



Contra Narratives about Migration

In the framework of a workshop

1. Identifying Negative Stereotypes and countering them

The framework of deconstruction started with certain cultural assumptions. These are two of the more prevalent.

Stereotype 1. "All migrants are drug dealers" (in general "criminals")

Stereotype 2. "Migrants steal our job"

Participants need to analyse the selected stereotypes by trying to answer to the following questions:

Question 1. Which are the key elements of the stereotype?

Question 2. Do you think that it is completely unfounded or are there any true elements?

Question 3. Which vision do the stereotype bears and to which factors can you trace it back?

Question 4. Who do you think holds these perspectives?

Participants will then split in four groups and research each idea for factual validity, media multipliers, and originators.

Open discussion based on Dialectic process

Argument – Counterargument – Synthesis

Following this step, participants produced counter-narrative that can prove the stereotype wrong, contrast the hate speech and racism, facilitate dialogue and send a positive message centred on the values that the participants want to share.

In particular they had to identify the elements below:





- 1. Key words**
- 2. Values**
- 3. Supporting arguments**
- 4. Strategies, target and means of communication**
- 5. Strengths and weaknesses**

Finally they had to shape their counter message (by summarising their conclusion / choosing a slogan / drawing, etc.)

In order to create an effective counter-narrative they need to focus on 4 concepts

1. Key words

Diversity

Reciprocity

Listening

Comprehension

2. Values

Empathy

Respect

Solidarity

Equity

3. Supporting arguments

- In order to reduce criminality, immigrants can be included into the host society and in the job market through social integration and job placement.
- Immigrants have the ability to adapt to the society in which they live.
- Being open to communication and dialogue helps solving the problem.





4. Strategies, target and means of communication

Participants identify the importance of social media to spread the counter-narrative. However, they also considered important to have direct contact and share experiences with others. They also stressed the importance of organising cultural and artistic events including different types of art.

5. Strengths and weaknesses

The participants will recognize as the counter-narrative's strength the potential to develop among citizens the capacity to welcome, share, and include others. It is a way of seeing "diversity as enriching and not depriving".

With regard to the stereotype relating to the deprivation of jobs because of immigration, participants pointed out that the responsibility does not fall on those who accept extreme conditions in a state of necessity but on those who exploit people under these conditions. In this regard, the counter-narrative has the objective of creating empathy and provide clarification, for instance regarding the fact that a migrant who wants to exit from a past situation of social disadvantage is apt to take jobs that Italians would not like to do.

Nonetheless, the participants will recognise as an obstacle the fact that people often do not make a critical use of mass media. Participants thus highlighted the importance of verifying information and recognise a bad use of media, fake news and wrong information that are spread and foster stereotypes about migrants.

Conclusions

Finally, one group will identify slogan "**Unity in diversity**", which is actually also the motto of the EU. The other group may choose "**Free to move**" and draw a globe together with the motto.

