



Ethno-Medical Centre – Description

Since 1992 the **Ethno-Medical Centre** in Hannover has been training transcultural AIDS-mediators. The model used was adapted from the traditions of community participation, empowerment and peer education but introduced new key elements and developed considerably over time into Europe's largest health education project for migrants (more than 1,000 mediators in over 30 regions).

The **approach is theoretically founded** in a mixture of sociological and asset building frameworks. In educating well integrated migrants to reach those of lower educational and social status we largely draw from John Rowles' philosophy of the maxi-min rule. We empower the better off to reach marginalized people. Another highly regarded goal of our work is the concept of sustainability as defined by the Brundlant commission. We are reaching for sustainability of our educational approach by mixing funding, spearheading programmes of change management for established organizations and by exploring new opportunities for social entrepreneurship systematically. Our transcultural mediators are trained, paid and evaluated. Their research contributes immensely to the success of our approach. We also follow the recommendations and principles laid out in the **Alma-Ata-Declaration and in the in the Ottawa Charta**. As you may well understand now we do believe that health is a human right.

We are also convinced of the need to engage in continuous education as a meaningful resource for successfully encountering the multiple challenges of sociodemographically and culturally transforming societies. Rational and evidence-based health education is not only a meaningful undertaking in general. For migrants opportunities to preserve and improve their own health are a very friendly welcome into a host society. Europe has excellent health systems that could become much more accessible to immigrants. Language and culture should not have to remain the major obstacles on this way.

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