

Coloured Glasses *Grow*

Expanding Intercultural Education

**Facts, findings
and stories from
a living project**





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Coloured Glasses by



YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING
Intercultural Exchange Programs

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1. CGrow at a glance

Introduction



“Coloured Glasses: Expanding Intercultural Education” (CGrow) is a 2-year project that contributed to increasing the number of young people who develop intercultural competences, thus equipping them to engage in non-discriminatory practices and intercultural dialogue.

The best practice of Coloured Glasses, informed by the expertise of youth exchanges, brings intercultural education in short workshops to schools and other target groups. It often involves peer-to-peer learning and is rooted in grassroots volunteerism and community building. Scaling up Coloured Glasses not only advances intercultural understanding but is also an investment in increasing the capacity of youth organisations and youth networks to drive change in communities.

This project, running from December 2016 until November 2018, was coordinated by European Educational Exchanges – Youth For Understanding (EEE-YFU), and implemented in partnership with FernUniversität in Hagen, OBESSU, YEU International, YFU Austria, YFU Bulgaria, YFU Estonia, YFU France, YFU Germany, YFU Italy, and YFU Sweden. Funding was provided by the European Commission, via Erasmus+ funding (KA3 - Support for Policy Reform – Initiatives for Policy Innovation, Social Inclusion through Education, Training and Youth).

Three key approaches were used in this project to scale up and disseminate Coloured Glasses:

- Upscaling through new and strengthened geographies at grassroots level - A major part of this project was to bring Coloured Glasses to local regions where it previously did not exist.
- Upscaling through pedagogical adaptation to new target groups With the scaling up approach, new guidelines were developed to deliver Coloured Glasses workshops to those who work with young people: teachers and youth workers.

- Disseminating and networking to change beliefs and inspire action - Additional dissemination activities were initiated to increase awareness about the importance of intercultural education and how it can be implemented.

Rational

Newer approaches to intercultural learning and intercultural education are needed in both classrooms and in youth work settings.

In school settings, teaching methods often lack participatory and experiential approaches, and teachers would benefit from diversity training as they are often inadequately equipped to deal with diversity in the classroom (according to the NESET II Report), which can be invaluable for the development of intercultural competences. At a more basic level, while there has been policy discourse in many European countries about intercultural education, in many cases concrete implementation has been partial or entirely lacking. In the field of youth work, intercultural learning has been present, but has too often been superficially implemented. Youth work, like intercultural education in the formal education sector, lacks a wider vision of cultural diversity that can help young people to learn to avoid “othering”, stereotypes and ultimately discriminatory behaviour. Perhaps most worryingly, the development of intercultural learning and intercultural education practices, respectively in non-formal and formal education contexts, has been done in separate educational spaces, with little awareness of the other sector.

At the heart of these challenges are young people. Developing anti-discriminatory and intercultural competences and attitudes from a young age can have profound impact both on their lives and on the European society as a whole.

Coloured Glasses Intercultural Education workshops, as a best practice, responds well of these challenges. It is adaptable to different target groups (different ages and roles) and environments (school, youth work, geographical locations). It has withstood the test of time (it was first

developed 20 years ago) and is typically delivered by young volunteers, using non-formal education methods, but within a school context, thus bridging formal and non-formal educational spaces.

Partners



EEE-YFU
European Educational Exchanges
Youth for Understanding

European Educational Exchanges – Youth For Understanding (EEE-YFU) is the umbrella organisation for 28 national YFU organisations in Europe. Youth For Understanding is a non-profit youth exchange organisation, providing exchange programmes for 15 to 18 year old students in more than 50 countries worldwide.



Youth
for Exchange
and Understanding

Youth for Exchange and Understanding works to promote peace, understanding and co-operation between the young people of the world, in a spirit of respect for human rights. We have young people from over 30 countries involved in our activities.



OBESSU
Organising Bureau of
European School Student Unions

The Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions (OBESSU) is the platform for cooperation between the national school student unions active in general secondary and secondary vocational education in Europe.



FernUniversität in Hagen

The FernUniversität in Hagen – University of Hagen - is the only state-maintained distance teaching university in the German-speaking countries and regions. The FernUniversität in Hagen supports focus- and profile-oriented research.



YOUTH FOR UNDERSTANDING

YFU Austria is a non-profit youth exchange organization. YFU Austria is a volunteer based organisation with approximately 200 active volunteers. Every year, YFU Austria has the responsibility for around 130 exchange students who are either coming to Austria from one of our 50 partner organizations or going abroad.

YFU Bulgaria was founded in 2002 and has its head office in Sofia. It is accredited and recognized by the international network of national YFU organisations. Since its start YFU Bulgaria has hosted exchange students and sent exchange students abroad. The organization has a network of volunteers that supports both students and host families.

YFU Estonia is a member of international student exchange organization Youth for Understanding (YFU). In Estonia we have been operating for almost 25 years, and since then we have sent abroad more than 1300 students from Estonia and hosted almost 400 foreign students in Estonia, helping them all to become the citizens of the world.

YFU France is a non-profit organisation based in France, operating activities based around Intercultural Education and non-formal learning. YFU France was created in 1966 and counts nearly 600 active volunteers in metropolitan and rural France. The key activities of the organisation are Intercultural exchange programmes, from 6 weeks to one year.

YFU Germany is a non-profit, international exchange organization founded in 1957. Since then approximately 60.000 students took part in our exchange program, lived with host families and went to public schools in over 40 countries worldwide. The Coloured Glasses' concept originated in YFU Germany in the 90s. Since then, more than 12,000 young people have participated in Coloured Glasses workshops conducted in Germany.

YFU Italia is a non-profit organisation promoting intercultural understanding through the exchange program. YFU Italia is affiliated to the YFU Network. YFU Italia has this year more than 200 exchange students participating in our programs (110 outbound and 90 inbound).

YFU Sweden is a non-profit youth exchange organization that provides intercultural exchanges to high school students. Our target group are high school students from 15-18, however, people from all ages are involved in our programs being host families and volunteers.



2. Coloured glasses: a best practice



The best practice of Coloured Glasses Intercultural Education Workshops brings intercultural education in short workshops to schools and other target groups. 'Coloured Glasses' refers to the well-known analogy of the sunglasses which represent the cultural filters through which we observe and interpret reality. In Youth For Understanding, Coloured Glasses has come to refer to a set of workshops designed to build young people's cultural self-awareness, and to gain an understanding of issues such as culture and identity, intercultural communication, stereotypes, prejudice, discrimination and inequality, human rights and responsibility, in order to develop their intercultural and global citizenship competences. The Coloured Glasses workshops can be conducted in school, youth clubs and other relevant organisations. The workshop design is flexible enough to be customised for different age groups, time constraints and specific needs of the participants.

Grounded in non-formal education practices, Coloured Glasses workshops are lively and engage participants in simulations and role plays that allow them to experience some aspects of intercultural interaction. The simulations are followed by group discussions where they can express their feelings and difficulties encountered during the exercises and relate them to cultural theories introduced by the facilitator.



In 1996, a EEE-YFU project resulted in the creation of a manual entitled Coloured Glasses: a Resource Manual for Intercultural Education, which contains ready-to-use workshops on intercultural learning for use in secondary schools (14-18 year olds). The manual was used during a European Voluntary Service (EVS) project in 1999, which ran in parallel in Estonia and Germany. Over the years, YFU organisations have also brought volunteers from other countries - in the context of the EVS programme - to conduct these workshops, giving an added value to the workshops and to the capacity of the YFU organisation.

Since then, the manual has gone through several revisions and updates, until its latest version from 2016. Coloured Glasses workshops are currently run by YFU organisations and their volunteers in more than 15 countries across Europe.

Check the new Coloured Glasses Manual:

<https://tinyurl.com/ya42gynj>

Coloured Glasses often involves peer-to-peer learning and is rooted in grassroots volunteerism and community building. Scaling up Coloured Glasses is therefore also an investment in increasing the capacity of youth organisations and youth networks to drive change in communities.

Researches on Coloured Glasses were carried out by German university students in the frame of their diplomas' or masters' thesis, in [2008](#), [2016](#), and [2017](#).

[Several articles](#) were published between 2005 and 2016 around Coloured Glasses in Germany and Estonia. Coloured Glasses was also featured in an [article on goodimpact.org](http://www.goodimpact.org).

Check out the Coloured Glasses video by YFU:

<http://tinyurl.com/ydbakrtt> .

The project partners identified the need to have an in-depth professional evaluation study to assess the impact of YFU's Coloured

Glasses workshops on the individual development of multicultural attitudes and competences of the study participants. As part of the CGrow project, this study has been carried out by Dr. Julia Zimmermann, from the FernUniversitaet in Hagen.

3. Upscaling Coloured Glasses



One part of this project focused on bringing Coloured Glasses to six regions where it previously did not exist. This has been done through investing in creating new regional volunteer groups who are supported and trained in facilitating Coloured Glasses workshops. Over the course of the project, over 200 volunteers in 6 regions have been recruited and have delivered workshops to more than 20,000 young people.

Via this project, new guidelines were developed, offering support on how to deliver Coloured Glasses workshops to those who work with young people: teachers and youth workers. The new and adapted content was tested and then translated into additional languages for a wide dissemination.

Coloured Glasses as a best practice has been disseminated in several ways, including through online, social and traditional media; through presentations at national and regional events of project partners and other relevant entities; through a European Conference that brings together policy makers, youth workers and leaders from the field of formal and non-formal education.

Project activities

Upscaling through new and strengthened geographies at grassroots level

- A European Training for Regional Co-ordinators and School Ambassadors
- 4 e-learning modules for knowledge development of local volunteers
- Development of a ready-to-deliver regional training manual
- 14 Regional Launch Events
- A capacity-building meeting for Regional Co-ordinators and School Ambassadors
- More than 30 Regional Training Courses for local Coloured Glasses Facilitators
- More than 1000 workshops in schools and with youth groups
- Networking with schools, youth groups, associations and other relevant stakeholders

Upscaling through pedagogical adaptation to new target audiences

- Development of a common Coloured Glasses Quality Assurance Framework
- 3 Pedagogical Adaptation Team (PAT) meetings
- Development of guidelines for Coloured Glasses workshops for teachers and youth
- Translation of guidelines into six languages
- 6 pilot-testing Workshops targeting teachers and youth workers

Disseminating and networking to change beliefs and inspire action

- Conducting a study on the impact of Coloured Glasses and disseminate its findings
- Promotion of Coloured Glasses as a best practice online (website, newsletters, social media)
- Participation in more than 35 National Networking Event Opportunities
- Promotion of Coloured Glasses via traditional media (newspapers, radio)
- Promotion of Coloured Glasses via social media (Facebook, newsletters)
- European-level Conference: "Empowering Global Citizens: Intercultural education for diverse classrooms and societies"

Visit www.cgrow.eu

4. Aiming for impact

7 COUNTRIES

9 NEW REGIONS

6 LANGUAGES



More than **1.000**
WORKSHOPS
for intercultural
education



Reaching out to
20.000 YOUNG PEOPLE
(urban and rural areas, public and private schools, professional and non professional educational institutions)

More than **300**
ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS



120 TEACHERS & YOUTH WORKERS
tested the new guidelines, resulting from the pedagogical adaptation of Coloured Glasses

Policy impact

- Policy recommendations shared at the European Conference, with practitioners and policy-makers.
- The expertise and the experience gained through this project contributed to the preparation of EEE-YFU's response to the public consultation "*Recommendation on promoting social inclusion and shared values through formal and non-formal learning*", in Summer 2017.

CGrow volunteers have a say!



Volunteers are at the core of the Coloured Glasses' expansion: The CGrow project aims to build and strengthen networks of volunteers in the 7 countries where the project is implemented. Volunteers can be involved in CGrow as trainers, facilitators, or support persons helping out with networking and logistics.

At the end of the first year of the project CGrow, a survey was sent out to all active volunteers, to receive their feedback and hear about their engagement in Coloured Glasses.

Key results of the survey

- 100% of the volunteers agree or completely agree that it is important for young people to develop intercultural competencies;
- 86% of respondents said that they feel empowered to bring their ideas to the project;
- 95% of respondents said that they learn and develop their competencies, via this project;
- 94% of them think that they are contributing to a meaningful project;
- 80% of them feel part of a team, while 18% partly agree with this;
- 88% of respondents would like to continue their engagement around the topic of intercultural education in the future;
- 46% of respondents now feel more connected to local

communities and contexts than before; but 43% partially agree with this sentence, and 10% disagree.

The same survey was completed by the volunteers during the second year of the project, and the results were very similar:

- 99% of the volunteers agree or completely agree that it is important for young people to develop intercultural competencies;
- 85% of respondents said that they feel empowered to bring their ideas to the project;
- 90% of respondents said that they learn and develop their competencies, via this project and 8% partly agree with this;
- 92% of them think that they are contributing to a meaningful project;
- 88% of them feel part of a team, while 6% partly agree with this;
- 87% of respondents would like to continue their engagement around the topic of intercultural education in the future;
- 63% of respondents now feel more connected to local communities and contexts than before; but 31% partially agree with this sentence, and 5% disagree.



What do we learn from these surveys?

Volunteers feel a strong connection to the project CGrow and to its values and mission. They are glad they can bring their ideas and contribute to expanding intercultural education.

Most of them are likely to stay in the project and continue their engagement around this topic in the future, thus contributing to the sustainability of the networks. During the project, we have gotten better at reinforcing the sense of belonging to one team and connections with local communities, but there is still room for improvement.

**Thank you to each and every volunteer for the
commitment, dedication, and energies
devoted to CGrow!**



5. Testimonies and stories

In the course of the project, a variety of testimonies and stories were collected and disseminated. Here is a selection to give a first-hand insight and overview of what happened on the ground and what impact it had.

Meet Sara, a Coloured Glasses professional!



Sara is a Coloured Glasses project manager and volunteer manager for YFU Germany, mainly responsible for training and educational activities.

Sara, for how long have you been involved in Coloured Glasses?

Since my internship in YFU Chile, in 2015. Before that, I was involved but not so seriously. In Chile, I started delivering workshops in schools.

So, Coloured Glasses is not just in Europe?

No, it is spread across the world! And there are attempts to spread it even further. Now, as a Coloured Glasses manager for YFU Germany, I work primarily for the development of Coloured Glasses in my country, but I also help other organisations to develop locally.

How many people are involved with Coloured Glasses in Germany?

YFU Germany has had Coloured Glasses workshops for 15 years now. We have approximately 100 volunteers who are active on a regular basis to deliver Coloured Glasses workshops to young people.

Only this year, we trained other 50 new volunteers, who are now ready to join the big group. We do not expect all of them to stay: in general, 50% of them drop out... but still, the volunteer network is growing fast!

What do you like the most of Coloured Glasses?

It is inclusive: not only YFU

volunteers can join, but whoever is willing to work for meeting these important educational goals.

I also love that Coloured Glasses is based on non-formal education method and peer-to-peer learning: this makes the workshops so authentic and involves young people to work with young people.

Another “plus” that I now see from the new perspective of a manager: Coloured Glasses is cost-effective! With a small budget, it can have big impact.

Can you share a success story from Coloured Glasses?

Two years ago, I delivered Coloured Glasses workshops in a high-school in my home town (a small town in Eastern Germany). Some students were very enthusiastic and interested, so I proposed them to be trained and become facilitators themselves. Now, two years later, they are still doing Coloured Glasses workshops in their schools and in other schools, besides being involved in volunteering with refugees and for human rights. Active citizenship spreads quickly!

Active citizenship spreads quickly!



Cycling for Understanding



1,832 kilometers, 16,760 vertical meters, 160 liters of water, 71 bananas, 132,000 calories burned and 85 Coloured Glasses workshops funded.

This is the balance of Judith's and Thomas's road bike tour, which took them from Valencia in Spain to Rum in Tyrol in 15 days of July, for a good cause.

What started as a joke finally became a tangible project – a road bike tour that was to serve the good cause. The end of the Erasmus semester abroad of Thomas in Valencia was the starting point of the project of the two Tyroleans, with Thomas' hometown Rum in Tyrol being chosen as the destination.

The route was planned, the bike of

Thomas flown to Spain, a second bought there for Judith and the purpose of the tour was clear. Under the motto "Cycling for Understanding", the two cycled to promote the "Coloured Glasses tolerance workshops and the idea of a united and peaceful Europe. Since the CGrow project, which offered support for workshops, where young people deal with issues such as culture, identity, stereotyping and human rights, ends in December 2018, the continuation of funding was uncertain. However, with their road bike tour, Judith and Thomas

managed to collect donations for a **total of 85 workshops in 2019 and thus promoted a tolerant future society.**

The main idea of the Coloured Glasses workshops is to be open to all schools and youth organisations, ie. the organisation and realisation of the workshops is free of charge for the participants. However, as a non-profit workshop program, Coloured Glasses relies on donations to cover ongoing expenses. For the continuation of the workshops the following expenses will be covered by the donations: education and

continuous training of volunteers, travel expenses of volunteers, workshop material, advice and support for interested young people, teachers and schools and workshop coordination by the YFU Austria office.

This journey taught Judith and Thomas that after every effort and every down, there is always an up and a path that positively surprises and motivates you.

**Thomas and Judith say:
Thank you to all for the support!**



Aggression in School – Is there anything we can do?



Aggression and violence have become themes we can no longer avoid. We see them on the news, in the street, in our history and, sadly, in our kids. But is there anything we can do to prevent or resolve these issues?

Being a part of Coloured Classes Bulgaria for several years gave me a lot of chances to meet with people who see opportunities where others see obstacles and focus on

solutions rather than problems. One of them is Borislava Pakosyan, a gym teacher and karate instructor. We met on a training in 2016 and she became a focal point between the school that she works for and our project. Despite the fact that our workshops work best with high-schoolers, we decided to try and deliver them to kids in pre-high school and especially to students known for their aggressive behaviour towards each other. We made the rules a bit simpler, but we kept the golden rule and let the discussion take its own course, allowing the group to take exactly what it needs from this experience... And they loved it! They kept asking when we will be back and if they can play those games every time in gym class. In the feedback (an anonymous free text, where every kid expresses their opinion on the workshop), they told us they were glad they had the chance to talk on those subjects, that it helped them see another perspective, that after our games they feel united and wanted to treat each other better. One of the kids, as young as 11, said that when he grows up, he wants to become a facilitator and make the world a better place...

The workshops became very popular and we managed to deliver them to all nine pre-high school classes in OU “Vasil Levski”, Plovdiv. Our campaign was set in four different visits during February and March. Now, at the end of the school year, we have an overview from the teachers of

the participants. There is a long-term positive effect in the way kids behave and treat each other – some issues, that were there before they did the workshops, were influenced deeply and others are gone for good.

While it would be naïve to believe that one workshop alone changed permanently the behaviour of a whole group, it is safe to say that it played a major role in the process. The combination of clever games, open discussion and support, makes our workshops a gentle and yet effective tool that helps us prevent and deal with aggression and violence. So that confusion and ignorance don't turn our kids into lost and angry adults.

Written by Denitsa Georgieva, Regional Coordinator for CGrow, Bulgaria

Coloured Glasses goes live on radio!



On January 31st, I was invited to a radio broadcast in order to introduce YFU France and the Coloured Glasses project. It was in a local radio station, in Tours, France. Around 350 to 400 people were following the show live. It lasted one hour and a half, during which I spoke about different aspects of the project.

Radio Campus Tours is a local radio hub where many people have their own radio broadcast. I was invited by Wanny, one of the La Station organization's members who is in charge of their radio project. For an hour and a half, I answered his questions, first on YFU France and after on Coloured Glasses.

Concerning Coloured Glasses, I tried to speak about the whole concept of the project, inviting schools and youth organizations to check our website, and get in contact with us, underling several aspects which everyone could find interesting about this project. Alternating songs and interview, I answered to every question Wanny asked me.

We began with a global introduction of the Coloured Glasses project, its origins, and its main purposes. Then, I spoke about the workshops, their goals, how they are made and facilitated by our specifically trained volunteers.

To gain visibility on a local level, we took advantage of the chance we were given to participate in this show, allowing people to get to know us better. During the interview, I also had the opportunity to speak about our training we had last February.

Followed by hundreds of people, mainly students, Radio Campus Tours was a great experience for us to spread our values and core messages! With Wanny, we are planning to have a second interview in the future, to follow the progress we have made with CGrow.

I hope this enriching interview could give the opportunity to many people to get to know us and to feel an interest in the Coloured Glasses project, whether it is school staff to welcome workshops or people wanting to become volunteers.



You can re-listen to the entire interview here:

<https://www.radiocampustours.com/?s=yfu>

Three days, three high schools, 13 workshops, one city: Palermo!



On the 5th of March, three Italian volunteers, Rachele (from Turin), Paola and Michela (from Milan), together with the author of this post (from Rome) met at the airport of Palermo ‘Falcone e Borsellino’ for 48 intense hours, full of hard work but also of rewarding moments.

We have been asked to deliver our workshops to 12 classes in three high schools, counting exchange students from 14 different countries. The three high schools we visited included one International Classic High School, and two Linguistic High Schools (one private and two public).

The schools wanted us to focus on Intercultural Communication (especially for the younger students, 9th and 10th grades), and on discrimination (especially for the

students from grade 11th to 13th). Accordingly to that, we prepared and shaped five different workshops:

- “International Conference”,
- “Buildation bridgeation”,
- “Around the world”,
- “Circle of Society”, and
- “Paper bin game”.

Although none of the classes we visited were familiar with non-formal education methods and never had before these kinds of workshops, all the students were

very enthusiastic and receptive to the topics.

We set ourselves the goal to try making all students reflect about how to improve their knowledge, and give them theoretical tools with which they can build their own strategies to communicate better, and fight discrimination. The response from the students was overall positive, with some classes being more active than others (especially in the classical high school). Also the level of interaction of students was higher for those who did not request to have their workshop facilitated in English.

We delivered in fact a couple of workshops in English with mixed results. If on the one hand, it highlighted the importance of speaking English, as one of the most useful languages to communicate worldwide and diversify the sources of

information, on the other hand it affected negatively those who were not able to express their thoughts well in this language.

All in all, we noticed that young people were highly interested in becoming able to communicate effectively in another language. In the last few centuries, Sicily from being the center of a big trading area became a periphery of Europe, suffering the negative impacts of the recent refugee crisis. The Sicilian young people feel a bit alienated by what happens at the heart of Europe, but they really desire to be a part of a bigger community!

I really hope we will be able to boost our work here, and involve more young people in the individual and common effort to improve communication and fight against discrimination.





