

Preface

For a long time this publication carried the working title of “Mission Impossible”. More than just a cinematographic reference, the title reflected quite literally the feeling of many involved in non-formal education activities in the Euro-Mediterranean framework: that it would be impossible to produce and finalise such a T-kit. This feeling was justified by the objective fact that none of the many deadlines set for its production was ever respected and that practically none of the authors originally commissioned to write the T-kit wrote anything.

We could add a few other signs, such as the fact that the T-kit originated within a Euro-Med Youth Partnership and ended within the (single) Youth Partnership, that the structure of the Euro-Med Youth Programme was radically changed when we were at the editing stage, and that the European Union grew from 15 to 27 member states during the production and editing of this T-kit.

The feared or alleged impossibility of the mission was, however, less based on these facts than on the nature, complexity and potential controversy of the task. To research, write and propose educational methodologies that reflect the realities and issues affecting young people in the 47 member states of the Council of Europe and the 10 Meda countries of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has simply proved to be much more difficult and complex than ever anticipated. In many ways, this reflects perfectly the status of the co-operation between European and Mediterranean countries: multi-faceted, conditioned by many political, social, cultural and economic factors, influenced by history and memory and, very often, extremely volatile. While we all agree that the richness of diversity is what makes Euro-Mediterranean youth work such an exciting adventure, describing, writing about or writing for this diversity is a completely different challenge.

As writers and editors, the authors of the T-kit could not, for example, escape the traps of ethnocentrism and almost automatic forms of stereotyping and generalisation. How can one avoid generalisation when attempting to summarise such a complex political, social and cultural reality in 15 or 20 pages? Conversely, how can one avoid singling out a particular reality that may be applicable or understood only by a handful of people? Does it matter if an experience occurred in a given town with people from one nationality instead of another? What can and cannot be learnt from those experiences?

We originally planned a final chapter to contain the closing statements and question marks for this T-kit, and for this we dreamed up the title “Mutual perceptions, dreamed realities and confiscated dreams” – ‘mutual perceptions’ because everyday reality in Euro-Mediterranean societies is shaped as much by the mutual perceptions people have of themselves and others as it is by reality itself. Perceptions, as we know, are often the result of years of socialising, learning stereotypes and generalisations, and (it comes as no surprise) may contain prejudicial views about other nations, peoples or communities. Producing this T-kit has the obvious risk of helping to crystallise and therefore legitimise many of these perceptions. It is a risk we have to take, in the same way that we know that not all Euro-Mediterranean projects (whether youth-focused or not) actually achieve all their objectives. Yet that is no reason not to try.

We have tried to involve, as much as possible, writers and contributors from the various cultural, religious and national realities of Europe and the Mediterranean. We took this as a pre-condition, but it is impossible to state that we have succeeded. What should be clear to everyone is that this T-kit is not a sociological or anthropological

work, a history textbook or a political essay. It is a practical collection of starting points, references, reflections and questions that may stimulate the reader/user to embrace the Euro-Mediterranean reality in all its complexity and, we hope, recognize where we have got to, now that the T-Kit is in print: it is impossible to describe and explain any reality in a way that is acceptable and makes sense to everyone, but especially the European and Mediterranean reality of this T-Kit. This should not prevent us, however, from trying to be as objective as possible and from acknowledging the diversity of points of view.

In the Euro-Mediterranean context, mutual perceptions co-exist and are deeply influenced by dreamed realities: the “European dream” for many young people in the Maghreb or the Middle East is full of aspects quite as imaginary as the orientalist views of perceived oriental cultures and societies. We know only too well how constructed realities and representations are stronger than any reality-check: the strength of prejudice resides in its ability to blind us.

Dreamed realities were also an obstacle in a different way: must we stick to the stated philosophy and purpose of co-operation, or should we reflect the reality? In other words, is it more appropriate to emphasise the “Euro-Mediterranean” space of co-existence, mutual co-operation and bound destinies or, instead, address everything that today denies it? Is it acceptable to speak about the possibilities offered by Euro-Mediterranean youth programmes without mentioning the fact that many young people from “Mediterranean” countries will never be able to get a visa for most European countries? What does a commitment to human rights mean? The youth worker engaged in Euro-Mediterranean activities will always need a wise mix of reality and dream, without which their work is either too idealistic or simply unbearable. But it is important, in any case, to be aware of how much reality there is in a dream and what in reality is the projection of dreams, hopes and expectations.

The reality of many young people in Europe and around the Mediterranean is a reality of precariousness, increasingly longer periods of transition to autonomy alongside insecurity about their future, which obviously translates and reflects the insecurities of their societies. As youth workers, it is our professional duty and ethical obligation to take young people’s perspectives and concerns into account. This is what participatory approaches are about and also what makes Euro-Mediterranean youth projects a unique experience for many young people: participation, dialogue, creativity and discovery about oneself and others.

None of this happens miraculously or automatically. It requires, from youth workers and project organisers, the awareness, motivation and competence to put young people first and, consequently, adopt a participant-centred approach. Part of the ‘mission possible’ of this T-kit is to provide those involved in youth work and training projects with tools to enable the young people they work with to be fully part of their projects. Like a mosaic, this is more than a collection of practical activities, background information and sometimes uncomfortable questions. It is our expectation that it will all make sense once it is put together, practised and experienced. It will then be a real kit for training and, most of all, for learning.

In this expectation, we hope not only to help some of the dreams of young people to come closer to reality but also to make sure that their dreams are not confiscated by the institutional, political or practical priorities of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. This is a must we owe to ourselves and to all the young people who, to paraphrase Mahmoud Darwich, suffer from the incurable disease called hope.

Rui Gomes

1. Introduction

The Mediterranean is both homogeneous and diversified, like its languages and cultures, its music, its colours, its fragrances and its forms. It could be compared to one of its major art forms, the mosaic, which is made up of assorted small coloured fragments assembled to create images of astonishing richness, diversity and harmony.¹

About *Mosaic*

Mosaic, the T-kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work, was originally planned as one of the key actions of the Partnership on Euro-Mediterranean Youth Co-operation in the field of Training, signed between the European Commission and the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe in 2003. That partnership aimed to provide further good-quality training and learning opportunities for youth workers and youth leaders active in Euro-Mediterranean co-operation, based on intercultural learning, the citizenship and participation of young people, and human rights education. The aims of this partnership were later integrated into the (single) Youth Partnership between the European Commission and the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe (with which the North-South Centre is associated).

In line with the T-Kit series developed within the Youth Partnership, *Mosaic* is intended to provide theoretical and practical tools for youth workers and trainers to work with and use when training people. More specifically, *Mosaic* aims to be an intellectually stimulating tool that supplies youth workers, trainers and project leaders interested in Euro-Mediterranean youth co-operation with starting points, essential information and methodological proposals enabling them to understand, address and question common issues present in the reality of Euro-Mediterranean youth projects.

What makes *Mosaic* special as a T-kit is the fact that it does not focus on one topic (such as intercultural learning or project management). It complements all the other T-kits by reflecting and exploring the specificities of the Euro-Mediterranean region and the specific objectives and issues of the Euro-Med Youth Programme. *Mosaic* is also complementary to other tools developed within the Euro-Med Youth Programme, such as the T-bag and other materials produced by the Salto Euro-Med Resource Centre.

Mosaic has thus been produced within a political and institutional framework that goes beyond the scope of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership launched by the Barcelona Declaration. In particular, this means that it covers the 47 member states of the Council of Europe, as well as Belarus and the Holy See (signatories of the European Cultural Convention); this is practically all of Europe. Furthermore, while the primary target group of this T-kit are the users and practitioners of the Euro-Med Youth Programme, it has been developed to be of interest also to users of other “European” and “Mediterranean” co-operation programmes, bilateral or multilateral.

One of the overarching concerns of Euro-Mediterranean youth co-operation is not to create new, artificial borders, but instead to recognise the many liquid borders and interconnections between, for example, European, Asian, African, Arab, Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Western and Eastern realities. In the Youth Partnership we try to practise this as far as it makes sense and is institutionally and financially possible. Similarly, *Mosaic* should be of interest to anyone interested in intercultural learning/dialogue activities. More than any other T-kit, *Mosaic* is of direct interest and use to youth workers and project leaders, not just trainers.

An intercultural production process

The production of this T-kit was special, not only because of the institutional framework in which it took place, but also because we as editors were venturing into a field – referencing and describing issues from a Euro-Mediterranean perspective – that had simply never been mapped before. One of the major challenges, therefore, was to collect and process information about the common issues that form the backbone of this T-kit from both a “pan-European” perspective and a “Mediterranean” perspective. Quite simply, we realised that much of that information did not exist or was very widely scattered (and often hidden) in the available literature, or was accessible only with difficulty.

Moreover, the themes dealt with by the T-kit required a multidisciplinary team of writers and contributors, who were able to explore issues as diverse as gender equality and history. It was also our concern to ensure that the T-kit was written by youth workers or trainers who were not only familiar with the subjects but were also experienced in youth work and, if possible, with Euro-Mediterranean youth work. Finally, we were aware of the prerequisite need to reflect as much as possible the different social and cultural perspectives across Europe and the Mediterranean to prevent (otherwise inevitable) expressions of ethnocentrism and prejudice.

The editorial team of *Mosaic* was composed of experts from the Salto Euro-Med Resource Centre, the Directorate of Youth and Sport and the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, as well as independent experts in Euro-Mediterranean and intercultural youth work. The editorial team defined the scope, contents and educational approach of the T-kit. On the basis of the work of the editorial team, a call for contributors/authors was launched among the Trainers’ Pool of the Directorate of Youth and Sport of the Council of Europe, and among trainers and experts working with the Salto Euro-Med Resource Centre or the Euro-Med Youth Programme.

As a result of this call, writers were assigned to specific issues and contents: Alper Akyüz (History and Memory); Asuman Göksel (The Political and Institutional Context); Burcu Arık and Tala Bassam Momani (Environment); Cécile Barbeito Thonon (Peace and Conflict); Ellie Keen (Human Rights and Human Rights Education); Anne Sophie Winkelmann, Heidi Ness and Katrin Alban (Participation and Active Citizenship); Henrietta Szovatti (Gender Equality); Jana El-Horr (Cultural Diversity and Equal Opportunities for Minorities); Miguel Ángel García López (Religion and Tolerance) and Suzanne Shomali (Intercultural Learning).

The texts proposed by these authors were subsequently submitted for comments and suggestions to a group of experts from diverse national, linguistic, professional, cultural and religious backgrounds. The feedback and comments provided in this systematic manner by Alexandra Raykova, Annette Schneider, Chris Mammides, Farah Cherif D’Ouezzan, Gisèle Evrard, Iris Bawidamann, Michael Privot, Nadine Lyamouri-Bajja, Teresa Cunha and Yael Ohana Forbrig have undoubtedly helped to enrich the texts by broadening their perspective and scope. This, however, did not always translate into simpler work – very much the contrary! In fact, many of the delays in producing *Mosaic* resulted from this process and everything it entailed. We are confident, nevertheless, that it has played a major role in ensuring the quality of the final product. In addition to these comments, other people had the opportunity to provide feedback

and comments on the texts on line. This ensured, as far as possible, a participatory process, which was also open to the realities of those involved in Euro-Mediterranean youth projects.

All the texts were subsequently edited by the general editor, Asuman Göksel, who had the uncomfortable task of harmonising styles (in as far as humanly possible), enriching the texts, checking references and securing overall consistency.

The thirty activities (or “methods”), which form perhaps the most colourful pieces of *Mosaic*, went through a similar process of feedback. The original ideas were edited and often significantly developed by Ellie Keen and Patricia Brander. The overall process was co-ordinated by Rui Gomes, who also served as final editor for all texts.

A mosaic of themes and activities

Euro-Mediterranean youth projects aim first of all to promote intercultural dialogue and intercultural learning with and by young people, but they are often based on a particular theme that reflects the realities or concerns of the young people involved. In this respect, intercultural dialogue is not just the purpose of the projects but also the way intercultural learning occurs. In our case, interculturality occurs in the Euro-Mediterranean context, which features not only some sort of youth work but also the understanding of different world views, central to intercultural dialogue. Thus, it is only meaningful if and when it bases itself on, and addresses, the daily realities of the people and Euro-Mediterranean societies it seeks to connect.

→ The thematic chapters

The Euro-Med Youth Programme was and is based on thematic areas that reflect the specific fields of co-operation being developed through youth projects. At the time when *Mosaic* was being developed, these themes were Gender Equality, Environment, Minorities, Peace and Conflict, Participation and Citizenship, Human Rights, and Religion and Tolerance. Despite some changes, the current phase of the programme reflects very similar thematic priorities.

Each of these themes is explored in *Mosaic* in a dedicated chapter that informs readers about:

- definitions of the issues and main concepts embraced;
- the expression and relevance of the theme in European and Mediterranean societies, and insights into particular issues or challenges;
- how the theme relates to young people;
- how the theme is (or can be) addressed in Euro-Mediterranean youth projects.

Youth participation and active citizenship

All European youth programmes, including the Euro-Med Youth Programme, are based on the active and voluntary participation of young people and should seek to increase

the opportunities for practising active forms of citizenship. Chapter 4 explores these concepts as well as the contrasting realities of young people in European and Mediterranean societies.

Human rights and human rights education

Together with participation and active citizenship, human rights are part of the framework of values of European youth policies. Universal human rights also inform the way in which intercultural dialogue should be developed. At the same time, human rights are often at the core of discord between partner countries in Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. Chapter 5 provides basic information about human rights and the role of human rights education, while addressing dilemmas for youth workers and activists.

Gender equality

Chapter 6 looks at gender equality, which remains a key objective for many national policies and international organisations; gender mainstreaming implies the need for this to be dealt with and addressed in youth projects. Furthermore, in the context of Euro-Mediterranean co-operation, this area is often subject to controversy and mutual recriminations.

Cultural diversity and equal opportunities for minorities

Cultural diversity is a reality in all societies covered by Euro-Mediterranean co-operation. Minorities, whether religious, ethnic, cultural or social, are the most visible expression of diversity, in that they connect Europe and the Mediterranean. These are the subject of Chapter 7. Awareness of minorities at home, and of the obstacles they may face in gaining equal opportunities, is an important pre-condition for engagement in intercultural dialogue and co-operation, because it implies recognising their visible or invisible otherness.

Religion and tolerance

As the Mediterranean region is the birthplace of major monotheistic world religions, and religion is one of the most unifying and divisive factors across societies, we could not avoid addressing it. Chapter 8 gives basic information about major religions, complemented by practical tips and reflections on how to make youth projects inclusive of religious diversity.

Peace and conflict

These are the twin themes of Chapter 9. Not only is peace the ultimate aim of international co-operation, including youth exchanges, but prevailing conflicts put at risk the purpose and essence of Euro-Mediterranean youth projects. Providing youth workers with tools for understanding and working with conflict had to be a must in this T-kit.

Environment

The Mediterranean is the leading example of a sea surrounded by many lands, its coasts a mosaic of peoples and civilisations whose use of the sea has led to serious environmental problems, putting its sustainability and historical heritage at risk. Chapter 10 examines environmental problems, which are typical of the kind of issues that need to be addressed together if solutions are to be effective.

To these seven themes, we added three that the editorial team considered cross-segmental or fundamental to the publication.

Institutional and political context

Chapter 1 clarifies the institutional frameworks within which the T-kit has been produced, notably the youth programmes of the Council of Europe and the European Commission, the Youth Partnership and the Euro-Med Youth Programme.

History and memory

Chapter 2 explores some landmarks in the history of European and Mediterranean relations, together with a reflection on the role of history teaching and learning, and the place of memory in forming collective perceptions of the past and perspectives for the future.

Intercultural learning

Chapter 3 reviews some of the basic concepts and challenges in using intercultural dialogue in the practice of youth projects. Intercultural learning is addressed because it is the underlying approach and purpose of many Euro-Med youth projects.

These ten themes have not only provided the background in which Euro-Mediterranean youth work takes place, but they have also often conditioned the work to be done with and by young people. With this in mind, the information in these ten chapters is meant to be a starting point for users, supplying them with basic reference points that will allow them to run activities more comfortably. In particular, these reference points will support them in helping the participants learn through the activities, by clarifying some concepts, proposing definitions, or providing different perspectives and points of view on an issue.

Despite their internal limits, the thematic chapters may surprise readers by constructing and deconstructing the meanings and perceptions attributed to various colourful pieces of the Euro-Mediterranean mosaic. The most striking experience we had to go through in this process was to deal with the fluid definitions of “Euro-Mediterranean” in different thematic chapters: most of the time, the political and institutional boundaries did not match the natural, geographical or cultural ones in our *Mosaic*!

Compiling the information for the thematic chapters was not an easy task, especially its synthesis and the need to ensure it was inclusive of “European” and “Mediterranean” realities. We are, therefore, aware that many users may miss what for them might be crucial contents and perspectives, while others may actually disagree with our choices.

We are fully aware of the limits of our texts, in the same way that we are confident that they will provide useful references and starting points for many youth workers and trainers.

Accordingly, we would like to encourage all users to look for information in other sources and we apologise for not always being able to present all points of view. This is not only a matter of space; it is sometimes also a matter of knowledge. We count, therefore, on the benevolence of users and on their active involvement to make sure that the limits of our editorial work do not limit the potential of their activities. It is fair to say in this respect that everyone can bring more pieces to complete and enrich this mosaic.

→ Activities

The popularity of the T-kits owes a lot to their unique combination of theoretical concepts with practical approaches and tips on how to integrate or deal with them in youth worker training activities. *Mosaic* takes this approach one step further by explicitly providing a series of activities that can fit several themes and, especially, can be used directly on Euro-Mediterranean youth projects, not just (or even particularly) in training projects.

Recent years have seen an increase in the provision of educational methods and activities for non-formal education youth activities, all claiming to serve crucial educational approaches, from experiential learning to intercultural education. Many have expressed concerns about the risks of emphasising “doing” and “activism” over “reflection” and “learning”.

It is not our purpose to engage further in these debates with this T-kit, but we acknowledge that the risk is real: action without reflection and, even more, reflection not grounded in experience greatly reduce the potential for intercultural learning in international youth projects.

As in *Compass*, the Council of Europe’s manual on human rights education with young people, whose structure has many similarities with *Mosaic*, youth workers or other users of the manual – the facilitators – can start using it anywhere and may, therefore, not read the thematic information before running a given activity.

But we do hope and expect that the presence of that information will be a reminder and encouragement that learning from experience is most effective when there is a reflective process through which learners are able to realise what they have learned and what to do with what they have learned. Information is vital to overcome stereotyping and prejudice!

Practically all the activities that have been submitted by the authors are the result of previous practice and, therefore, have been tested in Euro-Mediterranean projects. The editors of the activities, Ellie Keen and Patricia Brander, took particular care to make sure that their descriptions are understandable to users in different places with different groups of young people. The extent to which the activities will be usable always depends on the motivation and competence of the facilitators as well as on their ability to adapt them.

Table 0.1: What is in an activity?

<i>Title</i>	Title of the activity
<i>Taster</i>	A sentence or quotation that gives an insight into the issues raised or the method proposed by the activity.
<i>Level of complexity</i>	Perceived level of complexity or type of activity, ranging from 1 (easy and simple) to 4 (difficult or complex). Level 4 activities usually require more time and also experienced facilitators. Level 1 and 2 activities are usually easier to run and more appropriate at the beginning of seminars or youth exchanges.
<i>Theme</i>	Each activity is linked to at least three themes (from those covered in chapters 1 to 10), the most closely connected being named first.
<i>Issues addressed</i>	Indications of what topics the activity is about, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Discrimination in the workplace</i> • <i>Generation gap</i> • <i>Territorial conflicts</i>
<i>Group size</i>	Suggested ideal size of the group(s) or minimum/maximum numbers.
<i>Time</i>	Duration of the activity, including preparation, running, debriefing and evaluation.
<i>Objectives</i>	List of the learning and social objectives that a standard session of the activity might pursue or help reach. It may also include objectives related to the process (e.g. developing communication skills).
<i>Preparation</i>	Indication of everything that the facilitator needs to consider and prepare <i>before</i> starting the activity.
<i>Materials</i>	List of things, materials, resources or facilities that the facilitator will need for full implementation of the activity.
<i>Instructions</i>	What the facilitator needs to know and communicate to the participants in order to run the activity.
<i>Debriefing and evaluation</i>	Review of how the activity was experienced and perceived, what participants could learn from it and the connection with the realities of the participants (and Euro-Mediterranean co-operation).
<i>Tips for the facilitator</i>	Guidance, things to be aware of, where to get extra information.
<i>Variations</i>	Ideas for how to adapt the activity or use it in a different situation.
<i>Ideas for action</i>	Suggestions for the next steps, so the participants can give practical meaning (and consequences) to their learning. It is the participants who should decide if, what and how they want to engage in a follow-up activity. The facilitator's role is to guide and support them in that.
<i>Suggestions for follow-up</i>	This section suggests other activities (in <i>Mosaic</i> , <i>Compass</i> , the Education Pack <i>All different – All equal</i> or other <i>T-kits</i>). Virtually all these educational resources are available on line at www.coe.int/compass or www.youth-partnership.net .
<i>Further information</i>	Background information relevant to the activity. References to articles or other books; references to further reading.
<i>Handouts</i>	List of handouts to prepare and give to participants in the course of the activity (if relevant). In <i>Mosaic</i> , handouts are always appended to the activity itself.

The educational approaches in *Mosaic*

The editorial group of this T-kit provided the editors with a series of guidelines to be respected during the production process. Those included the need to:

- demystify the difficulties of youth work projects in the Euro-Mediterranean context, while acknowledging the possibility of conflicts;
- dispel fears and concerns about Euro-Mediterranean youth work;
- make sure that, if and when there are issues specific to Euro-Mediterranean youth work, the T-kit prepares users to deal with them (general tips should be given: what to do when things go wrong, facilitation, dealing with conflicts, sensitive issues);
- provide starting points for youth work on Euro-Med co-operation, since it is not possible to anticipate everything.

This very simple list of concerns and advice summarises some of the dilemmas we dealt with in the development of *Mosaic*: is there a specific educational approach to Euro-Mediterranean non-formal education activities? If so, what is it and how can it be described?

At the end of the process, and resulting also from experience with many other Euro-Mediterranean activities inside and outside the partnership, we have come to the conclusion that the educational approaches that we recommend and use in this T-kit are fundamentally the same as those prescribed in other T-kits and similar educational resources. Material conditions and possibilities may change, as well as the level of experience and familiarity of participants and facilitators with some of the concepts. In addition, surely, the experience people bring to the learning processes are potentially more varied than they can be in regional or national youth activities. However, in our opinion, this calls mostly for effort and skill in adapting activities to the project and target group and in complementing the thematic information provided here with more specific information related to the participants, the venue of the project or its particular aims and objectives.

The educational approaches underlying *Mosaic* are well outlined in the T-kit *Training essentials* and in the first chapter of *Compass*, and we would like *Mosaic* users to consult those two manuals. In brief, these approaches include experiential learning, intercultural learning, being participant-centred and action-orientated, incorporating non-formal learning.

→ **Experiential learning**

Experiential learning is learning from practical experiences by reflecting on them, drawing conclusions and parallels to other realities and applying the learning to new activities. Of particular relevance for this purpose is the evaluation and debriefing stage of the activities.

In the debriefing, links with reality can be made and participants can be invited to compare the issues discussed or the experience gained from the activity with other realities, and think how they can apply their learning to those. Experiential learning does not have to be based on the *Mosaic* activities: facilitators may and should apply the same principles to other activities in their Euro-Mediterranean youth projects or even to the project as whole.

→ Intercultural learning

Chapter 3 gives ample information about this concept and some of its practical implications. If you are applying it through and in *Mosaic*, we would draw attention to the need to:

- be aware that ethnocentric and stereotypical views always influence the way an activity is run;
- be careful about drawing parallels between participants' attitudes or reactions during an activity and their alleged cultural affiliations (it is more up to the participants themselves to do this);
- give everyone opportunities to express themselves and to participate – communication is essential for dialogue and for learning;
- take into account participants' specific communication challenges or needs, particularly being aware of the power of language;
- reflect the diversity of the project's leadership or educational team – in *Mosaic* activities this could mean, for example, working with two or more facilitators;
- acknowledge participants' multiple cultural affiliations while also acknowledging the diversity of identities in the group in a balanced way;
- be aware that participants may have very different starting points and moral perspectives on many issues – the purpose of *Mosaic* activities is not to challenge or confront people (as in “forcing” them to change) but rather to provide starting points for discussion and dialogue that should always be respectful of different points of view, because the point is precisely to allow those points of view to be first of all expressed, heard and discussed.

We are aware that the thematic chapters and the activities contain and express, directly and indirectly, inevitable cultural biases, because they have been written by men and women who have their own specific identities and who relate to different cultural codes. We believe, nevertheless, that their potential as means for learning and working together remains intact and that the facilitators should easily be able to spot and correct some of these biases. (Tip: this can always be a way to conclude a training session based on a *Mosaic* activity: “What are the biases that the activity carries or transmits and how can they be corrected?”)

→ Participant-centred

Being participant-centred means that the starting and ending points of the activities are the participants/learners: what they can learn (and ultimately what they can use their learning for) should be the facilitators' key concern. There are many examples of this focus in *Mosaic*, such as starting by collecting examples from participants' reality, applying learning to their realities or inviting them to identify what they can learn from the activity.

The attitudes of the facilitators also need to be participant-centred, for example, by adapting the activities to the learners'/participants' realities and in taking seriously their concerns or objections. *Mosaic* is by no means an end in itself: it is merely a tool or medium for learning. Its content can be changed, adapted or simply dropped if not useful.

Finally, participant-centredness includes the notion that everyone in a group can contribute to the discussion and to the learning process; the task and challenge for the facilitator is to make sure that this can effectively be so.

→ Action-orientated

Young people do not attend Euro-Mediterranean activities simply as a way of spending their free time. These activities and projects are in fact ways to act on their realities, by becoming more acquainted with their social and political environments, developing their intercultural competences and deepening their awareness of particular issues. Learning about the complexity of an issue can be very interesting but it is not necessarily an empowering process.

Therefore, as well as making connections between issues and young people's realities, facilitators should also consider the possibility or necessity of inviting young people to think what they can actually do to address a particular situation or to help solve a problem. If short of ideas, facilitators can always call on examples of other people or organisations. This invitation for action should always respect participants' freedom (to do or not do), backed by an awareness of the political or legal obstacles that social action may face in some countries.

Action-orientation can, in very simple ways, be used by facilitators to ensure young people's involvement in the future development of their project.

→ Non-formal education principles

Other common practices and principles central to non-formal education obviously apply to *Mosaic*. These include:

- use of group work and forms of collaborative learning that also emphasise development of social skills, such as those related to communication, dialogue and conflict-transformation;
- voluntary participation and open-endedness, in the sense that joining in the activities should not be seen as compulsory, and acknowledging the fact that different participants may learn different things from the same activity. It is the facilitator's role to support the participants in realising what they can learn and what they can do with their learning;
- planned and structured learning opportunities: even though many activities in *Mosaic* may be seen as games or exercises, they have all been developed as structured learning activities, which should not be limited to one stage only. We stress, in particular, the role of the debriefing and evaluation sessions.

Using and adapting activities from *Mosaic*

No activity or exercise from *Mosaic* can be used without some kind of adaptation to the group and the situation. The activities are often described in a way that is as neutral and sometimes as general as possible, so that their meaning and process can be understood.

This makes them suitable for virtually any group of young people in a Euro-Mediterranean project, but it also means that it is the facilitator's role to adapt them to reflect the specific issues being discussed or, for example, to address a conflict that has emerged in the group.

Always adapt in the light of the educational approaches outlined above, in particular centring on the participants and focusing on intercultural learning. Here are some simple ways of adapting an activity:

- Change the focus of the theme if it makes it more easily understood by the participants, or more relevant to them.
- Change the balance between individual work, group work and plenary sessions (be sure to respect the functions of each of these), bearing in mind that participants less experienced in international youth activities often find it easier to contribute to small group discussion.
- Adapt the description of a given situation or starting point (like roles in a role play).
- Adapt the setting and materials to the participants' learning needs or physical needs.
- Consider translating instructions or handouts; avoid relying only on verbal translation of important instructions.
- Make "national" or regional groups if you want to deepen a particular perspective or take into account specific realities.
- Break the ice by setting up a brainstorm or a "silent floor discussion". You can also make use of quick energisers or physical activities to get participants' attention or re-dynamise the group. Some basic activities on group dynamics can be found in the first chapter of *Compass* (www.coe.int/compass). The Salto resource centres also have a database of energisers and other dynamic methods for group work (www.salto-youth.net/toolbox).

As a general guideline, you should see the debriefing and evaluation as a key stage in any learning process, and therefore it should not be skipped. On the other hand, the debriefing and evaluation only make sense if there is enough "material" or previous discussion to build on.

Facilitators should also bear in mind that the time estimated in the description of the activities is for monolingual groups. If you are working in more than one language or with simultaneous interpretation, you should increase the time estimated.

A word about terminology

→ Facilitators, trainers, youth workers, instructors ...

We use the generic term "facilitator" to signify anyone who is conducting, leading or facilitating an activity from *Mosaic*. The function or profession of the facilitator can vary greatly: they may be a leader or a participant, a paid or voluntary youth worker, a trainer or a learner, an organiser or a resource person.

All words and terms carry with them the potential for different interpretations and misunderstandings. The contributors and editors took great care in trying to use language and expressions that are as neutral as possible. Readers and users can evaluate whether they have succeeded or not; but, in any case, a certain level of tolerance of ambiguity is requested. Whenever you find a term to be ambiguous or inappropriate, please feel free to improve it when you use *Mosaic* and always bear in mind that it has not been the intention of the authors to hurt or disrespect anyone through the language used in the T-kit.

Some terms in *Mosaic* require nevertheless an explanation of their usage and what is meant:

- “European” refers to realities or situations pertaining to any country in Europe: that is, member states of the Council of Europe and beyond. In any case, it is much wider than the member states of the European Union.
- “Euro-Med” or “Euromed” refers to realities and activities taking place in the framework of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership between the member states of the European Union and the other parties to the Barcelona Process.
- “Euro-Mediterranean” (activity, youth work) refers to realities involving or covering all the countries of Europe, or some of them, and all or some of the countries bordering the Mediterranean. It is wider than the Barcelona Process or the Euro-Med Youth programme.
- “Meda” refers to the realities of (all or some of) the countries signatory to the Barcelona Process that are not member states of the European Union (namely Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Israel, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Authority, Syria, Tunisia and Turkey), as in “the Meda countries”.

Notes

1. Baccouche, Fathia (1999) “The Mediterranean region united in its diversity” in *Intercultural dialogue: basis for Euro-Mediterranean partnership*. Lisbon: North-South Centre, pp. 23-28.