

Public Debate Workshop
IDEA Exchange 2007
Workshop facilitator: Marcin Zaleski

Public debates play an important role and have a rich tradition in many societies. These debates can involve public figures as well as ordinary citizens, *professional* as well as laymen and they are a particularly engaging opportunity for young people. The main goal of a public debate is to engage members of a public in discussion of an important issue (s). The purpose of debating in such a context is not so much competition between debaters but raising awareness, education and *advocacy*.

In many communities, public debates occur regularly in a designated space (e.g. a *debate house* or a town hall, etc.) and become an important element of community's life. IDEA believes that public debates are an essential component any Debate in the Neighbourhood Program and we have promoted public debate alongside competitive debates. For the last 3 years IDEA has been involved in the People Speak Project (www.idebate.org/thepeoplespeak/). Many of our members have been incredibly successful in promoting public debate – some of which took place on prominent channels on public television.

The proposed workshop on public debate will cover 8 hrs of instruction and will include the following objectives:

- Present participants with different models of public debate;
- Analyze the most important components of preparation and organization of public debates;
- Provide opportunity for practicing various skills through task-based exercises

The workshop will include the following sessions:

1. Why debate in public and what public debate model (s) to choose?
2. Analyzing the context- issue (topic), motive, audience, format.
3. Preparation for public debate- publicizing debate, selecting participants, logistic considerations
4. During the debate
5. *Now what?* – follow-up on public debates

During the workshop, the participants will actually prepare a public debate - which can be shown to the participants of the Exchange or General Assembly.

There will also be ample opportunity to discuss any debate or non-debate issues with Marcin after the workshop (taking advantage Kaunas' famous *alus* scene☺)

Note on the trainer:

Marcin has been with IDEA since its inception and “has worn many hats” with the organization. Marcin conducted debate trainings in over 30 countries, developed debate curriculum and a number of projects with IDEA and its members and partners. Marcin has also been involved in grant writing part time for IDEA and its members for the last 6 years and has managed to obtain grants worth over 1,000,000 Euro.