Each of us is a member of a multitude of groups. Some of these are smaller, and we know the other members: our volley-ball team, classmates, group of friends, etc. And some groups are so large that we don't have any chance of actually knowing all the other members, yet we can still sense, or imagine these groups that we tag with labels like: "women" or "the French". Small or big, "real" or "imagined' all group membership has an impact on us:

- How we define ourselves (our identity) : how we think, feel, behave.
- How we understand, evaluate and respond to others.
- How others understand, evaluate and respond to us.

In this section we'll explore what it means to be a member of groups in an intercultural context from four different angles. First, we'll look at what it really means to be members of groups. Second, we'll explore cross-cultural differences in relating to groups. Third, we'll consider intergroup dynamics: what happens when people of different groups interact. Finally, we'll explore changes in group memberships or group identities. And of course, we'll do this exploration through the incidents we have collected.

What is group membership?

Some of our group memberships are results of choice and conscious action (like getting inscribed to a sport club) while others seem to just happen to us, as if we were just 'born into' them: to be white, French, woman. Precisely because they are less conscious, they come to us from the society where we are, they are given to us, these latter are more interesting, because their influence is subtle and often unseen. But we're not quite 'born' into any groups, instead we are 'socialised' or 'enculturated" into them. Whether or not it is a chosen group we learn to become members, we acquire the values, the norms and the behaviour corresponding to these groups. The incident "Whatsapp jokes" (ES) gives us an example of how this learning is happening: for the young man animating the youth camp group identity is forged through a whatsapp group, where they are continuously in contact and bonding established by telling each-other sexist jokes.

| « WHITE » ? | « BLACK » ? |

The process whereby we identify ourselves or others as members of a group is called categorization. According to researchers a first automatic categorization happens through a fraction of a second, along age, ethnicity and gender (Fiske 1998). Categorisation implies that we are exaggerating the differences between groups to the expense of differences within. In order to create the categories of "Blacks" and "Whites" for instance we have to sacrifice all the nuances of beige and brown. In our critical incident "Sound system" (FR), the young man from Algeria feels as "one group" with the Egyptian youth worker , despite differences in roles, employment status etc.

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Cross-cultural differences in relating to groups

One of the first discoveries of comparative cross-cultural psychology was that in some societies belonging to groups is more valued than in others. Indeed, we can distinguish societies according to their orientation towards individualism or collectivism (interdependence).

Individualism: Preference for a loosely-knit social framework in which individuals are expected to take care of only themselves and their immediate families. Its opposite, collectivism, represents a preference for a tightly-knit framework in society in which individuals can expect their relatives or members of a particular in-group to look after them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty. A society's position on this dimension is reflected in to what extent people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "we." (Hofstede 1998)

This individualist vs interdependent orientation is not merely an abstract, theoretical concept, it can affect the way we behave and can generate culture shocks. For one, babies of individualistic parents tend to sleep in separate beds and separate bedrooms. Or, from our own collection, the incident "McDonalds" (FR) is told by a youth worker who became friends with some of the Senegalese participants. The young men believed that the youth worker was wealthier than them, and so, expected her to pay for their entrances to the dance club: when one has resources, it is normal to share them with the group. Not so much for the youth worker, for whom private property and personal responsibility and autonomy are more valued.

Intergroup dynamics: how to treat the other groups?

Whether we're individualists or collectivists, belonging is a core motive for everyone (Fiske). This implies that we often look for the company of people similar to us, merely because we enjoy the comfort zone. What's more, we are also motivated to occasionally positively discriminate our group, to prioritize "us" before "the

other ones". Negative attitudes do not merely emerge based on visual markers of difference, nationality or religion, but basically along any line of differentiation. People may feel some groups can pose a symbolic threat to their sense of morality (e.g. the "deviant", those with different sexual orientation or family arrangement can threaten their preferred version of sexual behaviour or family). Developing negative attitudes and stereotypes[1] can act as a protection against these symbolic threats. Accordingly, any label as poor people, unemployed or homeless are labels that attract substantial negative stereotypes and prejudice, leading to the observation that social class or poverty may generate more cultural distance than divisions of nationality in precise moment where other labels can be more predominant in other contexts, see the concept of intersectionality https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Intersectionality[2]   In our collection, we found

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[1] You can find in annexe the definitions of the different automatisms and biases such as stereotype, prejudice, racism etc.

[2] For a deeper exploration of this issue see the concept of intersectionality https://web.archive.org/web/20120223222021/
http://www.caen.iufm.fr/colloque_iartem/pdf/knudsen.pdf)

manifestations of prejudice on the basis of sexual orientation ("He's a girl" (NL) or "Predator" (HU)) and religion ("We do not match" (HU) "Religion is impoartant to me"(HU), "Radicalisation" (ES)).

Understanding differences, compensating for power asymmetries

Youth workers who are prepared and trained to face intercultural situations know that they need to take into account cultural differences. They can do this by awareness and application of some form of cultural relativity, which helps them decentre[3], and realise that a particular behaviour does not have the same meaning for them as for the members of the other group. But such relativization can sometimes trigger conflict with their own values of references and also with one's co-nationals, especially when the subject is connected to some sensitive zone. This is what happens in the situation "Eritrean band" (NL) where a band gets banned from playing in a cultural event because the content that they put on their Facebook page is considered as inappropriate in the Dutch setting. The conflict also divides the youth workers, part of whom sides with the Eritrean band and part with the Dutch colleague objecting to their inclusion.

Members of the dominant group are not always aware of the power dynamics playing in their favour and can resent the youth workers' attempts of re-establishing equality or empowering the minority groups. We see this happen in the situation "You are the colonizer" (HU) where a German participant does not understand why the youth worker wishes to give a Palestinian group the possibility to initiate and teach something to the others.

Changes of group identity: adaptation, acculturation

Members of minorities and migrants spending extended time periods within dominant groups other than their own are entrained to a process of adaptation or acculturation[4]. One of the most cited models explaining acculturation strategies is the one proposed by Berry in 1987. For its wide acceptance, Berry's model[5] is reproduced below.

		Is it important to maintain connections with members of the original society?	
		YES	NO
Is it important to create connections with members of the host society?	YES	INTEGRATION	ASSIMILATION
	NO	SEPARATION	MARGINALISATION

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[3] For further information about « decentring » and activities that focus on learning "decentring" please see our TOOLKIT https://intimacyacrosscultures.eu/cultural-diversity-in-intimacy-and-relationships/#

[4] In some literature "acculturation" is used to refer to the full set of changes that people undergo through extended contact with another cultural group, while others use it to refer to the changes in cultural identity. We'll use it in the larger sense, that is more compatible with the observation that emotional reactions, behaviour change and identity change are closely related.

[5] We are adapting Berry's model as proposed in his 1980's article

The model classifies the acculturation strategies of migrants and minority members based on their answers to two questions: "Is it important to engage in relations with members of the new society?" and "Is it valued to maintain relations with members of the original cultural group?" From these two questions, a matrix of four acculturation strategies emerges: integration, segregation, assimilation and marginalisation.

Are people free to choose their strategies? The choice of acculturation strategy is not necessarily a conscious one, nor is it very autonomous. Updates of Berry's model (1997) show that the host society has a strong impact on what strategies are available for minority members. For instance, France traditionally favours the assimilation path, facilitating learning the French language and cultural codes, but does not put emphasis on cultivating the "culture of origin". This leaning towards the assimilation strategy is apparent in the national programmes and subsidies available for migrants and the official discourse. This however does not mean that all French nationals or even youth workers would abide by this discourse. In fact, in the situation "Don't follow the Ramadan" (FR) what we see is precisely the clash between the different representations of integration of two youth workers.

There is a fair amount of agreement in literature, that out of these four strategies, integration should be the "winner". But the situation is not so black and white. Clearly, marginalisation is the most undesirable. Consisting in taking a distance from the culture of origin and the host culture, it implies, discriminations, a loss of social connection and has often been associated with psychosomatic and adjustment disorders (Berry, 1997). Separation implies a retreat in the original social cultural group to the expense of connections with members of other groups. This strategy clearly has some advantages in the short term: the safety zone offers a necessary buffer in the new environment. But in the long term it is an obstacle to learning from the new environment and functionally adapting to it. This strategy has been associated with neuroticism, anxiety and psychoticism, cardiovascular problems, as well as addiction to drugs and alcohol (Schmitz, 1992). Assimilation occurs when individuals reject their minority culture and adopt the cultural norms of the dominant or host culture. People who assimilate seek daily interaction with the members of the dominant target culture, and their ambition is to become accepted as part of this outgroup. Among other things, assimilation has been associated with a weakening of the immune system (Schmitz 1992) and it is often reported to bring about higher levels of acculturation stress and dissatisfaction (e.g. LaFromboise 1993:397).. Integration leads to and is often synonymous with biculturalism. In this case, one identifies with both cultures in a positive way. If integration is found to correlate with both a sense of change and development and more satisfaction with the mobility experience (MOMAP 2013), it is not a simple strategy, as illustrated by the "In Between" (NL) situation. The Syrian youth worker living in the Netherlands experiences a loyalty crisis when he has to settle a conflict between Dutch and Syrian residents of the youth accommodation centre. Both expect loyalty from him, but he cannot be loyal to both at the same time. Or the same conflict appears in "Hot dress" (NL) where the Dutch protagonist faces her binary identity positions; she belongs to two different cultural communities. Her husband is a Muslim man. When she is with the family of her husband she follows the values of her Islamic family. In the classroom incident the two cultures create the conflict and she is frozen because she cannot be loyal to both of them.

Camilleri's research (1998) on identity strategies goes further, it shows a variety of tensions that can arise when there are contradictions in the value systems, norms and practices of the original and target

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cultures. The code-shifting is often used when there are conflicts between the two value systems. In the situation "Boyfriend" (NL) for instance we can see that the Syrian protagonist learns to be very open about his gay identity amongst the Dutch colleagues, while keeps it hidden from the Syrians, for whom it may be a taboo.

Extending a bit Berry's bi-dimensional models we could have a better measure of the full complexity of the acculturation processes. People can't be really reduced to their one national identity, instead they are members of a multitude of groups simultaneously, resulting in a kaleidoscope of identities which are all subject to change and transformation during long term interaction with others (the way we are men / women / youth workers / young or old etc..).

This same multiplicity has also a message of optimism: whoever we meet, it is likely that amongst the many group identities we have we can have some common ones. And if we are able to move beyond the obvious dimensions of differentiations and the rigidity of closing each other in the separate boxes we might as well build on the common floor.

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List of incidents

Title	Country
He's a girl !	NL
In between	NL
Naked	FR
Predator in the training	HU
Radicalization	ES
Ramadan	FR
Religion is important to me	HU
Should not have paid	HU
Sound system	FR
What a drag	ES
The boyfriend	NL
The Eritrean Band	NL
We do not match	HU
Whatsapp jokes	ES
You are the colonizer	HU

ANNEXES

Stereotypes: refer to the application of one's own ideas, associations, and expectations towards a group or an individual member of that group. There is an inference on the person based on his/her group membership, which can be either positive or negative. Stereotypes are a form of scheme, naïve theory which make the complexity of the world easier to cope with. Fiske (2010)

Prejudice: is present when our emotional reaction to a person is solely based on our feelings towards the social / cultural group of that person. An individual behaves in a prejudicial manner when he or she has an emotional reaction to another individual or group of individuals based on preconceived ideas about the individual or group (Fiske, 2010).

Racism: is a form of intergroup reaction (including thoughts, feelings and behaviours) that systematically advantages one's own group and/or disadvantages another group defined by racial difference. (Dovidio et al 2013). The ideology underlying racist practices often includes the thought that humans can be subdivided into distinct groups that are different in their social behaviour or skills, capacities and that these differences
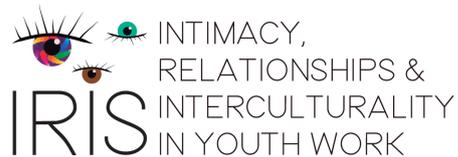
can be traced back to genetics (they are inherited characteristics). Based on these differentiations the groups can then be ranked as inferior or superior.

Discrimination: Discrimination is the denial of equal rights based on prejudices and stereotypes (Fiske, 2010). Discrimination differs from prejudice and stereotyping, in that it is not a belief, but rather the application of beliefs (Fiske, 2010), an unequal distribution of rights and privileges.

Ethnocentrism: etymologically "being centred on one's people" is first of all a cognitive process, referring to the incapacity of recognising cultural difference, of creating precise representations of what does not resemble oneself.   This cognitive process slides very quickly into an affective one, resulting in the negative evaluation and hierarchisation as inferior ('vulgar" "sexist" "disrespectful" etc.). (Cohen-Emerique 2015:103)

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