






Let's Cross the Sea

THEME/FOCUS: MIGRATIONS, STEREOTYPES

 **Group Size** | 20
  **Age Group** | 16+
  **Total Time** | 90 Minutes
  **Level of Complexity** | 2

 **Materials Needed** | Two cardboard boxes or bowls, flipchart, markers, small pieces of paper

 **Keywords** | Cultural knowledge, self-awareness, political and civic awareness, multi-perspectivity, self-expression, tolerance of ambiguity

Purpose/ Learning objective	The purpose of the activity is to stimulate individual reflection and group discussion on perceptions of, and fears about, migration in the Euro-Mediterranean region.	
Preparation/ Instructions for educator	Timing	Instructions step by step
	10 min	<p>Introduce the activity by showing the group the two boxes and ask them to imagine that they have to move home to the other side of the Mediterranean sea – to the south, if they live on the north side, or to the north if they live on the south side. What would worry them most about living in this new region?</p> <p>Hand out small sheets of paper and ask participants to write down their concerns, as many as they wish, but each on a separate piece of paper. These can be anonymous.</p> <p>When they have finished, the papers should be put into the appropriate box.</p>
	30 min	<p>Discussing the concerns:</p> <p>Divide participants into an even number of groups, making sure that people from the northern and southern countries are well mixed in each group. There should not be more than five people in each group.</p> <p>Distribute the “northern” papers among half of the groups and “southern” concerns among the other half. Ask the groups to read aloud (within the group) the papers they receive and discuss each concern among themselves. Ask them to consider, in particular, the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do they share the concern? • How, if at all, could they reassure someone who had this concern?

	20 min	<p>Ask the groups to use the next 20 minutes to produce a flip-chart presentation for the other groups.</p> <p>They should concentrate on the specific concerns they discussed and try to present what they have learnt about the different regions from other people in the group.</p>
	30 min	<p>Allow time for each group to present their work results using a flipchart. Once the results are presented, the facilitator may use the following questions to debrief the exercise with the whole group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your feelings about the discussions that have just taken place? • Were you surprised either by people's concerns about the area you live in or by what you learnt about other regions? • What was the basis of people's concerns? Media reports, friends or relatives' experiences, personal experiences – or what? • Do you have fewer concerns than you had at the beginning of the activity? Do you have a different image of the other region? • Why do you think that mistaken perceptions occur? What are the sources for most of your information relating to other cultures? • Do you think all people who migrate in the Euro-Mediterranean region have to face those fears? • Do you think there are more differences or more commonalities between young people in different parts of the Euro-Mediterranean region? • What can we do to try to arrive at a more balanced picture of other parts of the Euro-Mediterranean region? • How can we help to break down the stereotypes which are prevalent in our culture and, in particular, among young people?
<p>Facilitation tips</p>		<p>Some people may wonder whether they are currently living in the north or the south! You may want to limit north and south to “North of the Mediterranean” and “South of the Mediterranean”, or else allow participants to decide for themselves where they feel they are currently living. Ideally, the result should be that roughly half of each group come from one region, half from the other.</p> <p>When people are writing down their concerns, encourage them to be open and honest in what they write, but remind them to be sensitive to others in the group. Explain that part of the purpose is to explore existing prejudices, so people should not be shy about expressing these.</p> <p>The activity is very effective, but can also be very controversial if you have groups representing different Euro-Mediterranean regions. You should be sure that the participants feel comfortable enough with each other to share their concerns, and also that they will be sensitive when it comes to discussing them. You may want to establish some ground rules at the beginning of the activity and you should certainly be ready to address any possible conflicts, should these arise. Everyone should be encouraged to write down at least one concern.</p> <p>Suggest that groups start working on their flipcharts at least 20 minutes before the end. They need to produce something visual that the other groups will understand and find interesting, and which responds to the specific concerns they discussed in their group. You can invite groups to present their results, or you could simply hang up the flipcharts and give people a few minutes to look at them. In either case, invite comments to the group that prepared each one.</p>

	<p>If the flipcharts are general in the points they try to present, some people may feel at the end that their own concerns have not been heard. In this case, you could give people the opportunity to ask the groups specifically how they addressed the issue. However, you should try to limit this in the debriefing, in order to avoid repeating discussions that some groups have already had. You may want to introduce the concepts of Orientalism and Occidentalism: ask participants what they already know about these concepts and whether they find these terms useful in explaining the discussion they have just been having.</p>
<p>Ideas for follow-up</p>	<p>Find out materials about the situation with migrants, refugees, asylum seekers in your reality. You may organise a meeting with organisations that addressing it and organise a visit and may me some support action.</p> <p>Encourage participants to find out more about issues in their own society that give rise to negative images of other cultures. They could write a letter to a local newspaper or even write their own article to dispel some of the more destructive myths.</p>
<p>Source</p>	<p>Adapted from T-Kit 11: <i>MOSAIC -The training kit for Euro-Mediterranean youth work</i> by the Council of Europe, pages 325-328. PDF available from youth-partnership-eu.coe.int/youth-partnership/publications/T-kits/T_kits</p>