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EUR(H)OPE Project Training Course Report

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Reviewed and submitted by Danielle Bishop (CEPS)
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A project of:

CEPS Projets Sociaux



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Website: eurhopeproject.com

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**EUR(H)OPE Project
AGENDA
Training Course for Youth Workers
Self-Telling: From the Object to the Subject
Tirana, Albania
9-13 December 2024**

Venue: [Qendra Dua](#) (Naim Frasheri Street, 32, Tirana 1023)

Day & Time	9.30 - 11.00	11.00 - 11.15	11.15 - 13.00	13.00- 15.00	Afternoon activities
Monday 9.12	Introduction to the EUR(H)OPE project and self-narratives: Who tells our stories? Facilitators: Rea Nepravishta (Uja) & Christian Elia (QCODE)	Coffee break	Understanding migration: Trends, myths, and identity in a changing world Facilitators: Entenela Ndrevataj (Uja) & Danielle Bishop (CEPS)	Lunch	15.00-17.00 Tirana tour 19.00-20.00 Social dinner
Tuesday 10.12	Self-telling toolkit: Turning personal experiences into powerful narratives	Coffee break	Mastering interviews: Methods, preparation, and ethical practices Facilitator for the day: Dr. Ervin	Lunch	

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			Goci, Senior Lecturer, Department of Journalism and Communication		
Wednesday 13.10	Narrative journalism in practice: The case of Citizens.al	Coffee break	Study Visit to Citizens.al: Understanding their role in re-framing migration narratives (Facilitator for the day: Elira Kadriu, journalist at Citizens.al)	Lunch	15.00-16.00 Visit to Tirana Feminist Library
Thursday 14.10	Exploring migration through creativity: Developing a Self-Telling Project	Coffee break	Continuing work on developing Self-Telling Projects. (Facilitator for the day: Entenela Ndrevataj)	Lunch + working on projects.	Continuing work on Self-Telling projects until 17:00.
Friday 15.10	Participant presentations: Sharing process experiences and outcomes from working groups	Coffee break	Evaluation and closing remarks: Training reflection, improvements, and feedback.	Lunch	Departure of participants

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The EUR(H)OPE Training Course in Tirana: An overview

The EUR(H)OPE project Training Course, held in Tirana, Albania from December 9–13, 2024, focused on testing the draft document of the Self-Telling Kit and sharing information and skills in narrative journalism and self-telling. It brought together 13 youth workers from Albania (4), Italy (4), Morocco (1), and Spain (4), rather than the originally intended 16 youth workers, since the remaining 3 Moroccan youth workers' visas were not approved in time to attend the Training Course, despite applying well in advance.

Over the course of the week, the 13 participants were engaged in learning about migration and narrative journalism as innovative approaches to enhancing visibility and reshaping public discourse. The training revolved around the critical question: *Who can tell our stories?* Throughout the five days, a series of lectures and interactive sessions provided participants with a deeper understanding of the Albanian regional context while positioning the country within the broader global migration landscape. The training aimed to ground the Self-Telling Kit in practical and real-life contexts, exploring then the general narratives from Albania to Italy and Morocco to Spain, before expanding to Europe as a whole. Participants analyzed Europe's dominant migration discourse and its implications, discussing ways to challenge divisive rhetoric and create a more inclusive narrative. This collaborative effort empowered youth workers to critically engage with migration issues, equipped them with storytelling tools, and encouraged them to advocate for more nuanced, human-centered representations of migration in the general narrative.

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Picture taken during the first day of the training in Tirana, Albania

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Day 1

Date: 9.12.2024

Location: Qendra Dua

Lecturers: Rea Nepravishta (Uja), Christina Elia (QCODE), Safouane Oumha (Morocco's Friends Foundation), Entenela Ndrevataj (Uja) and Danielle Bishop (CEPS Projectes Socials)

In the initial phase of the training, **Rea Nepravishta from Qendra Uja introduced the young participants to the EUR(H)OPE project and its objectives.** She elaborated on the core concept of storytelling and its application to migration—a highly sensitive topic that remains central to public and media discourse. Youth workers participating in the training were provided with detailed information about the structure of the program and the skills they were expected to develop over the course of the five days, particularly in relation to narrative storytelling and reflections on identity. Nepravishta also emphasized that the project aims to challenge conventional notions of "storytellers." Instead of simply narrating others' stories, participants were encouraged to view themselves as channels through which their own truths can be conveyed.

This was followed by journalist **Christian Elia from QCODE**, who connected online to **provide participants with an in-depth explanation of the importance of narrative journalism** and the challenges of the concept of objectivity. He also introduced fundamental ideas related to self-narrative. Elia further elaborated on the concept of the Self-Telling Kit and its importance in creating a document that provides the foundational principles of journalism while opening a new window for communication and storytelling. This approach directly addresses a critical question: *Who can tell our stories?* During his speech, Elia emphasized the significant value this training holds for the participants, particularly in the context of its implementation in Albania—a country with a long history of migration to neighboring states such as Italy and Greece, as well as other parts of Western Europe and beyond.

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Safouane Oumha from Morocco's Friends Foundation was unable to attend the training in person due to delays in approving his visa and those of the 3 other youth workers from Morocco. Instead, he participated online, where he **provided insights into the work of Morocco's Friends Foundation and discussed the current migration dynamics in Morocco**, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by young people leaving the country.

During her presentation, **Entenela Ndrevataj from Qendra Uja provided detailed statistics on the number of immigrants and emigrants** in countries such as Albania, Italy, Spain, and Morocco. She **explored myths and facts about migration** having in focus Europe, highlighting their critical role in shaping the narrative and discourse surrounding this issue. She emphasized that debunking these myths is essential, as they often serve as a foundation for anti-migration rhetoric targeting migrants, elaborating concepts of **misinformation/disinformation and the importance of fact-checking** – all central concepts found in the Self-Telling Kit document. Ndrevataj also discussed the various reasons behind migration, including economic, social, and political factors, with a particular focus on climate change as a driving force that is expected to significantly increase the number of migrants in the near future. To support this discussion, she presented the case study of Ioane Teitiota, widely regarded as the first individual to seek refugee status on the grounds of climate change, illustrating the intersection of environmental issues and migration.

In the final session of the morning, **Danielle Bishop from CEPS** facilitated an engaging and interactive workshop designed to **deepen participants' understanding of migration and the complexities surrounding it**. Using the innovative [Hive Minds tool](#), Bishop guided the group in mapping out and exploring diverse perspectives on migration, encouraging participants to identify connections between countries and shared challenges. This exercise fostered critical thinking and collaboration, enabling participants to reflect on the ways in which migration is framed and addressed across different contexts. The session emphasized the importance of

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adopting a nuanced and interconnected approach when tackling migration-related issues, laying a foundation for more inclusive and informed discussions moving forward.

Day 2

Date: 10.12.2024

Lecturers: Kristina Millona (Investigative journalist and researcher), Ervin Goci (Professor of journalism, University of Tirana)

On the second day of the training, **Kristina Millona, an investigative journalist and researcher, delved into the history of Albanian migration** following the collapse of one of Europe's most oppressive regimes. She analyzed key migration destinations and the public narratives that accompanied the continuous wave of Albanian migration to European Union countries. To provide a compelling illustration of public perception and narrative, Millona presented a case study on how Albanian migrants have been portrayed in the British media and the broader discourse by politicians and influential figures. The discussion then shifted to a recent agreement between Albania and Italy concerning the establishment of two migrant hosting centers in Albania, by providing examples from her own work. Millona explored the implications of this agreement, highlighting its role in shaping migration narratives and its potential impact on public discourse.

Afterward, **Ervin Goci, a communication expert and professor at the Department of Journalism at the University of Tirana, provided a thought-provoking discussion on the concept of the public sphere**, drawing from the philosophical framework of Jürgen Habermas. Goci explored Habermas's argument that private matters often fall outside the realm of deliberative democracy, as they are traditionally not seen as issues requiring public debate or collective decision-making. He then introduced the critique by feminist philosopher Nancy Fraser, who

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challenged Habermas's notion by emphasizing the transformative potential of private matters when brought into the public sphere. Fraser argued that the public possesses the power to create pressure mechanisms capable of influencing decision-making processes. This underscores the importance of **reframing the personal as political**—a central theme in feminist thought and activism. Goci connected Fraser's philosophical perspectives to narrative journalism, highlighting its role in bridging private and public discourse. **By amplifying personal stories and situating them within broader societal contexts, he explained that narrative journalism becomes a powerful tool for reshaping public discourse, challenging long-established norms, and advocating for social and political change.** This intersection between private narratives and public debate illustrates the critical role storytelling plays in expanding the boundaries of the public sphere.

Day 3

Date: 11.12.2024

Lecturer: Elira Kadriu, journalist at Citizens.al

Elira Kadriu, an experienced journalist, shared insights from her work at the Citizens media, where she focuses on human rights issues, particularly those affecting marginalized groups, social movements against the gentrification of Tirana, and advocacy for social change. During her session, she **explored the intersection of journalism and activism, highlighting that these two fields are not necessarily opposing forces but often share common ground.** Kadriu enriched the discussion with concrete examples from her fieldwork with communities, demonstrating how Citizens operates as a community-driven media platform. She emphasized the newsroom's philosophy, which challenges traditional notions of objectivity. According to Kadriu, objectivity can often disproportionately burden individuals with less access to resources and representation, reinforcing existing power imbalances. Through specific case studies,

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Kadriu elaborated on her journalistic approach, the impact of her work, her methods of engaging with individuals, and the fundamental principles guiding her practice. **She connected these elements to concepts outlined in the Self-Telling Kit, demonstrating how they are exemplified in her work and reinforcing the kit's practical relevance in narrative journalism.** She also connected this to narrative journalism's power to elevate marginalized voices, bring personal stories into public discourse, and challenge dominant narratives. **Following her presentation, the youth workers visited the Citizens newsroom,** gaining deeper insights into its operations, influence, and the challenges faced by this community-focused media outlet. This visit underscored the importance of narrative journalism in fostering inclusive public discussions and advocating for societal transformation.

Day 4

Date: 12.12.2024

Facilitator: Entenela Ndrevataj (Qendra Uja)

On the fourth day, the **participants engaged in producing three podcasts in order to put the many skills and themes of the Self-Telling Kit into practice in a hands-on, interactive way.** They were divided into three mixed-nationality groups and provided with a detailed guide outlining the steps to create a podcast. Each group had the freedom to select a topic they wished to develop. The process began with role distribution and drafting questions collaboratively, drawing on the Self-Telling Kit document they had received earlier and were encouraged to review in detail before the session. The participants were guided on how to construct a compelling narrative, using insights from the Self-Telling Kit to craft their stories effectively.

Throughout the process, they were continuously mentored, particularly during the selection of topics, role assignments—such as host/interviewee or multiple hosts/interviewees—and the

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creation of interview questions. The facilitators also assisted during the podcast production phase, stepping in when necessary to ensure the final outputs were engaging and well-executed. The topics chosen by the participants were intriguing, personal, and closely tied to the core themes of the training, exploring identity, borders, migration, and Europe.



Pictures taken during the podcast production phase

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Day 5

Date: 13.12.2024

Facilitators: Rea Nepravishta (Qendra Uja), Danielle Bishop (CEPS)

On the final day of the training, the group gathered in a circle, fostering an open and inclusive atmosphere to **reflect on their experiences and engage in further debate on the topics of migration, identity, and perceptions of Europe viewed through these lenses.**

Participants were invited to share their opinions about everything they had learned throughout the week in Tirana, discuss areas for improvement, and highlight their key takeaways. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing that the training had exceeded their expectations. Several participants shared how they had initially arrived in Tirana with low expectations but left inspired and enriched.

One of the most frequently praised aspects of the week was the podcast production experience, which participants found both engaging and thought-provoking. They noted that **this hands-on activity made the concepts from the Self-Telling Kit far more tangible and relatable**, though several participants wished they had more time to devote to the exercise so they could develop deeper connections and conversations with the interviewee and continue to polish the final product. This feedback is very helpful for the Youth Exchange that will be held in Barcelona in the summer of 2025, as it helps us to fine-tune the time devoted to the different stages of production and post-production.

Afterward, the discussion naturally transitioned to the **Self-Telling Kit** itself, where participants were encouraged to **offer constructive feedback on how the document could be improved for broader usability.** The youth workers suggested restructuring the Self-Telling Kit to include more practical examples and experiences, infographics, and innovative methods of delivering

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information, such as videos. They emphasized that these additions would make the material more accessible and user-friendly for others, whether these are youth workers or young people themselves. This discussion underscored the value of incorporating participant insights to enhance the training tools, reflecting the collaborative and iterative spirit of the entire week.

Exploring culture, history, and social impact: complementary activities

9.12.2024: Social dinner

The program began with a warm and welcoming social dinner hosted by Qendra Uja. This activity created a relaxed environment for youth workers to connect, get to know one other, and build relationships. Over traditional cuisine and lively conversations, participants had the opportunity to break the ice, share stories about their backgrounds, and establish relationships that would set the tone for the collaborative and interactive nature of the training.

11.12.2024: Cultural and historical tour of Tirana

To deepen their understanding of Albania's cultural and historical dynamics, youth workers embarked on a guided tour of Tirana. The tour showcased key landmarks, such as Skanderbeg Square, the National History Museum, and other significant historical and modern sites. Participants learned about the city's transformation over time, from its communist past to its present, gaining insights into its architectural evolution and societal changes. The tour not only highlighted the country's history and heritage but also provided participants with context for understanding the rapid urbanization and challenges Tirana faces today.

12.12.2024: Exploring social and feminist initiatives at Berk

On the same day, the youth workers visited Berk, a small publishing house that serves both as a social hub and hosts a section of Tirana Feminist Library. Berk is located in one of the few surviving historic buildings in Tirana. **Anna Shkreli from Berk** provided the participants with

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insights into the building's history, its architectural style, and its previous uses. The discussion then shifted to the gentrification of Tirana, the loss of cultural heritage, and the rapid transformation of a city that is gradually losing its historical identity. The youth workers actively participated in the discussion, sharing perspectives on the phenomenon of gentrification in their respective countries. Additionally, Anna Shkreli and Rea Nepravishta spoke about Tirana's Feminist Library, an initiative housed within Berk. This library is dedicated to feminism and gender-related content and discussions, aimed at promoting equality. The conversation extended to the status of women in Albania, feminist movements, and initiatives undertaken so far to achieve gender equality.

These three social activities were instrumental in enhancing participants' understanding of Albania's culture, history, and social challenges while fostering collaboration and exchange of ideas across diverse cultural contexts.

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