

Connect Global: Week One Report

Main Activities and Group Dynamics:

This week, students started their virtual exchange experience. Before attending their first session, participants completed the introductory activities that prepared them for the intercultural dialogue and allowed them to understand the key role they will play in the discussions. At the beginning of the sessions, most facilitators suggested ice-breakers that allowed participants to introduce themselves and their part of the world. Others encouraged participants to reflect on how they define their identity.

After the introductions, some groups started discussions about current events, social and global challenges while others shared their opinions on immigration, integration and media. During the sessions, facilitators encouraged students to discuss the required readings. Some participants discussed global risks including conflict and unemployment, others analyzed the recent quantitative indicators of global development.

Some facilitators rated their group's dynamic as good, while others reported a slightly slower start. In the beginning of the program, it is very normal for participants to be shy or quiet when they start their virtual dialogue experience. With time, participants will grow more interested in the cross-cultural interaction and will be more comfortable sharing their opinions. Facilitators also shared several examples of students who took leadership over the conversations. Their active participation in the dialogue might encourage peers to engage in future sessions.

Attendance and Technology:

This week, a large number of students were absent. We would highly appreciate your support in reminding students of the importance of attendance. **Regular attendance and participation are crucial to the dynamics of the program and its positive impact on participants.**

On the technical front, no major issues were reported by facilitators or participants. A very small number of students faced some technical issues and were successfully assisted by our technical team.

Thank you so much for reminding your students to login their sessions a few minutes in advance to make sure technical issues are avoided or solved during the session.

Next week:

In week two, participants will start working on their final projects. Students will pick a program-related topic with their group members and will discuss it further with the community members they will identify by the end of the week. In addition to the final project, participants will start their sessions with ice-breakers and will engage in free flowing discussions. During the second session, participants will dive deeper into the dialogue and concretely engage in discussions about global and social challenges. The main goal for participants in week 2 is to continue to build comfort and reinforce their confidence through listening and active participation.