

EYES FOCUS GROUP TRANSCRIPT

DATE: 5.4.2025

TIME: 10H00-12H00

Facilitator: EKO Greece

Logistic: ABARKA ONGD

Participants: 43.

(0:02 - 0:35) – Opening Remarks and Gratitude

The session opens with warm remarks and appreciation from the speakers. One participant expresses gratitude for the positive experience they've had so far, highlighting how enjoyable and rewarding it has been. Another thanks the host for the opportunity and begins to transition the conversation toward reviewing the slides and moving forward with the session's agenda.

(14:30 - 17:20) – Arrival, Greetings, and Informal Catch-up

As participants begin to join, there is a lighthearted exchange of greetings among international attendees. The host encourages participants to remind others via WhatsApp to join the session. Greetings are exchanged with individuals from Greece, Ethiopia, and Turkey, among others. A youth exchange in the Netherlands is mentioned, highlighting past interactions with Turkish participants. The conversation reflects a multicultural dynamic, with individuals identifying their national affiliations and past collaboration experiences. There is also a warm "Eid Mubarak" greeting shared among participants, acknowledging recent celebrations.

(17:21 - 23:04) – Participant Introductions and Playful Banter

Participants continue to arrive and introduce themselves, including members from the Karaman Youth Club Association. A mix of casual banter and light teasing brings a sense of camaraderie, as members from ABARKA's team (Celia, Luca, Maddalena, Guadalupe) are acknowledged. Jokes are made about being forgotten or overlooked in previous communications. Clotaire, referred to as "Klo," becomes a focal point in the jokes, with others humorously threatening to "settle" the matter during future in-person meetings.

(23:05 - 25:10) – Cultural Observations and Meeting Context

Participants joke about Taranto (Italy) becoming the "center of the world" and share past encounters. There's a remark about the growing diversity in the project, which is described as

resembling the "United Nations" or a "small village," echoing the theme of unity and global citizenship. Clotaire reminds participants that the session is being recorded, as it's part of the project's documentation process. While some people are still expected to join, the host emphasizes the importance of starting soon.

(25:11 - 28:13) – Country Check and Acknowledging Connectivity Issues

The host initiates a roll call by country to check who is present. Countries mentioned include Turkey, Italy, Ghana, Greece, Cameroon, and Nigeria. Some countries respond enthusiastically, while others are absent or silent, such as Nigeria, despite multiple registrations. The host jokes about language learning and encourages everyone to rename themselves with their name and country. They acknowledge technical and infrastructural challenges that participants, especially from African countries, might face, such as electricity cuts and low bandwidth, and urge flexibility from all.

(28:14 - 31:17) – Meeting Structure, AI Tools, and Language Support

Clotaire explains that while he usually facilitates, this session will be led by Greek partners, and his role will be logistical. The recording is emphasized as useful for creating reports later. Attendees are encouraged to contribute, even if they struggle with language – AI and translation tools will help document everything. Participants who can't speak fluently can write in the chat, and those inputs will be collected and analyzed for final reports and training design. Emphasis is placed on the importance of sharing perspectives today.

(31:18 - 35:24) – Introduction of Greek Facilitators and Focus Group Purpose

Greek facilitators, Costantina and Emanuela, introduce themselves and explain the goals of the meeting. This is a **focus group** for the **ICE Project**, a virtual exchange initiative connecting youth and youth workers from Spain, Italy, Greece, Turkey, Cameroon, Ghana, Gabon, and Nigeria. The facilitators underline the importance of participant input, which will inform future training sessions tackling issues such as youth unemployment, exclusion, and lack of civic engagement. They encourage openness and assure participants the space is safe and non-judgmental.

(35:25 - 35:56) – Energizer Activity Introduction

Emanuela introduces a light-hearted energizer to wake everyone up, especially given the early hour in some countries. Participants are asked to turn off their cameras, and as statements are read, they are to turn their cameras on if the statement applies to them. It's clarified that this is a playful and informal activity intended to get everyone engaged before diving into more structured discussions. Clotaire jokingly protests, suggesting he's not a fan of energizers, adding to the friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

(35:57 – 39:02) – Virtual Energizer: Breaking the Ice Playfully

The session continued with a non-formal energizer activity facilitated by Emanuela, designed to engage participants through a playful game involving turning cameras on and off in response to specific personal questions. Participants were asked to open their cameras if they still lived with their parents, knew how to dance traditional dances, had traveled to more than five countries, used ChatGPT, or were excited about starting the focus group. The activity was light-hearted and humorous, with several participants playfully admitting or avoiding certain questions. It helped create a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere and demonstrated how online engagement can be both fun and effective.

(39:03 – 42:14) – Sharing First Experiences with Virtual Exchanges

After the energizer, the facilitators introduced the first discussion question: whether participants had ever participated in or facilitated an Erasmus+ online or virtual exchange project. One participant shared that his first experience was in December 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, involving four countries including Greece, Denmark, and Portugal. He served as a facilitator and noted that although it felt unusual and challenging at first to manage a youth exchange virtually, it turned out to be rewarding. Daily online energizers and digital tools helped create a sense of connection among participants, who grew close despite the distance.

(42:15 – 46:06) – Perspectives from Italy: Challenges with Informal Online Training

Francesco from Italy followed by explaining that informal online training remains very rare in his country, even during the pandemic. As a university professor and VET educator, he regularly teaches online but notices that most Italian trainers are unfamiliar with engaging learners through informal methods. He emphasized that the mindset in Italy is still deeply rooted in formal teaching styles, and many educators lack the competencies to effectively lead or value non-formal, interactive learning spaces. Francesco believes more efforts are needed to promote virtual exchanges and informal education methods within the Italian academic and vocational training systems.

(46:06 – 53:03) – Experiences from Cameroon: Infrastructure and Digital Literacy Barriers

Narcisse from Cameroon then offered a detailed perspective on the challenges of implementing online learning in his country. He is an IT teacher and recently served as technical support for a World Bank-funded training project for school directors. Narcisse described major obstacles, including limited digital literacy among both students and educators, poor Internet connectivity especially outside major cities, and a lack of support teams to help users engage with online platforms. He stressed that although there is a strong willingness to learn, the lack of infrastructure, guidance, and digital knowledge prevents successful implementation of online learning. His testimony was echoed and validated by other participants familiar with the Cameroonian context.

(53:04 – 55:12) – Wrapping Up the Question and Transition to Next Topic

Clotaire acknowledged the importance of Narcisse's input and added a touch of humor, emphasizing that motivation is the essential starting point. The facilitators then transitioned to the next focus question: What skills or knowledge did participants feel they lacked—or wished they had—during their past virtual exchange experiences? They invited responses from both facilitators and participants, underlining that all viewpoints were valuable, including from those who had not yet participated in a virtual exchange. The intention was to gather diverse insights to improve future session design.

(55:13 – 55:57) – Clotaire's Reflection on Online Facilitation Skills

Clotaire took the floor to reflect on his own challenges in facilitating online sessions. He praised the energizer, noting that it inspired him because energizers are a key skill area he often questions in virtual settings. He highlighted how difficult it can be to keep participants engaged in online spaces and expressed a desire to incorporate more creative resources like the energizer activity into his own sessions. He emphasized the importance of these interactive elements to keep online learning alive and dynamic.

(55:57 – 56:57) – Reflections on Ineffective Online Exchanges

Clotaire continued his reflection by recalling a previous youth exchange he participated in, which he felt lacked engagement due to the absence of energizing elements and interaction. The

sessions were structured more like traditional lectures, with minimal participant involvement. He stressed the importance of maintaining a dynamic and interactive atmosphere in online settings, and how such techniques—like energizers—can significantly enhance motivation and participation.

(56:58 – 59:54) – Sharing Digital Tools and Platforms for Online Engagement

The conversation transitioned into a discussion about useful digital tools for youth workers. While PowerPoint was acknowledged as a traditional mainstay, newer platforms like Canva and Miro were also mentioned. Participants from Turkey enthusiastically recommended **GatherTown**, describing it as a game-like, interactive platform with customizable virtual spaces. They explained that participants could "walk" through digital rooms, engage in private or public discussions, and create thematic environments like offices, villages, or winter landscapes. The uniqueness of GatherTown lies in its proximity-based communication, where users can only interact with others in the same virtual space.

(59:55 – 1:02:02) – The Interactive Features of GatherTown

Further details were shared about GatherTown's design. Users navigate a pixel-based map and engage with others by moving into defined interaction zones. This setup allows small groups or pairs to have private conversations while also enabling larger presentations in dedicated virtual conference rooms. The presenter emphasized how the platform encourages spontaneous interaction and facilitates organic groupings, ideal for informal education settings. The tool's versatility and creativity sparked interest among the participants.

(1:02:03 – 1:03:39) – Microsoft Classroom and Forms for Structured Education

Erkan contributed by introducing **Microsoft Classroom**, a platform used primarily during the pandemic. It allows educators to distribute assignments, manage classroom interactions, and track students' scores easily. While Erkan no longer uses it regularly, he acknowledged its usefulness. He now prefers **Microsoft Forms**, which he finds quicker for his current needs. This contribution highlighted a more structured, formal approach to online education, contrasting with the informal style of tools like GatherTown.

(1:03:40 – 1:05:13) – Proposal for a Digital Tools Workshop

Inspired by the discussion, the facilitators proposed organizing a workshop focused entirely on sharing and exploring digital tools. Karaman Youth was enthusiastically volunteered to lead this session, having already showcased several effective tools. There was light humor and mutual encouragement as participants embraced the idea of learning from each other to improve their online facilitation skills. The conversation also mentioned familiar tools like **Slack**, **Slido**, **Discord**, and **Kahoot**, widely used for quizzes and interactivity in online sessions.

(1:05:14 – 1:07:44) – Building Community through the Project Platform

Francesco described plans for an advanced **Learning Management System (LMS)** platform being developed for the project. Beyond traditional e-learning, the platform will include social networking features similar to Facebook, allowing users to post, form groups, and build an online community. He stressed that community-building is key to successful online learning—participants must not only be taught but also actively engaged and heard. The Italian VET system still uses tools like Microsoft Classroom for basic skills, but the project aims to go further by creating a dynamic and inclusive learning space.

(1:07:44 – 1:09:32) – Addressing Connectivity Challenges in Cameroon

Responding to earlier concerns about low connectivity in regions like Cameroon, Francesco reassured participants that the LMS platform would be optimized for use in low-bandwidth environments. He explained that large files would be hosted on Vimeo to ensure smooth streaming, and that content could still be accessed through written posts and discussions without heavy reliance on visuals. The development team is consciously working toward digital inclusivity, ensuring that youth and youth workers in remote areas won't be left behind due to technical limitations.

(1:09:33 – 1:10:57) – Anticipating Platform Launch and Lighthearted Banter

The facilitators discussed their timeline for launching the platform, aiming to release it within a week or two. A humorous exchange followed, where Clotaire joked about traveling to Taranto not to visit friends, but to finally get access to the platform. The camaraderie among partners helped maintain a friendly, collaborative atmosphere. This segment reinforced the enthusiasm and dedication to delivering a user-friendly digital tool for the entire consortium.

(1:10:57 – 1:12:06) – Introducing the Topic of Intercultural Communication Challenges

With the digital tools discussion concluded, the facilitators introduced a new focus question: whether participants had ever experienced challenges related to **intercultural communication** or **online engagement**. They acknowledged that such challenges are common, especially when people come from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. A humorous but relatable example was shared—the difficulty of pronouncing participants' names correctly, which can sometimes cause awkwardness or discomfort.

(1:12:10 – 1:12:46) – Language Barriers and Accents in Multicultural Contexts

One participant chimed in with a personal anecdote, noting that even when people speak the same language, accents can create confusion. He explained that he has an Indian accent, which has led to misunderstandings in past online interactions. This point highlighted how language and communication challenges in virtual international settings go beyond vocabulary—they include pronunciation, cultural references, and interpersonal sensitivity.

(1:12:47 – 1:14:26) – Communication Challenges in Online Multicultural Contexts

A participant humorously elaborated on the challenges of understanding different accents in online meetings, acknowledging how amusing and enriching it is to encounter diverse ways of speaking. However, he noted that without visual cues—especially when cameras are off—comprehension becomes more difficult. Speaking slowly and clearly emerged as a simple but effective solution to improve understanding in multicultural online exchanges. He reflected on how the COVID-19 pandemic accelerated digital familiarity and coined the phrase “Sir, am I audible to you?” as a humorous example of how participants adapted. Despite the difficulties, he emphasized the unintentional entertainment value of virtual meetings, such as unexpected disruptions involving children, pets, or household noises, adding lightness to the discussion.

(1:14:27 – 1:15:12) – Gratitude for Balanced Criticism and Encouragement

The facilitator thanked the speaker for not only pointing out a problem but also proposing constructive solutions. This spirit of balanced reflection—acknowledging challenges while

offering pathways forward—was appreciated as essential for collective improvement in online youth engagement.

(1:15:17 – 1:18:40) – Mental Health and Private Self-Evaluation Techniques

The next focus question addressed how youth workers handle **mental health, motivation, and dropout** challenges in online environments. A participant with a background in mental health awareness shared insights from his work since 2019. He emphasized that youth are often reluctant to discuss mental health in group settings due to fear of judgment. To address this, he implemented a self-evaluation method during past exchanges, where individuals receive private questionnaires via chat. The results remain confidential unless participants choose to share. This approach respects personal boundaries while promoting introspection. Interestingly, he noted that such exercises can be more effective online because participants remain in their comfort zones, which encourages openness.

(1:18:45 – 1:23:26) – Motivation and Retention Strategies for Online Youth Engagement

The discussion shifted toward strategies to **maintain motivation and prevent dropouts** in online exchanges. The speaker argued that beyond the excitement of a first meeting, participants need follow-up responsibilities—like preparing an energizer or contributing a discussion point—to stay engaged. These informal assignments create a sense of ownership and accountability. The facilitator acknowledged the value of this idea, noting that dropouts were a common issue in past projects. Clotaire expanded on this, warning of a broader crisis in youth motivation fueled by an overwhelming and often misleading digital environment. He emphasized the need for **authentic role models** who embody the values they preach, suggesting that today's youth often lack trustworthy references. Real-life engagement and consistency are critical to building genuine motivation.

(1:23:27 – 1:26:43) – Leadership Empowerment Through Inclusion and Example

Continuing the reflection on motivation, Clotaire argued for giving young people opportunities to lead, even if they are inexperienced. Drawing on an example from a physical youth exchange in Bulgaria, he described how an 18-year-old participant with limited English confidently prepared, delivered, and evaluated a session after being empowered to do so. This hands-on experience dramatically increased the participant's engagement and confidence. Such inclusive practices not only promote learning by doing but also generate ambassadors who share positive

experiences and encourage others to join. For Clotaire, these examples embody the spirit of youth empowerment and sustainable engagement.

(1:26:44 – 1:27:12) – Micro-Messaging and Peer Influence Through Social Media

Edwika from Cameroon contributed via the chat, explaining how her team uses **short videos on social media** to deliver motivational messages and practical advice. This micro-content approach leverages the high consumption rate of short-form videos among youth, making information easy to digest, revisit, and share. The facilitator applauded the effectiveness of these small-scale interventions, recognizing them as a promising strategy in digital youth work.

(1:27:31 – 1:30:25) – Structural Causes of Dropout: A View from Cameroon

Mr. Narcisse rejoined the conversation to discuss the roots of **school dropout in Cameroon**, explaining he would begin with traditional education before connecting it to online learning. He noted that many young people in Cameroon have lost faith in the conventional education system. Despite earning degrees, they struggle to find employment, which fuels widespread disillusionment. Narcisse identified a key cause: **a lack of mentoring and professional orientation**. Without guidance, students fail to see the relevance of their education to real-world opportunities, leading to disengagement and dropout. The facilitators clarified that he would eventually link these systemic challenges to similar patterns in virtual education.

(1:30:57 – 1:33:12) – Root Causes of Dropout in Cameroon: Structural Challenges

Mr. Narcisse continued elaborating on the challenges of school dropout in Cameroon, pointing out that guidance and motivation are typically entrusted to “career counsellors” who spend only a few hours per week with students. Meanwhile, parents—who spend most of the time with their children—often lack the training and skills necessary to offer meaningful career or motivational support. This disconnect contributes significantly to disorientation and disengagement among youth, leading to high dropout rates. Additionally, inadequate infrastructure and poor internet connectivity further compound the challenges, especially when transitioning to online education models. Narcisse emphasized that the resistance to online learning is not due to unwillingness, but rather to deeper systemic issues and a lack of preparation.

(1:33:31 – 1:34:18) – Toward Passion-Oriented Guidance

Narcisse concluded that helping young people discover and pursue their passions could be a powerful way to increase engagement, even in the face of infrastructural and social obstacles. Once youth are connected with what they truly enjoy, they become more open to learning—including through online platforms. His message underscored the importance of meaningful orientation in youth development.

(1:34:21 – 1:35:42) – New Question: Training Topics for Youth Workers in Virtual Exchange

The facilitators introduced a new question: What topics should be prioritized in training youth workers for virtual exchanges? While energizers had been previously discussed, participants were encouraged to think beyond tools and suggest themes or skills they would want to develop. The discussion shifted to the importance of managing online disruptions—such as poor connections or overlapping speakers—and learning to become quick problem-solvers under such circumstances.

(1:35:43 – 1:37:06) – Conflict Management and Facilitation Techniques

Participants pointed out that managing participants during virtual meetings can be challenging, especially when people speak simultaneously or stray off-topic. They emphasized the need for practical training in online facilitation—learning how to bring people back on track, manage timing, and structure discussion effectively. Such strategies would help maintain productivity and coherence in virtual sessions.

(1:37:07 – 1:38:18) – Time Management and Accountability in Online Learning

Another contribution focused on the perception that online courses are less serious than face-to-face ones, leading some participants to treat them casually—joining from cafés or multitasking during sessions. The speaker suggested including training on how to instill discipline and a sense of responsibility among participants, helping them value and prioritize online engagements equally as in-person ones.

(1:38:19 – 1:40:57) – Communication Skills and Active Listening

Guadalupe from Spain emphasized the importance of communication tools in online settings, particularly **active listening** and **body language**. Since participants often cannot tell if others are paying attention, facilitators need to practice clear, slow speech and encourage movement and expressive gestures to maintain engagement. Even in virtual environments, body language and tone of voice can make a difference. She proposed adding modules on effective communication and non-verbal engagement strategies to training courses for youth workers.

(1:41:03 – 1:44:44) – Italian Perspective: Human-Centered Communication Strategies

Francesco elaborated on the Italian communication style, humorously acknowledging Italians' expressive use of hands. He highlighted that despite the limitations of screens, it's still possible to convey energy and presence through voice tone and facial expressions. He advocated for including modules on **human-centered communication strategies** in online training. According to him, teachers and youth workers often lack training in how to create real emotional and cognitive connections in virtual spaces. He praised the energizer exercise as a great example of how to humanize virtual meetings and emphasized that effective communication is not just about tools—it's about people.

(1:44:45 – 1:46:32) – Parent Involvement in Career Orientation: A Question from Gabon

Chantal Sarko, President of ONG CIFOS from Gabon, raised a significant question: **Are there any strategies or programs in your countries that involve parents in the career orientation of young people?** The question initiated a country-by-country response. Greek representatives shared that while there used to be career guidance modules in schools, they were often inadequately implemented due to lack of specialized staff. Spain reported the presence of orientation training in schools, but primarily focused on university paths. Other alternatives such as vocational education (FP) and Erasmus+ opportunities are less promoted, which limits student awareness of diverse educational paths.

(1:46:33 – 1:49:53) – Clarification on Parent Involvement and EU Project Perspective

Clotaire summarized the input from Greece and Spain, confirming that while there are career orientation subjects in school curricula, they often lack real substance or structure. Parental involvement, though mentioned in methodology, is not consistently enacted through specific programs. He explained that within Erasmus+ projects, especially under Key Action 2, it is

common practice to include **dual target groups**—such as both youth and parents, or educators and students. This dual approach creates pathways for involving parents more directly in youth orientation, even if it's not yet embedded in national systems.

(1:51:13 – 1:54:30) – The Role of Parents in Youth Orientation: Institutional Gaps and Project-Based Alternatives

The conversation returned to the earlier question raised by Chantal from Gabon about whether any national programs exist that systematically involve parents in the educational orientation of youth. Clotaire explained that while some schools—particularly in Spain and the Basque Country—make efforts to engage parents, this often fades after primary education. In practice, the burden of involving parents falls more on the individual school or educator's initiative than on structured national programmes. However, within **Erasmus+ projects**, there is more space to include parents and design activities that engage them alongside youth and educators. Clotaire noted that the project under discussion operates in this model, targeting youth workers and young people with the potential to create a ripple effect. Yet, no formal state policy or standard exists across Europe to institutionalize this dual engagement approach.

(1:54:31 – 1:56:18) – Youth Workers as Key Agents: Filling the Gap

Clotaire and another speaker emphasized that while some frameworks like Erasmus+ allow the integration of parents, the responsibility to involve families meaningfully often rests with youth workers and educators. There are no nationally mandated programmes that bridge this gap. The group agreed that this lack of official structure heightens the importance of bottom-up initiatives led by civil society organizations to include parents in the educational development of youth.

(1:56:52 – 1:58:53) – A Turkish Example: Family Camps and Bridging Generational Gaps

Representatives from Turkey added an important perspective by sharing existing government-supported programmes aimed at strengthening family bonds. These include nature-based camps for parents and children (e.g., father-son, mother-daughter weekends) designed to enhance communication and emotional connection. These initiatives are becoming more common as institutions recognize the growing disconnect between children and parents in the digital age. The Turkish team offered to translate and share any relevant government

publications or reports in English with the group, highlighting their proactive commitment to knowledge exchange.

(1:59:27 – 2:00:11) – Thriving in Remote Workspaces: A Proposal from Ghana

Beatrice from Ghana suggested including a module on how to thrive in remote or hybrid workspaces as part of youth worker training. She noted that many jobs today are digital, and since working with people from diverse national backgrounds can be challenging, this topic is especially relevant. Her suggestion was well received as it aligns with current employment realities and complements intercultural communication training.

(2:00:12 – 2:02:55) – Narcisse's Final Intervention: Structural Reform for Career Guidance

Mr. Narcisse returned with further reflections, supported by Clotaire's translation. He reiterated that young people's orientation is often delegated to undertrained and under-involved professionals, like career counselors who spend minimal time with students. These professionals often lack passion or the right skills for the role. He proposed redirecting resources—currently spent on formal training for these roles—towards equipping parents or civil society actors with the necessary tools to support youth guidance. According to Narcisse, organizations like those present in this discussion are far better positioned to connect with youth and support their holistic development.

(2:04:01 – 2:06:43) – The Case for Parent Empowerment in Cameroon

Drawing inspiration from France, Narcisse outlined a holistic approach to youth orientation based on three elements: **passion**, **natural abilities**, and **interaction with the environment**. He stressed that only parents, given their deep and continuous relationship with their children, are truly equipped to understand and nurture these aspects. He then introduced a Cameroonian initiative: the *Salon de l'Orientation et des Métiers*, a private annual event that offers parents training and resources to better guide their children. However, he acknowledged that a single event per year is not sufficient for mass impact, emphasizing the urgent need for more structured and widespread parent-involvement strategies across countries.

(2:07:11 – 2:08:14) – Giving Roles to Youth: A Psychological Insight

Fabian shared an insight he gained from a psychologist, noting that many young people today feel useless due to the overwhelming presence of AI and on-demand digital services. He argued that to counter this, youth must be given **roles** and **responsibilities**, even small ones, to feel valued and empowered. This reflection tied back to earlier suggestions of assigning informal tasks in online learning environments to boost engagement and accountability.

(2:08:15 – 2:09:18) – Closing Reflections and Evaluation

The facilitators invited participants to respond to a final question in the chat: **What is your ideal format for this training?** Options included live, asynchronous, blended, short or long sessions. Participants could also share preferences via microphone. The organizers thanked everyone for their time, energy, and contributions, reaffirming their commitment to incorporating all insights into the upcoming training programme.

(2:09:19 – 2:11:15) – Clotaire's Final Words and Evaluation Form

Clotaire closed the session by expressing his appreciation to EcoGreece for facilitating and keeping the session engaging and on schedule. He praised the high participation level, noting that over 40 people remained actively engaged for the full two hours. He reminded participants to submit any remaining feedback or ideas via the email shared earlier and encouraged them to complete the evaluation form (shared by Magdalena in the chat) to help assess the effectiveness of the focus group.

(2:11:16 – 2:13:15) – Final Evaluation: Live Survey and Real-Time Feedback

As the focus group neared its conclusion, Clotaire emphasized the importance of participant feedback and urged everyone to complete the evaluation survey immediately while impressions were still fresh. The goal was not only to understand what worked but to gather constructive criticism for improvement. Clotaire encouraged transparency, insisting that if something was not good, participants should explain why. He monitored responses live, motivating attendees to reach a full count of 41 answers, reinforcing that evaluation is integral to meaningful learning and project development.

(2:13:15 – 2:14:56) – Collective Applause and Celebration of Collaboration

A joyful, interactive moment followed where Clotaire invited everyone to applaud and show appreciation for the facilitators. What began as a light-hearted energizer became a collective

celebration, with names called out playfully to ensure everyone participated. There was laughter, virtual applause, and even emoji-fueled love sent across the screen. This moment symbolized the spirit of the gathering: collaborative, inclusive, and deeply human.

(2:14:56 – 2:16:14) – Encouraging Responsibility and Youth Leadership

As more participants completed the survey, Clotaire took the opportunity to remind everyone that **change begins with active participation**. He urged youth workers and leaders present to act intentionally in their roles and emphasized how something as simple as submitting a survey response is a meaningful act of engagement. He also offered technical support by explaining how to use integrated smartphone translation tools to understand the survey in one's preferred language, ensuring no one was excluded by language barriers.

(2:16:15 – 2:19:00) – Survey Insights and Participant Reflections

With the responses growing steadily, the facilitators shared preliminary results. Many participants indicated they felt more **confident, motivated, or clear about what they needed to work on** after the session. Several expressed appreciation for the opportunity to connect with peers and reflect on shared challenges and successes in virtual exchange. One participant suggested a deeper focus on **managing intercultural challenges** in future sessions. Clotaire echoed this feedback, encouraging participants to continue sharing what they learned, what they missed, and what they would like addressed in the next training.

(2:19:00 – 2:21:12) – Digital Literacy and Future Training Suggestions

Participants discussed the possibility of including **digital literacy training** in future sessions. Suggestions included tutorials on using browser tools like Google Chrome extensions or built-in translation functions, which could significantly enhance accessibility for global participants. Clotaire affirmed the relevance of this and acknowledged that even experienced users can benefit from learning about lesser-known tech functionalities. The idea of adding a dedicated session on **effectively using browser tools and digital features** was met with interest.

(2:21:12 – 2:22:40) – Looking Ahead: Training Timeline and Certificates

The session concluded with a roadmap of what comes next. The **facilitated online youth exchange discussions** will begin in August, with **one session per month**. Each will include **pre-activities and follow-up assignments** to encourage deeper engagement. Participants not

in the core team will receive updates through their local partner organizations, email, and social media. The importance of staying connected through WhatsApp and other channels was also highlighted. Finally, Clotaire mentioned that **certificates of participation** would be issued based on the registration list, reinforcing the event's formal recognition and value.

Closing Remarks

The session wrapped up in a spirit of shared achievement, gratitude, and future ambition. Clotaire and the organizing team succeeded in transforming a two-hour virtual exchange focus group into a **model of interactivity, reflection, and transnational dialogue**. Participants left feeling seen, heard, and inspired—ready not only to implement what they learned but to help shape the next phase of this meaningful Erasmus+ journey.

(2:22:53 – 2:23:05) – Certificate of Attendance and Final Appreciation

As the session neared its final minutes, Clotaire confirmed that participants would receive a **certificate of attendance in PDF format**, once prepared. This certificate would serve both as a token of appreciation and as formal recognition for their active involvement. He expressed sincere gratitude for the valuable contributions made throughout the session, particularly highlighting that having **33 attendees actively participating on a Saturday** was a notable success.

(2:23:05 – 2:23:23) – Farewell Wishes and Open Communication

Clotaire concluded by **wishing everyone a good and inspiring weekend**, appreciating their dedication to youth work and international cooperation. He reminded participants that the team's **email contacts remain open** for any future communication or questions. The recording was officially stopped, signaling the closure of the formal session, but he stayed briefly to check if any last-minute questions or messages had been posted.

(2:23:24 – 2:23:55) – Final Words and Emotional Closure

In these last moments, Clotaire reaffirmed his cultural pride with a light-hearted “I am still Cameroonian” remark, drawing warm reactions from participants. He offered heartfelt thanks and commended everyone's engagement, declaring that the group had been truly amazing. The session closed on a high note, with expressions of love, appreciation, and mutual encouragement shared across the virtual space. With that, the call ended with cheerful goodbyes and the promise of seeing each other again in the near future.

This marks the end of a deeply collaborative and inspiring international focus group session—one that not only discussed **virtual exchange strategies** but also **fostered human connection, intercultural understanding, and youth empowerment** across continents.

This was a vibrant and insightful session, full of practical recommendations, shared experiences, and a strong collective desire to improve the quality and accessibility of virtual exchange and youth work across diverse contexts.