



Introduction to the qualification module

“Language learning and inclusion of immigrants in the educational system”

Developed by Slovenian partner Šolski center Nova Gorica

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1. Module overview and objectives

Target group: People who work with immigrants and want to improve their assistance and support to immigrants and thus help them better integrate into society. Participants can be either volunteers or professionals who work with immigrants. Our module focuses on integration support in education, so target participants are various stakeholders who work or come in contact with immigrants in the educational setting. First of all, these are teachers; immigrant students come into contact with language teachers as well as teachers of other subjects as soon they settle and decide/are allowed to enter school. Then, there are school counsellors who work with immigrant students, and the management whose decisions importantly influence immigrants' integration into the learning process and, consequently, into society. Last but not least, there are volunteers who bridge the gap between formal and informal integration. They welcome immigrants into the new world with warmth and affection. When these volunteers also share an immigrant background, they often act as cross-cultural facilitators bringing together different worlds. Target participants are thus people without formal qualifications for working with immigrants as well as professionals who need further skills for successful work with immigrants.

Contents of the module: Approaching immigrant students through formal and informal assistance. Assistance to immigrants is considered as a whole; it includes: an overview of the past and present assistance-related activities, examples of good practice, a comparison of the existing assistance practice to the practice provided in other institutions, and identification of challenges to be addressed. An important aspect is bringing together all the stakeholders involved in the process of immigrant integration, since a lot has already been done in different areas without everybody being aware of it. By connecting the stakeholders, assistance-related challenges can be tackled more efficiently and responsibilities can be shared more evenly.

Module objectives: Improving collaboration between existing formal and informal immigration assistance systems, providing new forms of assistance tailored to actual needs and time restraints, presenting the existing integration assistance practice and involvement possibilities, identifying integration-related challenges to be addressed, establishing a system that facilitates the exchange of experience and information to all interested parties.

2. Module framework

Time frame: 3-day training

Venue and equipment requirements: The venue needs to be pleasant and have good room lighting as well as a projector and a computer with access to the Internet (to play videos, share web sources etc.). A whiteboard is recommended as well as enough space to allow small group discussions and to accommodate a display corner for useful publications and other materials.

Number of participants: Twelve is the optimal number of participants for a meaningful exchange of views; it allows enough space and time for building conversations, sharing subjective views, opening dilemmas, and constructive dealing with stereotypes and other limiting beliefs.

3. Recommended materials:

The training materials used in this module have been developed by individual trainers. These are mostly PowerPoint presentations showing immigrant integration practice in Slovenia. The contents includes some peculiarities of the Slovenian education but is generally transferable to other EU countries.

4. Didactic structure

Module structure:

The module consists of six main units. These cover: immigrant reception procedures in the country, interculturality in education, formal and informal immigrant support systems, language learning opportunities, examples of good practice, and personal stories of immigrants in the country.

Table 1 – **Table of contents**

Table of contents lists the topics covered in the training thus providing an overview of the module's contents, organisation and recommended teaching materials.

1. Overview of the current state of affairs
 - Reception of immigrants in the Republic of Slovenia
 - Education of immigrants in the Republic of Slovenia
 - Overview of the practice of teaching Slovene to immigrants
 - Language learning
2. Interculturality and inclusive pedagogy related examples of good practice
 - Intercultural education
 - Intercultural dialogue
 - Examples of good immigrant integration practice
 - Useful project results
3. System support
 - beginner and follow-up language courses
 - pedagogical contract
 - individualised education program
4. Second language
 - Available materials
5. Stereotypes and prejudice
 - Stereotypes and me
 - Prejudice hinder collaboration
6. Personal story of an immigrant

Table 2 – Implementation plan

The table shows the program broken into individual days. It includes goals, topics, methods and durations of individual sessions. It specifies knowledge assessment, teaching materials and the required venue and equipment.

Table 3 - Schedule

The last table is a daily schedule of activities, their durations, content and implemented methods

Contents:

The introductory part of the training is a general overview of immigrant integration situation; it provides a look back in history as well as at the current state of affairs in the region and country; it identifies challenges and features examples of good practice. The introductory presentation is meant to encourage discussion, help instructors set up upcoming activities, and motivate participants to actively engage in activities. Participants' willingness to individually contribute to better integration of immigrants into society is crucial for successful continuation.

Integration of immigrants into society can be enhanced through intercultural dialogue - an important and highly desirable skill which requires not only knowledge but also human touch. This approach does not try to erase immigrants' personal and national identities; it considers them valuable both on the personal level as well as on the level of the society as a whole; different cultures enrich one another. Stereotypes hinder us from developing an open society that could effectively assist immigrants' integration in the new environment. Since the language of the environment is crucial for inclusion, much attention has been devoted to language learning and difficulties encountered by both language teachers and immigrant language learners struggling with the basics. An overview has been done of what has already been achieved in this area and also of the available useful teaching materials. By transforming current difficulties into challenges to be tackled in the future, we tried to produce an action plan and our future course of action.

Key competences, skills and knowledge:

Competences	Acquired skills and knowledge:
Knowledge of migrant issues	They will follow migrant issues and acquaint themselves with current events.
Knowledge about the origin of immigrants	They will know the immigrants' countries of origin and will be able to recognize immigrants' national and linguistic affiliations.
Knowledge of the education system	<p>They will be aware of the particularities of the (destination country's) education system and its recognition of the educational achievements from the country of origin.</p> <p>They will know the difference between the education systems in the relevant countries.</p> <p>They will know how to help an immigrant in the context of the national education system.</p> <p>They will develop listening, explanation and empathy skills.</p> <p>They will be able to motivate immigrants and boost their self-esteem.</p> <p>They will be able to effectively organize group work.</p>
Knowledge of the legal system	<p>They will learn about migration statistics such as the number of immigrants, their origins, education, needs, the legal basis for their staying in the EU/Slovenia, etc.</p> <p>They will learn about novelties in legislation that make immigrants' residence in the country easy or difficult.</p>
Knowledge of humanitarian organizations and other organizations working with immigrants	They will know which organizations are working with immigrants locally and nationally and they will know how to get in touch with them.
Able to advise immigrants	They will be able to advise immigrants where to find support that will help them learn the new language and integrate in school and society.
Able to organize activities and connect immigrants to available services	They will be able to connect immigrants to organizations who provide services for them and they will be able to organize activities to facilitate immigrants' integration into society.
Basics of language teaching	They will learn basic approaches to teaching and learning the language of the new

	environment.
Able to advise colleagues	They will learn how to provide help and support to colleagues who come across immigrants at work.
Knowledge about enrolment and disenrollment from school and drop-out prevention	They will know who is responsible for the entry and exit procedures and which documents an immigrant needs for attending an educational programme. They will be able to take a stance to alleviate challenging situations, student failure and drop-outs.
Knowledge of the possibilities of further education within the national education system (secondary school/university entry requirements)	They will know entry requirements for secondary schools/universities. They will be able to advise immigrants on how to approach learning to achieve their goals.
Knowledge of language teaching materials	They will learn about language teaching and other useful teaching materials and will know how to use them.
Knowledge of intercultural approach	They will know how to include elements of interculturality in their work.
Intercultural dialogue	They will know how essential it is to use intercultural approach in classes and will be able to implement intercultural dialogue.
Recognizing stereotypes	They will be able to recognize stereotypes, their presence in a society, and how they affect communication and collaboration in this society.
Understanding prejudice	They will learn why prejudices are formed and preserved in societies
Knowledge of interculturality	Empathy

5. Methods of teaching

Lecture method; the teacher works directly with the group as a whole. Communication between teacher and participants is often one-way. The advantages of this frontal teaching method are: it's economical; it allows the teacher the control of a class. Its disadvantages are: teacher dominance; lack of communication and interaction between participants; whole-class activities are perceived as monotonous and less engaging.

Conversation method; conversation is built around the content participants are familiar with, have experience with and are interested in. The teacher facilitates conversation; at the beginning he/she determines the topic, sets the goals, makes a brief introduction and presents a specific or a general problem. Participants are fully

engaged in content creation. Teacher provides additional information by commenting, linking and summarizing participants' statements. The method is useful whenever participants have interest, experience and knowledge of the module's content.

Discussion is a method in which participants exchange ideas, discuss a topic, or plan new activities. It can follow teacher's instructions or is spontaneous. Group discussion develops participants' leadership and critical thinking skills, develops their sense of teamwork and is efficient for changing attitudes via a democratic dialogue.

Individual work participants will work individually on some topic.

Demonstration: teacher will explain some content with demonstration, using different materials: video, documents, description of some practice, role play, ect.