



# TeaM



## Teaching Marginalized Groups

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### GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING MARGINALIZED GROUPS

  
  
  


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## 1. Introduction

Even when there are no learners from minority ethnic backgrounds, our classes are multicultural. Our learners come from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Their backgrounds varied in terms of age, religion, socioeconomic status, household structure, and family structure. They also differ in terms of values and attitudes, lifestyle, abilities/disabilities, and ethnicity or nationality. Ethnicity or nationality is thus simply one of the variables that contribute to our classrooms' diversity and influence our learners' culture.

The settlement of immigrants and refugees has created new "minorities" in Europe, enhancing the previously existing social and cultural heterogeneity. It wasn't until educators began researching immigrant education that they recognised we'd always had a varied variety of learners in our classes.

The aim of this output is to deal with this diversity, with a focus on immigrants, the elderly, and the unemployed, in a positive and inclusive way.

When we talk about “Teaching Marginalized groups” we need to take a range of issues into consideration. These issues will be examined in this output, the main aim of which is to give trainers a practical handbook to support them in changing their way of teaching so that to create a better learning experience for **marginalized groups** of learners i.e. immigrants, the elderly, and unemployed.

## 2. Different educational approaches

### 2.1. Immigrant Education

Various educational approaches were established in a variety of European countries between the 1970s and the 1990s. The added educational approaches did not always replace pre-existing ones but rather overlapped in numerous ways.





The immigration that occurred in Europe beginning in the late 1960s triggered immigrant education. **Immigrant education** was initially deficit-oriented (Cogolin, Kruger-Potratx 2003), with a focus on language learning.

Parallel to immigrant education, many EU countries established a new approach, multicultural education. This method might be considered the initial step toward intercultural education. In the 1980s and 1990s, the debate centered on special schooling for immigrants, rather than assimilation or integration, with no mutual integration. The intercultural education approach finally led to the conclusion that a person from a foreign nation was no different from a local person from the same social background.

Most educators who specialize in this sector have come to the view that all learners must become intercultural competent in order to live and prosper in our modern society.

## 2.2. Intergenerational education

Intergenerational learning is especially significant for older adult learners since it can alleviate concern about technology and possibly allow exchanges of insights across generations. A collaborative learning environment fosters social interactions among learners while also fostering creativity and knowledge exchange. Older adult learners enjoy an active learning environment in which they may contribute their life experiences, opinions, and expectations. They require an informal learning environment with a customized curriculum in order for their learning session to be more productive.

Following extensive research and review, it was found that multiple tactics are required to ensure the effectiveness of sessions involving older adult learners. A collaborative learning technique may include small or large group conversations, activities that encourage collective interaction, or training and workshop settings.





## 2.3. Training for unemployed

Nowadays, many people who lose their jobs owing to a temporary fall in labour force demand face the prospect of long-term unemployment, which has major effects for both the individual and society as a whole; hence, preventing social exclusion is a crucial action to adopt during the crisis. Prompt and proactive actions may facilitate the integration of the jobless into the labour market, so boosting employment and making entrance to the labour market and return to work simpler after a period of unemployment (Labklājības ministrija, 2012b). According to International Labour Organization standards, an unemployed person is simply someone who has actively looked for employment in the last four weeks and is ready to start working within two weeks if an acceptable position is given. Unemployed people are usually encouraged to participate in educational activities and training courses that will help them improve their abilities and hence increase their chances of finding a job. An issue arises when unemployed people are not motivated to make changes, such as participating in educational activities and training courses.

## 2.4. Inclusive education

Another crucial point is that learners from marginalised groups do not experience equality outside of the classroom, implying that there is still much work to be done to combat social problems such as prejudice and racism. Education should always include anti-racist content. Being a decent citizen and having solid social skills is about more than just employment and employability. It is also about actively participating in the creation of a just and equitable society. Citizens who actively fight for non-dominant groups' equal rights and opportunities, who value and respect diversity rather than passively accepting it, are critical components in the creation of such just and equitable systems.

Alvarez and Juang (2010) define daily racism as "hidden, everyday manifestations of prejudice," such as being ignored and isolated, mocked and embarrassed, or treated





differently than members of the majority group. These routine practises toward individuals from excluded groups in society are dangerous because they form part of the dominant group's accepted framework. Essed (1991) finds evidence of everyday racism in most social and institutional circumstances, therefore one must assume that all of our educational institutions, both as places of work and learning, contain such characteristics and are experienced by both learners and educators, for some on a daily basis.

### 3. What needs to be changed?

This section will address some ideas for how educators might help marginalised groups. The solution is not quick or simple since no single teaching style is perfect for all learners all of the time. The answer is found in diversity, in many educational methods and approaches. Teaching approaches that involve the student, involve contact and communication, and have a structure that allows every learner to participate in the learning process are best suited to attaining the goal of teaching underrepresented populations. According to research (Cohen and Lotan, 1995), when we merely listen or observe, we use only a small portion of our potential to learn; however, when we explain to others, we learn more. The more we try to construct an idea about a subject, the better we grasp it. The more we strive to communicate with others, the better we comprehend; the more we discuss about a topic, the more we learn; the more we think rather than recall; the more we learn and remember. As a result, the more active we are in the learning process, the more we learn, understand, and remember. The question is whether we provide this opportunity to our learners on a daily basis or if it is a rare occurrence in our sessions.

**Cooperative learning** is a widely accepted solution for teaching marginalized groups. Furthermore, it has been demonstrated to deepen learners' comprehension and reach more learners than just one who is proficient in a subject. **Cooperative learning groups** are not only an effective tool for stimulating academic improvement through



involvement, but they may also be an effective vehicle for reducing isolation. Educators might strive to break down the surface obstacles that learners may encounter when they are individuals by forming a team. Individual attitudes, ideas, experiences, and beliefs are exposed in group work as they are employed to attain a common goal through a collaborative effort. Group work fosters a deeper grasp of the subject at hand as well as the dynamics of teamwork, which will be useful throughout life, and it facilitates communication among group members. Cooperative learning allows learners to hone their critical thinking, cooperation, and communication abilities. Of course, the content of the learning materials is critical.

A single trainer cannot alter the system, but they can change their teaching style and classroom structure by being open to learning and implementing innovative and inclusive teaching approaches. And now for the question: Is a trainer simply a subject trainer? A trainer is an all-around educator and role model who teaches their learners much more than just a subject - even when they don't want to.

Learners in most educational institutions are accustomed to individual structures in which the goal is to outperform others rather than to acquire any cooperative competencies. So, before beginning a cooperative session, a trainer must prepare both the group and himself. Several things are essential at the beginning:

- The trainer should prepare himself (definition of the size of the groups, creation of group workstations, formation of the groups by the trainer, written instructions, ensuring good working conditions, preparation of the tasks to reach the objectives of the session)
- The trainer should make sure that all learners understand their role during the use of the cooperating method
- A safe and supportive atmosphere should be created (get to know each other, presentation of the educational method)





## 4. Example of class activity to create a trusted atmosphere

When using activities to create a good class atmosphere, learners may learn with all of their senses; they learn by experiencing and feeling something, and there is always interaction to help them get to know each other better. An activity must always be followed by reflection so that the learners are aware of what they have learned. A good example of a class activity to create a trusted atmosphere is the BINGO activity described below.

**Resources required:** Large open area in a room

**Group size:** Any size

**Time:** 15-25 minutes including reflection

### Step-by-step:

1. Every participant receives a bingo sheet with statements appropriate for the learners' age in each box.
2. Learners are instructed to walk about and ask each other questions, and when someone replies "yes" to a question, they are to write that person's name in the appropriate box.
3. The goal is to obtain five distinct names in a row on a bingo, and when they do, they should shout BINGO. After they have shouted BINGO, they should keep asking and try to fill as many boxes as possible.

|                     |                     |               |           |                          |
|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Can play the guitar | Likes to play chess | Likes to cook | Has a pet | Grows up your own greens |
|                     |                     |               |           |                          |





|                               |                    |                  |                          |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Likes to watch films          | Is good at cooking | Has a sports car | Has met a celebrity      | Lived abroad             |
| Would like to become a writer | Has a tattoo       | Can ride a bike  | Went camping last summer | Plays sport regularly    |
| Took a road trip              | Hates animals      | Likes cats       | Likes sweets             | Runs a website           |
| Likes to sing                 | Speaks 2 languages | Likes jazz music | Likes drinking wine      | Has a birthday in August |

**Reflection:** What was going on in the room at the time of this activity?





## 5. Example of a topic-awareness-raising activity

The aim of this activity is to raise awareness about inequality of opportunity and also foster empathy with others who are less fortunate. Participants in this activity take on roles and progress based on their life chances and opportunities.

**Resources required:** Large open area in a room

**Group size:** Any size

**Time:** 20-30 minutes including reflection

### Step-by-step:

1. Ask participants to take a role card. Tell them to keep it to themselves and not to show it to anyone else. Ask them to begin to get into the role.
2. Ask participants to stay completely silent as he or she forms a line next to each other (like on a starting line).
3. Inform the participants that you will be reading a list of situations or events. They should take a step forward every time they can answer "yes" to the statement. Otherwise, they should stay where they are and not move.
4. Read the situations and events one by one. Pause for a moment between each statement to allow people to take a step forward.
5. Finally, ask everyone to take note of their final positions. Allow them a few minutes to exit character before discussing in plenary.

Situations and events concerning unemployed people:

- You've never had a severe financial problem.
- You can take a vacation once a year.
- You are not terrified about being pulled over by the police.
- You should replace your clothes at least once every three months.
- You have never experienced discrimination due to your ethnicity.
- You are not concerned about your children's future.





- You believe that your perspective on social and political topics is valued and that your viewpoints are heard.
- You believe that your language, religion, and culture are valued in the society in which you live.
- You have a decent place to live with a phone and a television.

Participants' Role cards:

|  |  |
|--|--|
| You are an unemployed single mother.   | You are the daughter of the local bank manager. You study Engineering at the university. |
| You are a homeless young man, 27 years old.  | You are the owner of a successful import- export company.                                |
| You are an unemployed university graduate waiting for the first opportunity to work. | You are the son of a Chinese immigrant who runs fast food business.                      |
| You are an illegal immigrant from Mali.  | You are the mayor of the city.   |
| You are a 23-year old refugee from Afghanistan.                                      | You are a 40-year old doctor.  |
| You are a fashion model of African origin.   | You are a 32-year old lawyer.  |
| You are a retired worker from a factory that makes shoes.                            | You are a 30-year old HR specialist in a big company.                                    |
| You are a 25-year old cleaner from Syria.  | You are the manager of two restaurants.  |

**Reflection:** Ask participants what happened and how they felt about the exercise, and then discuss the concerns addressed and what they learned.





## 6. Example of a cooperative learning task

The aim of this activity is to generate discussion among learner groups about a specific topic or content area.

**Resources required:** A room with teamwork tables

**Group size:** Any size

**Time:** 30-45 minutes including reflection

**Step-by-step:**

1. The trainer delivers a brief (10-15 minute) lecture on a certain topic or content area. They may also provide reading material.
2. Individually, learners create their own questions depending on the content being studied. Learners are not required to be able to answer the questions posed to them.
3. Each learner in a learning team poses a question for debate. The group discusses the questions and attempts to collect as many possible replies as feasible.
4. They select one question and make a presentation in which they explain the answer creatively.

**Reflection:** Ask participants what happened and how they felt about the exercise, and then discuss what they learned.

## 7. Conclusions

In the output, we presented our findings from the activities that occurred during the project's lifespan regarding teaching marginalized groups.

Furthermore, we included the activities that occurred during the 3rd LTTA in Greece. The first activity is an ice-breaker that can be used to create a safe and trusted environment among the participants. The second activity was used to raise awareness





about unemployed people's unequal opportunities, but it can also be adapted for immigrants or the elderly. The third activity facilitates discussion on a specific topic. We hope that this output will encourage and inspire other adult learners to utilize cooperative learning as a tool in their sessions so that everyone has equal access to the learning process.

