags at the Prica Gallery in Samobor © POU Samobor

1. POU Samobor - a center of cultural and educational programs

Pučko otvoreno učilište Samobor (POU Samobor) is a public institution for lifelong education, and it carries out its activities as a public service. The institution carries out its activities according to the law, the founder of the law, the Statute and other general acts. The founder of the Puko Open University is the City of Samobor and is represented by the director.

Adult education represents one very important area of activity of the University within which a whole range of training and training programs in the fields of agriculture, tourism, management and sales and personal services, as well as education and retraining are taking place.

The framework of the Samobor Open University is: adult education, adult primary education, adult secondary education, secondary and vocational education, lower education programmes, retraining programmes, teaching playing musical instruments, dance lessons outside the mainstream education system, organising music seminars for children, young people and adults, teaching children, young people and adults foreign languages, IT literacy for children, young people and adults, achieving and promoting multicultural, national and intercultural values, organising and promoting all forms of cultural and artistic creativity, decorating theatres, music, entertainment, film and other cultural and artistic programmes of their own production or in cooperation with other institutions and much more.

The mission of Pučko otvoreno učilište Samobor as a public institution for lifelong education, culture and information is to affirm Samobor as the center of cultural and educational programs. Respecting the tradition of Samobor openness to new challenges and cultural expressions, the mission of the Open University is to create new values in all artistic fields and popularize cultural products and cultural creativity in the local community, region and beyond, and to promote positive lifestyles.

The mission statement of POU Samobor through lifelong education programs works to raise the general knowledge of the community in the field of current knowledge and skills nowadays, in support of the general progress of our community towards the new challenges of the modern world and the world of human values.

The internal structure of POU Samobor consists of departments or centres, such as the Department for Education, the Department of Culture, the Department of Joint Affairs, the Youth Centre and the Accounting Department. The bodies of POU Samobor are the Governing Council, the principle, the Professional College and the Expert Council. POU Samobor employs 15 people and conducts over 500 cultural and educational activities annually.

2. Diversity all around POU Samobor

In the first phase of the process, a case study was conducted to explore the status of diversity in the organisation. Respondents of the case study were from different departments such as secretary, teacher, head of education. Through the interview, respondents said they had no experience with groups of migrants, but encountered differences of all ages, educated and physical or mental disabilities that they successfully coped with and embedded in their educational programs



One of the interviewees in POU Samobor:

"It is our institution that should be engaged in promoting diversity, giving lectures, workshops on diversity - that's why we were founded."

The case study at the management level showed that it was necessary to establish a link with other organizations that provide support and which can enable POU Samobor to get involved in activities related to migrants and provide education. The recommendation was to develop support for new users and intercultural staffing policy.

Staff in POU Samobor believes that you are what you do and accordingly base your value. They appreciate performance, no matter who you are. One of the main goals of POU is the lifelong learning of the individual. Through the goals of POU Samobor it is evident that the individual is the active ingredient of the community. By developing an individual, a community is also developing. That's how every individual matters. His or her needs matter not only to him or her, but to all of us. Because if we say we don't care about the individual, soon we won't care about the whole community.

The case study showed, that visibility of the organization (mission document, diversity of visions) is enough. Also, in terms of communication that may be a little more international in terms of language. Focus on Europe and international languages (English) are essential. This should be reflected in the organisation's vision and existing staff should be trained in international/European guidance.

2.1. Open minded POU Samobor

POU Samobor is open to people to build trust and relationships. Staff have a positive attitude, body language and useful emotions to communicate their own goals.

When employees first encounter a "diversity" with which they have not cooperated before, the first step is to have an individual conversation with a person. Then when education begins, they discuss with the whole group the topic of diversity associated with that person. If a translator or assistant is needed, they have provided it, but they are directing the teacher's attention to be more open and accept the person and assistant. The goal is to accept and feel that everyone in this process does not have to deal with everything on their own.

Interviewees work passionately on a job that helps others. They value teamwork and are always willing to stay late if someone is late within an important time frame. This has led to a culture of trust, kindness and mutual respect within the team.

As a collective, they believe that cultural norms play a big role in interpersonal relationships at work, but they do not take norms of behavior in society for granted and reflect reactions, preferences and feelings, which allows them to deviate from the central tendencies in Croatian society. On the other hand, they expect (based on their previous experience) from people who grow up in a certain culture, to adopt their (Croatian) culture if they live here.



Employee of POU Samobor:

"In addition to ethnic and cultural origin - what topics of the project are also important: Disability - mental, physical. Probation beneficiaries - social work in an institution "

2.2 Values and Mission

According to the values of the organization's workplace, people understand each other in the organization, they all do the right things for the right reasons, and this common purpose and understanding helps people build great working relationships. Matching the value helps the organization as a whole accomplish its main mission. The mission of POU Samobor as a public institution for lifelong education, culture and informing is to affirm Samobor as a centre of cultural and educational programs through its activities. Respecting the tradition of Samobor openness to new challenges and cultural expressions, the mission of the Public Open University is to create new values in all artistic fields and to popularize cultural products and cultural creativity in the local community, region and beyond, and to promote positive lifestyles.

2.3 Participation in numerous projects

POU Samobor have participated in numerous projects through which they worked on his own competencies and competencies of teachers and management, some of them are project "Together we can move forward!", "Digitize your knowledge and improve your communication skills", "Gastronomic Club for Smart Employment", "Media and us", "Project Place for You" and much more. Projects are described below.

3. Process of change and learning

3.1 Aims

Through questionnaires and interviews with employees of the Samobor Open University, it became apparent, that they are aware that changes from monocultural to multicultural organization are necessary and are open for change and for cooperation with migrants.

The main goal is to improve the structure of the college, to move from a monocultural college to a multicultural one. Change is a long-term process, in which an organization develops when employees also develop. Only when employees see the changes and new things they can deal with and the behavior will naturally change.

„Starting with change from yourself is the hardest, but the biggest step.“



Furthermore, it is crucial that management effectively manages differences and engages in new and fairer power relationships and creates learning settings using the organization's development interventions.

The most important thing is to use techniques and strategies that take into account the experience and expertise (knowledge) of an adult student / migrant / asylum seeker / minority group member. One recommendation was to connect with organizations that support migrants and establish cooperation with these organizations.

3.2 Activities

When the world was affected by the COVID-19 crisis, this brought with it numerous other circumstances and ultimately consequences. Piloting has not been fully fulfilled due to the focus on the financial aspects of the university and ongoing problems that have arisen in POU Samobor due to the overall situation related to the COVID-19 crisis.

The Open University participates in numerous projects that are facing marginalized groups in society. Here the approach to reach diverse target groups becomes apparent. Through the DivCap project, the awareness was enhanced for the diverse composition and needs of the various target groups. Connectivity with key institutions was one of the tasks in the case study. Through the DivCap stakeholder committee, the Jesuit Refugee Service - JRS and the Public Open University were connected and could share expertise in working with diverse groups, in particular migrants and refugees.

3.3 Awareness about diversity of target groups in projects

Diversity invisible to all

POU Samobor turned towards online education and education through the COVID-19 period.

POU is implementing the project "Gastronomic Club for Smart Employment" which has designed several educational programs for young people and ensured the departure for these newly conceived programs for the so-called "Smart Employment Club". Gastro club helps to recruit young people.

Through the project "Gastro club" POU Samobor had workshops with an individual approach. The ad for entering the workshop read "Each participant is special and has different requirements. That is why in our workshop we have an individual approach that seeks to emphasize your virtues in order to be noticed on the labour market."

Ads for participation in the workshop were turned towards all those who want to participate in workshops regardless of possible diversity, and marginalized group, i.e. unemployed young people.

Through the project "Media and us" a multimedia manual for teachers has been developed. Written in the language of modern media, it serves as a tool in youth work. The project is funded by the Agency for Electronic Media. The overall goal of the project is to realize it in a way that mobilizes the interest of students by using topics, digital formats and media content that are part of their youthful world and contemporary social context. Through the project, various groups of participants could be reached.

Through cultural activities to integration



In POU Samobor there are "Civil Tuesday", public lectures that are held for over 6 years. Through that event there are a lot of topics that are interesting to citizens, from the changes happening around us, to protecting the environment, to human health and others. From collaboration with the Obrtničko učilište OU / Craft College and the DivCap project, POU Samobor decided on topics facing marginalized groups of society and sensitive topics. In order to involve all interested citizens and listen to a free lecture that can help them in their further life and development.

POU Samobor organizes lectures on various topics such as ecology, health, child education, social topics, etc., as part of the information activities, which are called Civil Tuesday. The Civil Tuesday programme is a series of public lectures aimed at raising public awareness of current topics. It was created from the need to inform citizens about a whole range of tip-offs that have been happening in our society since joining the European Union onwards. It also discusses topics important for health and environmental protection, as well as all other topics that interest the citizens of Samobor.

As part of Civic Tuesday, the Open University organizes self-help workshops. As they turned more to diversity, they realized that diversity was possible in visible and invisible differences between persons.

The data shows that adolescents and young people are age groups who, along with people over 80, are most at risk of feeling lonely. Workshops "How to recognize loneliness, how present it is, what are the effects of the experience of loneliness and how to deal with it", "How to deal with unpredictable life situations?" are organized as one of the approaches that raise awareness of diversity and acceptance of oneself and then others.

Equal opportunities for all through an inclusive teaching approach

The POU Samobor was a partner on the project "Together we can move forward!", the project leader was the City of Samobor. The main goal of the project is to reduce the social exclusion and poverty of unemployed users and guaranteed minimum benefits by increasing their employability by participating in training programmes and soft skills development programmes and by raising the quality of work of social workers who will motivate, advise and mentor them. Through the call for tenders for the implementation of training programmes in the construction and geodesy and tourism and hospitality sectors, the POU Samobor applied for the competition and they were selected.

Through a cooperation, an Obrtničko učilište OU / Craft College employee did training for simple jobs of photovoltaic installers in POU Samobor where he had the support of the university. Three students who were different from each other participated in the training, and some of the participants had mental and some of them physical difficulties. The Samobor Open University has a culture of trust, friendship and mutual respect, which leads to how welcome the participants feel.

The training was attended by trainees with physical difficulties, i.e. they did not have all parts of the body. The teacher in cooperation with POU Samobor conducted training for a welder. Through a special and customized approach, participants are not provided for other people in the group.

In a welding simulator, a person showed that people with disabilities point out that awareness of their own limitations is extremely important when choosing a profession, including people with disabilities.

Another person who participated in the training had mental difficulties that were not visible at first glance. With the student in the classroom, he was a mentor throughout, who, along with the teacher, helped to go at odds with other students.



Through an inclusive approach to learning, the teacher responded to the needs of the students covered by the education process. In order to conduct quality inclusive teaching, good cooperation between teaching and non-teaching staff is required, which was also between the POU Samobor and the teacher who carried out the training.

It is necessary to introduce an obligation to inform teachers in a timely manner about enrolment of students with disabilities or other differences so that they can prepare in time for the realization of adjustments in teaching.

3.4 Connecting with key institutions

By applying educational programmes, POU Samobor cooperates with many institutions and institutes, but faces a common problem of non-diverse organisation regarding migrants: insufficient cooperation. When homogeneous leadership teams engage in groupthink, "they do not take into account the external perspective" and therefore create blind spots that will later lead them to problems.

POU Samobor is open to cooperation with migrants and other marginalized groups. But there are no instructions regarding the education of migrants from the state, government, local self-government and self-government units or from organizations dealing with migrants. POU Samobor is aware of the fact that migrants are in their environment and has made contact with some of the organizations engaged actively with migrants.

POU Samobor has liaising with the Jesuit Refugee Service - JRS through the cooperation partner Craft College. The JRS is an international Catholic organization whose mission is to monitor, serve and advocate for the rights of refugees and other forcibly displaced persons. POU Samobor is interested in future cooperation with the association if there will be opportunities for future projects and future participants. Through meetings and workshops, the Jesuit Refugee Service - JRS has conveyed realities of migrants' lives, the most common problems they encounter and their goals they want to achieve. The Open University was introduced to working with migrant groups through examples of good practice, which they could hear and use through cooperation with the Jesuit Refugee Service.

Connect with organizations that support migrants and establish cooperation with these organizations



POU Samobor participates in the Erasmus+ project "Digitize your knowledge and improve your communication skills". Through this project, the institution wants to offer professional staff quality education through participation in structured courses. This will enable the acquisition of competences for further advancement. It is planned to monitor the work in the institutions that are also engaged in adult education.

Participants of mobility cover various activities within POU Samobor and they are carefully selected to participate in certain courses that respond to their learning needs with their content. By participating in this project, they intend to improve access to their users, make the institution more accessible and ensure active participation through additional and improved programs. Making new contacts opens the door to new collaborations and opportunities for education and multicultural awareness.



4 Analysis of the process of change and learning, and recommendations

4.1 Let's change ourselves and then the environment

POU Samobor is a monocultural organization according to the 7-stage model, but it has an ambition to be a multicultural organization. Adapting and embracing the environment is a time-consuming process in the human view of the world. POU Samobor is oriented towards the needs of intercultural policy and opportunities for intercultural training. They believe that the competence of teaching and non-teaching staff, i.e. collective is essential to maintain employee satisfaction and improve financial performance. In the open university, the level of diversity of employees is low.

The environment as a mass of people has a hard time accepting change, we have evidence all around us and even in the media. In Samobor, a lady reported employees of a renowned Croatian company walking through the shopping centre because she thought they were migrants. In order to change the prejudices of the environment, we need to change ourselves and our immediate surroundings and then, by their example, influence the wider community.

The change in views and attitudes starts from a young age from family, kindergarten, school and this is reflected in society as a whole. Respect and acceptance of diversity among children is actually the basis for creating incentives in learning and teaching processes.

Changes are happening in the institution as well as in the environment. POU Samobor is constantly interacting with various groups of participants, and in one year most often many participants with visible and not so visible differences pass through. POU Samobor is focused on lifelong learning and is the holder of numerous cultural events, and some of them are already mentioned in the report.

A change in approach could also be observed in this time of closure and COVID-19 crisis. They conducted classes in online form and teaching and non-teaching staff had to adapt to a way of working that they had not previously applied.

4.2 Management-level changes

For management POU Samobor change means starting from a monocultural institution towards a multicultural organization. Working in a multicultural organization has more benefits, one of them is enriching the organization, reducing prejudices, providing a more comfortable environment in both private and business life to people with differences, broadening horizons and facilitating problem solving because of the way things are viewed.

Intercultural training that would improve intercultural cooperation or leadership to exchange views.



According to the completed questionnaires, management is open to cooperation with migrants both in terms of employment and in terms of education. Most important lesson is that diversity is a much border concept, and includes a number of components that make a person small different from the average person. Through the projects POU Samobor works on social exclusion and poverty of unemployed users and guaranteed minimum benefits by increasing their employability and they will continue doing that kind of projects to helping local community and learners.

With an open attitude we can solve our own prejudices



4.3 Meaning for Learners

Students who will be part of the educational group in POU Samobor will feel more comfortable and will more likely connect with the environment in which they are educated if there is someone who is similar to them or just understands them.

Changes in the organization through lifelong learning and raising awareness of students and employees to the positive impact of lifelong learning affects their intellectual and professional growth.

Adult education represents another very important area of activity within which a whole range of training and training programs in the fields of agriculture, tourism, management and sales and personal services, as well as education and retraining are taking place.

POU Samobor also has a number of programs for children such as programming workshops for children Code club, Small School of Comics and dance workshops within the Modern Dance Studio.

*Teacher in POU Samobor:
"Motivated students are the best students regardless of race, religion and other differences."*



4.4 Meaning for Staff

The teaching staff is in direct contact with the students. Changing attitudes and opinions and building a society is a lengthy process that has been building over generations. Without prejudice, staff change perceptions and allow people to judge objectively. In order to at least mitigate discrimination, the creation of mutual relations and friendships should be encouraged. In order for cohabitation and teaching to work well, teaching staff should first analyse his or her own views and reject those that have arisen under the influence of prejudice.

Changing people is a long-term process, changing employees means a change in the organization. Big changes are made in small steps in the organization. The first and foremost is to bring the organization from monocultural to multicultural.

4.5 Meaning for the Organisation

Cultural stereotypes stem from disrespect and misunderstanding of another culture, whose members then appear to be crude or rude. The culture of the Samobor Open University is the promotion of equal opportunities, so employees are governed by interaction with each other without the regulations that govern it.

If there are employees of different cultures, religions and other differences, soon besides employees and colleagues, the situation may happen that clients are from different cultures. In adult education institutions, they will immediately connect with the organization and teachers and will build trust if they are associated with a person who speaks their language, comes from their midst, knows their holidays and understands their customs.

A support system should be developed for new beneficiaries (migrants) and intercultural personnel policy.



Changes for the organisation mean easier access to financial investments - special equipment is needed (access by people with disabilities, e.g. lift in the building). Organisational and financial requirements need to be taken into account. Introducing new programmes - opens up new opportunities. Enrichment by getting to know different things, characteristics of other people. It is not known about the problem that may arise until they encounter such groups (migrant groups primarily).

It is necessary to familiarize employees in the way they need to approach and deal with diversity - ours in relation to them and theirs compared to us.



Through the connections with organisations that are linked to migrants, and that have experiences with working with that kind of diversity, helps POU Samobor to do the job shadowing, provides support to such organizations in the area of the town of Samobor and offers education and gain experience in working with migrants.

5. ANNEX - Good Practice Examples

5.1 Civil Tuesday - public lectures for all

The public lectures “Civil Tuesday” have focused in recent years on marginalized groups, such as youth, the elderly population, disadvantaged people. It helps and presents active topics that concern residents. Through Civic Tuesday, an attempt is made to make citizens aware of current topics such as loneliness in young people, how to deal with anxiety and other. In collaboration with the DivCap project, Civic Tuesday turned more to marginalized groups. POU Samobor noted how this COVID crisis has affected people and that they need to be made aware of it.

Lectures around these issues are organized and exhibitors are professionals such as psychologists, sociologists, professors and other relevant exhibitors.

It is clear how this COVID crisis has affected the lives of all of us, as well as the quality of our lives. Customized lectures are through online workshops so that everyone can participate in these difficult times as well. One of the last lectures was on “music therapy”. This lecture focused on music as a universal language, as an instrument that connects people regardless of their knowledge of the language, and music as a motivator. Musical experiences (singing, playing, movement ...) are designed to influence positive changes in behavior and thinking.

Through the lecture, one session also turned to physical diversity such as torture and the problems most often encountered by children in the quarantine period. During the quarantine period in Croatia, POU Samobor raised a topic that tormented many young people, but also the population of all ages, and that is loneliness. Loneliness of persons was present even before the COVID crisis, but an additional risk is the COVID crisis. Through this lecture, the psychologist introduced the participants to the symptoms of the onset of loneliness, how present it is and what the possible effects are and how to deal with it.

Other topics encountered by marginalized groups, and some topics are taboo for someone and they don't want to talk about these topics. These workshops are also motivating and are mostly located on the You tube platform, so interested people can also look when they need it.



Illustration 2: web page of POU Samobor © POU Samobor

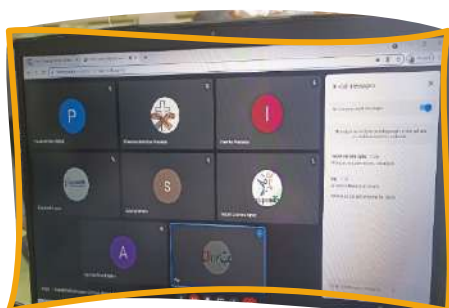


Illustration 3: Web page of POU Samobor © POU Samobor

Trevenque (Spain)

Shifting focus and embracing our inclusive digital connection

- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers
- Adaption of educational offers



Competences of trainers & Adaption of educational offers

Illustration 1: Working Online © Andrew Sweeney

The Organisation

The image below is of I.E.S Trevenque with the gates closed. The school remained closed from March until July in 2020. This complicated the piloting of the project. The process shifted from a top-down approach to a bottom up where direct contact was made with teachers and students to carry out the piloting with them. For many of the students and the teachers this was the first online piloting that they have ever taken part in.



Illustration 2: Trevenque closed for Covid © Miguel Sarrión

1. General description I.E.S Trevenque

I.E.S Trevenque is a public school which offers the following courses to students for the local area and beyond. The centre offers E.S.O which is the obligatory education cycle and it also offers F.P.B (which is the lowest level of V.E.T training), Bachillerato, F.P medio y F.P superior. E.S.O as stated above is obligatory until the age of 16. The course that follows E.S.O is Bachillerato and this gives the student different options or branches of education to specialise in before they continue onto third level education. Running parallel to E.S.O is the F.P.B which is vocational training usually in the trades such as plumbing, carpentry, electrician and so on. This education is aimed towards students who have not had academic success and would prefer to prepare themselves for the labour market sooner.

The school has the capacity for 749 students and has 61 teachers.

The centre offers course to students of all different abilities and needs. The centre prepares students for further third level education but also offers more professional based learning which is connected to the job market and subjects which teach students the skills in certain professions.

There are three cycles which are basic F.P (F.P.B) which would be the equivalent to E.S.O level of qualification and then transition F.P (F.P.M) which is below a Bachillerato but would allow students to access higher level courses upon completion and upper F.P (F.P.S) which allows students to access third level courses and it is the equivalent of the Bachillerato/selectividad end of secondary schooling exam and title.

The educational project as determined by both regional and national educational legislation constitutes the hallmarks of the centre and expresses the education they are developing. It contemplates the values, objectives, and priorities of action, not only limited to curricular aspects, but also to those that, from a cultural point of view, make the centre a dynamic element of the area where it is located.

The educational project defines the objectives that the centre intends to achieve, based on its reality and taking as reference the Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, and Law 17/2007, of December 10, on the principles that guide each one of the educational stages that are taught in the centre and the corresponding prescriptions about the curriculum.

The teachers in the school must adhere to both regional and national law and legislation regarding supporting their pupils. There are guidelines for the teachers to follow. The teacher must carry out an initial evaluation and find out if there are students who might need extra help. They can make adaptations to their planning and if the student to teacher ratio is sufficient, they can also ask for external help from social security or care workers.

The school will provide a language adaptation course for those migrants who have not yet mastered the language in which the subjects are being taught.



Importance of the creation of a safe and comfortable space for the interviewee to improve the level of sincerity and honesty in the feedback

2. Diversity and language for I.E.S Trevenque

During the first phase of the project, a case study was conducted to analyse the status of diversity orientation in the school. The process started with individual interviews with all levels of staff from administration to upper management. The interviews were designed to allow the interviewee to feel comfortable and able to express their views clearly and without any fear of offending their colleagues or those in charge of the organisation. These interview techniques were practiced during one of the Transnational Project Meetings for DivCap.

2.1. Key findings from the case study

The findings of the case study show, that there is not a focus on migrants or refugees. According to the head of department, they only view diversity as an issue in academic performance. Ethnicity or background is not a factor that is considered in the enrolment process in this centre.

The attention to diversity is focused on academic performance. The task of attention to diversity is covered in both national and regional legislation. As the school is publicly funded, it must adhere to the national and regional legislation regarding diversity in the classroom.

Each teacher must carry out an initial evaluation, in which they could adapt their own curriculum and/or ask for help from social services. The availability of these services will depend directly on the ratio of students to teacher and secondly if the school is fully public, which it is in this case.

The spoken language at the school is Spanish. Most of the teachers are monolingual. The centre has been deemed a bilingual school in theory. The bilingual status of public schools is somewhat controversial topic. The Andalusian government decided to give the status of bilingualism to many centres that were and are still not able or prepared to give classes through a foreign language such as French, English or German.



The key findings from the case studied highlighted further issues that management agreed needed to be addressed.

In practice this is not the case. Even the English classes are conducted partly in Spanish. There is special room for linguistic adaptation for students who do not have a command over the Spanish language. These courses for linguistic adaptation are protected by and provided by the national and regional legislation for public education. In the public system, there is an allowance for these courses given to each centre and the amount of funding received is related to the ratio of foreign nationals to local residents who could attend.

The Trevenque school is located 10 kms from the city centre and so the issue of ethnic diversity and migration is not a dominant social issue. With regards to diversity, the accessibility of the centre needs to be improved. The centre is not wheelchair friendly.

Impressions from the staff interviewed in the case study were serious and direct. The management would like to implement change and make the centre more accessible for all students, but is constrained by the local authorities. Another important finding is the lack of diversity in terms of staffing. There is only one foreign national working at the centre and after interviews with management some key reasons for this were highlighted. Job vacancies are only offered through the competitive state exam system “oposiciones”.

Only after passing this exam one can work at this school. This means that the level of diversity among staff is restricted to age and socio-economic background.

The age profile of the centre averages 40s and upwards. This is even more prevalent now with COVID-19 and the need for digital competences and telematic teaching. The age profile would certainly help with the transition to digital media and teaching methods and eventually when a level of normalcy returns that this important tool of the modern age and the modern workplace is not discarded for more traditional methods.

3. Adapting to Covid and change of paradigms

3.1. From top-down to bottom up approach

Everything was going to plan and then the outbreak of Covid-19 changed the dynamic of how we were going to work with the centre. The managers who had committed to collaborating on the project had been infected with Covid-19 and the replacement also had Covid.

This left us with senior management trying to conduct a piloting in the centre which proved to be difficult. After numerous phone calls, emails and skype sessions, the decision was made to directly contact the teachers themselves as the help from management was not forthcoming due to illness.

The Covid situation completely changed the working relationship with the Trevenque centre. It left us with no other option then to get in contact directly with the teachers there in the centre. The level of uptake was not high due to many teachers being completely overwhelmed with the situation and not willing to make a commitment with us. Teachers who did collaborate had the support and backing of F.D.O staff members via online zoom meetings.

Changing the approach to a bottom-up approach instead of top-down. We worked directly with staff and students instead. After the trainers and teachers had done the piloting with the students, an open forum was held to allow for honest and open conversation about diversity.



This was a change from the original idea of top-down approach. We had planned to collaborate with management to organise the teachers, trainers and students and we found that this option was no longer viable. The new approach was to directly contact the teachers and trainers themselves and try to convince them to collaborate with us on the project.

3.2 Conducting socially distanced piloting with the teachers

The focus on the piloting was changed from manager led to teacher led. This change was forced due to Covid illness. This change was difficult, but we were able to find another way to complete the task set by the project. Direct contact was made with teaching staff, and they were provided the material that had been created by the project plus a user guide and evaluation questions for the post sessions. Online workshops were held with the willing teachers to help them orientate themselves within the material of the project.

The piloting took place over various weeks in December 2020 and January 2021. Both online workshops and face to face meeting were organised when possible as to help orientate the teachers and trainers willing to collaborate on the project. Online assistance was offered to the teachers who had accepted to carry out the piloting with their classes and when any problems arose, they were quickly resolved via email, WhatsApp or video call.

This helped those teachers and trainers work with students on the material created by the project. Face to face meeting also took place when and where possible and abided by Covid protocols.

3.3. Piloting workshops and online connectivity with students

The students who participated in the piloting were social care students they were given the option of participating. The student profile was young adult between 18-25 finishing their diploma in health care and assisted living course. Diversity management is extremely relevant to the students as they will work with marginalized communities, migrants, and people with disabilities. They were doing a module on IT management and the use ICT in centers and so this online piloting was extra relevant to them and what they were covering before starting the piloting.

Reflecting about diversity

The aim of the piloting was to guide the participants through the curriculum “Applied Diversity Workshops (ADA)” and create a feedback link with them on the material covered. In the ADA Workshop theoretical approaches to diversity are covered. Furthermore, through exercises and “diversity walks” (walks in a neighborhood with a subsequent reflection session), personal experiences regarding diversity are explored.

The original idea was to have face to face workshops and seminars and even to have a diversity walk through La Zubia to connect the students with the project and the main aims and goals that it has.

Due to Covid that was not possible, so as mentioned above the aim shifted to conducting an online piloting with them working on the curriculum “Applied Diversity Workshops”. Teachers had multiple sessions with the curriculum and the students engaged in debate after each session.

Learning from international examples

The case studies in adult education centers in the other DivCap partner countries were also discussed and debated, and this helped to add an international dimension to the piloting experience for the participants. The students had various sessions on the case studies from the other partners of the consortium. After each session, the teacher responsible for the class would lead a guided debate. The students worked through the material of the DivCap website and went into the case studies. They provided their feedback on the case studies and had online meetings with their teachers to discuss the content and how it was expressed. The students were asked to give their general feedback through google forms at the end of the piloting.

Students reviewed the case studies and debates were carried out in class regarding topics such as diversity and all the different forms and ways that diversity can be expressed. The topic of diversity in southern Spain is popular and that the topic provoked some intense discussion by some of the students who participated. By in large, most of the students participating in the piloting would at least acknowledge that diversity and inclusivity are both important and fundamental concepts in creating a more fair and equal society.

The most common feedback received from the students was the need for improved I.T skills of teaching staff and students. The potential of online learning is great, but systems and training must be put in place to ensure the quality of the education provided. Online teaching is a valuable tool to improve student mobility and allow for the teaching process to continue even in times of an international pandemic. The students expressed both their own doubts about their IT skills and especially about the skills of some of their teachers. The need for IT training for new teachers was highlighted by students.

Students were recommended to use emails to communicate with their trainers and members of the project team to resolve any doubts that arose; this was done in a forum. There were many students who were interested in presential workshops but unfortunately during the time dedicated to the workshops, that was not permitted.

4. Adapting to circumstances

Working with I.E.S Trevenque was a difficult experience. The global pandemic played a massive role in how the centre worked with the project and the level of commitment on the part of the management who had given their word on a full and fruitful collaboration in the project. Finding another solution was of utmost priority. Dealing with teachers and trainers was time consuming and difficult to get a solid commitment from the teachers and trainers. Thanks to many emails, phone calls and favours asked, F.D.O was able to get a group of teachers to collaborate.

The teachers took time during a stressful and intense period to carry out an online piloting with an external project. They had no obligation to do so and did it with enthusiasm and the yearning to become better professionals and engage with their students in a forum that many of them were not used to or did not feel confident about. This allowed for a good practice to come to light which was the honest and open dialogue between teachers and students about how, where and with what means the teaching process can take place and how it can be improved. The pandemic caused many teachers to get out of their comfort zone and a sign of a professional is not too shy away from the challenge and instead take it on and learn and improve your skills through the process.

4.1 Recommendations for educational staff

Firstly, it is important to thank the staff at I.E.S Trevenque for their collaboration and help in such difficult times. Without their help and commitment all the previous work and case studies done would have been in vain.

Important techniques for the creation of a safe and comfortable space for the interviewee were highlighted as it would eventually help to improve the level of sincerity and honesty in the feedback that would be collected through the interview process.

The interviews were held on different days and the whole process took various months as there were follow up interviews with staff that had already give feedback on certain topics.

They were given lists of recommendations developed during the case study and possible improvements from upper management and then asked to discuss the viability and their personal thoughts on the measures. Having a good rapport with the interviewees was crucial to this quality and efficacy of putting new measures into motion. Having support for the process cannot be underestimated in terms of long-term success. Staff were also aware that through this platform their feedback would reach upper management through the filter of the DivCap project.

The interviews of the teaching staff proved more challenging to organise with schedules being tighter and it being problematic for them to be able to dedicate enough time to the interview process allowing for the nature of teaching in the centre. The centre has a dual system that has students working in companies and organisations during a certain number of days and then the other days receiving more theoretical material. The feedback from the teachers was mixed and reflected age groups and teaching preferences.

In general, teachers who worked with students on subjects such as social integration and socio-cultural wanted to have workshops working with diversity training and management. Other teachers were interested in the topic, however, did not wish to participate as they did not see any relevance to their own subject.

The teachers that did participate were very enthusiastic and energetic in working with the material created by the consortium.

The pilotings pointed out the need for modernization in teaching methodology. It also pointed out that students enjoying using the case studies and saw a practical application for them. Having a clear and relatable example of something in a practical setting, really helps to clarify and make theoretical material easier to digest and understand.

“This is a very interesting project and I wish that more of my colleagues would have participated in it”

José Joaquín - I.T Teacher I.E.S Trevenque

“It is important now more than ever to promote and encourage online learning and through that diversify how we as students have access to our education”
Anonymous student I.E.S Trevenque



The management clearly need to work on how they communicate and how they delegate their workload.



4.2 Recommendations for managers

The need for delegation is particularly important. The need for simple communication is also. The communication broke down due to one of the managers becoming sick with Covid. That leads to the first point, the need for delegation and effective communication to pass along the information of any responsibilities to those who will be covering for the person out sick.

5. Good practices

5.1. Build rapport with students and teachers online

Not having the opportunity to meet teachers and students face to face made the task of building a rapport and connection with them more complicated. During the first calls there were a few quick ice breaker games to get everyone on the call involved and have themselves present briefly with their names and one adjective to describe themselves that starts with the first letter of their names. The other students are then asked to recall the adjective and name of the student. With the groups for the piloting the game was not necessary, as the students were familiar with everyone, but it was a good opportunity to get everyone involved and motivated for the next task.

5.2. Teamwork with instant feedback and evaluation

During the many sessions there was a section dedicated to teamworking with the different sections of the material covered, such as the case studies. Each team would be assigned a case study and given fifteen minutes to read, analyse and summarise. This required the groups to delegate between themselves the material that they must work with. At the end of the time allowed the team would be asked for a concise summary and most important lessons to be taken out of the study.

When a team where unable to do so they were asked why? If they answered by saying that they did not have time they were immediately asked “did you communicate with your partners about how to divide the task amongst you?”. The point is to highlight good communication as a fundamental basis for dealing with work- and work-related issues. Many parts of the curriculum were done in a similar way and the students gave positive feedback for the process.

5.3. Evaluation questions for the post session

The following were the evaluation questions for the post session, and the summary of the answers given by the students:

Key code of colours for the pie charts:

Level of agreement

Blue: Completely agree

Red: Strongly agree

Yellow: Agree

Green: Do not agree

Purple: Completely disagree

1. Do you think the methodology and case studies are useful and that they can be interesting and useful to help with diversity in the field of work and / or study?

1. ¿Crees que sirve la metodología y los estudios de casos y que pueden ser interesantes y útiles para ayudar con la diversidad en el ámbito de trabajo y/o estudio?

23 responses

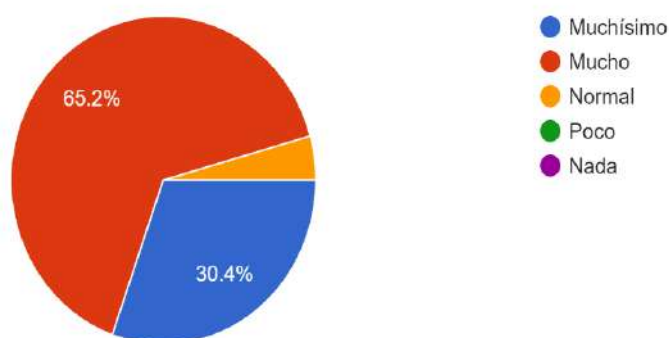


Illustration 3: Analysis of question 1

2. Is there enough information in the "methodology" section and is it easy to understand?

2. ¿En el apartado de "metodología" hay suficiente información y es fácil de entender?

23 responses

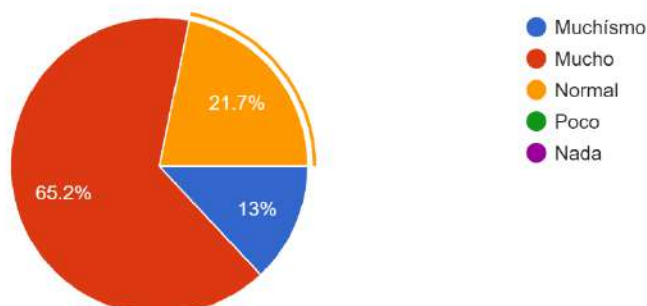


Illustration 4: Analysis of question 2

Do you think it is beneficial to compare good practices and case studies at the European level?

3. ¿Crees que es beneficioso comparar buenas practicas y estudios de casos al nivel europeo?

23 responses

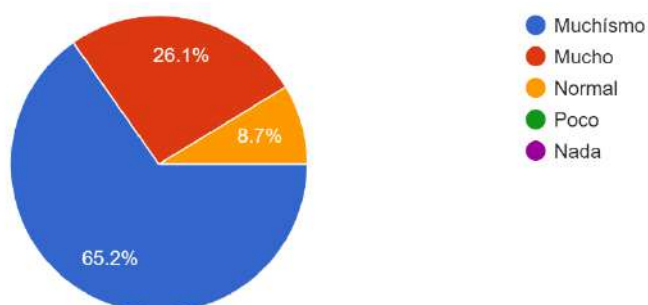


Illustration 5: Analysis of question 3

4. Do you think that the case studies could be applied in different settings and places?

4. ¿Crees que los casos de estudios se podrían aplicar en diferentes ámbitos y sitios?
22 responses

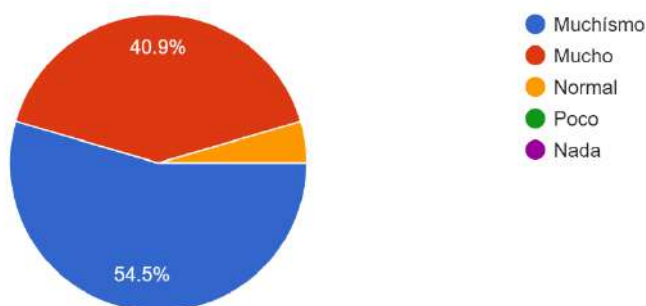


Illustration 6: Analysis of question 4

5. Do you think that in your institution there is diversity in this regard, teachers and students?

5. ¿Crees que en vuestra institución hay diversidad al respecto profesorado y alumnado?
23 responses

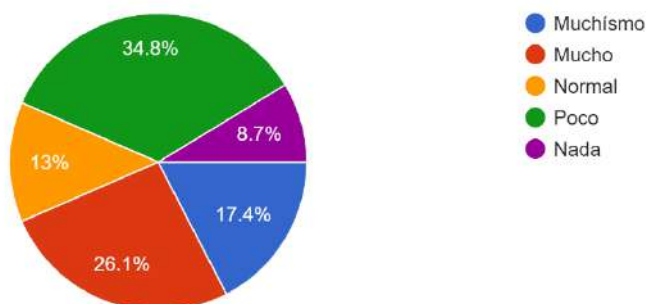


Illustration 7: Analysis of question 5

6. Do you have any emergence or improvement that could be made to the information presented on the website?

6. ¿Tienes algún surgencia o mejoría que se podría hacer a la información presentado en la página web?

23 responses

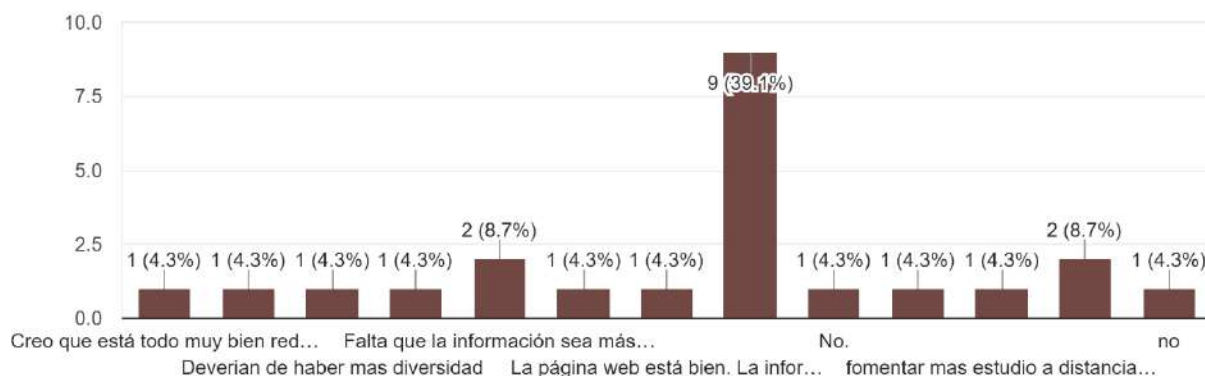


Illustration 8: Analysis of question 6

The comments can be summarised into the following themes:

- The curriculum and case studies were well designed and described
“I think everything is very well written and I see that nothing is missing.”
- Lack of diversity in the center
“There should be more diversity”
- Suggestion of how to improve the content. The information needs to be more visual and exemplified.
- Layout and accessibility are good. The website is fine. The information is clear. encourage more study at a distance and online



VHS Chance (Germany)

Personnel Acquisition for diverse Staff in Adult Education

- Diversity and Human Resource Management



A diverse staff keep the diversity of people in mind and can deal with it!

Illustration 1: © Geralt on pixabay

The Organisation

VHS Chance is partly situated in the “Lindener Rathaus” in the centre of the former industrial city, nowadays the very multi-cultural, very diverse city district “Linden”!



Illustration 2: © Ada-und-Theodor-Lessing-Volkshochschule Hannover

1. From Basic Education to Professional Education

Qualification for everybody

VHS Chance is part of the “Fachbereich Volkshochschule”, a department of the municipality of Hannover. Thus, for VHS Chance the legal frameworks of “Fachbereich Volkshochschule” and the municipality of Hannover are compulsory. An advisory board facilitates the communication between city council and institution. The institution is financed by public subsidies from the municipality, the Ministry for Science and Culture of Lower Saxony, third party funds (e.g. employment agency, social assurance, European Social Fund, European Commission) and the fees of participants.

The institution is located in the City Centre of Hannover, the capital of Lower Saxony with 556.695 inhabitants (1). 38,6% of the total population has a migration background, what means that they have a foreign nationality including those who have both: the German and the foreign one. 59,7% of these people are in the working age between 18 and 60 years.

VHS Chance carries out its program mainly in three different buildings and a couple of rented rooms in many parts of the city.

There exist two mission statements, one general and one specific for the educational counselling service. Both contain formulations showing openness. In the one of the counselling service “Sie ist kostenfrei und offen zugänglich für alle Menschen ...” (2) (It is accessible for all people and does not cost any fees). In the general one: “Damit nehmen wir die Bedürfnisse aller Bürgerinnen und Bürger der Landeshauptstadt Hannover auf und berücksichtigen dabei auch die Interessen und Lebensbedingungen von sozial benachteiligten und lernungsgewohnten Menschen”(3). (We are orientated on the needs of all inhabitants of Hannover and take especially into account the needs of deprived people and ones who have become unused for learning.)

Resources

1. All numbers from <https://www.hannover.de/Leben-in-der-Region-Hannover/Politik/Wahlen-Statistik/Statistikstellen-von-Stadt-und-Region/Statistikstelle-der-Landeshauptstadt-Hannover/Hannover-kompakt/Bev%C3%B6lkerung>, 06.01.2021
2. Printed Program VHS Hannover 2019/2020
3. <https://www.vhs-hannover.de/ueber-uns/leitbild.html>; 06.01.2021



VHS Chance works under the leadership of a headmaster (Dr. Susanne Kannenberg) and is divided in three sectors, each under a head of department:

1. Integration: Centre for Basic education, Program for migrants (German as foreign language, integration courses, courses for special target groups, integration guides) educational counselling.
2. School of second chance: Courses for people without school-leaving certificate.
3. Job and Career: Courses in IT, soft skills and accountancy for everybody, certification on system (IT and accountancy), training for employees in enterprises and of the municipality of Hannover, retraining for unemployed people, European projects.

A huge part of the provided training is a kind of formal education: school-leaving certificates, integration certificates, languages certificates “German as foreign language, accountancy certificates and last but not least the formal exams for completed apprenticeships are aims of the course. Only a couple of further education in the area of IT and partly German as foreign language are non-formal ones. The aim of VHS Chance is to provide education especially for marginalized people and to foster their integration and their welfare in a holistic approach.



VHS Chance is great! Its work is very important for the society. The VHS Chance gets on very responsible with the people and overtakes its social responsibility.

(Trainer for German as a foreign language)

That means in an idealized model:

Imagine, there is someone who is not able to write and read and his German is basic. So he starts in the Centre for basic education and learns reading, writing and improves his German. Then he continues in special language courses. In the next step he enters the school of second chance, gets his school leaving certificate and starts a retraining in Job and Career (“Chain of education”). The whole process is accompanied and supported by one of the counsellors.

In European projects, new methods were experienced and innovative approaches may be implemented.

2. VHS Chance wants adult education for all- 20% of Hannover's inhabitants have a foreign citizenship

2.1 The self-perception of VHS Chance

"We are committed to respect for human dignity, openness, dialogue and equal opportunities" is the central statement of the mission statement, which was developed in 2003 and revised in 2010. It is an important statement that illustrates VHS Chance's claim to provide education to all people in Hannover. But is that enough and what effect does this mission statement achieve? In the last 10 years a lot of things in adult education have been changing, but the mission statement not. In addition, an explicit diversity statement is missing. And fatally, most employees do not even know this mission statement.

According to the mission statement, VHS Chance presents itself as an open institution in the public, which invites all people to come. For example, the leaflet for retraining shows people with different cultural background, on the general printed program the cover shows pictures from people in different combinations (e.g. man and man, one dark, one pale). But on the other hand the institution publishes everything only in German.

2.2 Human resources

Partly, some staff, some teachers are speaking other languages because of their individual history. For reaching less mobile people courses are offered in certain parts of the town. At the moment, some projects are going on reaching those groups using their networks, their clubs. Exhibitions and events have been set up under topics related strongly to those target groups, involving network partners. Nevertheless, communication channels should be improved.

VHS Chance employ 69 contracted employees and more or less than 55 free-lancers. Furthermore, there is an administration for the whole Fachbereich (accountancy, IT, service and organisation, technical support, caretaker) employing 21 people.

The contracted employees are diverse in terms of age, gender, sexual orientation, cultural background. 10 of the 69 have migration background, but they are mostly teacher. In the management and the administrative staff, you will rarely find a migrant. For the free-lancer exact figures are not available. They are diverse in terms of age and gender, but there are only very few migrant trainers.

In the job-advertisement "male, female and diverse" are invited and people with migration background and disabled ones are asked specially to apply. It is pointed out that a photo is not wanted attached to the application documents. But nevertheless nor the ability to work in a diverse institution and to develop the diversity of the institution neither the intercultural competence is not asked or tested in the job-advertisement.



The only step taken is checking the CV, to see, if the person has professional experience with intercultural challenges and/or appropriate further training is compulsory. Indicators for this professional experience could be e.g. working with intercultural groups, in an intercultural organisation, with refugees. The indicators are not clearly defined.

A general barrier for migrants to applying for a job is that the legal frameworks of collective wage agreement (Tarifvertrag) and those of municipality of Hannover do not allow employing somebody without recognized qualification. So comparable abilities, qualifications and professional experience could not be acknowledged, the formal recognition, the expected professional degree are compulsory.

The institution offers flexible working conditions in the meaning, that the start and end of daily work is flexible. In addition, someone can apply for a mobile working place for enabling someone to work partly at home. However, halal food or a prayer room are not provided (but for instance vegetarian food is provided every day and that meets the requirements of most religions). The VHS Chance is a secular institution and any kind of religion has to be kept outside.

2.3 The networks

VHS Chance is networking with a wide range of organizations and bodies, busy in different areas. Under them are migrant organizations. VHS Chance is responsible for the “Hannover Diversity Network” (5) in cooperation with another institution. This network includes NGOs, adult education centres, public bodies and a few enterprises. Concretely VHS Chance cooperates with a refugee organisation (“Unter einem Dach”) (6) for organizing common events, and it is part of the network “ALBuM” (7), which has aimed to foster the entrepreneurship and the employability of migrants in origin and follows and cultural approach nowadays ALBuM includes Adult Education Centers and Turkish and Iranian organizations. In addition, cooperation with a Bulgarian association works very productive.

Especially for the training and education of migrants, VHS Chance cooperates with other adult education institutions in the way that participants will be forwarded to them if VHS Chance does not provide the right offer at right time. In this way they avoid that participants have to wait for their (language-) training.

However, the migrant organizations are not involved in recruitment campaigns. Nowadays, there is a high demand for courses and so VHS Chance does not organize any recruitment except publishing the program in printed and online version.

Resources

5. <https://www.vhs-hannover.de/aus-den-programmbereichen/projekte/hannoversches-diversity-netzwerk-hadi.html>; 07.01.2021
6. <https://unter-einem-dach.org>; 07.01.2021
7. <https://album-hannover.org/home>; 07.01.2021



2.4 Education

Teachers and trainers face usually very heterogeneous groups in their daily work. What is VHS Chance doing to support them and the students?

Special support for participants with difficulties in some specific subject is provided: additional lessons are provided; migrants are allowed to use a dictionary, peer-to-peer learning, tailor-made courses for different stages of knowledge and learning ability. VHS Chance provides support to teachers for handling intercultural conflicts. Training sessions for intercultural competences are organized for all the staff including the teachers. Furthermore, teachers are educated for carrying out intercultural social training with their students. But what is true for contracted teachers is not equally true for freelance trainers. They do not have the same opportunity to participate in those trainings.

The methodologies in the courses promote integration, for example in the long-term trainings the welcoming sessions are orientated on getting to know each other and coming together for establishing a collaborative learning environment. Learning sessions are organized in small heterogeneous groups; the participants are obliged to speak German in school for avoiding separated mother tongue related groups.



That we do not only teach them the subject matters. We are aware for the participants in a holistic way, included all the challenges of their integration!

(Trainer for accountancy)

2.5 Conclusion

The institution has a self-perception of openness for everybody. But it is only partly realised, e.g. no information in other language than German are provided, second language is not compulsory for staff in a higher position (e.g. department heads) and the job-advertisement could be improved for finding staff, who is able to foster the diversity of the institution and last but not least an explicit diversity statement is missing. And fatally, most employees do not even know the mission statement.



3.The Change and Learning Process - from an institution “well on the way” to an open institution with diverse staff

3.1 Aims and Approaches

"The requirements here are not only a change in the composition of the participants. At least as important is a (re)orientation of continuing education organizations with the social mandate to maintain democratic structures in society and to take a stand against discrimination and social inequality“ (8) - this is how Alisha M.B. Heinemann describes the demand on a continuing education institution committed to diversity and democracy.

VHS Chance is already well on the way to being such an open adult education institution committed to diversity. However, there is also a clear need for improvement and a process must be set in motion so that all employees deal with the topic in depth and are not satisfied with what has been achieved. In recent years, there has been a strong focus on "gender", "sexual identity" and "sexual orientation" in terms of diversity. It was therefore a good time to look again at cultural background, ethnicity and religion as important diversity criteria and to identify where changes and improvements are needed in order to live up to the propagated claim of being an open institution.

Based on the case study on VHS Chance, 4 important areas of change were identified: Revise the mission statement to include a diversity statement and communicate the mission statement throughout the facility. The mission statement is outdated, a diversity statement is missing, and most employees are not aware of it.

- Better support for freelance faculty as well, such as training in culturally sensitive teaching that is free and flexible for them.
- More efforts to acquire diverse staff and ensure that staff are cross-culturally competent and committed to the diversity of the institution.
- Improve multilingualism in the workforce.
- Multilingual information and outreach to better engage target audiences.

"The focus of current debates about institutional opening processes is on the key organizational areas of continuing education, such as personnel, program, and audience policies. The goal is to enable organizations to respond to the challenges of a migration society both at the structural and personnel level and in terms of content orientation and the composition of participants." (9)

Resources

8. Heinemann, Stoffels, Wachter; Erwachsenenbildung für die Migrationsgesellschaft, Bielefeld 2018, S. 13 translated in English

9. ibid, translated in english



The recommendations for VHS Chance are aimed precisely at this structural and personnel level in the long term. However, the goal of the change process in the medium term had to be that VHS Chance with its employees becomes aware again of its claim to be an institution also for foreigners and migrants and initiates the appropriate steps for improvement. This process should involve employees from all levels (administration and service, management, teaching staff) in order to find a broad consensus and achieve a deep identification with the goal of the diverse institution. This required not only raising awareness of diversity issues at the personal and organizational level in the adult education organization, but also concrete actions to promote inclusion and diversity at the organizational level and strengthening the personal competencies of adult education organization staff in dealing with diversity.

3.2 Activities:

3.2.1 Commitment with management

Even though this change process must not be organized "top-down", as this would not ensure that everyone identifies with the goal of the process, the first thing that must be done is to get management involved with the issue and get behind the goal. A change process requires activities, guidance and, above all, resources, which can only be provided by management.

In an initial meeting, the results of the case study and the resulting recommendations for change were presented to the head of VHS Chance. There was great willingness to implement the change process, and all concerns were considered equally important. Since the multilingualism of the website was tied to planned technical changes, this topic was postponed until later; the revision of the mission statement, the improvement of staff acquisition, and the support of freelance trainers were considered priorities.



Great importance was attached to the development of the mission statement in particular, as this entails a more in-depth examination by all employees of the topic of diversity and the question of what goals are being pursued with the educational work. As job advertisements and application procedures are due in the near future due to the retirement of several employees, this point was also considered to be dealt with immediately.

The next step was to present and discuss the results of the case study and the change processes in the three teams "Job and Career", "School for Adults" and "Integration" before developing a project plan. The human resources department should also be involved.

In addition, since VHS Chance is part of the Adult Education Department, the concerns had to be coordinated with the department's management.

3.2.2 Just Come up with a Plan!

And then everything changed, the Corona virus reached Germany, VHS Chance had to close down in the lockdown and work at least for the most part in the home office until further notice. Priorities shifted from one moment to the next.

Adult education had to be completely reorganized in this time of pandemic, online offerings had to be developed, technically implemented and administratively planned, teaching locations that were not hygiene-compliant had to be abandoned and new ones found. Conferences to discuss the mission statement were definitely out of the question. The agreed continuation of the project was put on hold for the time being.

Plans are good! But they must always be adapted to new realities, even if changes are not as drastic as required by the Corona pandemic.



In any case, I hope your plan takes shape, because the topic remains relevant.

Stakeholders motivate us in Corona-Times



Management commitment is an indispensable prerequisite for change processes

3.2.3 Restart with new priorities

Under the question of what is feasible under the changed conditions, new priorities for the first steps of the change process were agreed with the management of VHS Chance: Revising the mission statement remains important and unavoidable, but it will not be possible to implement it in the longer term until operations have returned to normal through and through. Improving job postings and application procedures are still on the agenda, as is offering freelance teachers intercultural training. The offer is to be an online course, as no face-to-face events are possible at the time and, moreover, in the long term this is a more flexible solution for freelance trainers. The management assures full support.

3.2.4 Implementation

Job-advertisement with regard to staff committed to diversity.

During the project period, three positions were filled in VHS Chance (1 Head of Department, 1 Teacher, 1 Clerk). While all job postings referenced the need for intercultural competency, this requirement was one of several. The importance of diversity for the institution had to be emphasized much more, so that it was clear to applicants that diverse people should apply and that diversity competence was an absolute necessity for the position.

As a first step, we looked at comparable job postings from other institutions only to find that we could not find any that matched our vision. So we would be breaking new ground. A draft text was created in collaboration with HR and submitted to various staff familiar with diversity and the project coach for feedback. The final version was submitted to the Adult Education Department and the higher-level Human Resources Department. In November 2020, the first position with this addition could be posted. Other departments at the state capital have adopted the wording.

Assessing intercultural competence in the job interview

As a matter of principle, job interviews at VHS Chance are based on a previously agreed, binding interview guideline that gives all applicants equal opportunities and ensures comparability. A formulated "horizon of expectations" is prepared by the relevant specialist and made available to the selection committee so that everyone knows what answers, what solutions to problems are to be expected. The interview is recorded, the protocol is later the basis for the selection. In addition to the relevant supervisors, a specialist, the staff council, and, if necessary, the disability representative and someone from the personnel office are also present at the selection. This means that there are also different perspectives on an applicant. Although this procedure limits flexibility in the application situation, it largely prevents discrimination.

Die Landeshauptstadt Hannover hat das Ziel, die Vielfalt der Bevölkerung auch in der Stadtverwaltung abzubilden. Sie erkennt damit Vielfalt als wichtigen Teil ihrer Unternehmenskultur an und ist bestrebt, ein offenes Arbeitsumfeld zu schaffen, das Menschen unabhängig von ihrer ethnischen, kulturellen und sozialen Herkunft, ihres Alters, ihrer Behinderung, ihrer Religion sowie ihrer sexuellen oder geschlechtlichen Identität gleiche Chancen bietet.

Wir bestärken Menschen mit einer Migrationsbiografie sich zu bewerben, da wir ihren Anteil in allen Bereichen und Ebenen erhöhen möchten.



In the three application procedures mentioned above, different strategies were used to assess intercultural or diversity competence. In all cases, the first step was to look for clues in the resume before the applicant was even selected for the interview.

Then, in the interview itself, there were different actions:

- In the interview guide, the applicant is asked how diversity and gender competencies relate to the position being sought.
- In each application process, the applicant is given a task to complete and present. This task tests, for example, the applicant's competence in communicating administrative procedures in a way that is appropriate to the target group, or the applicant's ability to communicate with the target group.
- The applicant is asked to consider how to resolve a conflict to the satisfaction of all parties involved, which addresses language barriers and different cultural customs in communication.

If required for the position, part of the interview will be conducted in a second language.

In the reflection with the DivCap coach, it was determined that questions alone are not sufficient to assess attitudes and competencies, but that it is necessary to see someone in action. In the future, tasks should be set in such a way that the result is presented in a role play between the applicant and an employee.



When creating the task, make sure that it has a strong diversity component but does not serve common stereotypes

3.3 What to be considered when developing the role-play

Cultures are systems of meaning and orientation, which consist of rules, values and norms and represent the basis of every community. Common definitions of culture include that it can refer not only to origin, but also to a society, organization or group. However, it can be seen that the term is predominantly equated with culture of origin. Thus, when people speak of "culture," they predominantly mean culture of origin, ethnicity or nationality.

The standardization of and focus on culture of origin is problematic, since it means that individuals are reduced to their nationality. Other important experiences, characteristics and imprints are left out. This one-sided view has the identity is strongly linked to a culture of origin.

The dynamic concept of culture, on the other hand, assumes that cultures are not closed containers, but are interrelated and changeable. People share many things in common, but belonging to a particular culture does not determine who we are as people. We belong to several cultural groups and are influenced by them.

Each person is part of numerous collectives that are, in principle, distinct social groups. Some groups are more important, some are more insignificant. All groups, however, shape an individual and provide social orientation. The groups need not be independent of each other, however. One can be part of different collectives that overlap. Collectives can therefore have different bases. This can be religion, gender, political orientation, origin of parents, language, hobbies, professions, place of residence, appearance and much more (11).

3.4 Lessons Learned

When formulating a diversity-oriented job advertisement, great care must be taken to choose the right words. Feedback from qualified employees should be sought. Beforehand, it is necessary to agree on what is meant by "diversity" and which aspects are important for the institution!

In large public institutions, these additions to the job advertisement must be confirmed by all relevant levels. This is tedious, but also creates a broad impact.

The task and the corresponding role play must be planned very carefully.

On the one hand, diversity competencies should become visible; on the other hand, we must not serve clichés in the task! This balancing act is important.

There will always be internal discussions about whether this is really important.

Time must be taken here every time to point out the importance of diversity for an adult education institution and the personnel suitable in this context.

3.5 Good Practice Examples

In the Annex you can find three good practice examples:



Text for a job-advert to address diversity orientated staff and to present the institution in a diversity-open way



Interview guide for the assessment with focus on the diversity-skills of the interviewed person



Instructions for a roleplay for assessing the intercultural and communication competences in the assessment procedure.

Resources

11. DVV International | Bildungsbrücken bauen II. Lehr- und Lernmaterialien
119 Modul 2 - Dossiers



4. Diverse staff - a real benefit for adult education

4.1 Summary

At the beginning of the interviews for the case studies, the question was asked why the institution wanted to address the issue of diversity and what it hoped to gain from doing so.

Several interviewees gave their views on the topic.

Important motives are therefore on the one hand the social responsibility as an adult education institution to address all people and also migrants, on the other hand the direct benefit for the institution itself to better address new target groups and new participants and to strengthen the productive work in the teams.

It is a duty of VHS Chance with its social responsibility to support migrants in their process of integration. We have to empower them to step into the job-market.



(Teacher)

The question now arises at this point whether the measures implemented have served these goals and to what extent this can be determined.

Benefit for the institution from the advantages of diversity:
-Diverse teams means different experiences
-Different identification targets for participants or possible participants

(Manager)



"Different teams means different experiences". Addressing migrants more strongly in job advertisements, or even more broadly, addressing all diverse groups, and more closely examining attitudes toward diversity and experience in dealing with it, will certainly contribute to making the teams more diverse in the long term. The first results are visible: Three positions have been filled in recent weeks: 2 teachers and a team leader. All three selected applicants have a migration background (1 African, 1 Turkish, 1 Arab) and have proven to be competent in the application process also regarding the topic of diversity and interculturality. This leads to a workforce and also especially to teachers with whom participants from different backgrounds can identify and whom they can also regard as role models. If it leads to more diverse participants cannot be verified at this time, but the measure is clearly working toward this goal, but additional measures are compulsory.

Addressing new target groups: A new website with different language functions and a mission statement clearly formulated with diversity in mind are essential for this goal - both are being planned, but their impact cannot be evaluated at the moment.

Other measures, such as strengthening language skills and making it clear which language is spoken by whom, intercultural training for trainers, will also certainly contribute in the future to migrants feeling more addressed, for example, when they enter the facility and find someone who speaks their language or feel understood and well taken care of in the course and communicate this to their community. However, all of these effects cannot be evaluated at the moment; the facility has been closed for many months due to the Corona pandemic and is just beginning to cautiously reopen to visitors and participants.

What is obvious as a success of the project in the facility, however, is that actually already since the first discussion about the results of the case studies and the recommendations for change and improvement, the topic of "diversity" has become more focused and measures have been initiated that go beyond the recommendations. For example, at the department level, with the participation of VHS Chance, an Erasmus+ mobility project was successfully applied for to improve the language skills of staff and trainers. Unfortunately, due to Corona-related travel restrictions, the project could not start yet, results are not available. Another idea is being pursued, namely how to make employees' language skills visible while maintaining data protection. This shows that despite the immense challenges posed by the Corona pandemic, the importance of the diversity issue has been recognized and worked on as best as possible.

4.2 Lessons Learned

Initiating change processes in an adult education institution must be done with a high degree of flexibility in planning. Fluctuations in staff, management and especially freelancers constantly create new situations. In addition, the facility is highly dependent on its environment - only if the environment makes it possible for people to come to the facility can it work and function. If this is not possible for some reason, such as a pandemic and a corresponding lock-down, priorities are changed from one moment to the next, work processes are redefined, and staff are assigned other tasks. Project planning must therefore be flexible and able to react to such influences.

Regardless of which measure is used to start the change process, a certain momentum starts and the topic of "diversity" inevitably comes into focus and is increasingly widely discussed and dealt with. The importance is recognized by many and new approaches and ideas emerge beyond the planned measures. It is important that project planning incorporates and supports these.



The commitment of the management is indispensable for every change process. Only if the management is fully committed can resources be used for the change and the topic gains the necessary importance. It is not enough to make sure of this commitment at the beginning of the project; it must be constantly renewed in the process. This is an important task for a coach who accompanies the change.

The recruiting of diverse staff is essential for adult education with the aim of diversity and openness. Only if the institution has diverse staff can it address diverse participants and respond sensitively to the different requirements, attitudes and expectations. In addition, visible, diverse staff enables identification with the institution; participants feel that they are being addressed in a very different way.

Enabling the experience: Moving forward instead of remaining at the same point is possible and satisfactory.

Trainer about the benefit of DivCap



An earlier way to diversify the workforce was so-called positive discrimination, which culminated in a statement made at the time as follows: "It doesn't matter what education she has or what she studied, the important thing is that it's a woman who has a migration background."

Different perspectives on our work and in addition, sublime Discrimination would be identified and eliminated! People with really different background in the human resources foster a cooperative and balanced team-work!

Management about the benefit of DivCap



However, this approach not only fails to maintain the quality of the workforce, it is also incompatible with the requirements for filling positions, especially in the public sector.

The way forward, then, must be to increasingly invite people from immigrant backgrounds, for example, to apply for jobs and to present themselves convincingly as an employer committed to diversity. In addition to presenting itself to the public, e.g., through an appropriate mission statement and a corresponding visual presentation, this also includes appropriate practice in job advertisements and application procedures.

This process must go hand in hand with procedures for selecting personnel who have intercultural or diversity competencies.

These must be ascertained in the application process and validly determined in the interview. These two processes are therefore interlinked, since a diverse workforce is better able to critically examine application procedures than a homogeneous one, and secondly, appropriate calls for applications and selection processes can only be initiated and carried out if managers and HR managers have the appropriate competencies.

Another important factor for framework conditions in which diverse personnel can be acquired and work is the continuous training of employees and teachers/trainers in intercultural competence. Communication between people from different cultural backgrounds has many pitfalls that can lead to misunderstandings and ultimately impede

Here is an example from class, as it could have happened in the cooperation in the institution:

Ms. K. fled Syria and now lives in Germany. She is usually late for German class. The teacher says nothing about this, but is of course annoyed, but he wants to be culturally open and he thinks that punctuality is not taken so seriously in the Arab world. He thus avoids talking to Mrs. K. about why she is always late and whether this can be changed. Otherwise, he would have learned from her that she lives alone with two small children, whom she first has to take to kindergarten in the morning, but which does not open until 07:30. Since she does not have a car, she then has to take the underground to class and it is not possible to arrive in time for class to start. As in this case, the automatism of "cultural background" often prevents actual engagement with people and thus possible approaches to solutions.

4.3 What worked Well?

What could be done Better?

One strength of the change process at VHS Chance was, on the one hand, the great willingness of the staff to deal with the topic of "diversity" despite the more difficult conditions due to the Corona pandemic and, on the other hand, the existing experience with the topic.

Since a few employees have a migration background and courses are also offered for people with a migration background and, in recent years, increasingly for refugees, the topic is not new. In addition, across departments, Goal 5 for sustainable development of the 2030 Agenda "Gender Equality" was the focus of the work in 2019. This meant that experience in dealing with diversity was available and could be built on.

Change takes patience and time - we know that, but in reality it is difficult to endure and brings with it many problems. On the one hand, the change process took place within the framework of a scheduled project, so that results should also be available at a certain point in time. On the other hand, an adult education institution must constantly face current challenges and, if necessary, postpone activities that cannot be accomplished at the moment.

The external coach has only a weak position in this structure, he can only move as much as the management allows him to. Another problem with the "time" factor is that it also involves personnel changes during the process, and new personnel often set new priorities. One must be aware of these hurdles in the change process in an adult education institution and include them in the project planning.

At this point, it is once again important to secure the support of the management from the very beginning. The management, in turn, has the task of selecting a coach for this change process whom it trusts and trusts to be competent, because the coach gains many insights into the organization that must be treated confidentially and must under no circumstances be made accessible to the public or even to competing educational institutions. Without these detailed insights, however, change is not possible. In the case at hand, this was a given; the DivCap coach was accepted and enjoyed a high level of trust. It was assured that publications such as in the project results would only be made anonymously.

Assuring this from the beginning is an important prerequisite for confidential cooperation in change processes.

5. ANNEX - Good Practice Examples

5.1 Text of job-announcement in English

The Municipality of Hannover aims to reflect the diversity of the population in the city administration as well. It thus recognizes diversity as an important part of its corporate culture and strives to create an open working environment that offers equal opportunities to people regardless of their ethnic, cultural and social background, age, disability, religion and sexual or gender identity.

We encourage people with a migration biography to apply, as we want to increase their share in all areas and levels.



5.2 Interview Guide with Explanations

This guideline has been developed to assess someone who has applied for a leadership position in the adult education in Germany. It should be customized to the kind of institution, the country and the needs of the aspired function. It is an example for a guideline and should not be taken as a blueprint for an assessment procedure. Take out what you need!

Guideline Interview Assessment

Department: _____

Function: _____

Interviewer: _____

Name of Applicant: _____

Requirements, Tasks and Questions	Interview notes Situation / Behavior / Result Distribution of points based on this rating scale from 1 - 5
<p>Introduction Phase</p> <p>We have read your application documents carefully. Nevertheless, we would like to ask you to name and describe one main task that you have performed in your current job or, if applicable, in a previous job.</p> <p>What do you like most, most about your current job?</p> <p>Once you think about your current job - what would you like to do without in the context of the position you are seeking?</p> <p>If necessary, you can ask to map the current tasks on a scale of 1 -10. 1 means I don't like to do very much, 10 means I like to do very much.</p> <p>Through these questions, we can gain an impression of whether the applicant is able to name focal points from current work that are relevant to the desired position, whether there is a reflected attitude towards preferences, and how openly answers are given.</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.2 Interview Guide with Explanations

Requirements, Tasks and Questions	Interview notes Situation / Behavior / Result Distribution of points based on this rating scale from 1 - 5
<p>Main Phase</p> <p>Please recall a situation in your professional life that was particularly challenging for you.</p> <p>If you have a situation present, we would first like to ask you to briefly and concisely describe this situation to us. Then I will ask you a few questions about it:</p> <p>How did you notice that you were facing a particular challenge? Please describe what you perceived, what clues did you recognize? Once you identified the challenge as such, what goal was associated with dealing with it? Who did you need, or who or what could you fall back on to achieve the desired goal?</p> <p>What was the result / outcome? Were you satisfied with the result? What did you learn for yourself from the situation? Would you act differently from today's perspective?</p> <p>This set of questions can be used to gain an impression of how the applicant reacts to challenges, but above all whether and how quickly he or she recognizes challenges as such. You learn something about the ability to proceed in a structured manner, possibly something about the ability to perceive conflict and the resources available to the applicant for conflict resolution. One also learns whether the applicant is able to present a challenge and how to overcome it in a structured way. One learns something about his/her conflict resolution strategies and about his/her ability to reflect.</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.2 Interview Guide with Explanations

Requirements, Tasks and Questions	Interview notes Situation / Behavior / Result Distribution of points based on this rating scale from 1 - 5
<p>Imagine that you have started a project. Please describe very briefly what the project is about. We do not want to talk to you about the project as such, but would like to ask you to do the following: Describe for us what framework conditions you need in order to carry out the project successfully?</p> <p>Who would be responsible for creating what you see as the necessary framework?</p> <p>How would you put together the project group, or what would you look for in personnel acquisition?</p> <p>What could prevent the successful implementation of the project?</p> <p>What do you think: once a project has been started, does it have to be carried out?</p> <p><i>This can be used to find out whether the applicant is aware of his or her role and responsibility, whether he or she has a realistic and reflective attitude toward problems that arise in the context of a project, and whether he or she keeps diversity in mind when making personnel decisions.</i></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Why do you think diversity competency is relevant to this position?</p> <p><i>Response Expectations: Knowledge of diversity; relevance in leadership role; relevance to the institution's PR.</i></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.2 Interview Guide with Explanations

Requirements, Tasks and Questions	Interview notes Situation / Behavior / Result Distribution of points based on this rating scale from 1 - 5
<p>Presentation of prepared Task</p> <p>Please present the solution of the task, which we have given to you before this interview. If possible, present it in English, please.</p> <p><i>The task should be set in such a way that we learn something about the applicant's ability to comprehensively weigh up different aspects, to place them in context with one another and to present them in a way that is easy to follow. This also tells us whether the applicant has dealt with the complexity of the task or is aware of it. We also test the foreign language competence and the willingness to communicate in another language.</i></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Ability to deal with a conflict</p> <p>Please imagine the following situation: As a leader in a meeting, you represent a point of view that you believe is very balanced and appropriate. A member of the discussion group represents an opposing point of view. How do you deal with the situation, what would be a possible solution from your point of view?</p> <p><i>This question allows us to find out whether there is an awareness of conflict in the context of the management function and whether the applicant has strategies for resolving conflicts.</i></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.2 Interview Guide with Explanations

Requirements, Tasks and Questions	Interview notes Situation / Behavior / Result Distribution of points based on this rating scale from 1 - 5
<p>Role-play for assessing communication skills and intercultural competences</p> <p>Please imagine the following situation: "A married couple, who obviously have a migration background, demand an immediate interview with you. The husband insists on the immediate enrollment of his wife in a German course. He is highly agitated and complains that this is the third time he has gone to the facility to ask for a place in a course for his wife and that he cannot always take time off from work to finally bring this cumbersome registration procedure to a successful conclusion. He threatens to complain to the Mayor".</p> <p>Please show us how you conduct the conversation as the responsible leader and with what result / with what feedback the couple leaves the conversation. What considerations led to your behavior?</p> <p><i>By observing the behavior and actions during the role play, we can learn something about the empathy and intercultural competence of the applicant. The partner in the role-play should be prepared by information about his role and the background.</i></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Final Phase</p> <p>Suppose your current colleagues were here in the room right now. How would they respond to the question of what they value most about you?</p> <p>If your current colleagues or employees had the chance to change something about you. What would they want to change?</p> <p><i>Through these questions, we find out whether the applicant can see himself/herself from the perspective of his/her colleagues and co-workers. Does she/he find it difficult to answer them? How reflective / confident is she/he in dealing with her/his strengths and weaknesses?</i></p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>

5.2 Interview Guide with Explanations

Requirements, Tasks and Questions	Interview notes Situation / Behavior / Result Distribution of points based on this rating scale from 1 - 5
<p>Impressions from Interview</p> <p>Demonstrates a confident demeanour, appears calm and poised.</p> <p>Formulates in an open, approachable and addressee-orientated manner.</p> <p>Can convince communication partners.</p> <p>Engaged, identifies with the topics.</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>General</p> <p>Quality of application documents</p> <p>Previous employment reconciled with the diversity of the work area?</p>	<p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> 4 <input type="checkbox"/> 5 <input type="checkbox"/></p>

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VHS Kursprogramm (Germany)

Culturally sensitive teaching - Indispensable in a diverse adult education setting

- Enhancing diversity competences of trainers
- Diversity in Human Resource Management

1. General description of the organisation - VHS

Kursprogramm: tradition and change for over 100 years

VHS Kursprogramm is a division of the “Ada-und-Theodor-Lessing-Volkshochschule Hannover (VHS Hannover) “. The VHS Hannover was founded in 1919 by Ada and Theodor Lessing and celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2019. Nowadays it is the “Fachbereich Volkshochschule”, a department of the “Landeshauptstadt Hannover (LHH) “, the municipality of Hanover. Thus, for VHS Kursprogramm the legal frameworks of the LHH are compulsory, encompassing HR processes and goals. An advisory board facilitates the communication between the city council and the VHS Hannover.

The LHH has signed the Charta der Vielfalt (diversity charta: a corporate initiative to promote diversity in companies and institutions) in 2008 as well as the EU-Charta for equal opportunities. The departments of the municipality engage in various activities and networks promoting sensitivity towards different aspects of diversity and reducing discrimination.

In addition, the LHH is part of several international networks like Mayors for Peace, UNESCO Creative City Network, Rainbow City Network, Farbenspiel and it established integration advisory boards. Throughout the last years, the LHH initiated various participatory processes for citizens and employees alike „Hannover - internationale Stadt“, „Lokaler Integrationsplan 2.0 - Wir in Hannover“, „Hannover - kosmopolitisch“, „Kulturentwicklungsplan“, „Schulentwicklungsplan“. The overall goal of these were to adapt its services to the needs of a more and more diverse urban society.

VHS Hannover is financed by the fees of participants as well as public subsidies from the municipality, the Ministry for Science and Culture of Lower Saxony and third-party funds (e.g. employment agency, social assurance, European Social Fund, European Commission).

It consists of three divisions: central departmental affairs (43.0), VHS Chance (43.1) and VHS Kursprogramm/Course program (OE 43.2).

Central departmental affairs is taking care of the infrastructure and maintenance to offer classes of all different sorts, e.g. organizing job interviews, making schedules for the staff to run VHS and so on. VHS Chance offers training for special targets groups with a focus on basic education, German as a foreign language and school of second chance as well educational counselling. These trainings are mostly refinanced by the state or have very low fees in order to diminish obstacles for participation.

VHS Kursprogramm on the other hand is the division of the VHS Hannover, that offers a diverse educational program and training to the general public. In general, the costs of its courses and training programs need to be covered by participants' fees with the exception of most courses in the section political education. In order to facilitate social and educational participation for all, VHS Kursprogramm offers a generous discount policy for people with small incomes, though. In the action concept "My Hanover 2030", the VHS Kursprogramm developed the concept "VHS Room3", which provides offers of political, social, ecological, economic and social education for free and strengthens the importance of the adult education center as a so-called third place.¹

In 2020, VHS Kursprogramm consisted of 3 teams - „VHS International“, „VHS Aktiv“ and „Political Education“ with a total of 10 different program areas. Due to staff turnover in several positions and the pandemic-related suspension of all staffing procedures for several months in 2020, the opportunity arose at the same time to better align the entire organisational structure with the changing educational needs and to compensate for eliminated positions by changing the structure of numerous program areas and teams.



As of January 1, 2021, the department „Beruf|Digital“ / Occupation|Digital with its 10 employees was transferred from VHS Chance to VHS Kursprogramm and eliminated jobs. At the same time, the previous teams of VHS Kursprogramm, VHS International and VHS Aktiv, were merged with additional positions from other teams to form a new department VHS InterAktiv with 18 employees, while the position for political education was eliminated. This was also accompanied by office moves.

Therefore, since 2021, VHS Kursprogramm consists of a total of two new subject departments: „VHS InterAktiv“ and „Beruf|Digital“. VHS InterAktiv offers educational formats in the areas of foreign languages, health, ecology, cultural education, political education and is involved in EU projects. VHS Beruf|Digital organizes courses in the areas of IT, skills, inclusion, vocational training and retraining, as well as continuing education for pedagogical staff in early childhood education.

Resources

¹ Stangl Werner, <https://lexikon.stangl.eu/25839/third-place-dritter-ort>



2. Constantly changing - Bearing in mind the diversity of society

2.1 The self-perception of VHS Kursprogramm

"We are committed to respect for human dignity, openness, dialogue and equal opportunities" is the central statement of the mission statement, which was developed in 2003 and revised in 2010. This important statement illustrates VHS Hannover's and VHS Kursprogramm's overall aim to provide education to all people in Hannover.

According to the mission statement, the course descriptions in the course booklet as well as the homepage, VHS Kursprogramm tries to present itself as an institution open to the general public and anybody seeking adult educational offers.

But this is mainly restricted to text, only a few pictures in the public relation materials and channels depict diverse participants. And the institution publishes everything in German only.

"In addition, our program serves to reduce gender-specific disadvantages and to integrate migrants into our society. In doing so, we want to maintain our strength as a major provider of public welfare-oriented educational work with a social and emancipatory profile in Lower Saxony" is another important statement in the mission statement that underlines the general awareness towards certain aspects of diversity and the organisations's aim to help reduce disadvantages for certain groups with educational offers.

But is all of this really enough? And how relevant is the mission statement in the daily work of the planners of the different program sections? The mission statement hasn't been revised in over 10 years and an explicit diversity statement is missing. And most employees do not even know this mission statement and those who do, find it hard to read.

In their 100-year tradition, Volkshochschulen (adult education centers) have always reacted promptly to social developments and changes and the resulting individual educational needs and provided appropriate offers. This also applies to VHS Kursprogramm, which, thanks to its well trained and motivated staff and its very good spatial and technical infrastructure, offers a broad program for all adults that is geared to current developments and topics. A section of its program addresses special needs of special target groups like men, women, elderly people and people with disabilities as well as LGBTIQ*. But how to address and how to plan offers for certain target groups for the more general courses is not yet reflected or discussed on an institutional level. Instead, this is entirely based on the individual knowledge and engagement of program planners.

2.2 Human Resources

Since the LHH and VHS Kursprogramm try to represent the diversity of the society in its employment structure, a gender equality plan determines goals for all functions in all departments. Therefore, in job advertisements, there always will be a statement that a member of a certain underrepresented gender will be preferred if the person is equally qualified. People with a migration background or people with a disability are especially encouraged to apply for job positions.

The staff structure of VHS Kursprogramm is currently still limited in diversity. Of the total of 29 positions, 4 are currently vacant and need to be filled. 21 of the 25 current employees are female and only 4 male. 6 employees are known to have a migrant background, 2 of which are interns on temporary contracts. In the next 6 years, 5 more employees will retire due to age, including 2 of the 4 men. One employee has a severe disability and one employee has come out as homosexual at work. No reliable statements can be made regarding the religion and social situation of the employees. In the last 10 years, there have only been about 10 new appointments, but 3 men and 4 people with a migration background were recruited. A general barrier for migrants applying for a job in the public sector - and therefore at VHS Kursprogramm - is the collective wage agreement (Tarifvertrag). For each position the necessary formal qualification has to be indicated and anybody without this qualification cannot be employed. Comparable abilities, qualifications and professional experience cannot be acknowledged, the expected professional degrees are compulsory. Therefore, VHS Kursprogramm offers stages for the recognition of a foreign occupation or profession.

The institution also offers flexible working conditions with flexible hours within the working day, and the option of a mobile working place for enabling someone to work partly at home. VHS Kursprogramm is a secular institution and any kind of religion is respected but not actively supported (e.g. there are no prayer rooms).

During the project period, there were also several personnel changes in VHS Kursprogramm and its network that influenced the course of the project since all management positions in VHS Kursprogramm that were entrusted with the DivCap project were newly filled. The previous head of VHS Kursprogramm ("Bereichsleitung") became the first woman since Ada Lessing to head VHS Hannover, and the new divisional head of VHS Kursprogramm started January 2020. The project management of DivCap also changed: After the retirement of the former project leader, the head of cultural department took over the management of the project for VHS Kursprogramm in 2020.

In addition, in 2020 there was a revision process of the Local Integration Plan of the LHH, in which the VHS Hannover is actively involved on two levels.

On the management level, VHS Hannover is represented by Jacqueline Knaubert-Lang in the steering group, which is staffed with internal and external personnel and which approves the proposed concepts and measures and submits them to the LHH Council for decision. On the other hand, the project manager of DivCap is the internal spokesperson of the working group Education .

No concrete statistics can be provided on the diversity structure of freelance instructors, as only the gender dimension is systematically recorded, and only since 2019 has it been possible to specify diversity². Out of approximately 600 freelance course instructors, about 400 are women and at least 2 course instructors indicated to be other. In general, the share of course instructors with a migration background is highest in the program segment of foreign language education, because most of them are native speakers.

2.3 Networks

The employees of VHS Kursprogramm are active in various networks on different (diversity) topics and work closely with other departments and divisions within the LHH³. For example, the Hanover Diversity Network HaDi is coordinated by the DivCap project leader together with the coordination office ALBuM. In addition, the employees are also involved in networks with civil society, associations and organizations at municipal, state and federal levels as well as at the international level. Examples of this are the Diversity Working Group of the Lower Saxony Association of Adult Education Centers and the Diversity Committee of the German Adult Education Association (DVV). The participation in these networks already have a positive effect on the course program of VHS Kursprogramm in terms of diversity issues. And for most programm planers, the networks are a self-evident part of the promotion of their offers for relevant target groups of their network partners.

2.4 Education

The Lower Saxony Adult Education Act (NEBG), which regulates the content and focus of state funding, is authoritative for VHS Kursprogramm. It is important that adult education programs are geared to the needs and requirements of the population.

Freelance trainers in VHS Kursprogramm usually face very heterogeneous groups in their daily work. How does VHS Kursprogramm support them and the students in regard to diversity issues? Training on intercultural competence was offered on a mandatory basis to all employees of the municipality until 2014, after which employees continued to receive follow-up training if interest was expressed or if there was a high level of service in direct customer contact. In addition, managers have been taking part in a training module on LGBTIQ* in the workplace on a mandatory basis as part of management development (FKE). However, this does not apply to freelance trainers. Because of their status they cannot participate in those diversity trainings, provided by the municipality.

Resources

2. Hanover's Local Integration Policy revision and the new targets for the Educational sector, view Attachment 2
3. Due to the diversity of topics, a complete listing of all cooperations and network partners is not expedient and would go beyond the scope of the project report, although this listing is planned on the newly designed website.



2.5 Conclusion

The self-perception of staff and the VHS Kursprogramm as an institution as a whole is open, open-minded and diversity-sensitive. And it is definitely at an advanced level as an intercultural organization. Nevertheless, some shortcomings and potentials for improvement could be identified during the case study:



The mission statement is outdated, too long and partly incomprehensible. An explicit diversity statement should be included corresponding to a diversity policy which still has to be worked out.

The homepage and mostly all public relation material are published in German only and foreign language skills are not mandatory for programm planners nor leadership positions.

For a multi-lingual way of communication and a better approachability for participants, it is necessary to promote multilingualism and diversity competence among employees and to re-evaluate job requirements concerning these skills and competencies.

The future website should be multilingual and all general information should be available at least in English and preferably also in e.g. French (since there are many participants who want to learn German as a second language with French as first language).

Diversity training should be offered for employees and freelance instructors as well. In the long term, VHS Kursprogramm should develop and implement an ongoing reflection and monitoring system for the diversity policy, in order to ensure that it is actively carried out and current (perhaps an annual reflection).

3. The Change and Learning Process - Education for all

3.1 Aims and approaches

The central task in the area of diversity at an adult education institution such as VHS Kursprogramm is to develop and implement a diversity-sensitive and diverse course offering and to design the announcements accordingly. The professionalization of the employees as well as the participation in networks is indispensable for this.

The self-perception of staff and the institution as a whole is open, open-minded and diversity-sensitive. However, individual and overarching training needs in relation to diversity-sensitive action are not always perceived or considered, or they are put on the back burner as lower-priority training topics.

A common attitude towards diversity as well as a clearly formulated goal of the organization, how diversity should be carried out and implemented, has not yet been developed in VHS Kursprogramm. This is a central task in the context of the revision of the outdated mission statement and for the strategic orientation.

Approaches of critical colonialism and capitalism should be at the center of the discourse, when dealing with the topic of diversity with ever more differentiating groups. The goal should be a continuous discursive negotiation process. This process should include attempts to programmatically communicate the current state of research internally and externally in suitable formats. This ongoing task can only be implemented through a constructive confrontation with one's own limitations in perception.

However, a one-sided view of diversity is insufficient in this regard. And diversity management as an employment tool is implemented in many companies with the goal of increasing profits by attracting new customers, yet not as an attitude of approaching all people in a diversity-sensitive manner. Diversity mainstreaming, on the other hand, i.e. the consideration of diversity in all processes, tasks, offers, etc., is an approach that appears to be purposeful for a further education institution with the claim to serve "the social and individual emancipation of the participants, social justice and solidarity...".

In order to implement this in the future, several approaches to action and a continuous process of change are required. VHS Kursprogramm sees itself as a learning organization, and the deeper examination of diversity at all levels is an important (learning) goal.

3.2 Activities

3.2.1 Commitment of management

Far-reaching change processes that affect the attitude of an organization and its employees, such as the intensive examination of diversity, must be supported by all employees in order to be implemented successfully. Management has an important role to play in this. It must formulate the change as an important goal, initiate the process and set the framework, because a change process requires activities, guidance and, above all, resources, which can only be provided by management. Therefore, the first thing to do is to get management involved with the issue.

Before the results of the case study and the resulting recommendations for change could be presented to the head of VHS Kursprogramm and discussed with her detail in 2019, she became director of the whole VHS Hannover and her successor was to take over in January 2020. In order to give the new head of VHS Kursprogramm some time to get familiar with the colleagues, the structure and the processes first, she was contacted some time after her start via mail with the case study attached in February.

“Most important: It [Diversity] must be truly supported and driven from the top and it needs resources!!! “
(network partner)



3.2.2 Corona changed everything overnight - new priorities with surprising side effects

Then, the corona virus reached Germany, VHS Kursprogramm was closed in March 2020 due to the nationwide lockdown. And staff was to work from home as much as possible until further notice. Priorities shifted from one moment to the next, as the in person aspect of the business, which had by and large been the sole core business of VHS course programs for over 100 years, came to a complete standstill, resulting in financial and future staffing constraints.

3.2.3 Digitalisation overnight

Already in the week after the lockdown started in March 2020, the Learning Management System vhs.cloud and the integrated video conferencing system edudip , which are both used at almost all German-speaking adult education centers, were introduced on a test basis at the VHS Hannover. The employee and freelance staff online-training that followed was very time-consuming and tied up a lot of personnel capacities, nevertheless, by April 120 courses could be offered online via vhs.cloud.

At the same time, the Corona pandemic situation required constant readiness to adapt to new requirements from everyone and caused extensive additional work at the planning and administrative level in the context of the planning and implementation of offers, online and in presence.

These resources were not available for the strategic development of the entire VHS Hannover and neither for the originally planned activities in the project, such as the actually intended mission statement process, the further training of employees. Instead, the new conception of online-supported formats and the securing of a program also under corona conditions had pedagogical and economic priority over the further planned measures within the framework of the Diversity Capacities project.

3.2.4 A new plan and new opportunities for re-shaping VHS Kursprogramm towards more diversity sensitivity

Even though the pandemic put a lot of strain on the organisation in many respects, digitalization and pandemic-related postponed staffing procedures, resulted in new opportunities and requirements for organisational development - with exciting and unexpected consequences for the diversity competence of VHS Kursprogramm.

So in a long online meeting the management and the project leader and DivCap coach determined which of the original recommendations could be implemented under the changed circumstances. Furthermore, they re-assessed the much changed situation in VHS Kursprogramm in detail and developed a strategic plan with new priorities.

3.2.5 Implementation

Diversity training for employees and freelance instructors

Conducting diversity training for employees initially seemed unrealistic in 2020 due to the pandemic. However, as online offerings became more widespread, it was decided to conduct online training on diversity topics. For this purpose, existing concepts were researched and offers were obtained. These were recorded and relevant with regard to criteria such as type of implementation (presence, online, hybrid), duration, content, instructors, costs and feasibility in a company context. The compilation was given as a decision proposal to the management of the VHS Hannover.

After an intensive exchange, the decision was made in favor of two online training courses offered by the VNB (Association of Lower Saxony Educational Initiatives) as part of the #vielgestaltig project, which offers training courses on diversity topics throughout Lower Saxony. The focus is on the one hand on the specific, diversity-sensitive addressing of different target groups and on the other hand on a critical examination of one's own privileges and racism-critical action, which can be attended during working hours. Due to their status, it is difficult to offer trainings to freelance instructors in diversity competence. Participation in training courses cannot be financially supported by the VHS for tax and social security reasons. However, an online self-learning course with centrally provided content of the DVV on intercultural communication has been set up in the vhs.cloud for the freelance lecturers and also the permanent employees and advertised to all course leaders. Interested parties can use the course flexibly in terms of time and location, but beforehand they should use the Implicit Association Test of Harvard University.

Promoting multilingualism among employees and intercultural openness

A survey on multilingualism among the 105 permanent employees of the VHS Hannover made it possible to assess their language skills from level B1 for the organization - for the first time.

For this purpose, the employees were asked by email which languages they speak at least on level B1 CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). Information on language skills at levels A1 and A2 was recorded insofar as they were named. However, these are not relevant due to their limited usability in potential discussions with participants, course instructors and other persons. With a total response of 28 persons, it is noticeable that German as a mother tongue was only named by a few. Since "foreign language skills" were not explicitly asked for - only language skills were mentioned - apparently German as the mother tongue was not considered relevant in the survey by quite a few.

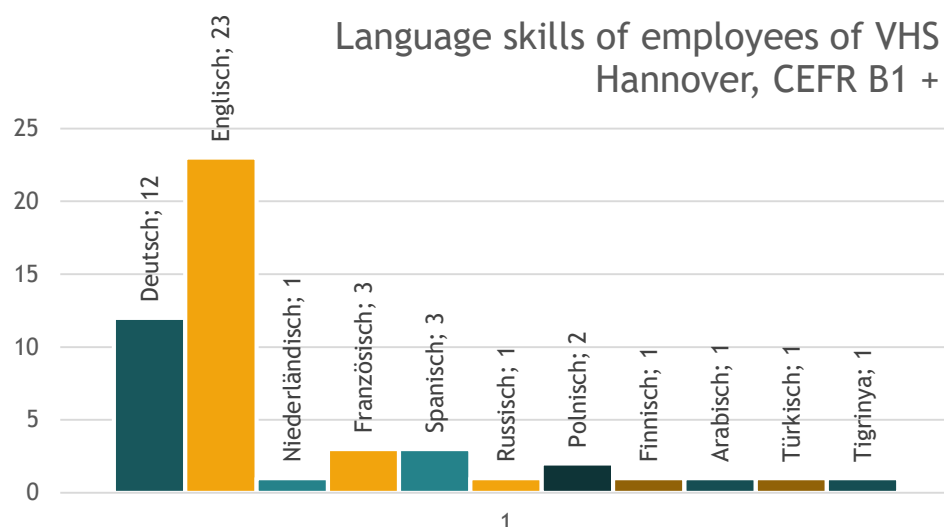


Illustration 3: Language skills of employees of VHS Hannover, CEFR B1+



The results of the survey are presented here for the entire VHS in order to have a larger sample and not to be able to draw conclusions about individuals.

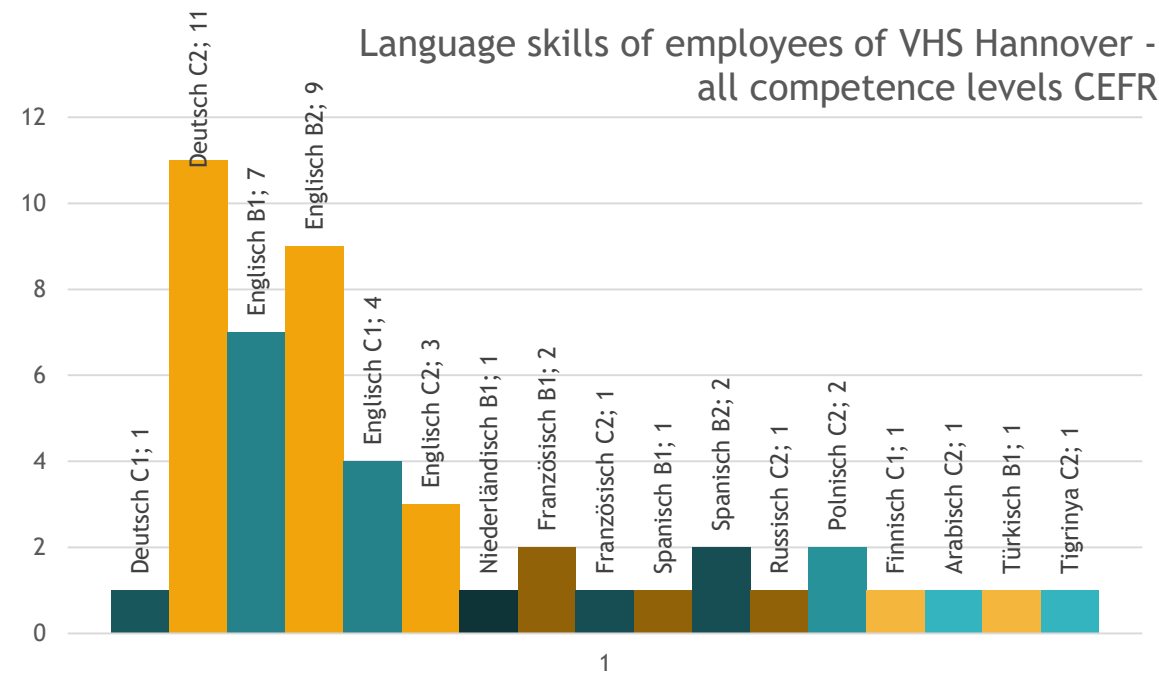


Illustration 4: Language skills of employees of VHS Hannover, all competence levels CEFR

After the feedback, the numbers were mirrored back to the management of VHS Kursprogramm in order to decide on next steps in presenting the language skills to the public in order to enhance service orientation.

Survey on diversity in the network

In order to also get to know the perspectives on diversity in the network of VHS Kursprogramm more closely and to be able to include them in the process of revising the mission statement as well as developing a diversity strategy, a short survey was conducted in a diversity-sensitive network in March 2021. The questions of the survey are attached (see attachment 1).

3.3 Lessons Learnt

3.3.1 Diversity training for employees and freelance instructors

The online staff training courses on the specific, diversity-sensitive addressing of different target groups and on a critical examination of one's own privileges and racism-critical action will take place in May 2021. In the mean-time, some of the staff as well as the freelance lectures worked on the online self-learning course. Since a participants' survey will not be conducted until the end of the semester, it is not yet possible to make a statement about learning outcomes and possible knowledge transfer into practice.

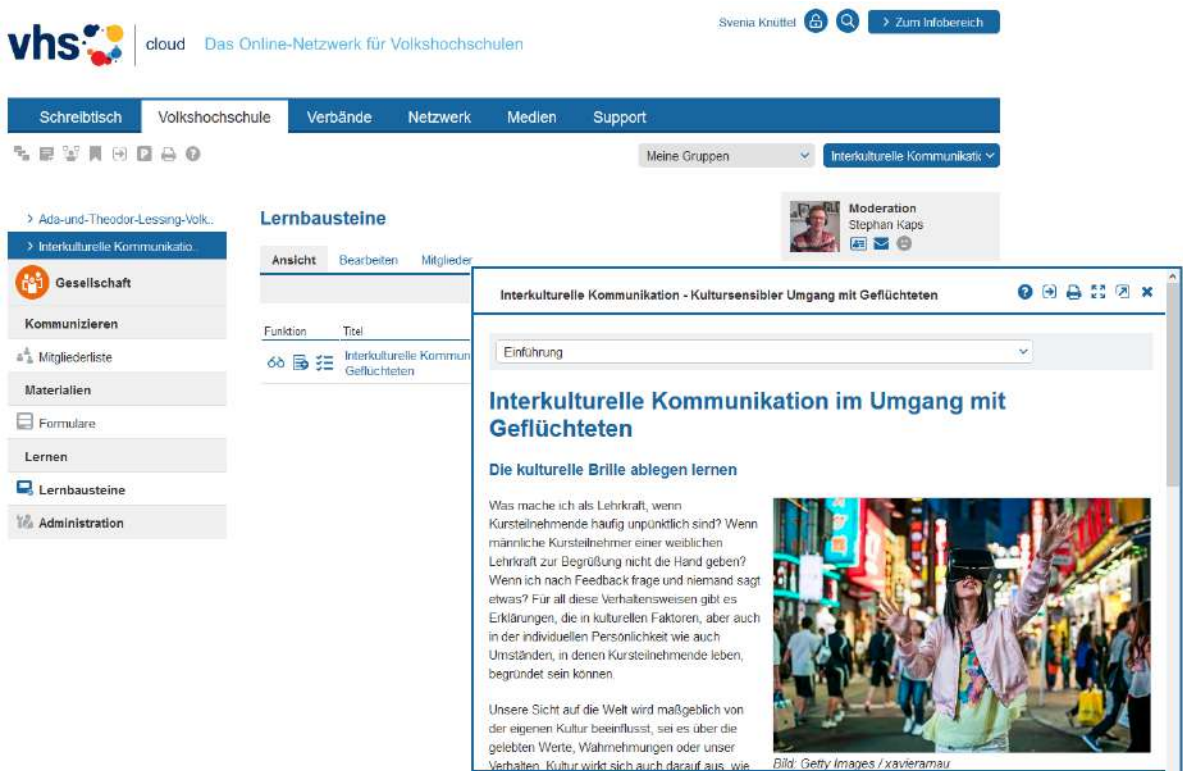


Illustration 5: Screen shot

But first feedbacks show a great willingness to participate in self-learning courses covering diversity topics. So new topics and content should be sought or developed.

3.3.2 Promoting multilingualism among employees and intercultural openness

The survey of linguistic competencies revealed that the knowledge of English, the lingua franca, is not as widespread as expected by the management. Since four positions are to be filled in the near future, the requirements for the jobs were carefully reviewed and interviews were conducted with job holders of comparable positions. The need was seen to strengthen the organization's diversity competence and intercultural openness, among other things, by increasing the multilingual competencies of employees, and the need for active participation in international network. Therefore, it was decided that social and diversity competence as well as English language skills would be a requirement for all management positions and program area management positions from now on.

Job descriptions have already been revised for three specific positions (1 team leader and 2 program area leads) to include these two job requirements in the official job description:

Aufgrund der Heterogenität der Teilnehmenden ist ein hohes Maß an sozialer und Diversitätskompetenz erforderlich. Im Rahmen der Netzwerk- und Projektarbeit sowie zur Teilhabe am Fachdiskurs sind gute Fremdsprachenkenntnisse in Englisch für den Arbeitsplatz erforderlich.

Due to the heterogeneity of the participants, a high level of social and diversity competence is required. In the context of networking and project work as well as for participation in professional discourse, good foreign language skills in English are required for the workplace.

3.3.3 Survey on diversity in the network

Find network partners.

Ask questions.

Don't speak about groups but with them. Include the groups in your preparations.

Let people find words to describe themselves.

Be aware of your own privileges.



Overall, many very important aspects were addressed by the participants of the conducted survey. They will be discussed with all employees in the planned participation process in order to obtain further suggestions for the concrete design of a more diversity-sensitive adult education center. At the same time, this also gave rise to the idea of placing the topic of diversity broadly at an online barcamp on the future of the VHS Hannover planned for September 2021, to which employees, course instructors and network partners will be invited. In March 2021 a survey among network partners took place that gave a wide inside into different ways of handling diversity in different organisations.

3.3.4 The domino effect of lived openness - new opportunities through digitization

With the introduction of the online learning platform vhs.cloud alone, VHS Kursprogramm has become already more diverse. For quite some time no courses in presence could be (and still can't be) offered. Furthermore, quite a lot of the existing freelancers weren't keen on offering online courses and for some it wasn't possible (i.e. due to the subject, missing digital competencies or technical reasons). Hence, new subjects, course ideas and even new instructors were needed. Therefore, existing course instructors as well as cooperation and network partners were asked to provide new content.

Through the new content, other new course leaders became aware of VHS Kursprogramm, which in turn ensured new offers and more reach and visibility.

In particular, the cooperation with the Indian Association Hannover and the then president (chairman) was very successful. He was able to win researchers as speakers for joint events on autonomous driving, data science, Covid vaccines and so on, through his own scientific networks of the Indian diaspora worldwide (including from the USA, India, UK).

And at the same time he could win top-class speakers for transcultural encounters. This cooperation, as part of the series "Encounters with India", also resulted in a course offer for the subject area Profession | Digital: a Python programming course in English.



*Dear Sir or Madam, I would like to thank you for your extensive online program. You are certainly one of the best adult education centers in the field of online teaching. Hopefully your online teaching program will continue after the pandemic, because people with disabilities (I am visually impaired) benefit immensely from this opportunity to participate in cultural education in an uncomplicated way. Thank you very much.
(participant from Bad Harzburg)*

Digitization in VHS Kursprogramm has also helped overcome spatial barriers to participation, as evidenced by the growth in the number of participants from all over Germany, and at the same time has opened up the course content and the providers.

The perception of the VHS Hannover as a place of encounter and exchange, the positive feedback as well as word-of-mouth among speakers resulted in a more diverse course program due to a chain reaction on the content and human level. New freelancers created new content and via their networks new customers and more new lecturers could be attracted. Other adult education centers also perceive this positively and planning networks are emerging, such as the "Denkraum Volkshochschule", a merger of the VHS Hannover with the VHS Langenhagen and the VHS Hannover-Ostkreis, which want to jointly advance political education.

To this end, there was a kick-off event in April 2021 in cooperation with the Spielfeld Gesellschaft of the Lower Saxony Lotto Sports Foundation: an anti-racism reading with Massoud Doktoran followed by a discussion and, one day later, a writing workshop on racist experiences, which is to be included in the general course program in perspective.

And there definitely is more to come.

3.4 Good Practice Examples

3.4.1 English languages skills and diversity competence as a requirement in the job descriptions

Since English language skills as well as diversity competence will from now on be a requirement for all management positions and program area management positions, the job advertisements needed to be reformulated and a new interview guideline with explanations had to be developed.

In the second DivCap pilot project at VHS Hannover, VHS Chance worked on the integration of intercultural competence in job-advertisements, interview guidelines and developed a role-play for assessing communication skills and intercultural competencies. At VHS Kursprogramm it was decided to focus on how to ask for English language skills of applicants in job advertisements and how to determine them in the course of an interview.



BEWARE: Defining English language skills as mandatory for the job could lead to unintentional discrimination of applicants.

When including mandatory skills in the official job description of a position in the public sector in Germany with its collective agreement, the organization also has to decide how to ask for the languages skills in the job advertisement. The job advertisement is the basis for determining which applicants can be invited for an interview and finally, if they fulfill all the requirements of the job and can be contracted.

If you formulate the job description with English language skills as a prerequisite for the job, anybody who does not have them at the time of the application (if a certificate is to be handed in) or at the time of the interview cannot be contracted. This could unintentionally result in a discrimination against people that haven't learned English as a second language, e.g. if they went to school in another country. It is therefore important to decide, whether a candidate needs to have the language skills straight away or if the person only needs to prove a willingness to learn English or to improve his*her language skills promptly.

Since VHS Kursprogramm does not want to risk to exclude otherwise suitable candidates, it was decided to use this sentence in future job advertisements:

Since the level of English language skills of the applicants may therefore vary, a flexible way to assess these in the job interviews needs to be established.

If the applicant indicated a good knowledge of English in its application, one question should be posed and answered in English in order to assess this. Therefore, the applicant will be asked to introduce himself and his position to a foreign network partner as the future jobholder. If the applicant indicated a willingness to acquire or develop English languages skills in its application, the same task will be given, but the task will be explained in German.

Imagine that you have started on this job and that you meet a foreign network partner for the first time.

Please introduce yourself and your job position to the network partner.

Alternatively for applicants who stated that they are willing to acquire or develop English language skills this task will be given (task will be read in German):

You indicated that you are willing to acquire or develop your English language skills. Still, we would like to ask of you to introduce yourself briefly to a foreign network partner in English:

Imagine that you have started on this job and that you meet a foreign network partner for the first time.

Please introduce yourself and your job position briefly to the network partner.

If this is not possible at all, please do so in German.

This can be used to find out whether the applicant is aware of his or her role and responsibility as well as the level of language skills.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

Since networking is also a crucial competence and task for management and pedagogical staff another question will be included in the interview guideline for these positions:

In which networks are you involved that could be relevant for this position?

This can be used to find out whether the applicant is aware of the importance of networking for the position as well as to assess his level of networking competencies.

1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐

These tasks will be included in the interview guidelines for all leadership and pedagogical staff positions.

3.4.2 Promoting multilingualism among employees and intercultural openness

There are several approaches to making the language skills of employees visible to customers and visitors in the future.

First, the language competencies will be made visible on the door sign by means of country flags (see pictures) in order to enable visitors to quickly find their way around.



Illustration 6: door sign to make the language competencies visible

Secondly, the small flags could also be placed on name tags. By wearing the name badges, employees can make their responsiveness visible to walk-in customers. Since the organisation is closed for an indefinite period of time due to the pandemic, the idea of name tags will only be concretized and implemented in the medium term.

And third, the language skills should be displayed on the website, also with little flags indicated the languages spoken. But since the website will be migrated to another system in the second half of 2021, this also will be implemented in the medium term the earliest.

In addition, an EU mobility project was (successfully) applied for in 2020 in order to enable employees from all functional groups and course instructors to take part in language or specialist training (focusing on diversity and digitization) during stays in other European countries. Due to the pandemic, however, it has not yet been possible to plan and carry out any mobility. For this, all the necessary administrative paperwork and processes were developed and prepared.

4. Implementing Diversity - A task for all

4.1. Summary

Some of the planned activities could not be implemented as planned due to the pandemic during the course of the project. Those, that could be implemented will still have to prove their validity. Because the new wordings for job descriptions, job advertisements and job interview guidelines will be tested in the upcoming application processes for the first time.

Instead, due to the Corona pandemic, VHS Kursprogramm focused on digitization and realigned itself in terms of subject areas, new content and organizational structure in order to better meet the needs of a more diverse urban society. Digitization has significantly expanded the local, regional, national and international network of all planning colleagues.

4.2 Lessons Learnt



Initiating change processes in an adult education centre must be done with a high degree of flexibility in planning. Fluctuations in staff, management and especially freelancers constantly create new situations. Project planning must therefore have leeway, flexibility and a plan B. In addition, adult education centres are highly dependent on its network.

And as far as the adaptation of mission statements, labor law processes and structures and the general implementation of change processes are concerned, in a system that is part of the public service, sufficient time must be planned in, since many other agencies and, in some cases, political bodies must be involved. 305

4.3 Feedback of the management of VHS Kursprogramm on the process and the activities

This feedback was written by the head of VHS Kursprogramm and shows her individual view and perspective on diversity within the organisation.

4.3.1 What has the organization learned about diversity?

VHS Kursprogramm is already in the process of addressing diversity in its various facets in terms of staff and also the many diversity-related offerings. However, this has not yet been done in a strategic and structured way. The potentials and hopes for the project in this regard were correspondingly high. Due to the change in leadership, the Corona pandemic and subsequently changed organizational priorities certain activities could not be carried out and intended changes were not yet achieved as a result. Nevertheless, the survey on the language skills of employees in particular, in conjunction with the overall increased awareness of the importance of diversity skills, has already led to a concrete change in the form of changed job description and job advertisements for leadership positions as well as pedagogical staff.

In addition, however, also the new form of predominantly online networking under Corona conditions that led to significantly more diverse but also more diversity-sensitive course program with a multiplying effect.

Having worked for 9 years to promote digitization in adult education, it is not surprising to me that we are reducing barriers for participation in time and space through online offers. Even so, the extent to which we have been able to attract new and more diverse course instructors and participants in the last 12 months alone while obtaining new experience to support and advise them all, has been unexpected in its entirety. This is a positive side effect of digitization that will be used strategically and in a targeted manner in the future and will be anchored in the development of a diversity strategy.

4.3.2 What were the most important lessons learned in this change process?

Enriching perspectives often come from outside. These should be sought out and invited in a targeted manner!

In addition to the diversity survey in the network, there has also been an increased focus on diversity through new employees and interns.

Since 2018, the VHS Hannover has been offering a place in the framework of the Voluntary Social Year (FSJ) Culture, in which so far two volunteers with international backgrounds have accompanied and enriched the work at the Adult Education Center for a year with their own project. This also contributes to the diversification of the staff, since these are young adults fresh out of school who take a different, questioning look at the institution and thus represent an enrichment.

The hiring of an apprentice for an apprenticeship recognized in Germany since December 2020, as well as the planned hiring of two apprentices who might have had another field of studies, with a migration background for the apprenticeship in office management from May 2021. They are an asset to the organization in terms of people, content and organization. Especially in terms of diversity, which is another important step towards diversification and dealing with diversity in an everyday work environment. For instance, many employees once again became aware of their own privileges in the dialogue with our new colleagues.

New working conditions and new organizational structures - potential for new ways of communication and getting to know long-time colleagues better.

The organizational restructuring was extensive and still requires a lot of the employees and the management, since all employees had to find their way into the new organizational and communicational structures and help shape them. They also had to adapt to the new spatial conditions, and all this under completely new working conditions due to the pandemic, with predominantly home offices, alternating office use, and generally little personal contact. A challenge for everyone. Simultaneously having the regular exchange in weekly team video conferences with everyone or video conferences with colleagues in between. All these nuances result in completely new communicative possibilities and opportunities to get to know each other, to obtain mutual understanding and cooperation.

Digitalization in particular offers great potential for taking into account the diverse realities of the lives of employees during the Corona pandemic as well as in the future.

4.3.3 Which concrete results did the process produce?

As for the proposed activities we obtained an overview of the language skills of our staff and successfully implemented the review of our hiring process: Job descriptions, job advertisements and job interview guidelines were adapted and high social and diversity competencies as well as good English language skills (or the willingness to acquire and improve them promptly) are mandatory from now on. We also provided some training opportunities for our staff and freelance trainers. However, due to the Corona-related late implementation of this activity in relation to the project timescale, we cannot provide any reflection on the effects of that.

4.3.4 What did you find most difficult in this development process?

First of all, it is hard to separate the project-related change process from the overwhelming changes of VHS Kursprogramm since January 2020.

Briefly: the new management implemented a major change in the organizational structures without being able to implement an actually necessary participation process and team development process in person. All this in addition to all the changes due to the Corona pandemic and personnel changes, which has been, to this day, a great challenge, especially for all staff members.

Although it would be very important to develop a common team and department culture in a targeted manner and to address the issue of lived openness toward diversity, this is not possible under the current working conditions. This is unsatisfactory.

And the great willingness of the colleagues to continue being highly committed and motivated in constructively coping with the current crisis situation with alternative solutions, uncertainty and extra work due to the pandemic and, in some cases, new clashes between different work cultures cannot be taken for granted and is therefore particularly important and worthy mentioning. Because with these colleagues, who prove to be highly emphatic, very resilient and at the same time willing to accept necessary changes on a daily basis, even if this is not easy for many, the upcoming intensive confrontation with diversity, which we are already experiencing more noticeably than ever in our cooperation, will succeed well.

4.3.5 What long-term effects can be expected for the organization as a result of dealing with diversity and the development process that has been initiated?

While reflecting on all the changes and small steps undertaken towards a more diversity sensitive organization throughout the last 16 months with the DivCap coach and some colleagues, we came to realize that especially networking activities and digitalization as well as hiring interns had a large impact. These are all activities that were not specifically mentioned in the original plan for the project, but proved to be very successful in taking us further towards our goal to become a more diverse and diversity sensitive organization. Therefore, these activities and their impact will definitely be discussed with all employees.

The municipal educational mission of an adult education center is to enable residents to actively participate in society and help shape democracy. VHS Kursprogramm can be a platform for this. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of an internal concretization of this mission and an agreement on common goals and priorities. In addition, planners often lack concrete ideas about diverse target groups and their educational needs as well as their preferred channels of communication and information. For this purpose, it is necessary to discuss the individual decision-making paths of the program planners in a collegial manner and thus uncover possible blind spots in the planning and resulting barriers to participation for certain groups of people, in order to jointly and comprehensively fulfill this social mandate. This is foreseen to be done, as soon as the participation process required for this can be planned and implemented in presence.

The introduction of a new course management software and homepage with significantly more options for the differentiated and target group-oriented presentation of content and information has also been closely supported by many employees since October of last year. The hoped-for multilingualism of the homepage will thus be possible in the future. Administrative processes will also be significantly simplified, and at the same time, the new course management software will make it possible to implement a more addressee-oriented registration procedure. When redesigning the website, however, diversity will be considered in its entirety and not isolated to one aspect such as multilingualism alone. For example, accessibility for people with disabilities or the integration of images of diverse target groups will also be addressed in order to appeal to additional groups of people.

4.3.6 What can be improved and what is yet to be achieved

The change process was initiated within the framework of a scheduled project and therefore results had to be available at a certain point in time. Since an adult education institution must constantly react to social developments and undergoes constant fluctuation in its staff and network, sometimes activities cannot be accomplished by a fixed date.

4.4 Recommendations

Recommendations to the management

- Trust your highly trained staff to provide the right content.
- Involve as many groups as possible in the planning.
- Make time and financial resources available.
- Encourage staff to share ideas with each other and in networks.
- Actively promote an anti-racist and diversity-sensitive attitude among all staff.

Recommendations to pedagogical staff

- Seek out networks and actively participate. The added value in terms of knowledge is more valuable than another repetitive offer.
- Look for experts and instructors who are diverse and look diverse. The diversity of the instructors, who may serve as role models, will increase the diversity of the participants.
- Look for instructors who are enthusiastic and can motivate others.
- Look for instructors who are open-minded and sensitive to diversity.

Recommendations to other employees

- Be aware that you are the face of the institution. Your behavior represents the entire organization, in this case the adult education center, if not the city government.
- Do not make attributions based on appearances. For example, ask everyone about their gender identity (gender).

Recommendations to external freelance pedagogical staff

- Educate yourself if you have the opportunities (time, financial, offers).
- Work for institutions that share your values.

Diversity must be addressed at all levels of an organization. At management level, at employee level and with the participation of the respective network.

Management must set the framework for this, make clear the strategic importance of a diversity-sensitive approach - also by setting an example - and provide financial and time resources for this process. A common approach to diversity must be developed together with all employees and with the involvement of the network of customers, course instructors and other external partners and expressed in a mission statement.

The results of the project show that it is not possible without the inclusion of new and external perspectives and ideas. Targeted feedback and ideas from outside stimulate the organization's engagement with diversity. Therefore, a comprehensive participation of different actors and network partners should be strived for in order to gain an all-round view of the structures and processes of the organization and to be able to adapt them better if necessary. This is very important for the further process. All employees must adopt this as a basic attitude, and the new opportunities offered by digitization provide many approaches to this.

Networks are also important in the provision of expertise and in the implementation of services. Adult education institutions have the necessary infrastructure to offer any content, and cooperation and network partners have the expertise so that participants can have a successful experience. A win-win-win situation for everyone.

"Higher education and the ability to acquire new knowledge independently are increasingly demanded and assumed as qualifications and personality traits. The desired or forced flexibilization of work, cooperation across institutional boundaries, the dissolution of boundaries in work, and also the erosion of collective security models are shifting many activities that once took place in clearly defined institutional or personal spaces into a new in-between space that is neither private nor public in the classic sense. This is the space of networks, communities, informal cooperation, and swapping and sharing, enabled by now ubiquitous digital communication."
(Stalder 2019, p. 38)



5. ANNEX

5.1 Diversity Survey via E-Mail

The following questions were asked per e-mail:

1. Name (anonymous or named quote if possible)
2. Institution (anonymous or named quote if possible)
3. Position within the institution or organization (anonymous or named quote if possible)
4. How would you describe diversity in one sentence?
5. In regards to diversity at the workplace, what and how has it changed? Do these changes go according to societal changes and what kind of changes are they?
6. What are some of the requirements necessary for successful diversity awareness?
7. What areas still need improvement? What is needed?

The replies were received per email. The people surveyed had a choice between having their reply stay anonymous or if they, their company and position should be mentioned. Most participants decided to remain anonymous.

5.2 Hanover's Local Integration Policy revision and the new targets for the Educational sector

By Maya Nyagolova, Expert Advisor for Education in Hanover's Local Integration Policy revision process

The city of Hanover's Local Integration Policy (in short LIP) constitutes both a strategic framework and an action plan for measures regarding issues of migration and social participation for all residents. The policy unfolds in public administration's main fields of action like Education, Social care, Urban Life and Culture etc.

The existing framework, created in 2008, now seems a bit outdated, as it no longer covers every aspect of the reality of the current open and diverse urban society. That is why, in 2020, the administration started a broadly based policy revision process under the working title LIP 2.0, consulting different stakeholders like experts in the field of diversity and inclusion, migrant-led established organisations as well as more contemporary youth initiatives. The actual needs of the broad public have been assessed using online surveys and open public discussions. The final output is being expected in summer 2021.

The drafted paper defines two basic principles for the future policy: 1) mutual recognition and respect between all members of society, including a better representation of (ethnic) diverse society members on all administration levels, along with systematic measures against discrimination and 2) open access to and permeability of institutions for all people in the city.

In this way, the administration aims to achieve equal opportunities for all people in Hanover. Through an individualised approach, everyone including newcomers, long-term residents and marginalised groups should be enabled to participate actively in social life, which in turn is an essential prerequisite for social cohesion

Furthermore, the drafted policy describes the main topics in every field of action. In the field of education, the city aims to minimize existing barriers regarding transitions and permeability of educational domains and promote equal opportunities regardless of social, ethnic, educational or economic background.

Therefore, six main topics have been concluded in the Educational action field, which should be addressed in every educational domain, starting from elementary to adult education:

- 1) Literacy and language acquisition in German allowing for multilingualism
- 2) Access to educational opportunities
- 3) Transitions in and out of the educational domains
- 4) Comprehensive educational opportunities / Informal education
- 5) Digitalisation and critical media literacy
- 6) Anti-discrimination work and prevention of violence in the context of education

In 2021, experts are going to derive specific measures on each of the above-named main topics.

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This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This document reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
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