

Developing Intercultural Competencies amid COVID-19

TRAINING ON INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES FOR YOUTH IN THE EURO-MEDITERRANEAN REGION

Deadline for registration: 4 May 2021

**17 May 2021 – from 3 pm to 6 pm (CEST)
Online – Zoom Platform**

[Training on Intercultural Competencies for Youth in the Euro-Mediterranean Region](#)

This online training session, jointly organised by UNESCO and Anna Lindh Foundation, is proposed in the framework of UNESCO's "Building Resilience through the Development of Intercultural Competencies" project, which aims to consolidate a network of facilitators of the Story Circles methodology for developing intercultural competencies and to build the resilience of women and men in contexts where intercultural dialogue is especially needed.

The relevance of intercultural competencies in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic has been accentuated as the health crisis deepened the disparities and exposed vulnerable populations, including refugees, migrants, minorities and indigenous peoples. Responding to this challenge requires immediate action in order to be able to build back more inclusive and sustainable societies in the longer term.

Through the provision of accessible and engaging resources to foster intercultural competencies, UNESCO develops individual and institutional capacities to build mutual understanding as a means of overcoming conflict, sustaining peace and contributing to inclusive development. The Organization also builds a solid network of prestigious institutions on intercultural competencies worldwide.

It is in this spirit that UNESCO launched in 2019 the Manual for Developing Intercultural Competencies, presenting Story Circles. Piloted in 5 countries by UNESCO (Thailand, Costa Rica, Zimbabwe, Austria and Tunisia), the methodology has proven to be effective on a variety of different issues - from the social inclusion of migrants to the dialogue among indigenous peoples - with participants acquiring strong skills for tolerance, empathy, critical thinking and listening for understanding.

This Training is designed for the youth of the Mediterranean region and is part of the Anna Lindh Foundation Virtual Marathon for Dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean region running between May and June 2021.

The Anna Lindh Foundation is an international organisation working to promote intercultural and civil society dialogue in the face of growing mistrust and polarisation, with large experience in mobilising Youth in the Mediterranean region through initiatives as the Young Mediterranean voices, that provides a pioneering platform to open doors for young influencers to shape policy and media narratives.

UNESCO recognises youth “as agents of change, social transformations, peace and sustainable development”¹. Youth have the potential and the capacity to make change happen – not only for themselves, but for their communities as well, and for the rest of the world. In this spirit, the proposed exercise will build the young participants’ capacities for intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding and will empower them to become facilitators of the Story Circle methodology in the Mediterranean region and drive change in their local communities in order to foster a culture of peace.

The author and main facilitator

Darla K. Deardorff is a research scholar at Duke University, author of eight books and over 50 articles and book chapters, founder of ICC Global, affiliated faculty at numerous institutions around the world, and frequently invited speaker and consultant. As the author of the Manual for Developing Intercultural Competencies, Prof. Deardorff will introduce the Story Circles methodology to the participants. **The training session will be held in English with interpretation in French.**

Implementation Strategy

The 3-hour online activity includes an introduction to the importance of developing intercultural competencies as well as a Story Circles exercise.

- Opening – a brief overview of the event and its purpose of developing intercultural competencies, and the ways to implement the Story Circles methodology in different environments
- Story Circles exercise, which takes place generally in groups of five or six participants (smaller groups help participants feel more comfortable in sharing stories)
- Debriefing
- New facilitators Q&A

The online training will focus on building the intercultural capacities, knowledge and commitment of the participants who can serve as multipliers to impact a large number of diverse groups in different countries.

Selection criteria for participants

With the present Call, UNESCO and the ALF aim at identifying young women and men to attend the Training.

¹ UNESCO Operational Strategy on Youth (2014-2021), p. 8.

Participants will be selected on the basis of the following criteria:

- Being a young woman or man aged between 18-30
- Being member of YMV alumni community, or EVE alumni community, or the ALF networks
- Nationality and/or residency of the applicant of one of the 42 EuroMed countries
- The capacity of the candidate to communicate and understand English and/or French
- Motivation
- Commitment and clarity of the follow-up on the training by the candidate acting as facilitator of future Story Circles activities in his own community

Based on the relevance and quality of applications, the ALF and UNESCO will try to ensure the selection of representatives from different countries of the region with a tentative ratio of 35% Southern Mediterranean and 65% European participants and with gender balance.

[Application and selection process](#)

Candidates to the Training of Trainers on Intercultural Competencies for the Youth of the Mediterranean Region should fill in the [application form](#) by 4 May 2021.