



“STORIES OF A POSSIBLE EUROPE”

Panels of citizens working on the theme of cultural dialogue through story telling methods

Europe for Citizens Programme - European Union

www.possible-europe.eu

Universitat de Lleida

Program of Activities



Introduction

Our workgroup was composed of seven members focused on fields of research related to sociology, education, and philology, and is coordinated by Dr. Núria Casado and Dr. Fidel Molina, who are also responsible for supervising the different tasks implemented in the project. Likewise, the rest of members of the group are Betty Borrallo, Sergi González, Ramon Rubinat, Óscar Sánchez, and Marta Miquel, who were in charge of implementing creative-writing workshops among the different groups of participants as well as gathering the stories created for this project. This group was shaped in 2008 with a view to taking part in the project entitled *Stories for a Possible Europe*. As students and researchers focused on sociological, educational, and philological issues, our main interest was to encourage participants to create all sort of narratives which would reflect their personal experiences of cross-cultural exchange across European countries through different creative manifestations such as narratives, photographs, and short films. Once the group was established, the different members held several meetings in order to set up a programme, assign tasks, and design the methodologies to implement in the workshops.

In the course of one of these initial meetings, Ramon Rubinat presented and established the procedure that all the rest of members would follow in the different creative-writing workshops, so that the stories would be shaped and developed systematically, taking into consideration a set of coordinated steps and indications. First of all, participants were encouraged to recall any experience arising as a result of any intercultural encounter and share them with the rest of the group. Secondly, participants were asked to classify their experience according to the following indicators: whether it was a positive or negative experience, whether there was only one person or many people involved, and finally, whether this experience could be related to idiomatic issues, politeness, traditions, habits, or any other indicator. Thirdly, the coordinator of each of the workshops helped participants shape their own narratives following three main steps. Firstly, participants were asked to reflect on their experience, and specify its main details with regard to question words such as who, what, when, how, where, and why. Secondly, participants were encouraged to discern why they still remembered this particular event, and ascertain whether it exerted a resounding influence on them as individuals. Thirdly, participants were asked what they had learnt from their experience, and in what way they thought their experience was representative of their own particular ideas concerning Europe.

All the narratives that our team compiled were produced by participants from five different groups. The participants are presently living in the city of Lleida, they are of different ages, and come from different countries and backgrounds. In all cases, the narratives were originally written in Catalan, Spanish, and English.

A) First activity

The first group consisted of university students enrolled on a course of Spanish as a foreign language, who had been awarded an Erasmus scholarship and were thus studying a degree at the University of Lleida. This group was coordinated by one of the members of our team, Betty Borrallo, who was also responsible for implementing the creative-writing workshop with them. The twenty-three participants in this group came from many different European countries such as Czech Republic, England, Italy, Poland, and Romania, and many of them were also originally from China. Despite their different origins, they met each other to take Spanish classes and were encouraged to participate in this project. In their stories, they share their personal experience with regard to their trips to different European countries as well as their beliefs and opinions about the Catalan and Spanish citizens. The participants that took part in this workshop are the following: Priscilla Barbato, Lenka Bartosová, Loddo Claudio (“!Las diferencias en las costumbres de las comidas!”), Simona de Pra (“¿Has vivido experiencias negativas o positivas en este Erasmus?”), Anna Giacomini (“Experiencia de vida”), Benedetta Haymar d’Ettory, Alexandra Ivanovici Georgiana (“Una experiencia en el Norte”), Siobhan Johnson, Zhao Junping (“Una experiencia inolvidable”), Francesco Lanciotti, Qian Lin (“Experiencia en España”), Shen Meng (“Cuando diferentes culturas se encuentran...”), Valentino Paoloni (“¿Cómo son de diferentes los horarios españoles!”), Gianpiero Riccio, Ivana Ríhová, Claire Sawyer (“Diferencias de horarios y hábitos sociales”), Gao SiWei (“Mi experiencia en España”), Maria Strus, Giuliana Viola (“Una experiencia inolvidable: ¡por eso la aconsejo a todo el mundo!”), Jing Wu, Zhu Xiao Jing, Wang Yirui, and Mo Zhao (“¿Sí o no?”). In this particular case, the coordinator of the group, Betty Borrallo, was also responsible for creating a set of photo-narratives in which many of these Erasmus students appear. In this respect, the research group wanted to incorporate visual narratives in addition to textual manifestations of intercultural experiences.

B) Second activity

The second group of participants whose contributions were compiled in the project was coordinated by Sergi González. On this occasion, most of the participants were young students of secondary-education in Lleida who came from different countries such as Argentina, Gambia, Morocco, Romania, and Ukraine. The participants that contributed with their stories are Fatima Afilad, Adina Berches, Konrad Bojkouski, Yézer Cifuentes Arroyave, Kevin Díaz, Patusk Dworak, Youssef Essahal, Elena Maria Fecheta, Diana Gantsyuk, Jing Jing, Fatima I., Ibrashim, Hawa

Kandeh, Ahmed Marrakchi, Ming Jian, Maria Mositiu (Oana), Rafaida, Roxana, Agrijan Rozana Samida, Anna Maria Suleriu, Reduvan, and Gerasela Viorela Lincan. Most of them unfold their personal narratives, portraying their attitudes and opinions about being migrant students in the city of Lleida, since in some cases, they have recently arrived with their families from their respective countries.

C) Third activity

Another group of participants, coordinated by Ramon Rubinat, consisted of national senior citizens who were taking a Senior Degree in Science, Technology, and Culture at the University of Lleida. In this case, the participants were Fina García Redondo, whose story is entitled “No somos tan distintos” and Julia R. Alòs, who wrote the narrative “El meu primer viatge a Europa”. Through the contributions of this group, testimonies from senior members underlined the creativity of aged citizens who unfolded their personal experiences with regard to trips and cross-cultural encounters in different European countries.

D) Fourth activity

We also managed to encourage a group of participants in a creative-writing workshop who also contributed with their narratives. The participants were Fina García Redondo (“Marie”), Joaquín García Terés (“Cruce de culturas”), Rosario Goñi (“En busca de Europa”), Manuel Martín Ibáñez (“Españolear”), and Encarna Peinado (“Viena anell de les arts”). In all these cases, the authors are originally Spanish, but their stories explore issues and experiences with regard to their journeys to different European countries.

E) Fifth and last activity

Finally, some narratives were also produced by a **group of lecturers** from the University of Lleida who were enrolled on a course of English as a foreign language, which was instructed by one of the members of the group, Marta Miquel. The participants that contributed to the project with their stories are Astrid Ballesta (“Creuant la frontera de la pell”), Maria Mercè Clop (“Un bombó suís”), Salvador Garza (“L’amor finlandès al pròxim”), Ana Maria Jauset (“El vostre nebot és tan, tan...”), Maribel Juárez (“Som com nens”), Josep Monné (“Una barbacoa acadèmica”), and Pilar Muñoz (“Puc ‘no’ anar al bany?”). In this case, these academics, mainly focused on research

in agricultural sciences, produced contributions about their different experiences with regard to research stays and professional exchanges in universities from different European countries.

Once all these narratives and photographs were compiled they were sent to the scholarship-holder member of the group, who was in charge of amalgamating all this material and send it to the project organising committee via web. All this material is presently available through the Internet on the website of *Stories for a Possible Europe*. Furthermore, we are also considering the possibility of producing a short-film based on one or some of the narratives compiled, which would also be sent for inclusion in the project. As we declared in our participation form, also sent via email, all these narratives and photographs created by different authors were compiled under the generic name of "Stories of intercultural experience". According to the description required, our submitted works are considered narratives, that is, fictional works, and their narrative language matches the categories of texts, photo-narratives, and audiovisual-narratives. In this respect, "Stories of intercultural experiences" amalgamates narratives by different Erasmus students, participants in creative-writing workshops, university lecturers, and migrant students, as well as photographs and short films envisioned and produced by members of the group such as Betty Borrallo and Óscar Sánchez. Our project is related to cross-cultural experiences, travelling, ageing, identity, creative-writing, life-stories, life-reviews, and remembrance. Thus, in relation to the thematic areas described in the project participation form, our narratives are related to "Experiences of feeling part of Europe" such as "Europe in a snapshot" and "Remember that time...". Moreover, our project is also somehow related to the category described as "Pathways through Europe", and in particular, it can be ascribed to journeys across Europe, living traditions, and memories. Furthermore, some of the narratives included in our project are also related to the epigraph "Another Europe is possible", especially with regard to categories such as "Intercultural dialogue".

Likewise, our team has kept in touch with the project organising committee through email, online meetings, and participation in some conferences held to that purpose. In this respect, two of the members of our team, Núria Casado and Ramon Rubinat attended the conference which was held in Berlin in April 2009, and Marta Miquel participated in one of the online meetings held with the rest of teams in June 2009. This permanent contact has aided in getting to know the rest of participating teams in the project as well as clarifying any queries with regard to procedures and development we may have had in the course of the project. A discussion group was also set up involving a creative-writing panel with senior participants, secondary education students, and an expert member in social work. A final meeting was recently held between the two coordinating members of our research team, Dr. Fidel Molina and Dr. Núria Casado, who selected seven

stories out of all the narratives submitted to date. As a research group, we regularly hold several meetings so as to supervise the different tasks all members of the group are implementing. By the end of the year 2009, we have implemented creative-writing workshops, selected and compiled the different narratives, compiled them on the project website, and chosen a number of stories according to the established criteria. We also intend to hold some more meetings and participate in the international conferences which may be held next year with regard to the project.

Stories for a Possible Europe

Research Group from Spain

Department of Geography and Sociology

University of Lleida, Catalonia, Spain

Coordinators: Dr. Núria Casado and Dr. Fidel Molina

Research team: Betty Borrallo, Sergi González, Ramon Rubinat, Óscar Sánchez

Scholarship-holder: Marta Miquel



Address of the general archive office:

Italy, Upter, Università Popolare di Roma, via IV Novembre 157, 00187, Roma, Italia. E-mail: stories@possible-europe.eu

Partner Addresses:

ENGLAND	GERMANY	GERMANY
<p>ACLI-ENAIP (Ente Nazionale Acli per la Formazione Professionale) 134 Clerkenwell Road EC1R 5DL , London admin@enaip.org.uk</p>	<p>SL -Sozial. Label e.v H. Spindler Sundgauer Str. 39 b 14169 Berlin fax: 030 - 83 22 93 51 spindler@soziallabel.de</p>	<p>ZAWiW, Zentrum für Allgemeine Wissenschaftliche Weiterbildung der Universität Ulm Albert-Einstein-Allee 47 89081 Ulm, Germany info@zawiw.de</p>
		

PORTUGAL	SLOVENIA	SPAIN
<p data-bbox="199 264 486 560"> VIDA - Associação Valorização Intergeneracional e Desenvolvimento Activo Av. das Cruzes 718 4535-011 Lourosal vida@viver.org </p> 	<p data-bbox="579 264 829 448"> Kadis d.o.o. Kopraska 72 1000, Ljubljana, Slovenia valerija@kadis.si </p> 	<p data-bbox="959 264 1300 448"> Universidad de Lleida Plaça de Víctor Siurana 1, 25003 Lleida, Spain molina@geosoc.udl.cat </p> 



Stories of a Possible Europe is a project funded by the European Commission within the Socrates-Grundtvig Programme. The content of these pages is under exclusive responsibility of the European Memories project partners. These pages do not reflect the opinions of the European Commission and the European Commission has no responsibility for their content.
 N. Project CP-2008-045