

intercultural encounter



objective of the activity

To introduce the participants of the training using some basic conversation elements in different languages.

introduction

An EWC is by definition a group of people coming from a wide variety of European countries, speaking a multitude of languages. Overcoming this language barrier is one of the prerequisites for becoming an efficient and coherent body of workers representatives. In most cases, interpreters play a crucial role during official meetings. Sometimes it is decided to use only one corporate language, usually English. Whatever the practical organisation may be, many EWC-members are forced to speak a language other than their mother tongue. If not during the plenary sessions, then surely during the informal contacts between meetings.

Even though most people manage to express themselves in either English, French or German, it is a matter of basic courtesy to at least be able to say hello in the language of your colleagues. It promotes social cohesion and it is just good fun as well.

task

Organise yourselves in pairs, preferably with a partner whose mother tongue you do not know yet. Find a quiet place where you take 10 minutes each to introduce yourselves to each other and to learn how to say this in the language of your partner. Next, you will be asked to present yourself in the plenary session in this foreign language.

Use these five standard sentences (*) :

- Good morning / good afternoon.
- My name is (*name*) and I come from (*country*).
- I have been a member of the European Works Council for (*number*) years/months.
- I work for (*company name*) and my job is (*job title*).
- Thank you and good luck.

(*) For the sake of the exercise, these sentences are mentioned in English only.