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EUROPE ON A PLATE

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QUIOSQ
HERITAGE PROJECTS

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1. Introduction

This module introduces a practical method for adult educators seeking to use *space* as a tool for learning. At its core is the belief that *space*, either physical, cultural, and sensory, is not just a context for learning, but a vital tool in itself. Drawing from UNESCO's *Teaching and Learning with Living Heritage* initiative, the module focuses on intangible cultural heritage to promote inclusion, intercultural understanding, and a shared European identity.

In an era of increasing fragmentation, nationalism, and euroscepticism, adult education plays a critical role in building bridges rather than borders. This method equips adult educators, facilitators, and cultural practitioners with creative, participatory methods that highlight the learning potential of the *space*. By contextualising a space, from a physical space like a kitchen or a symbolic space like a province or a country, it will allow learners to situate their own experiences within a wider European context, recognising both local specificity and continental connectedness.

This module encourages learners to value both difference and shared heritage, directly challenging the narratives that feed exclusion and cultural division. Through constructivist learning approaches, the method provides concrete, modular activities that invite adult learners to reflect on their identities, share their cultural knowledge, and engage in meaningful exchanges across borders. This process promotes not only cultural literacy but also the values of inclusion, cooperation, and global citizenship.

This module reimagines culture not as a fixed symbol of national pride, but as a living, evolving bridge. One that connects people, places, and generations across Europe. In doing so, it contributes to a more open, resilient, and culturally confident European community.

2. Learning Objectives

This module aims to foster a mindset of growth, curiosity, and connection. Participants will engage with the concept of *space as a tool for learning*. *Space* is not defined by a physical setting, but by its context and place within people's minds. It is an active element in shaping the way communities live, create and pass on knowledge. Learners will learn how *space* can be defined, and how it is connected to wider societal, cultural, and physical borders.

Through shared reflection and experiential activities, learners will connect their own sensory and cultural environments to those of others, building empathy and intercultural awareness. Whether shaped by the rhythms of the sea, the conditions of mountain life, or the seasonal cycles of fertile plains, place becomes a lens through which learners encounter intangible heritage and deepen their sense of belonging and perspective.

The use of *microlearning* in this module supports a flexible, hands-on approach to adult education, allowing learners to engage with rich, localised content in accessible ways. Each activity contributes to a broader awareness of how culture lives in and through space.

This method invites participants to see learning as something rooted in the world around them and the communal settings that shape our identities. It encourages learners to approach *space*, both physical and cultural, as a dynamic and inclusive environment for lifelong learning, connection, and dialogue.

3. Theoretical Background

Within this method, three key theoretical constructs are introduced: *intangible cultural heritage*, *microlearning*, and *constructivism*. Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a multifaceted framework for examining the intersection of culture and learning and can aid in understanding how culture-based learning can promote inclusion, dialogue, and European cohesion. The following sections will elaborate on each concept, highlighting their relevance and interconnection within the broader discourse on knowledge transmission and learning design.

Intangible Cultural Heritage:

Intangible cultural heritage refers to the living traditions, practices, expressions, knowledge, and skills that communities, groups, and individuals identify as part of their cultural identity. These may include rituals, oral traditions, performing arts, festive events, craftsmanship, and associated objects or cultural spaces. Passed down through generations and continually reshaped by environmental, social, and historical contexts, intangible heritage plays a vital role in fostering a sense of belonging, continuity, and cultural diversity. It reflects the creativity and resilience of communities, and helps sustain mutual respect and understanding.

Microlearning:

Microlearning is defined as an educational approach that delivers targeted, short-form content designed to be consumed quickly and integrated directly into a learner's workflow or daily routine. It focuses on a single concept at a time, often using multisensory and multimodal elements (such as visuals, audio, or interactive activities) to support retention and engagement. Microlearning is especially relevant in fast-paced environments, where time and attention are limited, and traditional training methods may not fit. It supports just-in-time learning, is easily accessible, and aligns with the learning preferences of newer generations entering the workforce. The model is positioned as an adaptive and efficient response to barriers such as time constraints, limited resources, and changing expectations in professional development.

Constructivism:

Constructivism is a learning theory and educational philosophy that emphasises the active role of learners in constructing their own understanding based on experiences and prior knowledge. This approach posits that learners do not passively absorb information; instead, they actively build new knowledge upon the foundation of existing understanding. A key principle within constructivism is *active learning*, wherein learners engage in hands-on, experiential activities that require them to apply concepts, solve problems, and reflect on their experiences, fostering deeper understanding. Another principle is *social interaction*. Learning is a social activity, where knowledge is co-constructed through interactions with others, such as teachers, peers, and community members. This collaborative process enhances understanding and allows learners to view concepts from multiple perspectives. Lastly, *contextual learning* is a key aspect. Knowledge is constructed within

a context, meaning that learning is influenced by the environment, culture, and experiences of the learner. This principle highlights the importance of real-world relevance in educational experiences.

4. Europe on a Plate

4.1 Intro to the topic

This method invites adult educators to explore the richness of Europe's *intangible cultural heritage* through one of its most relatable and resonant forms: food traditions. Positioned within a broader pedagogical framework that understands *space* as a tool for learning, this resource encourages learners to engage with the environments, textures, and cultural landscapes that shape what we eat, how we prepare it, and why it matters.

Here, *space* is not just a backdrop for learning. It is an active agent. It includes the soil that grows our ingredients, the climate that determines what is seasonal, the markets and kitchens where traditions are passed on, and the rituals tied to place-based knowledge. By reconnecting food to the specific environments from which it emerges, whether coastal villages, mountain farms, or urban neighborhoods, we invite learners to see culture as something rooted, embodied, and alive.

Grounded in *constructivist learning principles*, this method supports active, reflective, and experiential learning. Through *microlearning* modules, educators can facilitate rich discussions around how local geographies, environmental conditions, and community practices influence European food cultures. Participants are encouraged to engage with their own memories and cultural contexts, examining how space and place shape identity, taste, and tradition.

Food becomes a dynamic entry point to understand how terrain, weather, and location give rise to distinct regional practices and traditions. These environments, the textures of the earth, the rhythms of the seasons, form an often invisible curriculum that has been learned and taught over generations.

European food exchange networks reveal how migration, trade, and cross-border interaction influence what we consider “traditional”. The presence of imported spices, the adaptation of recipes, and the evolution of foodways across regions show how culture is both place-bound and fluid.

By engaging with the spatial and environmental dimensions of culinary heritage, adult learners are encouraged to reflect on their relationship with land, community, and shared cultural memory. This fosters not only deeper cultural awareness, but also empathy and connection across differences. In an era of fragmentation and polarisation, recognising shared spaces through food traditions offers a grounded, sensory, and deeply human way of learning.

Ultimately, this method uses food and *space* as powerful tools to preserve heritage, promote dialogue, and inspire learners to recognise that our cultures are not abstract ideas, but lived, local, and layered within the landscapes we inhabit.

4.2 Application in Adult Education

This method can be used effectively in adult education by incorporating a variety of teaching tools and techniques that promote active, personalised learning. Making use of *microlearning*, it will allow the trainer to break down complex content into small, digestible lessons. Using Interactive methods will allow cultural immersion so learners will engage directly with food cultures.

Hands-on experiences is an important aspect, where learners are encouraged to engage with food cultures in their own environments. For example, finding ingredients in the wild and cooking a simple dish from a selected European region and reflecting on the process and significance. This would allow them to internalise the spatial and cultural importance of the food they prepare.

Collaborative projects will help learners share their experiences of cooking or learning about food culture, encouraging a community feel. This can foster a deeper understanding through shared learning and exchange of ideas. Food practices are not often learned in an academic setting, but in the home. Oral traditions play a vital role in passing onto the next generation. Through *intercultural dialogue* and *sharing stories*, these culinary traditions will strengthen mutual respect and collaboration

Dialogue is encouraged where learners can reflect on experiences and insights, fostering critical thinking and deeper understanding. Group discussions and collaborative projects promote peer-to-peer learning, creating a community where learners can share their own food traditions and cultural perspectives.

This method is particularly relevant for adult education because it addresses key principles that align with how adults learn best: through experience, relevance, and self-direction. Adult learners often bring a wealth of prior knowledge, life experience, and specific goals to the learning environment. This method supports educators in understanding those dynamics and adapting their teaching to meet adult learners' needs effectively.

By combining *constructivist learning* with an exploration of Europe's diverse food cultures, the method provides a rich, dynamic learning experience that not only preserves intangible heritage but also empowers participants to engage with it in meaningful ways.

4.3 Case Studies and Examples

FOODSHIFT Pathways

FOODSHIFT Pathways is an Erasmus+ project running from 2022 to 2025, involving six partners across six European countries. The initiative collaborates with schools, teachers, and educational staff to assess and enhance the integration of sustainability, climate, and food education, aiming to meet society's evolving needs. The project contributes by supporting teachers with educational tools and knowledge, developing theoretical and practical learning materials and producing instructional videos to foster critical and creative thinking about food environments and eating habits.

<https://www.susmetro.eu/foodshift-pathways/>

Voedsel uit het Bos (Food from the Forest)

The "Jaartraining Voedselbossen" (Food Forest Year Training) by Voedsel uit het Bos is a detailed and immersive training program designed to help participants understand, design, and establish food forests, a sustainable method of cultivating food in a forest-like ecosystem. This program is structured in three comprehensive modules that span across various topics related to food forestry, from basic knowledge to advanced planning and design. By the end of the program, participants will have gained a solid foundation in food forest creation, with the knowledge to establish their own systems. The program provides an interactive mix of live sessions and online learning to ensure a well-rounded understanding.

<https://voedseluithetbos.nl/en/de-jaartraining-voedselbossen/>

FoodEducators

FoodEducators is an EIT Food initiative designed to engage educators with interactive resources to promote healthy, sustainable food choices among young people. The platform offers lesson plans and activities across four key themes: Food & Health, Food & Sustainability, Food Science & Food Systems, and Agrifood Jobs & Careers. These resources aim to foster leadership, conscious consumerism, and entrepreneurial skills in students.

<https://www.foodeducators.eu/>

EducLocalFOOD

EducLocalFOOD is an Erasmus+ project aimed at developing a teaching toolkit for local and sustainable food systems (LSFS), targeting educators in agricultural technical education. The initiative addresses challenges such as climate change, farmer precariousness, and food-related health issues by promoting more sustainable food systems.

<https://www.educlocalfood.eu/>

5. Teaching and Learning Methods

5.1 Methodology approach

Five pedagogical approaches that inform the design of the teaching and learning methods are used in this method. Rooted in principles of adult education and cultural learning, the selected approaches aim to create an inclusive, flexible, and engaging learning environment. Approaches such as microlearning, constructivist learning, sensory engagement, intercultural dialogue, and learner-led cultural exchange are integrated to support active participation, critical reflection, and meaningful cultural interaction. Together, these methods provide a framework for promoting cultural awareness and mutual understanding.

Microlearning is a pedagogical approach that delivers content in small, manageable chunks, typically focused on a single concept or skill. This approach works particularly well in adult education, where learners may have limited time for formal study. Microlearning allows learners to engage with material incrementally, offering flexibility in how and when they learn. Learning by doing, where learners are encouraged to explore, problem-solve, and reflect on their experiences, rather than passively receiving information. By fostering critical thinking, creativity, and reflection, constructivist approaches support learners in developing a deeper understanding of the material and how it relates to their own world.

Constructivist learning is based on the idea that learners actively construct their own understanding and knowledge through experiences and interactions. This approach emphasises

Sensory approaches in learning creates an environment that makes learning more immersive and meaningful. This approach allows learners to make connections with the material on a deeper, more intuitive level. Sensory learning activates distinct parts of the brain, aiding in the retention and emotional connection to the content.

Intercultural dialogue in education involves engaging learners in conversations and activities that promote understanding, respect, and collaboration between cultures. This pedagogical approach encourages learners to share their personal experiences, traditions, and worldviews, helping them gain new perspectives on cultural diversity. By engaging in dialogue, learners actively listen, reflect, and respond to ideas and experiences different from their own. This process fosters mutual respect and breaks down stereotypes and misconceptions.

Encouraging learners to **share their own knowledge and traditions** fosters a collaborative and inclusive environment where cultural exchange can flourish. This approach values learners' experiences and knowledge, recognising them as important resources for group learning. By sharing their traditions, whether related to food, customs, or rituals, learners can see their practices as part of a larger cultural tapestry. This encourages a sense of pride in one's heritage, while also promoting mutual learning and respect for diversity. Incorporating these pedagogical approaches into adult

ularly in the context of cultural learning, creates a rich, dynamic environment that
l growth, cultural awareness, and lifelong learning.

5.2 Suggested activities

Active dialogue and/or guest speakers

Suggested subjects:

- How migration has influenced food practices.
- How food practices influence what you buy.
- How local weather influences when you eat dinner.
- How cultural practices determine where you get fresh produce.
- How regions determine the staple of food practices.
- How technology has influenced when we consume food.
- Remarkable food traditions in Europe.
- What the average person eats as meals throughout the day.

Engaging activities

Suggestions:

- Finding (wild) local ingredients and learning how to use the land and its resources for cooking.
- Match the local food to its season and/or region.
- Participate in (local) food-related traditions.
- Learn to cook dishes from other communities.
- Make local traditional dishes together.
- A (virtual) food tour throughout the region.

Possible features:

- Interactive food map of Europe: Pinpoint regions and food traditions that users can click on to learn about specific cultural practices and contexts.
- Recipe collection & cooking challenges: Invite participants to try their hand at cooking different traditional European dishes and share their experiences.
- Guest speaker sessions: Host virtual conversations with chefs, food historians, or cultural experts to discuss the intersection of food, culture, and heritage in Europe.

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7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this module provides adult educators with a practical method to explore *space* as a dynamic tool for learning. It challenges the conventional view of *space* as just a physical backdrop, instead highlighting how cultural, sensory, and environmental spaces shape learning experiences, particularly in the context of Europe's intangible cultural heritage. By integrating pedagogical approaches like microlearning, constructivism, and sensory engagement, the method empowers educators to foster a deep connection between learners and the cultural environments that influence their identities. This approach not only encourages reflection on local and shared cultural practices but also nurtures empathy and intercultural understanding. As Europe faces increasing fragmentation and nationalism, the method plays a crucial role in building bridges through cultural dialogue, promoting shared European values, and encouraging an inclusive, resilient European community. Through interactive, reflective, and hands-on learning activities, this module equips educators and learners to engage meaningfully with both the spaces they inhabit and the cultural heritage that connects them to a broader European context.



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Overcoming Nationalism and Euroscepticism Through Culture