

# SALAM

preventing the rise of radicalism and  
islamophobia through art

## Public Report

**Training Course**

**11<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> June 2017**

**Palermo, Italy**

ERASMUS+, KA1 - Mobility of youth workers



Co-funded by the  
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Erasmus+ : KA 1 – Learning mobility of Individuals – Mobility for youth workers

Training Course

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## SALAAM in a nutshell

Migration flows in the EU & the Balkans have increased over the last years. Between 1990 & 2010, especially the number of Muslims in Europe has increased by 14.5 million, & it is expected to grow by 2 percentage points over the next 20 years (Pew research centre). The Muslim community is now the largest migrant population in Europe (6% of Europe's population in 2010) (Hackett, 5 facts about Muslim population in Europe, 2015). In such a framework, on the one hand, in both Europe & the Balkans, ineffective integration policies, social exclusion, lack of intercultural & political dialogue, unemployment & discrimination of migrants, especially Muslims, in their adopted European countries led to a deeper marginalization, facilitating the development of Islamic radicalisation & home-grown terrorism. On the other hand, the past & current situation in the Balkans' area led to identity issues & the raise of radical ideologies in the poorest & most isolated places.

To define the term of "radicalisation" has become central in the study of terrorism & in the shaping of counter-terrorism policies, yet there is no universal theory. The European Commission has adopted a wide-ranging definition of radicalisation as a "phenomenon of people embracing opinions, views and ideas which could lead to acts of terrorism."

Radical religious ideals often become attractive to young people with a migrant background feeling neglected by the European society they were born/brought into. Alienation & social marginalisation make these people vulnerable to violence-inciting ideologies, easily spreading through the new communication tools. At the same time, Islamophobia is rising across European communities due to fear, stereotypes, & ignorance of the migration phenomenon, hindering integration opportunities. Thus, these two negative phenomena appear to feed on each other, requiring a two-fold approach acting on both in parallel.

Such a multifaceted issue requires a joint effort bringing together EU institutions & civil society, especially in two dimensions: promoting inclusive education & EU values and calling for an inclusive, open & resilient society reaching out to young people.

This is the frame in which ***SALAAM - preventing the riSe of rAdicalism and islAMophobia through art*** was born, a 7-day-long Training Course that aimed at promoting inter-cultural dialogue and developing youth workers' skills to transfer the values of freedom, tolerance, democracy and respect of human rights.

Youth Workers play nowadays an important role in empowering and engaging youth in active citizenship and in transferring these values to marginalised young people, while enhancing their sense of belonging to a shared community.

For these reasons SALAAM has intended to increase youth workers' ability to work for a comprehensive integration of migrants and disadvantaged youth preventing radicalism and fighting islamophobia using non formal education tools, especially arts, and the Reciprocal Maieutic Approach by Danilo Dolci.

This project brought together 32 participants (27 Youth Workers/youth facilitators/project leaders working with disadvantaged young people, migrants, refugees and asylum seekers or young people with fewer opportunities, with the participation of 3 trainers and 2 support staff) from 11 countries: Bulgaria, Greece, Portugal, Poland, Italy, Spain, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia, Montenegro, and Serbia.

The intercultural and inter-generational composition of the group was an important element that added value to the sessions, enriching the learning outcomes reached through the implementation of the project.

## SALAAM's objectives

The main objectives of the project were the following:

- To foster inter-cultural dialogue and social cohesion within the youth field by improving youth workers' ability to prevent radicalisation and counteract Islamophobia across European and Balkan countries.
- To improve the skills and competences of youth workers and better promote their knowledge of non-formal methods and innovative approaches to learning in the field of inter-cultural, inter-religious dialogue and social inclusion.
- To demonstrate the role of non-formal education approach in developing the values of solidarity and tolerance among young people and support their active participation in democratic life.
- To improve the potential of youth work to connect young people thus creating new opportunities for them to put their ideas into practice and foster the inclusion of those with fewer opportunities.

This objectives were reached through the implementation of the following activities:



## SALAAM's methodologies and activities

Non-formal education methodologies are at the core of SALAAM training activities with a view to develop new competences & skills. Moreover, a variety of new approaches to foster inter-cultural dialogue in order to prevent radicalisation & Islamophobia have been implemented. These methodologies have supported participants' professional development, fostering furtherly their skills in the inter-cultural dialogue thanks to the multicultural environment.

### The main methodological approaches were based on:

- **Active involvement of participants** in the theoretical and practical sessions through non-formal activities, creative and artistic activities, team-building activities;
- **Inclusive and cooperative learning**: participants were actively involved in the learning process; cooperation among participants was fostered through group work and interaction and stimulated during all the training programme;
- **Peer learning**: participants were encouraged in sharing their knowledge, experiences and ideas, not only during the activities (Inter-cultural dinners, Partner organisations' fair) but also in non-formal moments (coffee-breaks, dinners, etc.);
- **Learning through art**: art was used as a tool to foster inter-cultural dialogue and to prevent the rise of radical ideas: through the art workshops, participants had the chance to experience directly the non-formal learning methodology and the use of different forms of art to prevent the raise of radicalisation and Islamophobia.
- **Creative thinking**: together with art, this methodology was used during the whole TC. It helped participants in finding innovative solutions for issues related to radicalisation, Islamophobia, inter-cultural dialogue and social inclusion.
- **The Reciprocal Maieutic Approach (RMA)**: by experimenting this methodology, participants were provided with a tool to manage conflict situations and to foster inter-cultural dialogue. RMA fosters non-violent communication and tolerance towards others' viewpoints by valuing them. Specifically, RMA is a popular dialectic methodology of research and self-analysis tested by Danilo Dolci starting from the 50s and by Centre for the Creative Development within the educational and sociological field nowadays. This approach promotes a sense of responsibility in the communities and individuals and can be defined as a "collective exploration process that considers individuals' experience and intuition as a reference point" (Dolci, 1996). If you want to know more, you can click [here](#).

- ***Open Space Technology***: an interactive method which allowed participants to share ideas and possible ways to start or continue their cooperation, by using the space as a creative tool to share ideas, develop proposal and maximize time.

## SALAAM Activities in details

In the following pages you'll find more details on how some of the activities were carried out. This can give you more inspiration in case of possible implementation into your home country.

### **BREAK THE ICEBERG! (GROUP BUILDING ACTIVITIES)**

Ice- breaking activities were used throughout the week to initiate the morning sessions.

In the first morning, the ice- breakers are essential: in the case of SALAAM, they were an opportunity for the group to get to know each other. Moreover, participants were asked to contribute by suggesting their own activities and ice- breakers throughout the week.

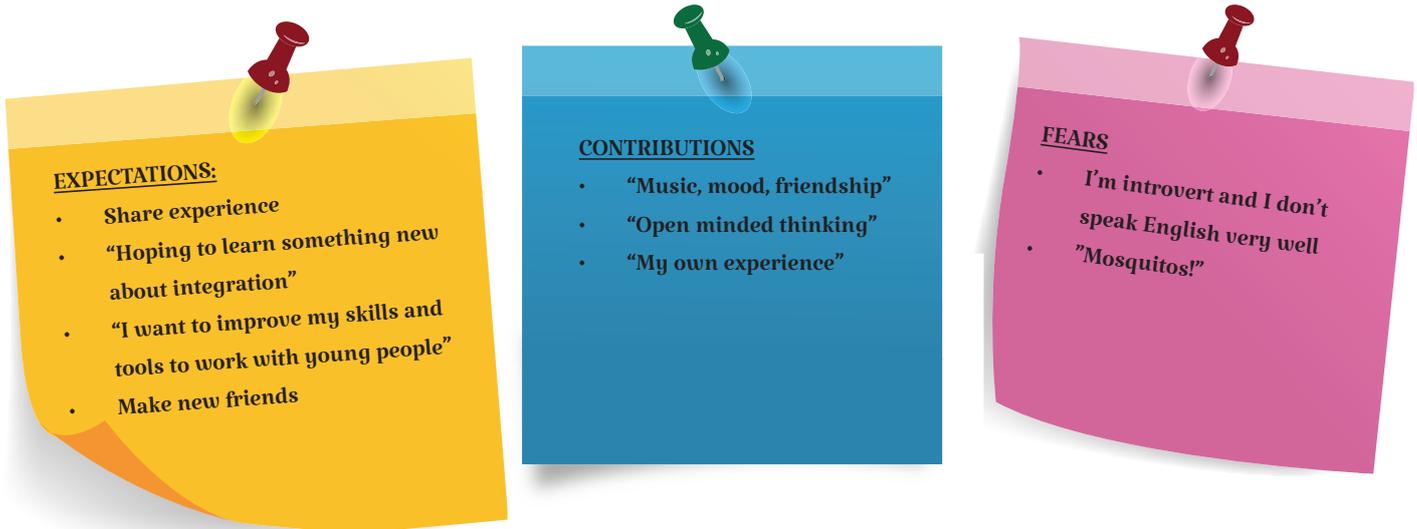


### **HOT-AIR BALLOON: EXPECTATIONS, CONCERNS AND MOTIVATIONS**

During this session the participants were able to express their fears and expectations toward this training. Using the “Hot-Air Balloon” exercise, the participants used post-its in order to brainstorm on what motivated them to participate in this training and share their concerns on how the following days would unfold. Moreover, their possible artistic contribution has been asked.



Some of their thoughts...



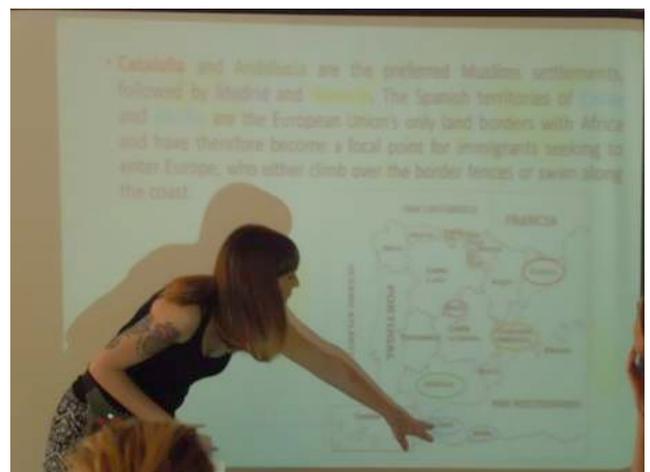
**MAPPING THE RISE OF RADICALISATION - NATIONAL SITUATION ON RADICALISATION, ISLAMOPHOBIA, MIGRATION, POLITICAL ASPECTS**

Based on their pre-departure preparation, the participants had to present the status of islamophobia and radicalism in their countries. Through the guidance of the trainers, the presentations were followed by questions, which sparked a very interesting debate regarding the situation of migrants and refugees in Europe and the response of the participant countries to it.



In Turkey...  
...”Countries received the most refugees from Syria: Turkey first, followed by Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and Libya (2016 UNHCR statistics)”

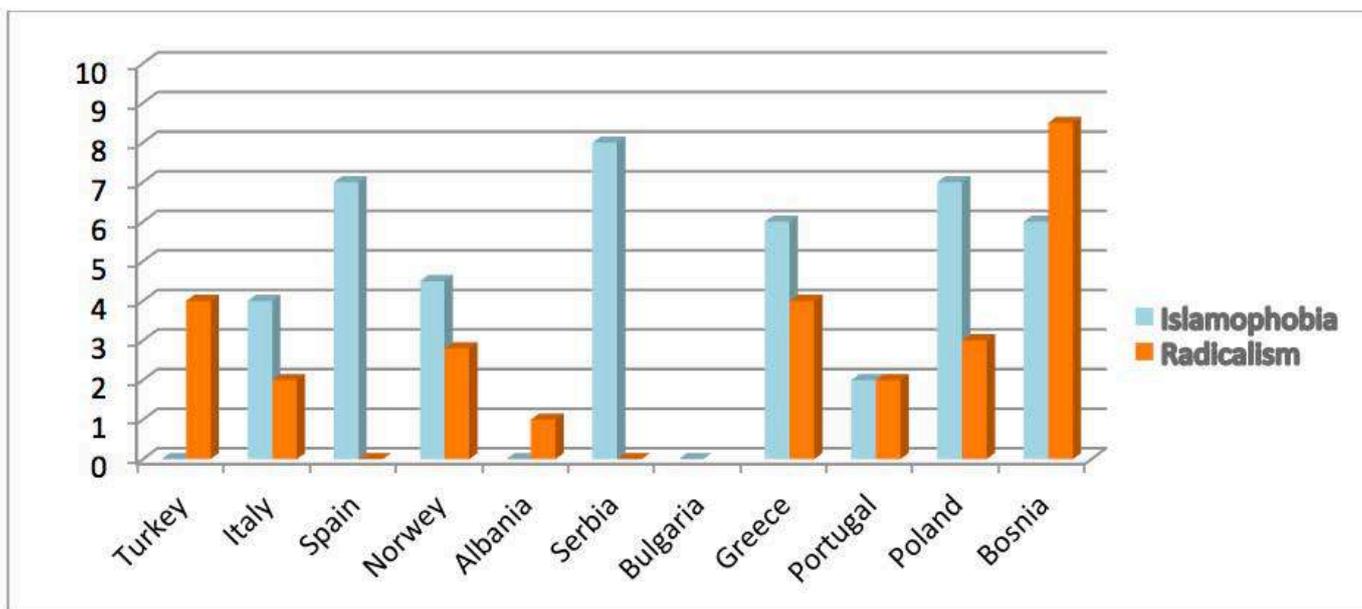
Spanish team stating:  
“Cataluña and Andalusia are the preferred Muslim settlements, followed by Madrid and Valencia”



After the national presentations, participants were asked to place their country in the World Chart according to the level of Islamophobia and Radicalisation they perceive.

It is quite interesting to see how the results reflect the different perceptions of the phenomena, which are often far away from the real national situations proved by the statistical data.

The world chart created on participants' points of view, in short:

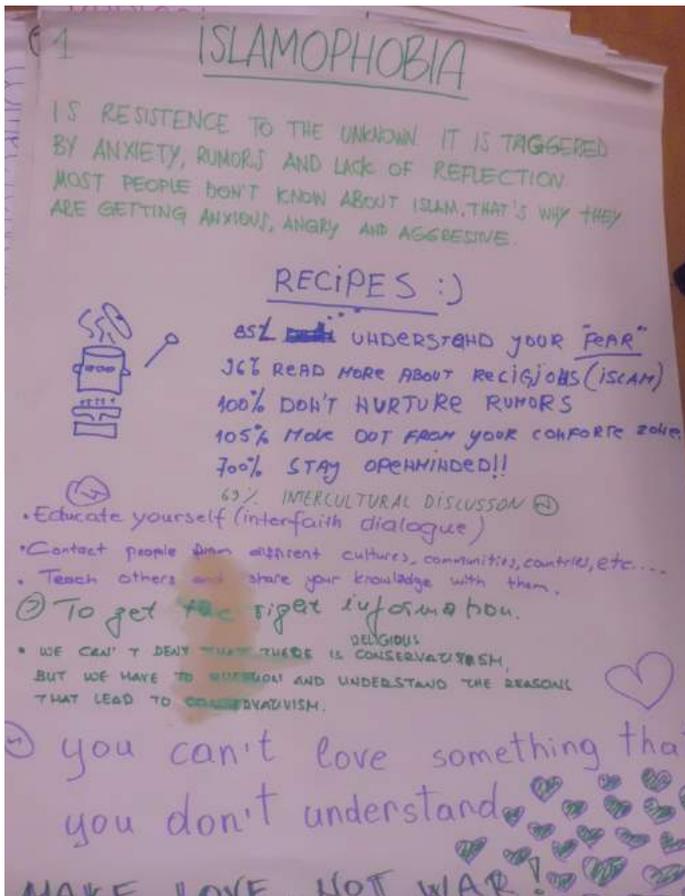


**MAP OF THE PROBLEMATIQUE: THE PARALLEL TRACK OF RADICALISATION AND ISLAMOPHOBIA**

Using the information collected from the previous session, participants were split in small groups in order to brainstorm on the meaning of radicalism and islamophobia. By discussing and analyzing key terms such as social inclusion, inter-cultural dialogue and extremism, they were asked to identify the common aspects and differences of islamophobia and radicalism, by drawing two parallel mind maps, one for each phenomena.



## LETTER TO AN ALIEN (I) & (II): REFLECTING ON COMMON FEATURES



In the first (I) part of this activity, participants were given large pieces of papers with letters of the alphabet written on them. Together with the guidance of the trainers, they were asked to think of one word for each letter, which would express their thoughts and feelings about radicalism and islamophobia.

After this, they had to form small groups and each group had to choose one letter from the charts. Using the words that were written on the chosen letter, they had to write a letter to "an alien", someone who had no idea or perception of the meaning of islamophobia or radicalism, explaining the terms and giving their personal definition.

Following that, during the second (II) part, each group had to present in a creative way their definition of the words. Some of the participants used their creativity to the maximum and they wrote a song for their presentation!

You can hear the song at the following video: <https://www.facebook.com/salaamproject.eu/videos/315366818902556/>

The trainers encouraged the group to discuss over the definitions that they had presented.



As a following step, they were asked to rethink of the mind maps they have created in the previous session, choose two shared characteristics of islamophobia and radicalism and reflect on possible solutions to tackle these phenomena. Then, participants were invited to share the results of their discussion in plenary, collecting feedbacks from participants.



### **A GLIMPSE BEYOND THE VEIL & WORLD CAFÉ**

After looking at the work produced in the previous sessions, the trainers decided to include in the foreseen activities the ideas of the participants together with the already prepared material for the training. More specifically, in order to organize the session “A glimpse beyond the veil”, they have also included the activity “World Café” in order to maximize the contribution by the participants.



The activity has been divided in 2 parts:

in the first part, trainers used images in order to analyse the use of stereotypes in our visual communication and to see how they are boosted by media nowadays, guiding the reflection of the group both on the role of mass media on conveying stereotypes and on art as a tool on breking down stereotypes. Then, trainers decided to use phrases from famous writers and thinkers, referring to the notions of radicalization and islamophobia or to the role of art in dealing with different issues. They decided to include also, some of the phrases that the participants thought during the “Letter to an Alien” activity.

Forming small groups, each group had to reflect on one of the phrases that they were given. They discussed on the meaning of the statements, to what extent they agree or not with them and had to write some words or a small sentence that would respond to this idea. At the end of the session, trainers wrapped up all the results, and asked participants how art can be used to tackle several issues, including integration problems, marginalization, bad stereotyping and so on.

## DISCOVERING LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS WORKING WITH YOUTH MOST AT RISK OF SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND ISOLATION



The group visited Centro Astalli Palermo, a center that offers first and secondary aid to migrants and refugees.

After visiting the facilities of the center, a member of the staff explained the different activities that take place there (breakfast, medical assistance, legal support, language course, workshops etc).

The participants asked questions in order to understand better how the Italian system works in regards to the migrants and asylum seekers. The visit has been an useful good practice – especially for non-Italians participants – to be seen by international participants.

## QUESTION A BOOK! THE LIVING LIBRARY

The Living Library took place in Centro Astalli, after the organized tour was finished. The participants were able to speak with 5 “living books”, 5 migrants who live in Palermo. Divided into small groups of “readers”, each group had time to discuss and ask questions to one book (with rotation of each group).

The topics of discussion were open and the participants were able to ask questions and learn about the stories of each one of the migrants, understanding the circumstances under which they arrived in Italy and exchanging opinions about the main topics of the workshop. Through the personal stories that the “living books” shared, the participants were able to view and understand a different side of the consequences of islamophobia and radicalism in the daily life of people.

**“... It was a very important experience, when we went to Palermo and talked with migrants.”**

**“I learned a lot from talking to them...”**

## **ERASMUS+ and EUROPEAN FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES + Open Space Technology**

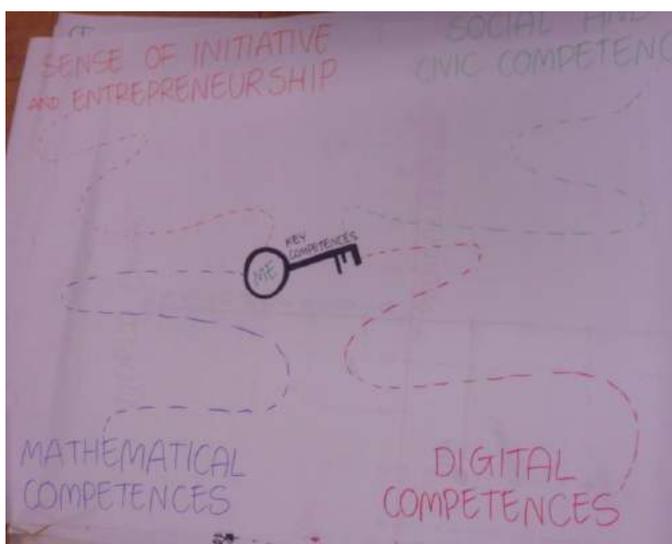
The trainers presented the Erasmus+ program to the participants, summarizing also the impact the programme had in 30 years of implementation. Trainers explained each action, highlighting the importance and the opportunities for youth workers and their activities. During this session they shared also on line resources for funding opportunities and open calls related to the topic of radicalization and social exclusion. Some of the resources shared were the following:



The session has been followed by the Open Space Technology, developing some project ideas, identifying the main topics in which to write some draft of proposal for the next Erasmus + deadline

## **YOUTH PASS, EUROPEAN PORTFOLIO FOR YOUTH WORKERS**

The trainers introduced the importance of the 8 key competences and of their certification through the Youthpass.



Through guided questions, trainers have carried out a collective reflection with the participants, facilitating in this way their self-assessment to get the Youthpass on the following months, based on their experience in the project. A specific space has been given to the European Portfolio for youth workers and youth leaders.

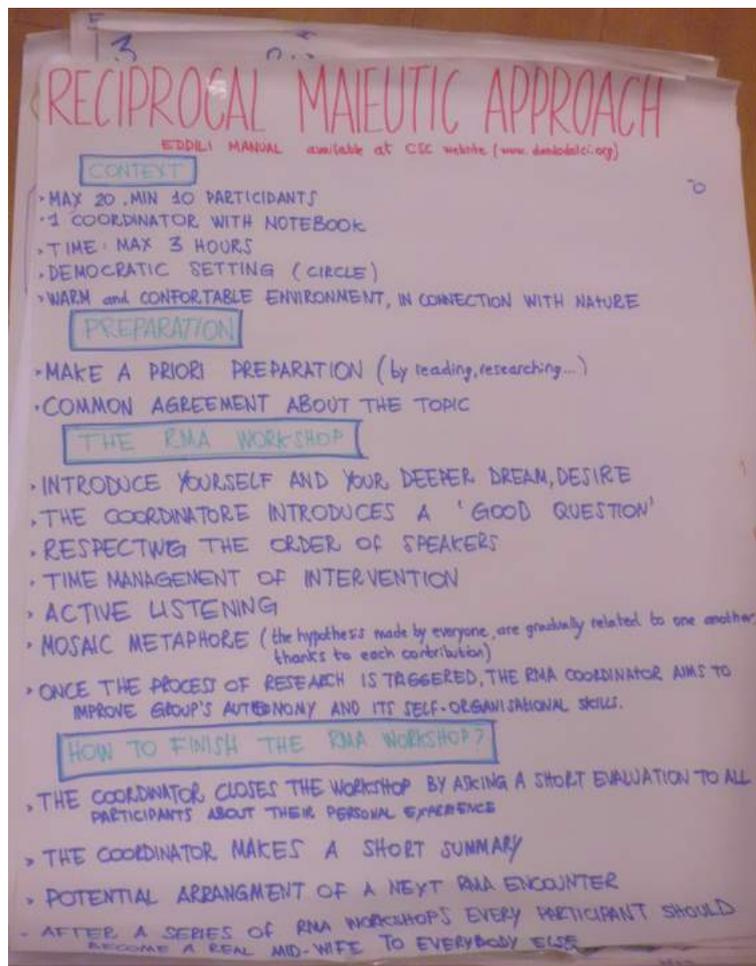
## WORKSHOPS

### ➤ RMA WORKSHOP: COMMUNICATING THROUGH ART



Specific part of the training has been dedicated to several workshop. The first one has been dedicated to the Reciprocal Maieutic Approach (RMA). The participants had the chance to get introduced to the RMA methodology and get familiar with a new technique that promotes inter-cultural understanding and democratic dialogue. RMA workshop has been useful to identify specific issues and approaches to be implemented in each own context, summarizing in the best way the previous sessions and preparing the ground for the other workshops of the project.





Once this approach is acquired, participants can establish a new environment of inclusion and equal opportunities for the young people they work with and in risk of marginalization.



➤ **THE USE OF ART TO PREVENT RADICALISATION AND ISLAMOPHOBIA AND FOSTER INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE**

The artistic workshop was introduced to participants through a short presentation and practical activity, in order to get participants familiar with artistic expression, using dance therapy and the movement of the body. Through the instructions of the trainer, participants were able to follow their inner artistic expression.

It gave them the spark of inspiration necessary to continue with the following creative workshops.



**BEHIND THE CURTAIN! ART AND THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED WORKSHOPS**



As a second step, the participants formed two groups, according to their field of interest: Theater of the Oppressed and Visual Arts. The idea behind the organization of these 2 workshops is that using different forms of art can be an innovative way to enhance intercultural dialogue among young people and to promote integration of young people at risk of marginalisation, in particular migrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

## ➤ THEATRE OF THE OPPRESSED WORKSHOP

As first step of the workshop, the group was introduced to the history of the Theatre of the Oppressed and Forum Theatre, starting from the work of A. Boal.

Through a collective reflection and a creative writing session, participants elaborated the story they wanted to create for their performance, the main characters and how they could include the ideas of islamophobia and radicalism in the play.

The group focused on working with the themes of social exclusion, discrimination, inter-religious understanding through the stories of migrants, refugees and disadvantaged people.

After two days of hard work, continuous rehearsals and preparation of the scenery, the theatre group was ready for their final performance!



## ➤ VISUAL ARTS WORKSHOP

Parallely to the theatre workshop, the visual art session has worked really fruitfully. After brainstorming on how they can use visual arts to transmit the message of tolerance, respect and intercultural dialogue, the team decided to form two smaller groups and work on two different concepts. The idea was to create a public exhibition of visual arts, parallel to the theatrical performance.



The first group decided to tell the story of migrants and asylum seekers through a comic strip. After making some staged photographs with the scenes of their story, they worked on editing and manipulating the photos so they resemble a comic strip. They made prints of the photos and they used a big board to set the panels of the comic strip, together with the texts and dialogues they had created.

The second group worked with some phrases that depict the fears and prejudice that people have towards migrants and refugees. Also, they elaborated on positive messages, indicative of a more open and welcoming society, that is willing to embrace the diversity of its members.

They used large format white posters on which they wrote the phrases. Each member of the team was photographed twice, holding one poster each time, with a negative and a positive message.



After printing the photos, the group worked on creating their footprints by using paint and paper, in order to create a path in the square where the exhibition would take place, leading the public to the images.

### **FINAL PERFORMANCE**

The final performance has been held on the public square of Terrasini (PA). According to the Theatre of Oppressed rules, participants performed a scene showing a discrimination act – in this case towards migrants with muslim faith. SALAAM actors have involved some spectators from Terrasini's square in the performance, leaving them the possibility to change the oppressive situations they were representing.



## ORGANIZATION BAZAAR & INTERCULTURAL DINNER

The intercultural dinners, in which local community had the chance to participate, were an opportunity for the participants to share the traditions and culture of their countries.



Some participants prepared typical dishes, they offered desserts and drinks from their country, and they introduced the rest of the group to the music of their region as well as their dances.

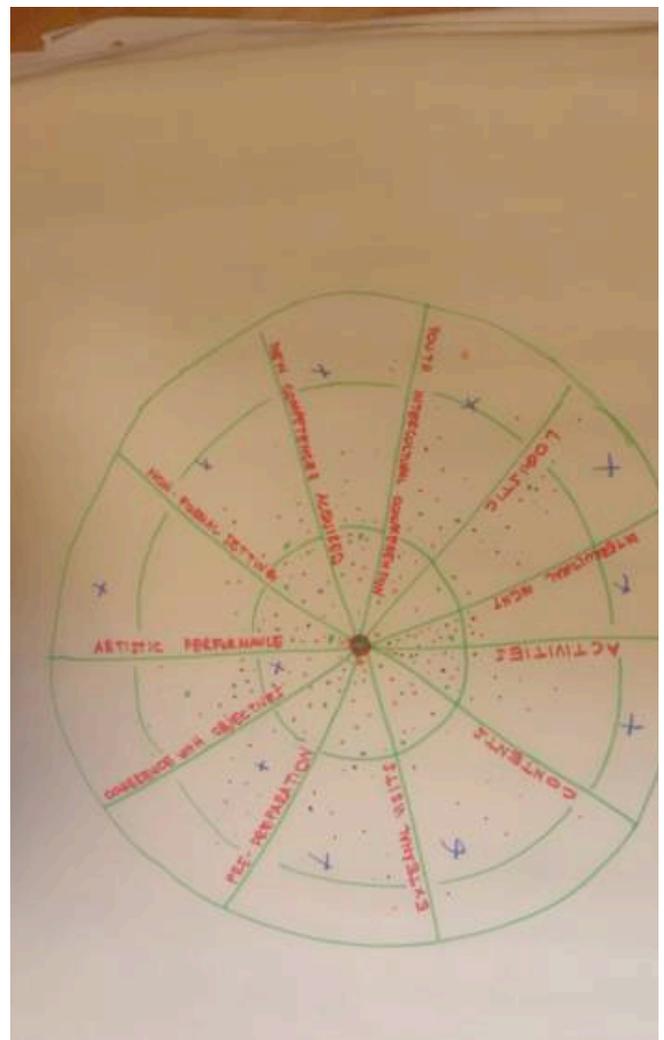
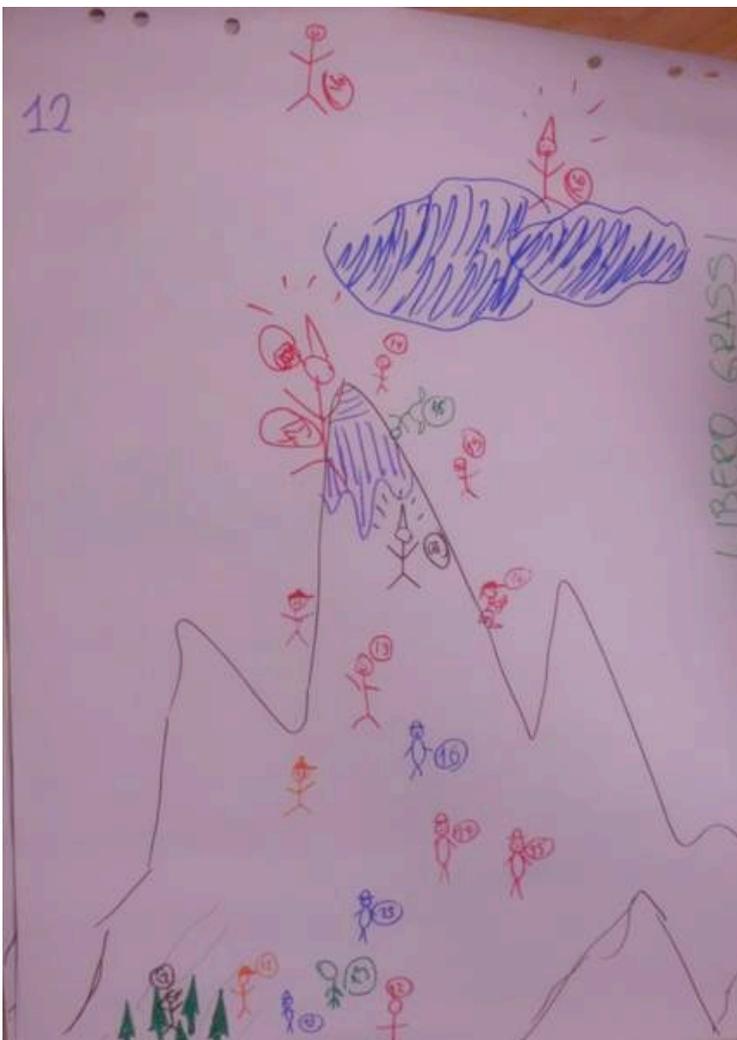
Parallely to the intercultural dinners, the organization bazaar was an occasion to present the work of the partner organizations, their history and the projects they work on. They shared brochures and information material of their ongoing activities, and through videos and power points each organizations had the chance to explain to the rest of the group their main aim, activities and products of similar projects.



## EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

The evaluation of the participants' experience, in regards to the activities of the training but also their free time and the hosting experience, took place in both formal and non-formal ways.

On a daily basis, after the end of the workshops, the participants were divided in small groups to evaluate their daily experience in a more creative way, using mainly visual group evaluation methods. Using a flipchart with a mountain drawn on it, each person had to position himself in a different part of the mountain (for example, someone would place themselves on the top of the mountain if he/she was very satisfied with the activities of the day). The coordinator, trainers and support staff were present during the evaluations in order to ask questions and take notes on what should be improved and their suggestions.

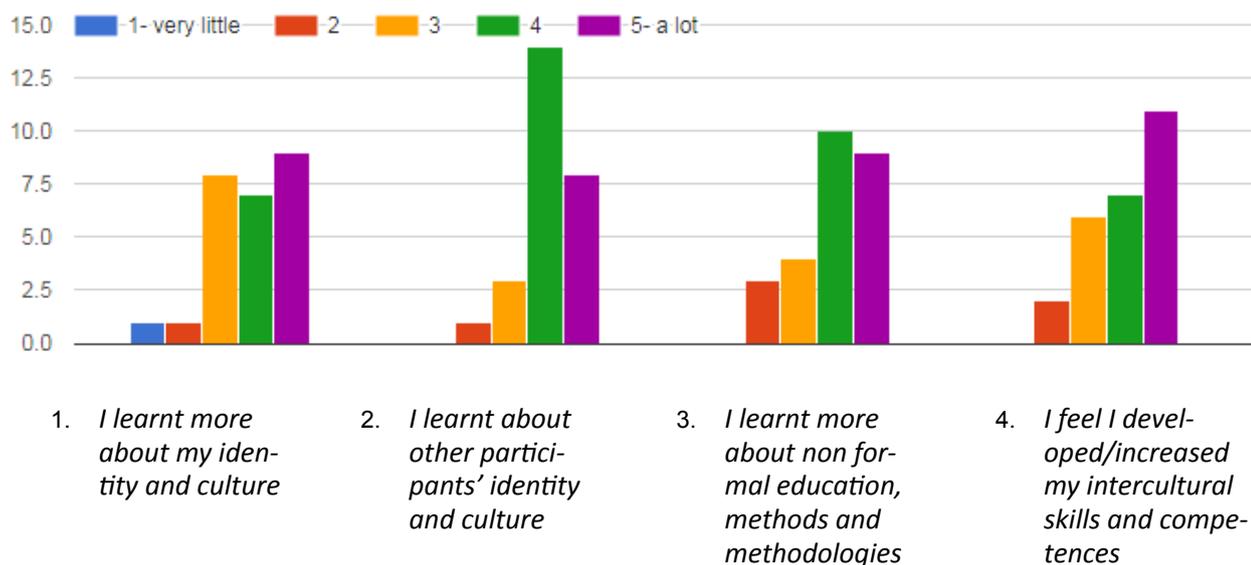


The same has been done during the final day: not only participants share their thought on how the experience went, but also try to visualize their position on a circle: the more they put themselves at the center of the circle, the more they are satisfied. The overall result of the evaluation has been undoubtedly positive, allowing to finalize the training in the best way.

Furthermore, prior to their arrival and after the end of the training the participants had to fill in different on line questionnaires where they could express their expectations, fears and suggestions for improvement.

Some results from the online questionnaire:

**Level of learning outcomes reached by participants**



**Anything else you would like to share regarding your learning outcomes?**

*It's my first training and my first "touch" with non-formal methodology and I'll hope I'll have the opportunity to share what I've learnt*

*Overall, it was a valuable experience*

*Thank you very much for this opportunity*

*Yes. Very important experience. In Palermo. Talk with migrants. Their look at many issues. I learned a lot from talking to them.*

## CONTACTS

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[www.facebook.com/pg/salaamproject.eu](https://www.facebook.com/pg/salaamproject.eu)



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