

# BRIDGES

A **toolkit** for **diversifying knowledge** and **tackling discrimination** through **civil society participation** in universities.

# Toolkit Workshop

# Critical Reflections

# ACTIVITY

# CRITICAL THINKING WORLD MAP

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## FOCUS

This tool contains a series of activities for participants to problematize both their academic environment and the content of their studies through a geographical visualization. The objective is to color-code different countries on the world map in order to carry out a critical analysis of the geographical distribution of our learning context and resources.

## OBJECTIVES

- To critically reflect on the content and actors that compose our learning environment
- To facilitate critical thinking through group work
- To create a space for decolonial knowledge production within the classroom

## STEP 1 (10 MIN)

Look at the world map at:

<https://worldmapwithcountries.net/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/large-political-map-world.pdf>

or

<https://mapchart.net/world.html>

All participants should draw on the map the following:

- In **green** their current nationality(ies) and citizenship(s).
- In **blue** the key sites that influence their personal and academic development.
- In **purple** the sites their ancestors originate from (parents and grandparents).
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Then, to discuss the geopolitical distribution of the curriculum, participants should draw on the map the following:

- In **orange** the nationality of the teachers across their degree.
- In **red** the countries of origin of 5 authors included in the bibliographical references of the course teaching guide.

- In **yellow** the places of publication of 5 bibliographical references included in the course teaching guide.

## **STEP 2** (10 MIN)

Reflect on the results of the mapping process. Note that the cold colors (green, blue, and lilac) represent internal relationships to people's identities, in which nationality, citizenship, places of personal and academic influence, as well as each person's family tree are related. On the other hand, in the warm colors (orange, red and yellow) are the external relations, those related to the university institution, including teaching staff and theoretical references used, as well as sites where these references are published. Discuss which population groups and parts of the world are represented on the map and which ones are under-represented or excluded.

## **STEP 3** (10 - 20 MIN)

After this first visualization, all participants comment on the use of cold colors and discuss the aspects that relate nationality to the places of high influence for their personal and academic development, noting whether or not both areas coincide and why. They can also discuss the emotions associated with discussing their origins and heritage. Participants should then discuss how the green, blue, and lilac results are organized, also paying attention to their relation to the countries (or regions) that are part of the family tree of each participant.

## **STEP 4** (10 - 20 MIN)

Observe what pattern and distribution the warm colors and cold colours follow and note what areas of the planet are more or less represented; discuss the following:

- What does this distribution tell you about the education you are receiving?
- What is the balance between the distributions of cold and warm colours?
- Is there a disparity between the origin and experience of the participants, and the geographical distribution of the learning resources? If so, why?
- How could a better geographical balance be produced?

## **STEP 2 - THE IDENTITIES THAT ARE GIVEN TO US (30 - 50 MIN)**

Instructions for the participants:

In this second part of the activity, participants will take their wallets or purses and place on the table the objects they contain, so that they are aligned and visible to all the people in the group. This should always be done by respecting the personal boundaries each person feels comfortable with.

- Identify the social labels or forms of identifications that are associated with each of the objects in your wallet. Where do these labels come from? Who/what imposes them to us? Where are these labels placed in relation to other labels (examples: having or not having a student card; having or not having an identity card; sex that is assigned in it, etc.) Are there hierarchical relationships between these and others? Which ones? Which of these do you feel comfortable/uncomfortable with? Why so?
- Discuss how these labels or categories act in different social situations or scenarios (examples: in your day to day life at the University, in leisure situations, in how you transit the public space, in how you build your future plans). How does it help you in certain social situations to be or not to be associated with them and labelled accordingly? And in comparison with other labels? Can you identify any law(s) related to these labels? Which ones?

## **STEP 3 - PLENARY**

Finally, for the closing plenary we invite you to initiate a collective conversation and reflection. The "spokespersons" will have noted a summary of all the small group reflections that have arisen in the two previous parts of the activity. During this final part, they will share these notes into the bigger group, always giving the option for others participants to comment if they wish to. You can find a list of suggested questions to facilitate the discussion in the Guide of the exercise.



This document is part of the BRIDGES Toolkit, a set of tools and strategies for addressing and dismantling structures of exclusion in Higher Education curricula. The Toolkit has been developed in the context of the Erasmus+ project **BRIDGES: Building Inclusive Societies: Diversifying Knowledge and Tackling Discrimination through Civil Society Participation in Universities**, whose working team consists of the following entities:

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