

# IO3 VAMOS TRAINING COURSE

**Expert in migrants' labour and social inclusion**

MODULE: 1 SOCIAL COMPETENCES & COMMUNICATION

Unit 7\_ Stereotypes & prejudices: Recognise the bias



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## MODULE: 1 SOCIAL COMPETENCES & COMMUNICATION



# Unit 7: Stereotypes & prejudices: Recognise the bias

BY the end of this Unit you should

01

Identify a stereotype.

02

Know problems but also benefits of stereotypes.

03

Know how to relax when speaking in front of an audience

UNIT 7  
GOALS

# Stereotypes & prejudices: Recognise the bias

- A stereotype refers to beliefs that certain attributes, characteristics, and behaviors are typical of all the members of a particular group of people.
- People use to categorize social groups often based on visible features, that provide the largest differentiation among groups of people (for example, skin colour, gender, age).
- Stereotypes are usually built based on direct personal experiences or, more commonly, from other people's.
- Media has a large influence on stereotype formation when we have limited opportunities for meaningful exchange with people from outside our social group.

# The benefits of stereotypes

- The human brain has a natural tendency to categorise everything. Our brain is continuously bombarded with a lot of stimuli.
- For that reason, we need an efficient method of making sense of all this information, to not overload our brain.
- Categorising people helps us to navigate our social world more efficiently.
- Social categorisation provides a sense of order and predictability that we can rely on to guide our interactions with others.



# The danger of the single story

- Stereotypes, these are nothing but stories which have been told over and over again in time.
- Using the words of the writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, and her TED talk about the danger of the single story lies: *“show people as one thing, as only one thing, [...] and that is what they become”*.
- The danger behind stereotypes, is not whether they are true or false, positive or negative, but that they are incomplete.
- They are, at best, fragments of a perceived reality; but a single story can soon turn into the only one.
- The problem is that single stories told by stereotypes can, open the doors to forms of discrimination, defraudation, and even dehumanisation.



Here you can check the video

# The problems with stereotypes

## ▷ Socially-constructed

Some stereotypes are informed generalisations about a group of people. Many stereotypes are invalid when they are based on race, religion, or gender. Stereotypes can be problematic and counter-productive when working with diverse people.

## ▷ Arbitrary

Stereotypes are arbitrary ways of categorising individuals.

Stereotypes might not accurately represent the characteristics of a particular member of that group.

## ▷ Biased

Research shows that we believe individuals from the same social group to be more similar than they really are.

We also tend to exaggerate the differences between social groups.

Researchers also report bias in our categorisations of out-groups and in-groups. Out-groups are social groups to which we do not perceive ourselves as belonging. In-groups are the social groups with which we most identify. We perceive members of out-group members as sharing similar characteristics, but we think of in-group members as having unique characteristics and attributes.

# Differences in the tendency to stereotype

- Researchers have demonstrated that individuals with a greater need for control are more likely to use stereotypes.
- In addition, when we have limited mental resources available for making sense of our social environment, we rely more on stereotypes to make judgements and guide our behaviours.
- Reliance on stereotypes is more pronounced when we are distracted by another mentally taxing task, or when we are under emotional or physiological stress.



# What to do then when stereotypes and prejudice come up?

- Confronting with and reacting to stereotypes and prejudice is not an easy job, as it requires reflection, self-criticism and adjustment before practical action.
- It is difficult to admit that we all use stereotypes and prejudice in our everyday lives, whether consciously or not.
- This self-reflective process should entail a set of introspective questions, such as: “*when do I use stereotypes? What groups do I apply stereotypes to? In which contexts? With whom? Am I objective or emotional in judging others? What message am I trying to transmit by using them? And more.*”
- Secondly, it is vital to be able to individuate explicit and implicit forms of stereotyping and prejudgment.
- Finally, the last step is to challenge them by empathically considering all the stories of a particular person or place.



# Activity: Don't Put People in Boxes

- ▶ Watch this video and after make to yourself the following questions:



- ▶ Have you ever felt that someone put you in a box?
- ▶ What happened?
- ▶ Did you feel offended?

# Bibliography:

- ▷ Dice Training Manual <https://cesie.org/en/resources/dice-training-manual/>
- ▷ <https://cultureplusconsulting.com/2015/05/24/unconscious-bias-stereotypes-prejudice-discrimination/>
- ▷ [https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda\\_ngozi\\_adichie\\_the\\_danger\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_story/transcript?language=es](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story/transcript?language=es)

# Thanks!



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