

Connecting Communities Empowering Transitions

Project Number: 2023-3-IE01-KA210-YOU-000176293



Connecting Communities
Empowering Transitions



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Overview

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Partner Organisations



Our programme

- As of the second anniversary of the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, more than 10 million Ukrainians were displaced and one-third of the population were in need of humanitarian support inside the country.
- It is estimated that these figures will increase to 14.6 million by the end of 2024, of which, 1.5 million are children.
- The Connect Project aims to support the integration of displaced Ukrainians in Ireland and Bulgaria on three levels:
 - Their economic integration
 - Their civic integration
 - Their social integration

The Connecting Communities – Empowering Transitions (Connect) Project

- The project contains:

- Knowledge sharing seminars in Bulgaria and Ireland.
- An in-service training programme for Youth Workers
- A series of WebQuests for Young People
- Integration seminars for young people
- A dedicated social media channel with tips and advice:
https://www.instagram.com/the_connect_project/



Connecting Communities
Empowering Transitions

The Connecting Communities – Empowering Transitions (Connect)
Project



Icebreakers – Together or alone



Icebreakers – Circles



Icebreakers – Web of Connectedness



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Module 2

Civic Integration

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What to expect

Module two aims to

- I. Support youth workers to support the civic integration of young people
- II. Identify and illustrate some of the factors influencing the civic integration of young people
- III. Present legal frameworks and organisations that support the civic integration of migrants.



What is civics?



Civics

- According to [CivXNow](#), also known as "civic education" or "civic learning", civics is a lifelong process that makes people into active, responsible and knowledgeable members of their communities.



Gallery Walk

Create a poster which addresses the following question:

In the context of the young people that you work with, what encourages and discourages them from participating in civic duty?





What is civic engagement?



Areas that young people can get involved in to enhance their civic integration



How can we support our young people to thrive and create just and free societies?



Through the provision of quality education

- Equipping young people with critical thinking skills, knowledge on their rights and responsibilities and promoting a deeper understanding of social justice issues is fundamental to the success of a young person in society.
- Look to the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) and SDG4 as a pivotal driver of positive change, transformative education and sustainable worlds.



Through empowering young people

- Empower young people to use their voices and advocate for issues that truly affect their needs.
- Electing young people to community groups helps to create opportunities for young people to be engaged in decision-making processes on a local level.
- In Ireland, the [National Youth Council of Ireland](#) is running a campaign for 16 year old's to be able to vote – would this work in reality?



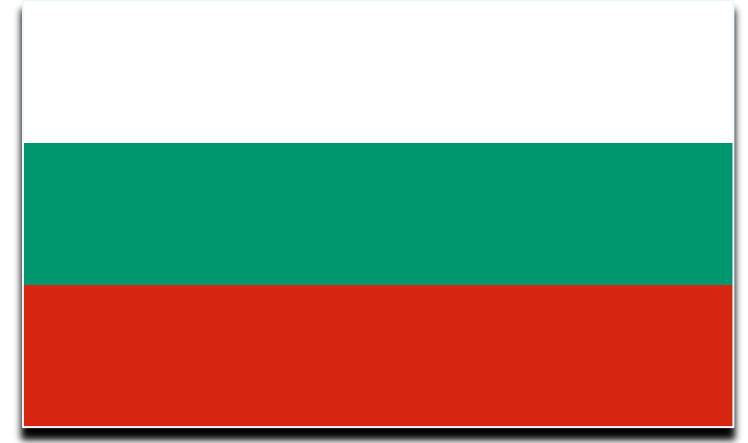


Legal frameworks that support the civic
integration of migrants in Ireland and Bulgaria



Ireland

- [Immigration Act 2004](#)
- [The Migrant Integration Strategy – A Blueprint for the Future](#)
- [Residence Permits & Citizenship](#)
- Anti-Discrimination Legislation - [The Equal Status Acts 2000-2018](#)



Bulgaria

- [Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria](#)
- [National Strategy for the Integration of Refugees and Foreigners](#)
- [Citizenship Act](#)
- [Anti-Discrimination Legislation](#)



Organisations that support the civic
integration of migrants



International
Labour
Organization

International Organisations

- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
- International Organization for Migration (IOM)
- International Labor Organization (ILO)



Irish Organisations

- [Migrant Rights Centre Ireland](#)
- [Immigrant Council of Ireland](#)





Bulgarian Organisations

- [Caritas Sofia](#)
- [Center for Legal Aid – Voice in Bulgaria](#)
- The Bulgarian Red Cross



Case Study– Alex’s Story (Fictious)

Alex is an 18-year-old migrant who recently arrived in Ireland from Ukraine, fleeing the war. Like many young people, Alex came to Ireland alone, leaving his family behind due to difficult circumstances. He does not have any close relatives in the country and is staying in temporary housing provided by a local charity.

Alex completed secondary school in Ukraine but is not currently enrolled in further education or vocational training. His English skills are limited, which has made it difficult for him to find a job. Despite his situation, Alex is eager to integrate into Irish society, make new friends, and contribute to his local community. He is passionate about technology and environmental issues but doesn't know where to start or how to get involved in civic life.

Alex spends most of his time alone, feeling isolated and unsure of how to navigate life in a new country. He has expressed interest in improving his English and meeting people who share his interests, but he is uncertain about where to turn for support.

Case Study– Alex's Story

Challenges:

1.Social Isolation: Alex is living in a new country without family support and lacks a social network.

2.Limited Language Skills: His limited English makes it difficult for him to communicate effectively, access services, or participate in community activities.

3.Unemployment: Alex wants to work but is finding it challenging to secure a job due to his language skills and lack of connections.

4.Desire for Civic Engagement: Alex is passionate about technology and environmental issues, but he is unsure how to get involved in these areas in his new community.

Task:

You are a youth worker tasked with helping Alex integrate into the community and become civically engaged. Using the knowledge gained from this training, create a support plan for Alex by addressing the following:

1. Building a Social Network: What steps would you take to help Alex build a social support network and reduce his sense of isolation?

2. Language and Employment Support: What resources and opportunities could you provide to help Alex improve his English and find meaningful employment or volunteer opportunities?

3. Connecting Civic Interests: How could you connect Alex with civic activities that align with his passion for technology and environmental issues?

4. Long-Term Engagement: What can you do to ensure that Alex remains engaged with his community and continues to grow his civic and language skills over time?

Suggested Responses:

- **Building a Social Network:** Introduce Alex to local migrant support groups and community centres where he can meet other young people. Organize informal social events like coffee mornings or tech meetups to help him make friends in a relaxed environment. Encourage participation in clubs that don't require advanced English skills initially.
- **Language and Employment Support:** Help Alex enroll in free or subsidised English classes tailored to migrants. Introduce him to online job platforms or vocational training programs that focus on tech or environment-related fields, where he can practice English and develop work skills. Offer guidance on how to create a CV and prepare for interviews in English.

- Connecting Civic Interests:** Connect Alex with local environmental organizations or technology-focused groups where he can volunteer or participate in projects. This could include tech workshops, coding events, or local environmental clean-ups. Volunteering in areas that interest him will help build his confidence and sense of belonging.
- Long-Term Engagement:** Pair Alex with a mentor who shares his interests and can guide him through the process of integrating into civic life. Encourage him to set long-term goals, such as leading a tech project or organising a community environmental event. Regular check-ins and goal-setting can help ensure that Alex stays motivated and engaged.



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Module 3

Promoting social integration

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What to expect

Module three aims to

- define and describe social integration
- Analyse the barriers faced by young people when integrating into new communities and new cultures.
- Support you to create a poster illustrating Hofstede's Cultural Insights.



What is social integration?



What is social integration?

Social integration is the degree to which individuals participate in a wide range of social roles and relationships (Brissette, Cohen and Seeman, 2000).

“The process by which separate groups are combined into a unified society, especially when this is pursued as a deliberate policy. It implies a coming together based on individual acceptance of the members of other groups” (American Psychological Association, 2024).



The roots of social integration



- Social integration was first discussed in 1897 by Emile Durkheim
- His early research found that elevated levels of suicide rates for single individuals compared to married individuals and less frequent when an individual was closed integrated into a society.
- Emile Durkheim found that that individuals who lacked a strong social identification would be more susceptible to suicide (Peyre, 2024).



Olga, a 19-year-old refugee from Ukraine, moved to Ireland last year. Despite the language barrier, she joined a local sports club and started volunteering at a community center. With support from local mentors and regular language classes, Olga not only improved her language skills but also made lifelong friends and became an active volunteer, helping others in the migrant community.

Example of social integration - What factors have helped Olga to integrate?



Why is it important to support the social integration of migrants?

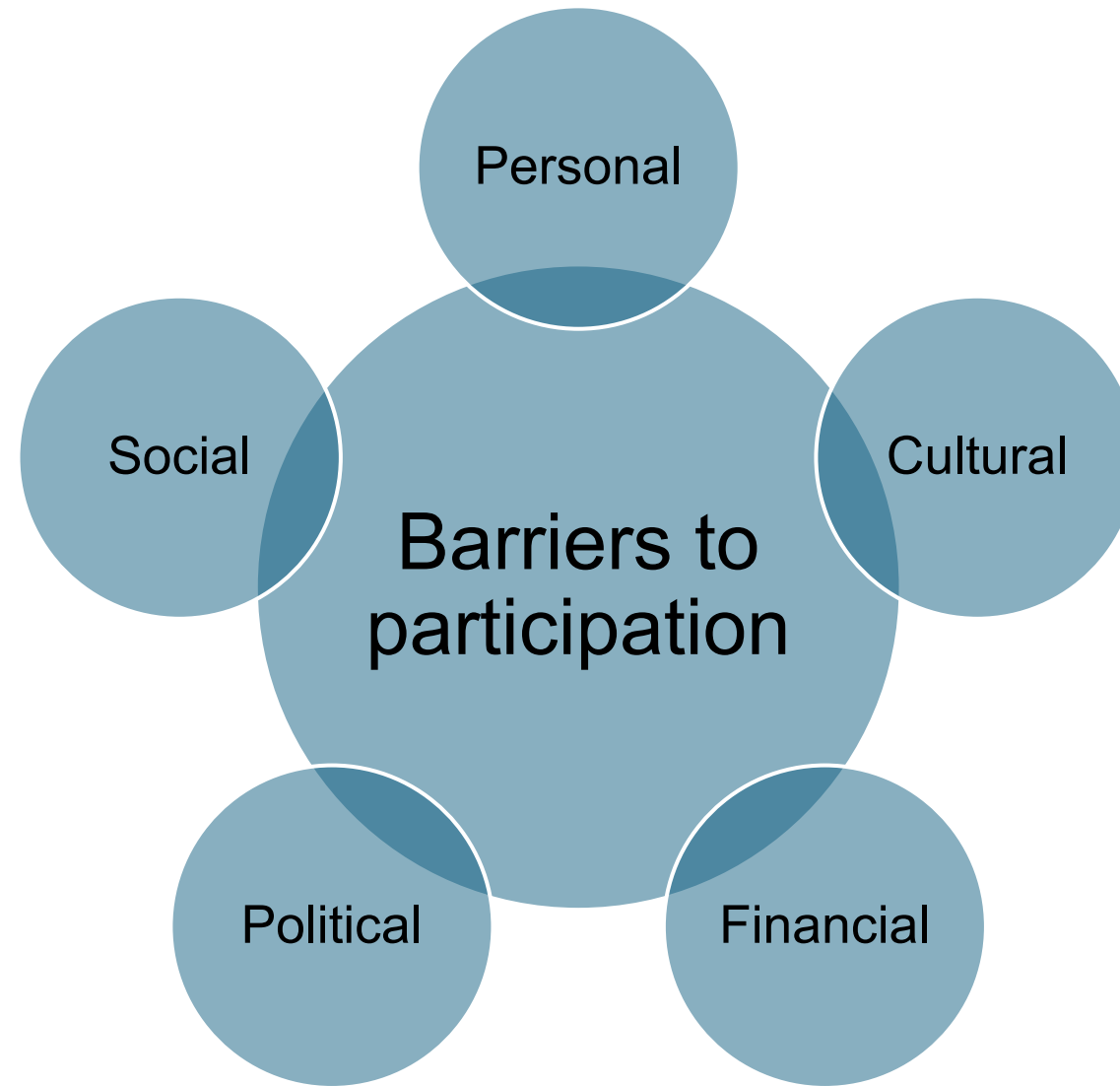


Supporting the social integration of migrants can:

- **Foster more understanding and empathetic communities:** Storytelling and sharing experiences can break down barriers that migrants face.
- **Improve our economies:** Migrants bring new knowledge and skills to our community
- **Enrich our society:** Migrants and natives can teach each other their local traditions and cultural values.



Some of the barriers
that young people face
when integrating into a
new community
include



Source: Migration Yorkshire (2024)



Barriers to social integration for migrants include

- Lack of access to education
- Lack of access to health care
- Unemployment
- Mental health challenges
- Gender-based violence



How can we support
young people to
integrate into our
communities?



Do you agree with this statement?

Problem Statement:

Cultural adjustment is complicated for refugees. Adjusting to a new culture can be a difficult challenge for refugees to accept. If they do accept this new culture and begin to re-establish and find an identity, it become challenging to keep everyone in both cultures happy. Yet, a lack of cultural adjustment limits communication, acceptance, and inclusion.





Discussion :

On the next slide, you will see a series of challenges that migrants typically face in their social integration.

What solutions would you propose to a migrant facing the following challenges?



Challenges

1. Feelings of isolation, pressure, depression and intimidation in the new culture
1. A fear / lack of desire to participate in school, activities or in the community
1. Potential discrimination or bullying from peers
1. Deculturation or trading their native culture for the new culture
1. A loss of identity leading to insecurity or unstable behaviours.

Activity adapted from Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services



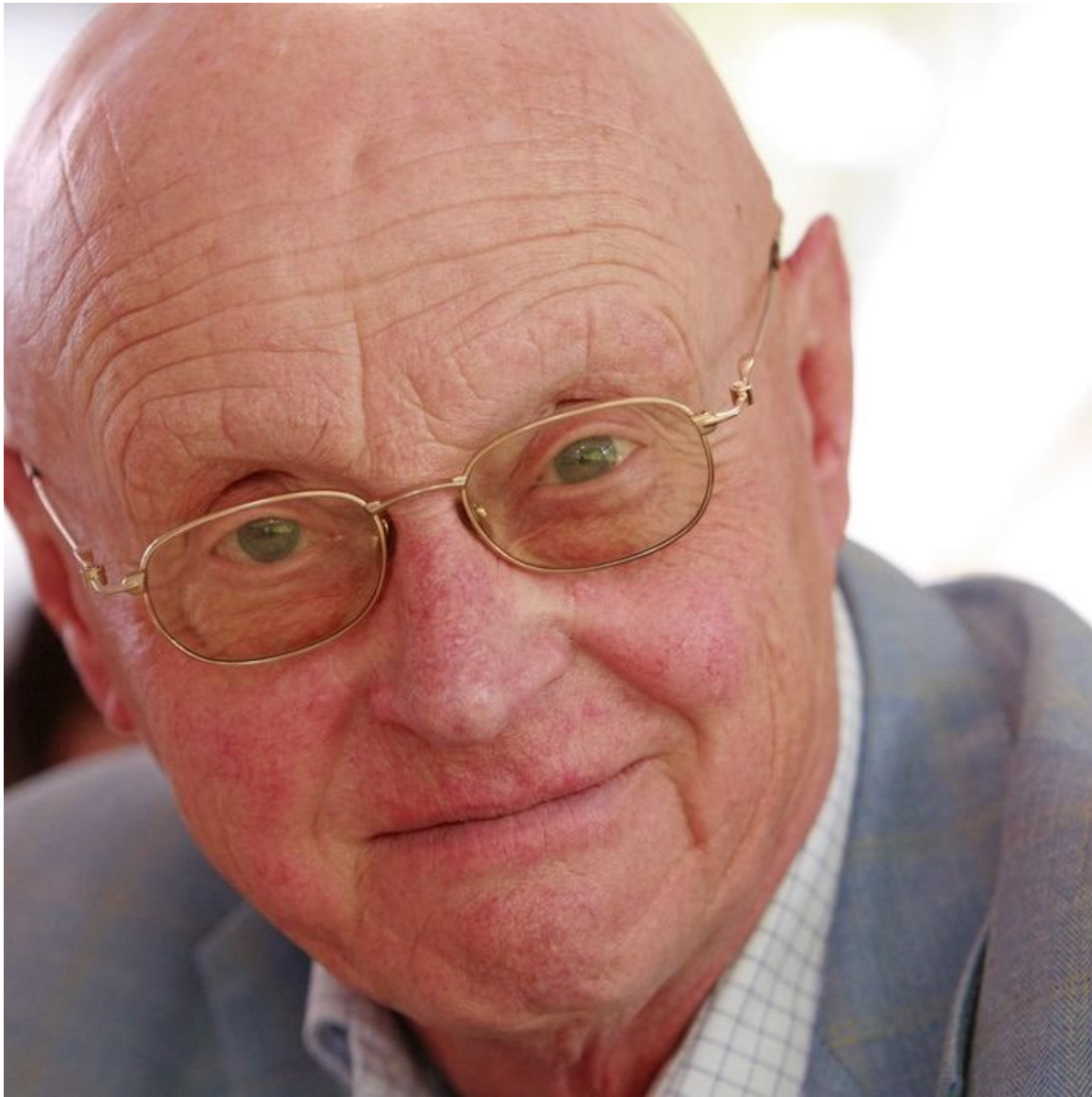
Some solutions may include:

- Promote bi-culturalism in youth-led activities
- Offer peer-to-peer cultural exchanges or activities
- Facilitate orientation for migrants in the new community to reduce culture shock
- Assist with inter-generational challenges that may occur from adjusting to or assimilating into a new culture
- Promote opportunities for migrants to get involved in community events
- Organise and host inter-faith celebrations or cultural festivals.



Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions





Geert Hofstede

- Geert Hofstede was a Dutch social psychologist (1928 – 2020)
- During the 1960's, Hofstede worked with IBM International
- He analyzed internal data which resulted in the development of [Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions.](#)



Cultural Dimensions

- The Cultural Dimensions Theory is used to understand the differences that exist in culture across countries.
- There are seven key dimensions which make up the Cultural Dimensions Theory.
- The framework helps to describe the effects that culture has on the values of individuals and how these values relate to the behaviour of people who live within a culture



The Dimensions

Power Distance

Uncertainty avoidance

Individualism-collectivism

Masculinity-femininity

Short vs. long term orientation

Restraint vs. indulgence

Hofstede's Dimension

Individualism and Collectivism





Power Distance

- The Power Distance Index (PDI) measures how people accept the unequal power distribution that exists in a society.



Power Distance

- Countries with a high PDI tend to have:
 - Centralised authorities
 - Clear hierarchical structures in place
 - Subordinates expect to be told what they have to do.
- Countries include:
 - Malaysia: High acceptance of hierarchical order without much questioning.
 - Mexico: Clear distinctions between levels of power and status.
 - Russia: Centralized power with less consultation from lower levels
- Countries with a low PDI tend to have:
 - Decentralised decision-making
 - Equality and accessible leaders
 - Subordinates who are consulted
- Countries include:
 - Denmark: Egalitarian approach, with flat organisational structures.
 - Sweden: Emphasis on equality and participative decision-making.
 - New Zealand: Low acceptance of inequality and hierarchical differences.



Uncertainty Avoidance

- Uncertainty Avoidance measures a society's tolerance for uncertainty and ambiguity.



Uncertainty Avoidance

- Countries with a high uncertainty avoidance tend to have:
 - A preference for formal rules and regulations
 - Low tolerance for risk-taking
 - Emphasis on job security.
- Countries include:
 - Greece: Preference for clear rules and stability.
 - Portugal: Low tolerance for uncertainty and high need for formal regulations.
 - Japan: High need for predictability and structured conditions.
- Countries with a low uncertainty avoidance tend to have:
 - More relaxed attitudes towards uncertainty
 - Acceptance of risk and change
 - Flexible working environments.
- Countries include:
 - Singapore: Open to innovation and less constrained by rules.
 - Denmark: Comfortable with ambiguity and flexible in planning.
 - Jamaica: Relaxed attitude towards uncertainty and risk-taking.



Individualism vs. Collectivism

- The individualism vs. collectivism measure reflects the degree of interdependence amongst members in a given society.

Individualism vs. Collectivism

- Countries with a high individualism measure tend to support:
 - An overarching emphasis on personal achievements
 - The rights and privacy measures for individuals are of utmost importance
 - Loose ties between individuals within the society
- Countries include:
 - United States: Strong emphasis on individual rights and personal achievement.
 - Australia: High value placed on individual freedom and self-reliance.
 - United Kingdom: Importance of personal goals and individual decisions.
- Countries with a high collectivism measure tend to support:
 - Strong group cohesion in society
 - Loyalty within society and group obligations
 - An emphasis on the family and on community.
- Countries include:
 - China: Strong emphasis on group loyalty and collective well-being.
 - Indonesia: Family and community are prioritized over individual goals.
 - South Korea: High value on harmonious group relationships and consensus.



Short vs. Long Term Orientation

- The short term vs. long term orientation reflects the attitude of the society towards time and considers their time horizon (where they look to).

Short vs. Long Term Orientation

- Countries with a short-term orientation tend to:
 - Focus on the past and present
 - Respect tradition
 - Place emphasis on quick results and social obligations.
- Countries include:
 - United States: Emphasis on quick results and present achievements.
 - Mexico: Focus on traditions and fulfilling social obligations.
 - Philippines: Strong respect for historical continuity and short-term goals.
- Countries with a long-term orientation tend to support:
 - Focus on future rewards
 - Persist and thrift to succeed into the future
 - Adapt their behaviours and take pragmatic approaches.
- Countries include:
 - China: Focus on future rewards and perseverance.
 - Japan: Value placed on long-term planning and sustained efforts.
 - South Korea: Emphasis on thrift and long-term success.



Indulgence vs. Restraint

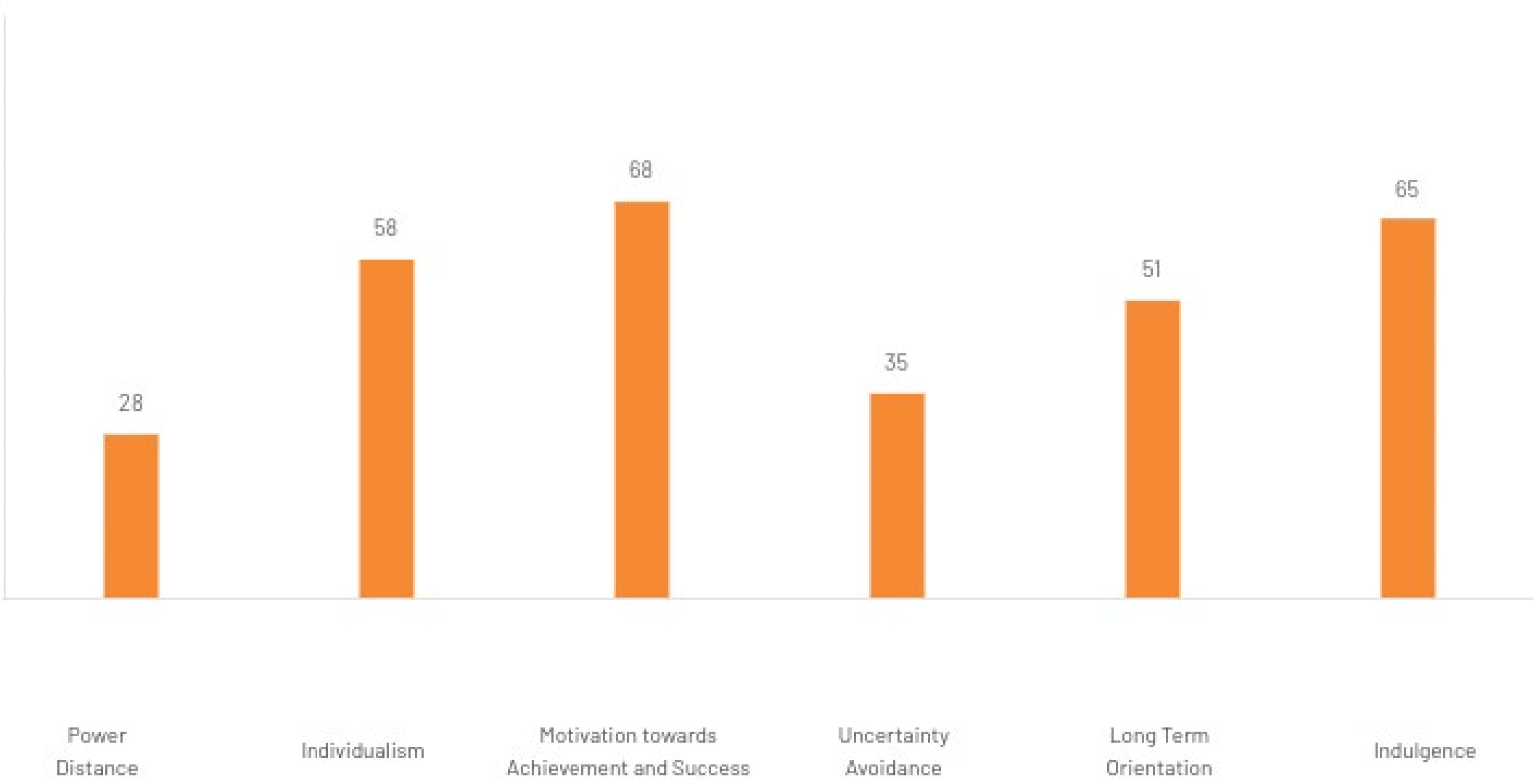
- The indulgence vs. restraint measure considers the degree of freedom that society allows when supporting individuals to gratify their human desires.

Indulgence vs. Restraint

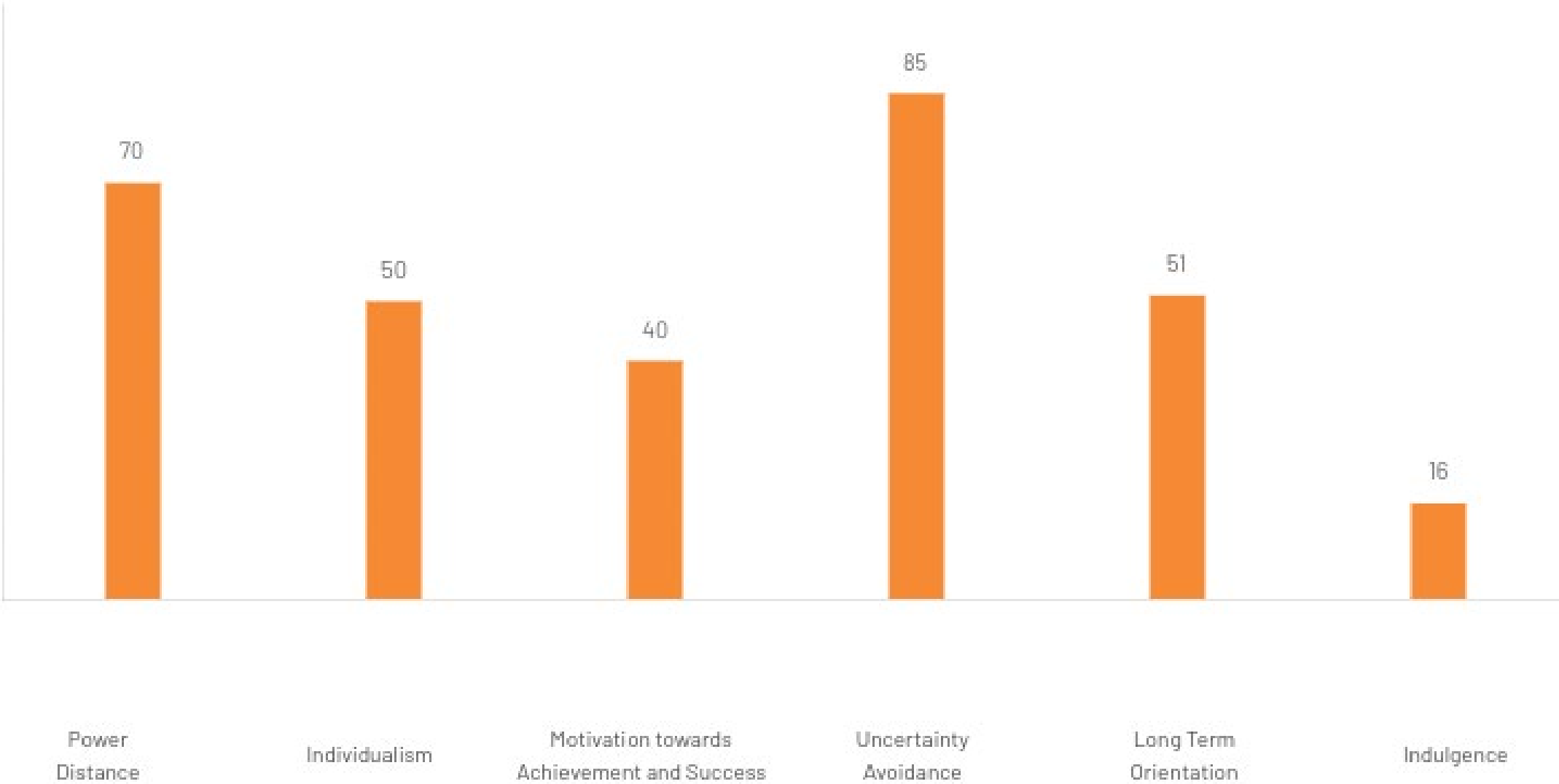
- Countries which are more indulgent tend to promote:
 - Free gratification of basic and natural human drives
 - Enjoyment of life and having fun
 - A positive attitude and optimism.
- Countries include:
 - Mexico: Enjoyment of life and importance of leisure time.
 - Sweden: High value on freedom of expression and personal happiness.
 - Australia: Positive attitude towards life and indulgence in leisure.
- Countries which are more restraining tend to promote:
 - A suppression and regulation of gratification
 - Strict social norms
 - Pessimism and cynicism
- Countries include
 - Russia: Controlled gratification and strict social norms.
 - China: Regulation of personal desires and restricted indulgence.
 - Egypt: Emphasis on social norms and suppression of immediate gratification.



Ireland

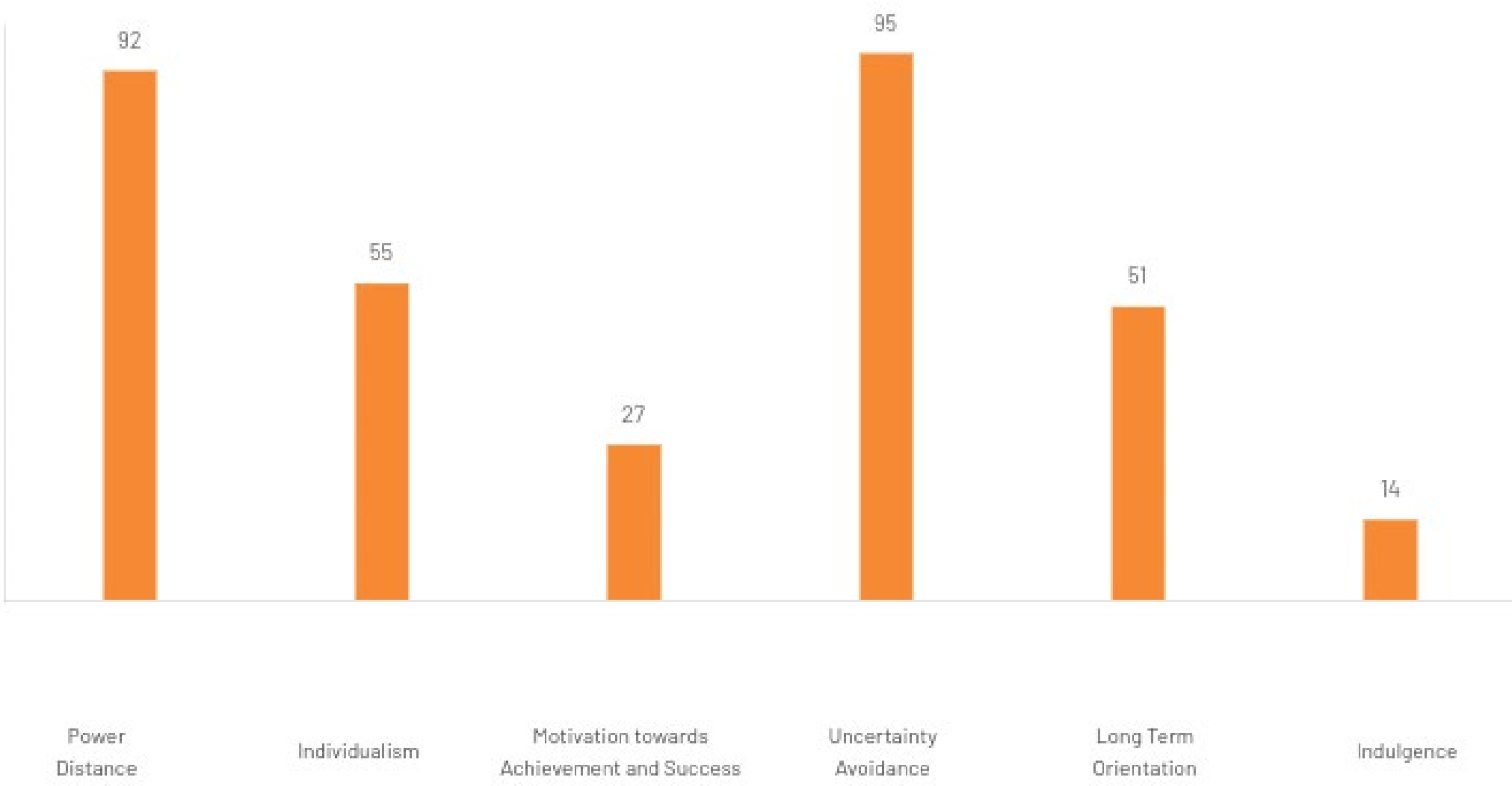


Bulgaria





Ukraine





Cultural Role-Playing Scenarios

Scenario 1 - Power Distance

You are a youth worker trying to get a migrant from a high power distance culture (such as Bulgaria) to express their opinions in a youth meeting. They seem hesitant to disagree with you or authority figures. You want to encourage more active participation and open discussion.

How do you handle the situation to make the young person feel more comfortable?

Scenario 2 - Individualism vs. Collectivism

You are organising a community project where young migrants and local youth will work together. One of the young migrants is from a collectivist culture (e.g., Ukraine) and prefers working in groups, while another participant from an individualistic culture (e.g., Ireland) prefers working independently. Both are struggling to agree on how to approach the project.

How can you support them in working together effectively?

Scenario 3 - Masculinity vs. Femininity

You are facilitating a discussion about career aspirations with a group of young migrants. A young woman from a more feminine culture (e.g., Sweden) expresses interest in pursuing a career in social work or healthcare, while a young man from a masculine culture (e.g., Ukraine) feels pressured to pursue a career in engineering or business, even though he is interested in the arts.

How do you facilitate a discussion that respects their cultural backgrounds while encouraging each person to pursue their passions?

Scenario 4 - Uncertainty Avoidance

You are planning a youth trip where young migrants will engage in outdoor activities like hiking and camping. One of the young people from a high uncertainty avoidance culture (e.g., Greece) is very anxious about the lack of structure and the unpredictability of the trip. They ask you for a detailed schedule and express concern about the risks involved. How do you ease their concerns and help them feel more comfortable with the trip?

Scenario 5 - Long-Term vs. Short-Term Orientation

A young migrant from a long-term oriented culture (e.g., China) is very focused on future goals and seems uninterested in short-term activities, such as volunteering or community events, which they see as distractions from their long-term education and career plans. However, you are trying to encourage them to engage in these activities to build their social connections and integrate into the local community. How do you convince them that these short-term activities have value?

Scenario 6 - Indulgence vs. Restraint

You are organising a community event for young migrants and locals that involves games, food, and entertainment. A young migrant from a restraint -oriented culture (e.g., Bulgaria) seems reluctant to join in the fun and expresses discomfort with the idea of "wasting time" on leisure activities.

Meanwhile, other participants from indulgent cultures (e.g., Ireland) are fully embracing the event and encouraging everyone to participate. How do you encourage the young person to engage in a way that respects their cultural perspective but helps them integrate socially?

Debriefing Questions:

How did the cultural dimension influence the young person's behavior?

What strategies did you use to address the situation?

How can understanding this dimension help us support young people more effectively in real-life situations?



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Module 4

Economic Integration and Empowerment

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What to expect

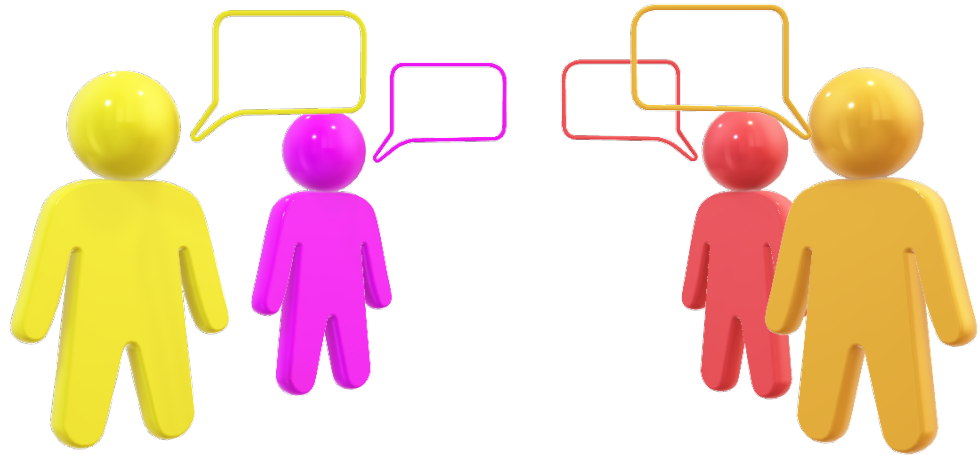
- The aim of module 4 is to equip you with the tools and insights that you will need to effectively support migrants in their economic integration in their new country.

- Recognise economic challenges faced by migrants when integrating into the labour market
- Examine methods to integrate young people into communities through employment opportunities

By the end of this module, you will be able to



Migrants face unique economic challenges
when trying to integrate into a new country



1. Language Barriers



Language Skills

- Language barriers can hinder the migrants' ability to navigate the labour market in their host country
- By offering language classes or coffee mornings, you can significantly enhance the economic prospects of young people that you work with.



2. Recognition of their qualifications



Qualifications and Talents

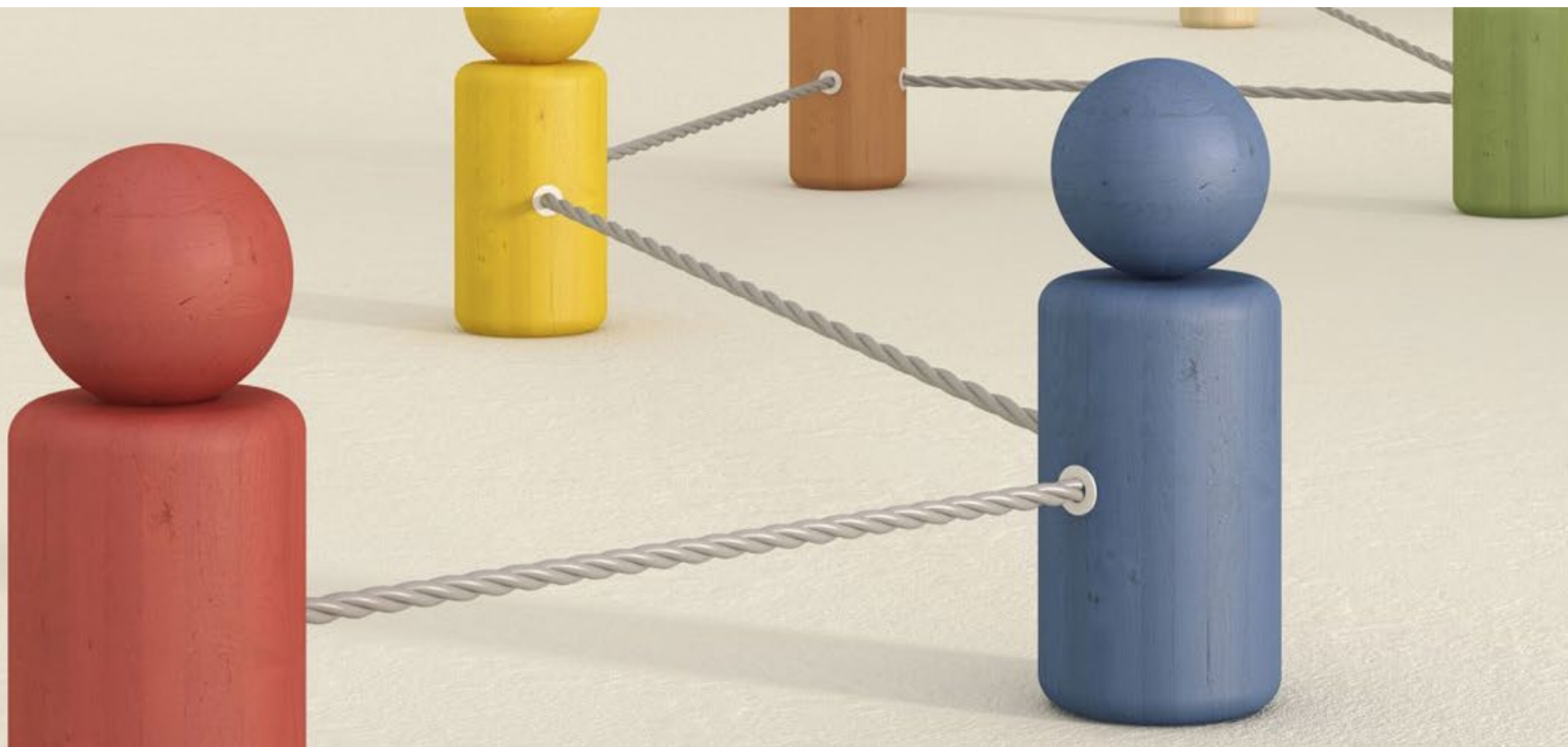
- When accessing the labour market, employers often staff with essential qualifications.
- [NARIC Ireland](#) provides advice on the academic recognition of foreign qualifications.
- [The National Centre for Information and Documentation \(NACID\)](#) in Bulgaria supports this process.



3. A lack of social connections

A lack of social connections

- References and recommendations play an important role in helping us to secure a job.
- What would you do if there was no one that you could call?





4. Financial Literacy

Financial Literacy



- Navigating a new country with a new currency can be challenging
- Often migrants struggle with budgeting, banking, taxes, and financial services that are available to them.
- How do you best support them?



Can you think of any other challenges that they face?



Employment Support



Job Search Assistance

Once settled many migrants often need help and support in looking for work in their local communities.



Useful European websites include

- [Eures](#)
- [Eurojobs](#)
- [European Language Jobs](#)



Action Plan

- Encourage young people to develop individualized action plans using SMART goals
- Through setting Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound goals, it supports them to be accountable for their actions.
- Providing follow-up opportunities will enable them to ask for help or clarifications if required.



Skill Development

- Supporting migrants to develop their skills is important to their economic integration
- To do this, we can
 - Identify their skills gaps
 - Facilitate access to training programmes
 - Provide them with courses for the development of their skills.



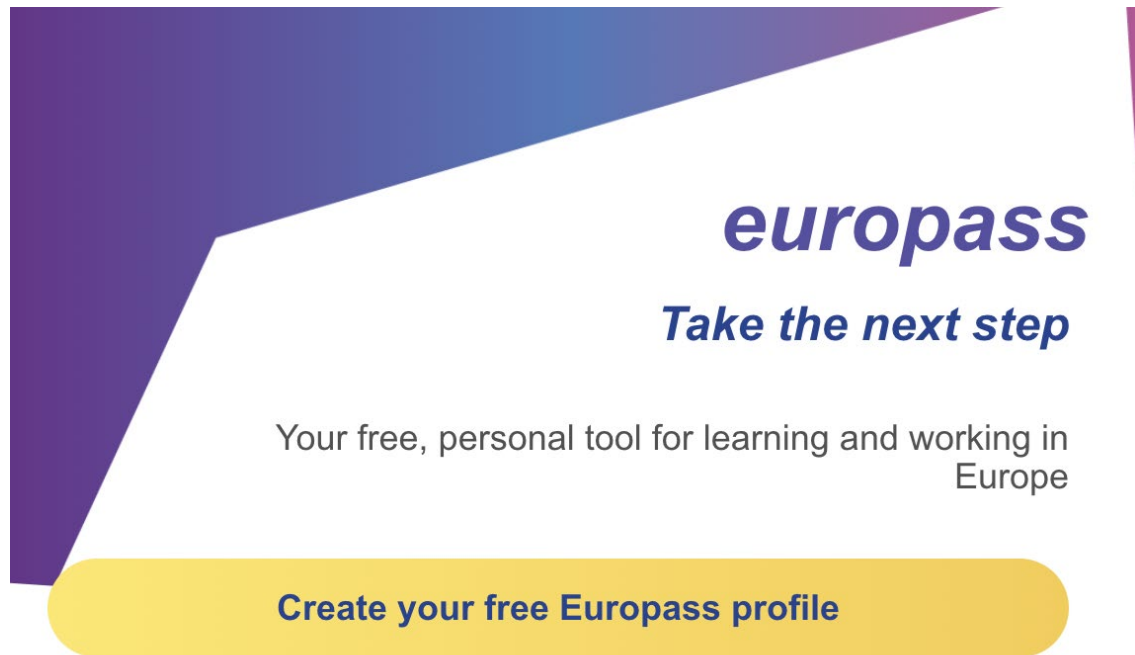
europass

Take the next step

Your free, personal tool for learning and working in
Europe

Create your free Europass profile

The Europass CV

The image shows a promotional graphic for Europass. It features a purple and blue gradient background on the left side. The word "europass" is written in a bold, blue, lowercase sans-serif font. Below it, the tagline "Take the next step" is written in a smaller, blue, italicized sans-serif font. Underneath the tagline, the text "Your free, personal tool for learning and working in Europe" is displayed in a smaller, grey, sans-serif font. At the bottom, there is a yellow rounded rectangular button with the text "Create your free Europass profile" in a blue, sans-serif font.

europass


Take the next step

Your free, personal tool for learning and working in Europe

Create your free Europass profile

The Europass CV

- An initiative of the EU, the Europass CV is a free template that can be used in 31 EU languages.
- In 2024, there were more than 5 million registered users of the Europass CV.

A graphic for the Europass logo featuring a purple-to-blue gradient shape on the left and a white area on the right containing text.

europass
Take the next step

Your free, personal tool for learning and working in
Europe

Create your free Europass profile

Create your Europass CV

- Visit the website:
<https://europa.eu/europass/en>



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Module 5

WebQuests for Civic, Social and Economic Integration & Empowerment

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What to expect

Module five aims to

1. present and examine the structure of a WebQuest
2. support you to develop a micro-WebQuest that you can use in your youth work setting.

WEBQUEST



What is a WebQuest?



WebQuests

- WebQuests were designed by Bernie Dodge in 1995.
- They are inquiry-orientated educational tools that are based online.
- WebQuests are constructivist in their nature so they help learners to make their own meaning from their learning.
- When developed, a WebQuest harnesses the power of the internet to focus the attention of the learner on information.



Using WebQuests in a Youth Setting



WebQuests ...

- Focus the attention of young people on a particular subject area or task
- Develop the capacity of young people to use the internet to search for information
- Can be as long or as short as you wish and can be incremental in their difficulty level
- Empower a young person to be active in their own learning.



The Structure of a WebQuest



4

WebQuests

There are four main sections of a WebQuest

1. The Introduction
2. The Task
3. The Process
4. The Evaluation.



The Introduction

- Reflect on what topic are you currently working on in your practice.
- The introduction section of a WebQuest allows you to provide some background information to the learners.
- In this section, you can present some of the key themes, vocabulary, issues or concepts that the WebQuest will deal with.



The Task

- A WebQuest is action-orientated.
- In completing a WebQuest, learners will have to develop, produce or create an output – such as a poster, a podcast, an email.
- In this second section, the task (activity) should be clearly defined and realistic to complete.
- It will be a call-to-action for the young person.
- **Top tip**: Set real-world tasks that the learners can complete such as complete a CV rather than create hypothetical tasks.



The Process

- Step 3 is the "doing" step of the WebQuest.
- Key information is presented alongside links for additional reading or watching to help the young person to learn more about the topic in a logical and guided way.
- Within step 3 are sub-tasks which each have their own call-to-action or "mini-tasks", such as jot down information, call a friend, or, make a poster.



4

The Evaluation

- The final stage of the WebQuest is measuring the new knowledge acquired by the young people.
- Ask questions or provide quizzes based on information that was provided within the WebQuest.
- Try to provide opportunities for self-evaluation and thought-provoking questions.



Developing a WebQuest



When developing a WebQuest

- **Start at the end** – what do you want your young people to achieve / create / do by the end of the WebQuest?
- **Work backwards** – find resources and information that can help you to achieve this goal.
- **Finish at the start** – once you have found links and information, extract some of the key information and statistics and create the introduction section.



Tips for creating a WebQuest

- A WebQuest is an online tool so open a Word Document File and split it into four sections.
- If your learners are more visual learners, include some photographs or interactive elements to make the WebQuest more appealing for them.



Create your own
WebQuest



Tips for creating a WebQuest

1. identify a topic that would work well with the young people that they are working with,
2. provide a solution to the challenges that they are facing,
3. create an introduction (50-words)
4. create a task (20-words)
5. provide at least 2 different web based resources that will help the young people to tackle the challenge
6. offer one evaluation question.



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What to expect

Module six aims to

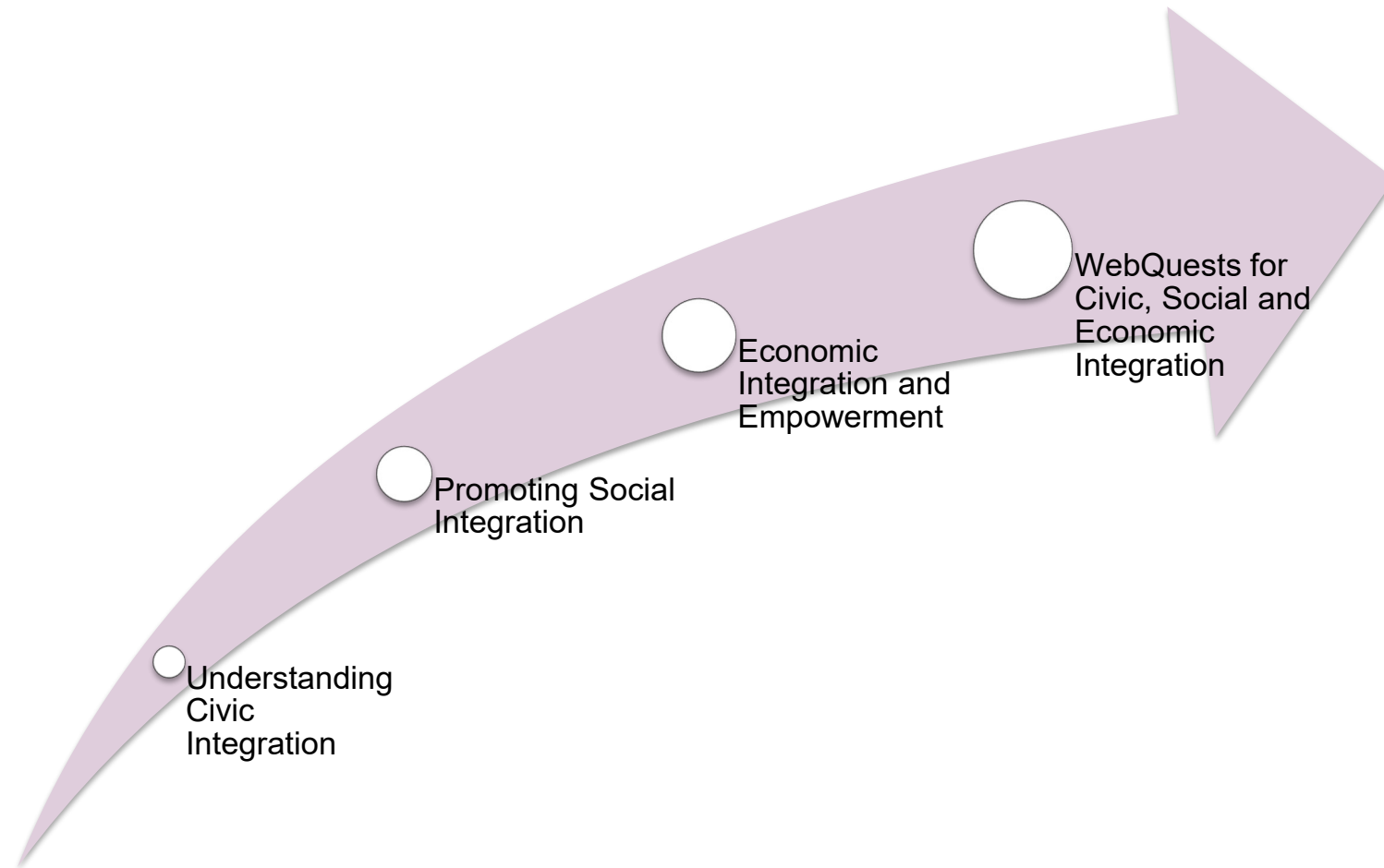
1. Provide a safe space for youth workers to debrief on the training programme.

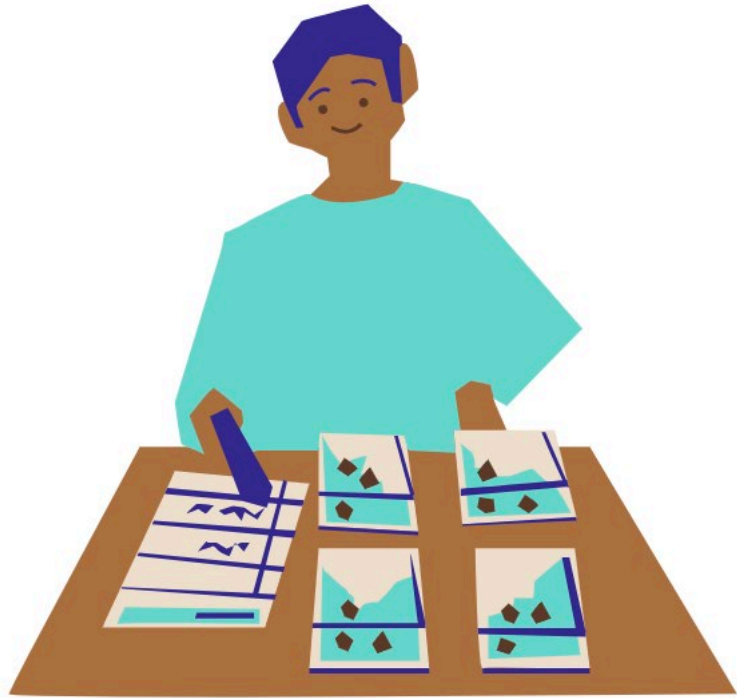
WEBQUEST





The training programme covered







What was the most
challenging part of this
training programme?



What will you bring
forward into your practice?



What behaviours or attitudes do you currently practice that you aim to leave behind?



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