

SELF-TELLING KIT

EUR(H)OPE

EUR(H)OPE



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CEPS Projets Sociaux



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INTRODUCTION

The EUR(H)OPE Project

EUR(H)OPE is a 24-month-long project funded by the Erasmus+ programme. It aims to build the capacities of young people aged 18-25 living in the Mediterranean and Adriatic border communities by engaging them in training and advocacy activities regarding European identity by means of journalistic techniques and Non-Formal Education (NFE) methodologies. This project involves four non-profit organizations from Albania, Italy, Morocco, and Spain: Qendra Uja (Tirana), QCODE Cultural Association (Milan), Morocco's Friends Foundation (Tiznit), and CEPS Projectes Socials (Barcelona). Above all, it intends to provide some food for thought on the question: **What does the concept of Europe mean today for those who are EU citizens, for those who will become them, and for those who migrate to live in the EU?**

We imagine Europe not as a bureaucratic space, but as a container of imaginaries, of identities, a model of democracy. Is this still the case for young people from countries that are part of Europe (Spain and Italy), that have asked to enter Europe (Albania) and that represent one of the main migration routes to Europe (Morocco)?

Equipped with the right professional tools, young people from these (and other) countries will be able – now and in the future – to develop their own generational narratives in order to bring to the EU decision-making centres proposals that will contribute to making the idea of Europe more and more solid and innovative. And we believe that if this narrative comes from those who are always portrayed as crossing borders, it can be even more important and impactful.



Introduction to the Self-Telling Kit

The Self-Telling Kit is the first major output of the project, **co-designed by the four project partners and tested during a Training Course** held from 9 to 13 December 2024 in **Tirana**, Albania. During the Training Course, 13 youth workers from partner organizations were introduced to the Self-Telling Kit and provided with the skills and techniques needed to analyze current narratives, develop interview techniques, and prepare content in both self-telling and narrative journalism, as well as measuring the shared vision in the field with participatory interviewing and writing work, together with a Non-Formal Education (NFE) approach. The feedback received from these participants has been incorporated in this final version of the Self-Telling Kit.

This Self-Telling Kit is based on some of the main instruments of narrative journalism, and **it is meant to be used as a reference and a guide for the development of self-narrative or reality storytelling projects**. As such, the approach that lies at the foundation of the Self-Telling Kit is participatory, and it is centred around the idea that **communities should be empowered to tell their own stories**. The Kit explores different ways to do this, and is also characterized by adherence to some of the main canons of journalism: verification and protection of sources, fact-checking, protection of vulnerabilities, respectful language, and knowledge of shared contexts and sensitivities, among other important topics.

We hope that this Self-Telling Kit inspires young people and youth workers from countries all around and outside of Europe to **share their experiences of what Europe means to them today and how they envision Europe in the near future**, as well as how it stands in relation to the values on which it was founded. They can share their perspectives on how EU policies impact their daily lives, education, and job opportunities. They can discuss the challenges and benefits of living in a multicultural society and how the EU's stance on immigration and integration affects their communities. Moreover, they can reflect on their hopes and aspirations for the future of the EU, including their views on unity, solidarity, and the preservation of European values in the face of rising nationalism and populism. **By empowering and hearing directly from young voices, we can gain a deeper understanding of the evolving European identity and the role of youth in shaping its future.**



MODULE 1. DEVELOPING A NARRATIVE PROJECT

When Were Narrative Stories First Tracked?

Many authors debate the roots of narrative stories and journalism, with some tracing its first footprints back to Greek drama and mythology.¹ However, others agree that this genre began to develop in the 19th century, during what Fitzgerald would call the "literary movement of sentimentalism."² During the second half of that century, as times began to change, women persisted in maintaining this form of narrative. This style continued into the 20th century, and in the 1960s and 1970s, social and political unrest inspired journalists to resist traditionally objective journalism.³

What is Narrative Journalism?

A personal narrative is an emotional process with a beginning, middle, and end.⁴ Through a personal narrative, characters release their pain and enable empathy with readers/listeners, who experience the emotional tension along with the narrator. In the process of narrative journalism, some degree of objectivity must be maintained to understand the significance of an event or situation for its exploration in writing. However, it's also essential to be subjective, incorporating your personal thoughts and feelings to effectively convey your message.⁵

1. Van Krieken, Kobie & Sanders, José. (2019). What is Narrative Journalism? A Systematic Review and an Empirical Agenda. Journalism. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1464884919862056>

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

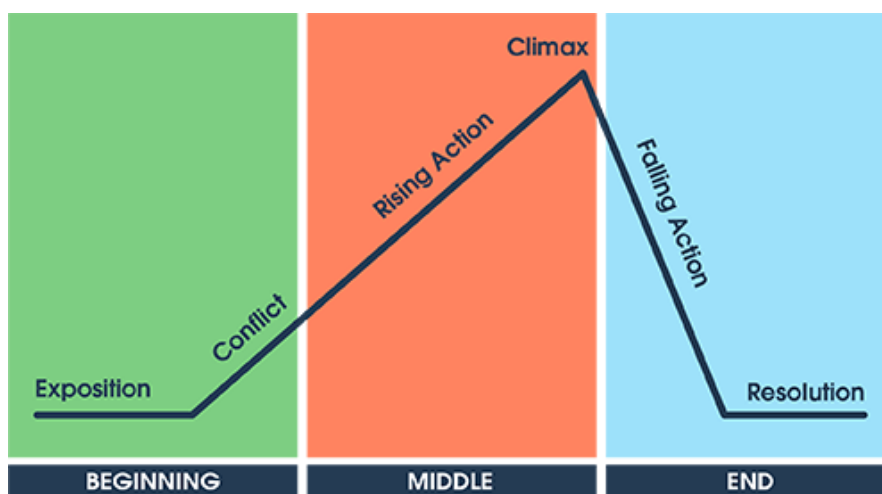
4. Vergheze, A., (September 1, 2020). Journalism must include personal narratives. The Tulane Hullabaloo. Available at: <https://tulanehullabaloo.com/53850/intersections/journalism-must-include-personal-narratives/>

5. Ibid

In fact, incorporating personal stories into journalistic reporting can be a highly effective and attractive way of making journalism come alive, particularly in the context of complex and highly personal topics like migration and identity.

At its core, **narrative journalism** blends journalism's commitment to factual accuracy and honest reporting with narrative and other literary elements that enhance the immersive storytelling aspects of a real-life event, thus making it even more attractive and relatable for readers. Narrative journalism can go by many names—including literary journalism, creative nonfiction, narrative nonfiction, long-form storytelling, immersive reporting, New Journalism, and many others—but it essentially **requires reporters to construct their non-fiction story around a narrative arc**, which includes the following elements:

- **Setup or Exposition** of the situation, setting, main theme, and **protagonists** (main characters);
- **Plot**, or progression of events, that identifies the central **conflict** and builds up the **rising action** of the story;
- **Climax**, or dramatic arc/ turning point, and the subsequent **falling action**; and
- **Denouement, or resolution** of the story.



Source: [Storyboard That](#)

This structure is a mainstay of **literary fiction** and makes the narrative very compelling and engaging, as well as giving readers a deeper understanding of the subject of the story. However, the journalistic principles of **honesty, accuracy and transparency** are also key to a good piece of narrative journalism: **we are telling a real-life story in a compelling way, not fiction**. We cannot sacrifice the veracity of the story for the sake of narrative structure, but rather we must verify the accuracy and reliability of the information and sources we use to tell the whole story. This is particularly important in **digital narrative journalism**, which is a much newer field, but is becoming increasingly prevalent with the growing influence of social media and other digital media sources, which bring with them more opportunities for news and stories that are not necessarily fact-checked, as they are quickly and easily spread.

Using Personal Stories for Engaging and Authentic Reporting

Achieving the successful union of **reporting and narrative storytelling** can be difficult for reporters, citizen journalists, and others who are not familiar with this structure. As a starting point, it can be helpful to identify any personal interest or connections you have with the story at hand and **incorporate some elements of your own personal history into the narrative** in order to make the story more personable and relatable. This is particularly effective in long-form journalism, though it can be done in almost any type of reporting, both in print and online.

Here are some **key suggestions for incorporating your own personal stories into a journalistic piece** in order to maximize its effectiveness and authenticity:

- Be **genuine, honest, and authentic** in telling your story in order to **generate a real connection with the reader**. Don't invent details to make the story more exciting or sympathetic; instead, look for real human connections with the protagonists of the story and show how your experience makes it possible for you to relate to them. This will, in turn, make it easier for your reader to relate to both you and the subjects of the story.

- At the same time, **know your purpose and place within the story, and know when *not* to insert yourself in the story**. Connect your personal experience to the wider issue at hand, but don't let it overwhelm the narrative or take center stage, especially when it will take away from the topic/focus at hand or the representation of certain people or communities that historically have been marginalized. Your story should add flavor, not serve as the main course.
- **Privilege the voices of the people living the situation** and then add your own experience and, if applicable, the voices of experts to add further context and detail to the story.
- **Acknowledge your own biases and limitations** that may keep you from telling the whole story.
- **Don't forget to fact-check**. Just because they are your own stories or experiences, doesn't mean you shouldn't verify your facts and their sources. Human memory is biased and fallible, even yours!
- On a narrative level, make sure to **include vivid and descriptive language** that brings specific details alive, as well as focusing on **developing the complexities of the main characters or situations** in the story. These narrative devices allow you to share the full, sometimes messy, but ultimately *real* situation or person you are writing about.
- Always **keep your destination in mind**: Where you want to go with the story, the main theme or purpose you want to communicate, and what you want the reader to experience throughout your piece or take away from it at the end.

- At the same time, don't be afraid to focus on the small details in addition to the "big picture" of the story, as this is where a lot of richness exists. As the journalist Tom French says:

“

"...you really need to have faith in the power and importance of tiny moments. Newspaper reporters are trained so that we are really good at big moments. But the longer I do this, the more I have to learn to have faith that in those times when it looks like nothing is happening in front of me, something very important is happening. I just need to learn to pay better attention".⁶

- When in doubt, **write what you know**, both in terms of your writing voice and the subject matter you choose. This makes it much easier to produce authentic and natural narrative stories that better showcase your voice as a writer.
- Remember that in the Internet age, **once you put a personal story out into the world, it's connected to your name forever**. Make sure your story is something you would like to be associated with you 5, 10, or 20 years from now.
- Finally, you can (and should!) also **read and study the narrative journalism of other writers** in order to see the varied approaches and techniques they use to combine their personal stories with journalistic reporting.

6. Nieman Reports. (15 March 2002). Sharing the Secrets of Fine Narrative Journalism. Nieman Reports. Available at: <https://niemanreports.org/sharing-the-secrets-of-fine-narrative-journalism/>

Structuring Your Story: Universalism vs. Self-narrative

As mentioned above, to start to structure your story, you first ought to ask yourself: **Who am I in this story?** If you decide to include your personal experiences, you should have a clear understanding of your purpose and place in the story. But even if you don't include them, you should always be able to understand why this story is important, why you are the right person to tell it, what you don't like about how it was told before, and why the person telling it should feel comfortable telling it to you. There are **two main approaches to narrative journalism**:

- ① **Universalism:** What matters is that the story we decide to tell respects the point of view of the people involved, and that that story – moving from micro to macro – is able to narrate universal themes of global interest.
- ② **Self-narrative:** This approach feeds on stories (like all real-life storytelling), with the difference that it lets the protagonists tell their own stories and experiences and define their own narratives about themselves, rather than someone else making them the object of a story. It presents an opposite dimension to storytelling, then: it is not ethically correct to 'manipulate' the stories that are told to us, aiming for a more literary language. Self-narrative must be deeply attentive to respecting the words that these voices choose for themselves. It is also important to remember that self-narrative is not a diary form, but instead involves clear research and narrative structure.

The Difference Between Self-narrative and Diary Form

Self-narrative starts with gathering voices, sources, data, and other elements that are not only in the chronicler's gaze. Communities involved in a social, economic, or political event should find the 'internal' voices (according to background, education, culture of origin, native and unmediated language, experience, knowledge of the context, etc.) that move in the environment and can tell its story without stereotypes, exoticism, or paternalism, with a true knowledge of its everyday lived reality. This method is not a top-down nor a bottom-up approach, but rather involves the storytellers and chroniclers on an equal and collaborative basis.

The diary, on the other hand, although a valuable resource for a narrative of reality, is a vehicle of communication not necessarily designed to be read by anyone. Even if it is published at a later date, it is designed to report the author's thoughts, not to give voice to communities, groups, or special interests.

The substantial difference between these two forms also lies in the breadth we give to our narratives. **In self-narrative, we gather voices that help us understand how a community involved in a phenomenon wants to tell its story, which terms it chooses to do so, what facts it considers important, and why.** This scenario requires authors to confront sensitivities, cultures, and imaginaries that, if not known and respected, can generate toxic and offensive narratives.

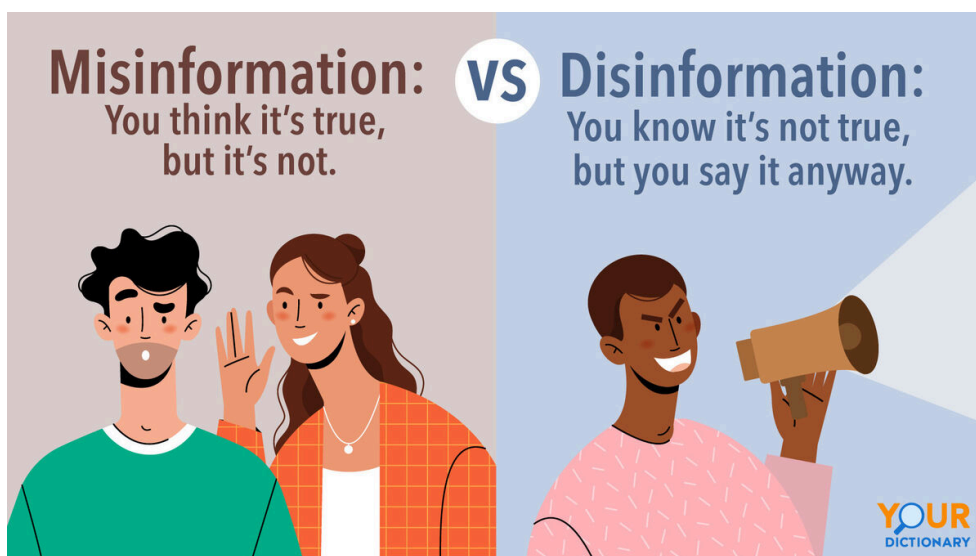
Here, it is important to remember that **self-narrative does not exclude the role of the journalist: indeed, the presence of the journalist enriches narrative work** because everything that is written will be read, which has not always been true in the past. This changes the relationship, bringing a parity between the community and the journalist, who can use their position of power to amplify and further disseminate community voices.

MODULE 2. VERIFYING SOURCES AND INFORMATION

The verification of information and its sources is both crucial and increasingly difficult to carry out. Today, social media is acquiring an increasingly important role, not only in the social realm, but also from a human rights, legal, and security point of view. Therefore, it is extremely important to verify the information we receive, through what is colloquially called “fact-checking”.

The Importance of Verification: Misinformation and Disinformation

Misinformation refers to false or out-of-context information that is not presented with the intent to deceive; it is information whose inaccuracy is not intentional. This may include, for example, errors and inaccuracy of information such as dates, titles or names.



Source: [Open Library](#), [ECampus Ontario](#)

Disinformation, on the other hand, is false information with the intent to deceive or mislead readers/viewers about someone or something. This is often seen in manipulated narratives, where misinformation is used to promote a political agenda or position. According to the European Commission, disinformation (along with foreign information manipulation and interference) can “undermine democratic institutions and processes (such as elections) by preventing people from making informed decisions or discouraging them from voting. And they can polarise societies by pitting communities against each other.”⁷

Examples of disinformation can include **deep fake images, videos or audio**, which can often be difficult to recognize and can also be created easily thanks to **artificial intelligence (AI)**. For this reason, before sharing content or using it for academic or professional purposes (or even on your personal social media), **it is important to check whether the author is an official source** or a source who is well-known in the field, **and whether the story is reported or verified by other people/entities**.



Source: Christian Hetrick, USC Price

7. European Commission. (2024). Strategic communication and countering information manipulation. *European Commission*. Available at: https://commission.europa.eu/topics/countering-information-manipulation_en

Verification and Fact-checking

Incorporating personal stories into journalistic reporting can be a powerful tool to connect with an audience and provide in-depth, understandable reporting on a sensitive or complex topic. **As journalists, we always have the responsibility to confirm the truth and accuracy of what we write. We must be sure to verify the information we are given, as well as the sources.** This means being sure to verify whether facts, statements, theories, and other information are objectively true by expanding on their claims and/or comparing them to other data. It is important to make a distinction between **verifying news** from a journalistic point of view and **fact-checking**.

1. **Verification** is an editorial technique used to assess and confirm the accuracy and completeness of a piece of news or a statement.⁸
2. **Fact-checking** is just one applied method of verification in the journalism field, consisting of confirming the truthfulness of all the facts included in a piece of news.

When trying to verify information, it is important to ask yourself the following questions from the very beginning:

- "Who says this?"
- "How do they know?"
- "What are their biases?"
- "What might be missing?"

How to Verify Information: Research and Data Triangulation

Conducting research is a central tenet of good journalism, since all journalists must gather information and then fact-check their stories to verify all the information they have included. This is also what separates non-fiction narrative from fiction, as real-life stories require a much higher degree of veracity.

8. Silverman, Craig. (2014). Verification and Fact Checking. *Handbook of Verification*. Available at: <https://datajournalism.com/read/handbook/verification-1/additional-materials/verification-and-fact-checking>.

As a result, all journalists use varied research strategies to confirm the facts, figures, statements, and other pieces of information that make up a news story. These strategies can be sorted into two main types: primary and secondary research.

- **Primary research**

This is all the research and investigation a journalist performs first-hand, which often includes carrying out interviews, surveys, or experiments; relying on first-hand observations or personal experiences; or actively engaging in any other type of first-hand knowledge-gathering.

- **Secondary research**

This is the collection of data and information through sources written and published by other authors. This can include publications like newspapers, books, articles, databases, and reviews, as well as the collection of information from other types of sources, such as personal effects and archives.

Primary research requires journalists to actively participate in data collection and analysis, while secondary research requires them to consult and analyze data, facts, and situations using online resources, libraries, and archives. Primary research is often the most useful in creating a narrative structure and many of the main details of a story, while secondary research helps to uncover supporting details that enrich the story and make it even more credible, truthful, and compelling.

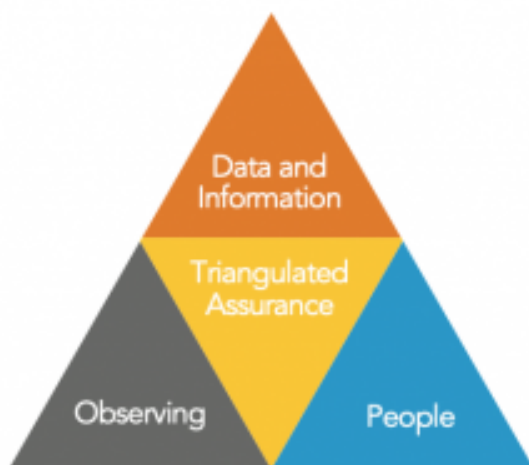
- **Data Triangulation**

In addition to gathering and fact-checking information through these research methods, journalists also use another important verification method called data triangulation. This means double checking any information against one or more other sources—whether people, articles, books, etc.—to confirm that the same fact is true for many people or in multiple contexts.

For example, if we interview someone about their experience at a protest, we should also try to interview other participants to see if their accounts of the event are consistent. The more people that corroborate an idea or experience, the more likely it is to be true.

Another key element of data triangulation is using data from a variety of sources, methods, or theoretical approaches to help confirm our information and avoid making biased conclusions from the data we have interpreted.

Using the same example, while the protest attendees might share similar narratives of what happened, this doesn't rule out the possibility they are sharing this narrative for a specific purpose, or that their common point of view makes them interpret the situation similarly. Thus, we can also talk with any non-participant bystanders, the protest organizers, or even the police forces present for crowd control in order to get a variety of viewpoints, which then make it easier to see the whole context and have a more objective view of what happened at the protest.



Source: [Good Governance Institute](#)

Here are some helpful suggestions for verifying the information you use in your stories:

- **Pick the right sources of information from the beginning.** Make sure that your sources are inclusive, appropriate to the story you are writing, representative of the group or community you are writing about, and, above all, reliable and credible sources with a reputation for telling the truth.⁹ (We will explore this in more detail in the next part of this module!)

9. Baker, Allison & Fairbank, Viviane. (2022). Reporter's Guidelines for Fact-Checked Journalism. *The Truth in Journalism Fact-Checking Guide*. Available at: <https://thetijproject.ca/guide/reporter-guidelines/>

- **Start from the assumption that any “fact” you include in your story might not be true, and try to prove its accuracy from there.** This means asking yourself about why it could be true or false, how we know this, what kinds of assumptions and biases could be driving a statement, and why the readers should believe the fact is true.¹⁰ You should do this for every fact you include!
- **Double check the small but vital details:** the spelling of names, companies, titles, and place names; the statistics or numbers you include; references to times and dates; all direct quotations from individuals and other sources; and all the arguments or narratives you write that depend on facts, making sure they are logically consistent with the facts.¹¹
- **Afterward, make sure the parts add up to the whole.** Double check that all the facts you have verified are not only truthful on their own, but also make sense and retain their truthfulness when they are viewed in the context of the bigger picture. As the old idiom goes, “Don’t miss the forest for the trees” (i.e., don’t miss out on understanding the whole context or situation because you are focused on a few parts of it). Here, both the forest and the trees should be verified!
- **Be as transparent as possible.** Make sure your readers are not only aware that you have verified your information, but also informed about your methods and processes of verification, as well as your motives for writing the story.¹² This is crucial, as transparency plays a huge role in your credibility as a journalist and storyteller.

10. Zamith, Rodrigo. (2022). Verifying Information. The American Journalism Handbook: Concepts, Issues, and Skills. Available at: <https://ajh.rodrigozamith.com/sourcing-and-verifying-information/verifying-information/>

11. Ibid

12. Institute of European Network Remembrance and Solidarity. (2021). How Journalists Verify Information. Hi-Story Lessons. Available at: https://hi-storylessons.eu/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/9_J.Godole_How-Journalists-Verify-Information_EN.pdf

- [Create your own verification checklist](#) to speed up the process, where you ask yourself things like:

- Have I established or verified the accuracy of all the statements or items presented as fact in my story?
- Have I considered the possible biases that could be influencing these facts before moving forward with verification?
- Have I double-checked the spelling of names and places, the accuracy of numbers and quotations, and the final version of any updated text related to the facts I checked (in case any changes were made)?
- Can I verify all of the facts with authoritative (and ideally primary) sources?
- Do all of these verified facts add up correctly in the context of the entire piece? Does it make sense as a whole?
- Have I made it clear that my story is factually sound and credible, and mentioned my methods for verifying its information?
- And any other considerations you would find helpful to add to the list to streamline your own verification process and make it second-nature.

How to Verify Sources

With the enormous advances of the internet and digital media in the last three decades, as well as the advent of the 24-hour news cycle, we now have nearly limitless information at our fingertips that is available anytime, day or night. As a result, it is [more important than ever to know how to identify good sources and to verify their credibility and the veracity of the information they share](#).

One particularly positive application of this idea that [“anyone can be a reporter on the web”](#) is the development of [citizen journalism](#), especially in terms of political movements (as we have seen during the Arab Spring and the Black Lives Matter protests) and in the context of many wars worldwide, where traditional journalists are often denied access, censored, or even killed for their reporting.

However, the negative side of this statement betrays the fact that today nearly everyone can contribute their personal stories, narratives, points of view, and information to the huge bank of resources housed on the internet, often with **opinions being presented as facts and little to no transparency about their motives**. As a result, it is ever-more common to see misinformation, disinformation, and “**fake news**” circulating on websites and social media about an ever-widening array of topics: from politics and current events to health, celebrity gossip, and more.



Source: The Soft Copy via [News Literacy Matters](#)

This current reality leads to an even more pressing need for the verification of information and the identification of credible sources from both sides: first, as journalists or storytellers, we must be **sure to verify our information and sources**, and second, as readers, we must also take on increased responsibility for **assessing what is real or factual** vs. what these narrative depictions of reality tell us.¹³ This means not only knowing how to identify credible sources, but also **practicing critical thinking and good media literacy skills** as we interpret the information we are given from a variety of sources.

13. van Krieken, Kobie & Sanders, José. (2019). What is Narrative Journalism? A Systematic Review and an Empirical Agenda. *Journalism*. Available at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1464884919862056>

Here are some helpful tips for identifying credible sources:

- Credible sources usually have **some degree of authority in the field**, whether it is because they are reputable institutions or have been around for a long time (and thus have **proven themselves to be factual and trustworthy over time**), or because they are extremely **transparent about their methods of research, writing, and verification** and place a high degree of importance on doing these processes right.
- Credible sources can also be authoritative because they **offer first-hand information** about the topics of interest and can back up the veracity of this information.
- **A source's credibility depends on the specific topic it treats and the specific context in which it functions.** For instance, in many Western countries, major newspapers and magazines tend to offer more reliable, credible accounts than other pieces written and self-published by individuals who are not established in the field. Likewise, official government statistics may be more credible and reliable than the results of a survey carried out by individuals with a specific agenda. However, **all sources should be read critically, as even generally credible sources, can (and often do!) write with a bias or agenda in mind.**
- In general, you can **evaluate the credibility of sources by asking the following basic questions and interpreting the answers within your specific context:**¹⁴
 - *Who is the author? (Author)*
 - *Where does the source come from? (Publisher)*
 - *Who was it made for? (Audience)*
 - *What is the purpose of the work? (Purpose/ Motive)*
 - *Which context is this work presented in? (Context)*
 - *Where does the information they use come from? (Credibility of their sources)*
 - *How does this source compare to others? (Verification of information)*
 - *Review: Is there anything included that jumps out to you as potentially suspect or untrue? (Seeing the whole picture)*
 - *How do you plan to use this information in your own work? (Application)*

14. Information synthesized from: University Libraries, University of Washington. (9 January 2025). FAQ: How do I know if my sources are credible/reliable?. Research Guides. Available at: <https://guides.lib.uw.edu/research/faq/reliable>

- For websites specifically, consider the follow elements:
 - **Author:** Are they listed? Do they form part of an academic, scientific, governmental, or other organization that can answer for them and that has other credible pieces online?
 - **Date:** Is this information up-to-date or recent enough for your purposes? This may vary depending on the context and topic you are writing about.
 - **Their sources:** Do they use credible sources themselves, and cite them properly?
 - **Domain:** Generally, the domains .com, .org, and .net can be purchased and used by individuals, but .edu and .gov domains belong to registered colleges and universities, and government websites, respectively.
 - **Site design and writing style:** Poor spelling and grammar and even a poorly-designed website may indicate the source is less credible, as credible websites usually proofread and try to present their content in the clearest way possible, which includes following rules of spelling and grammar and, often, creating an attractive design.
- Finally, remember that [using credible sources is key to establishing ethical reporting and increasing your credibility as a writer](#), because readers know they can trust you to tell the truth.
- Likewise, [using your critical thinking skills is a key part of verifying the truth of both the individual facts you use and the whole story they add up to create](#).



MODULE 3. USING INFORMATION AND INTERVIEWS

Guidelines for Interviews

As we have previously noted, a particularly important aspect of both narrative journalism and self-narrative is their **ability to share and amplify marginalized voices, particularly those who do not have access to adequate technical equipment or to large audiences to raise awareness about their situations**. Self-narrative in particular provides a great opportunity for communities or individuals to tell their own stories directly (in the vein of citizen journalism), or to tell them through the help of a journalist, who collects the information, structures the story, and helps amplify the message by sending it out through new formats or mediums, all in a completely participatory way. In this way, **the relationship of trust between the storyteller and the story collector is crucial** in order to avoid narrative biases, potentially paternalistic attitudes, and harmful stereotypes or single stories about the people at the center of these stories. Our goal in the EUR(H)OPE project is for **youth and migrants to become the subject, not the object, of reporting on migration**, as they are the real experts on their own situations, experiences, and identities.

No matter which self-narrative approach you decide to take, it is likely that you will need to prepare and carry out interviews so that you can have a more in-depth idea of the story someone wants to tell, or collect additional viewpoints or elements of interest to add to the story. This section gives a clear overview of elements you should keep in mind to organize and carry out good interviews.

1. Choice of questions and preparation for the interview

According to the author Serena Carpenter and her colleagues, reporters or interviewers should **create intimacy with the source** in order to encourage the source to “reveal their beliefs, experiences, and knowledge” during the interaction.¹⁵ Below, we present the analysis done by Carpenter and her colleagues that describes the steps to follow in order to obtain what they call Journalistic Interviewing Competencies (JIC), key elements that allow us to come up with clear, coherent, and compelling interview questions and prepare adequately for the interview itself.

1. Research	Developing a list of questions by researching the source and story subject area allows reporters to better handle the interview by anticipating the interviewee's potential concerns.
2. Listening	An interview should resemble a conversation, with the interviewer spending most of the time listening, asking follow-up questions, and using empathy to build trust and improve communication.
3. Professional Aspects	Reporters should approach interviews as they would a job interview, dressing professionally, being polite, and arriving on time.
4. Articulation	Journalists must clearly express their thoughts, using simple, jargon-free language to ensure a smooth conversation flow and avoid misunderstandings.
5. Interaction Management	Journalists need to manage the interview's flow, balancing control without dominating the conversation, and managing time while building rapport.
6. Non-Verbal Behaviors	Body language, facial expressions, and voice tone positively influence the interaction, guiding the conversation and helping to build rapport.

15. Carpenter, Serena; Cepak, Anthony & Peng, Zhao. (2018). An Exploration of the Complexity of Journalistic Interviewing Competencies. Journalism Studies. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/317826689_An_Exploration_of_the_Complexity_of_Journalistic_Interviewing_Competencies

2. Technical Elements of Recording

In their paper "A 'How-to' Guide for Producing Recorded Interviews," Rhianna Pedwell and her colleagues outline some of the key steps for collecting material that meets ideal filming or recording standards for interviews:

- Visiting the interview location before the scheduled day, ideally at the same time the interview will take place, and taking note of any sounds that could be distracting in the final recording.
- Recording yourself speaking there, or having a friend stand in for the interviewee.
- After listening to the audio, if you detect issues such as echoes, background noise, or volume problems, they recommend adjusting the setup.
- Having a backup plan, such as using a separate device off-frame to record audio in case of any incident.¹⁶

3. Elements of location

Another key aspect of preparing an interview is taking into account the following elements of location and how to successfully record an interview, especially when the final result will be presented in video format (tips compiled by MediaCollege.com¹⁷).

1. The background:	The background of your interview should be relevant to the interviewee and the topic. Ask if you can adjust the setting by moving objects, ensuring nothing distracts them during the interview and they stand out clearly.
2. Lighting	Use natural lighting when possible, positioning it in front of the interviewee. Avoid filming with strong light behind them, as it can obscure their face. Also, steer clear of harsh lighting like direct sunlight.
3. Frame	Ensure the background doesn't distract from the interviewee's message. Avoid inappropriate or copyrighted content, and remove anything that might make them appear awkward, like shadows or protruding objects. Double-check the frame for a professional look.

16. Pedwell, Rhianna; Hardy, James & Rowland, Susan. (2018). A 'How-to' Guide For Producing Recorded Interviews. CourseSource. Available at: file:///C:/Users/Perdorues/Downloads/A_How-to_Guide_For_Producing_Recorded_Interviews.pdf

17. <https://www.mediacollege.com/>

4. Methods to Engage with the Interviewee

During the actual interview, engagement with the interviewee is essential for gathering your desired materials and producing a good narrative. We recommend you keep in mind the following points to ensure good engagement with your interviewee:

Point	Summary
1. Pre-Interview Meeting	Hold a preliminary meeting to reduce tension; pre-interview discussions help with nerves from filming.
2. Active Listening	Listen actively, maintain eye contact, and recognize the significance of the interviewee's shared experiences.
3. Logical Question Sequence	Ask questions in logical order and use follow-ups to gather details and show respect.
4. Clarification and Paraphrasing	Clarify and paraphrase answers to ensure understanding and show you value their input.
5. Non-Verbal Cues	Monitor body language and facial expressions to assess the interviewee's comfort.

5. Storage items

One final and critical aspect of interviews is that the materials collected (whether audio, video, or even notes) are saved and stored properly. The materials you collect in interviews should be stored in secure locations where only members of your organization can access them. You should also consider [creating a backup account](#) to ensure that the collected information is secure and will not cause issues in the production of final materials.

- Digital storage should use reliable solutions such as [cloud storage and encrypted drives](#) to safeguard recorded interviews.
- Backup copies of all recordings should be created and stored in separate locations to prevent data loss.
- Files should be clearly labeled and organized to ensure easy retrieval and reference.
- Access to the recordings should be restricted to authorized personnel only, ensuring confidentiality and security throughout your self-narrative project.

Obtaining Permission to Interview: Informed Consent

Whenever we carry out interviews to develop and disseminate our own journalistic stories, it is crucial to **obtain permission from our sources before interviewing them, and to properly handle the personal information of our sources both during and after the interview.**

Ethical journalism requires journalists to obtain permission from their sources for using their stories, statements, and any other information they share with us in our reporting, regardless of which format we use to tell their story. Specifically, we are required to obtain the **sources' informed consent to participate in interviews and to use their information in our stories.**

What is informed consent?

- A formal, written statement or signed document from a source or participant that they **agree to share personal information about a topic and have it appear in your story.**
- In order to give their full consent, sources must **understand and agree not only with sharing their information, but also with the purpose and planned use of their information** afterward.
- It is also crucial that this **consent is "obtained in circumstances that ensure that the individual is not coerced in any way".**¹⁸ This means they should not be pressured, tricked, or bribed into sharing their information with us, no matter how much we want to tell the story.
- **In the case of children, their parents should provide informed consent** for their participation in a story.
- **Informed consent applies to any kind of participation on the part of our sources:** participating in an interview, taking their photo, recording audio or video of them, etc.

18. United Nations Communications Group. (December 2016). Ethical Guidelines for Journalists. UNICEF.org. Available at: https://www.unicef.org/afghanistan/media/2136/file/afg_publication_UN%20Ethical%20Guidelines%20for%20Journalists%20-%20English.pdf%20.pdf

- It is important that informed consent is not just verbal, but rather must be confirmed in writing (or recording). This may be done in a variety of ways (i.e., by signed letter, email, video recording, etc.), but it is most often obtained by signing a specific document that clearly confirms the participant's informed consent in all activities involved in the interview process.

Below is a sample Informed Consent Form, courtesy of the organization Philanthropy Without Borders¹⁹, that you can use as a starting point for creating your own consent form. Don't forget to tailor this form to your own specific needs and contexts!

MEDIA CONSENT FORM (TO DOWNLOAD)

Processing personal information

As journalists and storytellers, we also have an **obligation to protect our sources from harm or adverse effects, to the best of our ability**. Part of the process of obtaining informed consent includes a detailed (and often ongoing) conversation with our sources about the story we are writing, how their information contributes to that story, and what kinds of consequences they might face when this information is published and publicly identified with them. This is especially true in the case of young people and people in vulnerable circumstances.

In some cases, **we may choose to protect the confidentiality of sources in order to protect them from negative consequences**. This might mean **obscuring certain details** so they cannot be publicly identified with the source, or it could mean keeping our sources completely **anonymous**.

In addition, any time we handle the personal data of our sources, we must **adhere to all applicable laws about the processing of private or sensitive data**. In Europe, this means adhering to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)²⁰, which governs the way we collect, process, and store EU citizens' personal data.

19. <https://philanthropywithoutborders.com/consentform/>

20. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A32016R0679>

This regulation requires us to define and clearly communicate why, when, and how this personal data is being processed, and the impact of processing their personal data, as well as obtaining informed consent for its processing. In practical terms, even if we don't handle large amounts of personal data, we still have to be very careful with the use and sharing of personal data such as personal ID numbers, phone numbers, email addresses, home addresses, etc.

Guidelines for Using Others Peoples' Stories

There are several other important considerations to keep in mind when using other peoples' personal stories, information, and interviews in our self-narrative projects. Keep this list handy to make sure you are creating an ethical, respectful, and professional self-narrative project:

- **Always ask permission to tell someone's story or to use elements of it.** As we have seen, obtaining informed consent for a subject's participation in an interview or for using aspects of their story is a critical part of adequately and honestly representing their reality, as well as their involvement in telling their story.
- **First and foremost, do no harm.** We should always strive to protect our sources, whether this means keeping them anonymous, providing few identifying details, or carefully choosing what parts of their story to tell and how. We should never share parts of someone's story that may lead to defaming their character or opening them up to harm in any way. Here it is important to note that both our intentions and their consequences should do no harm!
- **Make sure it's your story to tell, or reflect again upon why you are the best person to tell it.** This necessarily involves asking yourself what you don't like about how it has been told before and what you can do to improve that telling, as well as reflecting upon why the person telling the story should feel comfortable telling it to you.
- **Involve the communities whose stories are being told.** Respect and promote how the affected community wants to tell its story, in which terms it chooses to do so, which facts it considers important, and why. Treat them as the experts, and yourself as the facilitator.

- **When choosing a journalistic project based on self-narrative, we must be particularly careful in verifying the data, facts, and voices chosen** in order to give a complete, accurate picture of the situation that fully represents the people telling the story and their truth, as well as situating their truth within the wider context of what is going on around them.
- **Share a complete and complex picture of a community**, i.e., not just their trauma and “resilience”, but also their rich culture, traditional knowledge, etc. Avoid “trauma porn” narratives that focus only on the trauma and difficulties people face in a purely titillating way, instead balancing this reality with other parts of their story.
- **Always ask permission to tell someone’s story or to use elements of it.** As we have seen, obtaining informed consent for a subject’s participation in an interview or for using aspects of their story is a critical part of adequately and honestly representing their reality, as well as their involvement in telling their story.
- **In the same vein, avoid the “single story” stereotype** of groups or communities. We should always strive to portray people and their communities as complex beings, not monolithic groups, and we should be especially careful not to further negative stereotypes or “single stories” about people (i.e., common media narratives that reduce people to one idea or stereotype, thus reducing their humanity).
- **Avoid paternalism and the “othering” of the people and communities** telling their stories, especially in terms of narrating from a Eurocentric/Global North perspective. We have to believe and communicate that people are the best authorities on their own experiences and realities, and allow them to tell their stories on their own terms, in their own contexts, without making value judgments from a place of privilege.

- **When framing and writing up your story, consider the 5Ws:**
 - **Who** is telling the story and who will receive it?
 - **What** needs to be told?
 - **Why** are you telling it? (What is the outcome you would like to achieve?)
 - **How** should the story be told to meet these goals?
 - You might also think about **When** and **Where** the story is being told as additional elements of its successful reception and capacity to inspire change or follow-up action.
- **Consider how you can share your power, privilege, knowledge, and tools to facilitate self-narrative projects where communities tell their own stories, on their own terms (and then act!).**

On air since 1995, the *This American Life* radio program and podcast is one interesting example of narrative journalism centering others' stories to create compelling, hard-hitting human-interest stories on complex topics.



MODULE 4. GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF IMAGES

In self-narrative projects, where the multimedia aspect is often essential for storytelling, narration and the documentation of activities, it is important to establish **clear guidelines for the use of images**. These guidelines should cover several aspects of usage rights, confidentiality, ethics, and image quality, among other themes.

Here are some key points to keep in mind as you select and use images and other visual content for your self-narrative project, using the EUR(H)OPE project as an example:

Elements for Selecting Narrative Tracks to Produce Coherent Images

- **Story-based image selection:** Images should correspond to the stories told and reflect the experiences of young people and communities. Choose images that reinforce your project's themes. In the case of the EUR(H)OPE project, these include: migration, identity, active citizenship, and intercultural collaboration.
- **Consistency between contexts:** Although national contexts vary, it is important to maintain thematic consistency. This can be achieved by using images that express similar, relevant emotions (such as hope, perseverance, and solidarity) and fit into the overall narrative of the project.
- **Visibility of impact:** Choose images that show concrete actions (such as participation in workshops, intercultural exchanges, or training courses) and key moments (speeches, debates, interactions, etc.).

Suggestions on the Project's Line of Sight

- **Main messages:** The project's visual focus should reflect its mission. In the EUR(H)OPE project, for example, each image should convey the values of diversity, inclusion, solidarity, and youth empowerment.
- **Visual representation of values:** Images should illustrate young people's ability to express themselves, to participate actively in society, and to overcome obstacles linked to social and migratory contexts.
- **Commitment and active participation:** Emphasis should be placed on the active participation of young people, whether in group work, discussions, or creative activities (art, journalism, etc.).

Source References for Shared Images and Photographic Outputs

- **Creative Commons licenses:** Encourage the use of images available under Creative Commons licenses, making sure to respect the conditions (attribution, share alike, non-commercialization).²¹
- **Free image banks:** Use free recognized platforms to access high-quality and royalty-free images with clear conditions of use, such as:
 - Unsplash: High-resolution images, free use with no registration required.
 - Pexels and Pixabay. These platforms offer royalty-free images with a wide range of themes.
- **Paid image banks:** For more specific needs, image banks such as Shutterstock, Adobe Stock or Getty Images offer professional-quality images, but also require a paid license.
- **Local photographers:** Whenever possible, hire local photographers to capture images that reflect the specific realities of the project in the various participating countries.

21. See <https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/ccllicenses/> for more information.

Rules for the Correct Use of Images, Including Permission and Credits

- **Visual quality:** Images must be high-resolution to ensure they can be used in a variety of formats (print, video, social networks, reports, etc.).
- **Correct use:** Do not alter an image in such a way as to distort its meaning or change its original context. Cropping, retouching or visual effects must respect the integrity of the message conveyed by the image.
- **Image credit:** For each image used, appropriate credit must be given. Images obtained must include the author's name, source, and licensing conditions, if applicable.
- **Use on social networks and websites:** When distributing images on public platforms, it is essential to mention the credits and use hashtags or descriptions that respect the ethics and mission of the project.
- **Archiving and protection:** Images should be securely archived, with copies of all consents obtained. This ensures that if images are reused in the future, they can be used in a way that respects rights and privacy.

Using Images in Storytelling

- **Illustration of personal stories:** Images must be directly linked to the stories told by the young participants. They should reinforce the story, bringing a complementary visual dimension to the personal or collective message.
- **Integrated multimedia content:** Wherever possible, images should be used in combination with other media (audio, video, text, etc.) to enrich the viewer's or reader's experience.

Elements of Respect for People's Privacy Concerning Discriminatory and/or Disrespectful Narratives

- **Protection of participants:** Avoid images that could undermine people's dignity, especially in the case of stories related to migration or sensitive subjects. Do not broadcast images that could expose someone to discrimination or prejudice.
- **Informed consent:** Be sure to obtain explicit consent from each person appearing in the images, explaining how these images will be used. This is particularly crucial in migratory contexts, where confidentiality is often essential.
- **Fair portrayal:** Be careful to avoid stereotyping or victimizing those photographed. Images should show people in positive, dynamic, and empowering contexts.

Legislative Elements on the Use of Images of Minors and/or Other Vulnerable Categories

- **Parental consent:** If minors are photographed, it is preferable to obtain parental or legal guardian authorization before publishing or using their images for public purposes.
- **Protection of vulnerable groups:** For vulnerable populations (refugees, migrants, people with disabilities, etc.), it is essential to guarantee confidentiality and personal safety. No image should be used without explicit, informed consent, and anonymity may be a preferable option if the safety or dignity of individuals is at stake.
- **National regulations:** Each partner country must comply with local legislation concerning the use of images, particularly those of minors. Partners should check the laws applicable in their jurisdictions.

The use of images in a self-narrative project must conform to strict ethical principles while respecting the rights of individuals and reinforcing the project's main messages. These guidelines will ensure a responsible and professional approach to the management of visual content. These rules can and should be adjusted according to the local contexts, specificities, and legal frameworks of each country participating in your project.



MODULE 5. GUIDELINES FOR ARCHIVING AND POST-PRODUCTION

Archiving Your Materials

During reporting and self-narrative work, it is critical to ensure that all data collected (images, interviews, recordings, videos, etc.) is properly secured and that backup copies are created, both as a safeguard against data loss and for their digital security. In addition to file storage problems, there are also possible legal problems or problems related to the topic of cybersecurity or digital security if confidential information is not handled correctly. In this way, it is crucial to keep files containing confidential information saved in a way that is easily identifiable and protects its access only to yourself or other authorized members of your organization.

In practical terms, there is no single formula for labeling or renaming files and folders, but rather each person should develop a method they find useful for their own needs, which is easy to remember and to implement. It is fundamental to do this on a time-by-time basis (i.e., as you go), and not try to save and rename everything at the end of the project.

The partners of the EUR(H)OPE project offer the following tips for correct file storage and archiving practices:

- Store your files in organized folders and give the folders names that make sense and can be easily remembered. It is important to choose a consistent method of naming the folders and files in your project. For example, including the date, the name of the publication, and a descriptive text, such as “20240823_EUR(H)OPE_digitalpreservation” is one example of a simple and understandable file naming.

- Always **make 1 or more backups of your files** to make sure you don't lose access to your materials. Because digital files are so easily replicable, it is easy to generate multiple copies to help you in case of data loss.
- It also helps to **save copies in different locations** so that if you lose a folder, you always have the files available in other folders or on other devices. For example, you can save a file on the computer, on an external hard drive and in the cloud.
- **For files with confidential information**, consider adding password protection, storing them in a hidden folder or encrypted drive, or naming them in a way that you know signals they are confidential, but is not so easily apparent to others.
- **We recommend storing interviews** in secure locations where only you and members of your organization can access them, ensuring confidentiality and security throughout the project.

Production and Post-Production Guidelines

Once you have planned and carried out your interviews, gathered all relevant information and visual aspects (such as photographs, infographics, etc.), and generally have all your materials ready to form the basis of your self-narrative project, you can then shift to the **production and post-production phases**. We recommend keeping the following suggestions in mind as you structure your story, verify all its facts and information, and put the final content together in the post-production phase:

- **Start working on the final product** only when all the material you have created is available, so that you can more easily see the "big picture" of how it all fits together.
- **Re-read or re-watch all your interviews** (and not immediately after they have been conducted!) to make sure you have a clear picture of what each person said and how it might contribute to the story overall. After checking them, make sure to include them in your reporting carefully.

- **Decide whether to use the first-person point of view of the narrator** or whether you need to gather other voices. Gather additional voices if there is a good reason: for example, because you are watching with your own eyes, because you are part of the story, because you bring a direct contribution to the work on the topic, etc.
- **Double check that all possible different opinions** that emerged from the interviews are well-represented in the final product. Here, you can double-check the veracity of the statements of each person and also confirm the veracity and representativeness of the story on the whole, after you have incorporated all the different points of view.
- Ensure that **all relevant multimedia content related to the story is present in the final product.**
- **Conduct a final check on the accuracy** of all names, places, information, quotes, and any content that may not respect the sensitivities or confidentiality of someone or something.
- **Sharing your final texts and/or products with the interviewees before their publication is also good practice.** If there is doubt or controversy about a certain element and you have the recording to prove what was said, you may keep the point in the story, but generally it is more important to pay attention to how people feel represented, and how they feel their stories are told.



IMPLEMENTING THE SELF-TELLING KIT

In addition to the theoretical content and the many helpful suggestions, tips, and examples we have included throughout this Self-Telling Kit, we are also happy to provide additional information here that will help you [synthesize what you have learned and better adapt this information to your personal needs and contexts](#).

The following sections aim to help you understand the basics for [how to structure your own self-narrative storytelling project](#), as well as offering you several [concrete examples of activities](#) you may put into practice with young people, youth workers, or any other collective in order to inspire and empower them to tell their own stories through a collective self-narrative project. Feel free to [adapt these structures and sample activities](#) to fit your own needs, interests, desires, contexts, audiences, and more in order to harness the creativity and individuality of each person's (or group's) experiences!

How to Structure a Self-narrative Story

1. **Define the story project well:** What story do we want to tell? Why? Why do we believe it is universal? Why do we believe we are the right people to tell it?
2. **Study and research:** Analyze how the same story was told before us, if it happened, to find one's own point of entry and development of the story.
3. **Make a census of all the voices that are important to cite on that topic,** making sure that they represent as many points of view as possible on that topic. We should also carefully ensure that they are relevant voices, either because they have been chosen as representatives by many or because they have personal experiences that are so important as to be necessary for telling the story.
4. **Work on a list of interviews** with relevant people and communities, and schedule them.
5. **Plan and carry out the production phase of your project,** including recording any interviews, taking photographs, creating infographics, etc.
6. With all of your information gathered, **structure your story with a clear narrative arc** and decide which other information and practical details you need to include, according to your chosen format (i.e., a written story, podcast, video documentary, photojournalism project, etc.).
7. Make sure to **verify all of the facts and information you have gathered and used in your story** to ensure your self-narrative project is true, in line with good journalistic practices, and is respectful and empowering for the communities involved.
8. **Finish strong with a good post-production phase,** which includes piecing the final content together, editing, saving copies, and archiving all your materials in a clear and concise way.

Sample Activities

Activity 1: Creating a Podcast

This activity will guide you through the basic steps needed to create a short (10-15 minute) podcast, using the principles of narrative journalism found in the Self-Telling Kit. It is intended to be completed over the span of 1 morning, though you can always extend the time to allow participants to create more polished and professional products.

Step 1: Brainstorming and topic selection (9:45 - 10:00, 15 minutes)

- After dividing into groups, brainstorm collectively and choose a topic you care about and have some background knowledge on. This will help create a strong narrative for your podcast.
- Use the following questions to guide your brainstorming:
 - a. What story do we want to tell?
 - b. Why are we the right ones to tell it?
 - c. Why is it important to tell this story?

Step 2: Designing questions and structuring the story (10:00 - 10:30, 30 minutes)

- After selecting a specific topic (the more specific, the easier it will be), work together as a group to design interview questions.
- Ensure your story follows the structure explained in the Self-Telling Kit:
 - a. **Setup/Exposition:** Introduce the situation, setting, main theme, and key characters.
 - b. **Plot:** Outline the sequence of events, highlighting the central conflict and the rising action.
 - c. **Climax:** Present the dramatic turning point and the falling action.
 - d. **Conclusion:** End with the resolution of the story.

Step 3: Role assignment and planning (10:30 - 10:45, 15 minutes)

- Decide who will take on the roles of host (interviewer) and interviewee.
- For the interviewee, ensure fact-checking for any statistics or claims being shared.

- Plan the podcast’s introduction and closing:
 - **Introduction:** A brief presentation of the host and interviewee. (If referencing elements of the training, consult the draft of the Self-Telling Kit.)
 - **Closing:** A short and concise conclusion to wrap up the podcast.

Coffee Break (10:45 – 11:00, 15 minutes)

Step 4: Rehearsing the interview/ podcast (11:00 – 11:45, 45 minutes)

- Practice the podcast structure and simulate interviews to ensure smooth delivery before recording.

Step 5: Recording the podcast (11:45 – 13:00, 1h15 minutes)

- Each group produces their podcast in the studio.

The podcast should not be longer than 10-15 minutes. Good luck!

Activity 2: Video Storytelling

This activity will guide you through the basic steps needed to create a short (5-10 minutes max) video storytelling project, based on the principles of narrative journalism and self-telling. The script is written for an activity that can be done in one full day (a “taster” session), though you can easily adapt it to create more extended video storytelling outputs by extending the time allowed for each step (especially the recording and post-production phases!).

Step 1: Brainstorming and Topic Selection (9:45-10:00, 15 minutes)

- Divide into groups of 2-4 people and collectively brainstorm and choose a topic that is interesting and relevant to all group members. You should have some background knowledge about the topic in order to create a strong narrative.
- Use the following questions to guide your brainstorming:
 - What story do we want to tell?
 - Why are we the ones who should tell it?
 - Why is it important to tell this story?

Step 2: Research and Information-Gathering (10:00-10:30, 30 minutes)

- After selecting the general topic, spend some time thinking more deeply about what kind of story you want to tell and what kinds of information and inputs you need to gather in order to tell it fully. This may include the following techniques (among others):
 - **Mini-interviews with group members** to hear their stories and decide which elements are key to telling the story and which may help reinforce or add interest to the story.
 - **Doing research online** for more background information, definitions, data, and even consulting examples of how others have engaged with the topic. This will help enrich the personal story at the core of the reporting.
- Since this is a self-narrative exercise, it will be helpful to **decide on the core narrative** you want to convey in your video storytelling during this stage.

Step 3: Structuring the Story and Planning the Visual Aspects (10:30-11:00, 30 minutes)

- With the inputs from Step 2, **outline the structure of your story**, using paper and pen or the online tool [Miro](#) to map out what you want to tell, and how.
- Make sure the structure of the story follows a clear **narrative arc** (as explained in the Self-Telling Kit):
 1. **Setup/Exposition**: Introduce the situation, setting, main theme, and key characters.
 2. **Plot**: Outline the sequence of events, highlighting the central conflict and the rising action.
 3. **Climax**: Present the dramatic turning point and the falling action.
 4. **Conclusion**: End with the resolution of the story.
- When your narrative structure is in place, **plan which visual aspects you will need to convey this story**. Remember to keep the overall time frame of the final video product in mind (5-10 minutes), as well as how much time you can dedicate to creating it. Some of the elements you may choose to incorporate might include:
 - Recording video interviews with key interviewees or groups of people
 - Recording other footage from the field

- Recording audio or background sounds
- Taking or collecting photographs that illustrate your point
- Collecting Infographics, data visualizations, and other graphic materials, etc.

Coffee Break (11:00-11:30, 30 minutes)

Step 4: Writing the Scripts for Each Element (11:30-12:00, 30 minutes)

- Take your list of visual elements and **write a script for each part that will guide the filming**. This will help you manage your time effectively and be more precise in your filming so you don't have to do as many takes.
 - **For interviews**, compile a list of questions and rehearse briefly. Plan where you want to record the interviews and how long it will take.
 - **For recording footage or sounds in the field**, think about where you need to go to record them, how long the clips need to be, etc.
 - For **photographs**, think about where you will take them or where you can download non-copyrighted photographs from the web.
 - For **infographics, data visualizations, and other graphic materials**, think about where you can download these elements with Creative Commons licenses, or how you can create your own (using programs like [Canva](#), for example), as well as how much time this will take.

Step 5: Production- Recording and Gathering Materials (12:00-14:00, 2 hours)

- Using your scripts and general plan for filming, go out into the field (or work online) to **record and gather all the raw content you need for your story**.
- We recommend **dividing the work between team members** according to location and the time it will take to record, in order to use your time efficiently.
- Make sure to **save each piece** with an easily identifiable title that describes its content and place in your story structure (for example: Interview Carlos_Event 1) to make the next stage of post-production much easier.

Lunch (14:00-15:30, 1h30 minutes)

Step 6: Post-Production- Video Editing and Sharing (15:30-17:30, 2 hours)

- Once all your visual materials are gathered according to plan, you can use free programs like [Clipchamp](#) or [Adobe Express](#) to **upload and edit the materials** into a coherent video.
- If you have time and want to create more interactive video storytelling content, you can use the program [Stornoway](#), which allows users to click and interact as they watch your video.
- When your content is finished, you can **share it to [YouTube](#), [Vimeo](#), social media**, or any other platform you choose!

Activity 3: “Stories of Belonging”: Creating a Photo Narrative

Objective: To explore and document European identity and belonging through photojournalism, encouraging participants to engage with their local communities and reflect on their shared values and experiences.

Duration: 5.5–7 hours (can also be extended to more than 1 day).

Round 1: Briefing (30 minutes)

1. Introduction to Photojournalism:

- Explain the basics of storytelling through photography: composition, lighting, framing, and capturing emotions.
- Discuss ethical considerations: respecting privacy, obtaining consent, and portraying subjects with dignity.

2. Theme Exploration:

- Introduce the theme: "Belonging in a Changing Europe."
- Encourage participants to think about what belonging means in their community and how migration, culture, and identity intersect.

Round 2: Fieldwork – Capture the Story (3–4 hours)

1. Community Interaction:

- Participants choose a subject or topic that embodies the theme. Examples might include:
 - A migrant sharing their experience of finding home in a new country.
 - A youth gathering showcasing cultural exchange.

2. Photo Documentation:

- Capture a series of 5–7 photographs that tell a coherent story about their chosen subject.
- Ensure that each image serves a purpose, from setting the scene to highlighting emotions and actions.

Round 3: Narrative Development (1 hour)

1. Select & Sequence:

- Participants review their photographs and select the most compelling shots to create a narrative flow.
- Arrange the images in a logical sequence that enhances the storytelling.

2. Write Captions:

- Write a brief caption for each photograph, providing context and deepening the audience's understanding of the story.

Round 4: Group Sharing & Reflection (1–1.5 hours)

1. Present the Stories:

- Each participant or group presents their photo story to the larger group.
- Discuss the challenges they faced, the decisions they made, and what they learned.

2. Feedback & Reflection:

- Facilitate a discussion on how these stories connect to broader themes of European identity and belonging.
- Encourage participants to reflect on the power of visual storytelling as a tool for advocacy and social change.

Materials Needed:

- Cameras or smartphones with good photo capabilities.
- Notebooks or digital devices for note-taking and caption writing.
- Printed copies of consent forms (if necessary).

Outcome:

This exercise will:

- Enhance participants' skills in visual storytelling and journalism.
- Foster a deeper understanding of European identity and the diverse experiences within their communities.
- Produce tangible outputs (photo narratives) that can be showcased during project activities.



CONCLUSIONS

This Self-Telling Kit has sought not only to offer a base of information on narrative journalism and self-narrative techniques, and concrete suggestions for how to tell a story through a self-narrative project, but also to inspire you to immerse yourself in the heart of personal and collective experiences. Through self-narration or self-telling, it is possible to explore the nuances and complexities of telling a story, transforming the experience into an act of sharing that goes beyond simply conveying information. In fact, narrative journalism does not limit itself only to transmitting facts, but rather invites the reader to live in and reflect on stories through a deeply human point of view, particularly that of the people who experience these events first-hand.

In a world where topics are often treated superficially, the EUR(H)OPE project works to restore value to the emotional and subjective dimensions of storytelling, so that each story can be listened to with even more empathy and understanding. This is possible precisely through the use of the tools of narrative journalism presented in this Self-Telling Kit, as well as the greater idea of maintaining the principle of a self-narrative style of storytelling, which is capable of speaking to as wide an audience as possible, not just those who are already attentive and sensitive to certain issues.

We hope you will find the information, tools, suggestions, examples, and structures in this Self-Telling Kit useful for creating your own self-narrative projects, or for working with young people, youth workers, or other collectives as you empower them to learn new skills and to tell their own stories. If you decide to share your results publicly, don't forget to tag us on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#) or let us know via the [EUR\(H\)OPE project website](#) so we can enjoy them and help amplify their reach!

CREDITS

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