

ID TALKS!

ID Talks 2024 spring edition will take you on a journey through faith, belief, and how to build projects to encompass different perspectives in your youth & community projects.



ID Talks:

UNDERSTANDING INTERFAITH DIALOGUE
INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND IDENTITY
INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND COMMUNITY
INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND RECONCILIATION
INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AND PEACE

Download this and other SALTO Inclusion & Diversity booklets for free at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/. This document does not necessarily reflect the official views of the European Commission, the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity Resource Centre or the organisation co-operating with them.

ABOUT SALTO

...‘Support and **A**dvanced **L**earning and **T**raining **O**pportunities within the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes’. The European Commission has created a network of seven SALTO-YOUTH Resource Centres to enhance the implementation of the EU Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes, which provide young people with valuable non-formal learning experiences.

SALTO’s aim is to support the implementation of the European Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps Programmes with regard to priorities such as Social Inclusion, Diversity, Participation, and Solidarity. SALTO also supports co-operation with regions such as EuroMed, South-East Europe, or Eastern Europe and The Caucasus and coordinates all training and co-operation activities, as well as information tools for National Agencies.

In these European priority areas, SALTO-YOUTH provides resources, information, and training for National Agencies and European youth workers. Most of these resources are offered and disseminated at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net. Find online the [European Training Calendar](#), the [Toolbox for Training and Youth Work](#), the database of youth field trainers active at the European level ([Trainers Online for Youth or TOY](#)), links to online resources, and much more.

SALTO-YOUTH actively co-operates with other actors in the European youth field, among them the National Agencies of the Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programmes, the Council of Europe, the European Youth Forum, European youth workers and trainers, and training organisers.

THE SALTO-YOUTH INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY RESOURCE CENTRE WWW.SALTO-YOUTH.NET/INCLUSION/

The SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre (based in Belgium Flanders) works together with the European Commission to support the inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities in the Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes. Through that, it works to contribute to social cohesion in society at large. SALTO Inclusion and Diversity also supports the National Agencies and youth workers in their inclusion work by providing training, developing youth work methods, disseminating information via the newsletter, etc. By offering opportunities for training, exchange, and reflection on inclusion practice and diversity management, SALTO Inclusion & Diversity works towards the visibility, accessibility, and transparency of its inclusion & diversity work and resources, and towards making ‘inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities’ and ‘positive diversity management’ a widely supported priority.

For more information and resources, have a look at the Inclusion & Diversity pages at www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/



DISCLAIMER

This magazine contains pictures as a result of the Graphic Recording which is an integral part of all the ID Talks events. There are four types of styles throughout the whole magazine.

- **General Cover Picture.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events. It is displayed as a cover picture of each ID Talks version.
- **Portrait of Speaker.** It depicts each speaker and a few graphic recording elements such as written parts of their "speech" and/or any other graphics according to the style of each ID Talks version. It is displayed on top of the speaker's description page.
- **Main Graphic Recording Card.** It is used for promotional reasons throughout the social media channels and the dissemination materials and it depicts the logo of SALTO Inclusion & Diversity, the title, and the graphic elements of each version of the ID Talks events, including the specific name of the event, the portrait of the speaker, written quotes of their "speech" and/or any other graphics. It is displayed on top of the first page of each article.
- **Graphic Recording Elements.** Throughout each article, the graphic recording elements complement the text with essential parts of each speaker's "talk".



I & D Talks

“Interfaith Dialogue for Community and Peace Building”

What is it all about?

ID Talks are a series of 5 online workshops on 5 major topics to form a general understanding of interfaith dialogue and its link to community building and quality youth work. They feature youth workers, professionals, and volunteers from all over the world to share insights, research findings, food for thought, good practices, or inspirational stories. They will guide participants through the pressing matters and challenges affecting interfaith dialogue and inspire them to make their programmes and organisations more inclusive, embrace human differences, look ahead and picture how the future of youth work and Inclusion and Diversity might be.

Each workshop begins with an input from a guest speaker. Afterwards, participants have the opportunity to engage in the discussion, ask questions, and share their realities and experiences.

For whom?

Youth workers, youth leaders, professionals, and volunteers involved in ID in the EU youth programmes, as well as all those interested in youth work and Inclusion & Diversity topics.

Main objectives:

- To provide food for thought and learn from inspirational ID stories;
- To provide an opportunity to learn about ID topics from the youth work sector and beyond;
- To get information, inspiration, and methods to help the youth sector address ID;
- To inform about and contribute to quality (international) youth work;
- To identify and learn how to tackle existing and future challenges within ID;



Event Dates:

- 14 February (13h CET) > **ID Talks Understanding Interfaith Dialogue** - Are you wondering what is interfaith dialogue and what we can learn from it? Why it is important and what is its value and relevance today? Let's discover together the various concepts (such as inter-conviction dialogue, religion, faith, spirituality...) and differences between those, and have a closer look at the basic elements of interfaith dialogue, its potential and limits. Guest speaker: **Meg Villanueva, Philippines**
- 13 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Interfaith Dialogue and Community** - It is undoubtedly important to foster dialogue and exchange between people and communities living side by side. But what does it really entail and how do you conduct it? What makes "good" interfaith dialogue, what conditions enable it and who should be involved? Let's analyse how the complexity of diversity affects interfaith dialogue and community building, and discover the role the city and the EU youth programmes can have in this process. Guest speaker: **Fien Ingelbrecht, Belgium**
- 27 March (13h CET) > **ID Talks Interfaith Dialogue and Reconciliation** - How can we create bridges between people? This session zooms in on reconciliation and the role of interfaith dialogue in this process. As religion and faith can be forces of cohesion instead of division in the society, let's find out about possibilities to bring together different religious communities in post-conflict areas and the role of the youth work and youth programmes like Erasmus+ in reconciliation processes. Guest speaker: **Nadežda Mojsilović, Bosnia and Herzegovina**
- 10 April (13 CET) > **ID Talks Interfaith Dialogue and Peace** - Peace and conflict are very often addressed in non-formal learning and youth work. But what sets interreligious conflicts apart from other types of conflict? Let's see what is the role of interfaith dialogue in conflict prevention, conflict transformation and peace building, and how youth work and youth programmes like Erasmus+ support the work on intercultural learning and peace building. Guest speaker: **Mamoun Khreisat, Jordan**
- 24 April (13h CET) > **ID Talks Interfaith Dialogue and Identity** - Ready for some introspection? In this session you'll discover what is identity and the role religion and faith play in its creation. How do the religious identities of an individual and a community interrelate? Knowing that our religious and cultural narratives are as important to us as theirs to different other communities, is the clash of narratives inevitable? Guest speaker: **Nyanchama Okemwa, Belgium**

ID Talks: Interfaith Dialogue and Peace

What sets interreligious conflicts apart from other types of conflict?



GUEST SPEAKER: MAMOUN KHREISAT

Mamoun Khreisat is a proactive and well-rounded executive with over 25 years of diverse experience in both the business sector and the non-profit and voluntary sectors, both locally and internationally. Currently, Mamoun holds leadership roles in two prominent non-profit organizations in Jordan: the United Religions Initiative in the MENA region (URI-MENA) and Desert Bloom. In these capacities, he oversees numerous community development programs focused on peace-building, conflict transformation, socio-economic empowerment, environmental sustainability, capacity building, women's empowerment, youth leadership, and advocacy for human rights. Mamoun's dedication to positive change extends beyond national borders. Recognized as an international training and development professional specializing in Leadership, Management, and Community Empowerment. As the Regional Coordinator (Director) of URI-MENA, Mamoun provides guidance and support to over 100 autonomous URI member groups across the MENA region.



Article

Mamoun Khreisat



The Role of interfaith dialogue in conflict prevention, conflict transformation, and peacebuilding

How do youth work and programs such as Erasmus+ contribute to intercultural learning and peacebuilding?

Before delving into the complexities of interfaith dialogue, it's crucial to acknowledge the profound influence of religion on human development and the moral underpinnings of civilizations across time. In today's interconnected world, interactions with diverse cultural and religious backgrounds have become integral to our daily lives. Thus, interfaith dialogue becomes indispensable for navigating this intricate tapestry of differing perspectives and values.

Why religion matters:

- With over 85% of the world's population adhering to a religion, it exerts a powerful influence on cultural norms, shaping morality and values across the globe.
- Most if not all religions emphasize values like compassion, forgiveness, and charity, promoting peaceful societies.
- Religion can be a source of comfort and meaning, promoting resilience and well-being by reducing depression and anxiety.
- Religious communities provide social support, fostering a sense of belonging and purpose.
- Religion also shapes the political, social, and economic attitudes of people across the globe.



I conducted interviews with young atheists across Europe, I posed a question: "What aspects of your ancestors' religious background do you still uphold?" Surprisingly, many echoed sentiments of retaining religious values and traditions. They integrated religious virtues and principles into their moral framework. Yet, a majority of today's youth exhibit a lack of enthusiasm towards interfaith engagement. Therefore, at Desert Bloom, our NGO, we leverage cultural exchange as a bridge to interfaith dialogue. By exploring cultural practices alongside religious traditions, participants discover the shared values that underpin diverse faiths. This intercultural approach fosters empathy and understanding, making interfaith dialogue more engaging and impactful.



Interfaith dialogue contributes to peacebuilding

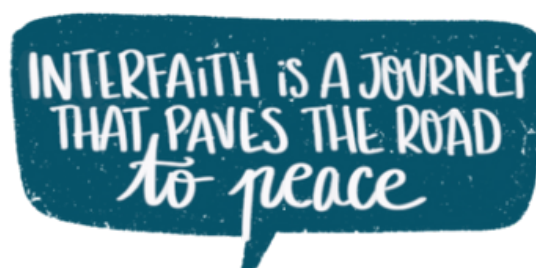
Silence fuels extremism. Religious texts can be twisted to justify violence creating a dangerous 'us vs. them' mentality. Interfaith dialogue is the answer. It fosters communication and empathy, dismantling stereotypes and building bridges for peace. While religions may differ, core values like compassion and helping others unite us. Dialogue highlights these shared threads, reminding us of our common humanity.



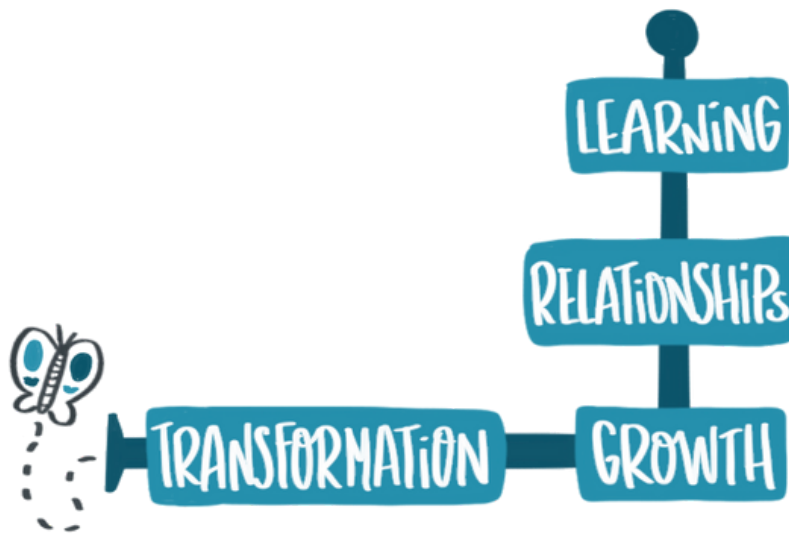
Interfaith work is a journey of building bridges for lasting peace

Over the past 20 years, my work with the United Religions Initiative (URI) has shown me the transformative power of interfaith dialogue. In the beginning, the biggest challenge was simply encouraging people of different faiths to come together for conversation. Over time, trust gradually blossomed, transforming these gatherings into cherished moments of joy and deep connection. The increased demand for participation speaks volumes about the importance of creating safe spaces for interfaith dialogue.

Without safe spaces for open dialogue, people tend to build walls of ignorance, fostering negative stereotypes. Just as a seed takes time to grow, interfaith work is about planting the seeds of understanding. It's a marathon, not a sprint, a lifelong journey fueled by love, empathy, and acceptance. Each individual's participation, at their own pace, contributes to a more peaceful and understanding world.



The below shape outlines the cyclical nature of the interfaith journey:



Religion and Conflict

Conflict represents a situation in which unacceptable differences in interests, values, expectations, and opinions arise within or between individuals or groups. It is a relationship between two or more parties who have, or who think they have incompatible goals. Religion can be a source of both comfort and conflict, impacting various types of conflict. On an individual level (intrapersonal conflict), religion can manifest as internal struggles with faith, questioning one's place within a religion, or grappling with ethical dilemmas arising from religious teachings. Interpersonal conflicts can arise between individuals due to disagreements about religious practices or interpretations of scripture. Power struggles within a religious organization or differing viewpoints on social issues can create tension within a group (intragroup conflict). Finally, historical and ongoing conflicts between different religious groups (intergroup conflict) are the most well-known examples.

Interfaith dialogue is an effective tool that capable of not only preventing conflict but also facilitating its transformation, thereby fostering the development of sustainable positive peace. This concept of positive peace encompasses more than just the absence of violence; it entails the restoration of relationships, the establishment of justice, and the creation of equitable social systems that cater to the needs of all members of society. In contrast, negative peace, while characterized by the absence of explicit violence, may still harbor underlying tensions and unresolved conflicts, as articulated by Johan Galtung in "Peace by Peaceful Means" (1996).



UNDERSTANDS CONFLICT
AS AN OPPORTUNITY,
NOT AS A PROBLEM

Religion can be in every conflict sources

Drawing upon Christopher W. Moore's Circle of Conflict, it becomes evident that religion can significantly influence and intersect with every aspect of conflict, as illustrated below:



Recommended approaches to handle conflict based on its source

For structures and values & cultural attitudes sources, we need longer-term approaches such as Conflict Transformation & Peacebuilding, that focus on understanding and addressing the root causes of conflict and embrace conflict as an opportunity rather than a problem, resulting in:

- A. Transformation in relationships between parties of a conflict.
- B. Fostering fundamental social and political changes to correct inequities and injustices.



The contribution of youth work and programs to peacebuilding

Youth work and programs like Erasmus+ and international youth camps empower young people to become agents of peace. These programs foster intercultural understanding by challenging stereotypes and promoting open-mindedness. By building bridges through cross-cultural friendships, they humanize "the other" and cultivate empathy. Nonetheless, it's crucial to recognize that this process is inherently long-term in nature. We can illuminate this journey by drawing upon Milton Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, which provides a framework for understanding the gradual evolution towards cultural empathy and competence. See the below illustration:



- **Denial:** Unawareness of or inability to recognize religious /cultural difference -Many face this at their first intercultural exposure
- **Polarization:** An evaluative mindset that views religious / cultural differences from an "us vs them" perspective. It can take the form of Defense ("My religion/ culture is superior to other culture") or Reversal ("Other religions/ cultures are better than mine"). Many face this during their early intercultural exposures
- **Minimization:** De-emphasize differences- Addressing religious/ cultural differences with a focus on similarity and commonality. Many people believe this is the highest level of intercultural sensitivity, as it allows for connection and collaboration despite cultural or religious distinctions.
- **Acceptance:** Strong analysis and appreciation of both differences & commonalities. Acceptance of both behavioural differences and different ways of perceiving the world.
- **Adaptation:** Shifting behaviour and thinking appropriately in response to religious/ cultural difference
- **Integration:** Respect the diversity of beliefs and cultures by acknowledging that no single religion or culture holds superiority over another. Each religion represents a genuine pursuit of truth. Embrace the differences between religions and cultures, and advocate for adaptation and accommodation in alignment with the fundamental human right of 'Freedom of Religion'

EDITORIAL INFORMATION

Published in April 2024 by SALTO-YOUTH Inclusion and Diversity Resource Centre (Support & Advanced Learning and Training Opportunities within The Erasmus+: Youth in Action and European Solidarity Corps programmes)

Official Website: www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/inclusion/

SALTO-Jint, Grétrystraat26, 1000 Brussel, Belgium

Tel: +32 (0)2 209 07 20 Fax: +32 (0)2 209 07 49

inclusion@salto-youth.net

Legal info: JINT vzw, 0441.254.285, RPR Nederlandstalige Ondernemingsrechtbank Brussel

Coordination: Henrique Gonçalves and Marija Kljajic (inclusion@salto-youth.net)

Facilitator: Anna Yeghoyan (ayeghoyan@yahoo.com)

Digital Co-Facilitator: Maria Kousoula (marakikousoula@gmail.com)

Graphic Facilitator: Olalla González (olalla@shokkin.org)

General Editor of the Publication: Maria Kousoula (marakikousoula@gmail.com)

Reproduction and use for non-commercial purposes are permitted provided the source www.SALTO-YOUTH.net/Inclusion/ is mentioned and inclusion@salto-youth.net is notified.



On behalf of the SALTO Inclusion & Diversity!

