



# TOOLBOX OF GOOD PRACTICES



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



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# STEP UP – ART CHANGES PEOPLE'S LIVES

## RADIO, CERAMICS AND PUPPETRY AS TOOLS FOR EMPOWERMENT AND SOCIAL INCLUSION OF VULNERABLE GROUPS

### 1. INTRODUCTION/FOREWORD

#### 1.1 WHAT IS THE PROJECT ABOUT?

The general objective of the Step Up project, which is co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union, is to establish a new transnational network of adult education providers of informal and non-formal educational activities, who are working on the promotion of social inclusion of specific adult education learners groups and in particular vulnerable groups. The specific objective of the project is to foster European cooperation between adult education providers working with specific adult education learner groups and in particular vulnerable groups (homeless people, people with high support needs, people who struggle with mental health problems, people on a low income, minorities, etc). The Network facilitates the cooperation and exchange of experiences among participating organisations, and promotes the role of culture and arts, in the context of adult education, in facilitating the social inclusion process of vulnerable groups.

Art is a tremendously positive force in bringing people together, and creating an inclusive and creative atmosphere where all values and principles co-exist and can be criticised. Regular participation in cultural activities has been proven to contribute to individual and social wellbeing and fostering a cohesive society.

#### 1.2 WHO ARE THE PARTNERS?

The Step Up Network consists of organisations that design and implement informal and non-formal educational activities, and who are actively facilitating the social inclusion of vulnerable groups. Some of the partners have already mostly worked with adult groups, while other partners have been also working with children and young people, and through the project have increased their ability to target adult groups, as seen in the next chapters.

[Equal Society](#), coordinator of the Step Up project, was established in February 2010 in Athens, Greece, as an independent and non-profit organisation aimed at carrying out actions to combat social exclusion, unemployment and poverty. Its primary objective is to support and inform citizens on the issues related to equal treatment and non-discrimination in all areas of social life. More specifically, its interventions are related to the following areas: Education, Social welfare and protection, Social inclusions, Employment, entrepreneurship and culture. The theatre group of homeless people (“Walkabout”) is a good practice in adult education which both empowers the participants and raises public awareness on issues related to homelessness.

[Centro Social de Soutelo](#) is a Portuguese non-profit organisation, founded in 1976 in Soutelo. Since 2001, CSS has been promoting programs and projects that aim to contribute to the non-formal education of vulnerable groups through the development of soft skills, employability skills, and support to the definition of an individual’s life project. These initiatives approach inclusion through arts and they combine formal and non-formal educational strategies (e.g. combining Artistic Workshops with formal Adult Education programmes). Several people benefit from the Centre’s occupational programmes as CSS actively supports professional insertion and employability.

[Espacio Rojo](#) is a Non-Governmental Organisation that was established in 2004 to support artistic creation in all its facets, thus generating spaces for reflection, facilitating debate and encounters of people related to the cultural field. Interculturality, integration and social awareness are key to the organisations’ projects, bringing art, culture, and education closer together in order to improve and build a better society. Espacio Rojo develops Arts-based Educational activities for vulnerable youth and training programmes for trainers, artists, therapists, NGO staff, and volunteers.

[Nytott Kör](#) is a small Theatre in Education NGO, established in 2005 in

Budapest, Hungary. Theatre in Education (TiE) is a participatory theatre practice. During the course of an average school year the organisation reaches around 4500-4800 students, and delivers 150-190 Theatre in Education events. Since 2010 co-workers of Nyitott Kör have been researching possible adaptations of TiE for and with adult groups, especially vulnerable groups, such as adults with high support needs, and teachers and education practitioners. The motto of the organisation is Play. Act. Explore, which guides the design and implementation of the activities.

[Bielskie Stowarzyszenie Artystyczne “Teatr Grodzki”](#) was founded in 1999 in the town of Bielsko-Biala, Silesia Region, Poland, as a grassroots initiative of the local artists, pedagogues, culture promoters and entrepreneurs. They have been using art, mainly theatre, as an effective tool for social inclusion of physically and mentally disabled people, families at risk, young offenders, victims of alcohol and drug addictions, unemployed, and all those alienated from the mainstream of social and cultural life. The Association runs a wide support programme for the assistance and motivation of the above groups, based on creative and artistic approaches. Approximately 500 people in need receive support each year. The Association provides employment for around 50 staff members annually.

[Oba Ütopya Eğitim Sanat Ve Medya Ticaret Limited Şirketi](#) (a.k.a. Utopia Education and Art) is an organisation which specialises in the field of nature-based, experiential learning, art and culture. Utopia aims to support the development and improvement of the education field using nature and creative methods as effective tools for the social and cultural development of children, youth, teachers and adults in lifelong learning programmes. By following this objective, Utopia coordinates international exchange projects, international training courses, workshops, shows and local festivals that focus on social cohesion, environmental-cultural awareness, ecology and climate change.

## 1.3 WHAT ARE THE AIMS OF THE TOOLBOX?

The Step Up Toolbox includes cultural and artistic practices, as educational methods which were piloted by the partners with selected vulnerable adult groups in their respective contexts, the aims, guidelines and values that led practitioners, as well as their sessions' structure, their comments about the challenges of implementation, feedback from participants and local partners, achieved results and impact of the activities, as well as tips for application and transferability of the activities for different contexts. Multimedia resources support the presentation and understanding of the described processes.

## 1.4 WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM THE TOOLBOX?

The Network created the Step Up Toolbox to share with Arts & Educational practitioners who would like to design and implement any of the Puppetry, Radio broadcasting and Ceramics practices, as educational methods, with the participation of the selected vulnerable groups aiming to empower them and promote their social inclusion. The toolbox provides them with the necessary information as well as a summary of the experiences that the participants and the trainers gained through these activities.

Moreover, the toolbox can be used as a resource, not only for practitioners, but also for raising awareness among decision makers of institutions, public authorities and policy makers as to the power of Arts as an educational tool for facilitating the process of social inclusion. In the following chapters first the background of the good practices is outlined, the contexts they originated from, their aims and possible applications. Subsequently, the participating organisations share how the implemented pilot processes supported and engaged particular groups of adults in a vulnerable situation.

# 2. SELECTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICES THAT WERE PILOTED IN THE PARTNERS' COUNTRIES

## 2.1 PUPPETRY IN ADULT EDUCATION

### 2.1.1 Country of initial application, description and target group

PUPPETRY IN ADULT EDUCATION good practice has been developed by Teatr Grodzki in Poland and tested with a number of groups of disadvantaged adults, as well as with adult educators across Europe. Among the puppetry workshop participants were people with mental, physical and sensory disabilities, elderly people, psychiatric patients, prisoners, migrants and refugees, unemployed people and those experiencing poverty, addiction, and violence. Moreover, professionals active in the field of education, art and social inclusion from more than 20 European countries and also from Asia participated in puppetry workshops run by Teatr Grodzki (both in face-to-face actions and online) since 2014.

This practice includes three main activities. First, each workshop participant makes his/her own puppet in a very short time (one-two hours) following the instructions of the trainer. An instructional video on how to make a paper puppet is available for free on [THIS LINK](#).

Next, everyone personalises their puppet, adding to the basic construction some characteristic elements (hair, clothes, various attributes) to create a theatrical personage. The second step is to learn how to animate the figures and the third and final step is devoted to developing stories (most often with no words) with the help of the puppets, and performing them, often as public presentations.



## 2.1.2 Justification for selecting the good practice

The method of working with self-made puppets, aimed at contributing to social cohesion, has been selected for piloting as part of the Step Up project, since it has proven to be a highly effective practice for activating and empowering people from vulnerable groups. It is also a perfect tool for improving teamwork and mutual communication. Simple objects and materials brought to life on stage can represent any real or imaginary personage/creature and any feeling, emotion or phenomenon. By coming alive and being specific, they are at the same time metaphorical. This is why puppets are so impactful in raising important issues (personal and social) in theatre. They are also very effective for involving those in theatre work, who are shy or self-contained. One can always hide behind a puppet, while at the same time be able to express true feelings and emotions. Moreover, it is a low-cost practice, since cheap and ordinary materials are used, such as paper, newspapers, string, fabric, foil, and found objects. Last but not least, this practice can be easily transferred and reproduced, in many different social contexts, by various kinds of experts related to theatre and creative education.



## 2.2 RADIO IN ADULT EDUCATION

### 2.2.1 Country of initial application, description and target group

In Hungary, a BBC employee and a local psychologist decided to create a prison radio programme similar to the [one broadcasting](#) in the United Kingdom. Originally it was created to tackle depression amongst inmates and prevent fallback. During the focus group interview, the practitioners told the researchers that the Hungarian version of the prison radio initiative was more focused on the psychological aspect of this practice.

The practice includes two stages. During the first stage, some of the selected inmates of a prison receive training in the management of radio equipment and develop basic journalism skills over a six-month period. As a result, during the second stage they start to create a radio programme: they decide about the shows, programs, broadcasts and then they start creating their own shows. In the collected good practice the broadcast was only available for other inmates in the facility through their devices in the very early morning. Almost every inmate was a regular listener of the prison radio. At the peak of the programme, there were 3 different facilities running the project and they had affected rates of depression and fallback. Suddenly, the activity ended in 2017 due to security measures, without further explanation.

## 2.2.2 Justification of the selection of the good practice

This practice has [proven to be empowering](#) for those who live within strict confinement. They could learn technical skills such as how to maintain a small studio, audio devices, microphones and editing programs. Also they could manage the whole structure of a radio programme and they created the content of each radio programme. This was a complex activity, in which the participants could learn a variety of things, and most importantly, improve their soft skills. Furthermore, the creation of social, artistic and educational broadcasts is a form of constructive self-expression, which could help inmates to restore their self-confidence and explore ways in which they could appear as positive characters in front of others. When asked what could lead to the banning of this programme in all prisons, the interviewee answered “They’ve become too hard to handle.” As if the participants got too empowered and confident for a prison context. This also proves that the practice had real, measurable impact on members of a vulnerable group.

In Greece, Equal Society decided to pilot the activity due to the role that radio plays in modern society. It is a fact that radio can have a significant impact not only on those who are producing the radio show, but also on the listeners. With regard to the people who are producing the radio show, it is noted that their engagement in all stages, i.e. preparation and production, of the radio show develops their public speaking skills and strengthens their self-confidence.

In addition, radio is one of the most engaging media and plays a vital role in spreading information, educating and enlightening people. Radio is related to companionship and emotional connection with the listener. Because of its potential to reach a huge number of people, radio shows are powerful and can have a great impact on listeners and society in general. This is more obvious in recent years as radio shows are also being broadcasted through the web and social media pages.

Taking this into account, the project team of Equal Society decided to produce podcasts, which can reach a significantly larger audience through online platforms and web pages.

## 2.3 CERAMICS IN ADULT EDUCATION

### 2.3.1 Country of initial application, description and target group

The good practice was originally developed in Portugal by Caixas Prison. [Reshape Ceramics](#) was an art based social practice that aimed to have a positive impact on the lives of the prison community, creating better and equal opportunities for integration in society, through the creation of unique and handmade ceramic pieces.



These pieces were produced by current and former members of a prison community. The Reshape team presented the project to the prison Board. After its approval, the prison's education technicians referred the inmates whose profiles would fit this activity, namely those whose prison path was about to end. The Ceramics methodology went through the following steps: selection of inmates; integration in a two-week socio-emotional skills training; selection of four inmates to join the ceramics training. During the workshop, the participants had a two-month technical training with two trainers, one of them being a potter, who guided them in the following areas: moulding, cleaning, glazing and the technique of forming and unmolding ceramic pieces. After the training, the participants became autonomous to execute all the tasks inherent to the manufacturing process, always supervised by a trainer. Once the pieces were finished, they were sold in the Project's social shop.

The currently piloted good practice has been transformed and further developed by Asociación Espacio Rojo in Madrid, Spain and tested with groups of disadvantaged adults as well as adult educators. Participants in the ceramics workshop included, among others, people with mental, physical, and sensory disabilities, elderly people, young people, migrants, unemployed people and people experiencing poverty. In addition, professionals active in education, art and social inclusion attended. This good practice in ceramics includes three main activities using different techniques and creative variables. First, in each workshop participants make their clay piece during a 2-hours-long session, following the technical instructions of the trainer. When the clay piece has reached a certain hardness (after a few hours or a day), the final decoration and finishing of the created piece is carried out. The second step is carried out by the potter who, after drying, places the pieces in a ceramic kiln designed for this purpose.

The third step in the ceramic process, once the piece has been removed from the kiln, is to bathe it in ceramic glaze, which will remain transparent on the material and give it its characteristic shine. At this stage, creativity is the most important thing, as a wide variety of glazes and other materials such as pigments, and ceramic markers can be used. When the piece is decorated, the colours have to be fixed by placing it once again in a ceramic kiln, which is carried out by an expert professional. At this stage, the piece takes on its definitive colour and texture, and is ready for use. The process of the ceramics activity serves to empower and improve the lives of vulnerable groups, thus it manages to connect with society in its utilitarian aspect and with the historical aspect of humanity. Human beings have maintained this tradition for millennia, since they learned to do it in prehistoric times. Today, in the age of technology, it is still relevant.

### 2.3.2 Justification of the selection of the good practice

Developing a pottery activity with groups of adults who are in a vulnerable situation promotes social inclusion and can be developed in different social contexts. It is ideal for working with mixed groups and stimulates creative development by tensions and/or emotions through the manipulation of clay with their hands. This hands-on activity has allowed groups of adults to develop and improve their lives, and vitality, as stress, anxiety and harmony are equally reflected in the process and product. It is also an impactful tool to create employability through craft design, creating original products and possibilities for entrepreneurship with a social impact. Although this good practice may initially have a high economic cost, it is possible to build partnerships with local artisans and/or artists, or to create a ceramics workshop that can adapt the production processes to people's abilities, offering artisanal, solidarity-based, quality and artistically valuable pieces.

# 3. STEP UP PROJECT PILOT IMPLEMENTATIONS

## – ART CHANGES PEOPLES LIVES

### 3.1 PUPPETRY IN ADULT EDUCATION

#### 3.1.1 Pilot Activity in Hungary: Create a Puppet, Create Yourself

##### 3.1.1.1 Implementing organisation in the partner's country: Nyitott Kör

##### 3.1.1.2 Target group

Nyitott Kör implemented Puppetry workshops with three different types of vulnerable groups; people with high support needs and cognitive disabilities, people with mental health difficulties, and young people on a low income. All together 5 different groups participated, out of which 4 were single session processes (Group 1, 3, 4 and 5), and one was a six session process (Group 2).

##### A. People with cognitive disabilities and high support needs

Group 1 - Figyelj rám!

The realisation of the programme took place in a small town called Dunabogdány near Budapest, in collaboration with the [Figyelj rám! Association](#). One of the main programs of the association is to ensure safe employment for people living with different cognitive disabilities and high support needs, and freetime activities for their community. The group involved (Maybug Group) were aged between 27 and 56. Nyitott Kör had previous connections with the institution and also with the participants, so in this case the selection was based on the familiarity of the group and the participants individually.

Seven group members attended the session, all with different types of difficulties, so their ability to participate varied too: some of the participants had difficulties with crafts, especially working with their hands for a longer period of time, while for others the mental process was more exhausting, even though the group was familiar with arts and crafts. Support staff of the participant organisation was present with 5 members who were social workers, educators and special needs' specialists. The team of facilitators counted 4 staff members.

Group 2 - Fészek Csillag

Nyitott Kör contacted the [Fészek Csillag \[Nest Star\] Foundation](#) near Budapest in the city of Batorbágy. The organisation provides daycare and a safe workplace for people with special needs, especially for adults with high support needs. For the workshops the host organisation had created a group of 12 participants, who were aged between 23 and 50 years old. They also provided the venue for the sessions and a supporting staff member joined as well who has been working with the participants on a daily basis.

##### B. People with mental health difficulties

Group 3 - Awakenings

Nyitott Kör collaborated with the [Awakenings Foundation's](#) "Barcsay group". The Foundation conducts an innovative mission in the field of recovery-oriented community-based mental health reform in Hungary and is active in the field of community psychiatry. The Barcsay group is an Art based, self-facilitated unit of Awakenings, whose members were open to a longer collaboration in the Step Up project, however because of the difficulties due to Covid-19, the group could only gather for a one-off session.

Members of the Barcsay group are people who want to create, regardless of their mental state, and in the everyday functioning of the group the created products are not analysed for therapeutic purposes. The members involved in the workshop were adults with various difficulties of mental health, such as anxiety, bipolar diagnosis, depression – based on what they shared with us during the workshop. In this group the facilitators’ team particularly respected participants’ emotional vulnerability, and personal space, therefore private/personal data were not collected. Participants were aged between 25 and 50 years old. The group consisted of 7 members and they were joined by 2 facilitators from Nyitott Kör who are Theatre in Education experts.

The preparation phase was relatively long (from September 2021 to March 2022), due to the need to reschedule the activity several times because of the risk of Covid-19. Members of Nyitott Kör exchanged information with the leadership of Awakenings about the work of their respective organisations, they shared information about the project with a Barcsay group member and contact person, and discussed the possible benefits for the participants.

## C. Young people on a low income

Groups 4 & 5 - ELTE

Nyitott Kör collaborated with Eötvös Loránd University and two groups of young adults who are learning a profession, which has a starting salary of below average. The numbers clearly show that the wages of teachers are way below the rate of standard living in Hungary, which is a cause of various social dysfunctions. Young professionals cannot be independent from their parents and many times have to work several jobs/multiple shifts to make ends meet, which can easily lead to early burnout and can cause mental and physical problems. The Puppetry technique offered them a chance to meet themselves, reflect on their difficulties and lack of perspective, and share their feelings with colleagues-to-be. Furthermore, young adults could learn this technique also to apply with their own groups in the future.

Nyitott Kör conducted two separate events for two different groups. Each event involved 18 participants within the age range of 18-25.

### 3.1.1.3 Implementation: Presentation in table with the following data: Name of the session; Duration; Materials; Objectives; Main results. Activities and observations are described under the table.

#### Group 1 - Figyelj rám!

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Our Puppets	3 hours with one break	For the puppet: paper, scissors, string. For the personalisation of the puppet: craft materials, pencils, string, paper (different colours)	Supporting mental health, communication, self-expressions and reflection skills of vulnerable adults with special needs. Facilitating a common creative and joyful experience.	Participants created their own puppets, and reflected deeply on the process and on their respective experiences. They supported each other with questions and encouraging comments.

## Group 2 - Fészek Csillag

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Introduction	10. 02. 2022. - 13:00-14:30	For the puppet: 80x120 cm wrapping paper (5 sheets per participant), scissors, 1 roll of hemp twine. For the personalisation of the puppet: craft materials, pencils, string, paper (different colours)	To create group cohesion, to introduce basic techniques, to create the puppet.	Rituals were created in the group, relationships started to build up, the creation process was kicked off.
Finishing touch	17. 02. 2022. - 13:00-14:30	For the puppet: 80x120 cm wrapping paper (5 sheets per participant), scissors, 1 roll of hemp twine. For the personalisation of the puppet: craft materials, pencils, string, paper (different colours)	To finish the puppet, to personalise it.	Puppets were finished, imaginative thinking was initiated.
The home	24. 02. 2022. - 13:00-14:30	papers, string, scissors, glue, tables, markers, found objects in the room, chairs, tables	To learn to move the puppet, to think about the concept of home, to personalise the puppet.	Puppets were moved, concept of home was explored, puppets were personalised.
The obstacle	03. 03. 2022. - 13:00-14:30	papers, string, scissors, glue, tables, markers, found objects in the room, chairs, tables	To form a common imaginary place, to fill it with life.	A new world was created together, the concept of obstacles was explored, resilience was reflected.
Rehearsal	10. 03. 2022. - 13:00-14:30	papers, string, scissors, glue, tables, markers, found objects in the room, chairs, tables	To finalise the parts for the show and to rehearse.	The story was finalised and reflected, the play was rehearsed.
Performance	17. 03. 2022. - 13:00-14:30	papers, string, scissors, glue, tables, markers, found objects in the room, chairs, tables	To rehearse, to perform, to reflect, to celebrate	Performance was performed, reflected and celebrated.

### Group 3 - Awakenings

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Puppetry: Stranger Figures	3 hours with 2 short break, adapting to the needs of the group	For the puppet: 80x120 cm wrapping paper (5 sheets per participant), scissors, 1 roll of hemp twine. For the personalisation of the puppet: craft materials, pencils, string, paper (different colours)	Supporting mental health, communication, self-expression and reflection skills of vulnerable adults who struggle with psychiatric problems. Facilitating a common, creative and joyful experience.	Participants created their own puppets, and reflected deeply on the process and on their respective experiences. They supported each other with questions and encouraging comments. Members had a creative experience and found relief during the session.

### Group 4 - ELTE

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Puppetry workshop – Me and the Puppet	24. 03. 2022. - 8:00-11:15	For the puppet: 80x120 cm wrapping paper (5 sheets per participant), scissors, 1 roll of hemp twine. For the personalisation of the puppet: craft materials, pencils, string, paper (different colours)	To introduce the puppetry technique, to initiate self-reflection, to develop vocational skills.	Participants reflected on themselves, brainstormed about the future usage of it, and learnt how to do such a puppet

### Group 5 - ELTE

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Puppetry workshop – The Puppet's Morning	31. 04. 2022. - 8:00-11:15	For the puppet: 80x120 cm wrapping paper (5 sheets per participant), scissors, 1 roll of hemp twine. For the personalisation of the puppet: craft materials, pencils, string, paper (different colours)	To introduce the puppetry technique, to initiate self-reflection, to develop vocational skills	Participants learnt the technique, reflected on themselves, brainstormed about future usage of it, and learnt how to make such a puppet.

**Below is a short description of the activities that took place in each session, along with key observations, and external resources used.**

## **Group 1 - Figyelj rám!**

- 1. Arrival, greetings and introduction - 10 minutes**
- 2. Group rules and needs - 15 minutes**
- 3. Creating the puppet - 60 minutes**
- 4. Lunch break - 30 minutes**
- 5. Short reflection and discussion - 15 minutes**
- 6. The puppets introduce themselves with a gesture - 20 minutes**
- 7. Group members reflect on their experiences - 30 minutes**
- 8. Closure - 5 minutes**

To begin the session, the facilitators from Nyitott Kör decided to start with a short **introduction**, to make sure everyone knew the topic and the structure of the session, in order to keep up with the schedule. Then, they shifted the focus to the group and to the group's needs: the participants were all familiar with each other and with the support staff, and also they had all met with the facilitators at least once (two members of the facilitators's team had held activities for them in the past year, one of them a few years ago, and the fourth facilitator visited them before this session, to get to know them a little bit). The participating group was active and friendly, always ready to play and talk, so the facilitators decided to start with a game, where they asked the participants to touch their left shoulder with their right hand, and then their right shoulder with their left hand, and then they continued to touch the hips, knees and ankles, trying to concentrate and say the name of the body parts at the same time.

The group continuously made the movements, trying to do it faster or slower, while the facilitators paid attention to the group and at a certain point stopped the game, because they noticed that they had reached a boundary. After Nyitott Kör's facilitators discovered the **group dynamic** and agreed the **rules with the group**, they **began the process of puppetry/puppet making**.

During the session, facilitators and participants followed specific steps together, they tried to move forward collectively with the assistance of the support staff. Nyitott Kör's main aim was to minimise their interventions and let the participants **work more independently**. This required attention from the facilitators and support staff, and active watching/listening to notice if someone needed help or could be encouraged to work alone. The facilitators also tried to encourage the participants to **help each other**, because some of them required more time to complete the same process. As the facilitators tried to move forward slowly, waiting for everyone, they noticed that some of the participants were getting bored. At this point the facilitators realised that it was crucial for the support staff to **know the steps of puppet making**, so they could help those who were ready to move to the next step. Therefore, before starting the work, it is useful to consult with the support staff, share the steps and the main stages of the process, so they can easily adapt to the pace of the participants. Everybody started to get a little bit exhausted, but just at the right time because it was time for a **lunch break**. The members of the Figyelj rám! Association ordered food for everybody, so everyone had a great lunch together. It was really needed, also to stop and rest a little bit, and to eat because concentration had started to drop as a result of hunger.

One little observation here: using the same room to create and eat is not a good option. After we finished lunch, even though everyone started to help with the dishes and the leftovers, the space became a little bit chaotic to work in. On the other hand, we also saved some time by ordering and eating at the association's residency, but this could be planned more thoughtfully.

After everyone had finished creating the puppets, participants were invited to name them. In the second half of the session the participants started to move their puppets, and they began to shape each puppet's personality. They felt more involved in the process and started interactions between the puppets. This was only one session, the group was also encouraged to hold another session facilitated by the local support staff and continue with the puppets' personalisation, through appearance and movements. Nyitott Kör's facilitators shared with local support staff the six steps of the Puppetry technique, as described in chapter 2.1.



## Group 2 -Fészek Csillag

Nyitott Kör set the starting date in late October but when the time arrived for the first session, the institution had to postpone the event because of many cases of illness in the group. The postponed date then had to be postponed again because of the trainers' illness. So the whole process was delayed by two weeks before it could finally begin.

### 1. Introduction

#### a. Learn names

#### b. Warm up games - to practice hand movements and complex movements, such as tying a knot

#### c. Start puppet creation

At the first session there was a delay with lunch - which happened to be in the same room as the workshop. The facilitators had no time to prepare in the room and started 15 minutes late. As they found out this was not a delay they could easily make up. For the participants it was extremely important to know exactly when they could go home. In some cases this meant what time their parents or siblings should come and pick them up.

This was the first time Nyitott Kör's team met the local staff member, the responsible employee of the partner institution. Nyitott Kör's facilitators were unable to prepare for the session with her so it was not an easy start. On the other hand, the facilitators quickly connected with the participants and their friendliness and openness made the process run smoothly. Nyitott Kör were not sure about the manual skills of the participants so they initially provided a lot of support, and subsequently learnt that they could design the session in a way that the group members were more independent.

After all the sessions Nyitott Kör's facilitators had a 30 minute discussion with the local professional. She advised Nyitott Kör's team to trust more in the abilities of the participants and let them struggle a bit with the different ties and knots. They will manage. As it turned out they liked to "outsource" as many tasks as they could, even if they were able to do the task themselves. Most of the people around them are impatient and they may do the tasks for them because it is faster. This way they got used to the fact that they did not really have to do complicated tasks.

## **2. Finishing touch**

- a. Warm up ritual**
- b. Finish the puppet**
- c. Name the puppet**
- d. Come up with a brief background story for the puppet**
- e. Farewell ritual**

For the second session Nyitott Kör's facilitators decided to introduce rituals. One of the facilitators, who had been in contact with Mászínház (an organisation which creates inclusive theatre plays) mentioned that they always have these rituals. So they decided to create a ritual from some warm up games that help in physical skill building and concentration.

For the farewell ritual they borrowed an exercise from Mászínház. The prompt start and finish and the rituals created a well-framed session in which everyone could feel safe and present.



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## **3. The home**

- a. Warm up ritual**
- b. Create the home of your puppet (in four groups with four helpers)**
  - I. What's inside?**
  - II. What is home for your puppet and its character?**
- c. Showcase your puppet's home**
- d. Introduce the concept of a town and its neighbourhoods**
- e. Reflection**
- f. Farewell ritual**

Nyitott Kör introduced complex and abstract ideas into the process. Ágnes created 4 groups from the participants. Each group contained 3 people whose abilities were somewhat similar.

This way every group could work at their own pace. Also one trainer got to work with 3 people which helped the process. It was quite different how deeply the groups could explore the concept of home. Sometimes the answer to a question like “What is home to you?” was a simple shrug, but sometimes it was something profound.

It was challenging to find the useful amount of analysis. The facilitators could never know if the lack of answers was caused by an inability to grasp the problem or rather some kind of ‘laziness’ - at some moments participants did not feel like making very much effort to think. When the case was the latter the facilitators could insist for a meaningful discussion to arise. But if the former was true and the facilitators insisted, there was a risk of causing distress and confusion.

#### **4. The obstacle**

##### **a. Warm up ritual**

**b. Introduce the idea of a spring festival towards which all the puppets are headed in the morning. They all face an obstacle along the way but manage to overcome it.**

**c. Work in small groups, create the scenes and perform to each other.**

**d. Reflection - What gives them strength to overcome those obstacles?**

##### **e. Farewell ritual**

This session was a peak period of the process. The puppet met an obstacle and then overcame it. The task was self exploratory and the obstacles were tangible things, such as a puddle or a stray cat. The story went like this: ‘Everyone is preparing for the spring festival but when they try to get to the scene of the festival they face different obstacles. Somehow later they all meet at the festival.’

Four groups created a short sequence for each puppet, moved by three participants. Then each group introduced their scenes for the other groups. At this point the facilitators opened up some scenes with Drama techniques. The facilitators asked the groups to stop the scene at the point when the puppet was most invested in the obstacle. Then they gathered some thoughts: ‘What are the things this puppet could be thinking about at this point? What helps the puppet to persevere? What gives them strength?’ The facilitators felt that these questions could be important for a member of a vulnerable group, and the commonly explored answers could be empowering. Surprisingly, the answers were scarce, or simply just a joke about the scene. Also, sometimes they were answers that participants thought the facilitators wanted to hear, which felt authentic. The facilitators recognised that answer-panels played an important role in this group, and that it was beyond their capacity to transform this in the limited time available, nevertheless they could challenge it. At this event, one of the facilitators had to be replaced because of a foreign project event. Another facilitator was invited, who had worked with the participants before. On the one hand, the group dynamic was impacted by this. It changed the stability, which was important for the group. On the other hand, it was extremely useful to have another person in the group of facilitators who was familiar to the participants. The supporting colleague informed Nyitott Kör’s team that if they wanted to talk about the aforementioned complex questions, they could build a way towards it from smaller blocks. Maybe the culture of self-reflection was not well-developed in the group, maybe the shift in the group dynamic caused a feeling of uncertainty. This was an interesting and inspiring challenge during this pilot implementation process, which led to an ongoing professional debate.

## 5. Rehearsal

- a. Warm up ritual
- b. In small groups create a story from the separate scenes
- c. Create vision board with the story
- d. Rehearse
- e. Farewell ritual

This session was constructed rather theatrically. Each group created a story from the 3 different obstacles. The stories were rehearsed in small groups 4-5 times, and then performed to each other. After watching the scenes, and commenting with supportive thoughts and ideas, a common scene was created in which every participant moved their puppets in a dance in the main square of the town, constructed using tables in the room.

## 6. Performance

- a. Warm up ritual
- b. Rehearsal and finishing touches on the scenes
- c. Perform in front of other members and workers of the daycare
- d. Celebration
- e. Goodbye

The last event was a celebration of every aspect of the work. The groups briefly rehearsed the scenes again, and then hosted the invited guests from the facility: disabled colleagues of the participants, and supporting personnel.

The goal of the event was to enhance the success-experience after a relatively long process, in which all of us invested a lot of ourselves. It was a meeting between those who participated in the workshops and those who did not. It was also a possible new discovery for the support staff in the facility who could see a new aspect of a person they provide care for or discover a new skill this person had developed. It gave a perfect closure for the sessions: as in theatre premieres, everyone had a toast with champagne and snacks and just talked informally to each other. There was music chosen by a participant, and guests danced. The whole event created a sense of community.



## Group 3 - Awakenings

### Flow of the workshop:

1. Arrival, greetings - 10 minutes
2. Introduction: who are we and what is our relationship to Creation/Art - 10 minutes
3. Group rules and needs - 15 minutes
4. Creating the puppet - 60 minutes
5. Short reflection and discussion - 15 minutes
6. The puppets introduce themselves with a gesture - 20 minutes
7. Group members reflect on their experiences - 30 minutes
8. Closure - 10 minutes

Upon the **arrival to the centre** of the organisation – which was located in a deprived but rehabilitating area of Budapest – some participants welcomed us at the door and showed the way to the room. Nyitott Kör’s team introduced themselves immediately and started building a friendly, informal relationship with the members of the Barcsay Group. The room was smaller than they had expected, and most of the space was filled with tables. A couple of chairs and more tables were arranged aside from the walls. The walls were decorated with drawings, paintings and creations of the Barcsay group, and materials used by them. The overall atmosphere of the space was creative, though quite intense, and the facilitators realised that they could not move around the room freely. They needed to quickly adapt to the space since they were used to working in relatively big and empty rooms. The door was kept open, which was also unusual for their practice. For around 10 minutes people were coming and going, some members of the programme dropped by and said hi.

Finally the session got started with 7 participants. Some of the members were looking downwards, at the table, or had closed body positions; the facilitators had to acknowledge that they might have arrived in a difficult phase/mood. First the facilitators **introduced themselves by saying their name, a few words about the session, and a bit about their relationship to Creation/Art. Then participants were asked to follow this pattern: Name and their relationship to Creation/Art.** Some participants talked about painting, writing, taking photos, cooking, and dancing. Somebody expressed that he was very interested in doing theatre and others echoed this. It was striking that when talking about creating, various participants started their sentences with “In the old days...” and “Before...” alluding to the fact that since their struggles started, they stopped engaging in creative activities. Facilitators summarised the information: “Creation/Art means different activities for different people, and it can also be a tiny little thing one does for their enjoyment or well-being, without the pressure of producing a result, or evaluating its quality. Some of the group had not experienced the feeling of being creative for a while, while others still made art to find relief, express a feeling, or produce something nice to look at or give to somebody else.”

Since the facilitators were not familiar with the rules of the Barcsay Group’s activities, and some participants were new to the Foundation’s programmes and did not know the others, to briefly **discuss and write down the group rules.** Nyitott Kör’s facilitators shared the aims of the session in more detail, and agreed about the use of informal language (the Hungarian language differentiates formal and informal registers, mostly represented in verbal conjugation). The facilitators asked the group about the use of phones, arrangement of breaks, and any other needs. Members agreed to keep their phones on silent, put away, and allowed one participant to use an alarm for taking certain medication.

Participants were mostly smokers, and they expressed their need for a break every 60 minutes, therefore we agreed to have two 10-minute-long breaks during the session. One participant – who was hesitant from the beginning – expressed her need not to talk about herself, because in the last session (Philosophy group in the morning) difficult topics were discussed, mostly about being ill. A short discussion started, because the facilitators were sure that they could not, and did not find it useful to limit expressions about difficulties and experiences. The facilitators expressed that participants would talk about themselves in connection with their creations, and that **each individual was free to decide what and how much they shared, respecting each other and listening to one another**. This was satisfying for all members.

Nyitott Kör's facilitators started the puppetry creation process, following the steps shared by Teatr Grodzki in chapter 2.1. One of the facilitators was showing each step on a sample puppet, while the other facilitator supported with the distribution of materials and individual assistance. The facilitators also encouraged participants to help each other when more hands were needed.

The first break was held during the puppet making, after the head and the arms of the puppets had been formed. One participant, who had expressed having a difficult day and had been emotionally moved by the Philosophy session, did not come back to the room after the break, though she came back an hour later to say goodbye and express again that she did not feel well, independently from this session. After the break the group acknowledged her absence, and calmly discussed that the crumpling of the paper and the noise it caused might have affected her mood negatively.

The group accepted that she needed a different kind of support for the moment, and were confident that she could find that in the centre. The group was progressing step by step, though there were significant differences in terms of the participants' pace; the facilitators needed to pay attention to harmonise the needs of the group and support participants to find "just enough challenge" during the creative process, moving forward patiently with themselves and the others. The facilitators encouraged participants with positive feedback from time to time. During the making of the puppet, when steps were already clear, small conversations naturally started among participants, mostly related to the process, to their mood, or another common experience/topic, in which facilitators could gently participate.



When the groups were close to finishing the puppets, one participant said: **“Ha, I see that the important result is that we create the puppet, not what it is like!”** During the creation, participants already briefly commented on how their puppets were unfolding; **“It looks like an alien, I like sci-fi.”**, **“I want mine to be pregnant.”**, **“Mine wants to wear a mini-skirt, but she is also nervous about it.”** **“The brains of my puppet fell out, because I made it too heavy.”** When everybody was finished and in a way satisfied with their creations, participants took turns to **make and show a gesture of their puppet**, expressing some aspect of their character, introducing themselves. Most gestures were still shy and were mainly waving; this led the facilitators to **plan to slowly build up how participants could express themselves through the puppets**. Nyitott Kör’s team asked some reflective questions to facilitate a brief discussion: **How did the creation process feel, what were the difficulties, what felt particularly relieving or joyful?** After sharing about the experience this way, they held the next break.

In the last part of the session the group **returned to moving the puppets**; the facilitators asked participants to individually explore for a few minutes what their puppet could do, how they moved, what their bodies were capable of. Then they gave the instruction: **“Find one gesture of your puppet which you’ll present to the group and which represents a difficulty your puppet struggles with.”** They went around, watched the gestures, and reflected on each as deeply and as long as the participants wished. This fit comfortably into the time frame, so there was no pressure to hurry. Gestures and comments included: **Overthinking every detail, feeling lost, feeling ashamed, feeling lonely, feeling ineffective, feeling trapped.**

Participants could support each other when personal feelings were expressed, and some of the strategies were also mapped that could possibly help when these feelings take over. **The facilitators also attempted to channel relieving thoughts/feelings and problem-solving strategies into gestures of the puppets. Strong dramatic moments were found, which proves that the group could arrive at a state where they experienced creative flow.**

For the closure each participant expressed with one sentence how the overall experience was for them, and if they wanted to continue with the process. **It emerged that everybody wanted to continue**, and they felt sorry that more participants had not joined us on the day of the workshop. After discussing further options, the facilitators found that there was no common time-frame good for the members of the group, since some of them were about to start working in a new environment. They agreed to keep in touch, and that the group member responsible for the Barcsay Group’s activities would reach out to Nyitott Kör about a possible continuation when he had mapped internal needs. Unfortunately, no further session was organised. Nyitott Kör respected the Awakening Foundation’s internal policy and left responsibility with the members to organise the group.

## Groups 4 & 5 - ELTE

### 1. Get to know each other

Short introduction from the facilitators and introduction to the session. Nyitott Kör's facilitators found it useful to ask participants to say their names and also their favourite game to play, whether it was online, a board game, card game, or any other sort of game. This made the inner child more accessible and helped reflect on the fact that playing was not only for children - people play games throughout their entire lives.

For the next activity the facilitators provided two magnetic boards with a map of a typical Hungarian school, where spaces and rooms were named. Participants were asked 'Where do adults and students feel safe and where do they feel unsafe?' to discuss in small groups, and put small magnets of different colours in the respective spots. This provided space to talk about the differences between teachers' and students' experiences at school. Furthermore, the group discussed the similarities, such as the classroom as an unsafe space for students and teachers too, and that the goal of education would be to construct safe classrooms for all. This task helped to focus on the nature of learning and its relationship to the feeling of safety/fear.

### 2. General introduction to drama pedagogy

Nyitott Kör's facilitators asked participants whether they had any kind of experience with drama. In regards to their answers we clarified the main concepts, such as framing, drama event, stepping into roles, etc. The facilitators introduced core sources of information found online. Then they introduced the concept of the hidden curriculum: a pedagogical situation always has at least two layers; the first which is obvious and visible and easily detectable.

In Puppetry this was the technique of creating the puppets and animating them. Nevertheless, there are hidden layers in which a huge portion of the learning happens; such as how the puppet, which one makes, reflects oneself. The situations participants constructed for their puppets revealed details about themselves, their own problems, values, and worldviews. Drama specifically and directly plays with the hidden layers of learning, therefore the facilitators' hypothesis was that the Puppetry tool could work impactfully along this concept.

### 3. Making the puppet

Nyitott Kör's facilitators introduced the steps shown in this video, and followed the description by Teatr Grodzki in chapter 2.1.

### 4. Short scene with the puppet in groups of three.

The facilitators offered participants a simple situation: "the puppet wakes up in the morning and does a series of morning tasks." The created scenes were very different – they offered a brief insight into the creators' minds and attitudes towards starting a day which carries information about general life satisfaction, motivation and current emotional state.

### 5. Perform and reflect

After participants all showed their scenes, everyone sat back in a big circle. The facilitators asked the participants how they felt during the process. What were the difficulties or challenges? What were the personal successes? Together they reflected on the internal processes the creator-participants had experienced.

### 6. Discussion about how Puppetry can be further utilised to develop self-awareness, social skills, collaboration and problem-solving.

After reflecting on the experience, facilitators asked participants how they could use such puppets and the practice in their own group work. We also shared some of the information we had gained from Teatr Grodzki.

### 7. For closing we asked participants to fill out the Step Up project evaluation questionnaires about the impact of the workshop.



### 3.1.1.4 Comments on the pilot implementation, useful tips about each step for practitioners who would like to recreate the practice

#### Group 1 - Figyelj rám!

**Starting with a game** is important, especially if the group dynamic is unknown to the facilitators. The beginning activities are good for getting to know the participants, their involvement and to discover their limits a little bit. Also it helps to be more concentrated and to create a context for working together.

Before and during the process it is important to pay attention to the group and the participants individually, to **make sure everyone can follow the steps**. For this part, it is crucial for everyone to see and hear the facilitator, who tries to describe and show the steps with detailed descriptions.

**Sharing the steps of the puppet making process with the support staff** can help to work more easily and collaboratively, if the support staff see and understand the whole process, they are more likely to follow the group's dynamic.

**Detailed preparation of logistics** is also important: the venue, break(s), food, etc.

#### Group 2 - Fészek Csillag

**Work in small groups**. It was important that there were 12 participants and four facilitators, one of which was a support staff member who worked with the participants and knew them well. She suggested creating small groups in a way so that every group had people with similar abilities, and she prepared this arrangement, paying attention as well to who could work well together and who could not. This helped the teams to work at their own pace and avoid conflicts in the small groups. If there had been different aims it might have been appropriate to create more diverse and mixed groups, however Nyitott Kör's facilitators decided to trust the local professional with this decision. These groups of three enabled participants to express themselves freely and authentically and helped facilitators build a personal connection with each member.

**Be aware of abilities, but challenge participants**. Facilitators found that it was easier for two people to animate the puppet than three. They had a better grasp and could access the puppet better. Naturally this would mean that the puppet would not move as gracefully and professionally as it might but it really came to life this way also and it was simpler for participants to coordinate their movements this way. The facilitators found that at first the participants were rather passive and blocked when imaginative tasks were proposed, which the facilitators sometimes perceived as laziness. Since imaginative tasks require an abstract form of thinking, it did not come easily for everybody, however the facilitators wanted to encourage this approach, and sought ways of challenging participants to step out of their comfort zones.

Nevertheless, sometimes facilitators encountered imitation and repetition of others' ideas, therefore they had to emphasise the power and beauty of authentic expression, and the belief that each person has their own unique ideas, which are equally valid. It was worth the effort to create time and space for each member to find their own ways, because finally interesting results arose, such as the Policeman Puppet, who was strongly equipped with defence tools, such as weapons and handcuffs. One member of the group was reluctant to cooperate with the facilitators at the beginning and made jokes in every session, however they made a great effort during the performance in front of others.

**Aim for a story.** It was remarkably useful and meaningful to create a common space starting from the puppets' individual homes. This way the series of workshops developed from individual creation towards smaller group work (and creating "neighbourhoods") and finally the participants formed a whole fictitious town, in which everyone had a function and a purpose, thus a buddy or partner.

**Create Rituals.** Nyitott Kör's team found it useful to have a starting and a finishing ritual. It gave a sense of stability and safety for the participants. For the beginning there were two games. One was about coordination of two hands at the same time. The other one was about complex movements in different directions. For the farewell ritual the facilitators borrowed an exercise from [MáSzínház](#): everyone stood in a circle. The facilitator turned to their right and said "Thank you for playing with me." With this sentence the person speaking and the person spoken to, touch hands. Then the addressed turned to their right and repeated the statement and gesture. After all members had their turn, they faced the centre of the circle and said together: "And I thank you too."

## Group 3 - Awakenings

**Preparation** is key: be mindful of the internal policies of the partner organisation. If you have the opportunity, see the building and the room before the activity, and talk to people who spend time there.

With this particular target group **adaptation and flexibility** were key; Nyitott Kör's team could not know how many participants would join the group and in what mood they would arrive. The facilitators were also prepared to modify the time-frame if that was the need of the group.

**Be transparent** about the aims, possible results and commonly created rules. This helps members feel safe in the group. The written group rules could also be signed by each member (although Nyitott Kör did not do this), and hung on the wall/door to remind participants of the agreed guidelines for constructive collaboration.

**Respect each mood and feeling that is present** in the group, and be aware that there are aspects that are not in the facilitator's control. Trust the partner organisation and the participants that they have strategies to deal with difficult feelings and situations; after all they are adults, competent in their lives.

**Trust your intuitions**, take the signs and leads of the group. If you feel tired, probably the group also does. It is possible to take a break anytime, and do a short warm-up when returning to the room. It is important to have a joyful time together that inspires participants to be creative in their daily lives.

**Express and encourage opposite opinions.** It is also useful to draw attention to something that might bother the group; in one particular case one participant was always the fastest to answer questions and started to dominate the group's space. When the facilitators asked her to pay attention, give space to others and reassured her that a momentary "thinking" silence is okay, she was grateful and reflective, and the dynamic of the group was restored.

**Co-lead and collaborate.** After the creation of the puppets, facilitators exchanged the lead role, and the one supporting the puppet-making process became the main instructor and moderator of the reflective discussion and puppet-acts. This was useful because he could closely observe participants' reactions while the puppets were being made from the supportive role, and the other facilitator could observe closely while moving the puppets and think about the potentially most useful closure.

## Group 4&5 - ELTE

**Contextualise the work.** Since these events were well integrated in the participants' professional training it was necessary to talk about the bigger picture in which the piloted puppetry technique fitted; drama (pedagogy). In the very beginning of the two events Nyitott Kör's facilitators talked about drama in general then focused on the specific practice of Puppetry and its special potential.

**Engage with a hook.** The facilitators recognized that in the first event the introductory part was too long and complex, the learners became quite tired of the 30 minute long presentation. Therefore the facilitators adapted this into a shorter and more interactive activity for the second event which engaged participants more successfully. The participants enjoyed it and became more open to learning about the topic and tool. As it turned out, the way in which the event began had a crucial impact on the participants' later involvement. The first group was more passive than the second one, which was also surprising, as the facilitators had been advised that the second group was especially distant and resistant in similar situations.

**Support teamwork.** The facilitators invited the first group to work with their puppets individually and the second group to work in teams of 4-5 participants. The latter proved to be a good decision, the group work motivated young adults more effectively.

**Plan, evaluate, re-plan.** The experience with the first group was very useful, the facilitators gained new ideas about how to engage this group more effectively. As a result of the facilitators' reflections and discussions with the partners' group leader, the second group was well facilitated and thus more rewarding for the participants (based on their feedback). Participating young adults could successfully meet each other in a new way and they reflected deeply about the power of non formal education tools, while also sharing their initial doubts.

### 3.1.1.5 Results and impact

Nyitott Kör's team spent most time **in the Nest Star group** of adults with cognitive disabilities, where the atmosphere was predominantly joyous, participants were in a festive mood, and wished to **"have a good laugh"**. Sometimes this also meant that comments were expressed about each other, and each others' puppets or solutions, which were not always funny for the person involved; all in all the **feeling of safety was fragile**. Additionally the facilitators' attempts and questions that focused the attention on self-awareness might have been unexpected for the group, and the facilitators see further potential in building up this goal with a more gentle, step-by-step approach.

**In the Maybug group** Nyitott Kör's team **lacked the time to deeply analyse the process** with the participants, who were quite tired after having made the puppets, and therefore appreciated easier, relieving, playful tasks. **In the first group of young adults** the facilitators decided to propose a more traditional teaching approach, and first gave a **presentation, which was not effective in fully engaging participants**, – only on a cognitive level, – which later impacted their attention and approach to the tool, and prevented their immersion in the learning process. Another aspect that might have played a role was **the routine or culture of the particular group in self-reflective discussions**; while the Barcsay group works similarly on a daily basis in a group setting, for the other groups the depth of comments depended rather on each individuals' past routines and experiences.

### Group 1 - Figyelj rám!

*"Making the puppet is very useful for me. I had a really good time."*

*- Participant*

*"I was happy to make my puppet and I had a good time with the others"* - Participant

*"I made a puppet named Darth Vader and next week I will make a cloak for him."* - Participant

*"Both participants and facilitators had a good time, the time spent together was pleasant and useful. There was complete harmony."* - Social worker

*"For many years we have been working with the Open Circle Association, who help us to run our development and leisure programmes. Today's pleasant day was spent together with our beneficiaries, who were able to try out new creative work. We continue to enjoy working with the association, because of the creative ideas they bring to the days of our group."* - Social worker

## Group 2 - Fészek Csillag

It was fascinating how quickly Nyitott Kör's team connected with the participants. At the third session they were hugging us and waiting for the facilitators at the door. At the last session some of the participants drew pictures for the facilitators and gave them cards saying how much they would miss them. They admitted that they had been very sceptical about whether they would be able to create a puppet, let alone animate it. It was a huge success for them to conquer this challenge, which proves the power of the tool in disadvantaged people with the ability to believe in themselves and commit to a process.

To animate the puppet it required 2-3 people to work together. With a little bit of support from the facilitators, they could all experience how to work together effectively.

### Quotes:

*"Everything was clear and understandable for me."*

*"The facilitators did a good job."*

*"My mood improved, I became happier."*

*"I would suggest making it a one week program, like a camp."*

*"It strengthened my relationship with my boyfriend [another participant], because the puppets were like our children."*

## Group 2 - Fészek Csillag

*"Ha, I see that the important result is that we create the puppet, not what it is like!"*

*"It felt like creating another version of myself."*

*"It felt really good to crumple the paper, I arrived stressed and it was released!"*

*"The process was difficult for me because I struggle with detailed, monotonous work. I almost gave up. But I am happy I didn't."*

*"I am angry because your puppet is much more beautiful than mine."*

*"It felt good to discuss that the puppets can be different and authentic, I felt that mine was special."*

*"My puppet's head rolled down, like mine when I overthink something."*

*"My puppet is happy because she got the job she wanted. She claps her hands."*

*"I like my puppet, because it reminds me that I can be a lot of things and I can create."*

*"I am bipolar and during the virus I experienced the down-side of it. I struggle to keep things organised in my environment, but my appearance is still okay. My puppet looks okay on the outside, but if you look more closely, she almost falls apart."*

*"I could not imagine what we would do here and how, and I was afraid it would be childish. I enjoyed the childish, playful part of it, and the discussions were deep and useful for me, thank you."*

## Group 3 - Awakenings

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*"I could not imagine what we would do here and how, and I was afraid it would be childish. I enjoyed the childish, playful part of it, and the discussions were deep and useful for me, thank you."*

## Group 3 - Awakenings

The simple act of creating a puppet had an enormous hidden area of learning, which provided a great potential for becoming teachers to explore what they were most looking for. Beyond the tangible tasks, in the unspoken, or even unconscious sphere changes and discoveries happened, which were unique and personal.

*"It was creative and free."*

*"Learning without teaching."*

*"It was very straightaway."*

*"I have more knowledge now than I had before I came here. Also drama has grown closer to me."*

*"Very useful tool and has varied applicability."*

*"The creation of the puppet took too much time in my opinion."*

*"It was fast and intense. Everyone was learning every second."*

*"It was brilliant, I would like to learn more about it."*

*"I could remain open and enthusiastic and gained a lot of help for my professional life."*

*"I haven't really learned anything, but maybe I will use it later."*

*"I gained a lot of knowledge which will be useful in my professional life."*

*"It was playful learning so time flew by really quickly. I really enjoyed myself while learning."*

*"The process of creation was really relaxing, almost therapeutic. I liked the more conceptualised tasks also. And we could get creative about the production (within the certain guidelines.)"*

## LEARNINGS, NEWLY GAINED EXPERIENCE AND NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE TRAINERS/FACILITATORS

Nyitott Kör chose the good practice of **Puppetry** for the Pilot implementation, because it integrated well in the organisation's mission: **Play. Act. Explore.** Nyitott Kör's team immediately connected with the tool when they first encountered it during the collective partnership training in 2021, and mapped possibilities for introducing it in different contexts. During the Pilot sessions **Theatre in Education specialists could apply their skills** through a new tool and **with new groups.** Nyitott Kör works with students and young people on a daily basis, and delivers training courses for professionals, their focus was only occasionally on vulnerable adult groups in the past. Therefore **the activities in the Step Up project also helped the organisation to learn about effectively engaging adults** with high support needs and gain experience in collaborating with a community psychiatric facility.

### Group 1 - Figyelj rám!

During the realisation of this session the facilitators' team gained new experiences and met with new challenges. These challenges were mostly about the details of organising and facilitating the workshop, as mentioned above. In the meantime, the facilitators all learnt to pay more attention to details and were able to incorporate these experiences into sessions with subsequent groups. Nyitott Kör's team acknowledged how important it was to get to know the participants' limits, to explore their needs and to give as clear instructions as possible.

*"For me it was hard to know when my help is really needed and to realise if I just give too much help. I think it's important to try to see the limits of the participants and in order to get to know the limits, you have to try out different approaches and simply just see the result."* - Support worker

*"I realised the importance of the details, especially when I am the facilitator and the group is following me. Maybe for me it is clear what I am trying to show, because it is in my head, but I learned that I have to be more careful with describing and leading as a facilitator."* - Facilitator

*"The diversity of the group was a new challenge for me, I wanted to keep the tasks and the whole process interesting for everyone. However, one individual was much quicker than the others, who took their time. It was a bit hard to accept that one's own process is more important than achieving the goal."* - Facilitator

### Group 2 - Fészek Csillag

*"I realised that it was hard to cope with the difficulties regarding abstract thinking."*

*"It worked really well that there was evaluation and consultation after every session [among the facilitators and the local supporting staff member]."*

*"I think it's important to have programs where playfulness and self-expression is in the focus."*

*"I am more open in the common sessions and also curious about the participants' lives outside work."*

## Group 1 - Figyelj rám!

Nyitott Kör had not worked before with the target group of people in psychiatric care, so they appreciated the opportunity to **collaborate with this group**. Nyitott Kör shares values and a mission with the **community psychiatric approach** and in particular the Awakenings Foundation, it was uplifting for the members of Nyitott Kör to see how trust and **power is given to a vulnerable group to self-facilitate** and organise activities that they need. Non-formal activities can support the well-being of the members, so the activity Nyitott Kör offered fitted in with the organisation's weekly programme. Nyitott Kör gained a positive experience of **the potential of the Puppetry tool** and developed their skills as Theatre in Education practitioners in this field, which encouraged them to look for similar opportunities in the future, **with a view to a longer, multi-session process**.

A **small challenge** can be stated about the implementation of the group rules: One of the participants kept looking at her phone, another member went out several times, and toward the end of the workshop others from the facility dropped in to see what the group was doing. These were **not ideal circumstances** for the sessions' dynamic, however the facilitators tried to watch and observe how the group related to these details, and **it seemed quite natural** for them, nobody expressed tension caused by these events. However in a longer process we would **return to the group rules at the beginning of every session** and collaboratively evaluate if each person complies with our own commitments, or if there are suggestions for modification. In the latter case we would **seek a consensus** instead of a majority decision or autocratic choices.

*"I was very happy that we laughed a lot during the workshop, especially because in the first 15 minutes my perception was that some of the participants arrived in a nervous and dark mood, I was not sure if they would open up and play."*

*"My feeling was that a safe space could be created easily, the group was very constructive and they had routine in such group arrangements, they supported each other, listened actively, and worked at their best."*

*"It was challenging to find a way to meet every participants' needs because their paces were so different, but I was also surprised how reflective and supportive they were when this was put in focus."*

*"We lost one participant during the process, but I was glad she came back to say goodbye, and that she could find the support she needed."*

## Group 4&5 - ELTE

*"It reinforced my view that in professional training it is crucial to introduce various methods of learning. I gained new professional knowledge and also created professional acquaintances."*

*"I will seek more ways to connect with Nyitott Kör and also other organisations."*

The challenge was not only to conclude the puppetry workshop, but to provide a tool for the learners which they can use in their own practice. In Nyitott Kör's experience, it is challenging to live through an experience and immediately transform that into tangible knowledge. This time the facilitators had to find a way to create a space where everyone could immerse themselves in the activity of creating a puppet. On the other hand, they needed to support participants to look at the process from an outside perspective and evaluate its potential transferability to their field. This situation created an overlap of two layers, and retracted the possibility of having the full experience of either of them. Here it is important to acknowledge that in Hungary the training programme for new teachers has severe contradictions and causes tension for both students and educators.

Teaching-students see their future as rather bleak, as they are aware of the lack of social recognition, below living-wages (a Junior Teacher starts with a gross monthly wage of 570 EUR), and overwhelming working hours (45-50 hours per week). The training programme prepares teachers to adapt contemporary and non-formal education views, however when they start practising and face the reality of the outdated school system in Hungary, they feel disillusioned. Around 70% of junior teachers give up and drop out in the first 5 years of their career.

Therefore the students are quite reluctant, distant and unenthusiastic during their training. Finding a source of self-motivation was the first challenge the facilitators had to face. The participants were doubtful about the usefulness of the course, in which the session took place. As facilitators, it was a challenge to find ways to tackle this passivity and facilitate a success-experience, in which participants felt less alienated from their profession and themselves.

## IMPACT AND LEARNINGS OF LOCAL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

### Group 1 - Figyelj rám!

*"I was totally satisfied with the session. The group learned some new techniques and they had a good time, and also it was useful to us, to see how the facilitators work with our community" - Social worker*

*"I think we will continue the puppetry, I can see that they have a need to play with them and to make them clothes or something. Now we know how to make the puppets so maybe we can do it with the other group too!" - Support worker*

*"I am richer in ideas. My interest in similar programmes has increased." - Social worker*

*"I feel like I'm more open now." - Social worker*

### Group 2 - Fészek Csillag

*"It built a stronger connection amongst the participants."*

*"We are open to similar programmes, it is always great to exit our comfort zone."*

*"They [the participants] were looking forward to the sessions every week. They really enjoyed the new activity."*

### Group 3 - Awakenings

*"We are open to all evidence-based complementary methods. For people with a mental health diagnosis, understanding and strengthening their self-image can be important in any diagnosis. We learnt the basics of a playful method, our users left the event with good feelings. The participants left with a knowledge of a method we have never used before. They could get closer to themselves, their feelings and their values. We will be able to integrate the experiences gained here into the development of our own innovations and related research. Our clients are seeking care from several mental health providers, spreading the word about the method, and our self-help groups can adopt the approach voluntarily. The symptoms of the people involved can be a measure of such methods. This activity had an acutely positive impact on individuals."*

## Group 4&5 - ELTE

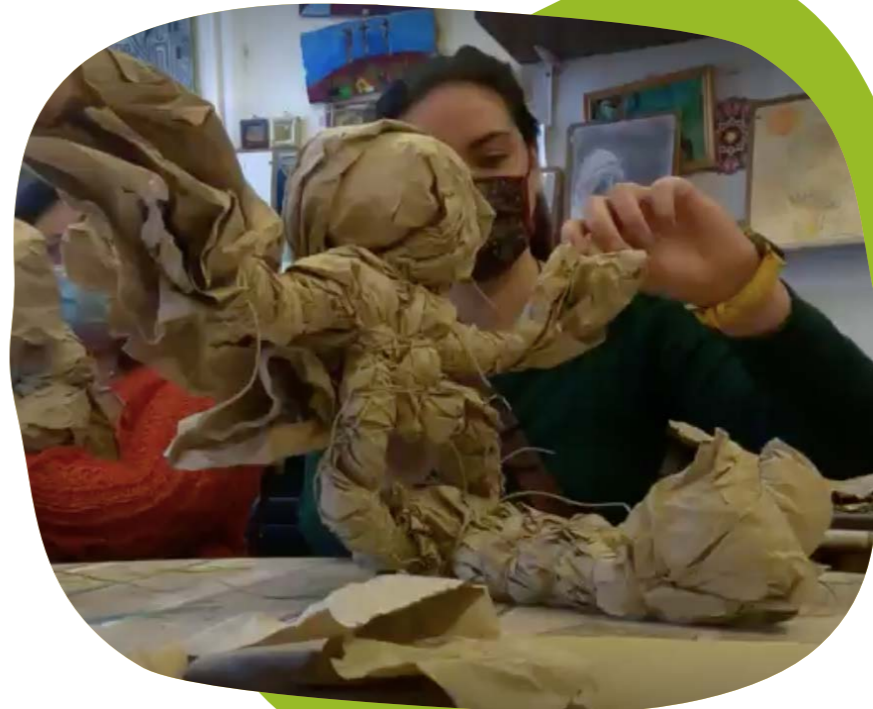
*“These events were the very first steps of a long-term cooperation between the University and Nyitott Kör. We are currently working on a curriculum to offer a longer and deeper insight into drama.”*

The basic principles of the current teachers’ training and the views of drama regarding the nature of learning are quite close to each other. Nevertheless, drama is not integrated in the training program. Since the partner and contact person was the head of the teachers’ training programme, this was a special session and hopefully the beginning of a long term relationship.

### 3.1.2.6 Images, videos and multimedia



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THE VIDEO



## 3.1.2 Pilot Activity in Turkey: Create a Puppet, Create Yourself

### 3.1.2.1 Implementing organisation in the partner's country:

**Oba Ütopya Eğitim Sanat ve Medya Tic. Ltd. Şti. (A.k.a Utopia Education and Art)**

#### 3.1.1.2 Target group

##### **Group 1 –Young adults with economic disadvantages - individuals at risk of poverty**

The first group participating in the pilot activity in Turkey were young adults with economic disadvantages - individuals at risk of poverty. The target group was selected because it was considered that the activity is likely to have a positive effect on their personal and professional development and that they can make use of these skills in their future life and work. Moreover, these individuals usually don't have many opportunities to attend educational and social activities due to a lack of financial resources. The workshop took place in Antalya, in the Meltem Sports and Activity Complex with the collaboration of Muratpaşa Volunteer Centre, a branch of Youth and Sports Ministry. The Volunteer Centre aims to serve young adults who are mostly from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Among the participants there were also young adults who joined the centre as participants, then became social workers and volunteers themselves now working with disadvantaged groups.

Utopia had connected and collaborated with Muratpaşa Volunteer Centre from the beginning of the Step Up project, involving them in Focus Group Meetings. When it had been decided to implement the Puppetry technique as the pilot, the social workers and volunteers in the centre expressed their interest in hosting the workshop and making an open call for the potential participants. Utopia also announced the event on their social media accounts and web page. 12 applicants aged between 20-25 signed up for the workshop. However, there were only 10 participants who showed up for the first session and only 4 of the participants could complete the whole workshop process. There was one team leader from the Volunteer Centre helping with orientation and coordination, and Utopia was present with 2 staff members. The workshop started in December 2021 and the whole process was initially planned to be completed within a month. However, it was extended to 2 months because it was hard for the group to fully participate in all of the sessions. It is hoped that the workshop will have an ongoing impact because the participants who completed the process were very willing to disseminate and use this new method in their own future professional lives (e.g. in teaching and social work).

## Group 2 – Seniors

The second group participating in the pilot activity in Turkey were 'Seniors'. This target group was selected in order to experience the social and individual impact of sharing creative methods with seniors. Moreover, the method was considered a good opportunity for seniors to improve their self expression and well-being. Utopia implemented the workshop in March 2022, in Antalya Active Seniors' Social Centre with the collaboration of Antalya Metropolitan Municipality. The Active Seniors' Social Centre aims to support seniors to stay active and be aware of both the physical and mental risks of ageing. Utopia applied to Antalya Metropolitan Municipality, stating that they would like to introduce the Create a Puppet, Create Yourself method in the Active Seniors' Social Centre. After the approval of their application to the municipality, they planned the workshop within the events for the "Seniors' Week". The Active Seniors' Social centre had made an open call among its members, as Utopia had also announced the event on their social media accounts and web page. As the centre requested a one day intensive workshop, Utopia modified the month-long plan into a full-day workshop. There were 11 participants, aged between 65 and 73. For support, two staff (a gerontologist and a psychologist) were present from the centre during the workshop. Utopia had 2 staff members coordinating and leading the workshop.

The seniors who participated in the workshop reported that they felt as if they were children again while playing games and creating their own puppets. Moreover, a very valuable result of the workshop was that many of the participants designed and created puppets also to give to their grandchildren, dreaming about how they would play with them together and strengthen their bonds.

**3.1.2.3 Implementation: Presentation in table with the following data: Name of the session; Duration; Materials; Objectives; Main results. Activities and observations are described under the table.**

**A. Group 1 – Young Adults with Economic Disadvantages:**

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Paper Puppetry Workshop	8 sessions (app. 2 hours long) expanded for 2 months	Kraft paper (4-5 pieces, the size of paper determines the size of the puppet) newspaper (optional; can be used for filling the head and the body of the puppet, and for styling it ) hemp/cotton different coloured string scissors fabrics (can be recycled from old clothes or leftover fabrics) sewing supplies other recycle materials crayons and paint	To contribute to participants' self-esteem and self-awareness. To contribute their communication and social skills. To improve their knowledge about themselves and their needs. To offer a non-formal and experiential learning experience. To offer new methods for sparking creativity. To create a space for participants to express themselves and get to know each other. To create an environment for team building and effective cooperation, To introduce to participants some social integration and cohesion techniques.	The group shared a common enthusiasm for creating the puppets for themselves and most of them took it very seriously and expressed their interest in the workshop. They also stated that they would use this new method in their own future professional life and social work.

**B. Group 2 – Seniors:**

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Paper Puppetry Workshop	1 day of intense workshop	Kraft paper (4-5 pieces, the size of paper determines the size of the puppet) newspaper (optional; can be used for filling the head and the body of the puppet, and for styling it ) hemp/cotton different coloured string, scissors fabrics (can be recycled from old clothes or leftover fabrics) sewing supplies other recycled materials. crayons and paint	To contribute to participants' self-esteem and self-awareness. To contribute their communication and social skills. To improve their knowledge about themselves and their needs. To offer a non-formal and experiential learning experience. To offer new methods for sparking creativity. To create a space for participants to express themselves and get to know each other. To create an environment for team building and effective cooperation, To introduce to participants some social integration and cohesion techniques.	The seniors who participated in the workshop reported that they felt as if they were children again while playing games and creating their own puppets. Moreover, a very valuable result of the workshop was that most of the participants designed and created puppets for their grandchildren, dreaming of how they would play with them together and strengthen their bonds.

## ACTIVITIES FOR EACH SESSION, OBSERVATIONS AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES

### A. GROUP 1 – YOUNG ADULTS WITH ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGES :

#### **SESSION 1 (2 hours): MEETING EACH OTHER AND INTRODUCTION**

The group chose to get to know each other through games, warmers, ice breakers and conversations.

In this session Utopia's facilitators also introduced their organisation, The Step Up project; including the partners and the project's objectives, and why they had chosen this practice to share with the workshop participants.

Utopia introduced Teatr Grodzki to the participants as the developer and mentor of the Puppetry method. The facilitators then shared the materials needed to make the puppets. The group then prepared the materials together and started to make the upper body of their puppets.

#### **SESSION 2 (2 hours): INTRODUCTION TO MAKING OF PAPER PUPPETS**

Utopia started the day with games and warmers again. The participants continued creating their paper puppets while coming up with ideas about the puppets' characters. Because there were participants who had missed the first session, the participants who made progress in making their puppets also helped the newly arrived participants. Even if the workshop process was slowed down, the social impact of it exceeded expectations.

The participants enjoyed creating the puppets together and the dialogue during the process had a very positive contribution to the group dynamic. There were also participants who wanted to make another puppet for their friends and relatives, so the project team shared the YouTube video made by Teatr Grodzki on Making Puppets:



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THE VIDEO](#)



#### **SESSION 3 (2 hours): MAKING PAPER PUPPETS**

Throughout the workshop process Utopia's facilitators started each session with games and warmers. After constructing the puppets, the participants began decorating and personalising them. For this purpose, the facilitators encouraged the participants to bring recycled materials and old fabrics that they could use to create the character for their puppets.

## **SESSION 4 (2 hours): CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT FOR PUPPETS**

Utopia's team offered the following questions to the participants to create a character for their puppets:

What is your character's name?

How old is your character?

Where was your character born?

Who is/was in your character's family?

Where and with whom do your characters live now?

What does your character do for a living?

Name a cherished possession of your character.

What's your character's favourite piece of music?

What's your character's favourite place?

What's your character's favourite food?

Tell us more about your character's personality.

Moreover the styling and individualising process was going on in parallel with the discussion of these questions.

## **SESSION 5 (2 hours): MEETING THE PUPPETS**

Utopia's team and the workshop participants interviewed each puppet as a group and asked the puppets questions to get to know them, similar to 'Hot seating' in Creative Drama.

## **SESSION 6 (2 hours): CREATING STORIES FOR PUPPETS**

In groups of 4, the participants tried to animate the puppets and make them perform. One participant was responsible for moving the head, one was responsible for moving the arms and one was responsible for moving the legs. The maker of the puppet took on the role of a director. Afterwards, the participants started working on the theme: "How would your puppet start a brand new day?"

## **SESSION 7 (2 hours): PERFORMING PUPPETS**

Each paper puppet performed their scene with their character's favourite music, without using any text or meaningful words. There were 3 participants who were moving the puppets with the direction of the puppet's creator. The participants made a spontaneous, unannounced performance in Meltem Sports and Activity Complex for the people who happened to be there for different sessions and were interested to watch this casual and semi-improvised performance.

## **SESSION 8 (2 hours): REFLECTION, EVALUATION AND CLOSURE**

Utopia's facilitators asked the participants to share their feelings and feedback on the workshop process. They requested the participants' evaluation via Google Forms and to close the facilitators invited the participants to stay in contact for possible future collaborations.

## **B. GROUP 2 – SENIORS:**

GENERAL PROGRAMME has the same flow as the first pilot implementation carried out with Young Adults with Economic Disadvantages, but only with reduced hours because Utopia's team modified the schedule in order to fit it in an intensive one-day programme.

### **SESSION 1 (60 min): MEETING EACH OTHER**

### **SESSION 2 (60 min): INTRODUCTION TO MAKING PAPER PUPPETS**

### **SESSION 3 (60 min): MAKING PAPER PUPPETS**

### **SESSION 4 (60 min): CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT OF PUPPETS**

**SESSION 5 (60 min):  
MEETING THE PUPPETS**

**SESSION 6 (60 min):  
CREATING STORIES FOR PUPPETS**

**SESSION 7 (60 min):  
PERFORMING THE PUPPETS**

**SESSION 8 (60 min):  
REFLECTION, EVALUATION AND CLOSE**

**3.1.2.4 Comments on the pilot implementation,  
useful tips about each step for practitioners  
who would like to recreate the practice**

**A. For Young Adults with  
Economic Disadvantages:**

In planning the 8 workshop sessions, maintaining a consistent group of participants was the most challenging element that Utopia's team faced during the process. Some participants started the workshop and then reported that they had found jobs and could not attend any more. Some were still students and had exams in university so they missed some sessions. Some didn't continue because of pandemic related health issues.

**B. For Seniors**

In the beginning of the workshop, not many seniors were taking the idea of making puppets very seriously. They had doubts about it because they thought it was a childish thing to play games and make puppets. Moreover, they were likely to set boundaries which were very rigid and didn't want to connect with the others in the beginning. However, after spending the entire day together, in spite of the people who left early because they had prior engagements, the group was finally laughing and having fun together. While trying out group work for performing the puppets, the participants were enjoying their time and freely having fun on the improvised stage as if they were children. Utopia's facilitators shared with the participants the joy of witnessing how art can be a very powerful tool to support the emotional well-being of individuals in a life-long learning process.

**Recommendations:**

Always try to start the sessions with an energizer, ice breaker or any game you think appropriate for the specific group that you are going to work with.

Try to keep the expectations low, both yours and the participants. Emphasise needs instead of expectations.

Let participants try out their ideas.

Trust that with every group it will be an entirely new experience, so be flexible.

Have fun! :)

### 3.1.2.5 Results and impact

During the workshop both participants and facilitators have experienced very valuable moments and mutually shared a joyful, warm and friendly atmosphere. Playing games, creating and individualising the paper puppets positively affected the self-expression of participants and improved their mental and emotional state. The process has shown that art is indeed a very strong tool with a wide impact, and can be easily individualised for everyone in life-long learning.

#### A. Young Adults with Economic Disadvantages:

**PARTICIPANT A (22):** *“The activity was very effective. I felt comfortable and happy. This motivated me even more. It also boosted my motivation. I think it is because of the methods of activity and training. It’s always nice to have a new skill. In addition, socialising and contributing to my personal development. It felt so good to create. I am also motivated in other parts of my life. I am normally a cheerful person. I am also friendly. However, I am a tense and anxious person in social situations, even in the presence of my friends. This workshop’s creative drama part made me a more assertive and more comfortable person in my friendships. I am grateful for that. I also learned a lot from people I met. I would like to attend more events such as this one. We’ve both acquired skills and peace of mind. I think the result was pretty good.”*

**PARTICIPANT B (24):** *“It was so fun and contributed to my personal development. creating new characters and defining emotions to the puppet I have created made me happy. I had unforgettable experiences. I feel mentally healthier. I wish we had a longer workshop ”*



**PARTICIPANT C (21):** *“It was a very fun process. Making paper puppets and designing and personalising them. I have positive experiences in a social way. I would attend more social activities. I would love to have a more social life. It encouraged me to do these kinds of activities. Everything was perfect.”*

**PARTICIPANT D (25):** *“It was a beautiful event. Moreover, the energetic and friendly attitude of the teachers encouraged me to participate in this event. It was fun, beautiful and unforgettable. I wouldn’t change anything because I love the event and our teachers.”*

**PARTICIPANT E (21):** *“The activity was really fun. During the event, we had a very good process with the different ideas that everyone expressed. I’ve acquired a more positive approach to life and this made me feel more energetic.”*

**PARTICIPANT F (20):** *“Gaining a new skill is great. I felt really happy to be able to create a new thing.*

**PARTICIPANT G (23):** *“ I was already interested in tools like creative drama. I learned a lot about new creative methods in this activity. I experienced being creative. I felt free and unique. I learned to be social and make decisions freely thanks to creative thinking. “*

## B. Seniors:

**PARTICIPANT A (70):** *“I enjoyed it very much. Participating in the activity changed my life in a positive way. I felt much happier after the activity. I wish we had more time.”*

**PARTICIPANT B (65):** *“I decided to participate in this activity, because I thought I would feel happy. In the end, I was so satisfied and felt happier. This activity reminded me of the feeling of peace and happiness in my childhood. I would love to participate in this workshop again a few more times.”*

**PARTICIPANT C (65):** *“It was so good and fun. Time passed so fast. We had a great positive vibe in the event, I remembered my childhood. I am progressing in a very positive mood and am proud of myself. My self-esteem has increased. I also want to create animal puppets next time. I am very happy, thank you so much!”*

**PARTICIPANT D (73):** *“I attended this activity to make a puppet for my grandchild. However, the process reminded me of my own childhood. We didn’t have this kind of opportunity back then and I felt great today. Everything was perfect, teachers were very helpful and understanding.”*



**PARTICIPANT E (67):** *“It was beautiful. We could have a longer workshop time. Sharing something with people made me feel great.”*

## LEARNINGS, NEWLY GAINED EXPERIENCE AND NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE TRAINERS/FACILITATORS.

Thanks to the Step Up Project’s partner, Teatr Grodzki, Utopia’s team learned about a new artistic technique for social inclusion and were really excited to try it out as the pilot implementation in Turkey. Utopia’s members learned and tested the Puppetry practice and decided to add it to the non-formal training programme in their organisation.

The challenges that Utopia’s team faced during the programming and implementation of the workshops were:

Some of the participants started the workshop but didn’t fully complete the whole workshop process. There were many formalities to go through in order to collaborate with governmental organisations. Utopia’s team chose this technique because it was inexpensive and sustainable, however there has been an excessive increase in the price of paper, string and other stationary supplies in Turkey since the project started. In other words, there were unexpected expenses during the process. Trainers might need to find more ecological ways to create the puppets from used papers, newspapers or posters instead of buying new paper.

Even if some participants had a lack of interest and motivation at the beginning of the workshops, afterwards Utopia’s facilitators had great communication with them and they became fully engaged in the process. They contributed to the workshops with an unexpectedly diligent approach by carefully designing their individual puppets and this can be counted as a highly valuable and concrete outcome.

## IMPACT AND LEARNINGS FOR LOCAL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS

### A. Young Adults with Economic Disadvantages:

*"We work with groups with different special needs. We wanted to participate because we thought that this activity would be interesting to them and that group work would contribute to their social development. We think that the activity has contributed to improving our future work. Our friends who attended this workshop will go to some village schools as volunteer teams and teach what they have learned in this workshop, and it will become a constant activity in our volunteer centre. We learned the processes and techniques of puppet making. And we experienced the learning-to-learn process with all our participants. The stories have been created for puppets. Our participants learned about a new field of art and the realisation processes of a new workshop. Making paper puppets will be a continuous activity in our centre."*

### B. Seniors:

*"Our organisation's main function is to ensure elderly people participate in life actively by rehabilitating them in all social, physical and psychological senses. This activity has definitely contributed to seniors' manual skills and attention span. We are happy to be a part of this project and seniors' interests have increased through these activities."*

### 3.1.2.6 Images, videos and multimedia



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## 3.1.3 Pilot Activity in Portugal: Create a Puppet, Create Yourself

### 3.1.3.1 Implementing organisation in the partner's country: Centro Social de Soutelo

### 3.1.3.2 Target group

Centro Social de Soutelo decided to pilot Puppetry Art with beneficiaries of the Social Integration Income. Economic insufficiency, long-term unemployment, difficulty in labour reintegration, low educational qualifications and addictions are the main weaknesses that are part of their life paths and that have hindered their social inclusion process.

Taking into account the expressions of interest in participating in this activity, initially, the group consisted of 20 members, eleven women and nine men aged between 18 and 65 years old (five participants - 18/35 years old; four participants - 35/50 years old; eleven participants - 50/65 years old). The participants live in Rio Tinto and Baguim do Monte, two parish councils of the Municipality of Gondomar, in Portugal. Regarding the educational qualifications of the participants it is important to highlight that, thirteen participants (more than half) have only completed basic education, which in itself is already evidence of the difficulties that the group may have felt in understanding and completing some of the tasks during the pilot implementation; four participants have secondary education and three have higher education.

The selection of this target group was motivated by the fact that it was a group of people with socio-economic fragilities with repercussions, mainly at the level of their labour insertion and, as such, people who were in a situation of social exclusion. The Step Up Project and the puppetry workshop provided a space and a moment that resulted in a socio-emotional empowerment of the participants.



**3.1.3.3 Implementation: Presentation in table with the following data: Name of the session; Duration; Materials; Objectives; Main results. Activities and observations are described under the table.**

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Session No. 1	2 hours (10h-12h)	Sheets of kraft paper, scissors, coloured yarn and wool, newspapers, post-its of different colours, pens, chairs, tables, whiteboard.	To encourage a sense of commitment; To develop personal motivation; To foster individual and group empathic capacity; To stimulate a spirit of curiosity; To promote individual and group reflexive sense.	All the selected participants were present and they collaborated positively and spontaneously in the warm up activity.
Session No. 2	2 hours (10h-12h)	Sheets of kraft paper; scissors; coloured yarn and wool; fabrics, video camera and camera.	Encourage a sense of commitment; Develop personal motivation Foster individual and group empathic capacity Promote the spirit of mutual help between participants; Encourage proximity between the participants and between them and the facilitators; Facilitate affection between the participant and his puppet.	The participants were very enthusiastic about building the puppet. However, some had difficulties with fine motor skills. The team stimulated the sense of mutual help between the participants.
Session No. 3	2 hours (10h-12h)	Chairs, objects, newspapers, magazines, video camera and camera.	Promote group reflection; Encourage a sense of commitment; Encourage the expression of feelings; Promote concentration; Learn to deal with frustration; Explain how to animate the puppet.	Good level of participation from all elements. The proposed activity allowed participants to identify the obstacles they had experienced throughout their lives and express the emotions associated with these obstacles. This activity allowed a great sharing of remarkable experiences among the group.
Session No. 4	2 hours (10h-12h)	Puppets, tables, chairs, video camera and camera.	Promote mutual understanding; Encourage a sense of commitment; Encourage cooperation between participants; Promote interpersonal communication; To raise awareness of the importance of non-verbal communication; Promote time management.	From this session onwards, the group began to have some absences, due to health reasons, the beginning of professional and training activities.

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Session No. 5	2 hours (10h-12h)	Puppets; chairs; tables; video camera and camera.	To foster self-knowledge; Promote the ability to manage difficulties; Facilitate spontaneity and interpersonal relationships; Work on time management; Stimulate creativity.	Good level of participation in the dynamic.
Session No. 6	2 hours (10h-12h)	Objects chosen by the participants that they should bring from home; Pens and white sheets; video camera and camera, chairs, tables.	Promote group reflection; Promote personal appreciation and confidence; To encourage a sense of commitment; To empower for a better perspective of the future; To foster inter-group empathy	Good level of participation in the dynamic.
Session No. 7	2 hours (10h-12h)	Puppets, chairs, tables, video camera and camera.	To promote self-worth and confidence; To stimulate and develop non-verbal communication skills Encourage a sense of commitment; Encourage intergroup empathy; Promote group reflection.	Participants found it difficult to animate the puppet according to the emotion assigned to them as well as the rest in understanding which emotion was being pampered.
Session No. 8	2 hours (10h-12h)	Final evaluation questionnaires for participants; Pens, tables, chairs, video camera and camera.	To promote critical reflection (self and hetero); Encourage active listening; Stimulate and develop non-verbal communication skills; Encourage the sense of commitment; Promote group reflection.	Great involvement of the participants of each-sub-group in the preparation for the final presentation.
Session No. 9	2 hours (10h-12h)	Video; Photographs; Chairs; Puppets; Table; Screens; Black cloth; other materials to support the presentations.	Promote personal development; To foster interpersonal relationships; To encourage communication skills (verbal and non-verbal).	The presentation went very well, despite the participants' anxiety, in front of an audience of 25 people including the social workers accompanying them.

## **ACTIVITIES FOR EACH SESSION, OBSERVATIONS, AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES USED**

In November 2021, the project team had a meeting with social workers and together they selected the group of participants. After this selection, in December 2021, some meetings were held with the participants in small groups, where the objectives and work methodology were explained. After this explanation, those who showed interest and motivation to participate signed the consent form. At this point, their expectations for the project were, on the one hand, enthusiasm for the possibility of learning to build a puppet. On the other hand, they showed some reluctance to work on their emotions.

The activities started on the 26th January and ended on the 24th March. Nine sessions were carried out each lasting approximately 2 hours. In the first sessions, the participants created their puppets. Then, they learned how to animate them. Throughout the sessions, the participants were encouraged to share their feelings and emotions through role plays. The group was allocated into subgroups and they were invited to write a small story based on their life experiences. These stories were animated using the puppet. They also created scenarios according to their stories. The whole process ended with a public presentation.

### **3.1.3.4 Comments on the pilot implementation, useful tips about each step for practitioners who would like to recreate the practice**

The experience of this pilot implementation led us to make some considerations regarding the process of its development. First of all, a good articulation with the technical team that accompanies this target group is crucial, because it is very important to understand the individual characteristics of the participants. Secondly, it was essential to hold meetings with each of the participants to present the training and clarify any doubts that may arise. The better they understood what they were doing, the greater their level of commitment to the training could be.

It is also important to make written records of each person's reflections on their participation in the sessions throughout the training. It helps the trainers to reflect about the relevance of some activities and improve them, that is what happened during Centro Social de Soutelo's training and they recommend this practice for future training.

Another relevant point is the number of sessions to be held. At the end of the pilot implementation, the trainers concluded that, and due to the content to be worked on, mainly related to emotional skills, it would be positive for the group to extend the number of sessions. It would allow us to go deeper into some of the issues raised by some of the participants, related with their personal and family experiences, which at a certain point in their lives, were factors of emotional instability with repercussions in personal and professional lives.

The facilitators also found that some of the participants already knew each other from other working groups, which supported their involvement in the process, with higher levels of commitment in the participation in the group and the establishment of relationships. In fact, one of the positive aspects of participation in this group, emphasised by the participants, was the fact that they had a space to share and recognize their problems with people with whom they had already interacted previously, which facilitated the sharing with those they had already met.

### 3.1.3.5 Results and impact

The main results and impacts of this training are that each of the participants expressed their emotions and shared about their lives (problems and expectations). They established relationships among each other and provided emotional support to one another.

*“For me this was a moment of relaxation and conviviality with others.”*

*“I realised I’m not the only one having problems.”*

*“I have learned to be comfortable talking about myself.”*

*“In this time of war, and me being Ukrainian, the days when I was here, I forgot a little about what was happening.”*

*“I liked very much to learn how to make the puppet. I thought I couldn’t do it, but I did.”*

*“I had never had an experience like this before and I liked it very much.”*

*“Despite not knowing anyone in the group I felt very comfortable talking about myself and my feelings.”*

*“At first I thought I would have a lot of difficulties making the puppet, but then I realised it wasn’t difficult.”*

*“I really enjoyed participating and meeting new people.”*

## LEARNINGS, NEWLY GAINED EXPERIENCE AND NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE TRAINERS/FACILITATORS

The implementation of this training was a challenge for the trainers: the main content of this training is essentially based on the promotion and development of the socio-emotional skills of its participants, which is a very sensitive area for this target group.

As the sessions were being developed, facilitators felt that, in addition to contributing to the empowerment of the target group, they were also witnessing their own “growth” as professionals. It was not, however, an easy process, taking into account the dynamics implemented and the difficulty of the group in communicating and understanding the given explanations. That is the reason the sessions had to be adapted according to the group’s characteristics.

It’s also important to mention that they started with a group of twenty people, but only nine people stayed until the end of the process. The drop-outs were due to external factors, namely illness, work and entering other vocational training. One of the participants expressed that he did not feel comfortable to approach personal issues and emotions through the methods used as he was still in a process of recovery from depression.

These situations did not compromise the continuation of the training, however the facilitators needed to make some adjustments to their session plan, namely the reorganisation of the subgroups who were being prepared for the final and public presentation.

All the work was rewarding and although it took a relatively short time to implement the process, the facilitators perceived some changes, namely in the capacity of the participants to interact and help each other as well as their ability to express themselves.

The Puppetry workshop was a very inspiring process for us, because it clearly contributes to the personal growth not only of the participants, but also of the trainers who develop it. It was a training that was well designed/organised and can easily be adapted to different target groups. Therefore, this training can be tried out with other target groups, such as children and teenagers, young adults, old people, people with mental illness, physical or mental disabilities, prisoners, victims of domestic violence, among others.

### 3.1.3.6 Images, videos and multimedia



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## 3.1.4 Pilot Activity in Poland: Create a Puppet, Create Yourself

### 3.1.3.1 Implementing organisation in the partner's country: Teatr Grodzki

### 3.1.3.2 Target group

The method was practised with two groups of blind and visually impaired people (aged 30-70), both women and men. Some of them cannot see at all, but the majority had bigger or smaller visual dysfunction.

In total 20 people participated in the classes in Zdunska Wola (central Poland) and in Bielsko-Biala (southern Poland). The main aim of the

workshop activities was to explore the possibility of using puppetry art with people who have poor vision or cannot see at all. Since both, making and animating puppets seem to necessarily require sight, the goal of this experiment was to find out to what extent (if at all) such a possibility exists. The intention was to complete all three steps of the good practice implementation and in fact this turned out to be possible.

### 3.1.3.3 Implementation: Presentation in table with the following data: Name of the session; Duration; Materials; Objectives; Main results. Activities and observations are described under the table.

#### GROUP 1 – ZDUNSKA WOLA

NAME OF THE STAGE	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Puppet making	1 session (2 hours)	Brown paper, newspapers, string, scissors.	To teach participants how to build a simple paper puppet. To develop creativity, imagination and manual skills.	Puppets were created.
Puppet animation	1 session (1 hour)	Paper puppets. Tables and chairs.	To teach participants how to animate puppets. To develop creativity and manual skills. To integrate the group.	Each participant attempted to bring his/her puppet to life with help of other group members. Participants were working together, talking, getting to know each other better.
Developing stories	7 sessions (7x2hours =14 hours) + work on the scenario	Paper puppets. String, scissors, pieces of fabric, foil, glue. Tables and chairs.	To further activate participants and mobilise them for taking up new challenges. To facilitate participants` self-expression. To further integrate the group.	One of the participants, supported by the leader and the group, elaborated a scenario of a theatrical performance. The group was rehearsing and staged the play.

## GROUP 2. – BIELSKO-BIALA

NAME OF THE SESSION / STAGE	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Puppet making and animation.	2 hours	Brown paper, newspapers, string, scissors.	To develop creativity, imagination and manual skills. To create the conditions for independent construction of paper figures by the participants.	Puppets were created.
Developing stories	4 hours	Tables and chairs. Paper puppets and found objects.	To further foster creativity and artistic interests of the participants. To encourage participants to express themselves and share their thoughts and emotions with the others.	The group jointly created the outline of the story to be further developed and performed with the use of puppets.

## ACTIVITIES FOR EACH SESSION, OBSERVATIONS, AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES USED

### GROUP 1 – ZDUNSKA WOLA

During the first, introductory sessions each participant created his/her own puppet and the animation of paper figures was also practised for a little while. Then, the group worked on the scenario, following some initial ideas proposed by the leader. The general concept was to begin from the puppet characters – a few people living in their close, separate worlds and next to find a way to connect them, let them meet each other. When the final structure of the story was ready, the group organised a workshop session focused on dressing up three puppets and giving them a look of a busy businesswoman, a bowler, who recently injured his arm and a blind IT specialist. The course of actions was also planned and agreed on and an important role of presenting the characters and reporting on the story development was assigned to a narrator. Then the group started rehearsing. The whole process ended with a public presentation and open discussion with the audience.



## GROUP 2. – BIELSKO-BIALA

An alternative way of engaging blind participants in the puppetry experience was introduced during the first workshop. Instead of explaining in detail how to make the puppets, the group members were given the already existing paper figures to examine (“see”) them with their hands. Their task was to find out how the puppets have been constructed and then to try to build their own paper characters, following the inspiration which comes from the material. The question was posed: What does the paper tell you? What kind of a creature does it want to become? Some explanation on the basic rules of puppet making was also provided by the leader. For instance, it was emphasised that ties/junctions have to be strong to make the whole construction stable. With the support of people who can see, the blind participants created different characters – a warrior and various animals (birds, fish, horse/donkey). At the second stage, the outline of a puppet show was devised also through improvised actions. The puppets were placed on stage and the group of blind and not blind people experimented with their movement, developing short scenes. Thus, the ideas for the potential performance to be staged in the future appeared. The group decided to continue rehearsals and present the final result to the audience.



### 3.1.3.4 Comments on the pilot implementation, useful tips about each step for practitioners who would like to recreate the practice

Both ways of working with blind & visually impaired workshop participants on the puppet creation were effective. Even though giving precise instructions on each step of the puppet making process seemed to be easier for the participants, also the alternative way (giving them “total” freedom to build the figures) proved to be successful and rewarding. So, both methods can be recommended for use while working with this target group.

It should be emphasised that the way of leading the workshops should be adapted to the specific needs of the blind. First of all it is very important to give them detailed and precise instructions. A descriptive and visual way of explaining what exactly should be done, step by step, is necessary as a substitute for showing/demonstrating individual actions.

Help of people who can see was crucial to ensure a relaxed and effective workflow. During the workshops with both groups described above such support proved to be invaluable and in fact it is difficult to imagine proper implementation of this good practice without it. An important role of the spoken text in creating puppet shows with blind people must be stressed. For them, verbal communication with the others is the most important, and relying on just movement and visual expression of the puppets is not sufficient.

In the case of the first group in Zdunska Wola, the workshop process was concluded with the official premiere of a short puppet show titled "This is Us". The presentation, open to the public, was organised by the Municipal Public Library in their premises. Around sixty people gathered, including the Mayor of the City, the director of the local Cultural Centre, staff of the Occupational Therapy Workshop and representatives of the University of Lodz (Department of History of Art).

The show lasted for 10 minutes and was preceded by an audio description of the puppets' outlook, their characteristic features and ways of behaving. 7 actors and actresses were sitting on chairs and animating three puppets placed on small tables. There were also meaningful elements of scenography - paper skittles and a laptop on a little desk. According to the scenario created by one of the participants, a narrator was also involved, reading the text of the story. This presentation was a very important part of the whole experience for the workshop participants. First of all, they felt that their efforts and struggles led to success and resulted in art work which received appreciation and recognition in the local community. After the performance a discussion with the audience took place. The actors had a chance to speak out on their adventure with puppet theatre but also on their life as blind and visually impaired people.

### 3.1.3.5 Results and impact

The participants felt valued and capable of creative work which can be shared with others. It strengthened their self-esteem and courage to take up new and ambitious challenges. It also meant strengthening the social acceptance of the whole community of people with visual impairment.

*"Making puppets from paper and string was a new and interesting experience for me. The enormous charge of positive energy, relieving tension, was caused by the first moment when the smooth paper in my hands turned into a compact ball. All the tension eased at this point."*

*"This method of creating puppets in such a simple way is surprising. And an attempt to animate them was difficult at first, caused resistance, which however was overcome when my hand made the first movement, a gesture by the puppet."*

*"The puppet making workshops were an excellent form of integration and perfect cooperation. For me, it was also time well-spent on a new experience and meeting other people."*

*"These classes have taught me manual dexterity. When something more difficult comes to be done at home, I have such good and useful training here for new challenges."*

*"Manual work is often very difficult for blind people. But, our trainer prepared the workshop in a very accessible way and she tells us what to do all the time, so it turned out to be great fun and a very interesting experience. Because in fact, very nice puppets were made from just a few pieces of paper. Something unique, something new."*

*"I was pleasantly surprised by puppet-making. This is an interesting concept to use just string and paper from which figures of various sizes and shapes can be created. Nice atmosphere during the time with friends. It was also interesting to animate the puppets, let them walk and move their hands, feet and head. I did not expect such an art of making puppets. Now we are getting ready for the performance that will be a difficult challenge for me. But I treat this experience as a good time with puppets."*

*"I learned that one can make such puppets out of paper and even make a theatre performance with them. It will also be a new experience and a new challenge for me. By the way, it was nice meeting with good friends, with whom it was good to work together in creating the puppets. It is just having fun."*



## **LEARNINGS, NEWLY GAINED EXPERIENCE AND NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE TRAINERS/FACILITATORS**

Both workshops were a new and important experience for the trainers. It opened access to a new target group which seemed rather not achievable in the case of the use of puppetry art. However, it turned out that despite their blindness, these people could also enjoy making the puppets and animating them. This experience strengthened their self-esteem and made them feel that they belonged to the society, that they were not "worse" than anyone else.

*"In this workshop, the blind and visually impaired people were given a task theoretically beyond their capacity. But in fact, art, theatre or any other creative activity in general, incredibly develops the imagination, so this experience proved to be very valuable for people with visual impairments. They have other senses that are very well developed, so they really can do anything." (Anita Kwiatkowska, educator in the Library).*

Thanks to the Step Up project, Teatr Grodzki broadened the scope of Puppetry Art for educational and therapeutic purposes. The application of this good practice in creative work with blind and visually impaired people proved reasonable and successful. A seemingly inappropriate activity for people with visual disabilities turned out to be an effective tool in fostering their creativity and developing new skills and competencies. In particular, it is very useful for training manual skills, developing imagination, facilitating spontaneous actions and strengthening confidence in one's own ability.

Moreover, this good practice contributes to building bridges between those who are usually excluded from the mainstream of social life and the rest of society. In the puppetry workshop environment, cooperation and communication skills are practised in a natural way and working together connects people.

## **IMPACT/LEARNING FOR LOCAL ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS**

The involvement of local branches of the Polish Association of the Blind proved to be crucial for the successful implementation of pilots in both locations. Their members were the guides and advisers for the workshop leaders and gave many useful tips and information, mainly regarding communication channels and challenges connected with visual impairment.

Moreover, the Municipal Public Library in Zdunska Wola contributed a lot by hosting the workshops and the final presentation of the puppet show in their premises. Also, their expertise in working with blind people was valuable for planning and running the classes and it substantially helped the trainer to take an appropriate approach when leading the group.

### **3.1.3.6 Images, videos and multimedia**



## 3.2 RESHAPE CERAMICS IN ADULT EDUCATION IN SPAIN

### 3.2.1 Country of initial application: Portugal

#### 3.2.2.1 Country of pilot implementation: Spain

Implementing organisation in the partner's country: Espacio Rojo

#### 3.1.3.2 Target group

The pottery activity was developed with 4 groups of people:

**Group 1:** women with general learning disabilities (from 40 to 70 years old).

**Group 2:** long-term unemployed women in a situation of social vulnerability (from 30 to 50 years old).

**Group 3:** migrant women (50 to 60 years old).

**Group 4:** young migrant men and women with low economic resources (18 to 29 years old).

A total of 24 people participated in the ceramics workshop in Madrid, Spain.

The Ceramics workshop was developed over 7 months with groups I and II of female participants, where the aim was to explore the possibility of using the art of ceramics for people with and without sensory or general learning disabilities in order to foster their inclusion.

The selection of an inclusive group of women was due to the reports provided by Plena Inclusion (Full Inclusion) Federation from the Equality Women's Observatory (from The Institute of Women, an independent organisation which is attached to the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality from Spain) that highlight a double discrimination against people due to gender and disability, adding barriers that hinder the exercise of their rights, social participation, as well as access to training, employment, health and personal autonomy.

The expected impact with this group was to facilitate the development of social skills for better labour and social integration, to develop their autonomy and positive self-perception.

After assessing the positive impact of these sessions, the workshop was developed in a single session with group III of migrant women to explore the impact and learning with this vulnerable group.

As a result of this experience with the three groups mentioned above, Espacio Rojo decided to conduct a session with group IV.

This selection is due to the double vulnerability of this group: migrant and youth group to which they belong, taking into account that Spain has among the highest rates of youth unemployment in Europe.

After assessing the positive impact of these sessions, the workshop was developed in a single session with group III of migrant women to explore the impact and learning with this vulnerable group.

As a result of this experience, Espacio Rojo decided to hold a session with the following group of young men and women in order to broaden the experience of their target group.

**3.2.2.3 Implementation: Presentation in table with the following data: Name of the session; Duration; Materials; Objectives; Main results. Activities and observations are described under the table.**

**Group 1&2**

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Hand-made ceramic construction	12 (2 hours each=24 hours) + exposure work	Ceramic clay, various tools for ceramics (wooden sticks, potter's wheels...) sponges, water, rollers, ceramic kiln, a water point nearby. Tables and chairs, Wooden boards or tiles, Plastic bags, Pieces of canvas, Wooden rollers, Ceramic oven, Wooden shelves, Art books (optional), Music (optional)	To teach participants to build simple clay pieces with simple traditional techniques: slabs, coiling or "pinch" using their hands as their main tool.  To develop spatial perception; To favour the integration of the group; To broaden artistic and cultural knowledge; To develop creativity, manual skills and fine motor skills.	Ceramic pieces were created. Personal motivation and development of greater manual dexterity was increased. Greater autonomy and capacity for expression was improved.
Construction of ceramic parts with moulds	2 sessions (2 hours each = 4 hours)	Liquid clay, plaster moulds, tools for ceramics. Ceramic oven Wooden shelves Music (optional)	To teach the participants the construction of ceramic pieces "by slip casting". To learn about the tools necessary for artisanal production	Ceramic pieces with a higher quality were created and finished. Self-confidence and dexterity were increased. Planning skills in the creative process were improved.
Ceramic construction with a potter's wheel	2 sessions (2 hours each=4 hours)	Clay, electric potter's wheel, ceramic tools Tables and chairs Shelve Ceramic ovens	To teach the participants the use of the potter's wheel and its creative possibilities. To develop the participants' ability to play, to encourage personal empowerment. To get to know the professional tools in the use of ceramics and their mass production.	Pieces were made on the potter's wheel. Risk-taking and self-improvement took place. Bonding and mutual help arose. Communication and emotional expression were increased. Relaxation and concentration of the group.
Decorating	4 sessions (2 hours each = 8 hours)	Glazes, engobes and ceramic pigments, stencils with designs and textures, brushes.	To teach participants about ceramic decoration, its technical procedure and creative possibilities. To know and apply the design of stencils in ceramic decoration.	Decoration of ceramic pieces. Greater knowledge gained of colour and its technical and expressive possibilities in ceramic decoration. Greater dexterity and creativity.

### Group 3

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Handmade ceramic construction	1 session (2 hours each = 4 hours)	Ceramic clay, various tools for ceramics (wooden sticks, potter's wheels...) sponges, water, rollers, ceramic kiln, a water point nearby. Tables and chairs, Wooden boards or tiles, Plastic bags, Newspaper papers, Ceramic kiln, Wooden shelves	To teach participants how to build simple clay pieces with churro techniques using their hands as their main tool. To develop creativity. To broaden artistic and cultural development.	Creation of ceramic pieces. Development of creativity (each participant applies variables to his piece which brings originality). Communication and personal expression improved. Increased interest in art.
Handmade ceramic construction	1 session (3 hours)	Ceramic clay, various tools for ceramics (wooden sticks, pans), sponges, water, rollers, ceramic kiln, a water point nearby. Sponges, water, rollers, ceramic kiln, a water point nearby. Tables and chairs. Wooden boards or tiles. Plastic bags. Canvas cloths. Newspaper papers. Ceramic kiln. Wooden shelves.	To teach participants how to build simple clay pieces with slab techniques using their hands as their main tool. To develop creativity. To encourage interest in manual artistic techniques.	Creation of original and unique pieces. Development of identity and representation in the pieces strengthened. Creation of bonds, cooperation and mutual help arose. Motivation to learn increased.

### Group 4

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Handmade ceramic construction	1 session (3 hours)	Ceramic clay, various tools for ceramics (wooden sticks, pans), sponges, water, rollers, ceramic kiln, a water point nearby. Sponges, water, rollers, ceramic kiln, a water point nearby. Tables and chairs. Wooden boards or tiles. Plastic bags. Canvas cloths. Newspaper papers. Ceramic kiln. Wooden shelves.	To teach participants how to build simple clay pieces with slab techniques using their hands as their main tool. To develop creativity. To encourage interest in manual artistic techniques.	Creation of original and unique pieces Development of identity and representation in the pieces. Creation of bonds, cooperation and mutual help increased. Motivation to learn improved.

## ACTIVITIES FOR EACH SESSION, OBSERVATIONS AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES USED

It is important to emphasise that the **trainer knew the technique** to be used and gave appropriate **technical instructions**, with clear and precise explanations repeating each step during the process of construction of the piece, and also gave expressive freedom to the group so that each person contributed with the variables of form and originality that identified him/her.

**Groups 1&2:** During the first sessions each participant kneaded the clay, created their own ceramic piece with the different manual techniques used in each case, following the trainer's instructions.

The pieces created in each session were left to dry on shelves wrapped individually with bags to maintain humidity and continue working the clay in the following sessions. More complex techniques such as the use of moulds and the potter's wheel were then practised. After a few days, when the pieces were dry enough, the trainer or specialist technician fired all the pieces in a ceramic kiln, after which each participant chose and applied colour and glaze to his or her piece. Again, the pieces were fired in a kiln designed for this purpose.



The external resource used in all the sessions was a selection of music (playlist) played on a speaker. In session 12, the pilot group, volunteers, and people with general learning disabilities from the collaborating association and educators had a guided-visit at the Prado Museum as part of the educational programme "Inclusive Prado" to address gender through art. It also offered a wide workshop classroom for group participation and dialogue. After this visit, sculptures with feminine forms were made in the Espacio Rojo's workshop.

For the decoration of some of the ceramic pieces, the participants browsed and commented on a book with the ceramic works of Pablo Picasso, among others.

**Group 3:** During this session the participants were introduced to the ceramics workshop, with an informal chat, each participant commented on their experience with some manual artistic activity and what their motivation in participating was. Participants then made pieces using the churro technique with the application of red clay. The external resource used was music, as well as proposals of themes and ideas of interest to encourage bonding and connections between the participants.



**Group 4:** In this session the group was introduced to the main tools with the use of ceramics. The intention was to experiment with the use of two different clays to generate pieces of two colours without applying subsequent decoration. In this session the participants used the slab technique. The external resources used were images and ceramic pieces in which the same technique had been used.



### **3.2.2.4 Comments on the pilot implementation, useful tips about each step for practitioners who would like to recreate the practice**

The manual techniques used with the different target groups were effective and achieved a positive impact. The results were **unique and original pieces**.

It should be noted that the way to conduct the sessions should be adapted to adults with general learning disabilities, it is important to give detailed and descriptive instructions of the steps to follow, keep the materials to be used in order, as well as **encourage the participants' efforts and achievements with positive reinforcement** and set achievable goals for each participant.

The **inclusion of people in the process who do not have learning disabilities** is very important to ensure a smooth and effective group work environment.

During the sessions, **bonds of mutual help, learning and care** were established, bridging differences, dismantling acquired prejudices and guaranteeing true inclusion through artistic cultural practice.

### **3.2.2.5 Results and impact**

The commitment, communication and participation of all parties involved in the project is noteworthy, since as the sessions developed, significant changes could be observed in the participants: greater autonomy and confidence of people with disabilities and increased motivation to continue learning. It is also worth mentioning that the cooperation and mutual support increased in the group of women, which helped them feel safe.

*"I was looking forward to coming to the workshop to meet the group. I missed it because my life is difficult and here, I am part of something important and beautiful."*

*"This workshop has helped me to enhance my creativity, to improve my mood, to share and learn from the reality of other women, in a friendly and caring environment."*

*"The workshop has helped me to awaken my creative capacity, achieving greater self-confidence, I have learned from my classmates and teacher, and above all it has helped me to get out of my depression."*

*"On a psychological level I have felt less sadness and more enthusiasm, motivation and improvement of my self-esteem. On a social level it has allowed me to interact with very interesting people and has helped me to feel less lonely."*

## LEARNINGS, NEWLY GAINED EXPERIENCE AND NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE TRAINERS/FACILITATORS

All the pilot experiences with the different target groups were truly enriching. However, the main group where attendance was maintained over a long period of time had a significant impact on the participants as well as on the organisations involved.

The great experience gained for the trainers is that ceramics, despite being a tool that requires technical knowledge and appropriate tools, can be carried out with great success in the vulnerable population, even bringing significant benefits for young people by highlighting innovation and entrepreneurship, thus incorporating new technologies, design and digital tools.

### 3.1.3.6 Images, videos and multimedia



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## IMPACT AND LEARNING FOR LOCAL PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

The participation of the Afanias Association proved to be crucial in ensuring the success of the pilot experience. Its members advised the trainers, provided useful information about each participant and the challenges related to their general learning disabilities.

Furthermore, the cultural space in which the Espacio Rojo's headquarters is located, where it developed its workshops and held the final exhibition, also brought a lot of value and social impact to the project. Espacio Rojo's headquarters is located in the heart of the district of Carabanchel, in Madrid, adjacent to the River Manzanares which naturally separates the centre of Madrid from the south of the city. It should be noted that the district of Carabanchel is characterised by: low annual income, lack of cultural and social facilities, diverse and multicultural population, 70% of the population are elderly people.

In addition, the FRAVM Regional Federation of Neighbourhood Associations of Madrid (FRAVM Federación Regional de Asociaciones Vecinales de Madrid) with one of its local members such as Alto San Isidro Neighbourhood Association (Asociación Vecinal Alto San Isidro) facilitated the participation of other vulnerable groups living nearby the neighbourhood.

Espacio Rojo also counted on the social services of the Madrid City Council for dissemination, support and communication throughout the implementation of the project, as well as in the follow-up to the activities.

# 3.3 RADIO BROADCAST PRODUCTION IN ADULT EDUCATION IN GREECE

## 3.3.1 Country of pilot implementation: Greece

### 3.3.2.1 Implementing organisation in the partner's country: Equal Society

### 3.3.2.2 Target group

Equal Society decided to pilot the selected good practice with the participation of 10 people who had either recently been homeless or were homeless at the time of the pilot and were residing in homeless shelters. The participants were of various ages and could be grouped in two categories: a) those who were participating in the theatrical group of homeless people “Walkabout” which was established by Equal Society in 2017 and b) people who were participating in Equal Society’s activities for the first time.

The selection of homeless people as the target group for this pilot activity was based primarily on two factors:

**a)** the benefits that the participants could potentially have via their engagement in the production of podcasts. According to the relevant bibliography, homeless people are often characterised by mainstream society as “crazy”, drug-addicts, trouble makers, beggars, etc. This stigmatisation and the subsequent lack of social networks and relations have a clear impact on the well-being of homeless people and their interaction with other people, depriving them of social opportunities and worsening their social status and social exclusion.

To this end, the pilot activity was expected to contribute to the development of social relations among the participants, the improvement of their self-confidence, the enhancement/development of their communication skills, including their public speaking skills, as well as the acquisition of new skills which were related to the production of the podcasts.

**b)** since a podcast can reach an extremely large number of listeners, the dissemination of the podcasts could contribute to public awareness regarding the distorted image and narrative that the mainstream society has about homeless people; listeners could better understand the reasons that can lead someone to become homeless, the difficulties they encounter and the support they need.

**3.3.2.3 Implementation: Presentation in table with the following data: Name of the session; Duration; Materials; Objectives; Main results. Activities and observations are described under the table.**

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
First meeting with the participants & introduction to the pilot activity	2 hours	N/A	To introduce the participants to the Step Up project and the pilot activity	Participants were informed about the Step Up project, its aims as well as the pilot activity (objective, content and expected results)
Introduction to the radio equipment and discussion on the podcasts	4 hours	Radio equipment	To introduce the participants to the equipment that is necessary for the recording and production of a podcast; To introduce the participants to podcasts.	Participants learnt about the equipment that is necessary for recording podcasts, as well as the process for producing podcasts.
First, second and third training on the use of the radio equipment	9 hours	Radio equipment	To provide training to the participants as to the use of the equipment for the production of podcasts.	Participants learnt how to use the equipment for recording their podcasts.
Preparation of the first recording	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pen and paper	To identify the topic of the podcast; To discuss and finalise the script of the podcast; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recording.	Participants agreed on the topic and the script of the podcast; allocated roles and rehearsed the recording.
Recording No. 1: discussion on homelessness	120 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issue of homelessness.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion of the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of the recording was made.
Preparation of the second recording	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pen and paper	To identify the topic of the podcast; To discuss and finalise the script of the podcast; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recording.	Participants agreed on the topic and the script of the podcast; allocated roles and rehearsed the recording.

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Recording No. 2: discussion on homelessness	120 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issue of homelessness.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Preparation of the third and fourth recordings	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pens and paper	To identify the topics of the podcast; To discuss and finalise the scripts of the podcasts; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recordings.	Participants agreed on the topics and the scripts of the podcasts; allocated roles and rehearsed the recordings.
Recording No. 3: discussion on homelessness	120 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issue of homelessness and personal experiences of the participants.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Recording No. 4: education and homelessness	120 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issues of education and homelessness.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Preparation of the fifth, sixth and seventh recordings	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pens and paper	To identify the topics of the podcast; To discuss and finalise the scripts of the podcasts; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recordings.	Participants agreed on the topics and the scripts of the podcasts; Allocated roles and made rehearsals of the recordings.
Recording No. 5: daily activity for psychological improvement and strengthening	40 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast. The podcast focuses on the daily activity of the participant which improves her psychological well-being.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Recording No. 6: homelessness and unemployment	40 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issues of homelessness and unemployment.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Recording No. 7: personal stories of homeless people	30 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on personal stories of homeless people.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Preparation of the eighth recording	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pens and paper	To identify the topic of the podcast; To discuss on and finalise the script of the podcast; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recording.	Participants agreed on the topic and the script of the podcast; allocated roles and rehearsed the recording.
Recording No. 8: homelessness	90 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issue of homelessness.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Preparation of the ninth recording	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pens and paper	To identify the topic of the podcast; To discuss on and finalise the script of the podcast; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recording.	Participants agreed on the topic and the script of the podcast; allocated roles and rehearsed the recording.
Recording No. 9: homelessness and relationships	120 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issues of homelessness and social relationships.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Preparation of the tenth recording	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pens and paper	To identify the topic of the podcast; To discuss and finalise the script of the podcast; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recording.	Participants agreed on the topic and the script of the podcast; allocated roles and rehearsed the recording.
Recording No.10: homelessness and relationships	40 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issues of homelessness and social relationships.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.

NAME OF THE SESSION	DURATION	MATERIALS	OBJECTIVES	MAIN RESULTS
Preparation of the eleventh recording	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pens and paper	To identify the topic of the podcast; To discuss and finalise the script of the podcast; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recording.	Participants agreed on the topic and the script of the podcast; allocated roles and rehearsed the recording
Recording No. 11: homelessness and relationships	40 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issues of homelessness and social relationships	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Preparation of the twelfth recording	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pens and paper	To identify the topic of the podcast; To discuss and finalise the script of the podcast; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recording.	Participants agreed on the topic and the script of the podcast; allocated roles and rehearsed the recording.
Recording No. 12: relationships within the homeless shelters	30 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the issue of the relationships that are developed within the homeless shelters.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Preparation of the thirteenth and fourteenth recording	3 days (3 hours per day)	Pens and paper	To identify the topic of the podcast; To discuss and finalise the script of the podcast; Allocate roles; Rehearse the recording.	Participants agreed on the topic and the script of the podcast; allocated roles and rehearsed the recording.
Recording No. 13: a day in the street	30 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on a day in the street.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.
Recording No. 14: Dramatherapy	40 minutes	Radio equipment	To make the recording of the podcast which focuses on the topic of dramatherapy.	Recording of the podcast was achieved. Discussion with the participants, the trainer and the project team after the end of recording.

## ACTIVITIES FOR EACH SESSION, OBSERVATIONS AND EXTERNAL RESOURCES USED

On the 4th of October 2021 the project team organised the first meeting with the participants. During this meeting, the project team introduced the STEP UP project and the pilot activity to the participants. Over the next month and a half, the project team discussed the details with the participants about how the pilot activity would be implemented and provided training on the use of the radio equipment. The training included three sessions with a total duration of 9 hours. During the training, the participants in collaboration with the project team of Equal Society decided that the recordings would have the form of discussions between the participants about issues that they were concerned about, as well as interviews with homeless people talking about issues that could be useful for other homeless people and members of various vulnerable groups. It was also agreed that the recordings would lead to the production of podcasts that would be available for streaming on various web platforms.



Since the 19th of November 2021, the project team and the participants have produced 14 podcasts, the duration of which varies depending on the number of participants in each podcast. The methodology applied throughout the whole pilot implementation was the same for the production of each podcast and can be summarised as follows:

- **Identifying and selecting the topic of the podcast:** The topics were drawn mainly from the personal experiences and interests of the participants. However, this process was challenging since many of the participants experienced situations they did not want to share with the wider public and thus a common agreement on the issue had to be achieved.
- **Preparation of the script of the podcast:** The preparation of the script of the podcast was the activity which required most time. Following the agreement on the topic, the participants started working on the script by identifying the subsections of the topic and the transformation of these into questions. Then, the questions were organised so as to prepare the structure of the script. The structure of the script was distributed to all participants and each one started thinking about the answers. All answers were recorded in notes and corrections were made with the contribution of all participants, in order to produce an advanced draft of the script. Subsequently, the participants rehearsed the recording, discussed the topic again, and made additions and changes where needed. Once the script was finalised, the participants rehearsed the podcast several times before the actual recording took place.
- **Allocation of roles:** Following the finalisation of the script, the participants discussed and agreed on the division of roles, i. e. who would participate in the recording and which part of the script they would undertake.

- **Discussion about the recording:** After the end of the recording, the participants, along with the trainer and the project team discussed the recording and in particular what went well and what did not. This was particularly important for the participants in order to be aware of potential weaknesses during the recording and what aspects they needed to improve. In addition, the positive aspects of the recording were also highlighted during the discussion so as to use them as a guide for the next recording.

Overall, the initial recordings had a duration of up to two hours. However, the final podcasts have a duration of up to 45 minutes, following the editing of the recordings.

The following topics were chosen and developed by the participants:

- discussion on homelessness;
- education and homelessness;
- daily activity for psychological improvement and strengthening;
- homelessness and unemployment;
- personal stories of homeless people;
- homelessness and relationships;
- relationships within the homeless shelters;
- A day in the street;
- Dramatherapy

### **3.3.2.4 Comments on the pilot implementation, useful tips about each step for practitioners who would like to recreate the practice**

The pilot implementation of the selected good practice in Greece showed that the devotion of the participants and the trainer as well as the smooth cooperation between everyone is a key aspect for the successful implementation of the activity. To this end, the preparation of the recordings and the recordings needed to be made in a calm atmosphere, which facilitated not only the discussions but also the effective rehearsals and the recordings. A calm environment also allows more efficient discussions on sensitive issues or topics, thus impacting the mood of the participants, which is another issue that one needs to consider during the preparation stage of a recording. If a member of the group is not focused during the preparation, then it could result in disorganisation of the other members and even bring tension to the group. In this respect, the role of the trainer is crucial for ensuring an environment, which facilitates the process of preparation. Such an environment should make the participants feel creative, safe and protected, and each time, the trainer must encourage and support them. Participants who are not progressing or are progressing at a slower pace than the rest of the group will require the trainer to provide additional support.

Moreover, the topics that are chosen must be agreed by all participants as this will motivate the participants and allow everyone to express themselves more freely and impactfully. Topics that are not relevant to the interests of all members should be avoided in this respect as it could lead to a limited participation of some of the group members.

### 3.3.2.5 Results and impact

The evaluation of the activity by the participants showed that overall the activity was successful. One significant factor which contributed to this was that the topics and the scripts were developed by the participants themselves, while the participants were also in charge of the recordings. This clearly led to a higher level of commitment and interest in actively engaging in the whole process. However, the motivation for participating in the activity was not the same for everyone: some participated because they were curious; others because of their affection for radio in general; while others wanted to experience something new and discover how the process of making podcasts works.

Most of the participants found the training helpful and well organised, even though they would have preferred to have more time to get prepared for each recording, which was not always possible because of the demands of their everyday lives. As far as the topics are concerned, it was not easy for all of the participants to talk about homelessness, because it is not just an abstract social issue, but refers to their personal situation and it was sometimes hard for them to speak publicly about their personal difficulties and emotions. However, for the participants, these sessions were also an opportunity to reduce the stigma and prejudice that homeless people face and raise public awareness to change the social perception of this group and create new narratives. Some of them felt that they could raise their voice and express their thoughts, and that they never before had the opportunity to communicate as widely.

The main benefits that they referred to about the whole process concern: the increase of self-confidence; the attainment of better self-expression and better communication skills; and the management of stress while talking to the public. In addition, getting involved in the production of podcasts promoted a more efficient organisation of their thoughts and speech, especially for those who otherwise found it difficult to express themselves in a comprehensible and coherent way.

Furthermore, most of the participants were convinced that the production of podcasts was a very creative process. As a result, they got in touch with their creativity and their desire to continue engaging in this activity. Finally, they felt useful and productive, which enhanced their motivation to step up for their own empowerment and the pursuit of new opportunities in life.

*“The fact that I believe in myself and my skills more than before is very important.”*

*“My self confidence and self-esteem have increased and I feel more creative now than before the activity.”*

*“I find it easier to discuss with other people and feel more confident to share my thoughts and opinions, which was not something I was used to.”*

*“I was in a better mood after every session and recording.”*

*“I learned to control the tonality of my voice and improve my expression. I managed to adjust my speech to an invisible audience. I also had the chance to contribute to society by discussing social issues.”*

*“The learning process was useful and I had the chance to get familiarised with the different steps and processes of the activity, like the preparation and the active participation in the recordings.”*

*“I feel more creative and I am looking forward to the next recording.”*

*“I can better manage my voice and expression. I speak more steadily and fluently. I also had the chance to improve my communication skills and express my emotions and opinion in a more open way.”*

*“The most important change is at the level of self-expression and communication.”*

*“The whole experience was very interesting and rich.”*

*“I wish I could devote more time so that I can participate in more recordings.”*

*“I am happy with the discussions for agreeing on the topic of the recordings. We organised them very well.”*

## LEARNINGS, NEWLY GAINED EXPERIENCE AND NEW CHALLENGES FOR THE TRAINERS/FACILITATORS

The implementation of the pilot activity in Greece has been a new and challenging experience for the trainer in Greece. Despite her personal experience working with homeless people, in the context of her participation in the organisation’s activities and the support provided by the Director of the theatre group of homeless people “Walkabout” it is noted that it was her first time engaging in the production of podcasts. This in practice meant that the activity was an educational one for both the trainer and the participants. Despite the fact that the trainer devoted significant time to learning about the implementation of the new activity, there were aspects that had to be dealt with during the pilot implementation process in close collaboration with the participants.

Yet, as stated after the end of the activity, the experience was beautiful and the project team would do it again right from the beginning. The collaboration with the participants, despite the difficulties encountered throughout the activity, was precious and led to a better understanding and cooperation among all those who participated in the preparation and production of the podcasts. The fact that these podcasts will be published was also very important with regard to the feeling of contributing not only to the improvement of the skills of the participants but also to the sensitization of the wider public on issues related to homelessness.

### 3.3.2.6 Images, videos and multimedia



# 4. TRANSFERABILITY POTENTIAL AND CONCLUSIONS

## 4.1 MOST IMPORTANT RESULTS OF PUPPETRY, CERAMICS AND RADIO PRODUCTION IN ADULT EDUCATION

The **Puppetry workshops in Hungary** were intended to improve the **self-awareness and reflection skills** of the participants, which are key for personal development and the development of soft skills. In some cases **participants were successfully engaged on both cognitive and emotional levels**, and could find a **focused question** that supported their reflective processes. In these sessions **the experience went beyond having fun and simple skill-building, and the group could reach a higher level of meeting with themselves and with each other**. In the cases when the structure of the workshops was cyclical, when a safe space was consciously created for all, when the facilitators found a way to activate participants, **experiential learning and flow experiences happened** more naturally.

During the **Puppetry workshops in Turkey** the team experienced memorable and valuable moments and shared the joy with the participants when playing games, and creating and personalising their puppets. **Facilitators gained confirmation in their belief that art was a very strong tool** and could be easily applied for the benefit of vulnerable participants in a life-long learning process.

*“Having art in our lives and trying to do our best to **improve the social well-being** of our community helps us to look at the future with hope.”*

Moreover, the facilitators stated that they wish to have the chance to fully experience the workshop techniques and artistic tools that were used in the pilot activity by organising a more detailed and longer trainers’ training. They expressed that it would be a more productive and efficient process.

The successful pilot experience of **Puppetry in Poland** has been shared by Teatr Grodzki with a wide community of blind and visually impaired people and their tutors & supporters across Poland. The further dissemination of this experiment’s findings will be continued thanks to the **newly established cooperation with the Polish Association of the Blind** which has a wide access to professionals active in various fields (art, education, social inclusion).

The stimulating **pilot implementation in Portugal**, as well incorporating Puppetry among other non-formal education methods, **facilitated changes in the participants’ attitudes and behaviour, such as increased motivation and commitment**, which are two fundamental goals for any project aiming for better social inclusion of vulnerable groups. **Art was an important driving force in establishing and strengthening interpersonal relationships** in the group of marginalised adults, furthering social cohesion and coexistence.

The pilot implementation of Ceramic workshops demonstrated the importance of having a large number of regular sessions for this activity. The production of ceramics is a slow process. This, in addition to an inclusive group experience, results in the benefits that are established through the personal relationships between the participants. This in turn has positive effects on the technical-artistic result of the ceramic work as well as in the development of personal and social skills of the participating group. Maintaining a stable working group that has a common objective outside conventional social welfare spaces, such as in artistic and creative work spaces, achieves the active involvement of vulnerable groups through which impactful and tangible results are achieved.

The pilot implementation of Radio-making in Greece showed that regardless of the level of difficulty of the activity, by committing substantial time to the preparatory steps and adopting a participatory approach, it was possible to actively engage the participants in the production of the activity's outputs, and thus achieve tangible results. Through creating impactful programmes, participants also improve their technical and soft-skills. Indeed, radio is a rather challenging activity in terms of the time, preparation and cooperation that are required from participants. The provision of support for overcoming communication difficulties, limited self-confidence and expression of themselves is also crucial. Yet, the satisfaction that the participants feel as a result of the outputs produced, is immeasurable and thus any organisation working with homeless people or any other vulnerable group should consider investing in this activity.

## 4.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADULT EDUCATION PROVIDERS FOR TRANSFERRING THE STEP UP PROJECT'S RESULTS

The Puppetry tool is transferable to similar contexts, for vulnerable adults, or even youth groups. Professionals who would like to work with and through this practice shall know their target group well, and conduct a needs analysis in the group, if possible, non-formally and imaginatively. Creative practitioners will find alternative solutions for structuring the work and supporting individual and group progress. Artists, including theatre practitioners may find it useful to team up with non-formal education specialists, psychologists or social workers to plan and implement an innovative and impactful process. Facilitators who wish to transfer the learning of the Step Up project may wish to take time for the preparation of the activities, including conscious decisions about the balance between artistic creation and analytic reflection in the group, also taking into account what participants are comfortable with, and what activities are usual or familiar for them. Partners with various skills in Arts and Education practices agreed that the method was easy to follow from the descriptions and videos shared, and the materials were easy to find. Further ideas include the use of recycled papers or newspapers, instead of buying huge amounts of wrapping paper, as extensive paper production impacts the environmental footprints.

The process of Ceramic workshops can potentially be transferred by all organisations and has considerable long-term benefits. It is important to consider several aspects: it requires adequate technical staff to carry it out and a considerable dedication of time for the preparation of the material, as well as the care of the pieces throughout the whole process.

Ceramics requires, especially in its initial phase, a high economic cost allocated for this purpose: the acquisition of the ceramic kiln, the appropriate tools and a safe space to work with the participants.

However, considering the impact and benefits on adult education for vulnerable groups, the investment is recommended. Evidence demonstrates the potential value of art in promoting physical and mental health.

**The Radio Production activity** piloted could be replicated in various socioeconomic environments and be implemented with the participation of different vulnerable groups. Taking into account the results of the pilot implementation of the activity in Greece, it is recommended to all organisations which are willing to devote a significant amount of time working with their target group on the production of podcasts. This is mainly due to the significant time needed for the preparation of both the participants and the podcasts (selection of the topic, preparation of the script, division of roles among the participants, recording and production of the podcast). The allocation of money for buying the necessary equipment is another factor that needs to be taken into account. Yet, despite the cost, the impact of the activity on both the target group and the implementing organisation is very important and thus organisations working with vulnerable groups are encouraged to invest in this activity.

## 4.3 ASSESSMENT OF THE TRANSFERABILITY OF THE PILOTED GOODPRACTICES.

### CAN THESE PRACTICES BE REPLICATED IN DIFFERENT SOCIOECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTS OR WITH DIFFERENT TARGET GROUPS AND HOW?

The pilot implementation activities clearly showed that the chosen practices are transferable to different socioeconomic contexts and with different target groups. It was most clear in the case of the puppetry method, since it has been implemented in four significantly different countries and with 7 different target groups. Portugal, Hungary, Turkey and Poland vary significantly geographically, economically and socially. A group of elderly, a group of psychiatric patients and a social income beneficiary group have different needs, yet the method proved to work well in all of these contexts. All these groups could find their place in the puppetry process and the participants could gather important life lessons from it. The ceramics method was tried with 3 different target groups; people with disabilities, people with psychiatric challenges and people who come from migratory backgrounds – migrant women (50 to 60 years old) and young migrant men and women with low economic resources (18 to 29 years old) – could equally grow through the process. The radio project was implemented in a new socioeconomic environment, homeless people joined sessions to use the medium of radio (in the form of podcasts) and the process proved to be just as beneficial to them as to the prison inmates before. All three practices start with the training of the facilitators and the participants. The practice involves the passing of know-how before stepping into the role of creators. This is an important aspect of transferability, because it enables almost any type of vulnerable group to become participants and active agents of change.

The assessment of the target groups' needs is of key importance. If the practitioner is not experienced in working with a given target group it is extremely important to partner with other practitioners/organisations who have the necessary experience. In Spain, Espacio Rojo's partner organisation shared experience about the chosen group and facilitated effective collaboration while in Portugal CSS and in Greece Equal Society employed people who already were experts of the chosen target groups. In Hungary all the pilots were accompanied by experts who work with the participants on a daily basis, while in Poland Teatr Grodzky cooperated with the national institution of blind and visually impaired. In Turkey, Utopia worked hand in hand with an institution for elderly people. The extra heads and hands offered significant insights and support during the implementation. The members of the network brought the practice and the experts helped shape the methodology for the target groups.

When a process begins the practitioners should be attentive and responsive to the needs of the participants. During the implementation, preparation was key but the ability to improvise was nearly as important. In Portugal one of the participants wanted to share a personal story of their lives. So the final performance contained a scene in which this participant performed their own motorcycle accident. In Poland one of the participants said that the paper felt like it had an animal in it. So the facilitators helped participants to build an animal instead of a person as the practice would normally dictate. At the beginning of the 6-session process in Hungary there were no initial plans to hold a performance at the end. The facilitators and the expert from the institution revised the process from session to session, finally deciding to showcase the work to other members of the association with great success. As for the podcast, the entire showcase of the podcast channel was devised by the participants so the facilitators would have to organise everything around these first decisions.

Despite the difficulties encountered during the implementation of the pilots, the majority of the participants expressed their satisfaction with their involvement in these activities. Self-confidence, self-expression, teamwork and the chance to share emotions and personal stories were reported as some of the most important aspects of the Step Up pilot activity in all 6 countries.

## 4.4 RECOMMENDATIONS ON POTENTIAL ADAPTATIONS

To conclude the pilots, the method of implementing the good practices boils down to a simple "instruction":

*"Find the core activity and build your process around your target group."*

In these three cases the core activities were as follows:

**Puppetry:** Create theatrical paper puppets. Explore the world through these puppets.

**Ceramics:** Give the technique of ceramic art to vulnerable people.

**Radio:** Create a platform for a vulnerable group to cast their voice.

There are some technical requirements for each practice which are detailed in the descriptions. For those who would like to recreate any of the aforementioned practices the Step Up project partners produced a Manual which offers tips and guidance on how to design and implement cultural and artistic activities with the participation of the vulnerable groups.

## RADIO:

There are two major factors that can be changed in this practice: the target group and the platform. In the original practice the platform was radio. And the voices of the creators reached their peers. It could be interesting to try this method in circumstances similar to a prison, so that the voice of the vulnerable group could reach their peers, such as long-term psychiatric institutions; people with special needs who live in a big institution; underprivileged schools; juvenile prisons. In any place where a vulnerable group does not have a strong voice, and a channel through which they can communicate with each other and learn from each other, this practice could serve better social inclusion. In the Step Up pilot implementation it was a great strength that a vulnerable group could address the broader public which is also an important possibility regarding this practice. As the platform was changed from radio to podcast, the medium of the practice can be varied freely. Possible options for platforms: youtube channel, instagram feed, newspaper (print or online), blog, tumblr, reddit. These platforms can be learned easily and can give voice to any group. Naturally there is a lot of noise on social media platforms from which it is not easy to Step up and be heard, but continuity and quality guarantee an audience.



## CERAMICS:

Ceramics, like puppetry, have a clear advantage of being very accessible. Any vulnerable group can learn the basics of this unique art form. Learning the techniques and creating tangible outcomes and even useful everyday objects offers a chance for art to enter the creator's life more deeply and more significantly. Art created this way can become part of our lives and everyday habits. The meaning created through these processes can be "stored" in the objects of art themselves.

One of the important challenges of this practice is what to do with the objects created in the process. One way is to monetize it (as in the original practice). This also gives a chance to create revenue for the creators. It can be used to open the process of creation to the wider public. The objects can be vessels for conveying messages from vulnerable groups. This can manifest in many forms. Pop up art stalls, open exhibitions, performances in which ceramic art is created in front of an audience or any other form an imaginative reader can think of.



## PUPPETRY:

During the different implementation processes, this practice proved to be absolutely flexible and transferable to any target group without losing its essence. The base is that all participants create a paper puppet with set instructions. This means that any differences between the puppets arise from the personality of the creator. Participants are engaged in all tasks, and construct a world with their fantasies that are drawn from their own realities. The only limits to the variability of this practice are the limits of the practitioners' imagination. What lies ahead for this practice is to mine the possibilities it can give to psychology and psychiatric work. It is possible to use the tool for diagnosis in psychiatric care. It is also worth exploring how it could be used in sociotherapy. This tool is theatrical, which means that the goal of the process could be the creation and showcasing of a theatre play or performance. Community theatre or youth theatre would be a great medium to explore the theatrical possibilities of the tool with vulnerable groups. It is worth thinking about varying the material from which the puppet is created. The selection of material can emphasise different characteristics of the puppets and offers a variety of challenges to the participant, and could also possibly raise awareness of environmental issues.



# THE CONSORTIUM

The creation of this document would not have been possible without the good work and commitment of the partners of the Step Up Project.

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