



OVERCOMING
THE CONSEQUENCES
OF WAR **TOGETHER**

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION WORK in conflict-affected regions

Methodological guidebook

Marina CHERNIVSKY



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Preface

This methodological guidebook summarises the results of the two-year educational program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict”,¹ which took place from July 2015 to December 2017 within the framework of the international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together” (2015–2016 and 2016–2019).²

The main goal of the educational program was to prepare Ukrainian civil actors for the role of anti-discrimination multipliers and trainers, enabling them to participate in the prevention of discrimination, including cases caused by military conflict – now and in the future.

The program was implemented within the framework of one of the six working areas of the international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together”, namely “Countering Discrimination Caused by Military Conflict”. This area was managed jointly by DRA (a German NGO) and the project’s

¹ See https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/activities/bewaeltigung-konfliktbedingter-diskriminierungen_en and <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies/>

² See. www.overcome-war.org (2016–2019) and <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/previous-project-2015-2016/> (2015–2016)

partner, the anti-discrimination expert Marina Chernivsky, director of the pilot project “Perspektivwechsel Plus” (under the aegis of ZWST) from Berlin. Organisational work on the local level was carried out by the main partner of the international project in Ukraine, the NGO “Country of Free People”.

About the international project

“Overcoming the Consequences of War Together”

The international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together” (August 2016 to January 2019) has been developed and implemented by the German non-governmental organisation German-Russian Exchange (Deutsch-Russischer Austausch, DRA) in cooperation with seven other NGOs from five countries – Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Russia and Germany – with the financial support of the German Federal Foreign Office.

The main objective of the project is to support civil society in overcoming conflicts arising from military action and preventing new post-war conflicts, particularly in Ukraine, where many challenges posed by the ongoing hostilities require rapid resolution – as well as in Georgia, Armenia and the North Caucasus, where non-governmental organisations are active in addressing similar problems.

A previous project conducted by the DRA and partners on the same topic and under the same title in 2015–2016 demonstrated the productivity of live communication between civil society organisations from different regions where military operations are or have been taking place.³ We consider civil society a central factor in overcoming conflicts and in peace-making processes in all participating countries.⁴

³ See. <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/previous-project/training-courses-networking-meetings/social-integration/>

⁴ See. <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/previous-project>

The project supports civil society in resolving and preventing war-related problems and conflicts in many formats. These include

- trainings for multipliers and people working in the six areas listed below,
- financial and expert support for subprojects developed by the trainings' participants,
- international meetings for representatives of non-governmental organisations from (post-)conflict regions: conferences, roundtables and educational trips,
- interregional information campaigns,
- publication of information materials, manuals and specialist literature.

Thematically, the project covers six working areas:

- working with psychological trauma caused by military conflict,
- strategies to counteract domestic violence caused by the effects of war,
- Forum theatre exercises to achieve dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution,
- countering discrimination caused by military conflict (including the educational program presented here, as well as five subgrant projects and the present booklet),
- integration of internally displaced persons and refugees,
- promotion of social entrepreneurship to resolve social and economic conflicts.

A detailed description of the project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together” can be found on pages 212–219 of this publication and on the project website (in German, Ukrainian, Russian and English): www.overcome-war.org.

On the educational program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict”

The educational program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict”⁵ was implemented in Ukraine within the framework of two DRA projects, both entitled “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together” (2015–2016 and 2016–2019), in cooperation with the expert Marina Chernivsky. Its addressees were multipliers representing the civil society of Ukraine. The training gave them the opportunity to learn about specially developed anti-discrimination work methods based on dialogue and the anti-bias approach, which are being successfully used in Germany.

Graduates of our program can now, in their turn, teach certain target groups of society how to critically examine biases and prejudices. In doing so, they will be able to share tools that help overcome and prevent further discrimination. For the first time, the present toolkit describes this method in written form in Russian and Ukrainian, thus making it accessible to experts and civil actors in Eastern Europe. The experience gained during the implementation of the educational program in Ukraine has also been taken into account.

The educational program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict” consisted of four modules (fifteen days in total) and included the implementation of five subgrant projects by the participants with the expert support of the trainer and developer of the program, Marina Chernivsky. She conducted individual and group consultations, while the project team assisted in organisational matters. All projects were aimed at addressing the discriminatory conflicts

⁵ A detailed report on the educational program can be found here: <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies/>

that arose or intensified in Eastern Ukraine in connection with the war. The projects were implemented from February 1 to August 31, 2017, in and around the following cities: Vinnitsa, Nikopol, Sumy, Kharkiv and Cherkassy.

Vinnitsa and Nikopol saw the implementation of the sub-projects “A step forwards”⁶ and “Anti-discrimination awareness training for social workers, as well as employees of psychological, legal and other consultation establishment in and around Nikopol”⁷. The aim was to sensitize staff that provides social, administrative and counselling services, to help them recognize the discrimination of IDPs and (former) war participants. In addition to undermining prejudices against these people, the project also succeeded in convincing the local and regional authorities in Vinnitsa that this topic is important enough to merit additional anti-discrimination measures on their own part.

The projects “Formation of anti-discriminatory attitudes among teenagers through anti-discrimination training”⁸ and “Nonviolent communication at school”⁹ in Cherkassy and Kharkiv succeeded in reducing war-related aggression among young people and mutual discrimination between students and teachers (both at school and beyond). In addition, teachers were introduced to non-violent communication techniques.

⁶ In more detail: <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/on-discrimination-and-discrediting-stereotypes-caused-by-the-consequence-of-the-war-for-government-employees-and-teachers-of-the-vinnytsia-region/>

⁷ More about the project: <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/anti-discrimination-trainings-for-social-workers-and-psychologists-take-place-in-nikopol>

⁸ More: <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-course-in-cherkassy-took-place-for-adults-to-form-an-anti-discrimination-awareness-in-order-to-overcome-the-consequences-of-the-war/>

⁹ See <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/in-kharkiv-the-launch-of-the-project-non-violent-communications-at-school-was-announced/>

The project “The Spiral of History”¹⁰ produced the film “Transit Point” dedicated to the historical causes of discrimination. Its goal was to initiate dialogue between the IDPs who are being discriminated against and the host communities. The film was used in Sumy to sensitize the city’s employment officers to discrimination issues and to establish dialogue between them and representatives of IDPs living in the city. In addition, in August 2017, the film was presented to human rights organisations at the Human Rights Festival in Chernihiv. Most participants were so impressed by the film that they consider using it in their own anti-discrimination work. The film “The Spiral of History” and the methodology for using it in a teaching session are presented on our project website under the heading “Subgrant project materials”¹¹.

289 people have been directly involved in the five projects: social and administrative staff, teachers, (school) psychologists, school-children and young people, IDPs and former war participants suffering from discrimination. Approximately 2,000 people were indirectly affected by the project activities.

The subgrant projects have clearly shown the hardships of anti-discrimination work. The difficulties are partly due to the close link between discrimination, prejudice, stereotypes and the ongoing military activities in Western Ukraine, as well as the post-war social strife and conflicts throughout Ukraine. The situation is aggravated by society’s lack of awareness for the mechanisms and results of discrimination. This assessment is also confirmed by the anti-discrimination work continued by graduates of our educational program.

¹⁰ <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-course-in-cherkassy-took-place-for-adults-to-form-an-anti-discrimination-awareness-in-order-to-overcome-the-consequences-of-the-war/>

¹¹ https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/?page_id=5037#discrimination

In addition, the practical work has helped us understand how urgent it is to provide victims of discrimination with professional advice and support – especially in view of the discrimination caused by war and the population's growing readiness for aggression and violence.

Words of gratitude

First of all, I would like to thank Marina Chernivsky, who developed the educational program and wrote the present methodical guide, for the productive cooperation and the professionalism with which she trained and consulted the participants on their subprojects. My thanks also go to all German and Ukrainian colleagues who contributed to the success of the event.

We are particularly grateful to the participants themselves for their active cooperation, for all that they have achieved during the training sessions and the implementation of their subgrant projects – as well as for their readiness to engage in anti-discrimination activities, no matter what. Thank you, and all the best in your all-important work!

Finally, we greatly appreciate the support of the German Federal Foreign Office, which enabled us to contribute to overcoming the consequences of war together through thematically diverse international cooperation and the exchange of experience among civil society actors.

Maria Slesazeck

*Head of the international project
“Overcoming the Consequences of War Together”*



Which groups are subject to discrimination based on differences, as well as political and social conflicts?

What norms and regulatory parameters influence discrimination?

How are we ourselves involved in maintaining and reproducing prejudice and inequality?

What skills are needed to prevent discrimination?

Introduction

In the 21st century, human rights became an undeniable social priority. The value of individual freedom and human rights is a key democratic principle. However, despite the proclaimed equality and the international system of protection against discrimination, human rights are being violated everywhere. Each of us faces many open questions in this area, not only in “conflict zones”, but also in countries where ethnic, political and social conflicts are not considered acute. That is why educational and consulting practice must consciously and critically deal with all manifestations of discrimination, all infringements of the human right to equality, recognition and personal security.

We find it difficult to deal with diversity – that is, with differences. Where we suspect differences, we expect tensions. This becomes particularly apparent in times of conflict and political upheaval: inter-group difference is renegotiated; social power and dominance are constantly redefined. In educational institutions, on the labour market, in health care, but also at playgrounds or when shopping, we get to know how others think about “us”, what they expect from “us” or what they trust “us” to do. These expectations are usually based on the socially accepted definition of what is *right or wrong, normal or deviant, usual or alien*.

If such categories are normalized, they are no longer noticeable. The discrimination of minorities by the unaffected majority often goes unrecognised, and therefore is rarely scandalised. We silently agree to the discrimination of “others” and even genuinely fail to notice it if it does not affect us personally.

A deeper process of cognition and an impulse from outside are needed to make us question the norm.

The problem of *interethnic and international relations* is particularly complex and multifaceted. Often, *ethnicity becomes the measure of national identity*. This happened in Ukraine, where many consider citizenship to be an ethnic category. This can lead to the stigmatization of Ukrainian citizens who differ from the “norm”.

The armed conflict in eastern Ukraine has aggravated many *old and new lines of tension*. Discrimination against “internally displaced persons”, for example, is often attributed to the current conflict – however, its deeper causes and roots demand reflection. (Legislative) protection against discrimination works only with political support and structural/administrative implementation. With gaps in legislation and especially in times of socio-political conflicts, there is a growing need for the intervention of a strong and active civil society. *Its task is to notice all forms of prejudice and intolerance* and clearly indicate them. The foundation of a democratic society is respect for the human rights to autonomy, integrity and non-discrimination.

Formally, discrimination can be defined as unfair (unequal) treatment. For example, the chance for a job and the salary should depend on qualifications and abilities – and not on gender or skin colour. When this rule is not respected, German law (the Equal Treatment Act) prosecutes discrimination. However, in reality, the

legislative base does not always enable one to prove discrimination. In many countries, including Ukraine, the situation is even more difficult: legislative protection against discrimination is (so far) underdeveloped. Therefore, it is crucial to consider discrimination not only as a legal concept but also as a subjective social reality. Society must recognize the experience of discrimination without demanding evidence.

These considerations, as well as practical experience in Germany and Israel, formed the basis of the innovative anti-discrimination training in Ukraine.

The present publication summarizes the two-year educational program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict” (Kriegsfolgen 2017a and 2017b)¹², which took place from July 2015 to December 2017 as part of the international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together” (2015–2016 and 2016–2019; Kriegsfolgen 2016a and 2016b)¹³. Its main goal was to serve as a model, to familiarize civil society actors with selected fundamentals of anti-discrimination work and help them develop multiplier skills in order to prevent discrimination caused by the military conflict.

The educational program, whose trainings are described in the following, consisted of four consecutive modules (a total of fifteen days), as well as the implementation of sub-grant projects aimed at preventing/combating discrimination and conducted by the participants.¹⁴

¹² See https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/activities/bewaeltigung-konfliktbedingter-diskriminierungen_en and <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>

¹³ See <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en> (2016–2019) and <https://kriegsfolgenueberwinden.de/en/previous-project-2015-2016> (2015–2016).

¹⁴ During the implementation of their projects, the participants also went through several rounds of supervision and consultation conducted by the moderator of the program, Marina Chernivsky.

The methods listed here are only a selection from the modules. The present publication aims to provide a summary of the workshop programme both to its participants and to other interested parties. This collection of recommendations is addressed to all who deal or consider dealing with discrimination and engaging in anti-discrimination work. It is a workshop manual for multipliers who'd like to use our developments with groups they train or consult. At the same time, the book gives newcomers the opportunity to begin exploring this area of work.

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Goals of the educational program

- Raising awareness of diversity as social normality
- Raising awareness of discrimination as an individual experience and social phenomenon
- Dealing with the causes and effects of discrimination and intergroup (socio-political) conflicts
- Reflection on individual imprinting and social norms
- Deconstruction of enemy images and resentments (in the roles of both objects and subjects)
- Development of a critical and sensitive understanding of discrimination
- Support for the planning and implementation of anti-discrimination projects, for instance, in the domains of informal education, coaching and counselling

1. The educational program created a space for dialogue in order to analyse attitudes, skills and practical experiences. A crucial goal was to develop effective strategies for anti-discrimination work in Ukraine.
2. The educational program paid considerable attention to identity, self-identification, collective memory, prejudice, as well as the awareness of factors leading to prejudice/discrimination. It dealt with possibilities of protection against discrimination and tools to combat its manifestations, both in everyday life and at the structural level.
3. The educational program were designed according to the participants' needs and interests. Great attention was paid to intragroup communication with elements of coaching and supervision¹⁵. Training was process-oriented and stimulated the reflection on one's own involvement in biased and discriminatory patterns of thinking and behaviour. It also analysed the impact of biographical factors and sociocultural norms. This made it possible to show and rethink the deep cognitive and emotional structures of group-focused enmity (GFE).

¹⁵ Here, supervision is the method of reflecting on the goals, processes and structures of one's own work, as well as the consultation of the participants conducted by the moderator.

4. The educational program was based on the tried and tested *dialogical reflection approach*¹⁶, which is also often used to develop historical self-awareness and intergenerational memory. In addition, the anti-bias approach was used to facilitate the analysis of discriminatory practices and the acquisition of necessary skills. Both approaches offer analytical and practical toolkits based on self-reflection and addressing all manifestations of discrimination.
5. A trustful atmosphere as well as attentive and appreciative guidance and moderation were crucial as the training could conjure up painful experiences. In general, it is advisable in such cases to formulate shared learning rules, such as voluntary participation, active listening, speaking in the first person rather than generalizing, never devaluing another's experience, etc.

¹⁶ This approach was developed and theoretically substantiated by Marina Chernivsky specifically for the project "Perspektivwechsel" (Change of Perspective) under the auspices of the Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany (ZWST) primarily to enhance the qualification of employees of schools, administrations and social services, as well as coaches in the field of political education and anti-discrimination work. The project was funded by the German Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) from 2007 to 2014.



**Basic
considerations**

What is diversity?

We are *all different*. The term “diversity” describes the differences within a group or society. These are not always “natural”; often, they are produced socially and politically. It is important to *neither relativize social and cultural differences nor regard them as fixed and unchangeable*. You cannot say anything about *all* Russians, Ukrainians or Germans.

Categories such as age, gender, ethnicity, and sexual orientation are important for every individual and contribute to one's identity – but at the same time, they give rise to discrimination. A society that recognises diversity acknowledges its responsibility to respect differences and condemn discrimination in all its forms.

What is “othering”?

“Othering” means labelling a person as belonging to a subordinate social category. This is a discriminating, reductive approach, which arises especially often when the identity of people is defined by group membership.

Every society produces its own “Other” and often cannot free itself from othering for decades and centuries. Political upheavals and conflicts subject new groups to such categorization. Since we are all involved in these power relations, we adopt this social order and participate in it.

Every group-based differentiation of people is accompanied by categorization and evaluation. This process is never neutral.

What we find familiar or alien, what we take for granted and what we fail to accept or understand – all this is partly determined by the power relations, norms and discourses in our society.

How important is the past?

Even if we are not always aware of it, we encounter stories and history at every turn. Our historical identities influence the present, sometimes fuelling political and interpersonal conflicts (Schneider 2001). Each society has its own *historically developed distinctions*, handed down from generation to generation, which often end up seeming “natural” (see Chernivsky 2017, p. 3; Schneider 2001, p. 223). The historically defined “others” have an important function: they help us (re)define ourselves. Defining certain people as “others” can be a strong stabilizing link in defining oneself. When people and groups are claimed not to “belong”, intergroup boundaries/divisions are created and implemented (see Ladwig 1997, p. 83; Reuter 2012).

One must try to understand historical intersections, social hierarchies and one's own involvement in them. This knowledge can change our attitudes, encourage action, and help in anti-discrimination work.

What is prejudice?

Prejudices govern our expectations towards “others”. They serve as projections allowing one to attribute one’s own mistakes, fears and deficiencies to these “others”.

For a long time, it was believed that you could eliminate prejudices by proving them factually wrong – by comparing statements to reality and/or by offering alternative, empirically confirmed explanations of phenomena.

However, being primarily a matter of fantasy and projection rather than real behaviour, prejudices cannot be eliminated solely by using counter-arguments and “correct” information. Entering the discussion and striving to refute specific accusations, we seem to accept the main assumptions of prejudice. Pedagogical work against prejudices should concentrate not on their contents but on their affective, social and behavioural features, functions and effects. Only then does it sometimes make sense to proceed to deconstructing specific contents. Even at this stage, the crucial task is not so much to “correct the error” as to show the influence of prejudices on our judgments, attitudes and behaviour.

Prejudices usually stem from deep in the past. That is why it is so difficult to fight them. However, we can recognize the functions and mechanisms of prejudice, thereby reducing their effectiveness (Trisch 2010). “Every person can understand that prejudices narrow down thinking, and that they can be treated critically. Thus, we show that prejudices arise not because a person does something wrong. Rather, we absorb them in the process of socialization. These images accompany us throughout life. At the same time, it is important to show that this influence of society can be countered. We can change our thinking patterns – all we have to do is take responsibility for our attitudes” (Chmielewska-Pape 2010, p. 40).

Different theories offer different answers to questions about the emergence and maintenance of prejudices. It is important to distinguish between prejudices and stereotypes. All generalizations can be stereotypes. “Prejudice” more specifically refers to negative attitudes towards people and groups. In sociopsychology, prejudices are described as generalizing judgments about people made “solely on the basis of a certain property – origin, ethnos, religion, gender – which includes them in a negatively evaluated group” (Küpper 2016).

Prejudices do not always directly lead to discrimination, but they do increase the likelihood of discriminatory behaviour.

The path to prejudice consists of three main stages

Categorization: people are divided into categories according to one or more features – for example, nationality, origin, skin colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation/identity, disability, age, etc. Thus, groups emerge that are perceived as “us” and “them”.

Stereotyping: within these categories, people are assigned different properties, roles, intentions and behaviours. “Others” (out-group) clearly differs from “us” (in-group). When establishing stereotypes, people often pay special attention to “properties that are especially important to them personally”.

Evaluation: the properties, roles, intentions and behaviours that we – often unconsciously – attribute to others entail a positive or negative evaluation and determine how we see and treat people and groups. We tend to portray the in-group more positively than out-groups.

What is discrimination?

Discrimination (from lat. *discriminatio*, difference) is the ascription of differences; the infringement and violation of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of people due to their characteristics such as gender, nationality, language, origin, income, profession, place of residence, religion (or its absence) and other parameters. This can go as far as segregation and harassment.

Discrimination is usually associated with specific actions/behaviour. From a legal point of view, discrimination can be defined as infringement of a person's interests due to certain discriminatory criteria and without an objective reason that could justify unequal treatment.

In Germany, the General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz – AGG)¹⁷ aims to prevent or eliminate discrimination on grounds of “~~race~~”¹⁸ or ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age or sexual identity (Bauer et al. 2010, p. 8). The law explicitly *specifies a list of characteristics* to be protected from discrimination. Thus, it does not cover all possible causes and manifestations of discrimination but only provides support for selected categories. This has led to widespread criticism. To understand this, let us consider an example: a Roma single mother may be stigmatised, devalued or disadvantaged not only as a woman but also as a Roma and as a single mother, depending on the context and situation. Multiple discrimination is very frequent.

¹⁷ From 2000 to 2004, the European Union adopted four directives on the implementation of the European Equal Treatment Act. The General Law on Equal Treatment, adopted on June 18, 2006 in Germany, is the result of the commitment of EU member states to amend their national legislation in accordance with European directives.

¹⁸ The word is used in strike-through form to show the fundamental fallacy of this concept and discourage its use.

“Discrimination can be understood as an experience in which certain 'axes of inequality' cross each other. All people have a gender, a sexual identity, an origin, etc., and adopt different social positions along these axes.

Interconnections abound: for instance, ideas about mobility, gender roles and sexual identities are connected to the discrimination of old people, while discrimination against women is often closely related to age, ethnicity or disability.” (Bauer et al. 2010)

Excursion: Discrimination in Ukraine

In 2012, a new law came into force in Ukraine, entitled “The Law of Ukraine on the principles of preventing and combating discrimination in Ukraine”¹⁹. It defines the organizational and legal principles of preventing and opposing discrimination, as well as creating equal opportunities for the realization of personal and civic rights and freedoms. This law provides the following definitions:

Direct discrimination is “a situation in which the individual and/or group of persons because of their race, skin colour, political, religious or other beliefs, sex, age, disability, ethnic or social origin, nationality, and marital status, place of residence, linguistic or other features that existed, exist and can be real or imagined (the – some signs) suffered, incurred or may incur limitations in any form, established by this Law except the cases when such limitation has legal, objectively reasonable goals, and the ways to achieve them are appropriate and objective.”

Indirect discrimination is a consequence of seemingly neutral rules, which are theoretically supposed to provide equality but create problems in practice. This insidious form can be even more dangerous than direct discrimination. According to the Law of

¹⁹ Among others, the following people and institutions are supposed to prevent and counteract discrimination according to this law: BP, ombudspersons, the cabinet of ministers and other state bodies, local governments and public associations.

- Discrimination does not always come to light openly. It can appear unintentionally in everyday life or result from institutionalised practices and phenomena that disproportionately affect certain groups and prevent them from realising their potential.
- Discrimination can take different forms and work at different levels – through individuals, groups or laws. No area of life is exempt from discrimination. It affects people in interpersonal contacts, in political and social discourses as well as in structures such as the labour market, education, health and insurance.
- “*Structural discrimination* describes inequalities that have become entrenched in society. They condition individual experiences but function largely independently of individual intentions” (Bauer et al. 2010, p. 19). Thus, structural discrimination occurs within and through institutions.
- When exactly discrimination begins, is often difficult to define. To uncover the various forms and levels of discrimination in everyday life and to recognise the perspectives of those affected, it is important to develop a *broad understanding of discrimination* – one that goes beyond the legal definition.

Ukraine, *indirect discrimination* is “a situation where, as a result of the use of formally neutral law, evaluation criteria, rules, requirements or practices for the individual and/or group of persons because of their specific characteristics, have arisen or may arise less favourable conditions, except where their implementation or application is aimed at legitimate, objectively reasonable goals, and the ways to achieve them are appropriate and necessary.”

The law also names special forms of discrimination: instigation to discrimination and harassment. The following actions, on the other hand, are defined as non-discriminatory: special state protection of certain categories of persons in need of such protection; implementation of measures aimed at preserving the identity of certain groups of individuals, if such measures are necessary; granting privileges to certain categories of persons in cases provided by law; special requirements provided by law for the implementation of particular rights of individuals.

Identifying *indirect discrimination* is much more difficult than identifying direct discrimination. Very often, rules that may lead or have already led to indirect discrimination are generally accepted standards and bureaucratic foundations, and thus extremely hard to challenge or change.

Human rights activists have criticized “The Law of Ukraine on the principles of preventing and combating discrimination in Ukraine”, saying that it was adopted too quickly to be well-thought-out. It abstractly proclaims the right to protection against discrimination, and for the first time in Ukrainian legislature defines such concepts as direct and *indirect discrimination* – however, it prescribes no specific procedures and mechanisms to protect against discrimination. Neither does the administrative and criminal legislation of Ukraine provide any specific liability. Not every manifestation of discrimination can be considered a criminal offense. The main problem of the Ukrainian anti-discrimination law is the lack of a clear mechanism to apply it and establish responsibility for discrimination.

The general definition of discrimination as contained in the Law merely rephrases the Criminal Code of Ukraine, according to which “direct or indirect restriction of rights or the establishment of direct or indirect privileges of citizens on the grounds of race, colour, political, religious and other beliefs, gender, ethnic and social origin, income, domicile, native language or other grounds” is recognized as a crime. Additional criticism concerns the term “segregation”²⁰, which is not defined or prohibited as a separate form of discrimination. The issue of segregation was repeatedly considered and recognized as a violation of human rights by the European Court of Human Rights.

In particular, Roma and “internally displaced persons” are currently suffering from both direct and indirect discrimination, as well as segregation in Ukraine (cf. Lisnichka 2016). Direct discrimination against the Roma minority usually manifests itself in a lack of attention to its needs and in ethnicity-based contempt.

Direct discrimination of “internally displaced persons” often arises in connection with generalizations, distrust, and the universalization of a suspicious or hostile attitude toward Russians, Russian-speakers or non-Ukrainians. This often leads to the direct or indirect denial of services, information and other fundamental socio-economic rights.

Let us consider discrimination against Roma in the medical field as an example – the lack of medical institutions in places of compact residence, the unwillingness of first aid medical personnel to visit Roma settlements, as well as open (direct) discrimination of the Roma in health care facilities.

²⁰ Segregation is a form of “racial” discrimination.

The latter manifests itself in hate speech and the wilful ignorance of Roma patients' needs. Representatives of the Roma minority often cannot get a job because of *romophobia*. This is a case of direct ethnicity-based discrimination in the labour market.

As for *indirect discrimination* against Roma, their main problem in Ukraine is the lack of documents confirming their identity. Unable to receive such documents, the Roma are de facto stateless persons. And this automatically turns them into an object of indirect discrimination. Comparably, one of the most acute problems of "internally displaced persons" is the cessation of payments of pensions and social benefits in rebel regions, as well as gaps in the financing of medical and educational institutions. These phenomena also lead to indirect discrimination (UPO 2015).

According to Roman Romanov, Director of "The Rule of Law" Program of the International Renaissance Foundation, many factors of discrimination are not taken into account by the Ukrainian legislation (Genderz 2013). He states that a person in Ukraine can be discriminated against, with impunity, based on the following characteristics: race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex, gender identity, age, health status (in particular, having a disability or being HIV positive), citizenship (or lack thereof), marital and social status, occupation, place of residence, property and income, religious and denominational affiliation (belonging to religious communities and organizations), philosophical and political beliefs, membership in civic associations and particular social groups, level of education, sexual orientation, criminal record and the experience of having been in prison, general attitude toward religion, as well as native language/language of communication.

The constitutional foundations of the *principle of equality and the prohibition of discrimination* are also laid down in Article 24 of the Constitution of Ukraine, according to which "citizens have equal constitutional rights and freedoms and are equal before the law. There can be no privileges or restrictions on grounds of race, colour, political, religious and other beliefs, gender, ethnic

and social origin, property status, residence, language or other grounds." However, discrimination on ethnic, gender-based and other grounds can manifest itself at a less formal level. If and how discrimination is carried out at an informal level in various communities can be gleaned from data on the education, employment and representation in political structures of different groups, as well as from quantitative indicators of crime and poverty (Lisnichka 2016).

As an example, we can once again consider the unfavourable conditions for the development of the Roma minority, which are formed through direct and veiled discriminatory actions in the social, economic, ethnic and territorial spheres. These actions prevent representatives of the Roma community from integrating into Ukrainian society.

The situation is aggravated by the fact that people often become victims of multiple discrimination, that is, unfair restrictions of their rights on several grounds at once. Foreign citizenship and legal status in Ukraine, health and skin colour, sexual orientation: all these aspects can lead to a cumulative discriminatory effect.

The versatility of discrimination, the forms and levels of its manifestation are often poorly understood. This complicates anti-discrimination educational processes. A subjective definition of discrimination can help recognize social imbalances and see society through the eyes of the affected. But awareness building alone is not enough to introduce tolerance and a sensitive attitude towards discrimination. To make human rights respected at all levels of public organization, we must actively counteract discrimination, regulate social inequalities and optimize legislation. These are interrelated processes, although each of them is characterized by its own dynamics. In each case, it is necessary to develop a special program of actions – above all, at the political level.

“Mentions of discrimination are often disturbing, experienced as 'unpleasant', 'inappropriate' or shameful. The need to work through these themes often manifests itself in modified or hidden form, for example, in the desire to make a positive impression or to focus on practical issues: ‘We have no problems here’ or ‘fine, show us the right way, but quickly’. In such cases, it is useful to give the group a sense of responsibility, to help them ask: ‘what can I do about it?’ Through educational trainings, we can achieve individual changes and practical results. A critical attitude towards discrimination can be learned. The first step is becoming aware of the problem, willing to challenge and change your own standards. To explain to others what discrimination is, one must recognize all forms of its manifestation, regardless of personal preferences and ‘blind zones’.”

Summaries of the methodological approaches

Anti-bias approach

In the early 1980s, in the USA, Louise Derman-Sparks and Carol Brunson-Phillips conceived the *anti-bias approach*²¹ primarily for pre- and primary schools. Their goal was to transform educational institutions into places of diversity and recognition – irrespective of the children’s origin, skin colour, social status or religion. In Germany, this approach is now actively used in the field of non-formal democratic education – for example, in the form of multi-day trainings and trainings to prevent prejudice and discrimination in kindergartens, schools, youth centres and other institutions.²² The project “Change of Perspective Plus” (Perspektivwechsel Plus) has been using this approach since 2005, training educators, teachers, social workers, government officials and police officers to prevent discrimination, racism and antisemitism.

²¹ The description of the approach in this article is based on experiences gleaned from the project “Change of perspective”. The approach is open and inclusive. It is interpreted and implemented in different ways by different practitioners. For more information, see www.kinderwelten.de; www.anti-bias-werkstatt.de; www.olivertrisch.de; www.anti-bias-werkstatt.de.

²² The model project “Perspektivwechsel – Bildungsinitiativen gegen Antisemitismus Fremdenfeindlichkeit” (“Changing perspectives – educational initiatives against antisemitism and xenophobia”) in Thuringia is also promising in this context.

The anti-bias approach helps recognize →the problem of discrimination in society and teaches how to prevent discriminatory practices through trainings and mediation. The goal is twofold: awareness building and active preventive work. “This approach stimulates a conscious attitude towards discrimination and increases awareness, thus fighting prejudice and social imbalance” (Trisch 2013, p. 9). Within this approach, the definition of discrimination is based primarily on personal experience rather than legal aspects. All forms of stigma/discrimination are given equal attention. Specialists (multipliers) can develop a higher sensitivity to injustice, learn to recognize and, if possible, interrupt discriminatory practices. In particular, the approach is applied in schools, youth centres and other educational institutions in order to turn them into spaces of tolerance, where cultural and social diversity is valued, and measures are taken to prevent discrimination.

The basic principles of the approach

1. The anti-bias approach is a position rather than a catalogue of didactic methods against prejudice and discrimination. One can learn to realize its basic principles both in everyday life and in the workplace. Crucially, this implies a growing awareness of one's own system of attitudes, of the "mental baggage" that influences one's ideas about belonging and otherness, of the impacts that regulate one's social behaviour. This learning process is open-ended, as it implies a constant increase in critical sensitivity to social inequality and injustice. This approach helps to track and detect one's own involvement in discrimination and makes one constantly consider how to avoid discrimination in one's work.
2. Prejudice and discrimination are considered not in regard to individual perpetrators but as a systemic problem that creates attitudes and behaviours in society. There are at least three levels of influence: individual/interpersonal, institutional/interstructural (e.g. laws and rules) and global/social (e.g. norms and discourses). "This approach is strikingly different from others, which often work only at the individual level and consider discrimination as the erroneous behaviour of individuals." (Trisch 2013, p. 47).
3. The anti-bias approach recognizes an individual's need for cultural self-determination. At the same time, it is critical of the wide-spread notion that cultural differences are immutable, a "given". Instead, the main point of reference is the human right to self-determination within the framework of individual ideas about cultural, religious and ethnic affiliation. The approach seeks to recognize and *deconstruct dominant views of "others"* along the lines of cultural/national separation. The goal is to stop dividing people into groups and attributing to them qualities determined by their "culture" or "nationality".

There is no universal definition of Jews, Christians or Muslims. People have the right to determine the content of these concepts in relation to themselves.

The anti-bias approach is based on an open, dynamic, non-ethnic concept of culture and group identity.

4. Within this approach, the definition of discrimination is based primarily on the personal experience of minorities rather than on legal aspects. This is a way to counteract the "blind spot" of the majority, which often fails to see discrimination, not being the target of attacks. The subjective experience of discrimination is the starting point for the analysis of power imbalances between the titular nation/social majority and minorities. This approach concentrates on those affected. Their experience is not questioned or evaluated. The anti-bias approach assumes that every person can be involved in the practice of discrimination both as a subject and as an object (Schmidt 2009; Trisch 2013). This is called a *double perspective*. The goal of this approach is not to dilute the notion of discrimination but to see and hear the subjective experience of the affected, to critically consider discriminatory orders and structures.
5. Unlike most other methods, the anti-bias approach involves *all types of discrimination* (for example, direct and indirect), as well as all forms (for example, racism, antisemitism, homophobia, etc.). It draws attention to the *intersections of various discriminatory practices and experiences*. "Within the framework of the approach, various forms of discrimination are considered as categories that affect the everyday life of all people, as well as social structures" (Schmidt/Dietrich/Herdel 2009, p. 168; Trisch 2013, p. 46).

6. Some discriminatory practices are obvious and prohibited in most countries. Others are so deeply internalized that they are hardly perceived as discrimination. This is why the theme of *internalization* plays a central role within the anti-bias approach. The analysis of involvement in discriminatory structures includes the consideration of internalization mechanisms. It helps understand how norms, prejudices and power structures are passed down from generation to generation – as well as why some attitudes are very difficult to change.

Dialogical reflection approach

The ability to talk about discrimination does not come easily. This topic requires the willingness and openness of participants. The goal of the dialogical reflection approach is to help understanding and to shift the subjective vectors of perception and behaviour. This approach was developed and theoretically substantiated by Marina Chernivsky and the “Perspective Change” project team²³. Like the anti-bias approach, it helps consider how one’s own system of values, conventions and political views had developed under the influence of historical and social factors. Through a multi-step analysis, the approach helps consider the patterns of self-perception of and the perception of “others” – thus creating awareness for social inequality and discrimination.

The careful and attentive use of dialogue and reflection can increase the motivation of participants to approach such delicate and unpleasant topics as discrimination. The dialogical

²³ This approach was developed and theoretically substantiated by Marina Chernivsky specifically for the project “Perspektivwechsel” (Change of Perspective) under the auspices of the Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany (ZWST) primarily to enhance the qualification of employees of schools, administrations and social services, as well as coaches in the field of political education and anti-discrimination work. The project was funded by the German Federal Ministry for Family, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth (BMFSFJ) from 2007 to 2014.

reflection approach can be used not only in trainings but also as part of coaching and counselling to support the processes of change and professionalization. The approach works with the participants’ personal stories, emphasizing connections between individuals and society. “A personalized approach exposes ‘racists’, as if racism was a trait of character. This approach does not contribute to the awareness of the problem. It causes defensive reactions in people who are not being discriminated against. These people often overlook racism – and react with sincere indignation when their words or actions are criticized as racist” (Messerschmidt 2012, p. 15). The dialogical reflection approach seeks not to expose the “wrong kind of thinking” but to consider the motives that cause and support discrimination (see Leiprecht 2012).

The toolkit of this approach is being constantly updated and developed, focusing on new social needs and trends.

This process can be extremely emotional, causing *uncertainty and resistance*. The dialogical reflection approach seeks to create an empowering space in which participants can find the strength to approach these topics and integrate them into their biographies.

The readiness to self-reflect and temporarily leave one’s comfort zone is a key skill in working with prejudice and discrimination. Within the framework of this approach, “learning” does not mean simply “acquiring knowledge”. Rather, the emotional aspect is of great importance. But emotions are rarely subject to direct influence. They are difficult to thematize in educational processes.

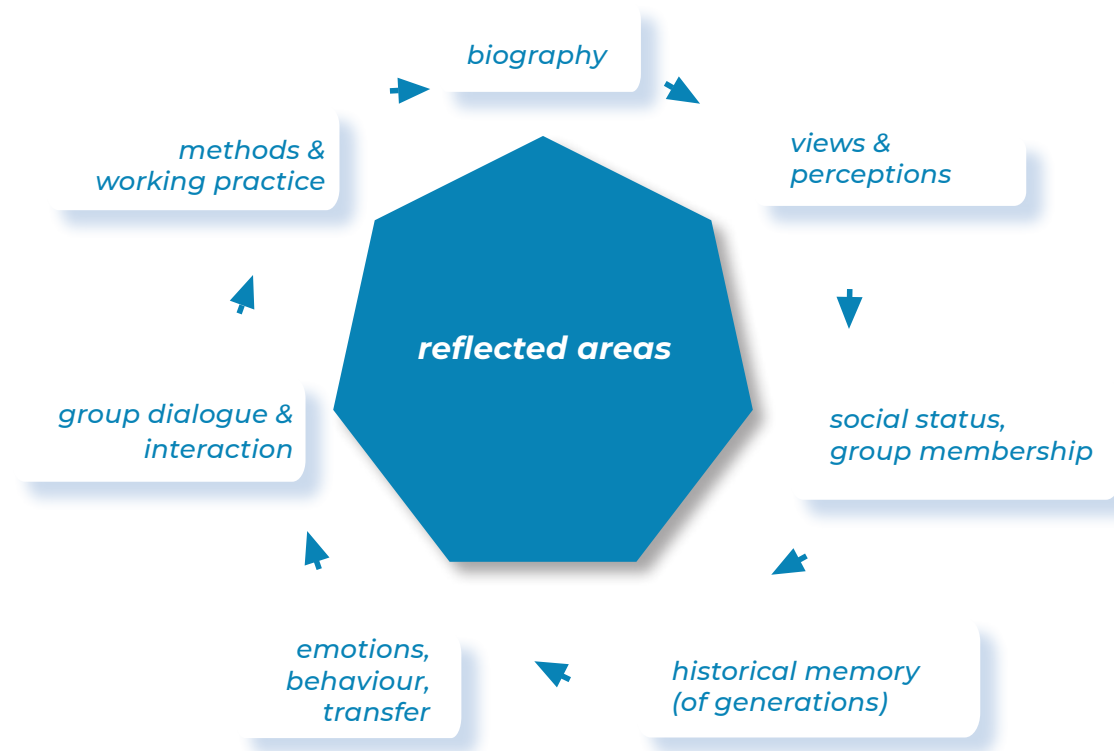
Deep, immersive learning:

- has good chances to flower when its object appears important and emotionally accessible. At the same time, cognitive processes that entail a revision of one’s own views can cause a sense of threat and provoke defensive reactions.
- is based on self-reflection and therefore often encounters emotional barriers. When the addressees are not ready to revise their habitual views, defensive reactions take over.

Dialogical reflection approach

1. enhances competence in handling conflicts and discrimination both in private life and in professional activities;
2. is process-oriented, concentrating on the social experiences and emotional backgrounds of the participants, thus helping analyse the normalization of (group-focused) enmity;
3. creates a safe space for dialogue on painful and sensitive issues – for example, how ideas about groups can influence the behaviour of people who deny the existence of discrimination;
4. attaches great importance to identity, biography, family history and the legacy of previous generations;
5. works to combat defensive reactions against and resistance to emotionally intense topics; contributes to the interdisciplinary analysis of social and political conflicts; helps consider historical and social forms, tensions, enmities and hostilities, as well as the causes of conflicts between groups, indicating possibilities of transformation, of overcoming discrimination and conflict.

Dialogical reflection model²⁴



²⁴ Chernivsky, Marina, Praxiswelten, 2014

Excursion: anti-discrimination work in Germany

For many years, anti-discrimination work in Germany was aimed at the majority society and mainly carried out by people without any minority experience of their own. This has been recently changing, not least due to multiple parallel empowerment processes of socially marginalized groups. In Ukraine, many human rights activists who work against discrimination are themselves subject to it. Their work is the beginning of a long journey. There is a great need to understand why conflicts develop and why the rights of citizens are being infringed in connection with their religion, origin, status, gender, health status, political views, etc. The anti-bias approach states that all people are all fundamentally affected by discrimination. This said, some forms of discrimination are particularly deep-rooted or have a stronger effect in certain regions and at certain times. Extreme and long-lasting discriminatory practices must not be equated with one-off incidents of exclusion. At the same time, experiences of discrimination should not be hierarchised and weighted against each other.

It is also important to observe that, in conflict-ridden regions, people often experience the double burden of being discriminated against, while also explicitly discriminating others.

Against this background, the notion of empowerment is particularly helpful. It bridges gaps and increases the activity of groups subject to discrimination. Empowerment means increased autonomy and influence, more opportunities to participate in public and political life. It is a way to provide equality to marginalized groups (see Chernivsky 2017, pp. 52-53).

Thus, empowerment both strengthens minorities and indicates to the majority that there is an asymmetry of power, influence and access to resources. While the approach strives to balance the distribution of forces and opportunities, it also takes care not to regard marginalized groups as a collective of victims. Empowerment “provides an individual or a systematically discriminated group with a safe space to work on expanding their individual and collective capacities, self-determination and participation in public life.” (Chernivsky 2017)

To strive for a sensitive attitude towards discrimination is to hear marginalized voices, to see what discrimination looks like from the perspective of minorities. This is the only way in which the majority can revise its positions and reconsider its involvement in various forms and levels of discrimination.



**Educational program
“Strategies for
preventing and
overcoming
discrimination caused
by a military conflict”
from the perspectives
of participants and
moderators – the basics
and dynamics**

1. Thematic links as the basis of the educational program

"I had this training in 2015, when there was a powerful wave of resettlement. And I saw a problem, the discrimination of internal immigrants. I cannot say that it affected me personally, but I have a lot of friends in central Ukraine, and therefore I began to think about it."²⁵ (participant of the educational program)

"We have different attitudes to the topics under discussion; our biographies make us look at the same problems differently. Our experience affects all communication in the group. By discussing a topic together, we create new connections. Another level arises: the consideration of ourselves and other members of the group. This affects the way we see both ourselves and the topic we are discussing together." (Chernivsky)

²⁵ The quotes in the description of this and all subsequent exercises are comments by participants of the program "Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict", conducted from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project "Overcoming the Consequences of War Together", 2015-2016 and 2016-2019 (Kriegsfolgen 2017b).

"I grew up in a family with a 'non-traditional' religion, and I always felt that. Everyone else was either Orthodox or atheist, that was the norm. If you had another religion, then you were strange, different, as if you were following some weird cult. This is why I had a strong response to this discussion." (participant of the educational program)

"Our approach creates a mirror effect in the group; it works best when people feel close to the topics covered. The relationships between the participants are a foundation of dialogical training. You need trustful, reliable relations in the group to speak openly about internal contradictions and to resist internal blockades. Our role is that of consultants and moderators.²⁶ We welcome conflicts as a reflection of real life in the training space, as an opportunity to practice the dialogical method. We realize that the participants are people who act and change the world with their own unique stories, experiences and areas of expertise. They are attentive observers of social realities. We invite them to ask questions: 'What do we (fail to) notice? How do we see ourselves and others? How does this affect our social life and scope of activities? What can we change? What coalitions and alliances can help us?'" (Chernivsky)

²⁶ To moderate, here, means to organise the communication process so as to support participants in their communication and search for solutions.

"I remember us walking with glasses of water, trying not to spill it, looking into each other's eyes. Everything that we did seemed strange, the pace seemed strange. It was hard for me, but I try to be open to the new. I stayed because I was hooked." (participant of the educational program)

"If we manage to help the participants to feel confident in what they are doing, to see possibilities of real change, they will feel more motivated to review their own attitudes and practices. A crucial step in this direction is to learn to appreciate your progress, to stop thinking only about the failures." (Chernivsky)

"At that time, I did not think of discrimination, except for a few particularly vivid examples. For instance, at school, a Roma girl shared a desk with me. No one else wanted to sit with her. I probably wanted a prescription, a recipe, when I came here. I thought I'd be told what discrimination was, and how to do the right thing: this way, or that way. At the initial stage, I couldn't grasp how to enter this kind of training." (participant of the educational program)

2. Contact and communication in the group

"I expected we'd be taught how to teach, and then we'd go to schools, to the police, and so on. We'd talk about what was happening everywhere – about violence against women and other people. We'd say you shouldn't say 'negroes' and 'gypsies', we'd explain it all. I thought: now they'll tell me how to do it, and I'll just go out there and teach." (participant of the educational program)

"The topics we deal with are delicate and painful for those involved: but precisely this speaks of their great importance. It takes a lot of time to establish reliable relationships within the group. From the very beginning, there is an important process of acquaintance. It prepares participants for learning from each other. And you can learn only by overcoming your fears and alienation, at least in part. Only in this way can a training become a space for open conversation where everyone can speak and be heard." (Chernivsky)

"It initially seemed to me that we were spending too much time learning to know each other – and now, looking back, I think this was absolutely necessary. I remember how we made portraits of each other on paper plates, everyone describing and drawing their partner." (participant of the educational program)

3. The format of educational program

"The dialogue approach implies an equality of perspectives and personal stories. The points of view are not disputed, not evaluated. They coexist in equality. Various perspectives are contrasted within the framework of the dialogical discussions specially reserved for this. We create a space for talking about oneself, for active listening and the sharing of experiences. To create a trustful atmosphere, it is important to look for individual approaches that consider the needs of the whole group. The training creates a space to discuss topics that concern everyone and are closely related to the stories introduced by the participants. Our dialogues are above all a look inside, a conversation with ourselves – and only then with the group." (Chernivsky)

"For me, the whole process has become more complex. Today, I see this topic in a more differentiated way. Now I know: there is not a single mechanism but a selection of methods that we use – learn to use – in our work. Reaching people and overcoming the historical baggage of stereotypes is a very tough job. Sometimes I feel that we are grains of sand in a desert. But I also hope that, even so, we can achieve at least something." (participant of the educational program)

"The training format is focused on self-reflection. It is built around identity, political and social realities, contradictions, conflicts, as well as the struggle for language, belonging and recognition. The participants interact using methods aimed at the realization of these goals." (Chernivsky)

"Gradually, I got the feeling that I really had been failing to notice many things. I did not see discrimination that did not concern me; I did not think about it at all. This was our first session. When we were divided into groups and did an exercise, I was struck by realizing to which groups I feel I belong, and which groups the others ascribe to me. I really liked that we had a very confidential environment. I was in a group with two guys, Denis and Alexey. What they said was very interesting; they noticed so many things so clearly. I was surprised about how boldly they talked about themselves. And it struck me that our life is so permeated with discrimination that we usually fail to see it. Something needs to be done about it, we need to move further." (participant of the educational program)

"Central to the trainings was the desire to understand one's own attitude to the past, and the influence of the past on the present. After all, the past very often causes conflicts in the present." (Chernivsky)

"I remember the plates. I was describing K., when she turned around and said: 'how do you know so much about me?' I had been describing her family, her work. I said: 'I don't know. I looked at you, and I had this feeling'. I also remember we had heated discussions about language – there was intransigence, such a conflict. Here is one side, here is the other; here is the argument. You are sitting there, and suddenly you have this insight: there are two completely opposite points of view, both based on personal experience – which you cannot see. Everyone has their own life, their own historical experience. Besides, there was the situation in Ukraine – that is, war. If we were having the same conversation in 2012 or 2013 – before the war – it would not have been as heated, as polarized. The war has split society apart. Everyone tried to convince or accuse their opponents, to prove the others wrong. That's how I see it today: it was the war that made the discussion so difficult." (participant of the educational program)

"A key element of the training is the analysis of the interactions, relationships, resources, experiences, potentials and knowhow of a particular group of participants." (Chernivsky)

4. Self-analysis in the group

“For me, everything was interesting. It is a fascinating approach. Initially, I probably believed the stereotype that people from abroad knew more than us; I expected some kind of secret to be revealed. But then we started talking, and I understood that I had so much work to do, that I had to climb so high to get at this knowledge. There was no disappointment; I was never given to understand that I was ignorant. Some coaches like to stress their groups’ lacunae, and this is unpleasant. But not here. At these trainings, I developed a desire to know myself. Even just seeing you was interesting, and hearing you was much more so.” (participant of the educational program)

“The process-oriented training and the concentration on personal experience are necessary to develop an intellectual and emotional access to complex, multi-layered topics. Meeting the personal needs of the participants and themes is the prerequisite for the training’s success. A narrative, dialogical approach allows building bridges between old/half-forgotten knowledge and new input. Thanks to it, the participants manage to embed discoveries into their world view – including those that change it. Individual biographical involvement is often associated with political and theoretical discourses on discrimination.

Transactional analysis²⁷ allows the participants to see themselves through others, to look into the mirror of the group, to hear and endure opposing opinions – and perhaps change their established narrative. Work in a group is built around a joint process and the individual experience of every participant. Resonance and interaction within the group are crucial resources that influence the design and realization of the training.” (Chernivsky)

“I realized that I, too, was a discriminator, although I had never considered myself such a thing before. For the first time, I realized that this was in me. I used to think that I was absolutely right on all issues. I thought that I was tolerant of all people, that I understood everyone and did not discriminate against anyone. I just wanted to learn techniques to reach out to others. I was delighted that I could join the training – and even more delighted when I saw your approach. I had been participating in different psychological groups since 2001. Everywhere, I’ve been looking for reflection, for emotional experience – and never found it. There was always theory, some exercises, usually without any follow-up discussion: why we conducted these exercises, how, wherefore... Yours was the first training when people openly said: ‘We don’t understand.’ I thought: ‘Wow, this is what we need, here it is!’ This moved me at all four trainings; this is why I continued coming.” (participant of the educational program)

²⁷ Transactional analysis uses interaction to help reflect on oneself and one’s perception of reality. The psychological theory of personality and group resonance on which this method is based was developed in the mid-twentieth century by the American psychiatrist Eric Berne (1910 – 1970). Transactional analysis seeks to provide concepts and questions that help people realize, analyse and change their perception of reality.

5. Analysis of society

"The educational program is not about transfer of knowledge but about a process of learning. The deconstruction of historically established ideas is a multi-step process, and we must start it with great care." (Chernivsky)

"What got me hooked is that there were things I didn't understand. For example, when you started to tell us that the statements people make are not just words that can be ignored – that there is attitude, experience, public opinion behind them, all these subtle notes. That moved me because I hadn't paid attention to it before. I realized that I, too, think in these ways, that I carry this luggage, that I often fail to notice the implications of my speech. That is, I did not keep track or notice them before. Now, I often do notice if I think in a stereotyping fashion." (participant of the educational program)

"The exercises and methods of self-reflection open up narratives that give rise to new questions and show the routines of thinking and the influence of patterns. At the same time, the analysis touches different levels – there is reflection of personal experience, practical analysis of skills and work styles, as well as in-depth consideration of social and historical frames."²⁸ (Chernivsky)

"I saw the discrimination in society, but I did not understand the events of the war in many ways. We were having a debate about the Ukrainian language. I myself think and speak Russian; I have a degree in philology. At first, I did not understand what you were trying to show: that everyone has the right to choose whether to speak, and in what language. Then I realized that patriotism can be good, but it can also be dangerous if it does not allow diversity to be reflected." (participant of the educational program)

"I see things differently because of the training. I did not have this critical eye before; I thought: this is good, this is the way to a bright future. Now, many things hurt me. I see radical views, people saying they are ready to die for Ukraine. If there is a holiday, you must wear a vyshivanka, this Ukrainian embroidered shirt. On the first day of school, September 1st, again, everybody seemingly must wear a vyshivanka. This omnipresence corrodes Ukrainian symbols. Our culture is becoming overbearing. A vyshivanka can be pretty, and it can also be a powerful symbol where it is appropriate, but making it a uniform is counterproductive." (participant of the educational program)

²⁸ See "Triangle model", p. 92.

"We see these slogans – 'Death to the enemies', 'ready to die for Ukraine'... Teachers ask, 'Why do you speak Russian?' They ask in Ukrainian, of course: *rozmovlyaesh rossiyskoyu movoyu*... There are a lot of immigrants in the class; there are Russian-speaking children. There is a boy whose mother is from Ukraine and whose father is most likely from the United Arab Emirates; the child can speak only Russian. He has dark skin, dark hair. And now his teacher is rebuking him: 'You are in a Ukrainian school, what are you doing speaking Russian!' It's the first grade – and there is no understanding that you should not talk to a child like that. If the Ukrainian language is important to the teacher, well, she should help the child master it." (participant of the educational program)

"I had conflicts with my sister. Her husband is a military man; they live in Russia. We had such clashes, such separation into 'you' and 'we', 'friend' and 'foe'! And then, thanks to the trainings, I realized that there are good people and bad people on both sides. I stopped drawing that line. The relationship with my sister got better. Now, my attention is focused on the people who live here, on what they are doing to change the country, to resolve the conflict. So many Russians are actually standing shoulder to shoulder with us. They are fighting for Ukraine – but still some Ukrainians say terrible things about them. If we define ourselves by ethnos as 'the Ukrainian people', we exclude all citizens of Ukraine who are not ethnically Ukrainians. This exclusion manifests itself in language, songs, curses." (participant of the educational program)

"It turns out that we define enemies by their origin. The exercise 'Image of a friend/foe' really opened my eyes. We begin to define our enemies according to formal principles, even involuntarily. And then 'Russian' begins to mean 'bad', even if the Russian lives here. Or else, 'Ukrainian' means 'bad', depending on your perspective. And it's the children who suffer, among others. Children of Russian-speaking immigrants are ill-treated by Ukrainians, while many Russians are biased against Ukrainian-speaking children." (participant of the educational program)

"All our findings are related to our personal 'mental luggage'. But we can share the way we see things without questioning the vision of others. Perspectives, positions and experiences voiced in the group are always woven into the public discourse. They interact, they have blind spots. We cannot always understand the experience of others. Individual – sometimes conflicting – views of prejudice and discrimination arise. The perspectives on political and social events are especially controversial. This training is an attempt to connect the personal with the collective, to explain the need for critical analysis. This is a matter of learning to see, understand and act."²⁹ (Chernivsky)

²⁹ See "Three-step model", p. 95.

6. Resistance

“Indications of discrimination often cause a feeling of shame and therefore are perceived with hostility. Defensive reactions and resistance mechanisms are at work – sometimes up to victim blaming. Moreover, these topics are easily overshadowed by everyday issues and forgotten.” (Chernivsky)

“I really don’t agree that people are responsible for what happens. The government is behind it, someone’s money is behind it – some oligarchs are redistributing property and power. The people are not responsible, they are just victims. That’s what I believe, and you can even cite my name.” (participant of the educational program)

“The responsibility for our thoughts and actions lies with us. It is important to work with these defensive reactions rather than against them, to identify the causes of resistance and transfer. Resistance often manifests itself in modified or hidden form, for example, in the desire to make a positive impression or to focus on practical issues: ‘We have no problems here’ or ‘fine, show us the right way, but quickly’. In such cases, it is useful to give the group a sense of responsibility, to help them ask: ‘what can I do about it?’ Developing willingness to see and speak is one of the objectives of the trainings.” (Chernivsky)

“We must teach people to think politically. By doing what you do, you can change the world. Everyone has a responsibility for their own thoughts and actions. You have to start with yourself. This year, I kept coming back to the idea that every nation lives as it deserves. How can this be so? Can it be that at this stage of development, the people deserve such a life? Maybe. Because shouting ‘Death to the enemies!’ is just evil. The government has affected all this terribly, of course. When will it all end?” (participant of the educational program)

“In Germany, the analysis of discrimination – especially antisemitism – encounters at least two post-nationalist strategies of resistance. First, people tend to think that antisemitism is irrelevant, that it is part of a past long gone. Secondly, it is often claimed that if discrimination by origin and religion exists at all in modern Germany, these are marginal phenomena, due only to the influence of extremists. Ukraine has its own problems, which are often denied, since it is painful to recognize them. Topics of current interest include ethnicity and nationality, language policies, discrimination against religious minorities and internal migration. Regardless of the main theme of the training, these issues demand time and attention. It is very useful to work *with* the participants’ (defensive) reactions rather than against them.” (Chernivsky)

"Sometimes, I still think stereotypically. Sometimes, I don't want to resist it. For example, it seems to me for some reason that Hindus or Arabs are not like us. I don't know why I think so. At the first training, we said that you couldn't say 'they are all like that', that people can always be different. I heard this, and I keep reminding myself of these words. Still, at first, I didn't want to accept this. In my head, I was fighting the ideas from the trainings. These things stayed in my subconscious, they influence and affects me." (participant of the educational program)

"New discoveries make you want to subvert and change the usual order. Interactive training creates spaces in which you can work on changing your attitudes without fear of losing the usual frames of reference. Group support is an empowerment tool. It is crucial to let participants feel that they contribute to the overall process." (Chernivsky)

"Why did I stay, despite my resistance to such discussions? I stayed because I liked the way understanding passed through me, the immediacy of it. This way, you can learn things that no amount of papers and theories can explain. At each training, at each training, I found out something about myself: who I am, what I do. It helped me realize that sometimes I need to change my behaviour to understand things more deeply, to find out what to do. This is why I stayed. And also because of those cute cards with monsters on them, and because of the tango!" (participant of the educational program)





Introduction to the methodological part

The exercises to be presented in this part are based on the two approaches described above. Both the anti-bias approach and the dialogical reflection approach come from non-formal education, i.e. programs of personal, social and political development for adults – coaches, teachers, multipliers. They are meant to increase the range of skills and knowledge beyond the limits of other (formal) educational programs and institutions.

The following is a set of tools that can support coaches in self-directed anti-discrimination work with their groups. All the tools presented here have been used by the educational program “Counteracting conflict-related discrimination”³⁰ (Kriegsfolgen 2017b), held from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project “Overcoming the consequences of war together”³¹ (2015 – 2016 and 2016 – 2019). However, the educational program was not limited to these methods. This methodological manual does not claim completeness. We merely offer a selection of exercises for further development, adaptation and application with different groups.

³⁰ See <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>

³¹ See <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en>

Main principles of the approach and the anti-discrimination training:

Voluntary participation

A special safe environment

Learning through experience

Active participation in the learning process

A holistic approach

Communication at eye level

No external evaluation

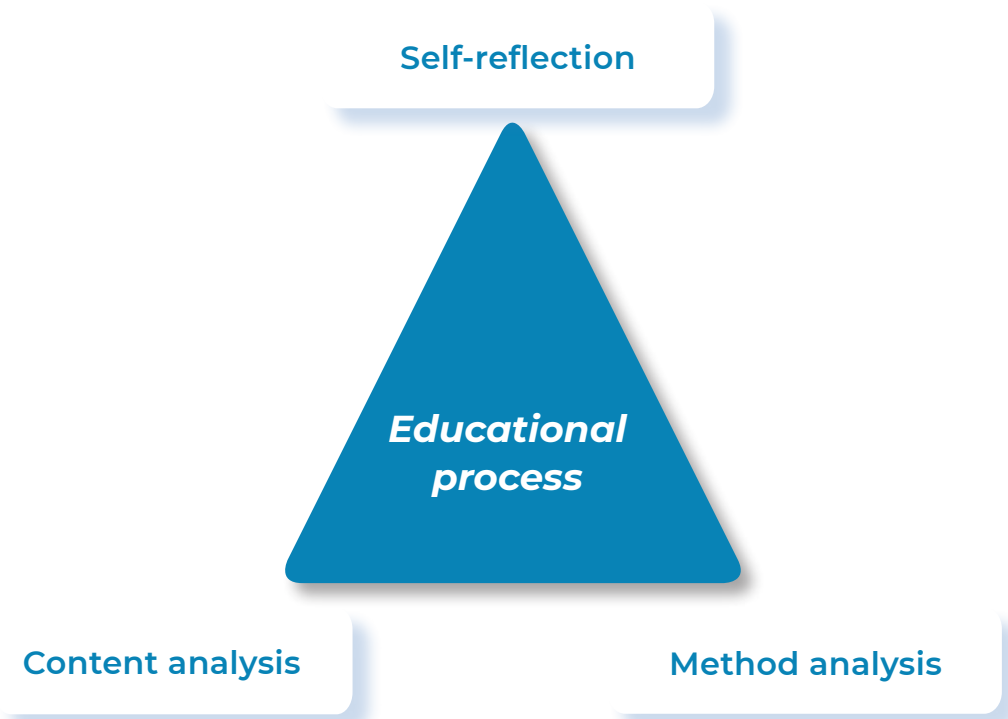
Focus on the group process

The “didactic triangle”³²

The three-step model

³² The model, which has been developed in the framework of the “Change of Perspective Plus” project, serves as the didactic basis of the dialogical reflection approach.

The didactic triangle³³



³³ Chernivsky, 2010

The methodical implementation of training modules is based on the so-called “didactic triangle” (Chernivsky 2013). According to this model, all exercises have a cognitive, emotional and behavioural orientation. “The thought process takes place on different levels – self-reflection, practical considerations, analysis of the socio-political situation” (Chernivsky/Friedrich/Scheuring 2014, p. 101). The group serves as an “echo chamber” that helps to hear and contrast multiple perspectives.

The main objectives of the approach and training

Training multipliers in the dialogical reflection approach is meant to develop awareness of discrimination as well as support the critical reflection of one’s own capabilities (and their boundaries) in the fight against discrimination. The specific objectives of the training are: **learning to see, understand, and act**.³⁴

1) Perception: within the framework of the dialogical reflection approach, the ability to recognize prejudice and discrimination is called “the ability to see”.³⁵

Seeing rather than ignoring injustice and discrimination is the **first step**. At this level, one can try to recognize habitual (internalized) patterns of perception, including biographically shaped “blind zones”. Our personal history must be part of the pedagogical process. “In addition to building up their specialized skills, [education] professionals must be prepared to analyse their own biographies, experiences, values, attitudes and blind zones. Biographical reflection is thus a central element of professionalism.” (Gramelt 2010, p. 38).

³⁴ For a description of the approach, see p. 54–56

³⁵ The model was developed by Marina Chernivsky in the framework of the “Change of Perspective Plus” project; cp. Chernivsky (2010) & Chernivsky, Friedrich and Scheuring (2014).

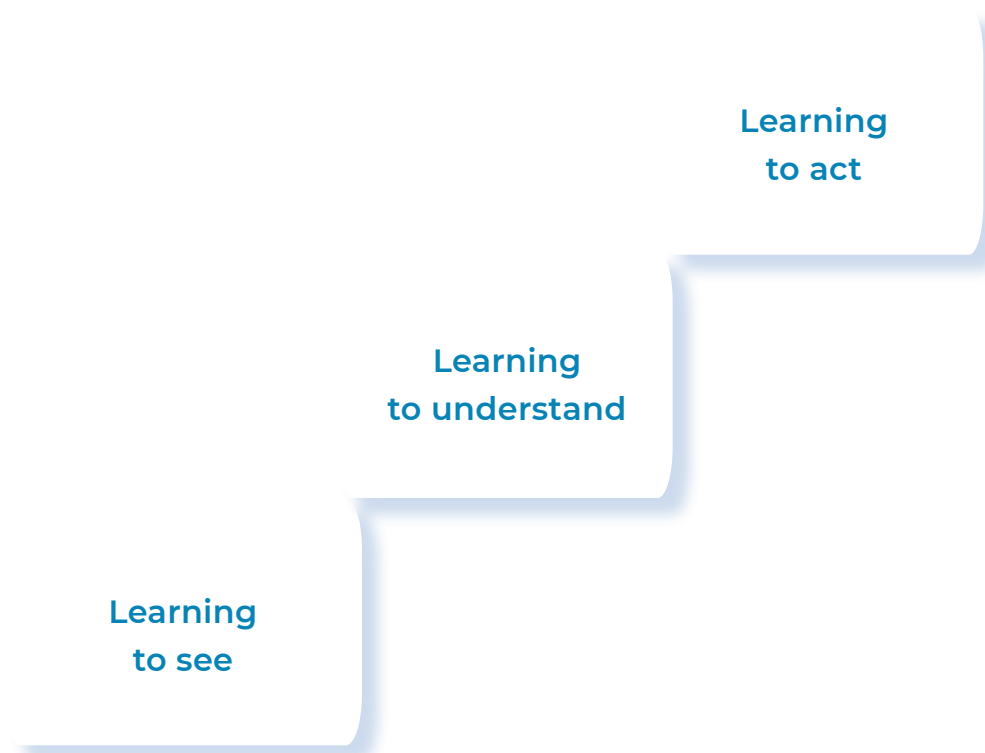
2) Analysis: within the framework of the dialogical reflection approach, “the ability to analyse” is the capacity to systematically consider and interpret situations that involve prejudice and discrimination, as well as to suggest ways to solve these problems.

The second step is an attempt to systematically analyse perceived discrimination. At this level, one can try to consider the causes, conditions and results of discrimination not only at the subjective level, but more globally, in the historical as well as contemporary context. In addition to theoretical reflection, one’s own experience remains crucial. Intuition also plays an important role in anti-discrimination educational processes (see Gramelt 2010). Critical reflection on conditions that lead to discrimination can help place subjectively perceived discrimination in the context of local social dynamics – and thus better understand the causes and effects of a particular form of isolation and injustice.

3) Action: within the framework of the dialogical reflection approach, “the ability to act” refers to effective strategies for preventing and fighting prejudice and discrimination – in particular, regarding minorities, refugees and displaced persons.

The third step creates a framework for jointly developed actions. Pedagogical professionalism in the prevention of discrimination requires a high level of autonomy and independent decision making. There is no comprehensive technique or method that could resolve all conflicts and get rid of all sources of tension and ambivalence (Gramelt 2010, p. 37). That is why an extremely effective method is to proceed from introspection, the awareness of one’s own attitudes, ideas, goals and needs.

Three-step model³⁶



³⁶ Chernivsky, 2010

Selected objectives of anti-discrimination training for multipliers

What?

Support in raising
discrimination
awareness and
fighting prejudice

How?

- Awareness building regarding the plural identities of people and groups
- Reflection on one's own norms, values, imprinting factors and socialization processes

- Increasing sensitivity to prejudice and forms of group-focused enmity, both historical and current
- Identification of imbalances, biases, direct and indirect discrimination in society and one's work
- Multi-perspective analysis of discrimination beyond one's own life experience
- Identification of discrimination at the personal, structural and social level, as well as in various forms
- Analysis of dominant frames affecting one's own perception of "us" and "others", "right" and "wrong"
- Training discrimination-sensitive forms of communication and behaviour – challenging habitual, routine forms and methods of working on discrimination
- Supporting the development of independent ideas and projects in anti-discrimination education

10 principles of anti-discrimination consciousness

1. Recognising diversity as a principle of civil society
2. Noticing the privileges of those whose voice is heard
3. Taking a clear political stance; identifying and denouncing all forms of discrimination
4. Working through one's personal, social and historical experience
5. Regarding prejudice/discrimination as a structural phenomenon/part of collective consciousness

6. Paying critical attention to the views/positions of majorities towards minorities
7. Unconditionally accepting 'others' experience of discrimination
8. Practicing awareness of the many forms of discrimination – from indirect and invisible biases to open violence
9. Identifying prejudice and discrimination in oneself, in one's environment and work
10. Being willing to push the envelope and build up skills

Anti-discrimination training: the didactic model

The didactic phases of anti-discrimination training may differ from case to case. The dialogical reflection approach focuses on personal experience, the group process and dialogue. The first step is always to overcome the emotional and social distance, as well as to work on one's attitude toward the topic. The training is always based on a well-thought-out concept, but at the same time it follows the group's dynamics, revealing specific needs and changing accordingly.

The following didactic phases serve only for navigation when planning a training. The moderator must remember that the phases are interrelated and can switch places due to group dynamics. Each training is individual, closely connected with its group, time frame, location and tasks. But no matter how the training design is modified, it is important to focus on the main theme and the personal experience of the participants. Different didactic models can be used. The following suggestions merely outline the possibilities; they should not be followed blindly. Self-analysis is the unifying point at which all phases intersect.

The following model is among the main didactic principles of the dialogical reflection approach

1.

Orientation, overcoming distance

** Approaching the subject, forming a group*

This phase marks not only the beginning of joint learning but also the birth of the group as a new unity. The group plays a key role in the dialogical reflection approach. The first dialogue between participants – about their expectations, ideas, questions, needs and positions – is just as important as the introduction by the moderator. This phase requires particularly careful handling: the group is just about to approach the themes of the training and to develop a relationship system. The individual views of the participants intersect, forming a unique echo chamber of dialogue and interaction. At this point, it is crucial to create a safe space, equally accessible to all. Then, the topics of the training, including potentially painful questions, can be approached with care. Methodically, this introductory phase can be shaped in different ways. Various group activities can be used to establish connections and bring participants together – ice-breaker exercises, but also the first thematic introductions.

2.

Sensitization

** Creating a sensitive attitude toward the topic*

In this phase, all participants receive the opportunity to openly approach the training's topics. Sensitization exercises coordinate these topics with the perspectives and needs of the group. Participants reflect them from their own perspectives and are given enough space to consider both ambivalent aspects and positive experiences. Developing a shared language is also part of this phase. Many of the tasks serve cross-sectional functions; however, they also have their own didactic "scripts." The sensitization phase stimulates the discussion of issues and positions that may differ from one's own. Methodically, this phase can be shaped using various exercises in group dynamics.

3.

Immersion

** Strengthening connections, deepening the discussion*

The phase of immersion naturally follows sensitization, providing a more detailed picture and creating links between different perspectives. The methods proposed here activate self-analysis and associate it (more strongly) with cognitive reflection at a global level. They serve to further and organize understanding and knowledge. Like introspection, immersion is always part of the learning process. It is within this phase, though, that it becomes the main goal, and individual experience is related to the historical context and current social trends. This process often raises doubts about one's own views; it is important for the moderator to pick up the process in time to help integrate new knowledge into personal experience as painlessly as possible.

4.

Integration of new knowledge

** Ordering and redistributing*

The integration phase focuses on the group process as a whole. Life experience, involvement, social and political realities, positions and perspectives of the participants – all these aspects influence what happens in the group, how the dialogue is conducted. They determine to which degree new (often destabilizing) knowledge can be integrated into the participants' world views. The smaller the conflict between new and old positions, the more likely the successful integration of new knowledge.

5.

Summarizing

**Feedback*

A summary of the central aspects is a necessary component of each phase and method throughout the entire training. The quality of the trainings depends on how well the results are being summed up: it is in this process that personal experience is contextualized. Questions like “What do I take home?”, “What do I leave here?” and “What remains open?” support this phase and help say farewell to the group.

**A selection of
exercises and
teaching tools**

EXERCISE: Traffic light – the first steps

“At first, it was all strange to me. The chairs in a circle, the absence of tables, the long conversations. Only much later did I understand why this format was so important. It turned us into a group, helped overcome the fear of self-knowledge.”³⁷

(participant of the educational program)

Objectives and contents

There are many ways to start a training. To transform strangers into a unified group, one needs a dialogue space where shared aspects can be discovered, and bonding can take place. This builds up an emotional connection to the topic and readiness for exchange. In an unfamiliar collective (even a temporary one), you can only have an open conversation in a comfortable and safe atmosphere. To save space in this publication, we only selectively present several ice-breaking and bonding exercises. To choose one of them, it is important to consider the goals and possibilities of a particular training. The “traffic light” method, for example, helps talk about the expectations, questions and needs of the participants.

³⁷ The quotes in the descriptions of all exercises are comments by participants of the program “Counteracting conflict-related discrimination”, conducted from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project “Overcoming the consequences of war together”, 2015-2016 and 2016-2019 (Kriegsfolgen 2017b), see <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>.

Main aspects

Goals:

- Participants learning to know each other
- Overcoming the distance to the topic and the group
- Reflection on one's own expectations, their reconciliation with the training's conditions and objectives
- Formulation (in oral and written form) of one's questions and needs
- Learning about the questions and expectations of others
- Enhancing self-perception
- Approaching the training's topics: diversity, hierarchies, discrimination

Chances:

the group opens up

Risks:

methodically complex processes can cause or increase resistance in the group

Duration:

45 to 60 minutes, depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

a list of questions or a flipchart visualization

Room:

enough space for movement

Method Description

This method helps participants to learn to know each other, to get acquainted with each other's expectations and to establish sustainable, responsible attitudes to the training issues. An unhurried, individualized approach to the topic can strengthen relationships within the group and the interest in the training, contributing to interactive learning. In addition, the exercise helps to formulate (and, possibly, revise) one's questions and expectations.

The symbol of the traffic light has been chosen with care. Red is a stop signal: we wait and listen to ourselves. This is the time to form new connections, to formulate questions to yourself, the group and the moderator. Green: we move on; we see new landscapes and new paths. Yellow is the transition between stillness and movement. In contrast to a real traffic light, it is mostly us who determine which colour follows yellow. To turn on green requires confidence and determination.

The sequence of the exercise elements can vary, but it is important to point out this image and formulate the questions in a way that matches the symbol of the traffic light and reflects the philosophy of the training.

Individual steps

The group is invited to stand up and move about in the room. While the participants are walking around, the moderator suggests that they start making contact: first with a glance, then non-verbally, and, finally, with verbal greetings. Then everyone sits down again and presents him- or herself in no more than three sentences. One's name, occupation and organization are introduced in short first-person sentences, one for each aspect. Then the group receives the "traffic light" task.

Individual work:

The following questions are visualized and presented. They mark the beginning of the training and help develop a detailed understanding of the participants' expectations.

- What do I associate with the keywords "diversity" and "discrimination"? How do these themes concern me in everyday practice, in society, in my personal life, in the media? Please take notes on the green sheet.
- What questions do I have in dealing with diversity and discrimination in life and work, what do I expect from the training? Please take notes on the red sheet.
- What sources and resources can I provide to the group? Please take notes on the yellow sheet.

Work in subgroups:

Participants gather in subgroups of 3-4 people to talk. After exchanging their impressions about questions, intersections and expectations, they develop general conclusions and write on the cards. These can then be presented and discussed during the plenary session.

Plenary work:

Red, green and yellow cards are presented. The moderator draws the group's attention to shared features and differences, as well as to possible departures from the objectives and orientation of the training. Within this framework, the possibilities, boundaries and main features of the training can be presented in a nutshell.

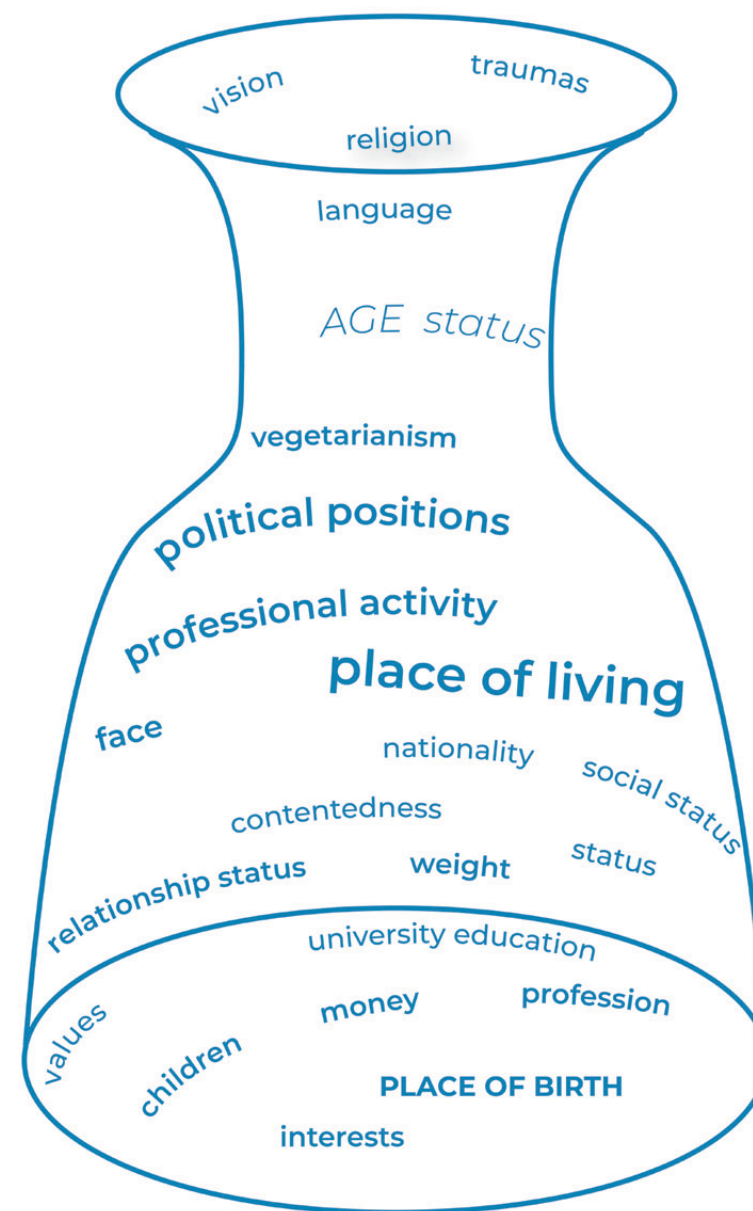
EXERCISE: Who is participating in the training? Vase of Diversity

“Language, age, gender, origin, religion, sexual orientation, mental health ... Where is the problem? We are all different, so what? How does all this relate to discrimination? Are all these things part of the self or a reason for discrimination? Or both? What is normal, and what is not? Do we all think in the same way? The exercise helped me approach these issues and introduced the topic of the training.”

(participant of the educational program)

Objectives and contents

The goal of any anti-discrimination training is to increase the knowledge and awareness of those involved. Each group reflects society – its conflicts, power relations, regulations, cultures and behaviours. Of course, the group will not precisely mirror society in miniature – deviations are inevitable already because only certain social actors decide to take part in such training. The group will probably be less diverse than society as a whole. This is one of the reasons why we should invite the group to think about who participates in the training, which identities and loyalties play a role. It is also important to pay attention to the social experiences associated with these forms of belonging. It is very useful to collect the divisions and differences – both at the beginning of the training, and in other exercises. This exercise enables participants to approach the definition and significance of key concepts – difference and diversity – while stimulating mutual understanding within the group.



Results of group work in the framework of the exercise «Vase of diversity»

Main aspects

Goals:

- Appreciation of the group's diversity as a valuable resource
- Understanding and categorizing power relations in the group and in society
- Increased self-awareness; critical review of one's perception of others
- Approaching topics such as diversity, hierarchy, discrimination

Chances:

a basic understanding of the topic is achieved. A sensitive attitude to the realities and feelings involved can help minimize the risks.

Risks:

discussing diversity can be painful; the conversation might reinforce/activate the experience of marginalization, causing resistance at the beginning of the shared process.

Duration:

45 to 60 minutes, depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

a list of questions

Room:

enough space for movement and the work of all participating subgroups

Method Description

The first step is an introduction to the rules of the exercise. The second step is a few minutes of quiet reflection on the question "Who else is participating in the training? What properties and identities are represented?" In the third step, the participants are divided into subgroups, which create their own Vases of Diversity and discuss attitudes towards diversity, as well as hierarchies in society. It is important to use as many aspects of differentiation as possible, especially those represented in the group: gender, age, origin, etc. In this way, lines of differentiation and the inherent power asymmetries are collected. The key question is: "Which hierarchies (and which connected privileges and disadvantages) are related to these differences?" The fourth step is a plenary discussion of the results. It attempts to correlate the imbalances found in the group with society as a whole, while focusing on the current lines of conflict in Ukrainian society.

Step by step:

- Independent work on the "lines of differentiation"
- Work in subgroups, creation of a "Vase of Diversity" to illustrate power asymmetries
- Discussion of diversity, difference and power asymmetries in plenary

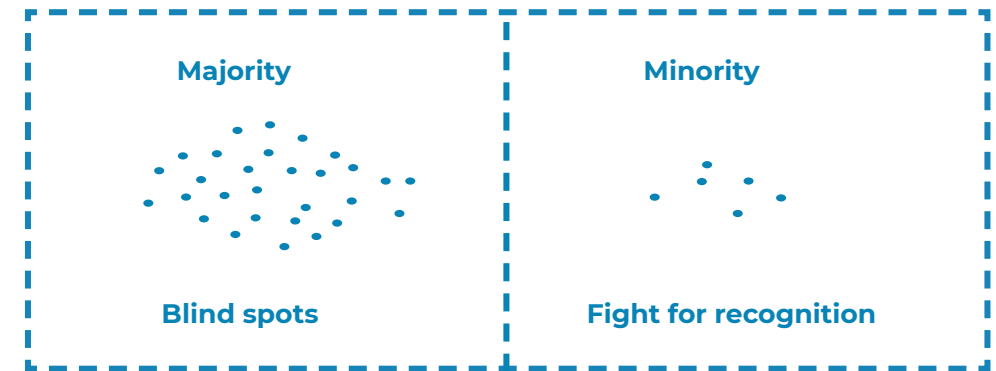
The following questions can help summarize and conclude the exercise:

- What information and knowledge may be important to make such distinctions?
- Which historical, social and political factors are most prone to create conflicts today?
- In which areas of society and for whom is this particularly evident?

Discussion

All groups are diverse – but this diversity is not always perceived positively. Sometimes diversity doesn't manifest itself at all because the differences are perceived as "shameful" or concealed for fear of discrimination. Sometimes, we fail to perceive differences because we regard them as deviations, as something "abnormal".

Minorities have a sensitive (generational) memory and tend to notice discrimination immediately. They usually have less opportunity to participate in society and often experience discrimination and unfair treatment. People who do not have such experience often ignore discrimination and are blind to minority perspectives. Power asymmetry also arises when one of the speakers has weaker command of the language used, does not have the local citizenship, or was forced to leave his or her place of residence due to an armed conflict.



Majority Positions

- Have been acquired as invisible norms
- Carry social assessments and unfair power relations
- Manifest themselves in a sense of superiority
- Are perceived as "normal" and not recognized as positions (due to one-sidedness, unequal distribution of privileges and power, as well as social hierarchies)

Source: Chernivsky 2015³⁸

³⁸ The quotes in the descriptions of all exercises are comments by participants of the program "Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict", conducted from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project "Overcoming the Consequences of War Together", 2015-2016 and 2016-2019 (Kriegsfolgen 2017b), see <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>.

Stereotypical reactions	
of majorities	of minorities
Paternalism	Infantilization
Rejection	Desire for acceptance
Contact avoidance	Desire for privacy
Depreciation of others	Self-depreciation
Exaggerated compassion	Responsibility avoidance
Double standards	Heightened sensitivity
Victim blaming	Self-protection/-justification
Ethnicization	Self-ethnicization

Kriegsfolgen 2017b

EXERCISE: Checklist – institution analysis using the example of the school

“It became clear to me that, as an individual, I only have a limited influence on social processes. But at least I should see the problems – for example, to draw our school director’s attention to them. Whether she will listen to me is another question... But you always have to start small.”³⁹
(participant of the educational program)

Objectives and contents

The purpose of this exercise is to evaluate an institution (for example, one’s place of work) regarding discrimination and attitudes toward diversity. The checklist helps analyse in how far a space (in this case, a school) is prepared to create conditions for inclusion. Multiperspectivity allows contrasting the divergent needs and tracing differences in access to resources such as visibility, recognition, equal treatment and the right to difference without fear of being ridiculed, ignored or excluded.

³⁹ The quotes in the descriptions of all exercises are comments by participants of the program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict”, conducted from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together”, 2015-2016 and 2016-2019 (Kriegsfolgen 2017b), see <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>.

Main aspects

Goals:

- Practical and concrete awareness of diversity; its analysis using the example of a school or another selected organization
- Detecting and discussing discrimination
- Enumerating the chances and challenges of discrimination prevention
- Discussing political identity and social diversity; thematization of deficiencies in society
- Developing self-perception and a critical frame of mind

Chances:

This thematic introduction collects and concentrates previously raised topics and insights, linking them to subsequent themes. The participants realize that they have opportunities to act, even as individuals. These opportunities can be discussed and specified in detail.

Risks:

It is important to discuss the political realities and self-perception of civil society, since reality and space for action in schools depend heavily on them. Some questions on the checklist reflect an ideal that can hardly be fully implemented at the moment.

Duration:

90 to 120 minutes, depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

checklist

Room:

chairs arranged in a circle; enough room to work in subgroups

Method Description

The exercise is based on a checklist complemented by instructions. The questions can be modified or used partially, depending on the group and the training. Their goal is to bring about a revision of the usual working routine, to help participants look into familiar organizations with new eyes. They reveal deficiencies and achievements, critically analyse social concepts of diversity and belonging, of discrimination and minority protection. Their conclusions are contextualized at the level of schools. Thus, personal stories are woven into a global context; the influence of political and social hierarchies on the institute of school becomes apparent.

Step by step:

- Introduction to the method; enough time to trust the process and get engaged with it. Checklists are distributed to be considered in silence for some time.
- Work on the checklists in subgroups.
- Plenary conclusion based on the central results of the subgroups.

Questions: a checklist

Schoolchildren's perspectives

1. How do the children see their school?
2. Do they have the opportunity to be themselves/live without hiding? Do they feel they are a visible element of the school's identity? Do their opinions count?
3. What differences among children are especially marked, in your opinion? (gender, origin, language, colour, religion, sexual orientation, social status...)
4. What are the forms of discrimination? How do children and teenagers cope with it?
5. In what form can students report their experiences of discrimination? Do these reports receive attention? What is the procedure in these cases?

School employees' perspectives

1. How do teachers and directors see their school in regard to diversity?
2. Do they have the opportunity to be themselves/live without hiding?
3. What differences are marked as "negative", in your experience and opinion? (gender, gender, origin, sexual orientation, language, colour, religion, social status...)
4. How do teachers and directors talk about discrimination? What is left out? What is overemphasized? How are children and teenagers discussed? What is left out? What is overemphasized?
5. How exactly does the teaching staff respond to discrimination? What help is offered? What activities are being held to counter discriminatory tendencies?

School structure

1. What does the school look like from the perspective of students and teachers? How are the realities of different people and groups reflected?
2. What is being done regarding diversity and discrimination? What languages are taken into account? How does the school handle Russian and Ukrainian?
3. How diverse is the teaching and managing staff? Is diversity welcome in principle? What categories are deliberately excluded?
4. What opportunities do parents have to actively participate in school life?
5. What specific pedagogical proposals exist, for example, for children with special needs?

Conditions/Tools

1. Does diversity appear among the key goals of the school? In which context do these topics play a role? How is the teaching staff prepared to handle these topics in class?
2. Do textbooks and educational materials include the various cultural, religious, linguistic and physical characteristics of students? Are all groups of students represented in textbooks, on posters, etc.?
3. How well do the classroom/school premises correspond to the needs of all students?
4. What methods are used to discuss the diversity of the student body and society?
5. What methods are used to discuss and analyse prejudice, social exclusion and discrimination?

EXERCISE:

Inside and out – the importance of intergenerational memory, historical and familial experience

“I understand now that my past has not really passed. Soviet slogans continue to live and act in me. And really, where could they go? We didn’t have time to contemplate the fractures that occurred. Life had to go on. Now, the conflict flares up exactly at the spots where it was not worked through back then.”⁴⁰

(participant of the educational program)

Objectives and contents

The perception of the present is often bound in with the past. Even a past that predates our own life can affect us strongly. History influences the positioning of individuals and modern society as a whole. It embodies the close relationships between generations, relationships that narrate the past, interpret the present and create visions of the future.

Familial memory is a point of reference that decisively affects our perceptions, expectations, norms and values. Traumatic historical events leave their traces in the memory of descendants. How do we receive these messages and “missions” from the past?

⁴⁰ The quotes in the descriptions of all exercises are comments by participants of the program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict”, conducted from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together”, 2015-2016 and 2016-2019 (Kriegsfolgen 2017b), see <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>.

What emotions, prejudices and conflicts are passed on to the next generations, and how does this heritage influence our ideas about difference and “the other”? Social and intergenerational transmission is of direct importance for working with contemporary manifestations of intolerance. It must be remembered that familial biographical memory plays a much larger role than documentary accuracy.

Interaction with other people is often influenced by deeply assimilated invisible mental frames – frameworks created by historical experience, family culture or sociocultural heritage. What seems familiar, what appears alien? What are we open to? What seems natural, and what appears incomprehensible and unacceptable? All this is largely determined by these frames. The exercise “Inside and out” encourages the analysis of narrative frames, intergenerational memory and the invisible influence of established norms.

Main aspects

Goals:

- Developing critical consideration of the influence of narratives on the perception of oneself and others
- Aligning personal history with the cultural and social context
- Approaching an open, dynamic concept of culture (see glossary)

Chances:

(Re)turning to one’s own history and family biography as a source of ideas about values and structures of belonging to different groups.

Risks:

Personal trauma triggers, vulnerability when discussing painful topics in a group. It is crucial to ensure that participation in such exercises is entirely voluntary.

Duration:

90 to 120 m., depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

list of questions and steps; additional hand-outs if the moderator sees fit

Room:

enough space for movement

Method Description

With the help of questions and subsequent steps, the participants of the training reconstruct their family stories (narratives) and listen to the stories of others. Discovering differences and similarities, they form an image of their personal and sociocultural identity, embed their personal histories in a global context and realize the influence of historical experience and the socio-political system on their attitudes and positions.

First step: silent reflection

Participants consider the questions. It is important to point out at this stage that the following discussion does not have to involve all the questions; one may choose to answer some questions silently.

Questions for reflection

1. What family narratives and traditions played a key role in your family?
2. Which of these narratives and traditions still play a role in your life?
3. What guidelines and messages can be directly or indirectly associated with them?

Note: Alternatively, handouts can be used (see below). In this case, the exercise changes accordingly. As with the other exercises, the phase of silent reflection and individual work is very important and requires enough time. The reconstruction of biographical influences causes deep internal processes that can lead to emotional reactions, including resistance. Work in subgroups plays a special role here, providing an opportunity for discussion in an intimate circle. Participants can decide freely what to share with the subgroup, and then decide again what to share in plenary.

It is important to ask not to disclose information received in the subgroups about others – neither to the whole group, nor to anyone outside the training.

Second step: discussion in subgroups

The subgroups discuss the results of silent reflection. All participants receive approximately equal amounts of time for their statements and practice active listening when others speak. The subgroup decides which parts of its internal conversation will be repeated in the plenary session.

Third step: plenary conclusions

The subgroups are invited to talk about their exchange of experiences. The following questions can support the reflection and open discussion:

- How did you feel during individual work?
- How did you feel during group work?
- What conclusions are particularly important for you?
- How did you feel when talking about yourself?
How did you feel when listening to others?
- What similarities and differences did you find?
- Have you managed to “grasp” any family narratives?
- Have you been able to reconstruct any principles or attitudes that have been handed down from generation to generation?
- Which of these principles/attitudes continue to influence your perception of reality and behaviour today?

Discussion

This exercise helps understand what connects your own story with other narratives, and what separates them. In addition, the in-depth discussion can move on to the topic of self-determination and attribution in the context of discrimination. This exercise can contribute to a sense of unity in the group, as participants learn a lot about the personal and social identity of others and feel the interest of others in their own experience. By inspiring participants to reflect on the familial and social factors that influence the development of their identity even today, the exercise helps approach the themes of identity and group formation.

The individual and group phases can use the following handout:

Hangout: “Family cultures”

What does *family* mean to you?

What *social status* did/does your family have?

What *holidays* did/does your family celebrate?

What role does *religion* / *nationality* play in your family?

What *principles* (*messages*, *missions*) do you remember from childhood?

Which of these *principles* still play a role in your life?

EXERCISE: Plates of belonging: who decides on group affiliation?

“How fairly can I evaluate myself and others?” “How much responsibility can I take for who I am and which groups I belong to?” “What should be done to educate society in the spirit of anti-discrimination?”
(participant of the educational program)



Main aspects

Goals:

The exercise leads to reflections on group identity, on the perception of oneself and others, as well as on the external definition of group identity.

Chances:

First approach to the issues of group architecture, self-determination, external definition and discrimination based on group membership (nationality, gender, etc.).

Risks:

Personal psychological triggers, vulnerability when discussing painful topics in a group. It is important to ensure that participation in such exercises is entirely voluntary.

Duration:

90 to 120 m., depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

list of questions and steps; additional hand-outs if the moderator sees fit

Room:

depending on group size

Objectives and contents

This exercise strengthens self-perception and lowers psychological barriers in dealing with other, “alien” groups. By inspiring participants to reflect on the familial and social factors that influence their identity today, the exercise helps approach the themes of identity and group formation. It can also contribute to the sense of unity in the group, as the participants learn a lot about the social experiences of others and feel the interest of others in their own experiences.

Method Description

The exercise process consists of two separate assignments. First, the question is asked: with which groups do I identify? After silent reflection and work in subgroups, the results are summarized in a plenary session. Then, another question is asked: with which groups do others associate me? Again, after silent reflection and work in subgroups, the results are summarized in plenary. The exercise can also be carried out without intermediate reflection between questions. Instead of a sheet of paper, one can give the participants paper plates and ask them to draw an answer to the first question (with which groups do I identify?) on a plate. Creating a moment of surprise, one can then ask to turn the plate over and answer the second question on the reverse side (with which groups do others associate me?) The contrast of these questions reinforces the results of analysis and discussion.

First step: silent reflection

Participants consider the questions. It is important to point out at this stage that the following discussion does not have to involve all the questions; one may choose to answer some of them silently.

Internal belonging

- With which groups do I identify?
- What is the associated balance of power?
- What is the associated distribution of benefits and drawbacks?



Main questions of the exercise

Internal belonging	External attribution
With which groups do I identify?	With which groups do others associate me?
What is the associated balance of power?	What is the associated balance of power?
What is the associated distribution of benefits and drawbacks?	What is the associated distribution of benefits and drawbacks?

The model of the “minimal group paradigm” is the theoretically relevant basis here

“US”	“THEM”
We are all different.	They are all the same.
Exaggerating differences, ignoring similarities.	Exaggerating similarities, ignoring differences.
For example: we are punctual; you can rely on us. Our punctuality manifests itself in different ways, so sometimes some of us make mistakes.	For example: others are non-punctual; you cannot rely on them. Some of them might be reliable, but it is an exception to the rule.



СИЛА,
НАС.
СУЩ.

НЕ АБСТРАКТЕ,

ПРЕЖДЕ
АТМУСФЕРА
2012

External attribution

Now, we turn to the second question: with which groups do others associate me? Again, plenary discussion follows silent reflection; if time is lacking, work in subgroups can be omitted. Alternatively, discussions can be conducted in subgroups, and only then in plenary. There is also another possibility: completely omitting the discussion in order to enhance the playful effect. Then, conclusions can be made after all the question phases.

- With which groups do others associate me?
- What is the associated balance of power?
- What is the associated distribution of benefits and drawbacks?

The contrast between these questions allows considering in how far group membership is determined from the inside and from the outside, and which aspects of identity play a key role.

Second step: discussion

Subgroups are invited to talk about their exchange of experiences. The following questions can support reflection and discussion:

- How did you feel during individual work?
- How did you feel during group work?
- What conclusions are particularly important for you?
- What similarities and differences did you find?

According to this model, we tend to perceive our own group as normal, positive and internally differentiated. We separate ourselves from “others” and tend to perceive those groups as being different from the norm and internally homogeneous. Often, they cause a negative attitude, which manifests itself in the perception of, communication with and behaviour towards these other groups.

The more negatively the group is portrayed, the higher our willingness to avoid or discriminate against it – even despite positive personal experience.

EXERCISE: Prejudice and othering – Who are the “others”, what is the “other”?

“The question ‘Who are the others?’ always leads back to the question ‘Who are we?’”

(Navid Kermani)

Objectives and contents

“Who is considered a stranger?”

This is the question behind the phenomenon of othering. From what perspective do we make judgments, evaluate others and define norms? This question attracts attention to how we think, how we perceive and categorize others. In addition, it shows the social norms and values that affect our position. There is a great deal of relevant scientific material on this issue (for instance, in German, Chernivsky, Friedrich and Scheuring 2014, pp. 92–104; Chernivsky and Bernuth 2016, p. 25). The proposed exercise helps detect prejudices and forms of hostility towards groups of people and critically interpret them in the context of current (political) trends in Ukraine.

How we perceive “others” is determined not only by personal experience. Legends, prejudices and ideas about group attributes predetermine our psychological patterns, attitudes, behaviours and forms of communication. Familial and generational memory, historical connections, environment and linguistic affiliation – all this constitutes our experience and determines our attitude towards “others”. People are classified by us according to their physical characteristics, socio-economic class or affiliation with a particular group. This is how stereotypes are created.

Main aspects

Goals:

Reflection on group perception, prejudices and criteria of othering against the background of the current socio-political situation, incl. changes in the perception of “old” groups and the creation of such new groups as “internally displaced persons”.

Chances/risks:

similar to the previous exercise

Duration:

90–120 minutes depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

quotes, flipchart, visualization of the key questions, “How do we perceive groups?” visualization model, cards and pens for notes

Room:

depending on the size of the group; chairs arranged in a circle

They give rise to a schematic and simplistic view of people and social groups. Even if we do establish contact with such an “other” person, our stereotype-based expectations often make it impossible for us to understand this person and prevent an unfair attitude.

Method Description

The main goal of the exercise is to understand how belonging to a particular group is regulated. The key question is: “Who is considered a stranger?” The exercise requires three to four steps.

The following questions can be used to stimulate reflection:

- Who in our society today is considered “alien”/ “different”?
- What social groups have marginal status in society and therefore suffer from prejudice, isolation and perhaps even assault and violence?
- How do ideas (prejudices, stereotypes) about groups affect the perception of people and groups?
- How do stereotypes about groups affect people during conflicts?

First step: introduction

The following questions can be used to stimulate reflection on one’s own categorization of groups and the processes of othering. They are designed as a circular model. Work on the questions usually proceeds in the framework of independent (quiet) reflection.



1. What groups do we see in our environment?
2. Which groups are especially visible in present social discourse? Which tend to be invisible?
3. How exactly does this affect my judgment, my work?

Note: working on such issues, it makes sense to limit the range of reflections – for example, to othering that is based on ethnic, national or religious grounds. This will give discussion a thematic focus.

Second step: analysis

The analysis and the initial discussion can be carried out in sub-groups or in plenary. The importance of this exercise is illustrated by the following consideration on the hierarchy of supplies:

The perception of people as “others” does not depend on their true origin. Othering happens when people are considered to belong to a group that is defined as “different” and negatively stereotyped. (based on Zick, Küpper and Hövermann 2011, p. 23, adapted by Chernivsky)

Questions to contemplate:

- What information may play a role in making such distinctions?
- Which historical, social and political factors are most conflict-laden today?
- In which areas of society and for whom is this particularly significant?

Note: the participants can organize the results of the subgroups' work together, and then comment on these.

Possible questions for discussion:

- What strikes you when considering the factors gathered by the group, and the resulting illustration?
- According to what features and categories are these groups defined?
- Where are the groups located? Which are more, and which are less central? Which ones are outside the circle?
- In what cases can the assignment to groups be caused or legitimized by prejudice? Are there any specific examples?
- What position in this circle is occupied, for example, by internally displaced persons in Ukraine? How are they perceived and categorized?
- What attitude of the public majority towards internally displaced persons do you observe or suppose?

Third step: immersion (alternative)

The phase of immersion can be carried out in subgroups or the plenary after the presentation of the first results. The following questions may help in analysing the topic of otherness/othering and working with handouts:

1. What did Ukrainian identity mean to you before? And now?
2. Which delimiting ideas about 'others' are associated with this identity?

Handout “Reflection support – sources of my internal images”⁴¹

To immerse the group in the topic and get closer to the objectives of the exercise, you can use the handout “Reflection support – sources of my internal images”. The greater or lesser distance of various groups can be considered and discussed in subgroups. To understand the origin of the dominant norms and mental patterns, one should consider biographical factors, for example, the family environment.

⁴¹ The materials are available at the end of this section, p. 148–149.

Fourth step: connection with practical work

The exercise can gain a practical dimension if it includes specific situations from the life and work of the participants:

- By what criteria do I categorize people at work and in private life?
- When I look at the circle, where do I subjectively place whom?
- Where do others place the same people?
- How do I react to this?
- How does this affect my work?

Discussion

Our real and symbolic closeness to and distance from people and groups does not arise by itself. The location of people in social hierarchies is determined by prejudice, group affiliation/ascription and ideas about the “other” and “alien”. The image of “alien/other” tends to be especially monolithic when it comes to a group with which the majority has little or no real contact. Social ties are created based on subjective ideas of otherness, which are shared and confirmed by society. Differences are usually emphasized all the more strongly, the less real contact the majority has with the group of “others” (cf. Schneider 2001, p. 227).

Historically fixed ideas about groups can cause violence against the background of current conflicts. Hierarchies and power relations in society play a central role in this process.

Our perception of groups is usually influenced by the norms and values learned in the process of socialization. We tend not to notice that any categorization of people – even with good intentions – often leads to othering, i.e. devaluation and attribution of otherness (see, for example, Ngyuen 2002).

The categories of otherness permeate our perception and constitute a reference point in everyday life. Evaluation is almost always

associated with these categorizations, albeit often unconsciously. Categorization regulates self-awareness and a sense of belonging, strengthening group boundaries. This reflects the need of the in-group to dissociate itself from out-groups marked as alien. The process often does not stop at assigning social groups to people.⁴² The next step is negative stereotyping and depreciation compared to the in-group. The positive image of “us” (in-group) arises in contrast with “others” (out-group). Othering is a forcible definition from the outside, the denial of individuality in favour of social categorization and identification.

To sum up: analysing discrimination, one must pay close attention to norms, prejudices, hierarchies and processes of othering.

⁴² There is a great deal of helpful research on how prejudices arise in social psychology; cp. e.g. McGarty, Yzerbyt Spears 2002.

Handout

“Reflection support – sources of my internal images”

Features and aspects of identity	What groups did I encounter?	What groups did I not encounter?	What did my environment see as “normal”?	What did my environment see as “abnormal”?	What does society presently see as “abnormal”?
Religion					
Language(s)					
Skin colour					
Origin (country, region)					
Nationality					
Age					
Gender					
Sexual orientation					

EXERCISE: Friend or foe? The enemy image during conflict

“Prejudices (biases) make us judge a person solely as a representative of a particular group.”

(Allport 1958, p. 9)

Objectives and contents

Social conflicts are based on escalated dislikes and disagreements between people and institutions. They are characterized by a binary relationship between groups (you can only belong to one group, while attributing certain features to both), as well as increased hostility and discriminatory behaviour.

Social conflicts are based not only on emotions and personal enmities: they are collective in nature, drawing strength from the binary image of friend vs. foe and tending to increase. It is important to note that the process works in both directions: deep prejudices can cause conflicts, while biased behaviour towards certain groups can maintain tension and discrimination. Often, a historical background is activated during a conflict.

Behaviour in the context of such a conflict requires, above all, an understanding of its underlying causes, specific manifestations and consequences, as well as the types of involvement of all participants. The main goal of this exercise is to discuss the symptoms, characteristics and effects of binary friend/foe images. Within the framework of the conflict in Ukraine, it is important to consider the attitudes and patterns of social perception regarding images of “us” and “others”, as well as the stability of structures and the influence of stereotypes.

Main aspects

Goals:

- Reflection on prejudices and enemy images against the background of the current situation in Ukraine
- Help in dealing with politicized conflicts at work and in everyday life

Chances:

clear positioning, self-critical conflict analysis

Risks:

Discussion of a loaded topic during an acute conflict situation can lead to the actualization of negative experiences and need for distance in relation to certain individuals (difficult to ensure in the given political situation). It is important to support the analysis without getting personal or judgemental. As in all exercises, the moderator should refrain from forcibly imposing his or her position. At the same time, comments that incite hatred should not be allowed. The moderator should develop a policy of behaviour in such situations.

Duration:

20-30 min. depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

quotes, flipchart, cards and pens for notes

Room:

according to group size; chairs arranged in a circle

Method Description

The exercise consists of three to five steps. Like the other exercises, it involves three phases: individual reflection, discussion in subgroups, and plenary discussion. Individual reflection and discussion in subgroups are especially important in this case: they allow considering the symbolic representation of friends and enemies independently before sharing the considerations. It is important to divide the group into subgroups in advance in such a way that the discussion can take place in a relaxed atmosphere. The analysis of different images will allow the group to find similarities and differences.

First step: reconstruction of images

The whole group is asked to draw images of a “friend” and a “foe” using symbols. The participants choose two monolithic images, one for each keyword. Every participant first draws or creates a verbal portrait on their own; then everybody is divided into subgroups.

Second step: work in subgroups

Participants discuss their images in subgroups, finding similarities and differences. They then create a shared image to be presented to the plenary. The discussion follows a three-part scheme:

- Sources
- Forms
- Consequences

Third step: plenary discussion

The subgroups present their images to the whole group, discuss and analyse them. Alternatively, the exercise can be conducted as a stage representation via positioning.



A result of subgroup work, “Friend or foe” exercise (Kriegsfolgen 2017b)

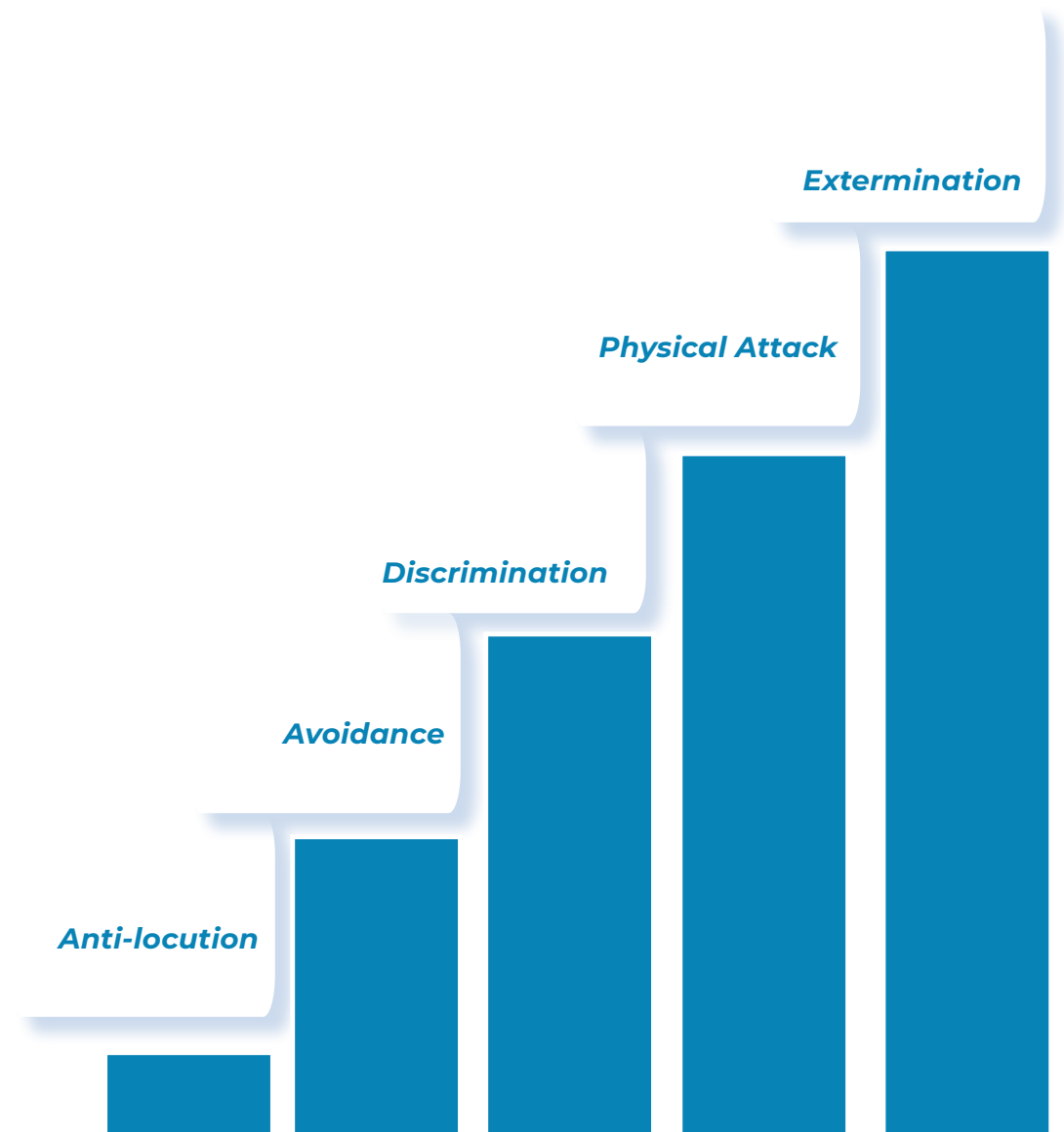
The following phenomena help consolidate the image of the “enemy”:

- increasing emotional stress
- negative stereotypes and attitudes
- structural labelling of an enemy group
- increasing conflict duration
- polarization of interests
- use of violence

The image of the “enemy” causes not only prejudice but also biased behaviour, such as discrimination.

Prejudice is an attitude; discrimination is a behaviour. Often, prejudices are a source of discriminatory behaviour, but not all prejudices necessarily lead to hostile actions, and not all oppression is a consequence of prejudice. Racism and sexism, for instance, are institutionalized discriminatory practices that persist even without personal prejudice. The number of prejudices grows when a conflict arises between mutually exclusive goals of different groups. An enemy image allows people to vent their aggression, while entrenching hatred.

Gordon Allport's Scale of Prejudice and Discrimination⁴³



⁴³ Gordon Allport, The Nature of Prejudice, 1954

The following phenomena signal that an “enemy” image is being created in a conflict situation:

- mistrust
- simplification
- blaming the enemy
- negative expectations
- identification with evil
- denial of individuality (“everyone who belongs to this group is automatically our enemy”)
- missing empathy/sympathy
- repressed and displaced aggression
- conformity with respect to social norms
- inequality

Discussion

The readiness to socially isolate others is based on prejudices and enemy images. Dividing the world around us into “good” and “evil”, they govern relationships, as well as feelings such as hate, anger and fear.

Conflicts are usually accompanied by numerous images of others and the creation of stereotypes. When the attribution of certain features to a group spreads, it robs the affected group of self-determination, simplifying reality and creating a monolithic, normative image of the in-group (us) and the out-groups (them).

A prejudice is more than a stereotype. It is not just any stable social attitude but a negative/hostile one. Based on generalizations, incomplete or distorted information, prejudices cause what sociologists call group-focused enmity (GFE). They always contain a discriminatory component that reinforces or provokes a propensity to violence. It is very difficult to stop using stereotypes (ready-made solutions and schemes), but it is crucial to resist prejudices.

Critical thinking skills, experience of self-reflection and analysis of social attitudes help recognize and overcome the need to create monolithic enemy images. An enemy image goes even further than a prejudice. Creating an enemy image opens up opportunities for overt hatred and legitimizes violence.

POSITIONING EXERCISE: “What do I see, what do you see?”

“Habits and traditions trigger chains of actions that we don’t really want to take. During the sessions, we often saw how we usually fail to notice discrimination in society. People are used to such situations. They are hard to recognize, especially if you are playing the role of the discriminator. To change your habits and judgments, you must first recognize their presence in yourself.”⁴⁴

(participant of the educational program)

Objectives and contents

“What do I see, what do you see?” is a sociometric exercise using the positioning method or elements of role-playing.⁴⁵ It is considered an effective tool for enhancing self-perception and stimulating a change in perspective, as it reflects the unknown and invisible realities and perspectives of affected persons. Taking position – literally, by moving in space – participants begin to notice how one feels as part of a majority vs. a minority, and how easily social pressure arises. Different categories throw light on invisible norms, social categories and hierarchies, power and powerlessness. These categories include origin, religion, sexual orientation, skin colour, marital status, education, age and gender.

⁴⁴ The quotes in the descriptions of all exercises are comments by participants of the program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict”, conducted from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together”, 2015-2016 and 2016-2019 (Kriegsfolgen 2017b), see <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>.

⁴⁵ Based on the positioning exercise “Ich-Ich-Nicht” (me/not me), cp. Chernivsky and Bernuth (2016), p. 36–39, and DGB (2008).

These are important elements of self-determination, but at the same time they often become a pretext for stigmatization and discrimination.

The (self-)perceptions of the discriminated minorities are usually hidden from the majority. Seeing and hearing what they see and hear is the first step towards recognizing a reality that does not seem to apply to us – although all of us can become objects of discrimination.

Main aspects

Goal:

Increased self-perception and self-awareness, change in perspective, critical analysis of sources and discourses

Chances/risks:

similar to the previous exercise

Duration:

ca. 60 minutes, depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

a list of questions

Room:

enough space to move for everyone

Method Description

The first step is to introduce and explain the rules of the exercise.

The second step is the positioning. Participants receive roles from the moderator and take a moment to connect with them. Then, the moderator begins reading questions out loud. Participants take a step forward to answer yes. Staying in place, they say no (or abstain). Thus, the sociometric space is changing; the location of roles and the public experience associated with them is established. It is important to emphasize that the participants answer the questions while in other people's roles. At the end of the exercise, it is important to perform a ritual of leaving the role. The moderator can suggest a movement to symbolize the return to one's own self.

In the third step, the positioning is discussed in plenary.

All steps are described in more detail below.

For your information: Ensuring that all participation is voluntary and initiative-based is especially important in interactive and semi-analytical exercises. Even seemingly "innocent" questions can cause discomfort. The moderator must indicate that participants may refrain from answering any of the questions. It is also important not to make value judgments about personal experience. Everyone should be able to formulate and ask questions. One of the objectives here is to learn to ask questions about one's own privileges and disadvantages and to find connections between these questions.

First step: introduction

The moderator assigns roles. Everyone is asked to keep their role private. Then participants take a moment to connect with their role. The following questions, addressed to the character, can help with this:

Where do you live? How do you celebrate your birthday? Where do you spend your holidays? What kind of music do you like? How do you spend your free time?

Second Step: Positioning

List of roles⁴⁶

(Vasyl), 22 years old, a stonemason, enjoys dancing tango, financially supports his mother and sister, came to Kiev to work, originally from Lviv; his grandfather fought in WW2 in the Soviet Army

(Maxim), 33, works in the city administration, enjoys cycling, studied in Moscow, has German roots

(Nastya), 26 years old, originally from Crimea, an immigrant living in Kiev since April 2015, engaged in social rehabilitation projects, speaks Russian

(Cengiz), 32 years old, born in Turkey, has been living in Kiev for 7 years, construction worker, owns a hostel in Kiev

⁴⁶ These roles should be considered as round characters and not merely symbols. It is important to find new realistic and relatable roles for every group. This allows reflecting social realities and providing a glimpse of the plurality and ambiguity of allegiances, group affiliations, etc.

(Dima), 19, a student, interested in photography, originally from Odessa, speaks Russian, considers himself an anarchist

(Olga), 18 years old, from Dnepropetrovsk, a student, member of the Jewish community, writes short stories in Russian

(Natasha), 30 years old, from Kharkiv, a journalist by training, works as a director of a small private theatre

(Lyudmila), 64, a nurse, originally from Donetsk, has been living in Lviv since January 2015, speaks Russian; her son lives in Taganrog

(Julia), 25 years old, a student, studies German, jobs as a saleswoman

(Felix), 19 years old, German, came for an internship at an NGO, fluent in Russian and Ukrainian

(Svetlana), 42 years old, lives in Makeyevka, works at a meat processing plant, has two children

(Irina), 23 years old, from Kiev, graduated from university, teaches English at school, single, suffers from diabetes

(Igor), 36 years old, architect, gay, originally from Chernivtsi

(Ivan), 28 years old, history teacher, lives and works in Dnepropetrovsk, cares about a healthy lifestyle

(Lena), 30 years old, born in Novosibirsk, living in Dnepropetrovsk since childhood, a psychologist by training, unemployed, speaks Hebrew

(Vladimir), 56 years old, born in Zaporizhia, a physicist by training, has been living with his family in Abkhazia for many years, back in Zaporizhia for the last 20 years, works at a nuclear power plant, has two children. His son lives in Moscow, his daughter in Anapa.

(Masha), 27 years old, from Kharkiv, works as a photographer, her father is a well-known businessman in the city

(Oleg), 45 years old, computer programmer, originally from Melitopol, has lived in Israel for several years, now lives in Kharkiv

(Boris), 39 years old, born in Tashkent, has been living in Kiev for 25 years, an entrepreneur; his daughter studies in Warsaw

(Mustafa), 44 years old, Crimean Tatar, has been living in Kiev for a couple of months, divorced

(Sasha), 34 years old, was born in Moscow, lives with his mother in a one-room apartment; his mother is from Kiev, his father from Ethiopia

Questions⁴⁷

Can you

- expect to receive important information in your native language?
- have confidence that at work or in school your rights and interests are taken into account?
- rely on friendly service in a cafe/restaurant?
- celebrate religious holidays in accordance with your faith?
- assume that at a train station in Kiev, the police won't ask you to present your documents?
- kiss your girlfriend/boyfriend in the street without fear?
- expect that, if you contact the police, they will be polite to you?
- count on support and understanding from the family of your boyfriend/girlfriend/husband/wife?
- participate in the social and cultural life of the city/district where you live now?
- rent an apartment?
- work according to your education and/or abilities?
- move freely on the territory of Ukraine?
- have confidence that your (future) children will not be discriminated against at school?

⁴⁷ Just like the roles, the questions should be adjusted to the group, the current social situation and other parameters.

Other questions:⁴⁸

- Do you identify as Ukrainian?
- Do you want your children to study in Russian?
- Do you feel a part of Ukrainian society?
- Are you going to stay in Ukraine forever?
- Have you ever been discriminated on a national basis?

Third Step: Summing Up

- What roles have you discovered?
- How did you feel when immersed in your role? Was it easy or hard for you?
- What differences and similarities do you find comparing this role to your life?
- What questions elicited a particularly strong reaction from you?
- In response to which questions did you take a step forward? When did you remain standing?
- What group attributions/aspects of self-identification were featured?
- What characteristics most often cause isolation and discrimination? Why?

⁴⁸ These questions can be answered in a binary fashion, with a yes or no.

Discussion

As the majority, we perceive our own social perspectives and everyday experience as normal and self-evident, and others as non-normal and alien. This often leads to partial or total ignorance of the discrimination of others, and/or to a lack of emotional reaction.

This exercise allows you to look at seemingly homogeneous groups from different perspectives, understanding the diverse experiences of those who belong to these groups – including the experience of marginalization, isolation and discrimination. The homogeneity attributed to others is called into question when attention is drawn to their multiple identities and aspects of self-identification.

There are no flat characters in life – we are all diverse, all struggling with different aspects of identity. Some characteristics tend to cause discrimination that is often denied or ignored by the majority (which does not directly suffer from it).

These patterns of discrimination are important to discuss. The exercise provides a starting point for the reflection of collective identities, as well as our own proximity to/distance from “others”. It supports a change of perspective and the emotional identification with discriminated people and groups.

Тренерские очки



О я...

чувствую

думаю

хочу

в чем я нуждаюсь

имею в наличии

OVERC
CONSE
WAR T

KRIEGSFOLGE
GEMEINSAM
ÜBERWINDEN

ПРЕОДОЛЕЕМ
ПОСЛЕДСТВИЯ
ВОЙНЫ ВМЕСТЕ

EXERCISE: Experience of difference and discrimination

“I’ve never dealt with these topics before. You can’t just sit down and start talking about such things. You need a safe space. Otherwise, there may be new traumas, and I really need to avoid this. I was most surprised by the realization that I myself could be a discriminator, that I could accidentally say something, look in a certain way, without wanting to offend anyone. It’s crucial to understand this.”⁴⁹

(participant of the educational program)

Objectives and contents

The experience of social isolation and discrimination affects one in the long term, influencing the sense of belonging and integrity. The attitude towards life and oneself is at stake here, the fundamental right to be yourself – without the need to heroically defend this identity. Minorities have little chance to co-determine what is considered prejudice or discrimination (and this lack of influence, too, infringes on their rights). The dialogical reflection approach⁵⁰ is based on the right to independently and subjectively determine one’s historical and social experience. The way an affected person sees and experiences discrimination is not questioned, assessed or devalued. We are only looking for context, finding connections with other narratives and social phenomena. The personal experience remains in the spotlight.

⁴⁹ The quotes in the descriptions of all exercises are comments by participants of the program “Strategies for Preventing and Overcoming Discrimination Caused by a Military Conflict”, conducted from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together”, 2015-2016 and 2016-2019 (Kriegsfolgen 2017b), see <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>.

⁵⁰ For more information on the approach, see p. 56–59.

Main aspects

Goals:

- Sharing one’s experiences
- Perceiving the experiences of others
- Practicing active listening and ambiguity tolerance
- Training the ability to listen to narratives that contradict one’s own positions and cause resistance
- Increasing self-perception and self-awareness, stimulating a change in perspective

Chances:

sharing one’s experiences; the chance of emotional relief based on talking and listening

Risks:

This exercise demands strict non-disclosure. Only after a clear permission may things that have been said in the subgroup be shared in plenary or anywhere else. Participants authorize their own narratives and set their own boundaries. Talking about extremely sensitive topics, it is crucial to be attentive to the processes, relationships and dynamics in the group. The moderator must help avoid misunderstandings and value judgments.

Duration:

ca. 60 minutes, depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

a list of questions

Room:

enough room to move around

In a nutshell: within the framework of this approach, discrimination is determined not according to some reference book, law or data set, but subjectively – above all, by those affected. The training constantly exercises conscious emotional identification with discriminated minorities and recognition of their points of view.

Method Description

This exercise is directly related to the definition of discrimination through personal experience. It lets participants approach and intensely experience topics within the biographically determined “blind zones”. The first step in criticizing discrimination is the awareness of its manifestations. Hidden forms are more difficult to recognize than open discrimination and violence. Not everyone is ready to admit that, right in front of us, there are people and groups suffering from discrimination or even being persecuted and denied rights. One’s own experience of discrimination – and especially its absence – obscures the social reality and experience of people suffering from discrimination (or other types of discrimination than we have experienced). Therefore, it is especially important to help those involved understand their dual role as the objects and subjects of discrimination. Questions that stimulate dialogue and reflection help reconstruct one’s own experience of social isolation and the associated feelings, thoughts and strategies. In addition, this method helps develop new awareness of discrimination through the experience of others.

First step: participants approach their own experience as objects of discrimination. Alternatively, one can move away from discrimination and concentrate on perceived difference. This sometimes enables the group to get closer to the more subtle and hidden aspects of the topic.

In the second step, participants approach their experiences as subjects of discrimination (the experience may consist in participation or non-interference).

The third step sums up the first two; initial conclusions are drawn.

The fourth step is the contextualization and discussion of data. The anti-bias model of discrimination (also used by the dialogical reflection approach)⁵¹ is well suited for this.

For your information: this method should only be used in this form only if there is enough time to conduct and summarize it attentively and thoughtfully. The exercise requires at least 120 minutes. It is advisable to devote at least 20 minutes to individual reflection and at least 45 minutes to work in subgroups (ideally of two to three people). It is important to ensure that everyone gets the same amount of time to talk. Since the participants are asked to speak on behalf of their “characters” throughout the exercise, it makes sense to clearly separate it in two parts. First, the personal experience as an object of discrimination is accentuated; then, the perspective changes to stress the role of the same person as a discriminator.

First step

Participants are handed out the first question. It concerns the biographical experience of difference from the perspective of the discrimination object. The exercise is explained step by step; participants are asked to answer questions about themselves. It is important to use the three-step analysis model whose description can be found below (“Facing difference. The experience of the discriminator/discriminatee.”)

The reflection begins with the reconstruction of one or several events, followed by careful reflection on the associated emotions, interpretations and, finally, coping strategies.

For your information: it is helpful to provide an intermediate summary or brief discussion after this phase of the exercise. With enough time, additional subgroup work is also effective in each phase.

⁵¹ For more information on the approach, see p. 56–59.

Facing difference

The experience of the discriminatee

1. My emotions associated with the incident
2. My interpretation of what happened
3. My coping strategy

Second step

Participants receive the second question. It concerns the experience of difference and discrimination from the discriminator's perspective. Usually, we are talking about passive complicity here, about the tacit acceptance of discrimination, be it by chance, through ignorance, or consciously. The further course of the exercise is explained; participants are asked to think about the questions individually. Again, it is important here to use the three-step model: 1) emotions, 2) interpretation, 3) strategies.

Facing difference

The experience of the discriminator

1. My emotions associated with the incident
2. My interpretation of what happened
3. My coping strategy

Third step

We begin working in subgroups. The participants share their main conclusions from the phase of individual reflection. In addition to discussion and mutual support, the group's task is to create a general presentation on paper, divided into two parts (according to the perspectives/roles) and corresponding to the three-stage analysis model.

Fourth step

The results are discussed in plenary. The first goal is to reflect on the experience of discrimination and difference on the level of feelings, thoughts and strategies – from the perspective of both the discriminatees and the discriminators. One by one, every subgroup selectively shares its internal discussions. It is important to respect the private sphere of all involved and not to mention anything that the respective participant asked to keep private. The moderator summarizes and compares the results, asks clarifying questions and supports the discussion with the help of the questions and models below.

Questions for conclusion:

- How did you feel during individual work?
- How did the reconstruction of the discriminatory experience affect you?
- Was it easy or difficult for you to “remember” such situations?
- How well did you manage to reconstruct the situations?
- What situations/roles did you find particularly hard to engage with?
- How did you communicate in subgroups?
- How did you feel when listening to others?
- How did you feel when telling “your” story?

Supporting questions for the discussion of emotions:

- Which feelings appeared immediately, which arose gradually?
- Was it difficult for you to identify your emotions?
- Did the feelings of the objects and subjects of discrimination differ?
- How do we tend to think about people who have experienced discrimination?
- How do we treat people who experience the effects of discrimination?

Supporting questions for the discussion of interpretations:

- What lines of thought tended to repeat themselves?
- How did you explain the situation to yourself?
- What were the first thoughts that came to mind? Did you feel the need to explain and organize?
- What explanations came up most often?
- Did the thoughts of the objects and subjects of discrimination differ?
- What attempts were made to justify or legitimize discrimination?

Supporting questions for the discussion of strategies:

- What coping strategies were mentioned?
- What ways to handle discrimination were mentioned most often?
- What resources have been found?
- How did the strategies of the objects and subjects of discrimination differ?
- What do we do when we recognize discrimination?
- How do we treat shame or guilt?
- How do we deal with people who experience discrimination?
- How can we develop solidarity and learn to acknowledge such experiences?

Discussion

How did you feel during this exercise? Were there any differences between the feelings and actions of the discriminators and the discriminatees? What situations and roles did you find hardest/easiest to immerse yourself in? What conclusions did you draw?

Discrimination is not always expressed in violence. Often it manifests itself in less visible forms of inequality and non-recognition, accusation, stigmatization and attribution. It also often results from legal practices that super-proportionally affect certain people and groups, hindering their development and self-realization. Discrimination is closely related to sociocultural norms.

Discrimination can manifest itself in different ways:

- between people, groups and states
- based on internal and external signs, intentionally and unintentionally
- ranging from personal prejudice and exclusion from certain groups to the denial of basic rights

“It is important to take into account that the perceived and described discrimination does not always coincide with objectively measured discrimination. However, the subjective element is inseparable from objective data, and both aspects are important. Being personally affected can lead one to overestimate the scale of discrimination. Conversely, the lack of attention and interest, as well as habituation, can lead to underestimation or genuine ignorance of discrimination.” (Zick et al. 2011, p. 26)

The experience of discrimination is contrary to basic human needs. Most people exposed to discrimination suffer great emotional pain; social isolation leads to feelings of otherness, humility and shame. Such experiences are often internalized: victims of discrimination begin to feel humiliation as natural, while also separating the experience of discrimination from the self and suppressing specific memories. They often wonder: why me? Aggression is frequently self-directed: “What am I doing wrong?”, “How do I

differ from others?” The fear of not being accepted often lasts a long time – sometimes even for a lifetime, turning into a general feeling of inferiority.

A discriminatory situation always means unequal relations. The discriminator has a stronger position than the discriminatee.

Factors that intensify the experience of/reaction to discrimination

- Repeated exclusion experience
- Visible, clear “categories of distinction”
- Intensity of experience
- Internalization of difference
- Expectation of discrimination (self-fulfilling prophecy)
- Objective possibilities of changing/choosing the environment
- “Man-made” violation of trust
- Lack of support by the social environment
- General lack of control over the situation
- Hypersensitivity
- Feelings of inferiority

For your information: subjectively, multiple discrimination is perceived as privilege asymmetry (Dern, Inowlocki and Oberlies 2010). In almost all interviews with victims of discrimination, the “desire to take a place in society” is mentioned. People feel that, being categorized by others, they are robbed of the right to choose between their (multiple) identities. Interviewees often express a “desire for social integrity”.

Aspects of discrimination:

1. Unequal treatment
2. Invisibility
3. Lack of trust
4. Deprivation

Frequent reactions to discrimination: loneliness, feelings of oppression, shame and guilt, indifference, self-denial, internalization of inequality – but also increase in political activity

Resources for overcoming discrimination: rethinking, social support and recognition, solidarity, a subjective sense of the power to influence the situation

When we act as discriminators (even if unconsciously) and then regret it, this experience can also cause painful feelings in the long term. The memory of our own guilt (be it even a singular and unintentional occurrence) is difficult to endure – which is why we often fail to notice our complicity in discrimination.

Factors that intensify discriminatory behaviour

- Group paradigm⁵²
- Privileges of belonging
- “Blindness” of the majority
- Victim blaming⁵³
- Feelings of superiority
- Guilt
- Deeply rooted “categories of difference”
- Expectation of difference (self-fulfilling prophecy)
- Desire for power and control
- Crowd psychology⁵⁴

⁵² Separation of people into groups according to an arbitrary criterion, see p. 199.

⁵³ Victim blaming, the attempt to blame the victim of one's aggression/crime for that very aggression/crime, has been analysed by the psychologist William Ryan in his 1971 book *Blaming the Victim*.

⁵⁴ The psychology of a person as part of a crowd is characterized by an increase in emotionality and suggestibility along with a decrease in self-criticism, responsibility and rationality. Information is processed less effectively; a feeling of power is accompanied by the awareness of one's anonymity.

This method helps remember and consider personal experiences of discrimination, as well as related emotions and behaviours, in a non-traumatic fashion. Different phases of the exercise help the participants find similarities and differences in the perception and interpretation of discrimination as its subjects and objects. The integration of one's own experiences is combined with an increased awareness of the difficult experiences of others, teaching to approach discrimination in a differentiated and sensitive fashion.

EXERCISE: Verbal violence – dealing with hate speech⁵⁵

“At first glance, it seemed insignificant. I used to hear things like ‘immigrant’, ‘Russian’, ‘why don’t you go back to Donetsk.’ I thought, well, nobody is trying to beat me up, so that’s okay. But the language does get to you, it hurts, especially when it happens several times a day.”⁵⁶

(participant of the educational program)

Objectives and contents

Sometimes, speech creates trust and closeness; other times, it is responsible for distance and alienation. It matters which words we choose, and what we mean. But it matters even more how we are understood, and what effect our speech has. Discrimination often occurs unconsciously. Thus, the (conscious) motivation for choosing certain words is not as important as the effect.

In everyday life, hate speech often begins with generalizations and historically negatively coloured symbols. The problem is exacerbated when the impact of such discrimination on the affected people is downplayed. We often ignore, downplay, or deny the discriminatory aspects of our speech.

⁵⁵ The exercise is based on the method “Beschädigte Sprache – verletzende Worte” (“Damaging speech – hurtful words”), cp. Chernivsky, Friedrich and Scheuring (2014), p. 148, and Chernivsky and Bernuth (2016b), p. 46-49.

⁵⁶ The quotes in the descriptions of all exercises are comments by participants of the program “Counteracting conflict-related discrimination”, conducted from July 2015 to December 2017 in the framework of the international project “Overcoming the consequences of war together”, 2015-2016 and 2016-2019 (Kriegsfolgen 2017b), see <https://kriegsfolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/training-on-effective-strategies>.

Main aspects

Goal:

self-critical analysis of personal speech habits, training of professionalism in dealing with discriminatory speech at work

Chances/risks:

similar to the previous exercise

Duration:

ca. 60-90 min. depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) no more than 15 people

Material:

positioning questions (only a copy for the moderator), key questions (for everyone), a scale on the floor, selected concepts on cards/A4 sheets/a flipchart

Room:

according to the size of the group; chairs arranged in a circle

This exercise introduces the topic “Speech and discrimination”. Widespread concepts are critically reviewed; alternative expressions are suggested.

Important note: Other relevant concepts should be added to the examples presented below. In particular, in the context of Ukraine, it makes sense to discuss the term “internally displaced persons”.

Method Description

First step: introductory conversation

Speech is our primary way of communication. We use it to convey our thoughts, feelings, interpretations and perspectives. But sometimes it is difficult to find the right words. It has long been known that many everyday expressions carry a discriminatory potential – nevertheless, and despite protests, they continue to be used. Such expressions hurt the people they refer to, even when used without malicious intent.

Second step: positioning along a scale

Participants answer the following questions non-verbally by moving along the scale on the floor with ratings from 0 (not at all, never) to 10 (yes, very much). Thus, the main topics are approached on an emotional level.

Positioning questions:

- Do you sometimes “stumble” over certain words?
- Are there any words that annoy you?
- Have you ever encountered discriminatory speech?
- Have you ever used discriminatory speech yourself?
- Have you ever been told that you had said something discriminatory?
- Is speech important for your (pedagogical, public, etc.) work?
- Have you dealt with the topic of speech and discrimination before?
- Has your organization ever discussed the use of particular words/concepts?

After the participants determine their position on the scale, a primary analysis of different perspectives might be helpful.

Third step: analysis of terms

As an example, the word “~~gypsies~~” can be used. It is written on a card and is shown to the group – in strikethrough form to show the offensiveness of this term. If there is time and need, it is a good idea to add other words.

The following questions may help the group in the analysis:⁵⁷

- Addressee: whom does this word address?
- Perspective: who is speaking?
- Impact: whom can this word hurt?
- Power: what (social) hierarchies are associated with this word?
- History: when did this word first appear, what was behind it?

Fourth step: criticism

The word “~~gypsy~~” is a designation from the outside. Roma themselves do not tend to call themselves that.⁵⁸ The concept initially appeared as a term of abuse in the Middle Ages and is still widely used, even in public discourse. It is associated with a number of negative (less often, romanticizing: for example, in fiction) stereotypes and is in no way connected with the self-identification of the Roma.

⁵⁷ The questions and the whole process can and should be changed depending on the needs of the group. The proposed example is based on the experience of the “Change of Perspective Plus” (Perspektivwechsel Plus) project.

⁵⁸ There are some exceptions: in several Eastern European countries, Roma do call themselves “gypsies”. One of the reasons is that language changes slowly in these countries, and criticism of discriminatory linguistic forms is slow to develop. Affected groups internalize terms that have arisen historically and ignore or compensate the connected social depreciation.

This word is used primarily when Roma people are perceived or described as a burden or threat. Historically, this is a derogatory, discriminatory concept. One should refrain from using it – especially in view of the current situation of the Roma in Ukraine.

Next, there needs to be a discussion of the habitual attitudes towards the Roma people, of pogroms and daily attacks on them. It is worth emphasizing how speech affects behaviour, and how important it is to work on your speech and actively change it.

Fifth step: summing up

To consider that your own speech habits can produce discrimination and humiliation can be extremely unpleasant. But the realization that speech is not neutral is a necessary first step towards linguistic responsibility. Reference to history and traditions – “people always say that” – does not free us from responsibility. The meaning and effect of words may change; one can only judge the discriminatory nature of a word given its history and its negative impact. To think about discrimination in speech is very important – however, in the framework of the training, one should not try to force people to reconsider their habits. Awareness must come voluntarily.

Discussion

The exercise can be changed depending on the question and the target audience. You can analyse different words and modify other elements. Sometimes, there is not enough time for the second step (positioning along the scale), but, whenever possible, it is well worth carrying out: it creates bridges between one's thoughts and feelings. Combined with a critical discussion of concepts, this exercise contributes to an intense reflection on one's speech habits. The exercise requires no special knowledge: the power of words is familiar to us all and inseparable from our everyday life.

EXERCISE: Peer counselling

“To combat discriminatory practices, we must understand their mechanisms thoroughly and develop discrimination awareness.”

(Chernivsky)

Objectives and contents

Peer counselling promotes individual and professional reflection and helps analyse specific cases (for more information, see Chernivsky, Friedrich and Scheuring 2014). It takes into account the experiences, perspectives and know-how of all participants, enabling them to help each other find new perspectives and opportunities to act in difficult or conflict-laden situations.

Method Description

Peer counselling is divided into clear phases. The sequence specified here allows the process to be optimally structured to search for specific solutions. Participants always decide in plenary what specific cases/questions are selected for study. The moderator only subtly guides and accompanies the process (for more information about the format, see, for example, Baier and Pope 2010).

Main aspects

Goals:

- combining different perspectives and areas of knowhow in a team
- developing discrimination awareness and professional competence in dealing with it
- revising habitual patterns of perception and interpretation
- reflecting on habitual behaviour/work strategies
- generating new solutions
- training how to effectively conduct peer counselling
- developing analytical skills and the ability to see situations as a whole

Duration:

90-120 min. depending on the size of the group and the duration of the training

Group size:

(ideally) up to 15 people

Material:

visualizations, cards and pens/markers for recordings

Room:

enough space for seating in a circle

First step: introductory discussion

Sometimes, situations hurt us so personally that it becomes difficult to look at them objectively. In such cases, it is useful to ask for advice from others to (re)expand your horizon. In addition, the diversity of perspectives in the group contributes to the development of new and more holistic solutions, approaches and behaviours. Peer counselling helps use the professional resources of the whole group. Models of thinking, perspectives and knowledge areas complement each other, creating synergies.

Second step: choosing a topic

Participants individually reflect on difficult situations or cases of discrimination that arose in working with refugees / displaced persons;⁵⁹ events that perhaps made them reconsider their usual positions. The situations are briefly described, and it is decided which situation and which question will be discussed in plenary. A counselling team of 3-5 people is gathered.

Third step: consultation process

1) Describing the situation

The person who had been involved in the chosen situation describes it as specifically as possible. In this phase, consultants refrain from comments and suggestions. They only ask clarifying questions. Then the colleague being consulted leaves the counselling circle, proceeding to remain an observer until the end of the discussion.

⁵⁹ To save time, participants can also be offered ready-made scenarios for discussion.

Supporting questions

- What exactly happened?
- Who participated in the event?
- What questions arise?
- What is the purpose of the consultation?

2) Resonance

The phase of emotional resonance focuses on feelings and perceptions rather than thinking. Consultants discuss with each other what they heard, saw, perceived and felt. The conversation at this point highlights not the situation as such but the personal reaction of the consultants.

3) Interpretation

The interpretation phase serves primarily to understand the context, not to develop recommendations. The circle of consultants speaks about the context, backgrounds and results of the situation; free association is used. Here, the various perspectives of the participants are important. They are the basis for the subsequent consultation process.

4) Consultation

In this phase, strategies and solutions are developed. The key question is: "What would I have done?" It is important to formulate all proposals in the first person ("I would ..."), not presenting them as objective truths. The colleague being consulted decides which strategies to approve and emphasize.

Fourth step: summing up

In conclusion, the moderator summarizes the process and the results of the consultation and comments on them. It is important to conclude the communication between consultants and bring in the perspectives of the consultee and the observers. The moderator may ask how the consultee experienced the entire process.

Support questions

- How do you feel after the consultation?
- How helpful was the advice given?
- Would you like to hear more ideas?

Additional information

After several rounds of counselling with an external moderator, you can hold a consultation without one. Throughout the process and in conclusion, deep reflection of the participants' impressions and contextualization of the proposed solutions are important.

Recommendations after peer counselling

- Recurring situations (for example, manifestations of mobbing and hate speech) should be discussed not as a series of chance accidents but as a pattern whose reasons require in-depth analysis.
- The reaction to discrimination requires objectivity, but also empathy and sympathy for the affected.
- The ability to try on the perspective of those affected, feeling solidarity with their experience, creates the basis for combating discrimination and grants moral support to its objects.
- The critical reflection of one's own working practice is crucial. Learning to notice unconscious elements of discrimination in oneself is a necessary precondition for changing patterns of thought and behaviour at the organization level.
- Intra-organizational criteria that help maintain diversity and prevent discrimination must be considered. Clearly proclaiming an anti-discriminatory position is a crucial starting point.
- The prevention of discrimination is a multidimensional task inseparable from everyday work. The role of civil society in creating anti-discrimination spaces is especially important if the laws do not provide sufficient protection.
- Self-analysis and peer counselling are needed continuously, not just in exceptional cases. These elements are the foundations and indicators of the quality of anti-discrimination activities.

Selected Concepts

Culturalization

The perception of people as representatives of a certain cultural group (rather than individuals) leads to stereotyping. Learned cultural standards become a pattern in which all “others” are placed, thereby losing their individuality and the ability to communicate with those who regard “culture” as an unshakable category. Defined by ethnicity, nationality or religion, “cultures” are often viewed as homogeneous and unchangeable. Individuals thus become mere carriers of their culture. Their identity appears predetermined. Of course, cultural frameworks do play an important role in self-identification. But in reality, the “culture” of every person is individual, mobile and depends on the environment.

Discrimination

Discrimination is finding differences that result in separation and rejection. Sociology speaks of discrimination when finding differences reduces the other in status. Discrimination is often used to regulate access to resources (such as education or leading positions in economical, legislative and scientific bodies). Discrimination manifests itself in at least three dimensions of social life: personal (between people), structural (in organizations) and cultural (norms, values, standards).

Group paradigm

Here, we are referring to the separation of individuals into groups according to an arbitrary criterion. No matter how random this criterion, any separation into groups suffices for people to prefer their in-group to the out-group. The separation into groups causes a tendency to discrimination, as well as hostile and aggressive behaviour toward other groups and their members. Empirical studies on the minimal group paradigm show which factors determine intergroup discrimination (Tajfel, 1970). Their list is diverse, ranging from personal interests to the desire for power and domination. The minimal group paradigm refers to a clear approval/preference of one’s own group (in-group) and discrimination against an external group (out-group).

Hate speech

The term “hate speech” describes statements that show intolerance (often on religious or national grounds) and express discrimination at the verbal or discursive level. Hate speech can discriminate any group that is considered a minority.

Mobbing

Mobbing is a type of directed (psychological) violence, harassment and persecution carried out by a group against a person (for instance, several colleagues or classmates against one; the management against a subordinate). Mobbing can manifest itself in frequent quibbles or mocking remarks, a boycott or misinformation. An important point for the classification of such actions as mobbing is their duration. We speak of mobbing when bullying lasts at least for several weeks and has regular manifestations. Over time, it tends to attract an increasing number of participants.

Prejudice

A prejudice is a stable social attitude that causes negative or hostile attitudes towards groups. It tends to be based on generalizations, incomplete or distorted information. Prejudices are an element of culture; they originate from cultural constructs, not biological causes.

Racism

Racism is a particularly severe form of discrimination, which manifests itself in stigmatization, attribution of (low) status and sometimes violence. The basis of racism is the division of people into distinct groups (“~~rac~~es” or “cultures”) according to real or imagined bodily or cultural characteristics – for example, skin and hair colour, native language or origin. Racism is never neutral, it always carries stigma and value judgments.

Stigmatization

Stigmatization takes place when society ascribes certain characteristics (usually negative) to people according to external, formal factors and due to cultural practices, policies or established norms. This term is derived from a Greek word that means the branding of an animal. Social stigma is characterized by a programmable (biased, negative) attitude. Due to the imposition of stereotypes, their object is deprived of recognition and the ability to lead a full social life.

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About the project
**“Overcoming the
Consequences of
War Together”**

Multi-ethnic conflict resolution and dialogue development through supporting civil society in Ukraine and other (post) conflict areas in Eastern Europe

In the current situation (war in the east of Ukraine and annexation of Crimea), the Ukrainian civil society is a central force in settling, resolving and preventing (post-war) conflicts. Thus, the aim of the project is to support the Ukrainian civil society in this complex work, to prevent professional burnout and to establish long-term and stable civic activity.

This goal is achieved through the targeted professionalization of civil society activists through training and further qualification, as well as through the exchange of knowhow and experience with experts and colleagues from other countries that have experienced or are experiencing military conflict, for example, Georgia, Armenia and the North Caucasus of Russia.

Through international conferences, roundtables and study tours, the civil society of Georgia, Armenia and the North Caucasus of Russia, each representing a central force remedying the impact of conflict in its respective country, is also supported in the resolution and prevention of (post-war) conflicts.

The second, equally important, objective of the project is to achieve dialogue and create a network of

cooperation between civil society representatives from different (post)conflict countries of Eastern Europe, especially between the four project countries: Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and Russia. This paves the way toward a shared long-term approach to conflict resolution, peacekeeping and, in the long term, toward a peace process throughout the region.

The project “Overcoming the consequences of war together” is being implemented from August 2016 to January 2019 by the NGO German-Russian Exchange (DRA e.V., Berlin) together with its main Ukrainian partner, the NGO Country of Free People (Kramatorsk/Lviv), its main Russian partner, as well as five partner organizations from Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Germany: Our Future (Zaporozhye, Ukraine), Caritas Armenia (Gyumri, Armenia), Sukhumi Women’s Foundation (Kutaisi, Georgia), Eastern Europe Foundation (Kyiv, Ukraine) and ChildFund Germany (Berlin, Germany).

The project builds on previous projects dedicated to the peaceful settlement of post-war conflicts implemented by DRA e. V. in Ukraine since 2014 (<https://kriegefolgen-ueberwinden.de/en/previous-project-2015-2016>).

The project is funded by the German Federal Foreign Office.

Activities implemented in the six working areas of the international project “Overcoming the Consequences of War Together”

The project involved 91 participants from 4 countries (Ukraine, Russia, Georgia and Armenia) in educational programs, trainings and trips. 286 persons participated in two international conferences and an international round table. Moreover, 32 subgrant projects implemented by participants of the educational programs within the framework of the project involved 3,847 persons directly and over 45,000 through internet resources.

Dealing with war trauma

This area supports civil society through the advanced training of psychotherapists and psychologists working with war trauma. It also works to prevent the secondary traumatization of psychologists and the burnout of volunteers, as well as to debunk widespread prejudices about psychological assistance.

Activities implemented in this area:

- Certified training of clinical supervisors from all over Ukraine
- 2 information campaigns to counter the stigmatization of psychotherapeutic care
- International conference “Trauma therapy in conflict and post-conflict regions”

Countering Discrimination Caused by Military Conflict

This working area supports civic activists in their work with selected social target groups, including host communities, aimed to overcome and prevent war-related discrimination. The training follows a method developed by our partner Perspektivwechsel Plus and based on the anti-bias approach. It aims to produce a critical, self-reflexive attitude towards prejudice.

Activities implemented in this area:

- “Training the trainers” training on anti-discrimination work in (post)conflict regions
- 5 subgrant projects implemented in different parts of Ukraine to reduce social discrimination due to the military conflict in eastern Ukraine
- Publication of a methodological guide on anti-discrimination work in conflict and post-conflict regions in three languages

Strategies to counteract war-related domestic violence

This area supports civil society in addressing war-related domestic violence by involving male participants and by supporting the exchange of experience among civil society activists from different (post)conflict regions working with men on domestic violence. It includes a educational program specially developed by project partners to counteract domestic violence caused by war through the involvement of men in responsible practices and public work to reduce and prevent domestic violence.

Activities implemented in this area:

- Training men in public work to reduce and prevent war-related domestic violence
- 7 seminars on domestic violence for male participants implemented in 6 regions of Ukraine within subgrant projects by previously trained participants
- 6 information campaigns on the prevention of war-induced domestic violence implemented in six regions of Ukraine within subgrant projects by previously trained participants
- International round table on “Working with men on domestic violence: effective prevention methods, work with abusers”

Working towards dialogue and peaceful conflict resolution through Forum theatre

Participants in this project area learn to find solutions to various war-induced social conflicts using Forum theatre – an effective method of mediation in negotiation and peacekeeping activities.

Activities implemented in this area:

- Training of multipliers on the use of Forum theatre in dialogue and peacebuilding work by experts from Ukraine, Armenia and the North Caucasus of Russia
- 6 subgrant projects on overcoming social consequences of the war using Forum theatre methods implemented in different regions of Ukraine
- Publication of the methodological guide “Forum theatre as a method for conflict resolution and prevention” in three languages

Integration of internally displaced persons and refugees

In this working area, we support the civil society of Ukraine, Armenia, Georgia and the North Caucasus of Russia in solving problems and conflicts connected to the integration of refugees and migrants through the exchange of experience and best practices.

Activities implemented in this area:

- 3 study tours to Ukraine, Georgia and Armenia to exchange experiences on effective strategies for the integration of internally displaced persons and refugees; the participants were activists from Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and the North Caucasus of Russia
- Publication of an information booklet on the best civil society practices in the integration of IDPs and refugees in Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia and the North Caucasus of Russia in four languages (Ukrainian, Russian, Armenian and Georgian)

Promotion of social entrepreneurship to resolve social and economic conflicts

This area supports civil society in its efforts to reduce the numerous socioeconomic problems and conflicts caused by war by developing and spreading social entrepreneurship in Ukraine.

Activities implemented in this area:

- Training of activists in using social entrepreneurship as a strategy to overcome and prevent social and economic conflicts caused by war
- 4 social enterprises aimed at resolving social and economic conflicts established in 4 regions of Ukraine
- 2 all-Ukrainian information campaigns aimed at promoting the idea of social entrepreneurship as a tool for civil society to prevent and overcome social and economic conflicts
- International conference on “Social Entrepreneurship as a Tool for Social Activists to Overcome and Prevent War-Induced Socio-Economic Conflicts”

Materials and videos with more detailed information about the project and its six working areas, as well as an overview of its results and connected subgrant projects, can be found on the project website: www.overcome-war.org

**The author of the
handbook
and
the head of the
project**

Marina Chernivsky

the author of the handbook
“Anti-discrimination work in
conflict-affected regions”



Marina Chernivsky was born in Lviv and grew up in Israel. She studied psychology, behavioural therapy and other behavioural sciences at universities in Israel and Berlin. For many years, she has been working as a trainer and teacher in the field of human rights and the prevention of racism, antisemitism and other forms of discrimination in several countries, including Ukraine. She currently runs two structures under the auspices of the Central Welfare Board of Jews in Germany (ZWST): since 2007, the educational project, *Perspektivwechsel Plus* (Change of Perspective Plus), which she had launched, and from 2015, the new Competence Centre for Prevention and Empowerment. Since 2015, she has also been part of the Second Independent Commission on Antisemitism of the Bundestag. In addition, Marina Chernivsky is a co-editor of the magazine *Jalta – Positionen zur jüdischen Gegenwart* (Jalta – positions of Jewish modernity).

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of War Together”



Maria Slesazeck was born in Berlin in 1981. She studied Russian philology, European law and economics in Berlin and Moscow, and also received an inter-university certificate in Eastern European Law. Maria is the winner of the Berlin FreiwilligenPass award for civil and social activism. For many years, she has been designing and coordinating projects on the processing of conflicts and dialogue work in (post)military zones, actively cooperating with representatives of civil society from different regions of Ukraine. She is engaged above all with working through psychological traumas caused by war, peacekeeping activities using the forum theatre method, the integration of IDPs and counteracting discrimination and violence in (post)conflict zones. From 2014 to 2016, she developed and coordinated two projects of the DRA to support the civil society of Ukraine in solving problems and conflicts caused by war. Since August 2016, she has been managing the DRA project “Overcoming the Consequences of the War Together”, collaborating with partners in Ukraine, Russia, Georgia, Armenia and Germany.

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