WORKSHOP MANUAL

Peace in Europe: Digital and virtual reality peacebuilding

by Yelyzaveta (Lisa) Glybchenko

Content

1. Introduction

This workshop is an educational effort to empower participants to recognize their potential as peacebuilders in Europe and beyond. It aims to map avenues for how their peacebuilding efforts could potentially continue outside of the workshop space – in both artistic and digital ways. The main goal of the workshop is to raise awareness of European education as a peace project in the following way:

- understand the relationship between peace, arts and digital technologies/media
- strengthen their digital and virtual technologies/media skills
- develop strategies of using digital and virtual technologies/media as peacebuilding tools

The workshop will:

- reveal the process of peacebuilding by using virtual reality (VR) tools
- encourage participants to practice digital peacebuilding in their everyday life

DURATION
140 minutes without a break

TARGET GROUP
young people aged 14-16 years, with an interest in technology and artistic expression (without any or much experience).

FORMAT
on site

MATERIALS
laptops/PCs, ideally (though not imperative) VR glasses, and internet access

2. Schedule

DURATION	MODULE	METHODS / TOOLS	DESCRIPTION
15 min	**MODULE 1** **Icebreaker**	What's your favourite piece of art/who is your favourite artist?	Participants name their favourite piece of art/ artist and the first instance of encountering a work of art.
30 min	**MODULE 2** **Introduction to digital peacebuilding**	Presentation of key definitions & concepts using the presentation and video address	Trainers explain key concepts and practices around technologies, arts and peace; they also offer an exercise to contextualize this material in participants' own understandings / experiences of peace.
25 min	**MODULE 3** **Visiting a VR exhibition**	VR digital exhibition	Participants engage in a virtual guided tour VR digital exhibition "Imaginary Reconstitution of Security in Yemen: Making Art and Making Peace Together".

BREAK

DURATION	MODULE	METHODS / TOOLS	DESCRIPTION
25 min	**MODULE 4** **Interactive VR debrief**	VR world, animated video, and guiding questions	Participants visit the VR world to use the stage/ microphone to discuss their VR exhibition experiences. Participants watch an animated video to learn more about using VR environments to engage in peacebuilding.
30 min	**MODULE 5** **Digital peacebuilding and us – harnessing our power as peacebuilders**	Discussion of guiding questions in the big round	Participants reflect on peacebuilding in their lives as Europeans, in their education, and design strategies on how to strengthen peace in their communities.
15 min	**MODULE 6** **Closing circle and further resources**	The link to Color Up Peace website and social media	To reflect on the lessons learned, participants share one peace action they commit to after the workshop. The trainer explains how the participants can further participate: submit a peace photo to Color Up Peace, be part of the virtual exhibition.

3. Implementation

Dear trainers,

I am writing this section to support you in choosing to implement this workshop in the best way possible, module by module. Let's start!

Icebreaker — 15 min

The trainer welcomes participants into the workshop space and creates a friendly atmosphere by starting with an exercise. As aspects of the workshop are about artistic expression, we can set the mood by asking the participants to name/describe their favourite work of art and describe the experience of encountering that work of art for the first time.

Introduction to digital peacebuilding — 30 min

This module is meant to create a basis for thinking about peacebuilding in digital and visual ways. Trainers can say or even read out these words to feel confident about conducting this workshop. Furthermore, they can use the slides as visual props in order to make it easier for the workshop participants to understand the potentially challenging definitions. The video address is to support both trainers and the participants on the workshop journey. It can be played at the beginning of the module or at the end.

→ *Special note: due to the ongoing war against Ukraine and because the introduction features examples from Ukraine, be careful with the materials provided to avoid misuse and manipulation of information. Please only use this information for peace education as part of this workshop. Additionally, please be mindful that this topic is sensitive, so it is important to think about the participants, their needs and the ways they may be impacted. I am always available to consult on how to adjust the workshop to different participant groups.*

MODULE 3
Visiting a VR exhibition — 25 min

MODULE 4
Interactive VR debrief and further learning about peace, technology, and art — 25 min

Trainers and participants will visit the virtual exhibition "Imaginary Reconstitution of Security in Yemen: Making Art and Making Peace Together", created by Lisa Glybchenko in collaboration with an anonymous Yemeni artist to highlight visions of peace in Yemen. It includes a guided tour, and all the visitors have the choice of either following the guided tour or exploring the exhibition on their own. The short screensharing video provides trainers with basic instructions – it can also be played for the participants, if necessary.

Even if all the participants enter the VR exhibition at the same time, they will not see other participants inside. Rather, this will be an individual experience where each participant gets to connect to the peace stories and think about the intersections of peacebuilding, technologies, and artistic expression.

In this module, the learning group is invited to visit the VR world "Visual Peace Technology", created by Lisa Glybchenko as part of her research and for this workshop. In the VR world, students can move around, interact and debrief experiences from the VR exhibition. This time all the participants are able to see one another as avatars in the VR world, creating a collective experience. For this step of the workshop, the laptops/PCs need to have the software AltspaceVR installed. It can be installed for free using this link. The trainers and participants will need to register in advance and create their own avatars (this could be part of the workshop pre-assignment or could be done during the workshop if its duration is extended – it should take no more than 5 minutes).

This short video introduces trainers to entering and using the VR world (the code to enter the world is UDE259). The video can also be played for the participants if necessary. Trainers are also welcome to watch the video about how to design VR pieces as peacebuilding tools with the participants.
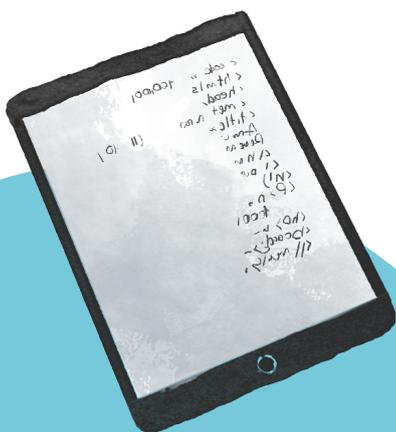
Once the group has entered the VR world, the following guiding questions should be discussed:

- How was your experience of the VR exhibition?
- Was it similar to or different from visiting exhibitions in person? In what way?
- What did you learn about peace in Yemen?
- Does what you learned resonate with your own experience of peace?
- What photo would you pick to show what peace means to you ? (spend two minutes to look for a photo among the photos you have taken yourself recently, or try to describe that photo in case you cannot easily find it, for instance, on your social media)

→ *Disclaimer: at a test workshop at a school, I was not able to enter the VR world for unknown reasons. Just in case, I recommend being ready to discuss the questions in person without entering the VR world (it worked very well in the test workshop), but still watching the video about designing VR pieces as peacebuilding tools.*

MODULE 5
Digital peacebuilding and us – harnessing our power as peacebuilders — 30 min

This is the time to bring together all prior parts of the workshop and to empower participants to think of themselves as peacebuilders located in Europe. This could be a free discussion based on these guiding questions:

- What is one small action that you could do to make the life of your community more peaceful?
- Could this action be scaled up with the help of like-minded people? If yes, who could that be?
- Do you think peacebuilding is somehow part of your education as a European? If so, how?
- What do you think is the best way to make peacebuilding part of European education? Could you contribute to this?
- Which peace organisations could you support?
- How can you support rebuilding a country/region where there is war?

→ *Special note: more advanced groups can discuss the last question to think about rebuilding Ukraine and also think about this question: "How can you make sure that what happened in Ukraine will never happen where you live or in any other place?" For this, please familiarize yourself with the latest developments of Ukraine's defence against the 2022 full-scale invasion and the previous 8 years of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Also, familiarize yourself with Ukraine's peace efforts. A good resource for that is this official website of Ukraine, which further suggests verified sources: https://war.ukraine.ua/*

MODULE 6
Closing circle and further resources — 15 min

Based on the previous module's discussion, participants can now articulate one small peace action they can commit to carry out. This step will support them in applying what they learned outside of the classroom's digital and physical walls. Here, trainers will also introduce participants to further resources on peacebuilding:

- Invite the participants to submit a photo to Color Up Peace. The photos will be turned into colouring pages – as with the VR exhibition and the guided tour. The photos can be submitted to the Color Up Peace Facebook page or the Color Up Peace Instagram account.
- Invite the participants to register for the Virtual Color Up Peace Workshops.

Thank you so much for conducting this workshop! I would love to hear how it went and get your feedback. Please get in touch with me on Facebook, Instagram or reach out via email at glybchenko.liza@gmail.com.

Sincerely yours,
Yelyzaveta (Lisa) Glybchenko

AUTHOR
Yelyzaveta (Lisa) Glybchenko

Yelyzaveta (Lisa) Glybchenko is an artist, peacebuilder and currently a doctoral researcher working on her PhD project "Visual Peacetech: Digital Visual Images as Security-Building Tools". In her PhD project, Lisa is interested in digital visuality of images, virtual reality image-creation and image-transformation technologies, augmented reality artistic image-layering, and development of short animated videos. Lisa's research is inspired by her grassroots peacebuilding work, in particular the visual art-for-peace project Color Up Peace which she founded in 2016.

4. Sources

→ Atspace VR

→ Color Up Peace

→ Galtung, J. (1996) Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization. Vol. 14. [Online]. London: SAGE Publications, Limited

→ J. Harlander. (2020) CMI & Salesforce l Peace Tech Webinar

→ Lederach, J. (2003) Little Book of Conflict Transformation: Clear Articulation Of The Guiding Principles By A Pioneer In The Field. Intercourse: Good Books

→ United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

→ Visual Peacetech: Digital Visual Images as Security-Building Tools

→ Wallensteen, P. (2015) Quality peace : peacebuilding, victory, and world order. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

5. Glossary

→ Some terms can be taken over from the **Understanding Europe glossary** and supplemented by your own ones.

Imprint