

ACTIVITY 13: INTRODUCTION TO AN ALIEN

Overview of the activity

Participants reflect on what it is like to be a member of a community and then consider to what extent certain statements about them are true to the specific individuals.

Objectives

- Reflect on what it means to us to belong to a certain group.
- Learn about answers to a question such as: What does it mean to be a Roma? (it could be a different question based on the participants e.g. Muslim, refugee, etc.)
- Reflect on how true to oneself certain descriptions of one's identity are.
- Introduce the topic of stereotypes.

Duration (in minutes)

30 minutes

Min/max number of participants

- Recommended: 12 – 15
- Minimum: 6
- Maximum: 18

Room/space requirements

A room where participants are comfortable.

Minimum knowledge requirements from participants**Materials needed****Preparation**

None required

- Small pieces of paper or post-it notes
- Pens
- 2 envelopes
- 1 rope (or some packing tape)

Instructions

1. Imagine that an alien has arrived on Earth and happens to meet you first. For the alien, all humans look the same. You want to explain to the alien that humans are the same to some extent but also have differences. Ask participants to write down their answers to the following question asked by the alien:

- What does it mean to be a Hungarian? (or choose another relevant nationality)
- Could you describe the 'Hungarians' briefly?

2. Collect all the responses from the participants and put them into an envelope.

3. Then answer the alien's second question:

- What does it mean to be a Roma (or choose another relevant ethnicity or identity trait) person in Hungary? (or relevant nation)
- Could you describe the Roma people briefly?

4. Collect all the responses from the participants and put them into the second envelope.

5. Lay out a long rope in a straight line on the floor, fixing it in place. Explain that this rope represents a 'thermometer' (or a spectrum of agreement) – one end means complete agreement with a statement, the other represents total disagreement.

6. Take out the answers to the first question and read them out loud.

7. Ask the participants: To what extent is that statement true for you? Please take a position on the thermometer, at the top if it is completely true for you and at the bottom if it is totally not true for you.

8. After participants take their positions, ask some of them: Why are you standing at that particular

point?

9. Repeat the exercise with the other set of answers.



Learning outcomes evidence / collected

The answers of other participants enables us to recognize strengths and resources, both on the community and personal levels.

Evaluation

Facilitating questions:

- *What seemed to be the strongest common point?*
- *Where did you feel more heterogeneous? Why?*
- *What did you learn about yourself and/or your peers?*

Teaching tips, stories and experiences during piloting

For the thermometer element, we recommend reading the participants' answers to yourself first and choosing which statements you want to use.