



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



## New Start:

European culture and values training for  
a smooth integration of migrants and refugees



Tips to learn a new start in a new country



<https://creativecommons.org>

**Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0)**

**You are free to:**

**Share** — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format

Under the following terms:

**Attribution** — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

**NonCommercial** — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

**NoDerivatives** — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you may not distribute the modified material.

**No additional restrictions** — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

**The images of the characters in this publication have been acquired under license in shutterstock. Anastasiia Kozubenko / shutterstock.com. Urbanvector / shutterstock.com.** They are free of copyright only as part of this publication. The images should not be used without a license in other media. The other images are copyright-free.



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

**The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.**

Hi! I am Jasmina. I have been living in UK for 10 years



Hi! I am Djibril. The beginnings are always difficult...



But we will try to help you. Hi! I am María



Welcome!

Hi !, I am Ahmed. Here you will find some useful tips



In order to work,  
you must have a  
legal right to remain  
in the country



The first and most important step in a new country will be to obtain a legal right to remain. This is the first step to being legally employed and becoming a citizen with full rights.

If you qualify and meet the criteria laid down by UNHCR, you may apply for refugee status. This status will allow you to access social benefits: housing, healthcare, education, schooling for children, etc.

If you don't qualify as a refugee then you will need one of several other leaves to remain which apply to third country nationals. Usually this is a work permit or spouse visa in which case you are an "economic migrant". Some leaves to remain will not permit you to work but this will be clearly stated on your documents.

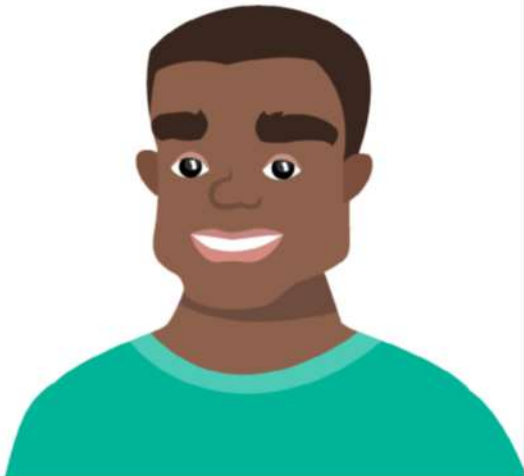
In order to gain UK citizenship, Refugees and Economic migrants must first prove some years of residence in the host country before being allowed to apply for citizenship. In order to gain access to public and social services you will need to prove you have a fixed address.

Once you have leave to remain with work permitted you can be legally employed, you will be registered as an employee, you will pay taxes and will benefit from social services such as full health services, unemployment pay, holiday pay, maternity pay, sick pay retirement pay, etc.





To open bank account  
you will need to take  
proof of your identity  
and proof of your  
address



Having a fixed address is the first step for many useful procedures such as opening a bank account.

Possible ways to prove your address are:

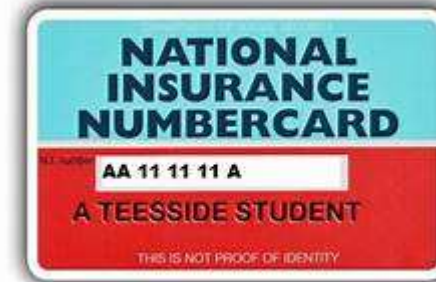
- A rental agreement that shows you as a tenant and a rent contract showing your name.
- Water, gas or electricity bills, sent to your address and with your name on it for the past few months.

You may have to prove your identity with your passport or National ID.

With a bank account you will be able to transfer funds from your home country in order to start a new life in the host country. It also allows you to save money earned in host country and to transfer them to your family or relatives in your home country.



To apply for work you must have a National Insurance Number



To apply for a National Insurance Number you must have the right to work or study.

National Insurance Numbers will be a required for many procedures such as when you sign a labour contract, when you register as unemployed or when you are ill and are benefitting from sick or accident leave. It is also needed to get your retirement pension.

If you have a residence permit, you must apply to have a National Insurance Number and then you will be able to sign a labour contract.

If you don't have residence permit you can't get a National Insurance Number and you can't work.



Don't work without  
permission, contract  
and insurance



If you don't have leave to remain or residency you can't have a National Insurance Number and you can't legally work.

This doesn't mean that you can't be offered "jobs" in the black market. There are many bad and illegal practices of employers hiring "non legal" migrants for their own profit. This is very risky for you, as those employers do these practices in order to pay very low salaries, offering bad working conditions in terms of long working hours and with no respect to health and safety at work. In case of an accident at work, for instance, you will be unprotected by law, with no healthcare or compensation.

In order to earn a living while you obtain legal residency, it is advisable to visit the social services of your city, to go to migrants support associations, charity organisations and to do small jobs in your community. With this, you can get support for housing, food, clothes, school for children and some money.



Parents may not take children out of school for any reason during term time.



School is compulsory for all children under 16. This also means that children can benefit from school until the age of 16, when the children can decide to start to work or to continue studying. For this reason, school for migrants' children is one of the social benefits you can get before you have a residence permit or leave to remain.

As a right, schooling is also compulsory and your children must attend school every day.

If an absence is required, parents must ask permission from the school and proof of why the child must leave school on a specific day. For instance, a doctor's appointment, receiving medical treatment, visiting a close relative at hospital, etc. Written permission must be obtained from the school.

Parents that don't observe these regulations, may face a fine. If the situation is repeated, parents may be visited by Social Services in order to assess the parent's role and to ascertain if the children need minor protection measures against the parents.





Under the Law ,Men  
and Women in  
European countries  
have Equal Rights in  
everything



Men and women have exactly the same rights in Europe. Minors (under 18 years old) are subject to their parents, but once one person is more than 18 years old, regardless if you are a man or a woman you can freely decide about:

- Marriage: to decide to marry or not. To decide to whom and when to marry.
- Studying: to decide to go on studying or not. To decide when and what to study.
- Job: to decide to apply for a job. To decide when and what to work at.
- Living: to decide to live with family or to live alone or with friends.
- Religion: to choose religious practice and beliefs.



Children under 12  
should never be left  
alone



Children under 12 should not be left alone for any period of time. Children under 16 must not be left alone overnight. Parents can be prosecuted if they leave a child unsupervised “in a manner likely to cause unnecessary suffering or injury to health”.

If you must go to work or be absent from home, you must find a responsible adult to take care of your children.

If you don't have anywhere to leave your children in your absence, ask for support from migrants' support associations, charities, or other organisations in your local community.

If Minors are found in closed cars in a street or left alone at home, by the police, this can be the starting point of legal procedures which might lead to children being taken from the parents and handed over to children's services or even parents losing parental rights of their children.



## Know the appropriate greetings



Greetings are as diverse as the cultures they come from. There are handshakes, kisses, hugs, and other informal greetings among young people.

The way we greet people may change with time, from the first time we meet to becoming friends.

A Professional environment requires a much more formal way to greet than personal relationships.

There are inappropriate greetings such as a man kissing a woman when meeting for the first time in a formal or professional context.

Kissing and hugging between males is normal between members of the same family, close friends and men in relationships.

Kissing between anyone is NOT a common greeting in a professional sense in the UK



Know about gender equality in your host country



Be ready to adapt to a new concept of relations between genders than you might be familiar with! There are equal rights for men and women in Europe.

But gender equality is still in progress, and there are often different realities e.g:

- Sometimes jobs performed by men are better paid than the same jobs performed by women.
- In some families, only the husband works, while the wife takes care of the family.
- The balance of household tasks between husband and wife is often unequal with women doing a bigger share.

Don't forget that gender equality is a real issue in Europe! Deal equally with women and men.





Try to make  
acquaintances or  
friends from the host  
country



Making new acquaintances and friends in your new country will help you understand the host country way of living better.

Suitable places to meet new people are, migrant support associations and programmes, sport or cultural associations, Adult education centers, leisure centers, neighborhood associations, folk or traditional culture centers, parents of your children's schoolmates (if you have children at school).

By starting new relationships with local people, you will feel less lonely, you will be better integrated and this will give you a feeling of belonging to your new community.



Know how to address people.



The use of first names, last names, titles, university degrees or religious names varies from country to country. You just have to observe and adopt what is appropriate in your new country.

In many parts of Europe, using someone's first name also denotes a certain level of friendship. In social interactions with strangers, the last name and/or more formal mode of address is used, usually until the people involved agree to move to an informal level.

However, this may not apply among young people, among members of particular groups (e.g. Students) or in informal settings.

Be on time.

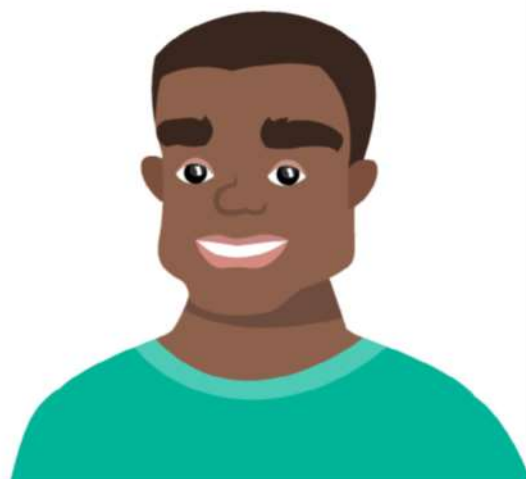


Punctuality is equated with courtesy and appreciation.

Of course you can be late sometimes. But then it is polite to give let people know and to apologize when you do arrive.



Respect regulations of public spaces.



Public spaces such as parks, gardens, public swimming pools, libraries ... have all regulations and instructions for use that must be respected. These may differ from country to country.

Usually they are clearly shown in information panels.





If you don't  
understand something  
,ask for more details.

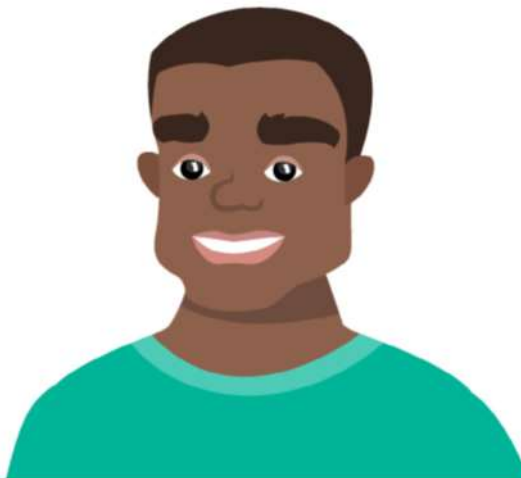


At work, if you don't understand something from your superiors, just ask for more details or ask them to repeat things. Maybe sometimes s/he speaks too fast or uses terms you do not know. It is not a problem to ask again. Better to ask again than do something wrong.

A good understanding of instructions is required to perform well at work.



Asylum seekers are not allowed to work.

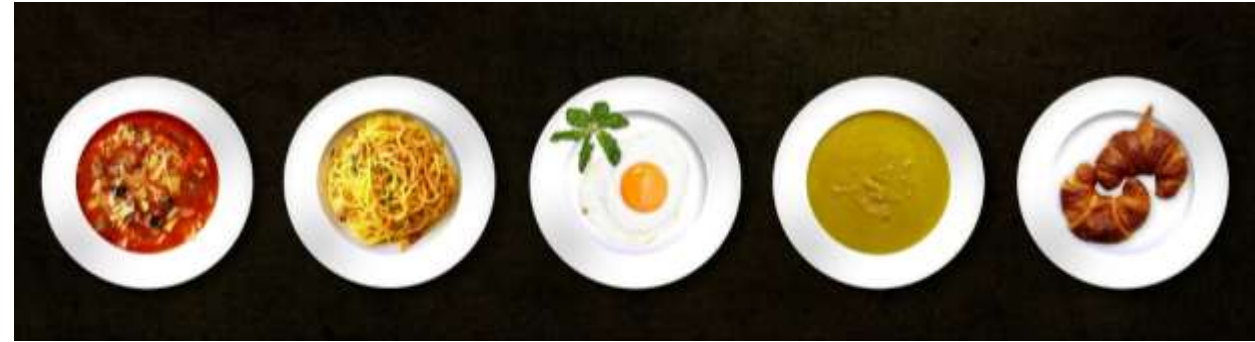


Usually, Asylum seekers are not allowed to work, though the specific rules are up to individual legislation in each country. Find out what conditions you need to meet to get permission to work.

Even if you are not allowed to work, you may be able to contribute your skills and competences to support other people through volunteering or through unpaid work-placements or internships, e.g. in your accommodation or at a association that helps refugees, or volunteering.



Inform yourself about  
your food - special  
requirements are  
accepted.



If you have food requirements such as vegetarian, no pork meat, no gluten, etc. you can get information on the ingredients of many food products at supermarkets and restaurants.

In restaurants, you can ask if you can get a dish which is prepared in another way than offered on the menu. Often it is quite easy to exchange or to omit an ingredient.

If you have kids who eat at childcare or at school, you can ask for special food, e.g. without pork or vegetarian or without gluten.



Alcohol is allowed only  
from a certain age



Children and adolescents are not allowed to drink alcohol.

However, there are differences from country to country from which age the drinking of alcohol is allowed. Of course, younger teens are not allowed to buy alcohol either. Therefore, sellers are allowed to ask for an ID card when young people want to buy alcohol.

Sometimes there are different age limits depending on how much alcohol a drink contains. In some countries, young people are allowed to drink alcohol earlier if their parents are present and allow it.





Accept and respect  
other people.



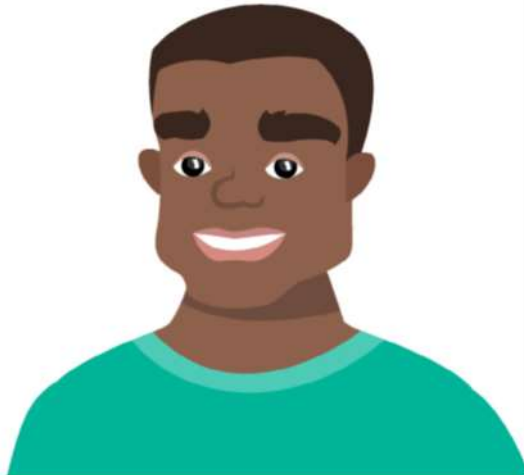
Accept and respect other people's opinions, beliefs and religion.

Even if you do not necessarily share the opinion of another, you should tolerate and respect them. There are no "right" and no "wrong" opinions and beliefs. You can exchange opinions, get information, discuss it - but you can not judge or condemn anyone. In the same way you can expect that your opinion, your beliefs and your religion will be respected.

That is the basis of a peaceful co-existence.



Don't throw waste on the street, but in the wastebasket.



Collection of household waste is guaranteed by the local authority in which you live, and is implemented either door-to-door or with the collection in apartment buildings using the specific containers distributed by the local authority.

Collection of separate waste in the streets is sometimes implemented with the use of big bins separating waste in different categories (Glass and Plastic, paper, organic, mixed waste).

According to European directives, throwing waste in the street or in the wrong bins can be punished with a fine. Fines are also possible for people who do not remove their dog's waste from the streets or public gardens.



If you need to change or amend your working hours, inform your supervisor and ask for permission



If you need to change or amend your working hours, ( e.g. because of your religious practices or childcare arrangements) please inform your supervisor and ask for permission.

Normally reasonable requests will be accepted, and an agreement on working hours and holidays will be reached.



Don't mention certain  
personal data on your  
CV.



Don't mention your age, gender, marital status, nationality, religion or provide a photo on your CV. This data is not mandatory in a CV. They do not say anything about the professional qualification of a person.

Furthermore the inclusion of such data might in some cases lead to discrimination.

That's why your CV should include everything that says something important about your qualifications for this job - but nothing more.





If you are ill, you should go to the doctor and inform your employer



If you are sick you should go to the doctor.

In this way the doctor can assess the severity of the disease, and he will give the medical leave if necessary.

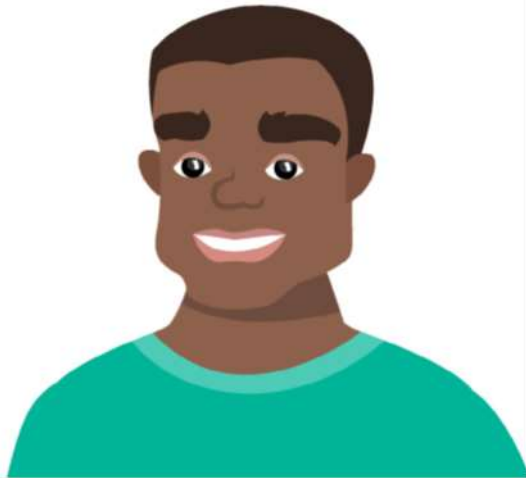
You should contact your employer to inform them about your sick leave. If you have a regular contract, your sick leave will be covered by this. Though you may have a deduction from your salary depending on your contract.

You have right to access hospitals even if you do not have regular permit to stay in the country. Doctors are not allowed to inform the police.

If you have an accident or you fall sick in the street you can call the emergency services for an ambulance.



Same-sex marriage  
and opposite-sex  
marriage are equal  
under the law



In the UK same-sex relationships are legal and same sex marriage is legal except in Northern Ireland. It is also now widely accepted and protected in law.

The UK also offer same sex partners the option of a civil partnership which is binding in law.

Where same sex marriage is permitted the same sex married couple have exactly the same rights as an opposite-sex married couple.



Read the full text  
of contracts, also  
the fine print.



Before signing a contract or any kind of agreement (job contract, licence for electricity or telephone services...) it is very important to read all the fine print and ask for details if something is not clear.

You may receive a phone call from companies and entities asking to “sign” a vocal contract by phone: be careful it is often a scam.

If something is unclear, take your time and ask to bring the contract with you and take your time to read it carefully before signing.



Know how to behave in the workplace: always respect hierarchies when addressing colleagues. Respect the dress code.



Some companies may have a dress code or rules for appropriate behaviour and conduct, rules for relations between colleagues. Pay attention to these and ask for information once you enter a new company.

This may be valid also in schools and other social situations.

Do not hesitate to ask ! Better to be informed !!



Buy a ticket . In the UK  
you don't need to  
validate it before use.



Public transport can be used by buying a relevant ticket: train, buses, Underground. Depending on where you live there are several options such as One day tickets, One week tickets, Monthly Passes, Annual Passes.

If you need to use public transport everyday it is convenient, and cheaper, to use a monthly or annual pass.

Tickets can normally be purchased on the bus and at underground and railway stations. In the UK tickets do not normally have to be validated before travelling unlike in many other countries in Europe.



You can get free access to internet in many public spaces.



If you have a smart phone you can get wi-fi free connection in many streets (provided by the city council), bars and restaurants.

If you don't have a smart phone, you can have free access to computers and internet in public libraries.

You can also benefit from internet connections at internet points such as internet cafes but they sometimes require a payment and you need to have official documents to be registered before you use them.



Students at school  
must refer to  
teachers with respect  
as Mr. Ms. or Mrs.



In School all pupils should call teachers by their family name prefixed by Ms. Mrs. or Mr. depending on what style of address the teacher tells you they prefer.



Don't hesitate to ask people to speak more slowly or to repeat things in order to understand!



In your new country you will have to register and undertake many procedures or meetings at public services. Sometimes, public officers speak too fast.

In some public offices, where services for migrants are provided, you may ask for the help of a cultural mediator or for a translator.





It is an offence to be  
in possession of a  
firearm



It is illegal to be in possession of any firearm such as shotgun, revolver, rifle, air weapon, or any gun and certain ammunition without a licence.

To obtain a licence you need an authorisation from the Police . The authorisation must be asked also for relatives and other persons living in the same house ( where the firearm is kept). The limits of the authorisations are really strict (duration , identification of the specific firearm, etc..) .

According to the use you intend to do of the firearm, other specific authorisation may be required.



## Cleaning up after your dog



Cleaning up after your dog is simply good manners.

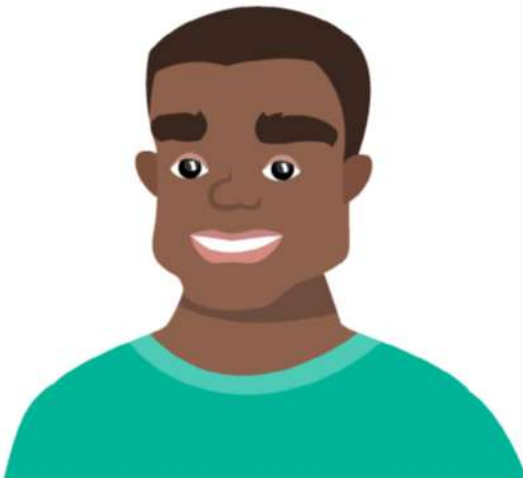
In the UK it is the law – all dog owners must pick up after their dog's mess in a public place. You can be fined for failing to deal with dog mess- £100.00.

Dog waste is not only foul smelling, but also carries and spreads a lot of dangerous diseases, which can make other dogs or people very ill.

Be a good citizen and clean up after your dog!



Make friends from  
your own country



Try to make acquaintances or friends from your own country as you can learn from each other and can share your experiences. It might stop you feeling lonely.

The places you can find migrants :

- Language training courses
- Migrant associations
- Through your neighbours



## The way people dress



It is common in Europe for women to wear either trousers or a skirt at work.

Head scarves are accepted as part of religious freedom.

Denim is not normally acceptable for professional business meetings and the Scots do not generally wear kilts to work.

Among the younger generation they can have unusual looks, it is accepted by the society.

Many organisations provide a work-based uniform (care homes, construction, nurses).

Many companies have “informal” smart dress code, which is comfortable to wear, but still presents a professional image for the company.





## Body language when you speak to people



When you are speaking to someone **keep** a personal distance of between 45 centimeters to 1.2m. You are close enough to shake hands and to see each other's expressions.

Smile (just a simple smile), be confident and stand up straight.

Make eye contact when you are talking to someone.

You can show your empathy by movements, such as nodding your head and smiling.

Touching a person while speaking or approaching too close is bad manners, and may make the other person uncomfortable. Don't do it.



To show that you  
care



Be pro-active and learn about the country you are living in now.

Ask others how they are and how was their day.

Do not be shy to help others.

Pay attention to your friend's need and wants.

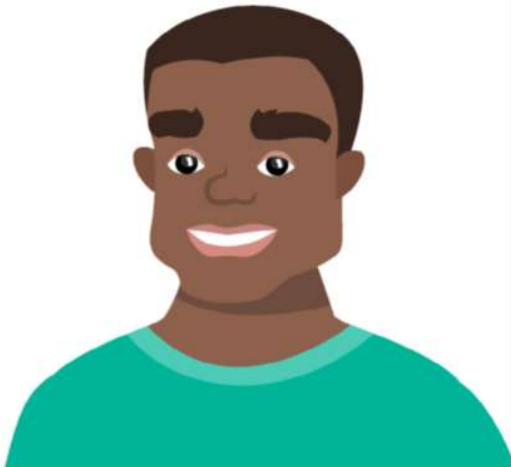
Plan events with people.

Tell people that you know, that you care. Sometimes the best feeling in the world is hearing someone say they care about you.

Just be genuine and people will know you care.



Open and read your  
letters



Open and read your letters and answer in time- you might miss important information regarding your doctor's appointment; meeting with your solicitor; information from the bank or your current accommodation.

If the posted letter is addressed to someone else you must return it to a postman/woman or post office.



**Make your kids  
proud of their  
origins**



If you have kids, make them proud of their origins.

But also try to help them enjoy the new country you have moved to , make new friends and integrate with locals.

It is not good to isolate them from the local society.





## Rules for the use of the public transport



Follow basic traffic rules by staying to the left as much as possible in the UK and Ireland (on the right in the rest of Europe).

Have your fare or ticket ready before you board public transport.

When you board a bus/ train/ tram during a rush hour, get out of the way so others can board behind you.

Always show good manners, when you see someone is struggling with mobility, stand up and the person to have your seat.

You should never place a bag on the seat when you are on a crowded bus/ train/ tram.

Don't inflict your noise on others. Hold off on long phone conversations until you reach your stop.

If you have children with you, make sure you keep their voices down, and that they stay by your side.

Don't bring food or drink on public transport.

Most public transport has a policy of no smoking.

Never drop rubbish on the floor or seat of a bus/ train/ tram.



Do not approach  
strangers for no  
reason



You shouldn't talk to strangers when you feel unsafe or are on your own e.g

- people you meet in a dark isolated street when you come back home after a night out.
- strangers that ask you if you want/have some drugs.
- strangers that ask you for money
- someone following you and behaving oddly

But it's ok to talk (or to try to talk) to strangers next to you on a train, in class, when you are in hospital to other patients, on holidays. It's ok to meet new people and make new friends.

It's ok to talk to a lot of stranger when you feel safe or are not alone.

## What is a *STRANGER*?



- A "stranger" is someone you and your family do not know.
- A stranger does not always look *mean* or *scary*!

## Know what to avoid



Pointing your finger is considered impolite.

Never call someone by first name until the person gives you permission.

Learn how to greet people and how to share a meal.

Integrate with locals by not offending them, showing an understanding for their culture and participating in their celebrations/ holidays.

Figure out any specific ways you might offend the locals, and avoid them.

Do not harass women- be polite, smile and ask if you really need to ask.





Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



## New Start:

European culture and values training for  
a smooth integration of migrants and refugees



Tips to learn a new start in a new country