Erasmus+
Virtual Exchange

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Stephanie Siklossy
Shaping the Future of Peacebuilding Training

Search for Common Ground

Outline

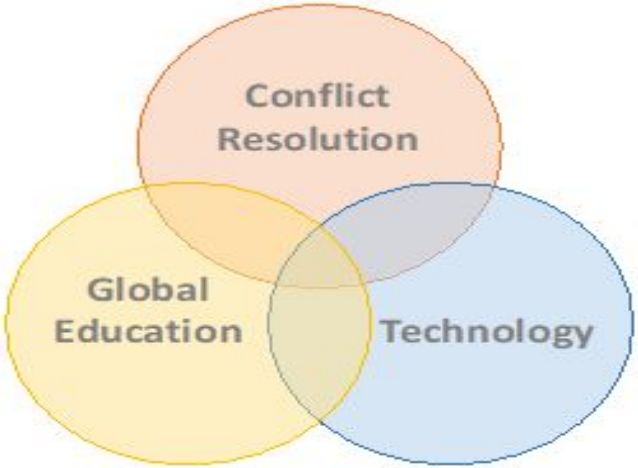
- Introduction to Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange initiative
- What is Virtual Exchange
- What are the main objectives and value of Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange
- What is its impact
- What activities are offered by the Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange
- The Exchange Platform

Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange

- A groundbreaking pilot project established by the European Commission in 2018.
- Expands the reach and scope of the Erasmus+ programme.
- An accessible, innovative way for young people in Europe and the Southern Mediterranean to engage in meaningful intercultural experiences online, as part of their formal or non-formal education.
- Open to any young person aged 18-30 residing in Europe and the Southern Mediterranean
- Implemented by a consortium composed of Search for Common Ground, Anna Lindh Foundation, UNIMED, Sharing Perspectives Foundation, Soliya, UNICollaboration, Kiron Open Higher Education, and Migration Matters

What is Virtual Exchange?

An innovative field sitting uniquely at the cross section of three key sectors



“Technology-enabled people-to-people dialogues sustained over a period of time”

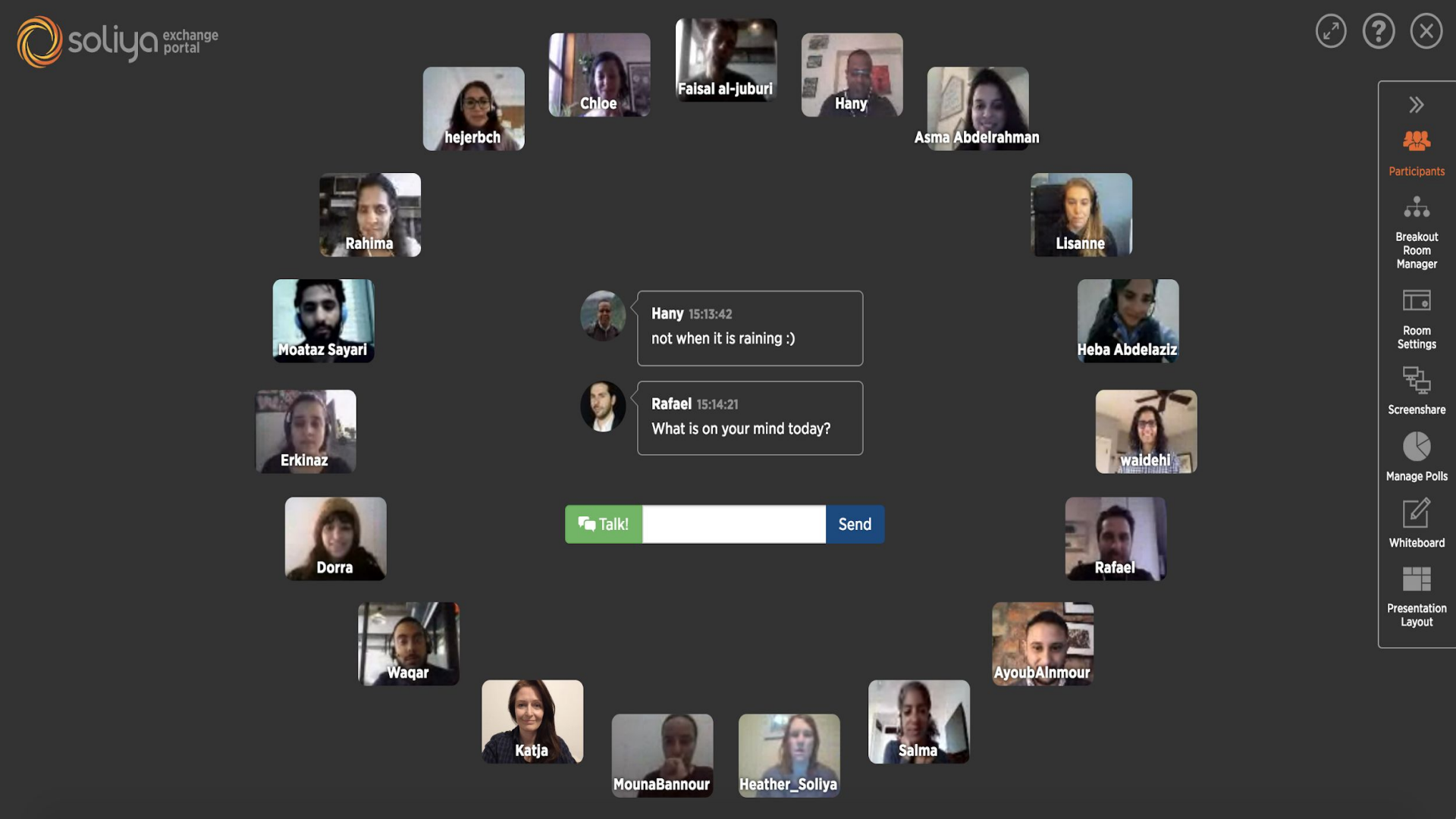
Defining components

1. **People to people**, meaning genuine, personal and preferably synchronous interactions between young people.

2. Interactions are **facilitated** to ensure meaningful dialogue.

3. A virtual exchange is **sustained**, more than just a one of meeting, designed pedagogical process that participants go through.

4. **Technology enabled**, online, and uses the broad reach and scope of new media technologies to bring geographically distant people together.


soliya exchange portal
Chloe
Faisal al-juburi
Hany
hejerbch
Asma Abdelrahman
Rahima
Lisanne
Moataz Sayari
Hany 15:13:42
not when it is raining :)
Heba Abdelaziz
Rafael 15:14:21
What is on your mind today?
Erkinaz
waidehi
Talk!
Send
Dorra
Rafael
Waqar
AyoubAlnmour
Katja
Salma
MounaBannour
Heather_Soliya
Participants
Breakout Room Manager
Room Settings
Screenshare
Manage Polls
Whiteboard
Presentation Layout

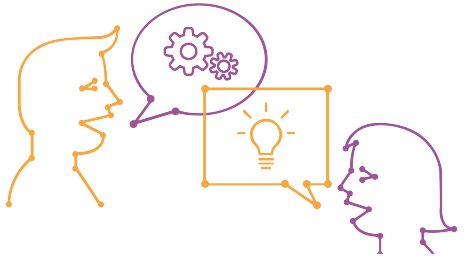
EU Policy Objectives

- Encourage intercultural dialogue and increasing tolerance, building on digital, youth-friendly technologies
- Support the objectives of the 2015 Paris declaration
- Allow more young people to benefit from an intercultural experience
- Strengthen the youth dimension of the EU neighbouring policy with Southern Mediterranean countries
- Enhance critical thinking and media literacy, to develop resistance to discrimination and indoctrination
- Foster soft skills development

Value of Virtual Exchange

- Use of new media platforms to enable deep, interactive social learning
- Proven impact and scalability
- Inclusivity - expands the number and diversity of young person who can be exposed to differences in culture, ideology or belief
- Intercultural competencies can be built in a safe environment
- Experiential learning - HOW to be comfortable with communicating with people from different ideas and backgrounds
- Understanding that different points of view are not mutually exclusive
- Building self-confidence to be CURIOUS about others and THINK CRITICALLY about one's own perspectives

Engagement



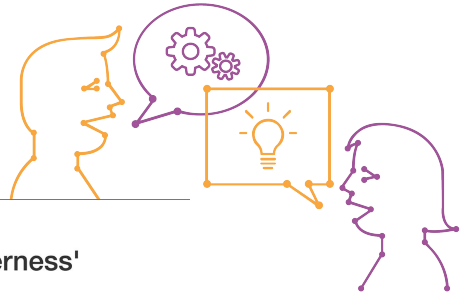
Participation

3265
Participants involved

265
Participated in facilitation training

132
Trained to develop a Virtual Exchange

38
Debate team leaders trained

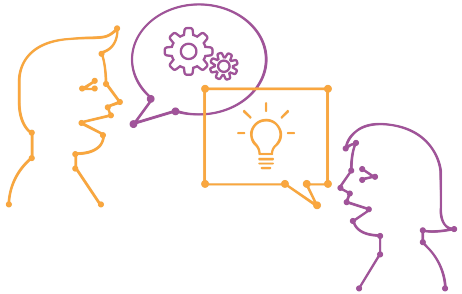


Attitudinal change towards difference and 'otherness'

82% Of participants noted an increase of their knowledge of relationship between societies

Of participants found that the Virtual Exchanges had helped them build meaningful relationships **77%**

65% Of participants agreed that the Virtual Exchanges had helped them become aware of stereotypes they held about another group



21st century skill-building

92% Of participants mentions participation has had a positive impact on their ability to work in a culturally diverse workplace

Of participants agreed that the Virtual Exchanges had helped them improve their digital competences **80%**

Activities

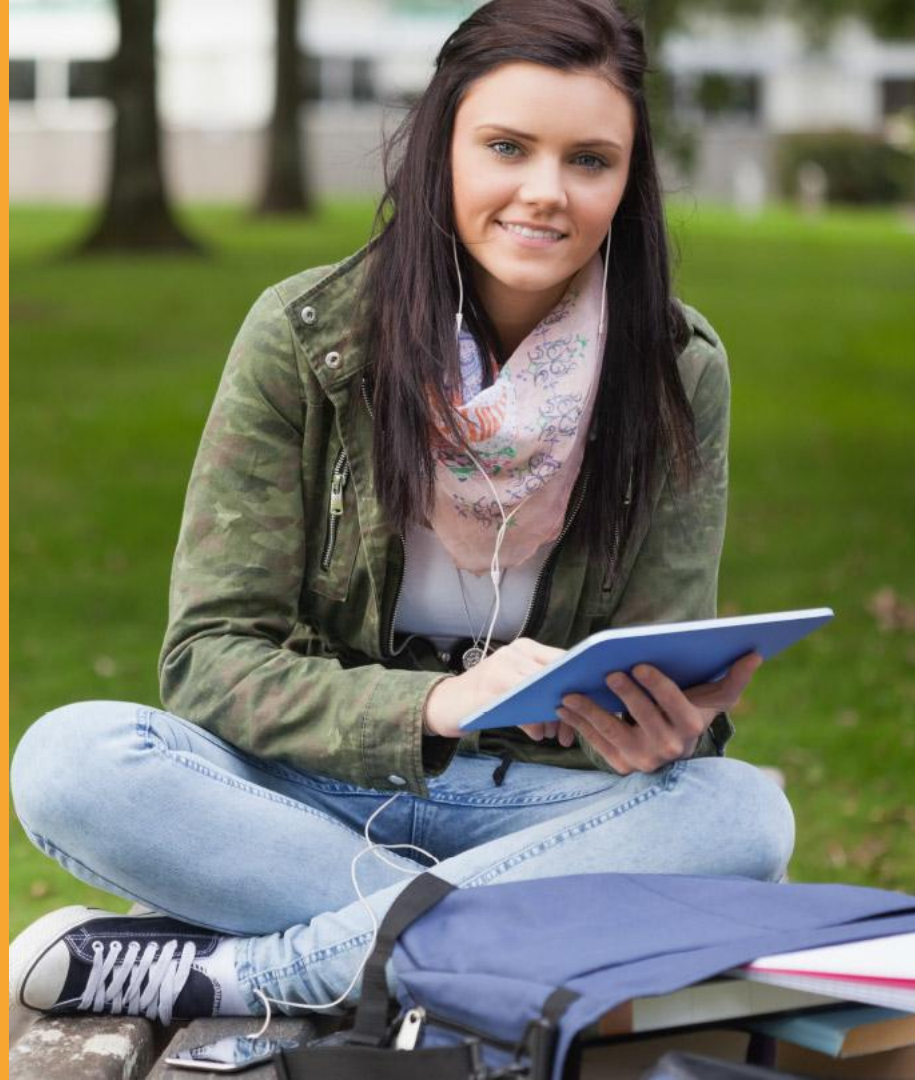
INTERCULTURAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES

ONLINE FACILITATED DIALOGUE

Three Virtual Exchange programmes connecting young people in non-formal discussions from various countries to each other for exposure to diverse views and cultures, language exchange and practice, and employability skills.

INTERACTIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES

Access open online courses across cultural contexts and national boundaries to learn with peers from diverse backgrounds using bite-sized video lectures, supported by skill building activities and facilitated intercultural discussions.



TRAINING TO DEVELOP VIRTUAL EXCHANGE PROJECTS

Professional development for youth workers and university educators to learn how to develop a Transnational Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Project (TEP) in order to enrich and expand existing programmes.

ADVOCACY TRAINING

Bringing young people from different backgrounds together to develop parliamentary debate skills with the support of a network of trained debate facilitators, fostering listening and understanding through advocacy training.

Facilitation Training

Training in facilitation tools such as active listening, summarizing and reframing, making observations, and addressing diverse group dynamics.

Hands-on facilitation practice with other trainees and extensive, individualized feedback from trainers.

Extensive individualised coaching as member of the Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange Facilitator Community.

Testimonials

"We all know that young people are the future leaders. So, if we help them through the virtual exchange to become more open-minded and give them the opportunity to see the world through new eyes away from the propaganda, we can have a better, more peaceful world".

Alumni from Tunisia, 22 years old

"I was asked to explain and position myself in topics where I thought to have a very thought-through opinion already. It reminded me that there is always a need to reflect and change settings in order to get new insights in our own standpoints.

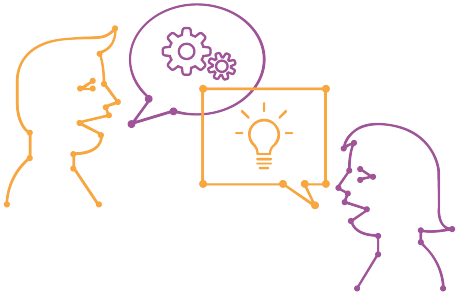
Alumni from Italy, 19 years old

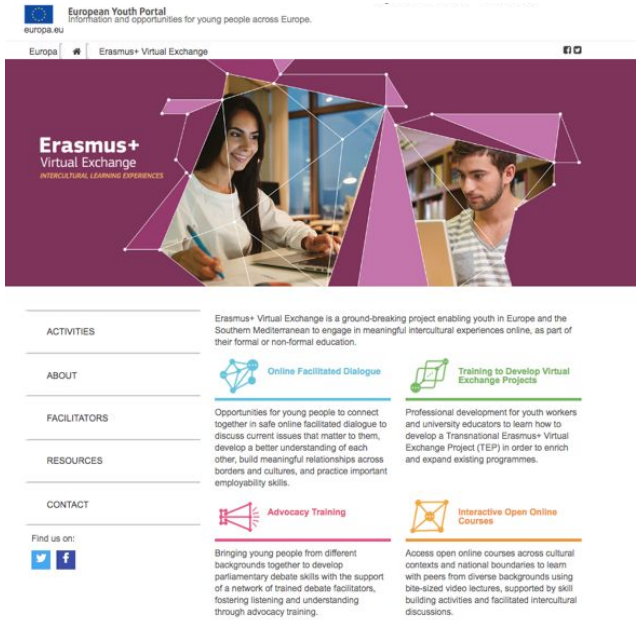
Recognition
Open Badges

- Recognition of participation in Erasmus+ Virtual Exchange activities works through a system of Open Badges
- There are badges for each of the different activities and also for trainers and facilitators

How to get involved? The Hub

https://europa.eu/youth/erasmusvirtual_en





Questions?

INTERCULTURAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES