Loesje

WHY NOT EXCHANGE PREJUDICES FOR EXPERIENCES

Report of the study session held by
Loesje International and Loesje Armenia
in co-operation with the
European Youth Centre
of the Council of Europe

European Youth Centre Budapest
21st – 27th of November 2011

Youth – Jeunesse

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Acknowledgements

Hranush Shahnazaryan
Carola Ståhl
Agnieszka Byrczek
Hristijan Jordanovski
Hussein El-Shafei

Table of Contents

(1) EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At the Study Session "Why not exchange prejudices for experiences" 30 youth leaders from 22 countries in Europe and beyond came together for five fully packed days at the European Youth Centre Budapest in Hungary. They came to get empowered to work with young people; helping them overcome their stereotypes and learn to live in diverse and multicultural societies; to respect human rights, by using creative tools including those of Loesje. Loesje is an international network of young, creative citizens wanting to inspire people to express their opinions, by creating posters with one-liners to make people think, react and act to improve the world around them. Loesje creative text writing was one of the methods used, as well as trust building sessions, non-formal educational methods like the 'fish bowl' and statement games, presentations and discussions. After discussing the basics of and roadblocks to activism, to share different viewpoints and activism-related experiences, the participants both created their own Loesje posters in a series of group workshops, and planned and executed their own street actions. They also planned a follow up project called '500 stories' and shared their own creative methods with the group.

Through all these steps they reflected on important topics like inclusion and how you can work together in a group, depending on if you are focused on the goal or on the process. They received some theoretical input on the psychological and sociological background of stereotyping and prejudice. Stereotypes are often seen as a logical process of ordering the world, while they do in fact create problems of prejudice and discrimination that must be dealt with. The participants' own stereotypes were challenged, and then they were given time for reflection, to finally address the four key concepts: human rights, dignity, social cohesion and diversity. To explain and understand the importance of challenging our stereotypes and fight against prejudices we took human rights and human dignity as our reasons and justification of the needs, and social cohesion and diversity as the goal.

(2) INTRODUCTION

(2.1) Organisers

Why keep your right to remain silent, when you have the freedom of speech? Everyone has an opinion. Loesje wants to inspire people to express their opinions by thinking, reacting and acting to improve the world around us. Loesje is an international network of young, creative citizens organised both in local informal groups and national associations. It is also a "Dutch girl" who so-to-say signs all the posters. The foundation Loesje International, founded in the Netherlands, with its seat in Berlin since 6 years, works as an umbrella organisation and gives support to and initiates projects for young people engaged in Loesje activities worldwide. The Loesje network's main focus areas are culture and creative expression; human rights and democracy; international peace, tolerance and the fight against racism and xenophobia; environmental protection and climate change and international as well as personal development. Loesje also started a registered association in Germany, an e.V., which carries out many of the activities.

To stimulate active democratic participation and to empower people, a monthly poster series is published online, from the results of Loesje creative text writing workshops across the globe. The texts are about current topics in society, as well as constantly newsworthy themes. They are questioning, sometimes critical, but always positive and inspiring. The posters are free for anyone to download, print out and hang up. With the posters, Loesje inspires people to reflect, take action and form their own opinions. As well as this, Loesje develops inspiring projects which create space for the participants to develop and express their ideas, thoughts and opinions, and offer opportunities to disseminate the results to a wider audience, both locally and internationally. The projects also develop the participant's know-how in different areas important for an active participation in democratic life.

The Study Session was a collaboration between Loesje International and Loesje Armenia, with trainers also from Loesje Macedonia and Loesje Egypt, as well as Cazalla International from Spain.

Hranush Shahnazaryan is the head of Loesje Armenia and the Course Director of this Study Session. She is passionate about youth work and believes in the positive changes that non-formal education can bring. She is developing, presenting and running various types of national and international projects on Human Rights and peace education, intercultural learning, and personal development.

Carola Ståhl, Loesje International, is the International Coordinator of the foundation and works in Berlin. She is active in Loesje since 17 years and now mainly coordinates activities and projects for the world-wide Loesje network.

Agnieszka Byrczek is a youth worker, trainer and project coordinator in Cazalla Intercultural in Spain. Her objective is to work for the understanding between cultures, elimination of discrimination and the empowerment of young people.

Hristijan Jordanovski is one of the founders and vice-president of the youth association "Info front - Prilep" and the head of Loesje Macedonia. He is a graphic designer and has vast experience in organizing different kind of street actions.

Hussein El-Shafei is a voluntary youth worker from Egypt. He is studying International Human Rights Law at the American University in Cairo. His interests are activism, cultural relativism and musical theatre. He is the president of the yet unofficial Loesje Egypt.

(2.2)   The aims and objectives of the Study Session

Aim:
The study session aims to empower youth leaders to work with young people helping them overcome their stereotypes and learn to live in diverse and multicultural societies, to respect human rights, by using creative tools including those of Loesje.

Objectives:
¬   To become aware and understand the concepts of human rights, diversity, prejudices and stereotypes
¬   To explore how the prejudices and stereotypes manifest in the countries of participants.
¬   To share the experiences of the participants in using creative tools for activism in their communities
¬   To allow participants to reflect upon their position regarding human rights, diversity, prejudices and stereotypes
¬   To develop the necessary competencies in order to implement the follow up initiatives in their communities and on international level.

(2.3)   The profile of the participants

        Not only in the aims and objectives, but also in the selection of participants we strove for the social inclusion of young people. The participants came from different backgrounds: some were Roma, some immigrants, some from the LGBT-community, they had different religions (Muslim, Jewish, Christian, atheist), came from all over Europe and beyond, some from conflict zones. The Study Session had participants from 22 countries and more nationalities than that. In their jobs or voluntary engagements at home they worked with the Roma community, with migrants and refugees, with LGBT-activism, with people with disabilities, school drop outs, young offenders and more. The whole idea with the Study Session was to bring together these diverse young youth leaders to let them share experiences and tools, as well as receiving valuable input and methods from the team, to strengthen their work for social inclusion and social rights of everyone in their communities.

The final profile of participants was agreed as follows:

¬ Participants must have support from an organisation
¬ Must be very motivated and have a realistic and clear follow-up plan
¬ There should be balance between people with more activist background and organizational background
¬ There should be balance between participants experienced and active in the Loesje network and those who are not
¬ Basic experience in the field is recommended
¬ Concrete experience working on specific topics (for example – LGBT, work with disabled, work with Roma community) will be a plus
¬ There should be geographical and gender balance

The open call for participants was posted on the official Loesje website and all of the organisations' mailing lists were used. Also, the open call was posted on Eurodesk, the SALTO training calendar and on the www.youthnetworks.eu website. We received around 300 applications, which were more than enough to make a good and diverse selection of participants.

(2.4)   The programme

	DAY 1-November 22	DAY 2 – November 23	DAY 3 – November 24	DAY 4 – November 25	DAY 5 – November 26
7:30 – 9:30	Breakfast				
9:30 – 11:00	OPENING	Challenging own stereotypes	Loesje creative text writing	Final preparation & presentation of street action plans	500 stories project: Division into 4 working groups
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break				
11:30 – 13:00	Intro to the Council of Europe and Loesje	Lecture on definition and mechanism of stereotypes	Loesje creative text writing	Street actions Lunch packages	500 stories project: Presentation of the working group results
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch				Lunch
15:00 – 16:30	Trust building session	Human Rights and human dignity Cherish diversity	Intro to activism	Start 14:30 – 15:30 debriefing	Evaluation, handing out certificates
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee break				
17:00 – 18:30	Sharing from the experiences and intro to the topic Intro to reflection groups	Intro follow up – 500 stories Early reflection groups	Final editing: presentation in the big group, the actual final editing in four smaller groups	Start 16:00 Presentation of creative tools sessions	Watching pictures of the street actions and Study Session, Closure
18:30 – 19:00	Reflection groups				
19:00 -	Dinner	Dinner out	Dinner		
Welcome drinks and intro		Free evening in town	Lay out of posters (optional) Preparation time for street actions	500 stories project: expectations round, World café with 4 tables: Communications, Fund raising, Content/idea, Local & international projects and activities	Party - big one!

8

(3) PROGRAMME – INPUTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the programme a mix of information, discussions, creative expression and activism challenged the participants to become aware but also to reflect upon their position regarding human rights, diversity, prejudices and stereotypes. The programme was realized through a variety of methods and presentation formats. We will go through the most important programme points and their outcomes below in more detail.

(3.1) Team building – goal or process oriented?

Thanks to the trust building exercise during the Study Session we managed to open the discussion and reflection about our working styles, how our attitudes toward our tasks and people whom we are working with are. The task given to the participants was simple, but with some complicating factors. Divided into two groups they had to cross a 'quicksand swamp' (marked with masking tape on the floor) using only the "safe" grass lumps in a specific order. The route was not given, so the participants had to discover it by themselves. An extra complication was added by the participants not being allowed to speak. In each team there was one "blind" participant, who couldn't see, one participant who was allowed to speak to guide the "blind" person, and one "one-legged" participant who could only jump on one leg.

The task was to cross the quicksand swamp with all the members of the team. Nothing was said about it being a competition, to do it faster than the other team, but this is how the participants interpreted the task. In each team a few leaders appeared, who tried to find an efficient solution. Many of the participants encouraged the atmosphere of competition, and after succeeding, celebrated the loss of others. At one moment the participants from one team decided to make the second team lose, by taking the papers the other team was using to mark the route. They didn't know that after passing to the other side they will form one big group and have to cross the quicksand swamp again.

In the debriefing we concentrated on the reflection on how our approach to the tasks were. We asked why there was a feeling of competition and the participants needed time for a deeper reflection, finally someone answered "*we assume many things as being rules, and those assumptions aren't helpful*". The participants' approach to the task was – first work individually, then some team spirit appeared, until they started with the team work. What they realized in the debriefing was: "*we should see what the other team is doing, I wasn't thinking about that and we could actually use the **best practices**, I was so much concentrated on our team*", and "*there was a part of the team so eager to work quickly and efficiently, and there was no space for good communication, the obstacle was the focus on the goal, on competition and efficiency that is usually a problem in our lives*".

The participants also felt that the obstacle of not being able to speak was quite difficult, and that it took some time to adjust and find other ways of making themselves heard.

An interesting aspect of this exercise was the topic of **inclusion**, which was highlighted through the case of the "blind person". Most of the team members didn't think about his/her needs, and that person was mainly communicating with just one member who was allowed to speak. In one of the groups the blind person wasn't allowed to take initiative, present his/her ideas, or even in one case try to cross by himself. The participants commented later: "*I didn't communicate with the blind person, I noticed that someone was talking to her*", "*it was for a long time not recognized that the blind person was a group member, only the supporting person was with him/her, and finally the group started helping and it was joyful*".

The experience of the blind person differed from the two groups. One person was totally dependent on the group, he was just lead around and had to follow without even knowing what happened around him. His experience was difficult, he said after: "*It was awful, I was lost. I started to trust and know what's going on when people started touching my legs. (…) I felt that they are taking me, I felt I was being taken, and I was not useful to the group, I was this blind one and I wanted to do it by myself*". In the other group the experience of the blind person was more positive. The supporting

person gave a lot of space for discovering, learning and trying. This "blind" person felt much better and believed in herself: "*being blind was interesting, I was touching the floor and I thought I could even do it by myself*".

The final reflection was that disabled persons "*still can do many things, although they are disabled*", but sometimes we are not offering enough space and support. And it is very much linked to our approach towards the task. This exercise can give us some thoughts how we are going to live and work together, how we want to be guided, supported, and how we want to work in a team, during the project as well as in the future.

The activity helped us reflect and raise a range of questions we often do not think about. When we get a certain task and assignment, how do we interpret it, how do we function, where are the boundaries? Where is the balance between process, team, and goals? How do we want to work in a group, and later on in our societies? For which price do we want to do that, what price are you willing to pay for efficiency, what kind of price do we want to pay for including people, are we willing to spend more time to assist someone else, to include them?

(3.2) Definitions and the mechanisms of stereotypes and prejudice

To learn more about how stereotypes and prejudice are created, we invited the external expert Evan Sedgwick-Jell, who through his academic background in history and social work, as well as his background in activism and non-formal education has a vast experienced in this field. With the lecture "A white 20-something heterosexual middle class man walks into a bar…. Stereotypes and their absence – a survey of harmless jokes and social justification of injustice and hatred" he described the psychological and sociological background of stereotyping and prejudice. This included how and why they are formed, different types of stereotypes, and gave a lead to the participants to understand how stereotypes and prejudices can be challenged and reformed among young people today.

"A white 20 something heterosexual middle class man walks into a bar..."

Stereotypes and their absence – a survey of harmless jokes and social justification of injustice and hatred
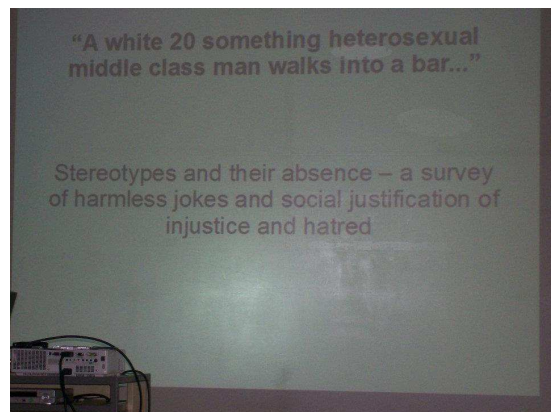
Although this report cannot contain the whole content of the lecture, we will present parts of it here:

Richard Dyer, an English academic specialising in cultural studies, in his essay 'The Role of Stereotypes'[1] sees 4 important points in Walter Lippmann's[2] concept of stereotypes.

Stereotypes are:

1. An ordering process
2. A 'short cut'
3. Referring to 'the world'
4. Expressing 'our' values and beliefs

Mr Sedgwick-Jell points out that the term 'Stereotype' is commonly misunderstood, and that focus often lies on point 1-3 of Dyer's analysis while the fourth gets ignored. Stereotypes are seen as a logical process of ordering the world, while they do in fact create problems of prejudice and discrimination that must be dealt with.

Psychologists and social psychologists broadly agree that stereotypes latch onto normal human cognitive processes of making the world understandable. As educators and activists however, we must seek the social context.

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[1] MARRIS Paul and THORNHAM Sue (ed.) - *Media Studies: A Reader*. 1999

[2] LIPPMAN Walter, *Public Opinion*: 1922

Sociologists have also noted the tendency and indeed need to create a picture of 'them' in order to identify an 'us', which one can see in myriad inter-group relations. The existence of different groups does not however necessitate structural violence and institutional discrimination.

Hierarchy and oppression of one group by another are social phenomena, which mean that their roots lie in the form of society in which we live, and do not occur 'naturally'.

Stereotypes do not exist in a vacuum

¬ Stereotypes are present in certain contexts for certain groups and not others, which always has links to those groups position within a society

¬ Stereotypes reflect social-economic power relations, while at the same time creating the conditions and justification for their reproduction

¬ Stereotypes therefore exist in a dialectical relation to discrimination, both reflecting, and recreating it, but alone unable to offer an adequate explanation

¬ Stereotypes which are relatively harmless do exist, and stereotypes which seek to justify discrimination do as well; the latter often act as a base for racist and violent action against particular groups

¬ Stereotypes are often constructed through political discourses[3], and used argumentatively by specific ideologies to justify the current state of affairs, or particular political actions

¬ The presence of stereotypes creates conditions for those defined through them, whereby it is more likely that they will conform to or be influenced by them

"Stereotypes get hold of the few, simple, vivid, memorable and easily grasped and widely recognized characteristics about a person, reduce everything about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development to eternity"[4].

"This is the most important function of the stereotype: to maintain sharp boundary definitions... Stereotypes do not only... map out the boundaries of acceptable and legitimate behaviour, they also insist on boundaries exactly at those points where there are none"[5]. Social groups get reduced to a few key exaggerated attributes which all supposedly share, and members are denied the possibility of being represented in other groups in how they are seen. This mirrors a material reality of how groups are treated politically, socially and economically, and stereotypes are often used as political justification for social problems and conflicts".

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[3] The Foucault definition of 'discourse' are ways of constituting knowledge, together with the social practices, forms of subjectivity and power relations which inhere in such knowledges and relations between them. Discourses are more than ways of thinking and producing meaning. They constitute the 'nature' of the body, unconscious and conscious mind and emotional life of the subjects they seek to govern (Weedon, 1987, p. 108). It is a form of power that circulates in the social field and can attach to strategies of domination as well as those of resistance (Diamond and Quinby, 1988, p. 185)

[4] Stuart Hall, *Stereotypes*, in: Stuart Hall (ed.), *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*: 1997

[5] DYER: 1999

Key assumptions about stereotypes

T.E. Perkins[6] challenged many key assumptions about stereotypes, and listed 10 points commonly held to be true about stereotypes:

1) Stereotypes are always erroneous in content
2) They are pejorative[7] concepts
3) They are about groups with whom one has had little contact; by implication, therefore they are not about one's own group
4) They are simple
5) They are about minority or oppressed groups
6) They are rigid and do not change
7) They are not structurally reinforced
8) The evidence of contradictory stereotypes is evidence that they are erroneous, but of nothing else
9) People either 'hold' stereotypes, or they do not
10) Because someone holds a stereotype of a group, her or his behaviour to that group can be predicted

After explaining in which way these points are erroneous (for instance that stereotypes are complex; that they often have a material base, but that lack of analyzing the reasons behind that material base recreates and reinforces the stereotype) Mr. Sedgwick-Jell showed how the relative harm of a stereotype relates to the social position of the stereotyped group, and their socio-economic reality. The divide between harmful and harmless stereotypes he therefore sees as very useful. An example of harmless stereotypes: British people like tea and they drink it every day and Japanese tourists take many photos. Why are these stereotypes harmless? First because they are international stereotypes, and there are no meaningful minorities of Britons in Japan, or of Japanese people in Britain. Secondly these stereotypes have little relevance for the way in which we treat people from these countries. Third and most importantly, there are few if any structural factors that would lead a person being put into a position where s/he would have to drink tea every day as a Brit, or be forced to take photos as a Japanese tourist. Fourth, these practices are not subject to a value judgment, whereas the picture within a society looks quite different. The effect can be that people are forced through a combination of social economic conditions, and the way in which expectations based on stereotypes are forced on them through this, into 'becoming' the stereotype. A child from a German-Turkish background treated as a trouble maker in school, and described as violent in the media, may well become as such, which also reflects relative economic opportunities and position in society.

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[6] PERKINS T.E. - *Rethinking Stereotypes* (1989)

[7] Pejoratives are words or grammatical forms that connote negativity and express contempt or distaste. *Wikipedia, 2012*

Stereotypes – descriptive or evaluative?

Mr. Sedgwick-Jell also showed E. Seiter's[8] model of the stereotype as a useful tool:

Stereotype

Descriptive

What are the group's traits?

What is the group's position?

Evaluative

How does the group relate to the definiton of the 'we' group?

Is the stereotypical picture negatively or positively evaluated?
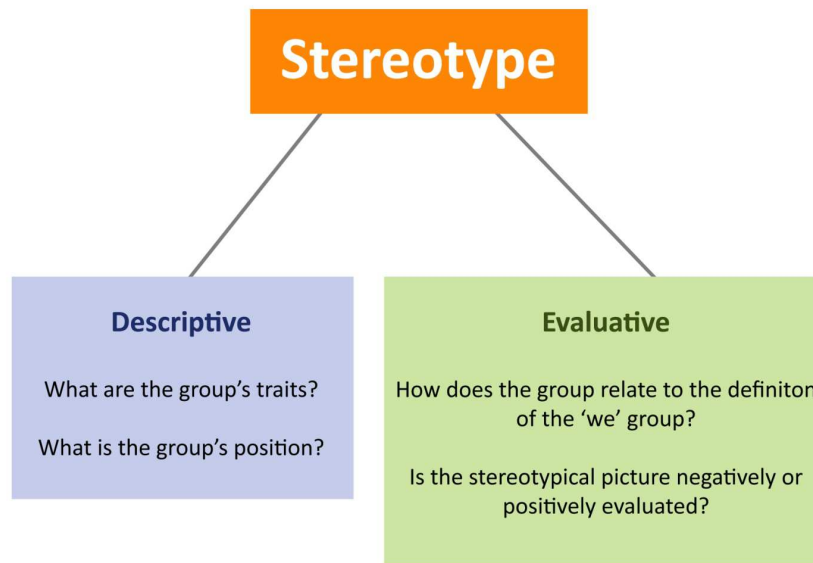
This model lets us distinguish between the truths behind stereotypes (be they social, physical, economic or otherwise), and extract the parts which explain the truths to benefit a particular ideological standpoint.

The classic method of right-wing populism identifies social problems as lying with individuals, or with specific social groups. The stereotype suggests that these problems are essential to this group's nature or culture, and therefore seeks to exclude political action to change the status quo. A stereotype in principle recognises social inequality, but at the same time both caricatures, and justifies it.

After showing some examples of stereotyped political campaigns, like the November 2009 referendum for the ban of Minaret construction in Switzerland (which won 57,5% of the votes), Mr Sedgwick-Jell ended the lecture with some practical conclusions.

 What can one do to combat stereotypes?

¬ Address people and understand something about their social experience, be aware of our stereotypes – treat people equally based on this
¬ Be aware that using a stereotype takes away the possibility of an oppressed group to define themselves (as individuals)
¬ Distinguish between the 'truths' of stereotypes, and the political message through education
¬ Promote political change whereby people are not forced into positions of oppression
¬ Reality is complex, and we must understand ourselves in relation to it, dividing TYPES, from STEREOTYPES

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[8] SEITER E. - *Stereotypes and the Media*, in: Journal of Communication

(3.3) Human rights, dignity, social cohesion and diversity

Human rights, dignity, social cohesion and diversity – we can provide many scientific definitions of all four terms, but knowing what it is, is not enough; it is important to start changing our attitudes towards other people, and challenging our own stereotypes. Seems like the personal experience, a deeper understanding based on examples and the ability of critical thinking and analyzing is essential for young people to firstly care, and then be aware and challenge themselves in order to undo their stereotypes and prejudices. In simple words Human Rights Education and the internalization of the values behind it, is the key to deal with the topic.

To explain and understand the importance of challenging our stereotypes and fight against prejudices we took human rights and human dignity as our reasons and justification of the needs, and social cohesion and diversity as the goal, something we are heading to. Having this logic in mind, during the study session we have created the programme flow to firstly challenge the participants own stereotypes, secondly – give the participants time for reflection during the theoretical input on the mechanisms and functions of stereotypes, and then to finally address the four key concepts – in the discussion between the participants and the closing input summarizing the whole day.

Together with the participants we tried to define and understand the four key concepts. For this we used the method 'the fishbowl'[9] to facilitate the discussions. The participants had the possibility to reflect and try to find answers to the following questions.

1. What is human dignity? What are the prerequisites for its fulfillment?

According to the participants dignity is respect for everyone, that goes together with acceptance. Because of dignity the human being cannot be forced to do anything[10]. The other approach of understanding dignity was by negation – "deprived of being who you are" - in other words dignity gives us a freedom of being who we want to be.

Talking about the prerequisites for human dignity, the participants understood the concept as culturally relativistic by saying "in every country and culture dignity is different". During the discussion it was difficult to agree of a common set of prerequisites. The elements mentioned were: basic things that should be respected, basic human values… and human rights. The clear link between human rights and human dignity was made, and everyone agreed that the human rights are the prerequisites for fulfillment of the dignity of each person.

Some final statements of the participants:

> ¬ *Human dignity should exist because we are humans.*
> ¬ *Human dignity is to make sure that all people have human rights.*
> ¬ *Human dignity is based on human rights.*

> **Human dignity is inherent in all human beings;**
> **It cannot be taken away and is inalienable;**
> **Human Rights were created to ensure the dignity for all.**

2. Do human rights ensure the provision of human dignity? Is that provision merely theoretical or also practical?

In the participants' opinion the provision of human dignity that human rights ensure is much more theoretical than practical. There were many voices giving examples of this:

> ¬ *"There are a lot of conventions on human rights, and all of them were created to protect the human dignity, but let´s go to the politics. There are a lot of things said about dignity, but in practice, human rights are violated."*
> ¬ *"Human rights provide the dignity, but sometimes this provision is more theoretical than practical. Take for example Kosovo, which is trying to apply to all the European standards, but then these are forgotten and not executed."*
> ¬ *"Human rights are a tool for the powers, to legitimize invasions, like it was in Iraq."*

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[9] In the fishbowl method four chairs are placed in the middle of a circle of the participants. Four participants sit on these chairs and discuss the topic at hand. At any time participants from the circle can exchange places with one of the four, and this way join the discussion. Only while sitting on one of the middle chairs the participants may speak.
[10] That refers to being forced by other people, not forced by law (to for example to pay taxes).

Although it was acknowledged that "it gives the practical base, and let people have the legal protection, which is important."

3. Do all people have the same dignity? Is there a hierarchy within human dignity from one person to another? Do different cultures have different dignity demands? Can culture contribute to the limitation of human dignity?

From the Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights we can learn that "*….recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world".* The first article of the same document states: *"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood".* But are the human rights really universal, do all people have the same rights? Is anyone going to make sure that human beings get what they deserve and are entitled to? What kind of role does culture play? What is cultural relativism?

The theory differs very much from practice. Ideally we all should have equal rights, but the discussion we had during the study sessions shows that this does not seem true for many participants in real life. Below are some points raised in the discussion on the role of culture, and the hierarchy within dignity that the participants struggled with:

¬ *"There are different countries, and different forms of dignity. In Muslim countries the women don't have the same kind of dignity as men."*
¬ *"I don't think that there is a hierarchy"*
¬ *"Theoretically of course in our beautiful union we have the same rights, but in practice we don't have those rights anymore."*
¬ *"Sometimes we are so ethnocentric, and we think that inside Europe we have much more dignity than the Muslim women."*
¬ *"But maybe it is a different form of dignity."*
¬ *"In Greece we never lived well, I am the living example, I am from a family of four kids, and we never had enough resources, and right now the crisis means that the rich people are losing money."*
¬ *"Sometimes you have to fight for dignity, sometimes, you have dignity, and sometimes it must be provided."*
¬ *"Religion has a huge influence on human dignity."*
¬ *"What the Catholic Church is doing is limiting human dignity, like saying that homosexuality is sick."*
¬ *"I think that different cultures have different dignity, and different forms of dignity."*
¬ *"It depends on the history of the country. Because people start teaching their children values, that they lost or they wanted for themselves."*
¬ *"Gender equality – in the church? Females being priests? I am a believer therefore I do agree with this."*
¬ *"There are some cultural traditions that are against the basic human rights! Some of the people are ok with this (for instance in the cast system) because it is part of the cultural traditions, but how it can be accepted?" "The same situation was with slavery, for a long time people agreed with this, and it was considered normal. Should we allow it to continue?"*

The conclusion of this discussion was again the acknowledgement of Human Rights. The participants stated that "*what we need is a mechanism, to ensure the provision of dignity*" and "*the human rights are for that*".

Conclusions…

The presentation of the external expert and the discussion between the participants were summarised and concluded with an input from the facilitators, linking the concepts of human dignity and human rights to stereotypes and a strive towards social cohesion. The input was a summary and provided open ended questions to be taken up later in the week.

A conclusion from one of the facilitators, Agnieszka Byrczek:

"We all, youth workers, trainers, activists, do agree on the importance of Human Rights, and the legal basis that it gives us to further work to ensure the well being of each person.

In my understanding every human being has the right to dignity, which comes from the fact that the person was born and is a person, and that right to dignity cannot be take away, or limited. The question is how we really understand dignity and the prerequisites to its fulfillment. For example can we say that a person living on the street during the cold winter, with no food or clean water has dignity, or someone who is being tortured? Can we say that, in this case the dignity is already limited or taken away? In my opinion dignity is a reason; ensuring the dignity of a person is a reason to why we need to act, why we must provide the legal basis – human rights, and why we need Human Rights Education. The human rights were created in response to each person's need of dignity.

But there is still the question what kind of role culture plays. How we can expect that a very "Western" concept will be implemented worldwide? And what happens when there is a conflict between human rights and the traditions within the culture? I don´t know if there is any good answer for those questions. The answer depends on our own values, background, the way you think. And because we are different, we think differently and we have our own opinions. That brings us to the importance of the tolerance of ambiguity, which means understanding that "I am right" but someone else with totally different points of view or values, can be right as well."

Human Rights, dignity, culture relativism, prejudices and stereotypes… **So, where are we heading?**

1) Social cohesion
Social cohesion is one of the possible answers for ensuring dignity, and the concept how we would like to see our societies, where all the members have equal rights, and can actively participate in society, and where the freedom of each individual to pursue their personal development throughout their life is ensured.

Key objectives
- Social protection and justice
- Access to rights for all
- Respect for the dignity of others, for diversity, and individual freedom
- The right of all individuals to have the opportunity of personal development, solidarity and participation in the democratic process

2) Cherish diversity
Diversity is everywhere, and experiencing it can be the way to learn how to deal with our stereotypes. Each time when we have contact with a person who sees things differently, has different values, behaves in a way that we don't really understand, and each time we take the challenge to start a dialogue, we take one brick from the wall that divides us and other people and cultures.

Learning from diversity is the next step we should promote in our societies. This is one of the tools for creating an understanding between people, eliminating the prejudices, and creating an environment where we do not judge people by the way they look, and we don't put them into boxes, assuming we know who they are, but instead we focus on the person and learn who this person really is.

What are the prerequisites for it?

a) Developing cooperation and communication skills – especially focusing on intercultural communication, including active listening.
b) Learning to understanding other cultures[11] - understanding doesn't necessary mean approval – whereas violating the dignity of others cannot be allowed.
c) Tolerance of ambiguity - which means learning how to understand that I can be right and a person with a different opinion can be right as well.

An experience of diversity:

"Many times my friends who come to visit me are very surprised. Usually when we are walking down the streets when I am showing them my city I meet a lot of friends. It's always the same - first two kisses (as it's habitual in Spain), then exchanging a few words, a few smiles, probably the decision that we should have coffee together someday soon, and goodbye. Then the surprised questions starts - How do you know this person? You seem to be friends? How come? Yes, I know people in my city with different nationalities, ages, skin colours etc. My idea of "normal" has changed. I have fun meeting people who are 15 or 50 years old, I learn a lot from my friends who represent the group of "migrants" in my city, I can learn a lot from their stories and experiences, and I really love observing people dancing during concerts, no matter if they are in a wheelchair or not. This type of diversity is normal for me, and I am surprised when it is "not normal" for my other friends."
Agnieszka Byrczek

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[11] By 'culture' we mean it in a broad sense, and not only referring to ethnicity or heritage. In every society multiple cultures and subcultures coexist.

(3.4) Dialogue and stereotypes

One of the strongest learning moments, but also one of the toughest experiences emotionally during the Study Session for many of the participants, was the 'Challenging stereotypes' session. In this session they were to position themselves physically, and if they wanted to speak out their opinions, in a statement game with provocative statements like:

"Equality means no special treatment - for anyone"
"There is more discrimination against women than migrants"
"I don't judge people by the way they look"
"It's better to be Muslim than gay"

The discussion was heated and some participants left the exercise at the last statement, since they didn't feel comfortable. It became clear how diverse the group really was and the different opinions were strong and diametrically opposed. The debriefing that followed was very important for the continuation of the group work. Also afterwards in the break some gay participants sat down and engaged in a discussion with the anti-gay participants and everyone gave their view on being gay and shared experiences. This was the first time one of the participants sat down with openly gay people and discussed with them. Although the situation was not easy for anyone involved, it proved to be a strong learning point.

The biggest outcome of this exercise was to open the floor to talk about difficult topics that people are usually avoiding, and topics that makes people uncomfortable. It is necessary to be honest with one another in order to understand ourselves and others better. With this exercise we started this process. One participant said: "Yesterday we were holding back but now we are really getting in there. Therefore I liked the statement game."

(3.5) Loesje Creative text writing, final editing, and layout: creation of posters on prejudice

The objectives of this session were:

¬ In a group create great texts that can be used for awareness raising about the topics
¬ To let the participants reflect, think and react on the topics
¬ To inspire the participants with an innovative method
¬ To give the participants an example of a method that they can use at home to work creatively with different topics
¬ To enhance the group feeling and trust by making the participants have a nice experience together

During the two days before the text writing, the participants received introductions to the topics, now it was time to reflect about these topics in groups. The method was Loesje creative text writing, developed by Loesje and used for more than 25 years all over the world. Loesje creative text writing is a collaborative method for groups of 5-16 people. Usually the groups write in their mother tongue, but at the Study Session we divided into four mixed groups, all writing in English. The text writing includes an introduction, warm up exercises (quite funny ones, we might ad), theme collecting, the actual writing and the first selection step: circling the favorite text proposals. During the actual text writing each theme suggested by the participants gets its own paper, and the papers are circled between the participants. Everyone can write words, poems, short texts, questions, make drawings, and associate on each paper, before passing it on to the next participant. Everyone can react to what others have written, improve on their texts, create variations, ask questions, tell anecdotes and much more. After an hour or more the papers again circulates, but this time the participants circle their favourite text proposals.

Later the same day it was time for the next step to create the finished posters: the final editing. After an introduction by a long term Loesje member, Myrto Iatrou, the group divided into four new groups, which all discussed a part of the text proposals according to the Loesje criteria of what makes a good poster and their own opinions.

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A GOOD TEXT…

- should be positive and progressive
- tickles the mind
- makes people smile
- criticises without judging or being moralistic
- makes people think / challenges people
- shows people a new way of looking at something they'd taken for granted
- can be easily read in different ways (but if one of those ways gives the wrong impression, it might be better to leave it out or rephrase it).

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The groups afterwards came together to present their own new Loesje series of 13 posters, and a few participants later in the evening learnt the Loesje way of layout by designing them. The posters were used in the street actions the next day and in other awareness raising activities during and after the Study Session. They were published on the EYCB website and the youth section of the Council of Europe website, www.loesje.org, the Facebook page of Loesje International, social groups and spread through the LoesjeINT Twitter account. To download the posters for printing, or to send them as e-cards, go to http://www.loesje.org/posterarchive/advanced and search for the topic Study session (Group: International, Language: English).

This way the participants collaboratively created a very concrete common result. Apart from giving the participants the chance to reflect, express their opinions and be creative together, they learnt a new method which they can use back home in their countries afterwards.

To learn more about Loesje creative text writing, read: www.loesje.org/handbook_eng

(3.6) Activism and stereotypes

On this day of creative activism an introduction to activism was appropriate. Loesje combines activism, creativity, and discussion to inspire people with texts on posters. There are many other ways of activism, and the participants all had very different backgrounds when it came to their knowledge, experience and methods. A workshop discussing the basics of and roadblocks to activism was conducted to share different viewpoints and activism-related experiences. The method was the screening of two short activism-related movies (links below) and raising critical questions using the fish bowl technique.

Movies:

1. What is Activism? A FIERCE LIGHT FLASH!

Explores the question: What is activism. Directed by award winning filmmaker Velcrow Ripper. Made with support from the Ontario Arts Council. (www.youtube.com/watch?v=ol_QrAI-n6Y)

2. Jody Williams on the Necessity of Activism

Nobel Peace Prize winner Jody Williams, who helped to bring about a worldwide ban on land mines, shares her success story. (www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6ebS9jXeVk)

Examples of critical questions:

1. Political activism is not only about confronting, undermining and eventually overthrowing oppressive systems, but also about creating the new system. What are the challenges of both steps?

2. We are getting so good at defining what we are against, that what we are against is beginning to define us. What are we *for*?

3. If you do not act up and stand for your point of view, the other guys are going to walk away with your power. How can you sustain your activism on a personal level?

The workshop was interactive and it gave space to every participant to debate and share their own perspective. They enjoyed discussing politics and believed the movies were inspiring. They learned something from the movies, but they learned a lot more from each other, and through their relative understanding of each debate. On the other hand, some participants felt that the repetition of the fish bowl technique drained them and that the discussion should have been more open.

The key points of the participants' discussion:

Topic: Is activism being self-centered and how much do we care about others?

- We are raised by our parents, and we were told to be self-centered.
- We are self-centered because we need some basics for ourselves, but most of the people just stay with their personal needs and the needs of their families.
- The idea of being self-centered is coming from the secularization period, right now we are more pragmatic, concentrated mainly on our career and money, but it comes with this generation. In Armenia, we become more and more egocentric, we don't care about other peoples needs, because we are too busy to achieve.
- Being egocentric is part of the neoliberal system, and we are actually taught to be self-centered, and to be better than others. We have to beat each other and continue the competition as this is deemed better for the economy.
- You can actually even care about people that you have never met or will ever meet, you can always say that you are selfish, because of the feeling of doing something good, but the motivation is not selfish, there were no selfish ambitions behind it.

Topic: Challenges of political activism

- In Egypt we are trying to build a new system. When people went on the streets on January 25th 2011 all of them were activists. When people came together and stayed together for 2 weeks, it was the biggest workshop that happened in our lives and we learned every second. The regime uses poor people to fight the revolution; media and education were used by the regime, and the challenge is to create a new system – new media and education. Now no one watches the national TV, but YouTube has so many hits. You can learn from the streets, from friends, from workshops like that.
- In politics people want to change something and follow the leader, and believe that something will be better, but the leaders finally aim to have the new systems for themselves, and the new systems can be even worse - it is really easy to manipulate society.
- Challenge – it's really hard to change the way of thinking of those who are at the top, and to make common people to believe in the system.

- There is no such thing as a new system, it can be only changed. You can change the politicians, government, but anyway those new people will become like all the leaders before them. A new government can be formed, but the system will not change.

Topic: We are fighting against something, but what are we fighting for?

- It is much easier to say "I don't like it" than to answer the question "What do you like, what do you want, what are the suggestions?"
- It is easier to point to others, and to failures, and saying it is wrong.
- We always say politicians should do this and this, but it makes me think about the Loesje poster – be the change you want to see in the world. It is like in the Egyptian revolution, it started from a small group of people talking and creating and the group was growing and growing.

Topic: If you do not act up and stand for your point of view, other people are going to walk away with your power. How can you sustain your activism on a personal level?

- Activism should be done on the street, not online. In Egypt internet was used for communication, in Palestine as well. I am getting many invitations to go to the street, and I go and find 20 people. For active activism, internet is not suitable, it is not enough, we need to go to the streets.
- When I am sitting at home and doing nothing I am giving my power to someone else, because I am not using my chances, I give the possibilities to others to act.
- I have the power to open an NGO, to speak up, to collect people around me, I can ask to change something – if I stay at home those powers will not be used.
- Activism is being selfless, taking care of people, starting from those who are close, asking what they really need. If we really believe in who we are and what we care for we should act.
- I am surprised that during this discussion no one questioned the existence of the government, there was the question of changing the system, and no one was thinking more radically. Political parties will always have their own agenda, maybe they are not needed.

(3.7) Creative tools presented by participants

Four participants seized the chance to present their organisations or methods they recommend: **Irozuru Kelechi (K.C.) Lawrence** gave a straightforward presentation of the intercultural and interreligious youth work "V2020 Leadership Initiative" does in the UK. **Ilya Panshenskov** from Russia showed a movie about young people from "Hillel" making a dancing flash mob about and during Purim (Jewish 'carnival'), which was followed by a discussion about religion and border crossing.

Only one new method was presented, from the theater collective of **Anargyros Papadopoulos** in Greece, which aims to analyze and dissect swear words/phrases from different languages and thereby disarm them and reflect on their meaning, in a certain society at a certain time. The method went like this:
The participants were all standing in two long lines at arms' length distance from each other. Every person had to say a swearword in her/his mother tongue to the person diagonally opposite, and so it went down the line. In the second round everybody had to translate what they had said. (This made some participants even more uncomfortable than saying them in the first place.) In the third round everybody should formulate a question relating to the swear word they had said. An interesting outcome was to learn that for the female Armenian participants the task was extra difficult, since "females are not used to use swearwords, it is not accepted in the culture" according to the present Armenians.

Shadi Zatara from "Juzoor Foundation – Jerusalem Youth Parliament" made an exercise in which everyone is assigned a character briefly described on a note which s/he should keep secret. All participants stand on a line next to each other. The facilitator then reads out statements and if you think it fits your character, you take a step forward. In the debriefing afterwards we found out that some participants received descriptions that resembled themselves or possible members of their communities. It was reflected that this if well facilitated in an international group could be a very powerful experience and a good opening of a discussion. However one participant had been assigned the character "you", which was reflected might become too personal. One participant didn't feel he could relate at all to his character (a female Turkish immigrant in Germany) which also illustrated how different perceptions and experiences of people can differ. In general the exercise received good feedback.

(4)   MAIN OUTCOMES OF THE STUDY SESSION

(4.1) Introduction to the main outcomes

The aim of the study session was to empower youth leaders to work with young people helping them overcome their stereotypes and learn to live in diverse and multicultural societies, to respect human rights, by using creative tools including those of Loesje. To concretize the aim we had the objectives:

¬   To become aware and understand the concepts of human rights, diversity, prejudices and stereotypes
¬   To explore how the prejudices and stereotypes manifest in the countries of participants
¬   To share the experiences of the participants in using creative tools for activism in their communities
¬   To allow participants to reflect upon their position regarding human rights, diversity, prejudices and stereotypes
¬   To develop the necessary competencies in order to implement the follow up initiatives in their communities and on international level

The aim and objectives of the study session were realized through the different workshops and sessions, and were also manifested in the outcomes: the collaboratively created poster series, the street actions and the follow up project. Objective one and four can best be described by the learning points that the participants experienced during the workshops and described in their evaluations.

(4.2) Posters we made

As described in more detail in point 3.5 the group created 13 Loesje posters together in English, about the themes of the Study Session:

To download the posters for printing, or to send them as e-cards, go to http://www.loesje.org/posterarchive/advanced and search for the topic Study session (Group: International, Language: English).

(4.3) Street actions we did

Because Loesje's creative tools are made to share and discuss with people, the participants self-organised a street action in the main square of Budapest, Deák Ferenc tér. The action was composed of a dance flash mob, colourful cardboard fish with Loesje messages, a banner to sign with the message "Megkülönböztetés: nem, Tolerancia: igen" (in English, "No to discrimination, Yes to tolerance") and the handing out of Loesje posters in Hungarian and English to the people passing by. The

23

action took place twice in two different locations on the square. The cheerfulness and optimism of the participants will probably stay in the memories of the people present in the square this day.

An article and pictures of the street action was published on the blog Belvaros Budapest, a self initiative from the group behind the blog. To read the article, go here:

http://belvaros.blogspot.com/2011/11/loesje-budapesten.html

(4.4) '500 stories' project we planned

Based on the Study Session we aim to kick start an innovative long term activity, collecting 500 stories by young people about how they overcame their stereotypes. We believe that personal experiences can make people open their eyes and open up for diversity. The main idea with this long term activity is to make a framework, where 500 people will make those unique experiences in a number of projects and activities, and share them so that yet more people can be affected. At the Study Session the young participants were trained with non-formal educational tools from the Compass and Loesje, to share and overcome their stereotypes. As follow ups they will carry out local, national and international projects, which all have one common end result: to collect stories of stereotypes being broken. The projects discussed and planned during the Study Session were about national summer camps for children/youth also underlining the importance of intergenerational dialogue; international trainings connecting youth in conflict zones (like Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkey, Greece and Cyprus), and some activities supporting the Arab spring. The end result will be published either online or in printed version, so that even more young people can be inspired by the stories of others.

A coordinator, **Joana de Sousa** from Portugal, was chosen among the participants at the Study Session, to connect and oversee the development. The platform "Project to manage" was chosen to exchange information and manage the project planning in an over viewable manner. It was also decided to have regular Skype conferences and to quickly divide in teams who would take part of different parts of the project planning, like funding, local projects, communications and final publication. When this report is written the coordinating team has had three Skype conferences and three local projects have so far applied for funding.

(4.5) Learning points for the participants

TRUST BUILDING EXERCISE

Early in the programme the participants were lead in a trust building session to build trust in the group and to practically introduce them to the topics of the study session: stereotypes and prejudice. They were to work together as a group in solving a somewhat complicated task that required team work, while not being allowed to speak. The exercise would allow them to experience how they as a group dealt with the challenge of working with team members with disabilities during a group activity (one team member was "blind" during the exercise and one team member was "one-legged", but at the same time had information that was beneficial to the groups' task). It would also create an opportunity for the participants to explore the group dynamics in this newly created group.

Through the trust building session the following learning points came out:

¬ A reflection on how group processes work and on which roles the participants took in it. Both groups took some time to adjust to the task at hand and working in the group. The task was made easier for the groups after a while, by some team members who worked out systems for how to simplify the tasks.

¬ The situation for the 'disabled' team members was complicated and dealt with differently by the two teams. The one-legged team members were taken by some as showing off since they were jumping on one leg. Neither of the one-legged members managed to share their information with the group, because they were not allowed to speak, felt that no one listened to them and that the process was stressed instead of inclusive and reflective. One of the blind team members found he was not

24

allowed to complete the task on his own, but was simply lead around. He requested how he wanted to be guided by his guide, but the guide did not listen, which lead to some stress on the blind person's part. He had a hard time until other team members decided to physically step in and move his feet. In the debriefing afterwards the group discussed how you should meet and assist people with disabilities.

¬ Reflection on that the participants saw the task as a competition between the two teams, that they assumed the task was to do it as quickly as possible, although this was not in the information they were given.

CHALLENGING STEREOTYPES

One of the strongest learning moments, but also one of the toughest experiences emotionally during the Study Session for many of the participants, was the 'Challenging stereotypes' session, described more in depth in point 3.4 above. The debriefing that followed was very important for the continuation of the group work. Although the situation was not easy for anyone involved, it proved to be a strong learning point. The biggest outcome of this exercise was to open the floor to talk about difficult topics that people are usually avoiding, and topics that makes people uncomfortable.

LOESJE CREATIVE TEXT WRITING, FINAL EDITING AND LAYOUT

After two days of theoretical input and discussions, the creative practical day with Loesje creative text writing, final editing and layout proved to be inspirational for the participants. They were happy to learn new methods that they could use in their organisations back home, to together be able to create more than they thought possible and to see the concrete results of their creative group process, the series of posters. For the Egyptian participants it felt good to have Loesje posters commenting on the situation in Egypt, which was very bad at the time of the Study Session, with violent repercussions by the police during the protests.

STREET ACTION PLANNING AND EXECUTION

For the street action the participants were given the task to self-organise whatever kind of event they wanted, with some practical support of the team. Here some learning points appeared, since it turned out to be difficult to self-organise and establish a decision making process. No one stepped up as leader and there was a strong desire to stay in one group, which made it difficult to agree and take decisions. In the end different teams were forming to create one common street action, which included a dancing flash mob, cardboard fish with Loesje posters, a banner, and Loesje posters in English and Hungarian to pass to the passers by. Until late night fish were created, a dancing routine was practiced and a banner was painted. The next day the execution was easier than the process getting there; the group was happy to do something together, glad to get active on the streets of Budapest and pretty satisfied with the results.

INTRODUCTION TO 500 STORIES PROJECT

The team learned during the preparations for the street actions that the method of letting the participants self-organise was not the most handy or easy one for them. Therefore the team decided to give more structure and time to the 500-stories follow up preparations. In a Prezi-presentation the idea of the project so far was presented, and in several steps the project was then planned. With more structure the planning had more success.

(5) SUMMARY OF THE PARTICIPANTS' EVALUATIONS

At the beginning of the Study Session the participants were divided into reflection groups. Each group had a team member acting as the group facilitator. These groups met on a daily basis to complete a brief verbal evaluation of that day and to give the participants an opportunity to express their concerns, impression and thoughts. During the daily reflections the participants were generally positive about the progress of the session. They said that they felt at ease in the group and not afraid to voice their opinions. They believed that everyone treated each other with respect and that the discussions were fruitful. The biggest concern was the lack of time and a worry that not all topics would be covered during the five-day session. On the last day, the reflection groups made a final evaluation of the session, which was very positive. Some participants mentioned that the Study Session made a huge impact on them.

The participants were given an evaluation form with questions and space to leave general comments. There the participants stated that their stereotypes were broken down and that they had experienced personal growth. A large majority stated that the course aims and objectives were fully realized. Overall, the general comments of the participants were very positive and they seemed to enjoy all aspects of the Study Session. The most pressing issue was the lack of time to cover all intended topics in depth. The Loesje creative text writing workshops received overwhelming positive feedback. Most participants stated that they would take the method which they had learned and implement the knowledge into their own organisations and future projects.

Some quotes from the evaluations:

"I really liked this study session. The whole programme was organised on a high level. I have seen a great diversity in terms of participants."

"It was a wonderful experience for me. The preparatory team was great, they made the atmosphere safe and friendly without any tension. The week was full of learning points."

"The most important elements that I learned during this study session is that we developed necessary skills and we learned creative tools and methods to implement the follow-up initiatives and to continue work in this area."

"I have enjoyed my time here and I have learned and experienced much. The group was very diverse, which was one of the greatest tools of overcoming my personal stereotypes. I will continue my cooperation with Loesje and other participants."

"It was such an incredible experience; creative, useful. I will take with me back home the experiences from the street action; it was a very educative experience. I am definitely going to use Loesje creative text writing workshop."

"I got a broader perspective of the participating and host countries; a deep insight into their cultures and stereotype reasons. The group was the most diverse I have ever been in. The clash of characters and personalities was quite intriguing."

"I learned people can have different opinions but can still live next to each other, and that they can change their opinions when they talk to each other in an open, honest and respecting way. The atmosphere was nice, safe, comfortable and happy. The programme was well prepared."
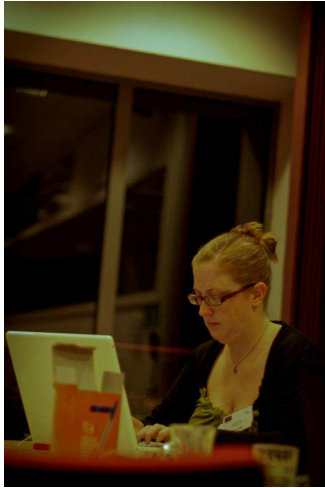
(6) TEAM EVALUATION

The team enjoyed working on this Study Session. It was a great professional and personal development for each of them. All of the team members had worked together with some of the other ones before, but this complete constellation was new. They also enjoyed working with the Educational Advisor, Menno Ettema, very much. He was always there to support, while giving a lot of space for the teams' ideas, own facilitation methods and styles. Since the feedback from the team, the Educational Advisor, the Council of Europe administrational team and the participants was very positive we feel motivated to work together and maybe conduct more of these kinds of sessions in the future.

7) FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: the fight against stereotypes and prejudice begins with you

Stereotypes and prejudice continue to shape our realities, whether we like it or not. Since they may lead to the violation of human rights and human dignity, and stand in direct contrast to social cohesion and diversity, they are not harmless, but rather a threat to society as we would like to have it. The active choice to understand the mechanisms behind stereotypes and prejudice and to develop strategies to combat them and their effects, remain an important one for youth workers and activists alike. One way to do that is to continue the work of the Council of Europe and many engaged organisations from all over Europe and beyond, to bring together young people with different backgrounds, opinions and working styles to let them exchange experiences and really meet and learn from each other. From the participants of this Study Session we received strong feedback that there is a great need for such opportunities to come together and learn. This was further confirmed by the fact that almost 300 young people applied to take part in the training.

From our side, Loesje groups from the different countries present and Cazalla Intercultural, the Study Session was an inspiring opportunity to work together in a new way. Since we believe that change begins with you, the fight against stereotypes and prejudice actually provides a perfect issue to get our hands on. We don't believe that change only comes top down from governments and large institutions to the people, but also the other way around, and from person to person. Laws and regulations can be a great help to assure equality, but without the public support for those laws, stereotypes and prejudice will not be overcome. As shown in this report small changes in attitude based on reflection on your own behaviour can make a huge difference in a person's approach to other people. To educate yourself and really reflect on your behaviour, to put yourself in someone else's shoes and try to visualize how they would like to be treated, and then act accordingly, can make a huge difference. With the Study Session we didn't only inspire ourselves, but also the twenty-five participants who took part. Hopefully with this report and all our other contributions to civil society - posters, projects, manuals and media - we will inspire even more people. Why not exchange prejudices for experiences?

27

APPENDIXES

1. Final programme
2. The posters we created
3. List of participants names, organisations and countries
4. Useful links
5. List of references

APPENDIX 1 – Final Programme

	DAY 1-November 22	DAY 2 – November 23	DAY 3 – November 24	DAY 4 – November 25	DAY 5 – November 26
7:30 – 9:30	Breakfast				
9:30 – 11:00	OPENING	Challenging own stereotypes	Loesje creative text writing	Final preparation & presentation of street action plans	500 stories project: Division into 4 working groups
11:00 - 11:30	Coffee break				
11:30 – 13:00	Intro to the Council of Europe and Loesje	Lecture on definition and mechanism of stereotypes	Loesje creative text writing	Street actions Lunch packages	500 stories project: Presentation of the working group results
13:00 – 14:30	Lunch				Lunch
15:00 – 16:30	Trust building session	Human Rights and human dignity Cherish diversity	Intro to activism	Start 14:30 – 15:30 debriefing	Evaluation, handing out certificates
16:30 – 17:00	Coffee break				
17:00 – 18:30	Sharing from the experiences and intro to the topic Intro to reflection groups	Intro follow up – 500 stories Early reflection groups	Final editing: presentation in the big group, the actual final editing in four smaller groups	Start 16:00 Presentation of creative tools sessions	Watching pictures of the street actions and Study Session, Closure
18:30 – 19:00	Reflection groups				
19:00 -	Dinner	Dinner out	Dinner		
Welcome drinks and intro		Free evening in town	Lay out of posters (optional) Preparation time for street actions	500 stories project: expectations round, World café with 4 tables: Communications, Fund raising, Content/idea, Local & international projects and activities	Party - big one!

29

APPENDIX 3 - List of participants names, organisations and countries

Participants

ALBANIA

   Name : Migena Danjolli

Organisation's name: Youth in Free Initiative
E-mail: rslorg@yahoo.com
Website: www.rsl-al.org

ARMENIA

   Name : Gasparyan Milena

Organisation's name: Loesje Armenia
E-mail: Armenia@loesje.org
Website: www.loesje.org

   Name : Maria Simonyan

Organisation's name: Armenian progressive
youth NGO
E-mail: apy@apy.am
Website: www.apy.am

BELGIUM

   Name : Aagje de Groote

Organisation's name: Get Basic
E-mail: info@getbasic.be
Website: www.getbasic.be

BOSNIA-HERZEGOVINA

   Name : Adnan Smajic

Organisation's name : M-Group
E-mail: digital-phantom@hotmail.com

CZECH REPUBLIC

   Name : Katarína Gabíková

Organisation's name : Mladiinfo cz
E-mail: info@mladiinfo.cz
Website: www.mladiinfo.cz

FRANCE

   Name : Coline Robin

Organisation's name: Loesje International
E-mail: loesje@loesje.org
Website: www.loesje.org

GEORGIA

   Name : Amirani Makaradze

Organisation's name :   Student – Youth
Alliance
E-mail: info-sya@gmail.com

   Name : Tina Kukhianidze

Organisation's name: AEGEE-Tbilisi
E-mail: aegeetbilisi@yahoo.com
Website: www.aegee.org

GERMANY

   Name : Laura Reti

Organiation's name: Queesch asbl
E-mail: info@queesch.lu

Website: www.queesch.lu

GREECE

Name : Anargyros Papadopoulos

Organisation's name: United Societies of Balkans
E-mail: unitedsocietiesofbalkan@yahoo.gr
Website: www.usbngo.gr

KOSOVO[12]

Name : Edis Galushi

Organisation's name: NGO "Durmish Aslano"
Website: nexhipmenekshe@gmail.com

LATVIA

Name : Ieva Miltina

Organisation's name: Radošă apvienība „Siltumnica" (Creative Association „The Greenhouse")
E-mail: siltumniica@gmail.com
Website: http://draugiem.lv/idejasaug

Name : Ilze Beča

Organisation's name: Apeirons
E-mail: info@apeirons.lv
Website: www.apeirons.lv

MOLDOVA

Name : Moisei Daniela

Organisation's name: Youth Parliament
E-mail: secretariat@parlamenultinerilor.md
Website: www.parlamentultinerilor.md

THE NETHERLANDS

Name : Johanna Petronella Hulscher

Organisation's name: De Vrolijkheid (The Happiness)
E-mail: info@vrolijkheid.nl
Website: www.vrolijkheid.nl

PORTUGAL

Name : Joana de Sousa

Organisation's name: Loesje International
E-mail: loesje@loesje.org
Website: www.loesje.org

ROMANIA

Name : Caracas Andreea

Organisation's name: Concordia Ile de France
E-mail: idf@concordia.fr
Website: http://www.concordia-association.org/

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[12] *All reference to Kosovo, whether to the territory, institutions or population, in this text shall be understood in full compliance with the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1244 and without prejudice to the status of Kosovo.*

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Name : Ilya Panshenskov

Organisation's name: Youth Jewish Nonprofit Organization "Hillel"
E-mail: spb@hillel.ru
Website: spb.hillel.ru

SPAIN

Name : Pedro Casermeiro Cortes

Organisation's name: Rromane Siklǒvne
E-mail: estudiants.rromane@gmail.com

THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Name : Marjan Naumoski

Organisation's name: Youth association "Info front – Prilep" , Macedonia
E-mail: infofrontprilep@gmail.com
Website: www.infofrontprilep.blogspot.com

UKRAINE

Name : Taras Rusnak

Organisation's name: Chernivtsi cell of allukrainian organization "PORA!"
E-mail: chernivtsi@opora.org.ua
Website: www.oporacv.org

UNITED KINGDOM

Name : Irozuru Kelechi Lawrence

Organisation's name: V2020 Leadership Initiative
E-mail: vision2020leadershiptraining@gmail.com

EGYPT

Name : Ahmad Hegab

Organisation's name :

PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

Name : Shadi Zatara

Organisation's name: Juzoor Foundation – Jerusalem Youth Parliament
E-mail: info@jyouthp.org
Website: www.jyouthp.org

Preparatory team

Name : Carola Ståhl

Organisation's name: Loesje International
E-mail: loesje@loesje.org
Website: www.loesje.org

Name: Hristijan Jordanoski

Organisation's name: Youth association "Info front – Prilep" , Macedonia
E-mail: infofrontprilep@gmail.com
Website: www.infofrontprilep.blogspot.com

Name : Hussein ElShafei

Organisation's name : Loesje Egypt

E-mail: egypt@loesje.org

Name : Aga Byrczek   Organisation's name: Cazalla Intercultural
                                  E-mail: aga@cazalla-intercultural.org

Lecturers

Name : Myrto Iatrou

Name : Evan Sedgwick-Jell

Course director

Name: Hranush Shahnazaryan   Organisation's name: Loesje Armenia
                                    E-mail: armenia@loesje.org
                                    Website: www.loesje.org

Council of Europe

Educational advisor

Name: Menno ETTEMA   European Youth Centre Budapest
                                 Address: Zivatar u. 1-3, 1024 Budapest,
                                 Hungary
                                 E-mail: menno.ettema@coe.int

Programme assistant

Name: Zsuzsanna MOLNÁR   European Youth Centre Budapest
                                 Address: Zivatar u. 1-3, 1024 Budapest,
                                 Hungary

Loesje International - www.loesje.org

Loesje Handbook - www.loesje.org/handbook_eng (English)

Cazalla Intercultural - www.cazalla-intercultural.org/

Council of Europe, Youth Department - www.coe.int/youth

Compass - eycb.coe.int/compass/

Compasito - eycb.coe.int/compasito/default.htm

Training kits (T-kits) - youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/T-kits/T_kits

Gender Matters - eycb.coe.int/gendermatters/default.htm

Education Pack - eycb.coe.int/edupack/default.htm

Coyote - youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/Coyote/Coyote

SALTO Network publications - www.salto-youth.net/tools/publications/

Social Animation tools for fun and education (This web site was created by Ieva Miltina and Ilya Panshenskov right after our study session where they developed the idea): www.banananas.info/about-bana-nanas.html

Relationships without violence, an education manual for schools and other youth settings: www.aoef.at/cms/doc/Info-Shop/Manual_heartbeat_relationships_without_violence.pdf

APPENDIX 5 – List of references

Books:

Hall, Stuart - *Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*: 1997
Lippman, Walter - *Public Opinion*: 1922
Loesje handbook - www.loesje.org/handbook_eng
Marris, Paul and Thornham, Sue (ed.) - *Media Studies: A Reader*: 1999
Perkins, T.E. - *Rethinking Stereotypes* (1989)
Seiter, E. - *Stereotypes and the Media*, in: Journal of Communication

Movies:

What is Activism? A FIERCE LIGHT FLASH!: www.youtube.com/watch?v=oI_QrAI-n6Y
Jody Williams on the Necessity of Activism: www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6ebS9jXeVk

Articles:

Articles about street action - belvaros.blogspot.com/2011/11/loesje-budapesten.html
Poster archive - www.loesje.org/posterarchive/advanced

Presentations used during the Study Session:

prezi.com/dvtmk51rg3et/study-session-project-management/

prezi.com/1rxuv_pqlvoe/presentation-of-500-stories-project/