

The Pre-departure training tool

**A tool to support young volunteers in the preparation of the
International Volunteering experience**

This tool is designed for the project EaSY_ Evaluate Soft Skills in International Youth volunteering, 2016-2-IT03-KA205-009012

EaSY is a 24-months project funded by the Italian National Youth Agency under the ERASMUS Plus program, KA2 Strategic Partnership - Cooperation for Innovation and Exchange of Good Practices.

Through EaSY, the partnership aims to contribute to the process of recognition of skills arising from non-formal learning experiences in Europe, and in particular the cross-skills or soft skills resulting from the International Youth Volunteering.

In this project Focsiv co-operates with FEC and La Guilde Européenne du Raid, organisations with long experience in youth volunteering, and Elidea - associated psychologists.

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1. Introduction

Why this resource was developed?

“EaSY_ Evaluate Soft skills in International Youth volunteering” is a 24-months project launched by FOCSIV in collaboration with NGOs FEC, LA GUILDE and the scientific partner ELIDEA – ASSOCIATED PSYCHOLOGISTS.

The main purpose of this project is to foster the assessment of transversal skills coming from non-formal learning, in particular from international youth volunteering.

One of the most important tools of the project is this tool for youth workers, on youth pre-departure training before an international assignment.

Who is this resource for?

This tool has been developed for youth workers who support volunteers in the preparation of the international volunteering experience. It is designed for pre-departure training sessions and it aims to help volunteers to observe themselves and to broaden up their minds on the skills achievement during any international assignment.

Helping volunteers to learn how to observe themselves during the volunteering period and to consider international volunteering as an all-encompassing learning experience (both professional and personal) is a key element of guidance throughout an international mission. Sending Organizations are responsible for providing volunteers of interpretations, supporting them in considering the international volunteering experience as part of their learning path.

This tool is complementary with the EaSY Return Handbook developed by the partners organisations in support to international volunteers return sessions.

Aim of the resource

This tool is intended to help youth workers to support volunteers upon their pre-departure training before their volunteering experience.

Based on the experience of the organisations involved in the project, this friendly user tool proposes guidance and exercises of the non formal learning methodology to use in the training of the young volunteers.

The main objectives of the EaSY training model are as follows:

- To give to youth workers tools related to soft skills assessment to use during the pre-departure training;
- To help youth workers in supporting the volunteer self awareness process on his/her soft skills and to prepare him/her to take the most out of the experience abroad.

The learning dimension of International volunteering

In recent years the number of young people having international volunteering experiences has particularly increased.

In education policy, International volunteering is commonly recognized as part of the non formal learning education, acknowledging the importance of education, learning and training which takes place outside recognized educational institutions (i.e. schools, universities..)

As a structured learning situation, these international experiences are widely recognized as highly formative for the Youth, both professionally and personally.

In particular, international volunteering experience help volunteers to strengthen those skills that aid individuals to develop into active and productive members of their communities. Consequently the number of programmes financed at National or European levels offering young people the opportunity to spend a period of their life in solidarity activities in Other countries has enormously increased.

Nevertheless young people have a lot of difficulties in having such competencies recognized in the labour market, for lack of knowledge of the existing tools, objectiveness and comparability.

There's the need of translating the International volunteering language into the Business language to officially recognize the undisputed learning dimension of International volunteering.

2. The EaSY project

In order to contribute in recognising the soft skills developed through international youth volunteering experiences, FOCSIV, FEC and LA GUILDE, which have long term experience in that field, and Elidea, I-O psychologists, cooperate in the present project. As part of the project, the partners have developed a model for assessing and grading the soft skills that are developed through international youth volunteering.

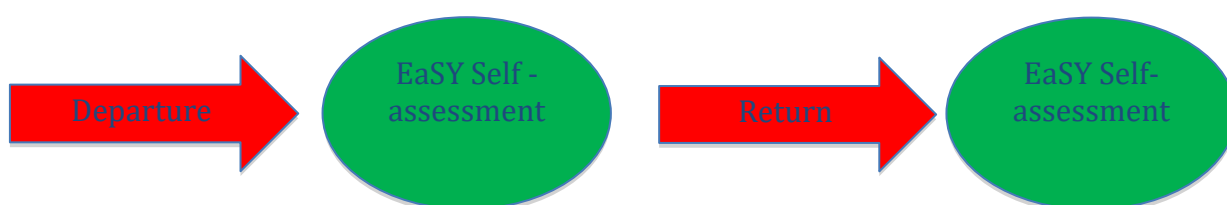
The model has been used to develop specific training tools for Youth workers: the first one to **enhance soft skills in preparation for international volunteering**, and the second to support and guide young volunteers after their experience. Moreover, an online interactive platform has been created for youth to self-assess their soft-skills, where a test helps participants verify the level soft skills they have developed before and at the end of the experience.



Thanks to the self-assessment test, young people will be able to attest their soft skills in a more objective and effective way, by using a shared European code relating to the international youth volunteering.

The online self-assessment tool is designed for the volunteers to measure their soft skills thought a questionnaire. Is easy to use, and can be done by the volunteers themselves.

The assessment must be done before the departure of the volunteers and upon their return



This test makes possible to measure the strengths and improvement areas in term of the soft-skills considered.

Youth workers will benefit from the project tools and outputs too, professionalising their role and improving their capacity to guide young people during the international experiences (particularly, through the pre-departure training, the monitoring, the final evaluation and vocational guidance). Similarly, the International Volunteering sector

will acquire more competences to offer highly formative experiences to young people, useful for their future professional life.

Explanation of Easy model

The EaSy project has developed the EaSY model, which is composed of the most significant soft skills developed by international volunteers during their experience abroad.

The main European studies about international volunteers' soft skills have been researched in order to better understand the different European models for measuring soft skills and how they approach to the volunteer experiences.

From this research the main 7 Soft Skills developed by volunteers during their experience abroad were identified.

The following table lists the micro-skills that describe each Soft Skill:

SOFT SKILLS	MICRO-SKILLS
Clear communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Synthesis- Written communication- Clear communication
Read the context and adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reading the context- Adaptability- Communication adaptation
Followership – support the boss	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Support the leader- Critical thinking- Autonomy
Manage frustration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mental flexibility- Frustration tolerance- Emotional control-
Create and maintain good relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Empathy- Listening- Create relationships
Coordinate people	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mediation- Sense of initiative- Small group coordination
Organise and manage resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Information processing- Organising available data- Analysis skills

These 7 Soft Skills are transversal competencies that volunteers can improve during their experiences.

It is assumed that being aware of their soft skills gives volunteers more opportunities for identifying their professional goals and improves their chances to achieve them at the end of the international experience.

3. The Pre-departure training

The Pre-Departure training is very important for people who will be sent for an international assignment.

It's widely recognized that international volunteers deal with cultural, personal, professional and social challenges during the assignment. Thus it's essential to make sure people is already compatible with the volunteering objectives and that they can adjust with the new environment and perform well since the early beginning.

The main objectives of pre-departure trainings are to make young people feel comfortable in staying in foreign country and to avoid, or at least minimize, the culture shock, enabling them to handle possible obstacles and challenges. At the same time the pre-departure training should provide them with concepts and mental models that can help the volunteer in "read" positively the experience recognizing their competencies and skills development.

A well-run pre-departure training reduces the probability of early return and also keep the volunteer mindset true (for volunteering assignment at service of the hosting communities and not for vacation).

The pre-departure training aims at providing volunteers a series of inputs and elements to consider in order to take the most out of the experience, both personally and professionally.

Since international volunteering is an all-learning experience, it's extremely important to consider the development of personal competencies since its beginning and to add this objective to the trainings scopes.

The learning path

All Sending organizations have developed pre-departure training model to use for their volunteers, in which useful information are given and motivation assessed and strengthened.

In case of national and European programmes (i.e. Civic Service, EUAV..), additional contents and modules are foreseen and ruled by the regulation.

The present document is conceived to suggest the importance to integrate a module specifically based on soft skills self-assessment in the existing training courses.

The specific training focus on the recognition of the added value of International volunteering in the volunteer's personal growth to make his/her international volunteering more rewarding.

This training module is delivered before the volunteer departure, as a part of the broader briefing provided by youth workers of the sending organization.

Here the main points of the EaSY learning path:

- **Develop reflective skills**

Developing reflective skills provides volunteer with the ability to consider their own performance as part of their learning process. The concept is strongly linked to "learning from experience", that is the ability to "think about what is done", and

“what happened”, and decide from that “what would to do differently next time”. This ability requires a conscious effort and practise.

- **Encourage soft skills self-assessment**

Since soft skills are naturally bound with international volunteering, it's essential to recognize them as actual goals of the learning experience and to set assessment criteria coherently.

Recognizing these criteria since the beginning of the experience encourages deep rather than surface learning, helping volunteers in identifying soft skills areas of strength and areas for development.

The assessment practice focus is not on generating grades, but rather providing volunteers opportunity to be able to identify what constitutes a good (or poor!) performance in the use of transversal skills.

The practice will help young people to set realistic goals in the experience and to have a more realistic self-concept.

- **To enhance regular constructive feedbacks and peer support**

The habit in self assessment practise helps volunteers to better engage with other people feedback, such as mentors, supervisors of activities, youth workers, colleagues and peers, both in the training and during the international volunteering experience.

The practise will enhance the recognition of the volunteering “learning environment”, in which all encounters and experience may be recognized in their relevant contribution to the volunteer's personal growth.

- **To revise experience and track own progress**

Finally, the self assessment practise on soft skills will concretely help return volunteers to get used to revising the international volunteering experience on soft skills and to recognize own achievements and results.

The ongoing practise will finally help volunteers to re-enter their societies, making the best of their abilities, planning future steps and considering possible job placements.

How to use this resource

This resource is designed to support youth workers at Sending Organisations to design the pre-departure training for their young volunteers.

It is not a full training resource. The chapters deals with the topic of Soft skills self-awareness and the how youth workers might support them in that process.

Youth workers are encouraged to explore and contemplate the different aspects of the topic at their own pace.

Youth workers have the flexibility to choose which exercises they wish to cover and/or to adapt existing exercises to the resource aim.

Methodological approach

I see and I forget.
I hear and I remember.
I do and I understand
Confucius

This resource brings together some experiential activities underpinned by a development education/participative learning approach. As a result, it focuses not only on content but on the process of how young people learn.

According to several educational studies, the more active and participatory is the learning process, the more long-lasting and deep is the learning achievement in return.

Cone of Learning		
After 2 weeks we tend to remember		Nature of Involvement
90% of what we say and do	Doing the Real Thing	Active
	Simulating the Real Experience	
	Doing a Dramatic Presentation	
70% of what we say	Giving a Talk	
	Participating in a Discussion	
50% of what we hear and see	Seeing it Done on Location	Passive
	Watching a Demonstration	
	Looking at an Exhibit Watching a Demonstration	
	Watching a Movie	
30% of what we see	Looking at Pictures	
20% of what we hear	Hearing Words	
10% of what we read	Reading	

The above “cone of learning” by Edgar Dale (1960) offers a clear image of how experiential learning and active involvement may positively effect on personal learning.

Influenced by these studies, the methodologies proposed are the following:

Role Plays

Participants take on different roles and work through an issue from that perspective, which considers various points of view.

Simulation Games

Games allow participants to experience the feelings of people involved in a certain situation. This method provides participants to practice new behaviours and attitudes in a non-threatening, non-judgemental setting.

Individual Exercises

Individuals undertake these exercises on their own. They help participants discover their own thoughts and feelings toward a certain issue or topic. They encourage critical self-reflection.

Discussion and Debate

This traditional methodology allows to be open to various viewpoints and perspectives.

The youth workers are free to adapt and tailor the activities to the training context and the needs of the volunteers group.

The youth worker's role

The youth worker role is to guide volunteers through the topics and activities in the pre-departure training.

The main role is to support the volunteer learning process to take the most out of the experience abroad. Thanks to different module contents, the youth workers will pass useful information and accompany volunteers during the weeks before their departure to explore their motivation, answer to questions and doubts and support them in interiorizing core elements of the volunteering experience.

Additionally, the youth worker is meant to strengthen the volunteer's orientation to the future at the end of the international assignment, helping the volunteer to recognize it as a unique learning opportunity.

All participants and groups are unique with their own needs and interests. So youth workers need to feel free to use their own creativity and imagination to rework the activities as appropriate for their context and aims.

Here are some tips to play the youth worker's role:

- Familiarise with the activity before trying it out;
- See if there are any specific materials or handouts needed for the activity and if so prepare them beforehand;
- Each group will work at their own pace so no need to worry if they go over or under the suggested time;
- Some of the activities proposed may be sensitive in nature since they are linked to personal behaviours and self-perceptions, so do not force volunteers to share their ideas and inform the group that it is completely OK not to partake in the activities they do not feel comfortable with;
- Be attentive and constructive in feedback;
- Facilitate feedback by the group : feedbacks by volunteers' peers are considered as fair;
- Keep the main message simple and repeat it at the end of each activities;
- Be open to learning and having fun in the process.




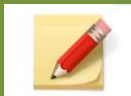
4. EaSY training: practical tips for implementation

As follows a series of activities that can be used during pre-departure trainings to focus on reflective practises and guide soft skills self-assessment .

The youth workers are free to adapt and tailor the activities to the training context and learning needs.

At the end of the pre-departure training, volunteers should be invited to do the online self-assessment EaSY test before the departure, specifically created to support the self-assessment process on soft skills at the end of the international assignment. The aim of taking the test before their pre-departure is to facilitate them in the state of art on soft skills.

➤ Activity 1

Aim of the activity:			
To make people aware of their own skills, and also of what they are not able to do (yet)			
Type of activity:  Individual Exercise	Group size:  At least 5 people	Time:  40 minutes (divided in two parts)	Material needed:  long strip of paper (5-10 metres) with a scale on it from 1 to 10
Benefits for groups: To have a clear perception of the learning experience in term of soft skills, in a non judgmental environment		Benefits for individuals: To honestly understand personal abilities and discover areas of strengths and improvement	

INSTRUCTIONS

Explain the participants that the scale is to show your personal abilities and that all participants are supposed to judge honestly for themselves if they still need to gain these abilities (1) or if they think they have already them perfectly in order (10). Also, explain that the exercise will be repeated at the end of the training to see if there are any changes, either because people acquired skills or discovered they had skills they didn't know about yet. Also make clear no one will be judged on where they are going to stand, that the exercise is mainly for themselves.

Put a statement in the group and ask people to take places; if they agree completely with it, they should go to ten, if they feel that it doesn't apply to them at all, to 1. Or they can find a place in between.

Ask a few people in the group to explain their positions, but don't force anyone to say something if they don't feel like it.

Repeat the exercise with several other statements.

At the end of the training, repeat the method and ask people if anything has changed for them since the first time.





Examples of possible statements:

- I am very good at cooperating
- I am a natural leader
- I am good at giving feedback
- I am good at receiving feedback
- I am good at helping people
- I am innovative and always coming up with new ideas
- I have lots of patience
- I am good at talking in front of a group
- I am good at planning
- I have a good sense of humour

Sample questions for debriefing:

- Were there many changes in your position the second time in comparison to the first time?
- Did you gain certain qualities/skills? Which one?
- Were there subjects on which you underestimated yourself?
- Were there subjects on which you overestimated yourself?
- Did you learn more about yourself or others?
- Was it difficult if you had to step down a bit (if you had to)?

➤ Activity 2

Aim of the activity:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To help participants identify and recognize their personal expectations, concerns and feelings before a volunteering experience; To encourage participants to express their personal expectations, concerns and feelings To share the above information with other participants on the same purpose 			
Type of activity:  Discussion and debate	Group size:  Maximum 30 people	Time:  90 minutes (divided in two parts)	Material needed:  Whiteboard or flipchart; Post-it notes; Pens; Paper; Handouts with interview questions
Benefits for the groups: Help the young people to confront and understand each other's		Benefits for individuals: Raising awareness and prompting self-reflection about the obstacles faced by young people when	

INSTRUCTIONS

Break the group up into pairs and explain:

“You have to interview your partner, imagining that the interviewee is preparing for a trip to an exotic place as part of a challenge. Your task is to interview them about what they will do during the trip and what they hope to achieve and learn. You need to find out how your partner is preparing for the trip, and the worries, difficulties or obstacles that they expect to come across during the journey.”

Give the participants a script of the interview (you may print it out on the handouts or write it on a flipchart during the activity)

Possible questions for the interview:

- Why did you decide to make this volunteering experience?
- What do you expect to achieve and learn during this experience?
- What is exactly your experience about? What will you do? How is your daily life going to be like?
- How is the preparation time going? Have you already got all the information about the service venue and activities?
- What do you expect to be the most difficult part of this experience?

After all participants have interviewed each other, ask them to present their results. Each participant present the person that he/she has interviewed. Allow 30-40 minutes for the presentations part.

Stick the post-it with the information on the wall.

Set aside 10-15 minutes after the presentations for debriefing, comments and summary.

Sample questions for debriefing:

- Which of the ones presented by your colleagues caught your attention? Why?
- Do all the journeys have something in common?
- What are the most common worries and expected difficulties?
- What are the most useful preparation tips?

➤ Activity 3**Aim of the activity:**

To foment the group work and to see, clearly, the personality of each participant and how his is important for the group relationships and work together




Type of activity:



Group size:

Time:

Material needed:

Simulations game			
	Groups of at least 7 people	30 minutes (at least)	Music; computer/ radio; audio system; large room; outfit chosen by participants
Benefits for the group: To create stronger relations; to do something together, using each one's abilities and personalities		Benefits for individuals: To learn more about his own personality; To see clearly his difficulties in group work	

INSTRUCTIONS

Divide the group in small groups (Min. 7 participants per group).

Tell each group to choose one music they like. All members of the group must agree in the music choice.

Each group must write a choreography to be performed by all the group members.

Give each group a separated space to prepare the dancing performance.





When ready, each group performs in plenary.

Once the performances are finished, debrief with the group members in plenary.

Sample questions for debriefing:

- Was the music choice an easy task? Who made the final decision in your group?
- How did you feel preparing the dancing performance?
- Did everybody participate in the writing of the choreography?
- Which one just followed other's "orders"?
- How did you feel performing the dancing in plenary? Were you all comfortable doing it?
- Who leaded the group? Why?
- Were there any conflicts during the activity? If yes, what kind of conflicts and how did you solve them?
- What did you learn about yourself and about the others through this activity?

➤ Activity 4

Aim of the activity:			
To illustrate the repercussion that small errors have on the final outcome of a communication process.			
Type of activity:	Group size:	Time:	Material needed:
			
Simulation Game		It depends on the	Large room

	At least 10 people	group size	
Benefits for the group:		Benefits for individuals:	
To increase the capacities of the group to understand each other using different means of communication (non verbal)		To acquire more awareness on the use of own body as a mean of communication	

INSTRUCTIONS

The group forms a circle, with all participants standing with their backs to the center of the circle.

The trainer chooses a volunteer and takes him outside the room (or away from the group) and tells him a sentence he must communicate to others using mimics starting from the first one next to him/her.

In order to pass the message, the person in charge must tap on the shoulder of the one next him/her in order to catch her/his attention and perform (and that person passes the message to the other one next to him/her and so on repeating the same structure).

Example of a message: A person bathing an elephant...

Each person can use only mimicry to share the message. It's not allowed to use verbal communication at all.





At the end, the last person will say loudly what he/she understood out of the message.

Sample questions for debriefing:

- How did you feel during the exercise?
- What were the biggest difficulties?
- What was the biggest distortion of the message?
- Was it easy to pass a message without words?
- Who misunderstood the message and passed it wrong?
- If you're going to a country with a different language, how will you solve the communication issues?
- What did you learn about yourself and about others through this activity?

➤ **Activity 5**

Aim of the activity:			
To raise awareness about our cultural identity in order to have a fruitful intercultural dialogue.			
Type of activity:	Group size:	Time:	Material needed:

			
Role play	At least 6 people	Max. 60 minutes	A setting with one table and two chairs for each pair in the middle of the room; Problem cards
Benefits for the group:		Benefits for individuals:	
To improve the group availability to learn more about other cultures and languages		To understand the importance of intercultural dialogue and possible challenges to face	

INSTRUCTIONS

The trainer prepares a series of problem cards/ sheets with different situations to use during the exercise.

Ideally the list should be formed by problems that inhabitants face locally in a specific country, and possibly occur to volunteers during their assignment or situations on which volunteers may be asked for help during their volunteering experience.

The trainer divides participants into pairs: one will play the local inhabitant role and the other the foreign volunteer. In sequence, each couple sits one in front of the other around a table in the middle of the room. All the other volunteers listen to the performance in silence.

Every local inhabitant picks up a problem card with the description of the situation to solve. His/her role is to explain his/her problem to the volunteer in 3 minutes and to receive suggestions or possible solutions.

The volunteer and the local inhabitant can only use their mother tongues and the body language. If this exercise is used with people who speaks the same language, the ideal is to ask one of them (mainly to the one playing the role of local inhabitant) to use a different language. Participants can't use any other common spoken language and they can't speak to each other before they sit.

Every pair has a total of 5 minutes to play the role.

If the helping volunteer doesn't get the point or isn't able to help, the local inhabitant can describe the problem in plenary and all the other participants can contribute.

All pairs will play and try to find solutions.

Examples of possible local situations and problems:

- I need of a doctor in the city and I have no way of getting there;
- I have no water to shower, cook or clean;
- My children are hungry and I have no food to give;
- My wife is having a baby and I there isn't a nurse available. Can you help my baby to born?
- My family expelled me from home and I have no place to live;
- My father is forcing me to get married with a man I've never seen and I need help;

- I have no money to go to school but I'm a clever person and I want to keep on going to school. What should I do?

Sample questions for debriefing:

- What were the biggest difficulty?
- How did you feel ?
- Which was the biggest challenge for you?
- Was it easy to understand similarities and cultural differences?
- Was it easy to solve a problem presented in a different language?
- If you're going to a country with a different language, what do you think it's the most important thing to consider?
- What did you learn about yourself and about others through this activity?

5. Conclusion

The average time, in hours, of training provided to volunteer before an international assignment is an indicator that showed great progression, since the number of hours made available for this purpose has dramatically increased over the years.

In regards to the training contents provided over the past years, it is noted that human relationship and teamwork focus, project and mission fields are increasing while information about the people and the living contexts have still less relevance on the overall training hours. Finally, most part of sending organizations doesn't focus on soft skills to be used by the volunteers during their experiences abroad.

The present training tool is willing to mind that gap, contributing to provide volunteers of interpretations, supporting them in considering the international volunteering experience as part of their learning path and personal growth.

Therefore, the tool enhance towards the social recognition of youth workers' role in accompanying the international young volunteers along that process.

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Annex



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Training youth workers

Youth International volunteering and the 7 soft competencies


- Intro -

PROGETTO “*EASY _ EVALUATE SOFT SKILLS
IN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH VOLUNTEERING*”
 ANG 2016-2-IT03-KA205-009012








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What are Competencies and Soft skills?

Competencies

A cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills that enable a person (or an organization) to act effectively in a job or situation.


It indicates sufficiency of knowledge and skills that enable someone to act in a wide variety of situations.




Soft Skills

Personal attributes that indicate a high level of emotional intelligence. A Soft Skill is a cluster of different behaviours that are specific, observable and logically linked together (behavioural indicators).

Soft skills can be classified into four categories: Cognitive, Social, Realization and Personal Skills





The “Easy Model” brings together micro-skills in order to define Soft Skills that volunteers can develop during their experience.



EaSY
soft skills



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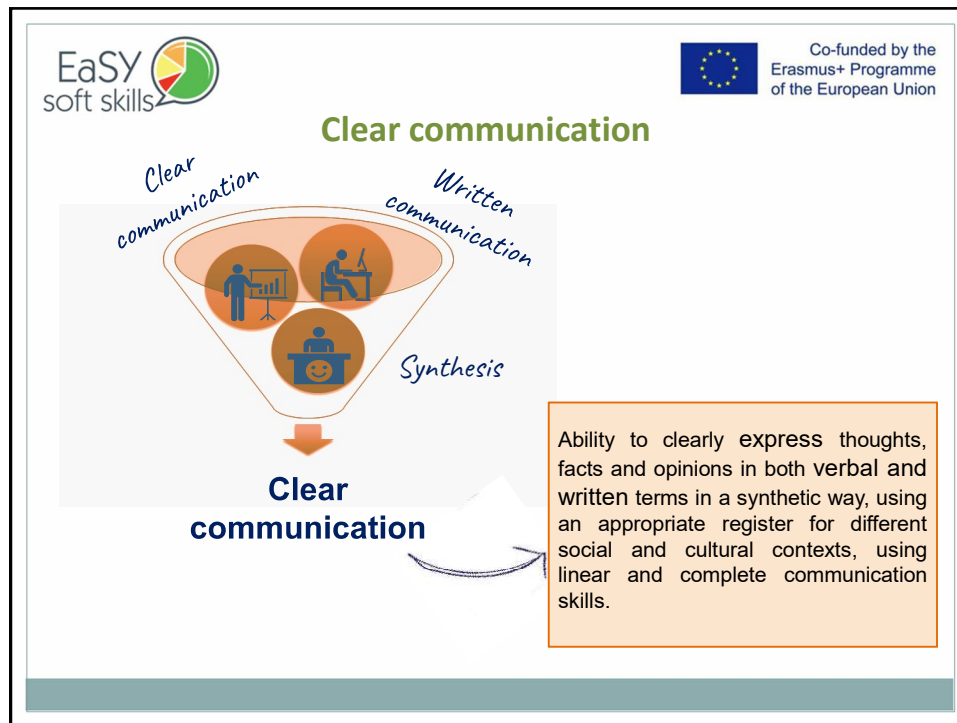
The EaSY model

EaSY (Evaluate Soft Skills in International Youth volunteering) project aims to create an **evaluation process** to recognize youth volunteers' Soft Skills at the end of their international assignment.



The project has identified the main **7 Soft Skills** that volunteers could develop during their volunteering. The model is based on a **mapping activity** on volunteers and youth workers and on **existing European studies**.





EaSY soft skills  Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union 



Followership – Support to the boss



Collaboration

Support the leader

Ability to support the boss (or the referent) at the workplace, taking responsibility for the common goal, and actively participating in any task or change needed for the group.
Ability to demonstrate collaboration, trust in the groups member and cohesion capabilities.


EaSY soft skills  Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union 

Manage Frustration



Frustration tolerance

Mental flexibility

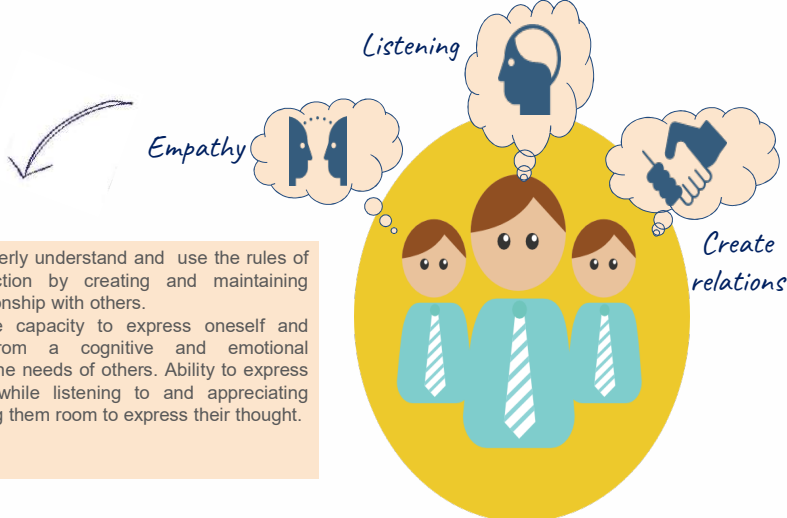
Emotional control



Ability to react positively and with spirit of sacrifice to frustration or stress, while maintaining measured and socially acceptable reactions. Propensity to recognize and value own abilities and strengths and to find positive motivation even in difficult situations, missed expectations or obstacles.

EaSY soft skills  Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union 

Create and maintain good relationships





Empathy

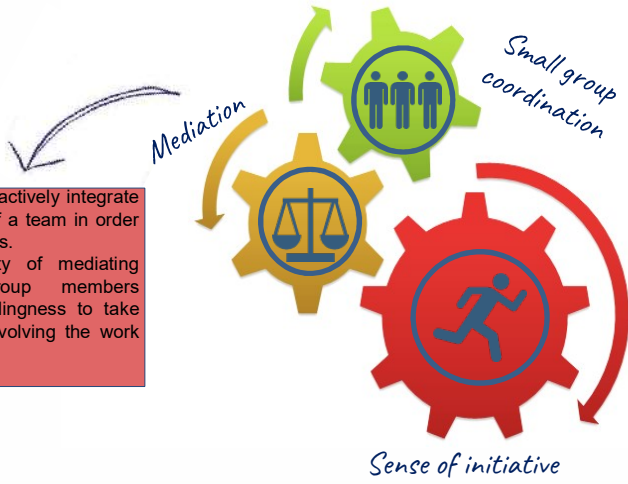
Listening

Create relations

Ability to properly understand and use the rules of social interaction by creating and maintaining positive relationship with others. It implies the capacity to express oneself and recognize, from a cognitive and emotional perspective, the needs of others. Ability to express one's ideas while listening to and appreciating others, leaving them room to express their thought.

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Coordinate people





Mediation

Small group coordination


Sense of initiative

Ability to manage and actively integrate the human resources of a team in order to reach the project goals. It implies the capacity of mediating among different group members viewpoints and the willingness to take initiatives and to act involving the work group.


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Organize and manage resources



Ability to organize information, tools, economic and human resources in order to reach project objectives.
Capacity to plan activities by deadlines and give priority.
This combines the ability to analyze data and general information without losing the details.
Ability to find solutions that optimize available elements





Information processing *Organizing available data* *Analysis skills*

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How to enter soft skills in the Volunteers' Pre-departure training?

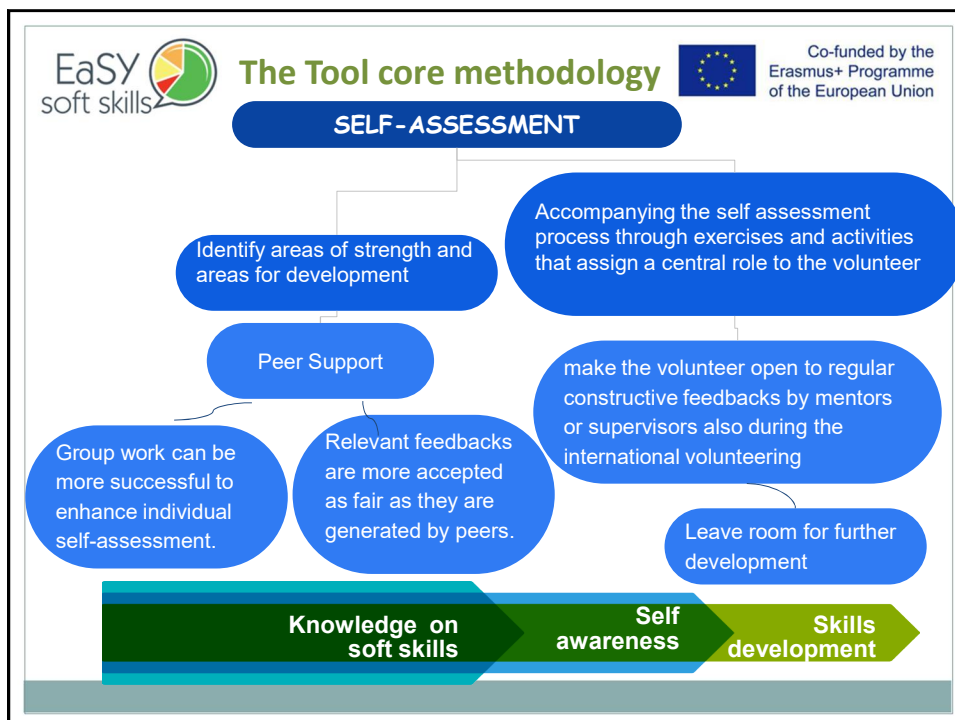
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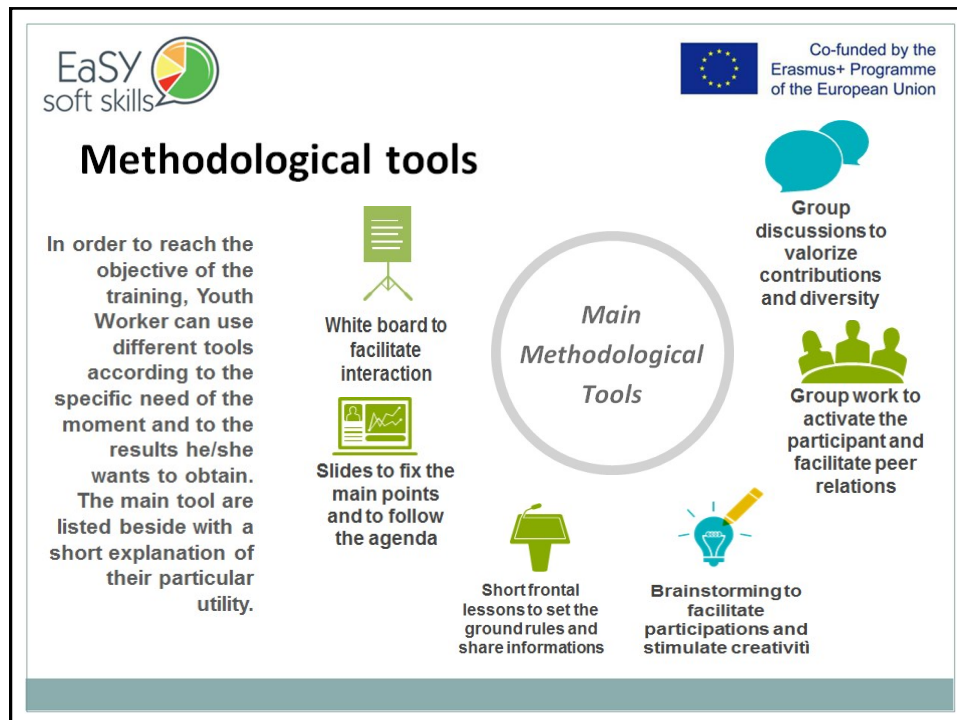
Why a soft skills focus?

Because....



- ...soft skills' importance are underestimated somehow in approaching international volunteering assignment
- ...volunteers need to take the most out of the volunteering experience
- ...soft skills competencies should be considered as assessment criteria of the volunteering experience
- ...young volunteer need to be sensibilized on the all-learning dimension of volunteering abroad (hard and soft skills)
- ...young people may not be aware of their behaviours and need guidance in self-awareness





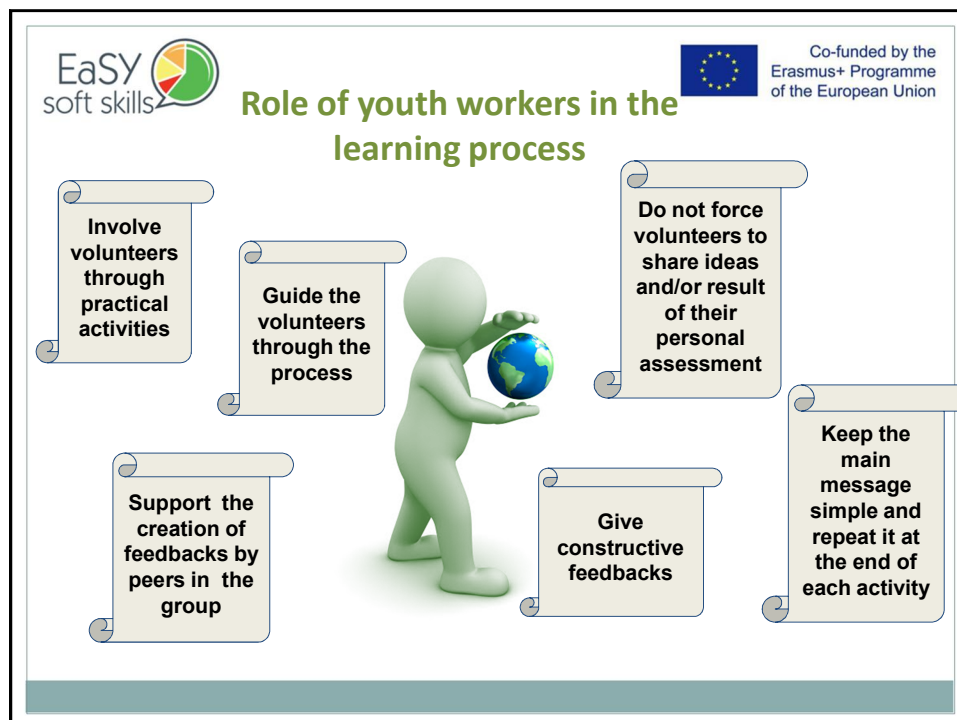
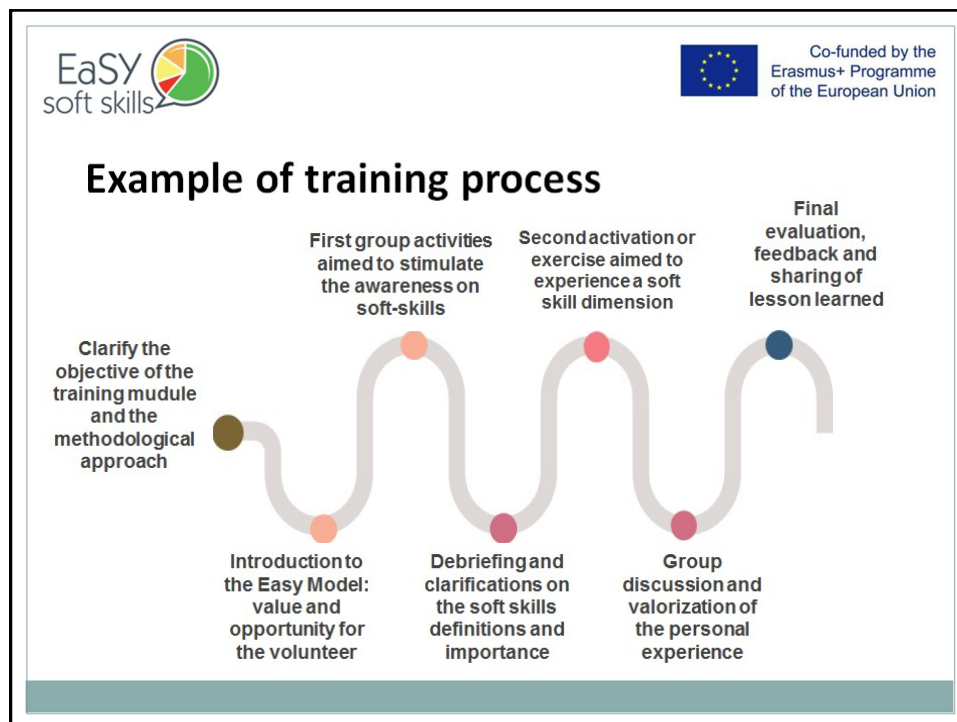
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How to enter soft skills focus in a training?



- Integrate the training course with the explicit objective of supporting volunteers on the self assessment process on their competencies
- Plan at least one module to enhance soft skills awareness: adapting existing contents or using new ones taken from this resource
- At the end of the training, invite volunteers to take the online test before their departure to support their soft skills assessment state of art .





Experiencing Soft skills in training activities

- some example-

Activity n° 1

Aim of the activity:

To make people aware of their own skills, and also of what they are not able to do (yet)

Type of activity:



Individual Exercise

Group size:



At least 5 people

Time:



40 minutes (divided in
two parts)

Material needed:




long strip of paper (5-10
metres) with a scale on
it from 1 to 10

Benefits for the group:


To have a clear perception of the learning
experience in term of soft skills, in a non
judgmental environment

Benefits for individuals:





To honestly understand personal abilities and
discover areas of strengths and improvement




Activity n° 2




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Aims of the activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •To help participants identify and recognize their personal expectations, concerns and feelings before a volunteering experience; •To encourage participants to express their personal expectations, concerns and feelings •To share the above information with other participants on the same purpose 			
Type of activity:  Discussion and debate	Group size:  Maximum 30 people	Time:  90 minutes (divided in two parts)	Material needed:  Whiteboard or flipchart; Post-it notes; Pens; Paper; Handouts with interview questions
Benefits for the group: Help the young people to confront and understand each other's challenges.		Benefits for individuals: Raising awareness and prompting self-reflection about the obstacles faced by young people when taking on a new project or activity.	




Activity n°3




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Aims of the activity: To foment the group work and to see, clearly, the personality of each participant and how his is important for the group relationships and work together			
Type of activity:  Simulations game	Group size:  Groups of at least 7 people	Time:  30 minutes (at least)	Material needed:  Music; computer/ radio; audio system; large room; props chosen by participants
Benefits for the group: To create stronger relations; to do something together, using each one's abilities and personalities		Benefits for individuals: To learn more about his own personality; To see clearly his difficulties in group work	







Activity° 4




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Aims of the activity:

To illustrate the repercussion that small errors have on the final outcome of a communication process.

<p>Type of activity:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Simulations game</p> </div>	<p>Group size:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>At least 10 people</p> </div>	<p>Time:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>It depends on the group size</p> </div>	<p>Material needed:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Large room</p> </div>
<p>Benefits for the group:</p> <p>To increase the capacities of the group to understand each other using different means of communication (non verbal)</p>		<p>Benefits for individuals:</p> <p>To acquire more awareness on the use of own's body as a mean of communication</p>	







Activity n° 5



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Aims of the activity:

To raise awareness about our cultural identity in order to have a fruitful intercultural dialogue.

<p>Type of activity:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Role plays</p> </div>	<p>Group size:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>At least 6 people</p> </div>	<p>Time:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Max. 60 minutes</p> </div>	<p>Material needed:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>A setting with one table and two chairs for each pair in the middle of the room; Problem cards</p> </div>
<p>Benefits for the group:</p> <p>To improve the group availability to learn more about other cultures and languages</p>		<p>Benefits for individuals:</p> <p>To understand the importance of intercultural dialogue and possible challenges to face</p>	