

***European Fair Skills, Fair*in, and the CEE Prevent Net –
preventing violent extremism and group hatred in Central
and Eastern Europe***

von

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European Fair Skills and the Fair*in approach for schools

Exchanging good practice in strengthening community-embedded prevention of hostile prejudice/ group hatred, hate crime and violent (right-wing) extremism



Cultures Interactive

**European Fair Skills,
Fair*in,
and the CEE Prevent Net –**

**Preventing violent extremism and group hatred
in Central and Eastern Europe**

European Fair Skills

Experiences and conclusions from EFS –

The EU's prevention discourse associates extremism with Islamism;

This supports the CEE countries' populist actors – and their xenophobia and group-oriented resentment;

Because populists equate refugees with (Islamist) terrorists;

And they use the Islamism topic for defamatory anti-refugee rhetoric

At the same time, populists deny widespread group hatred and right-wing extremism in their countries.

(Prague 2014, Slovakian Mosques, 2017, right-wing extremism vs polarisation, The It-briefs-Wellism challenge)

European Fair Skills

Fair*in approach for schools

Goals of our work

- Empowering young people from all social backgrounds to participate in society
- Strengthening mutual respect and human rights attitudes
- Preventing inhumane attitudes and behaviour, e.g. right-wing extremism, racism and hate crime (resilience)

European Fair Skills

Fair*in approach for schools

Target groups

- Youth and adolescents
- Different actors in the community (teachers, social/youth workers, family support, probation, and other prevention practitioners)
- plus: (inter-)national exchange

European Fair Skills

Fair*in approach for schools

Fair*in aims to prevent ethnically polarizing as well as sexist-homophobic and transphobic attitudes and other forms of group based resentment and group hatred among young people

European Fair Skills

Fair*in approach for schools

Fair*in develops new formats of civic education, youth culture education and community-embedded prevention, in order to test them in East-German Brandenburg, inter alia, and in Central and Eastern EU countries in the CEE Prevent Net project.

European Fair Skills

Fair*in approach for schools

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European Fair Skills

Fair*in approach for schools

The European Fair Skills approach (for distancing and exit work) consists of three elements ...

... one element comes from mental health care.

European Fair Skills

„Fair Skills“

The approach combines

- Youth cultural workshops (rap, break dance, comic strips, digital video/ music production, YouTubing etc.)
- “Post-classical” civic education (anti-bias, human rights pedagogy, mediation and conflict transformation, gender awareness, communicational ‘soft skills’)
- Self-awareness group work in the We-Amongst-Ourselves-Group (“Wir unter uns Gruppe”). Group dynamic, narrative exchange on biographical and actual life-world issues (a mental health care format).

European Fair Skills

Three work areas of European Fair Skills

- 1a) „Fair Skills“: Train-the-trainer workshops for youth workers
- 1b) „Fair Skills“: Youth cultural trainings for young people
- 2) “LocalDerad”: locally embedded prevention training for practitioners in youth and education (teachers, youth and social workers, probation, family support, etc.) – including input on exit facilitation
- 3a) “Regional Development Roundtables” with local/ national stakeholders
- 3b) The Roundtables may often also develop into quasi-diplomatic “governmental advocacy” networking





Principles of good practice in prevent/ exit mentoring

“RAN Derad Declaration of Good Practice – Principles of Sustainable Interventions in Disengagement and Rehabilitation (Deradicalisation) ... ”

Published in: http://cultures-interactive.de/tl_files/publikationen/engl/Draft_RAN-Derad_Declaration-of-Good-Practice_Harald.pdf

Good practice ...

- ... depends on personal *trust building***
- ... needs *safe space / confidentiality,***
- ... needs *external, non-staff practitioners***
- ... is *open-process* no session plans,**
- ... is *participatory, peer-facilitated,***
- ... is *voluntary* (incremental buy-in)**

... good practice ...

... follows a *narrative mode*, lesser so arguments, debate, counter-speech,

... focuses on *social skills* and *emotional intelligence* (conflict, anger, shame, and anxiety)

... . prefers *group settings* as much as possible (accompanied by one-on-one settings if needed),

... needs focus on *gender identity* conflicts, inter alia

European Fair Skills

Experiences and conclusions from EFS (roundtables) -

Youth workers and educators voice a great need for approaches to prevent group hatred, violence and extremism.

Project time together was needed also to develop a shared language and terms (what is extremism, group hatred, civic education, the narrative approach etc.)

European Fair Skills

Experiences and conclusions from EFS (roundtables) – 3

EFS countries do not necessarily depend on transfer of good practice. In some cases they already have methods of what is called good practice of preventing group hatred.

Yet, these good practices are not sufficiently known, recognized, and supported/ developed in the country and in the EU.

In particular, there is a need for an national infrastructure and a national pool of practitioners to do trainings for other practitioners (in native language) and secure quality on a national scale.

European Fair Skills

Experiences and conclusions from EFS (roundtables) - 4

In particular, youth workers show a need for methods which help to avoid the “argumentation trap” and the “moral appeal trap” – method that establish relationship and cooperation.

Youth workers job satisfaction/ confidence and productivity depend on being able to establish relationship and cooperation with the young people.

The EFS focus on “narrative methods and procedures” (of personal dialogue building) was found to be helpful (to avoid the “argumentation” and “moral appeal trap”). It made clear how to best meet the challenge on an inter-personal, dialogic level rather than on an ideological level of discussing and debating.

European Fair Skills

Experiences and conclusions from EFS (roundtables) - 5

Group hatred, being a very emotional and group dynamic issue needs methods that work with feelings and affects/ emotional intelligence (creative, self-expressive and open process methods – in group dynamic settings).

“Since the 1990s in Eastern Europe we have been told what to say, what to think and what to do in order to be good democrats – but democracy really is a feeling, you need to be able to feel this in order to want to do this!”

European Fair Skills

Experiences and conclusions from EFS (roundtables) – 6

It was found to be of paramount importance for EFS activities to steer free of party-political implications, rhetoric, campaigns.

This means:

- never talk about one sort of violent extremism (only),
- talk to all different stakeholders/ authorities,
- use wide, all-encompassing concepts as “group hatred”, “aggressive prejudice”, in schools: “mobbing” (also re gender: sexism, beauty fetishism, homophobia, masculinity(ies) etc.
- have an overall perspective on “safeguarding young people” (from criminal recruitment but also from becoming resentful personalities which limits their skills)

European Fair Skills

Experiences and conclusions from EFS (roundtables) – 8

In view of consulting politics/ administration (vs. campaigning):

In HU and SK in particular, EFS has developed a strategy of “governmental advocacy” being strictly focused on issues and solutions and communicating them to relevant authorities.



Contact

Thank you for your attention!

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Further literature:

<http://www.cultures-interactive.de/de/fachartikel.html>