



Youth e-perspectives



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GUIDELIES ON IMPLEMENTING THE YOUTH E-PERSPECTIVES METHODOLOGY “FIND-TELL-ACT”

INRODUCTION

The Youth e-Perspectives on Migration project aims to empower young people to address sensitive contemporary societal issues (in our case migration and the refugee crisis) and at the same time improve their digital and media skills. In this way, digital and technical skills develop in parallel with social values like active citizenship.

For this purpose, we developed and implemented a training methodology for a blended learning based on three interrelated digital media modules (or as we call them, workshops): Digital Photography, Digital Storytelling and Online Platforms, in which refugee crisis was our main theme. After piloting the methodology, we evaluated the pilot training and developed a forth module to fill in the identified missing aspects, titled Digital Journalism. This module is aimed to provide general knowledge on how to look for information, assess information sources, conduct interviews and provide an objective overview of the facts related to a topic.

These now four modules are the pieces of a puzzle that we tried to put together to give youngsters a full set of skills to use digital technologies to address topics of societal importance. Each module has a preparation phase, face to face part, evaluation and follow-up, except for the Digital Journalism module, which is an online course.

These guidelines are an accompanying document to our methodology and present our experience of applying the methodology and putting the different pieces together. It is a hands-on explanation that is aimed to guide anyone (teachers, trainers, youth workers or youth leaders) who decides to use our methodology in their work. This document includes lessons learnt, do's and don'ts and practical tips on how to make the methodology work in practice.

WHY THESE THREE WORKSHOPS (MODULES)? WHY “FIND-TELL-ACT”?

The *Digital Photography* workshop is meant as an introduction to the technical side of digital photography, but also as a preparation for the workshop on *Digital Storytelling*. It is meant to help young people **FIND** their story.

Digital Storytelling is a simple and creative process through which people with little or no experience of computers gain skills needed to **TELL** a personal story as a two-minute film using predominantly still images.

The *Online Platforms* workshop provides participants with the skills and knowledge needed to properly use online platforms to communicate to others, raise awareness about a cause and stir debate and **ACT**ion. ACT is also what our participants did when they organised their national peer-to-peer events.

Each of the three workshops can be implemented separately as a stand-alone training, (that’s what partners in this consortium were doing until this project). Each partner was expert in one of the workshops. But there is a real value in our experiment to bring them together and combine them, because they are complementary and reinforcing each other, leading to a multi-dimensional training that provides young people with a palette of skills. The combination of these three workshop has another positive aspect – youngsters have different and very dynamic interests, some are masters at using social platforms, but are not very good at telling a story or taking a photo. Others – vise-versa. Putting these workshops together has contributed very positively to address these barriers, facilitating better interpersonal exchange of knowledge among participants.

Finally, we discovered that there was a missing piece in our initial plan – an overall introductory workshop about media literacy and storytelling, and that is why we created the forth *Digital Journalism* workshop.

Readers should bear in mind that this was our first experience (pilot) of bringing those three workshops together in a comprehensive training. We were learning as we went, discovering how they can best be fit together to achieve the highest added value. Therefore, we present our lessons learned, including both the good practices, but also the “bad practices” – the things that didn’t work out exactly as we hoped, but which nevertheless taught us what we should improve in our next training.

Another thing to keep in mind when reading these guidelines is that they refer to an international training. Our methodology is best suited for international training with participants from at least 2 different countries. However, this does not mean that it cannot be applied to a local training only with local participants. It will just need some adaptation, but not a significant one.

Many important insights and lessons from our experience can already be found in the methodology itself, but here we try to summarise those and turn them into more general advice.

THE METHODOLOGY

PREPERATION

The project's process is organized using a blended learning concept, combining online and face-to-face learning methods. Our preparation also combined online and offline activities. On the online platform, which we created with Moodle, participants could have access to training materials and guidelines. It is important to underline here that it was difficult to get young people to study through the platform on their own, especially prior to the training.

Therefore, the preparatory face to face meetings were very important to engage them, and build tangible links among themselves, and between them and the project.

An online conference call among the participants from the different countries is recommended as it would help participants to imagine in practice (although only virtually) the possibility to meet peers from other countries.

FACE-TO-FACE TRAINING

The face to face training consists of three kind of workshops, Digital Photography, Digital Journalism, Digital Storytelling. The workshops aim to get participants familiar with digital methods and update their digital and technical skills and in parallel to share their experiences and views on the topic.

It is very important to ensure (as much as possible) and verify that the technical equipment is functioning. Unforeseen technical problems can always happen and tutors should be prepared for an alternative solution. E.g. due to electricity failure, one of the photography workshop sessions had to be done outside without visual examples. The tutor was skilled enough to compensate this. Preparing some print outs of your visual materials could also help in such case.

Digital Photography

During the Digital Photography workshop, participants are familiarized with the basic rules of photography and how they can use the camera in the right way. Moreover, participants learn through exercises the basic rules of photography and image editing, for instance working on portrait photography in teams.

Digital Storytelling

The Digital Storytelling workshop aims to teach participants how to create videos with a personal story. Digital storytelling is a simple way to express yourself and at the same time to learn how to edit images, record sounds, use music (including copyright), text and your own voice to share your personal experiences and thoughts. This workshop can also be used as a stand-alone workshop in education, youth work, and adult education and in different kind of topics. Digital storytelling is simple and practical for working with disadvantaged people or to improve participants' language, and social skills. By making their own storytelling, the participants improve their self-image in positive ways and get more self-confidence.

Online Platforms

In the Online platforms workshop, participants learn to use social media and platforms, such as Facebook, twitter, so they can share the results of the projects.

Evaluation

In the end of the face to face training, the participants evaluate the training and express their experiences and their views on the implementation of the project. The technique used was "Backpack, Fridge, Trashcan", explained in detail in the methodology. Apart from that, participants were asked to organise peers to peers events on their own.

PEER TO PEER EVENTS

After the face-to-face training, participants had to present their results to a broader audience. Moreover, the participants had the chance to show their video with the context to their external peers. The aim is to involve the youngsters in the organization of the event as much is possible. The organization of the events is also described in detail in the methodology, based on the Belgian example.

TIMELINE

The methodology is not written in a chronological way. This is where these guidelines come in handy. In this section, we include our day-by-day programme of the training, which can help you to organize the time around the different workshops and combine them.

Bear in mind that our training was 6 days and youngsters worked full time, i.e. 8 hours per day. Our experience showed that this time distribution is not ideal as 8 hours per day is too much for this kind of training where we need to mobilise youngsters' creativity and leave space for reflection. We recommend the training to be implemented over 8 days with 6 hours' intensive work per day. This will allow participants to have more time to develop their stories and you will not have to rush through the process. It is very important to have the story fully developed during the face-to-face training, as the story circle and direct feedback from other participants is very important. This was a short coming in our training, but participants nevertheless managed to create very high quality stories, thanks to the dedication of the trainers in each country, who continued to support them.

Day 1

Arrival of participants and first informal meeting at the training venue. Brief introduction of the venue and the host organisation, and a short visit of the venue.

Dinner and informal get-to-know.

Day 2

09:30 – 10:00

Opening ceremony with a reminder of the project, its objectives and a round down of activities.

10:00 – 12:30

Morning workshop: Digital photography – part one

Introduction to digital photography basics. First link to the storytelling workshop by emphasizing the fact that photos tell a story.

Assignment: each person must tell a story using five photos taken with his/her cell phone following previously given advices.

The assignment makes the second link with the storytelling workshop as it shows practically to participants the basics of choosing a story, and then thinking about pictures that could help share it with others.

14:00 – 17:30

Afternoon workshop: Digital photography – part two

Taking pictures with a DSLR. Participants apply the techniques and advices they learn in the morning.

Assignment: In groups, participants must take pictures with a DSLR in/around the venue. Each group had a different lens.

Day 3

09:30 – 12:30

Morning workshop: Digital Photography – part three

Refresher of the previous' day lessons and further explanations of photography basics using illustrations. Feedback on previous' day individual and group assignment pictures.

Assignment: In pairs, take each 5 portraits of the other. Try to at least have one serious picture and a smiling one.

14:00 – 17:30

Afternoon workshop: Digital Journalism – part one

Preparing participants to conduct interviews and a discussion on ethics.

Assignment: In groups of 5, participants should think about questions to ask different categories of people for an interview (person in charge, migrant, politician, citizen)

Day 4

09:30 – 12:30

Morning workshop: Field experience – visit to refugee facility and interviews (parallel)

Due to unexpected restrictions of the access to the refugee facility, only some participants went to visit a refugee camp based in a hotel (Tip: make sure to ensure the access to the refugee facility or any other field activity that you include in your project).

The rest of the participants who stayed took interviews with people working with refugees

14:00 – 17:30

Afternoon workshop: Online platforms – part one

Introduction to Wordpress.

Day 4

09:30 – 12:30

Morning workshop: Online Platforms – part two

Different means of sharing opinions or information through the Internet and social media.

14:00 – 17:30

Afternoon workshop: Digital Storytelling – part one

What is storytelling and how it can be digital.

Assignment:

Choose two stories related to migration you would like to tell. In groups, discuss the stories and choose one per person. Individually, choose at least five pictures that could tell your story. In bigger groups, participants had to present their story showing the selected images and receive feedback from the group.

Day 5

09:30 - 12:30

Morning workshop: Digital Storytelling – part two

Initiation to Youtube Video Editor. Participants work on their story.

14:00 – 17:30

Afternoon workshop: Digital Storytelling – part three

Participants work on their story.

Day 6

09:30 – 12:30

Morning session:

Evaluation and feedback game. Post-training assignments.

Some additional tips and tricks

These may sound obvious, but are nevertheless worth mentioning once again.

Blended learning is tricky

Firstly, during the preparation through the online learning platform, it was difficult to engage the participants, because it is harder for young people to study on a regular basis on their own. Therefore, we propose the preparation of the young participants to be face to face with national groups in each country and design the online learning platforms to be more interactive and easier to navigate it.

“Opening ceremony”

Furthermore, it is important to have a **proper opening ceremony** of the training before diving into the subject matter, when the trainers recall the project’s objective and concept once again. Also, it is important that the participants introduce themselves to each other before the start of workshops in order to know each other better and work as a team more effectively.

Involving everyone

Moreover, the workshops should be well organized and the trainers must ensure that **all participants involved in all activities**. In cases where there is any problem to carry out an activity, trainers should find a relevant activity to replace the previous one. The young participants are easily bored and that may have a negative impact on the proper implementation of the training if they are left doing nothing.