

# aces Kick-Off Meeting Bucharest, 30 September – 4 October 2013

## REPORT

Report by  
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**Interkulturelles Zentrum**

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aces is an initiative of  
ERSTE Foundation



**ERSTE Stiftung**

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coordinated by  
Interkulturelles Zentrum



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in cooperation with  
VČELÍ DOM



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and associated with the  
EU Strategy for the Danube region



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# 1. Programme – aces Kick-Off Meeting

Monday, 30.09.2013	Tuesday, 01.10.2013	Wednesday, 02.10.2013	Thursday, 03.10.2013	Friday, 04.10.2013
Arrival of Participants	<p>9:00 <b>Official Opening</b> “Entering the world of aces”</p> <p>10:30 Coffee Break</p> <p>10:50 <b>Playing Diversity</b> Team Game (possibly outdoors)</p>	<p>9:00 <b>Diversity Revisited</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Human Library</li> <li>- Euro-rail a la carte</li> <li>- Politically speaking</li> <li>- The scramble for wealth &amp; power</li> <li>- Reflection on Diversity Revisited</li> </ul> <p>10:55 – 11:25 in between Coffee break</p>	<p>9:00 <b>Get Started</b> Topic Presentation Introduction of Workshop Facilitators</p> <p>09:30 <b>Going to Workshop Rooms</b></p> <p>09:45 – 12:45 <b>Workshops # 1</b>  Coffee Break included (30')</p>	<p>9:00 <b>Get Started</b></p> <p>9:30 – 10: 30 <b>Evaluation and Closure of Conference</b></p> <p>10:30 End of Program</p> <p>Departure of Participants</p>
	13:00 Lunch boxes/Picnic	13:15 Lunch Pleasure & Leisure Team offers	12:45 Lunch Pleasure & Leisure Team offers 13:45 -14:15 aces Consultation – Info desk	
<p>Afternoon: - Registration of Participants - Last signing up for workshops</p> <p>18:00 <b>First Contact</b> <i>Bring your musical/rhythmical instrument</i></p>	<p>13:45 <b>Group Picture</b> 14:00 going back to venue</p> <p>14:30 <b>Project Teams I</b></p> <p>16:00 Coffee break</p> <p>16:30 <b>Diversity Talk</b> 2 Keynotes &amp; short reflection</p> <p>18:15 <b>Country Group Meeting</b></p>	<p>14:30 <b>Project Teams II</b> Teachers &amp; Students separate including <b>'Next Steps'</b> for Teachers</p> <p>16:00 Coffee break</p> <p>16: 30 <b>Excursions</b> and free evening</p> <p>(self-organised dinner in town)</p>	<p>14:15 – 17:15 <b>Workshops # 2</b>  Coffee break included (30')</p> <p>17:15 <b>Break</b> /Return to Plenary</p> <p>17:30 <b>Project Teams III</b></p>	
19:30 <b>Dinner</b>	18:45 <b>Dinner</b>	Pleasure & Leisure Team offers	18:30 <b>Dinner</b> 19:30 - 20:30 aces Consultation – Info desk	
Partners Lost and Found Corner Pleasure & Leisure Team offers	Pleasure & Leisure Team offer		20.30 – 00:30 <b>PARTY</b>	

## 2. Aims of the Kick-Off Meeting and Participants

The aims of the aces Kick-Off-Meeting are:

- Bringing together students and teachers from all aces projects 2013/2014 in order to get to know each other and the partner schools
- Finding out more about the goals and principles of aces
- Working on the topic of the year “I and the others: Discovering diversity around and within me”
- Taking part in methodical workshops related to diversity, project management as well as various other topics
- Reflecting on the aims of the joint partnership project
- Planning further steps for the common implementation of the project in order to feel well prepared for the joint partnership project



### Working methods and language

When preparing the aces Kick-Off Meeting the facilitators and the organisers thought of several “**guiding words**”, standing for the related aims we had in mind and the atmosphere we wanted to create during the meeting. We hoped that the event would be:

- **welcoming**
- **surprising**
- **thought & emotion provoking**
- **inspiring**
- **courageous**
- **relationship building**



We used a variety of working methods, such as plenary sessions, group work, an interactive “Diversity Game”, a “Living Library” etc. – and workshops.

The composition of groups changed depending on the different working sessions. We had mixed groups of students and teachers, country teams, groups according to personal interests, groups involving only the project partners or work sessions separated into teachers’-groups and students’-groups.

The settings aimed at a creative and dialogue-oriented interaction and a fruitful exchange between the participants. Furthermore, they encouraged a self-directed learning process. The common working language was English – with one exception: the meeting of country groups “(f)aces in the countries”, offering space for students and teachers to get to know other participants from their own country and to exchange contact details in order to approach each other when realising the school projects (e.g. in order to get useful first-hand information from a more experienced aces-teacher or to invite each other to project related activities and events).

**aces Tutors:** The intention to involve young aces members as assistants of the three meeting facilitators had already proved to be a success at the previous events. Following the overall idea of

lived participation, three students from former aces projects volunteered to take over this responsible task: Iliana from Macedonia, Anes from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Áron from Romania. Apart from assisting the facilitators “on and behind the stage” and “building bridges” between the organisers of the Kick-Off Meeting and the participants, they also supported the organisation team “behind the scenes”.

**Pleasure & Leisure Team:** Livia and her team invited the participants to join them during their free time in order to try out a range of creative activities for relaxation, enjoyment and personal development! No matter whether participants needed some chill-out, wanted to create recycled accessories out of pieces of trash and simple materials, get a brain-workout while playing board games or get moving with Kinect – the pleasure & leisure team made all this possible. Also the photo corner with costumes and an unforgettable Theatre workshop on Tuesday evening did not let the participants bore in their free time!

Livia, Ana-Maria and Alexandru did their best to make it even easier for the students to get to know their peers, to interact and to feel “at home” – and it wasn’t only the students who enjoyed interacting and being creative in the “Pleasure and Leisure Area”.



### Conference participants

Altogether approximately 260 participants attended the Kick-Off Meeting (see List of Participants in the annex 10)!

- Delegations from 104 schools involved in the 44 aces projects: 208 teachers and students from 15 countries (from 105 project schools; one school was unable to attend the meeting)
- Special guests from Austria and Romania:
  - Mrs. Liliana Preoteasa, General Director of the Life-Long Learning and Education Department in the Romanian Ministry of Education (RO)
  - Mrs. Lucreția Baluța, Romanian National Commission for UNESCO (RO)
  - Mr. Franz-Karl Prüller (member of the board) and Knut Neumayer, ERSTE Foundation (AT)
- Facilitator team (Katrín Lüth from AT, Darko Marković from RS and Gülesin Nemutlu Ünal from TR), the tutors and their accompanying persons, aces Council Members, keynote speakers, members of the Living Library from Romania, additional workshop trainers, members of the pleasure and leisure team, members of the orga-team and the finance team
- Team of the aces coordination, including representatives from ERSTE Foundation (AT), Interkulturelles Zentrum (AT) and VČELÍ DOM (SK)
- Journalists from Austria, Czech Republic and Romania

**Conference Venue: RIN Grand Hotel, 7D Vitan - Barzesti Street, 042121 Bucharest, Romania**

## A big Thank You !

In order to organise a huge event such as the aces Kick-Off Meeting it needs a lot of enthusiastic people and numerous helping hands. Every single one has contributed to the success of the event. But this would be nothing without the commitment of the aces teachers and students who are ready to realize their aces project despite the work load they have at school.

Thanks to the cooperation with and the special support of the following persons and organizations we managed to overcome some challenges in organising the event in the beautiful city of Bucharest and were able to offer a rich and exiting program to the participants:

Lucreția Baluța (Romanian National Commission for UNESCO) for supporting the organization of visa for the participants and representatives from the Romanian Ministry of Education;

Camira Events & Travel in Bucharest for organizational and logistic support and advice;

Ana-Maria Ilie and Roxana Turcu from A.R.T. fusion (Bucharest) for organizing the very special Living Library offering our participants a unique opportunity to get in touch and exchange with diverse people who otherwise they probably would never had dared to approach with questions. An extra special big thank you to the 26 lovely “living books” from Bucharest and Romania for sharing their life experiences, emotions and thoughts with us!

Dragana Jovanovic, and the students Milica Milovanovic and Dženet Koko from Center for Integrative Pedagogy (Belgrade, Serbia) for presenting the project “Reclaiming Adolescence Project: Roma Transition to Adulthood in Serbia” and sharing their experiences and learnings.

## 3. Impressions and Outcomes of the Meeting

The participants were arriving to Bucharest throughout the whole day and were greeted by organizational team members at the aces info desk in RIN Grand Hotel. There they were provided with information regarding the Kick-Off Meeting programme, venue, accompanying activities, the host town and country, and – in case they had not done it before – they were also able to register for the workshops and excursions.

### 3.1. Monday, 30 September 2013

#### ▪ Welcome and First Contact

After a warm welcome by the facilitators and a few words by Tine Gamper – one of the aces project managers – on the Kick-Off Meeting as well as on the topic of the year “diversity”, the participants were invited to join a first activity by writing/drawing on **6 large “flags”** (large pieces of white fabric) according to the following tasks:

- Draw the outline of your hand
- Write down your name
- Three words that describe the atmosphere you hope to have at this meeting
- Three names of people at home, who know and are exited that you are here today
- Draw/continue one of the given lines (arms length)
- One thing/person that inspires me





The decorated flags were put on to the walls of the plenary hall afterwards.

Following this activity, **different groups** of participants present at the meeting were welcomed and the aces dance video, which was created from contributions of more than 50 aces schools from the project cycle 2012/2013 and before, was shown (watch the video here: <http://vimeo.com/69175323> (aces dance - the final cut HD) or on our [facebook page](#) and in our [youtube channel](#).)

### Making Music Together

The participants were already asked before the Kick-Off Meeting to bring a musical/ rhythmical instrument of any sort with them from home. Some extra small instruments were provided for those who did not manage to bring something and the participants were also able to use their voices or bodies to make sounds.

First everybody was invited to find two other people who had a similar instrument in order to make music together. Then they should find three others with different instruments and form a band: after introducing themselves to each other they were asked to play a song together.

### Musical Story – Orchestra

The already existing bands were asked to form bigger groups of 8 to 12 people (3 bands together) and each group received a piece of paper with a different keyword written on it (*meeting, old, small, town, woman, applause, beautiful, wind, long, tradition, wave, forest, time, mountain, love, connection, change*).



The task for every band was to prepare a musical score (sound and/or movement) which expressed their individual word. After some minutes of preparation Katrin told a musical story and whenever she read one of the keywords the respective group played the music they have prepared (the whole exercise and story can be found in the annex 1).

In the end, the so called **learning diaries** were handed over to the participants. These personalised notebooks allowed them to capture unforgettable moments, note open questions, useful information or other things they have learned throughout the meeting.

Many teachers and students in the aces community speak several languages and for the meeting volunteered to become **language assistants** in order to help and support other people with English or other languages.

In the evening, the participants were able to have a rest after their long journey, benefit from the **various offers by the pleasure and leisure team** or meet with their project partners and other participants.

### 3.2. Tuesday, 1 October 2013

#### ▪ Official Welcomes and Presentations

The second day began with an **official welcome** to aces and the Kick-Off Meeting 2013 and aimed at “**building and entering the world of aces**”. The opening started with the screening of the movie-trailer from “One Day on Earth” and the welcoming of the participants by the facilitators.



After the introduction to the three aces tutors (Ilina, Anes, Aron), **Mr Franz-Karl Prüller**, Board Member of ERSTE Foundation, was invited on stage and he held a welcoming speech on behalf of the Foundation in which he also referred to the

Facilitators: Gülesin Nemitlu Ünal, Katrin Lüth, Darko Markovic

importance of diversity and equal treatment that is mentioned already in the founding documents of the Foundation of 1819.

As the Kick-Off took place in Bucharest, we were honoured to welcome **Mrs Liliana Preoteasa**, General Director of the Life-Long Learning and Education Department in the Romanian Ministry of Education. The aces tutors asked Mrs Preoteasa about her experiences with cultural diversity when she was a student herself; about the importance of empowering young people on the topic of diversity; and about her personal message to the aces students and teachers of the Kick-Off Meeting.



Franz-Karl Prüller, ERSTE Foundation



aces tutors: Anes, Ilina and Áron with Mrs. Liliana Preoteasa (2<sup>nd</sup> right)

After this interview, **Danica Lacová**, executive director of **VČELÍ DOM (SK)**, and **Mari Steindl**, director of **Interkulturelles Zentrum (AT)**, talked about their approaches to diversity and their personal experiences; similarities and differences among the institutions; and about the diversity of the people who work together to make aces happen – namely the coordinating organisations and a lot of students and teachers in the aces countries.



They also showed the aces video “[European Faces](#)” which includes statements of students and project coordinators and relates to the diversity of aces.

After that they launched the new [aces Schools Online Map](#) where information about all aces schools in the network and their projects can be found on an interactive map.



Finally, four of the current eight **aces Council** members were called on to the stage. The aces Council is an advisory group with consultative status consisting of 4 teachers and 4 students from aces schools in different countries. The Council does not make decisions but can point out blind spots and give recommendations to the aces management. Apart from that, one main task of the Council members is to listen to the concerns, ideas and wishes of the representatives of the aces projects. Therefore **Matyáš, Ovidiu, Tadeja and Gjorgjina** gave the participants an idea of their tasks and shared when, where and with which concerns they could be approached during the aces Kick-Off Meeting.

(You can find more information about the aces Council members and how to contact them [here](#))

### Code of Contact

Like all communities aces has developed its culture over the years and like in all cultures there are some written and unwritten rules that are important when interacting with other people.

Therefore Katrin presented the so called “**Code of Contact**” with its six rules: 1. Be open to meet other people. 2. Live diversity. 3. Participate actively: talk and listen. 4. Respect the material. 5. Appreciate what others give. 6. Appreciate what you give. After every rule the participants reflected on the meaning in their language, shared it with their neighbours and learnt a special movement connected to the respective rule.



## Who are !?

After the introduction of the Code of Contact, Gülesin encouraged the participants to explore their own “diversity” and what they have in common with each other and think about their own qualities which make them unique (our personalities consist of more than one layer ;).

Therefore the participants moved around the room and met with other people. According to some topics which were displayed on the screen they shared their similarities and their uniqueness with another person. After every question they continued to walk around and found a new partner which whom they talked about the next topic.

In the end the participants were asked to hold hands with every person they have shared their thoughts with. Through this the whole group were linked together somehow.





▪ **“Playing Diversity” (Team Game)**

After a short break the participants got together in their school project teams and the game **“Playing Diversity”** was introduced. Due to bad weather conditions and the impossibility to “play” outside, the plenary hall and the exhibition area of RIN Grand Hotel was transfigured in a playing field.

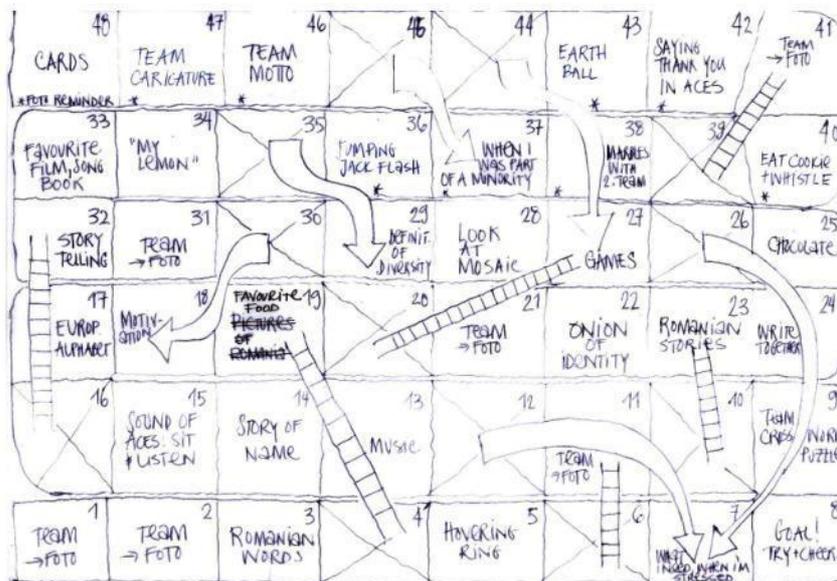


In the middle of the hall an **over-dimensional “board game”** (including 48 fields and “snakes and ladders”) was set and 36 stations (each of them was marked with a helium balloon and a number) were located randomly throughout the other parts of the room.



Each team received an oversized meeples/playing figure (a waterbottle), which has to be dressed and decorated in an individual and creative way with coloured paper and other accessories e.g. wool, plastic drinking straws, clear foil; a blanket; a handout with instructions of the game and other useful material.

After every team had successfully created their **individual meeples, they started to play**. Therefore they rolled an oversized die and moved their meeples on the huge “board game” according to the rules. **Each field on the board was connected to a clearly marked station located randomly throughout the larger playing area**. Therefore they needed to find the station with the correct number. At every station the teams carried out a specific task and afterwards they returned to the board and rolled the die again until they reached the middle or the time was up.



Some of the stations were facilitated by aces team members while others had to be done in a self-directed way according to written instructions. At every station the groups took a piece of fabric which were connected afterwards with safety pins into a huge colourful mosaic and put up on the wall of the plenary hall.



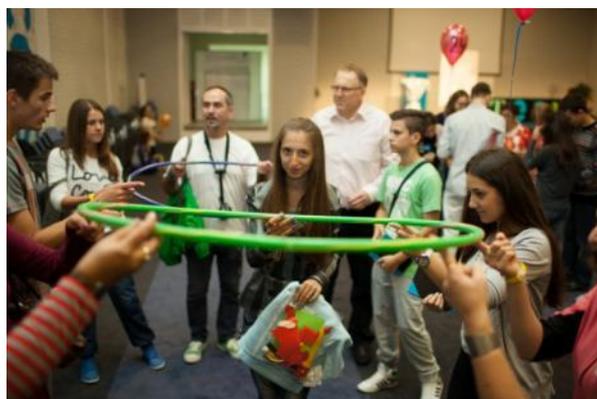
The main aims of this activity were:

- for project teams to get to know each other and have fun together
- introducing aspects of diversity to the participants as an “appetizer” to upcoming inputs
- experiencing the “Benetton approach” to diversity: we are all different, we are all beautiful
- introducing aspects of aces to the participants, such as team work, playful approach, international group,...



Therefore the stations referred to the following topics:

- **getting to know each other:** story of my name, how I react in a stressful situation, what makes me laugh ...
- **team cooperation:** drawing with one pen at the end of a long stick, laying down a hoola-hoop ring together, Jumping Jack Flash, our team's wish for the project ...
- **getting to know aces:** listen to the sound of the game, the game itself ...
- **exploring Romania:** Romanian words, Romanian Stories...
- **fun and silliness:** eating cookies and whistling, playing movement games, ...
- **diversity:** onion of identity, Lemon game, fabric mosaic, ...



Detailed information about the game and on every single station is available [here](#).

A photo of each project team was taken as well at the station “Photo corner” (all photos can be seen on the [aces facebook page](#)).



### ▪ Project Teams I

The aces school partnership projects formed the heart piece of the overall programme. All project teams had been chosen by an international jury to be part of this year’s aces cycle. Most of the project teams (two to three schools from different countries) met personally for the first time only at the Kick-Off Meeting – so the aim of the event was also to provide the teams with many meeting and discussion opportunities to further plan their joint project work. The first project team meeting was the official start of the actual cooperation and an opportunity to discuss open issues and come up with new ideas in order to even improve the project.

The assigned task for each team was to work on **“our project vision ... and how to make it real”**. First each school team should imagine themselves being in March 2014 – at the end and accomplishment of the project (!) – and should collect why it was a great project, what effects it had and what changes it brought about with the help of a handout. Then these ideas were shared with the project partners/partner school teams to see what similarities and differences their project visions had. Discussing this and building a common project vision concluded this exercise. In a second step the teams discussed how to make it happen: what needs to be done/taken into consideration in planning the project, regarding communication about it, regarding students, teachers ... etc. (see annex 2 - the powerpoint on single exercise steps; the handout was page 2 and 4 of the powerpoint).

The document “Challenges and possible sources of conflicts during an international school partnership project”, offering recommendations for a successful project implementation, was handed out to support further considerations on potential stumbling blocks (see annex 3). In the end each project team collected the three most important questions/topics to be further discussed and clarified in the next project team session.



## ▪ Diversity Talks

After a break the participants returned to the plenary hall for the two **keynote speeches** on the topic of diversity.

**Mikael Luciak** from the Initiative Minderheiten/ University of Vienna held the first keynote speech which addressed and deepened the concept(s) of diversity looking beyond “usual” approaches to diversity. It aimed to point out how individual characteristics lead to advantages and disadvantages and therefore to discrimination; and reasons and possible solutions to the challenges faced by today’s diverse societies (in Europe). Therefore Mikael approached the topic of diversity as a political matter as inequities are produced and reproduced through existing structural inequalities and asymmetrical power relationships. (See the presentation in annex 9).

After the speech of Mikael Luciak the participants had the chance to reflect about it and share their thoughts and feelings with the help of 6 cards with questions related to specific parts of the keynote.



For the second keynote speech three speakers from the Center for Interactive Pedagogy in Belgrade joined the stage. **Dragana Jovanović** who is a mentor in the “RAP” project (Reclaiming Adolescence: Roma Transitions to Adulthood in Serbia); as well as **Dženet Koko** and **Milica Milovanović** – two young student researchers in the “RAP” project – talked about the key findings from their participatory research on diversity in schools and about their own reflections regarding dealing with discrimination in school and their neighbourhood. They shared their personal experiences and lessons learned as part of the (Roma) community; and also showed the [video with](#)

[students testimonials](#) made by project participants.

Moreover, the short movie with the title “[I’m a European Roma Woman](#)” drew attention to key messages that influence our life and the way we perceive ourselves.

Through the sharing of their stories and the deeper insight, they wanted to achieve a better understanding of diversity and encourage youth activism through the presentation of role models.

Another set of reflection cards with questions was handed out after the keynote to support a short reflection and sharing of thoughts.



## ▪ Country Group Meeting – (F)aces in your countries

After the keynote speeches the participants had the chance of **meeting people from their own countries** in order to not only get to know each other but also to chat in the respective mother tongue.

The task for students and teachers in the country group was to:

- benefit from each other's experience and do an energizer or name game
- introduce yourselves to each other and briefly present the projects
- have a picture of the country group taken (at the right the group from Serbia – all other photos can be found on our [facebook page](#)).

Last but not least the participants were encouraged to exchange their contact details in order to be able to approach each other after the Kick-Off Meeting: e.g. in order to get useful first-hand information from a more experienced aces-teacher or to invite each other to project related activities and events.



### 3.3. Wednesday, 2 October 2013

#### ▪ Diversity Revisited

The Wednesday program had the aim to **deepen different aspects of diversity with 4 specific related activities**. All participants in large groups of 55 people attended the 4 parallel activities by rotating from one workshop room to the next. The activities were:

- **Living Library**
- **Euro-rail á la carte**
- **Politically speaking**
- **The scramble for wealth and power**



aces stage cubes/motto: DVCT (diversity)

The participants received one ticket each where they could find the order in which they were supposed to attend the 4 sessions (each of the four groups had a different starting activity).

#### Living Library – the *social* aspect of diversity

“The Living Library is an equalities tool that seeks to **challenge prejudice and discrimination**. It works just like a normal library: visitors can browse the catalogue for the available titles, choose the Book they want to read, and borrow it for a limited period of time. After reading, they return the Book to the library and, if they want, they can borrow another.

The only difference is that in the Living Library, Books are *people*, and reading consists of a *conversation*.

The Living Library attempts to challenge prejudice by facilitating a conversation between two people: Books and Readers. Books are volunteers who have either been subjected to discrimination themselves or represent groups or individuals within society that are at risk of suffering from stereotype, stigma, prejudice or



discrimination. Living Books often have personal experiences of discrimination or social exclusion that they are willing to share with Readers.” (source: The Living Library Organisers’ Guide, 2011, see link below)

The Living Library at the aces Kick-Off was organized in cooperation with the LL-experienced Romanian association **A.R.T. fusion**. The library had **26 books (persons) that could be borrowed and read by participants**; the catalogue amongst others comprised a “Bisexual”, an “Ex Drug Addict”, a “Person that works with prisoners”, a “Person with disabilities”, a “Blond”, a “Musician – Street Artist”.

Further information on “Living Library” and how to organize one in the Guides of the Council of Europe:

“Don’t judge a book by its cover. The Living Library Organisers’ Guide”, 2011.

<http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/eycb/Source/EYCB%20Living%20Library.pdf>

“Don’t judge a book by its cover. The Living Library Organisers’ Guide”, 2005.

<http://eycb.coe.int/eycbwwwroot/hre/eng/documents/ll%20english%20final.pdf>

**Biblioteca Vie**  
HUMAN LIBRARY

“Kick off meeting” 2013

**Author:** Constantin Nicolas  
**Book title:** Ex-Drug Addict

**About Ex-Drug Addicts**

- Drug addicts are blamed for their addiction;
- Drug addicts are transgressors;
- Drug addicts also contaminate people with HIV.

**About our books:**

I have been a drug addict for a few years, time of suffering. I was aware of what happened to me and I tried to cure myself in a Drug Addiction Treatment Centre. After trying a lot of methods of curing especially music therapy I managed to be a stable person and easily to cure my addiction. Today I am married, I have a child and I have a normal life.



### **Euro-rail á la carte – the *cultural* aspect of diversity**

The aim of the session “Euro-rail a la carte” was to work on the **construction of images of persons/groups and the construction of prejudice and stereotypes**.

The group of participants simulated to be on a train journey from Bucharest (Gara de Nord) to Oslo. The participants would travel in couchette compartments which are to share with three other travellers. Darko, who facilitated this workshop, handed out a list of passengers (e.g. a disabled war veteran from the Balkans; a middle aged Roma woman with a child; a Chinese man with five large bags; a gay rights activist from Hungary etc.) and participants had to choose three persons whom they would like to travel with the most and three they would like to travel with the least. (Background information: Normally, the journey would take 45 hours, but due to some heavy works on the railroads, it takes almost four days to get to Oslo.)

After their individual choices participants shared in small groups and discussed the reasons for their choice. In the final debriefing questions around the own feelings, the images and created stories and

their backgrounds as well as the use of stereotypes and how to overcome them were discussed in groups.

**Find a detailed description of the activity [here](#).**

This activity is an adaption of the exercise “Euro-rail á la carte” of the **Education Pack “all different - all equal”**, Directorate of Youth and Sport, Council of Europe, 2nd edition:

<http://eycb.coe.int/edupack/pdf/31.pdf>

### **Politically speaking – the *political* aspect of diversity**

The activity, facilitated by Gülesin, was a **simulation of a referendum voting** aiming at the exploration of the political aspect of diversity and brainstorm on methods and mechanisms which should support a ‘voting system’ allowing for a decision making process that would become more accessible for those with a diverse opinion than the majority.

After an introduction to the term “politics” and sharing of opinions and experiences on the issue of democracy and free elections, the participants were invited to vote in a referendum. The framework is that the referendum takes place at a school regarding the question: “Should students be allowed to use their cell phones at school, wherever and whenever?” Answering options were “yes” or “no”.

For the voting process two “public officers” to safeguard the correct execution of the voting were selected and provided with an on their tasks. The students and teachers voted one by one with the provided ballots. After the voting, the “public officers” counted the votes, and announced the results.

The following debriefing gave the participants the chance to reflect on the voting process and outcomes; and also to talk about the political aspects of diversity, relating mechanism and underlying structures. Especially questions about the majority and minorities in a society in relation to equal (voting) and civil rights were discussed.

**Find a detailed description of the activity [here](#).**



### **The scramble for wealth and power – the *economic* aspect of diversity**

This workshop, led by Katrin, focused on the economic aspect of diversity. In a short **simulation game the participants experience the inequality and injustice of how wealth is distributed in our world**. The aim was to use the personal experience of the game to reflect on how the distribution of wealth is linked to factors like age, ability, access to information, heritage etc.

In the game the gold coins (chocolate ones) do not only stand for money, but they also stand for housing, food, schooling, health care, political influence and more. Before the game starts, some of the



participants received a small amount of gold coins and some had to put on socks on their hands (as a handicap). Given these circumstances all had to rush to a “pool of gold” and try to grab as many coins as they could without touching each other (!). At the end they were divided into three groups according to the amount of their coins and Katrin presented the conditions every group now lived in as the amount of coins represents their wealth (economic situation) and power (e.g. their votes count differently) in the world.



The activity was followed by a reflection in small groups along questions like: what feelings and thoughts about getting the coins and the distribution of coins? Was there a fair treatment of everybody? Who are the “Haves” and “Have-nots” in our society? Should there be a re-distribution of wealth and power in the world? Why/why not? What could be guiding principles for this?

Find a detailed description of the activity [here](#).

This activity is an adapted version of the first part of “The scramble for wealth and power” published in “Compass – A Manual on Human Rights Education with Young people”. Find the description of the whole activity here: [http://eycb.coe.int/compass/en/chapter\\_2/2\\_41.asp](http://eycb.coe.int/compass/en/chapter_2/2_41.asp)

The whole “**Diversity Revisited**” morning was closed with the distribution of **reflection cards/questions** which the participants should answer and then exchange with their project partners during lunch or later on. (see Reflection Cards in annex 7).

#### ▪ Project Teams II – World Café for teachers and Project Carousel for students

In their second project team session, the students and teachers were divided into two separate groups and introduced to their specific setting and activity.

#### The Teachers

Reinhard Eckert, one of the project managers of aces, informed the teachers of the most important **Next Steps**, including details regarding the implementation of their international school partnership projects: the transfer of school grants, the final project reports, the documentation of the project work with the interactive website tools, project visits of the aces team, the upcoming events and the available support of Interkulturelles Zentrum and VČELÍ DOM. (Please see annex 4 or [Info for aces projects](#) for details).



The presentation was followed by a so-called **World Café**, a method that allows to discuss different topics with different groups and encourages active participation of all. Depending on his/her specific interests everyone had to find

a table labelled with five fields connected to the projects: “**Teachers**”; “**Students**”; “**Organisation of project**”; “**Programme/project activities**” and “**Open topics**”.

The aim was an open discussion around the questions they had brought in from the previous team session and they considered crucial for the success of their projects. The World Café was carried out in two rounds – every phase of active discussion at the respective table was followed by some minutes of personal reflection and notes in the learning diary. Reinhard, Carmen, Danica and Robin, on behalf of the aces project management team, as well as the Council member Ovidiu were present to give advice regarding practical issues or to share stories about their own project experiences.

### The Students

After a warm-up game and an energizer the group of 104 students was divided in 3 subgroups of ca. 35 students each. In the room 3 separate circles of 6 tables (for 4-6 students) each were set up – the **3 Students’ Project Carousels** which all had the same six exercises. Gülesin introduced the students to the single stations and explained the rotation system (every group had to move in a circle and spend ca. 10 minutes at every station).

1. Pot of Gold: Question and Answer Game
2. Association Spiral: Writing exercise and story telling, starting with the word “in a diverse world”
3. Meet the aces Council: Time to talk with the Council members, Tadeja, Gjorgjina and Matyáš hosted the stations.
4. What we can do: Think about the things students can do for the project and what they can maybe do better than the teacher? Think about yourself and your school team, write on cards and share
5. Our wishes: What do teachers need to do/know to have your support and motivation? Write on cards and pin on the board
6. Our music: a graphic which illustrates the stages of a project life cycle was on the table as well as 2 laptops with headphones. Which songs do you think fits to each step? (see the project life cycle graphic in annex 5)

The outcomes of some stations were hung on pin boards in order that the teachers could see them. Furthermore, the students were also encouraged to share the outcomes with their teachers.



### ▪ Excursions and free afternoon

On Wednesday afternoon the majority of the participants took part in one of the **optional excursions**. Most participants joined the one-hour or the two-hours guided tours through the city or visited the open-air ethnographic “Village museum”. Others walked around in Bucharest on their own or enjoyed their free afternoon.

### 3.4. Thursday, 3 October 2013

Thursday morning began with the presentation of the workshops and workshop leaders, who also joined the facilitators on the stage. After an energizers the participants went to the workshop rooms.



aces trainers with cubes/motto: work / shop / now!

#### ▪ Workshops all around Diversity and Project Management

The participants were able to **choose two workshops**: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. In most cases the same workshops were offered twice (morning and afternoon). In two cases, the morning or the afternoon session was reserved for students or for teachers only.

**Detailed information (downloads) on each workshop and method** will be available until mid of November on [aces methods](#).

#### Workshops

- Workshop 1: Let's Have a Closer Look!  
Mikael Luciak, Initiative Minderheiten/ University of Vienna, Austria  
(this workshop can be found under: ["Working on the topic of Diversity"](#))
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- Workshop 2: Step Outside and Find Diversity  
Katrin Lüth, free lance trainer and facilitator of learning, Austria  
(this workshop can be found under: ["Working on the topic of Diversity"](#))
- 
- Workshop 3a: All Together against Hate Speech Online (STUDENTS ONLY! Morning session)  
Workshop 3b: Towards No Hate Speech? (TEACHERS ONLY! Afternoon session)  
Gisèle Evrard, freelance trainer, organisation Taaluma, Belgium  
(these workshops can be found under: ["Working on the topic of Diversity"](#))
- 
- Workshop 4: How Does the Colour of the Eyes Matter?  
Mitja Blažič, Informational centre LEGEBITRA, Slovenia  
(this workshop can be found under: ["Working on the topic of Diversity"](#))
- 
- Workshop 5: Inside Out and Upside Down: Values, Diversity and Human Rights  
Gülesin Nemetlu Unal, tekne – Learning Constructs, Turkey  
(this workshop can be found under: ["Working on the topic of Diversity"](#))
- 
- Workshop 6: How to Have a Good Deal With Diversity in the Classroom  
Mari Steindl, Intercultural Centre, Vienna, Austria  
(this workshop can be found under: ["Working on the topic of Diversity"](#))
- 
- Workshop 7: How to Cook ...Instant PM Soup!!!  
Luciana Bold-Popescu, ENOA - European Network of Animation, Romania  
(this workshop can be found under: ["Management of \(international\) projects"](#))
- 
- Workshop 8: A Carousel of Diversity!  
Carmine Rodi Falanga, Cooperativa Muovimente, Italy  
(this workshop can be found under: ["Working on the topic of Diversity"](#))
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Workshop 9 Diversity Cinema  
Darko Marković, Inn.Side – people and training, Serbia  
(this workshop can be found under: [“Working on the topic of Diversity”](#))

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Workshop 10a: Sexi Arguments. Intro to Debate for Students (STUDENTS ONLY! Afternoon session)  
Workshop 10b: Sexi Arguments. Intro to Debate for Teachers (TEACHERS ONLY! Morning session)

Emanuel Beteringhe, ARDOR, Romania  
(these workshops can be found under: [“Problem-Solving Approaches, Group Dynamics and Self-Competence”](#))

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### ▪ Project Teams III – Reflection and planning

In this final round of project team meetings, the project teams had time to reflect on their workshop experiences and to come up with one personal learning moment as well as one aspect the group should consider when implementing the own partnership project.

Then, the participants were asked to think about their project work at home – they should discuss their next steps, possible meetings, etc. – and to come up with a work plan including responsibilities and deadlines for the various tasks (see the handout on Next Steps in annex 6).

### ▪ The Party

In the evening everyone dressed up to get ready for the party. The already “shiny” Diamond lounge has been turned into a disco and decorated by the pleasure and leisure team according to the party theme **“Shine Bright Like A Diamond”**.

The DJ made sure that everyone could hear some of his or her favourite songs. Quite a few hit the dance floor at one moment or another, others preferred having a drink and a chat at one of the tables or had fun in the nearby pleasure and leisure area.

### 3.5. Friday, 4 October 2013

Still being a bit tired from the party the participants seemed to be happy to review the Kick-Off Meeting and reminisce about their memories by seeing some of the photos that had been taken throughout the week.

The **aces** team members of **Interkulturelles Zentrum** and **VČELÍ DOM** were called on to the stage in order to be remembered by the participants as the contact and support persons during the implementation of their **aces** projects.



#### ▪ Evaluation of the **aces** Kick-Off Meeting 2013 by participants

The participants were invited to take some time to look back once more and to reflect on the last week.



Therefore every participant received a “**Rainbow Fan**” (an A4 paper with different coloured stripes which had to be folded afterwards in order to look like a fan) and had to **answer the following evaluation questions**:

1. *Green*: What is your overall feeling about the Kick-Off Meeting?
2. *Yellow*: What was the most inspiring moment for you during the Kick-Off Meeting?
3. *Blue*: What is your understanding of diversity after the Kick-Off Meeting?
4. *Orange*: On a scale 1-10, how motivated are you to implement your project? Please, explain.
5. *Red*: What would you suggest to be improved in future Kick-Off Meetings?

(Please find a model of the evaluation fan in annex 8.)

#### ▪ Catwalk

For the final activity the stage was remodelled into a **catwalk** and **every project team** was called on the stage one by one and was invited to “take a walk”.



Each team got a great applause from the audience and could take home the positive energy from the event as well as the feeling to be ready and empowered for the implementation of the own project.



The facilitators closed the Kick-Off Meeting with the forward-looking message: “See you in Senec!”