

## December 2010

**BRIDGE-IT (Be Relevant to Intercultural Diversity Generation in Europe Integration Team) invites service providers, working within bureaucratic institutions, to “be relevant”, that is, to reflect on their current communicative behaviour within multicultural settings with a view of transforming attitudes and behaviour. Rather than cultural melting pots, BRIDGE-IT advocates for communities where different cultures and languages co-exist in a dynamic and dialectic relationship.**

### BRIDGE-IT Partners

- <http://www.unipg.it>
- <http://www.club-austrialia.info>
- <http://www.erasmushogeschool.be>
- <http://www.f-bb.de>
- <http://www.keyandkey.it>
- <http://www.um.edu.mt>
- <http://www.hszuyd.nl>
- <http://www.est.edu.pl>
- <http://yozgat.meb.gov.tr>

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<http://bridge-it.communicationproject.eu>

## Newsletter One

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## From SPICES to e-SPICES to BRIDGE-IT ... a long way

European contexts are becoming increasingly multicultural, and daily events show that we still do not possess enough communication tools in order to interact adequately and constructively in this rapidly changing society. This is particularly evident sometimes in dramatic fashion in bureaucratic-institutional situations in which foreigners interact with service providers. BRIDGE-IT is the result of long-standing cooperation between founding partners and the input of other intermittent partners. It all started in 2004 with the preparation of a first European project, a Socrates Grundtvig 1.1 training courses project SPICES (2005-2007; 224945-CP-1-2005-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-G11). This initiative was followed, in 2008, by a Grundtvig Learning Partnership e-SPICES (2008-2010; 2008-1-IT2-GRU06-00547 1) which eventually fed into the current Grundtvig Multilateral Project BRIDGE-IT (2010-2012; 510101-LLP-1-2010-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-GMP). All three Grundtvig projects deal with adult education and specifically with InterCultural Communication (ICC) in bureaucratic-institutional contexts, a topic which is under-researched and poorly treated in educational programmes. We believe that 'ICC in bureaucratic-institutional contexts' is of extreme importance not only to foreigners (we prefer to call them 'adults-in-mobility') who often have language and communication difficulties, but also to service providers, civil servants (we consequently define as 'adults-in-contact-with-mobility') who very often encounter difficulties in dealing with people who are physically, socially, economically and culturally different.

The rationale of these projects stems from two initial assumptions confirmed through ethnographic interviews with the persons concerned and direct observations of related situations: 1) foreign people encounter communication problems in bureaucratic-institutional settings, 2) textbooks do not consider real-life communicative and linguistic necessities related to the settings in question. These results find their justification in the 6th “Common Basic Principle” on immigrant integration formulated and adopted by the EU Council (cf. Document 14615/04 of 19 November 2004) which declares that “Access for immigrants to institutions, as well as to public and private goods and services, on an equal basis to national citizens and in a non-discriminatory way is an indispensable foundation for better integration.”.

The acronyms provide the reader with an initial indication of the differences that define the three projects:

- **SPICES** means **S**ocial **P**romotion of **I**ntercultural **C**ommunication **E**xpertise and **S**kills ([www.trainingspices.net](http://www.trainingspices.net))
- **e-SPICES** stands for **e**lectronic **S**ocial **P**romotion of **I**ntercultural **C**ommunication **E**xpertise and **S**kills ([www.e-spices.net](http://www.e-spices.net))
- **BRIDGE-IT** means **B**e **R**elevant to **I**ntercultural **D**iversity **G**eneration in **E**urope **I**ntegration **T**eam (510101-LLP-1-2010-1-IT-GRUNDTVIG-GMP)



## BRIDGE-IT PARTNERS





The main difference lies, on one hand, in the target groups and, on the other hand, in the final product.

SPICES is aimed at communication trainers and facilitators, language educators and intercultural mediators. The project developed an ICC training methodology in order to train the target groups build up their own training material based on their learners' (adults-in-mobility and adults-in-contact-with-mobility) training and communication needs. The training provided through SPICES consisted of a face-to-face, train-the-trainer course which is described in Klein Gabriella B., Caruana Sandro, Dossou Koffi M., Lasagabaster David, Mateva Galya, Piriš-Svetina Nataša & Schwitalla Johannes, 2007, *Spices Guidelines: A training method for intercultural communication in institutional settings*, Perugia: Key & Key Communications (published in five further language and culture specific versions, namely Bulgarian, German, Italian, Slovene and Spanish).

SPICES has received various acknowledgments and three important awards:

- the EUROPEAN LABEL for promoting teaching and learning of L2 (Rome, 2006)
- the Silver Award for Quality in Mobility within the Grundtvig LLP action (Ljubljana, 2008)
- it has been selected as the first 20 projects qualified as Best Practice for Creativity and Innovation (Brussels, 2009)
- the English version of the Guidelines has been published on the official EU Website of the European Year of Intercultural Dialogue 2008 and can be downloaded for free (<http://www.interculturaldialogue2008.eu/1534.0.html>).



Encouraged by these good results, some of the SPICES partners (University of Malta, Key & Key Communications (IT) and University of Perugia (IT) together with the Spanish partner (who could not be selected for internal reasons) applied for a



The SPICES GUIDELINES contain a training methodology which may be used in order to create training modules in ICC and context language/second language (Lc/L2) use, through teaching and learning packs. It is transferable and applicable within various bureaucratic-institutional contexts. It does not intend substituting training courses which are already being implemented. On the contrary, it is conceived as an ingredient just like spices that can be added to courses which are already being held in the field of ICC training or L2 education.

The objective of this instrument is to help overcome communication difficulties through specific training activities directed at adults-in-mobility and adults-professionally-in-contact-with-mobility by promoting knowledge, experience and skills in ICC, including also second language education with specific reference to the bureaucratic-institutional context.

decentralised Grundtvig Learning Partnership, named e-SPICES, which has been approved in Italy and in Malta.

As a learning partnership, *e-SPICES* (electronic Social Promotion of Intercultural Communication Expertise and Skills), provided a forum for exchange of good practices, ideas and experimentations regarding training online. The partnership adopted the DOKEOS platform as a 'Virtual Communication and Learning Environment'. The innovative result is a communication system based on an e-learning facility that usually is used for online training. Partners have not only stored all relevant documents on the DOKEOS platform and engaged in pedagogical experimentation but have also demonstrated in this way how such a partnership constitutes a learning experience. While experimenting, the partnership had acquired skills and competences to apply for a further project: the current BRIDGE-IT (Be Relevant to Intercultural Diversity Generation in Europe Integration Team).

## The new way: BRIDGE-IT

BRIDGE-IT (Be Relevant to Intercultural Diversity Generation in Europe Integration Team) invites service providers, working within bureaucratic institutions, to “be relevant”, that is, to reflect on their current communicative behaviour within multicultural settings with a view of transforming attitudes and behaviour. Rather than cultural melting pots, BRIDGE-IT advocates for communities where different cultures and languages co-exist in a dynamic and dialectic relationship.

## The new perspectives

BRIDGE-IT aims directly at the end beneficiaries of such integration processes: the adults-in-mobility and the adults-in-contact-with-mobility, the most delicate node where integration concretely succeeds or fails.

The main 'product' of BRIDGE-IT, building on the SPICES ICC training methodology and the e-SPICES online platform, will be a blended training course for both adults-in-mobility (AMs) and adults-in-contact-with-mobility (ACMs). While SPICES and e-SPICES, targeting communication trainers and intercultural mediators, are applicable to any kind of bureaucratic-institutional context, BRIDGE-IT focuses on the most delicate period in an integration process: the 'first-impact'.

## What do we understand by 'first-impact'?

The first-impact is identifiable with the period which starts from the first contact between an AM and an ACM in a specific country and ends with the permission of either to stay (first permit of stay) or to move to another country.

The main objective of the present project is for each partner country to map the sequence of different public (or private) services / offices an AM has to go through from his/her very first contact as newcomer with an ACM in a new country. The scenario can vary according to the type of migration the AM is experiencing.

The different types of migrants envisaged are three:

- EU citizens
- non-EU citizens, regular (with Visa or equivalent)
- non-EU citizens, irregular (without VISA or equivalent).

For the design and creation of training material and learning paths the project will foreground the more vulnerable groups of migrants.



## The kick-off meeting in Kraków, Poland 14-19 December 2010

The kick-off meeting in Kraków served to: gel the group; sign partner agreements; present and discuss the work-plan; and generate a common language.

The partners will be working on an agreed schedule of work, using the already existing tools (the SPICES ICC training methodology and the e-SPICES DOKEOS platform), until they meet in Malta, in May 2011.

## The new actors of BRIDGE-IT

The new actors of BRIDGE-IT are the nine partner organisations, their thirty-three associated partners, the AMs and the ACMs.

Partners are from eight countries (seven EU countries and one candidate country) from nine different organisations among which

### four Universities

1. Università degli Studi of Perugia, ITALY as transnational coordinator
2. Erasmushogeschool Brussels, BELGIUM
3. L-Università ta' Malta, MALTA
4. Hogeschool Zuyd of Heerlen, Maastricht and Sittard-Geleen, NETHERLANDS

### two non-profit organisations

5. The Business Club Austria in Vienna, AUSTRIA
6. Key & Key Communications in Deruta (PG), ITALY

### two Adult Education providers

7. f-bb, a Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training in Nürnberg, GERMANY
8. EST Lifelong Learning Centre in Wadowice, POLAND

### one public administration

9. province administrative unit of Ministry of National Education in Yozgat, TURKEY.

The partnership has thirty-three associated partners, mostly from public organisations directly involved in first-impact situations from all over the eight partner countries. These will be actively involved in the project implementation process through common meetings, interviews, focus groups, collection of written and spoken texts. AMs will be actively involved in the test training sessions.

Eventually a train-the-trainer GRUNDTVIG in-service course will take place through which the blended training methodology worked out will be experimented.

## The new tools

While SPICES had delivered a training methodology for trainers and facilitators in intercultural communication within bureaucratic-institutional settings, e-SPICES has delivered as a main product a Virtual Communication and Learning environment, BRIDGE-IT will implement online learning paths for AMs as well as for ACMs related to communication barriers given mainly by the managing of forms to fill (written texts) and the corresponding interactions at the service counters (spoken texts) suggesting concrete strategies to overcome them. Related to this there will be a text depository in which to store and retrieve the mentioned written and spoken texts. The written and spoken texts will be those which are most frequently occurring in first-impact situations. The text depository will also provide the direct beneficiaries (AMs and ACMs) with comments on bureaucratic terminology and intercultural implications.

“Did you ever think about how difficult it can be to write your own name when the form is not corresponding to what you are used to?” - BRIDGE-IT will deal with such issues.





## PARTNERS

IT



### IT - University of Perugia

The University of Perugia has 11 academic faculties and a wide number of degree programmes. As the coordinating institution of BRIDGE-IT, the Department of Humanities and Education takes the role of supervising the project in all its scientific and administrative aspects, sets up a Virtual Learning and Communication Environment, and, together with the other partners, develops the BRIDGE-IT training methodology editing guidelines for creating and delivering online training paths.

<http://www.unipg.it>

MT



### MT - University of Malta

Established as a University in 1769, the University of Malta is the highest teaching institution in Malta. It is publicly funded and is open to all those who have the requisite qualifications. The University today has twelve faculties and more than 10,000 students. The BRIDGE-IT partnership is represented in Malta through members of the Faculty of Education who are also involved in the coordination of the Programme in Teaching for Diversity and the National Let Me Learn Teacher Training Programme.

<http://www.um.edu.mt>

AT



### AT - Business Club AUSTRIA

The Business Club AUSTRIA is a NPO-NGO, founded in 2000. It provides In-Service Training for European teachers and trainers. Projects so far focussed on intercultural competences & communication, where the organisation by now has developed quite strong competences. The participation in "BRIDGE-IT" is a logical step towards a high-quality portfolio in intercultural education for adults.

<http://www.club-austria.info>

NL



### NL - Zuyd University

Zuyd University is one of the largest universities of applied sciences in the Netherlands and contributes to the BRIDGE-IT together with important network partners such as (EMOL) Centre of Expertise Social Support Limburg, (KCEM) Kenniscentrum Emancipatie Maastricht, Stichting Vrouw & Welzijn Geleen, (P-Team) Platform Successful Migrant Women Maastricht and (FORUM) Institute for multicultural affairs.

<http://www.hszuyd.nl>

BE



### BE - Erasmushogeschool Brussel

Erasmushogeschool Brussel is located in Brussels, capital of multilingual and multicultural Europe, where the need is high for training materials in the field of intercultural communication. The Centrum voor Vaktaal en Communicatie is a research group of the Department of Applied Linguistics of the Erasmushogeschool Brussel. The research focus is on special language communication and terminology and on multilingual knowledge management.

<http://www.erasmushogeschool.be>

PL



### PL - EST Lifelong Learning Centre

EST Lifelong Learning Centre is a Polish continuing education provider for youth and adults founded in 1994. EST works in the fields of foreign language courses, ICT workshops, communication skills courses, integration of disadvantaged groups into the labour market. EST contributes to the BRIDGE-IT project with a substantial experience in evaluating projects co-funded by Community programmes and in training interpersonal communication skills to administrative staff of educational institutions.

<http://www.est.edu.pl>

DE



### DE - f-bb, Research Institute for Vocational Education and Training

The f-bb Forschungsinstitut Betriebliche Bildung, is concerned with a wide portfolio of research and development projects on vocational education and training. On behalf of companies, associations, ministries, the European Commission and other organisations, it works on research and data collection projects, conducts model tests on vocational education and training and provides scientific coaching for projects and programmes. The institute has developed e-modules for intercultural competence training for public servants and will contribute its experiences to the BRIDGE-IT partnership.

<http://www.f-bb.de>

TR



### TR - Yozgat II Milli Egitim Müdürlüğü

Yozgat II Milli Egitim Müdürlüğü (Yozgat National Education Directorate) is the top province administrative unit of Ministry of National Education, which provides service in Yozgat.

<http://yozgatmeb.gov.tr>

IT



### IT - Key & Key Communications

Key & Key Communications, founded in 1994, is a cultural and scientific non-profit association with members from various cultural origins, working in the vast field of Communication. Its active role and contribution concerns the visual development of the whole project as well as the development of the BRIDGE-IT methodology as an online learning system through collection and editing of video-recordings, online learning templates for non-verbal & visual understanding of written/spoken texts, also acting as trainers according to specific competences.

<http://www.keyandkey.it>

