

UNESCO's Academy of Young Women 2017

Newsletter

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The second module: *Intercultural dialogue*



The second training module of UNESCO's Academy of Young Women 2017, *Intercultural dialogue*, was offered by Ms. Rodica Precupețu.



Who was our second module trainer?

Rodica Precupețu is an independent expert in human rights, national minorities, interethnic and intercultural dialogue, former advisor to the Government of Romania in the Department of Interethnic Relations.

. Rodica's expertise is focused on the knowledge and understanding of the ethnocultural and religious diversity of today's world and how women can fulfill their aspirations, enjoy respect and a dignified status.



The main objectives of the Second Module

Objective 1 : To learn more about two possible solutions used during the last decades by the states in managing ethno – cultural diversity, opening the question: multicultural or intercultural societies?



Objective 2: To encourage the young participants not only to understand things and to have a public voice, but also to implement projects for solving real problems/ needs.



Objective 3: To promote cultural diversity and intercultural dialog



The main activities of the Second Module

At the beginning of the training, in order to introduce the group in the local atmosphere, Rodica Precupețu made a brief presentation of the 20 national historical minorities in Romania. After that, the participants had the opportunity to present the situation of the women and ethnocultural diversity of their countries.



Role play: Multicultural approach or intercultural approach?

The next step was to discuss which diversity management formula is more correct and advantageous for today's society, multicultural approach or intercultural approach?



Starting from the famous statement of German Chancellor Angela Merkel “Multiculturalism has failed”, the participants have organized two groups and discussed about multicultural versus intercultural approaches in our societies. “Which is better at present? Why?”



Role play: Multicultural approach or intercultural approach?

At the end, the participants understood the distinction between the two concepts:

While multiculturalism underlines the unique value of each culture and encourages preservation of minority cultures without interferences, leading to lack of contact and collaboration, interculturality derives from the understanding that cultures thrive only in contact with other cultures. Interculturality means to reinforce inter-cultural interaction as a means of building trust and reinforcing the fabric of the community”.

(definitions inspired by the programme “Intercultural Cities”, joint action of the Council of Europe and the European Commission).



Role play: Multicultural approach or intercultural approach?

Even if from country to country there are important differences in the way the two concepts function, the conclusion was that intercultural approach could bring much more benefit, more solidarity in achieving common goals, more cohesion and creativity in our society. It is true that multiculturalism has failed, something needs to be changed. The trend now for our societies is to change the balance and to make interculturality prevail, to make steps from multicultural to intercultural societies.



What can I do in the community in my country?



The last session has tried to make an inventory of the most important needs and problems to solve in our societies in order to make function a decent status for all women and girls, including minority women and girls.

The “brainstorming” was followed by a short simulation: the participants have elaborated together two project packages for the future:

- 1. on education**
- 2. on mass media**

Follow-up

These project proposals could offer the group an opportunity to collaborate further and to bring positive contributions in strengthening intercultural dialogue and equal opportunities for all in Central and Eastern Europe.



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