

# DESIGNING SOCIAL ACTIONS

## GUIDELINE





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## INTRODUCTION

Since the start of the COVID emergency, European societies have been struggling with the uncertain situation between lockdown and normality. This situation has particularly affected the most marginalized groups in society. That is why the project CONTINUE was created. It was a new experience for all the countries and it has revealed common issues.

After gathering young people's stories through community reporting, we can state that young people in all countries have faced various difficulties, along with positive changes, in their lives. One of the main challenges for the youth was the lack of communication. Even though younger generations know how to use technologies, virtual communication cannot replace real-life conversations and the possibility of socializing. Keeping in touch with others helps young people to sustain their motivation over a long time. During the pandemic, schools switched to online teaching, and for students, it was challenging to stay motivated and focused on their studies. They said that their life became "boring and monotonous", also stating that, "it was very easy to disappear from online classes, just by clicking one of the buttons".

Among the challenges listed above, the time that people spent with their families increased due to the national lockdowns worldwide. This situation brought positive and, unfortunately, negative changes into the lives of all families. It was a chance to get closer to family members and create stronger bonds within the family, but also, some family dynamics became more uncomfortable during the lockdown period.

The closeness affected the mental health of young people. Some young people mentioned in their video stories that their mental health worsened, saying for example that "it definitely took a downward spiral, I was not happy at all".

Despite all the negative effects, some people are thankful for the positive changes in their lives due to Covid-19. The increased amount of free time gave them the opportunity to find where they want to be, what they want to do, and they had the chance to find new opportunities while adapting to the online world. It shows that no matter what kind of circumstances you are in, you can always do way more than you think, if you find the motivation to change your life into what you want it to be.

For a better understanding of the effects of Covid-19 on young people, watch these short videos in which they share their experiences on how the pandemic changed their lives. The video materials are available here: <https://communityreporter.net/continue>.

The CONTINUE project aims to support young people suffering from social exclusion in tackling the specific challenges in post-COVID times of staying connected and integrated into European communities. CONTINUE is helping young people living on the margins and the youth workers who support them.

There are three main fields of needs to be covered by the project:

- The need to better understand the problems faced by youth as a result of COVID-19;
- The need to find connection to their communities, institutions and policies;
- The need for digital skills and capacities to assist their social inclusion.

The project directly involves young people with migrant and other marginalised backgrounds to enhance interaction at individual, community, and pan-European levels. The activities of the project include different methods to achieve the it's aim.

### **Methods applied in the project**

The CONTINUE project is based on non-formal education methods. Non-formal education is open to any age, origin and personal interest. It is a voluntary type of education, which offers no degree, but the learning experience itself. The main idea of non-formal education is experiential learning, which is an engaged learning process. The students "learn by doing". One of the methods that have been used in this project is called Community Reporting. It comprises three different parts: gathering, curating and mobilizing stories.

Why do stories matter to us? There are different types of knowledge such as practical know-how, theoretical expertise and experiential understanding.

Experiential knowledge focuses on what people can learn from their own and others' experiences. As a result, we can gain a better understanding of people's feelings, how they handle, interpret and respond to specific situations and what is important in their lives.

The outcome of the project CONTINUE will be, among others, local social actions implemented by the youth.

### **But what is a social action exactly?**

"Social action projects go beyond volunteering and service-learning, where people help each other in need and learn about social issues in local and global communities." (*American Youth Leadership Program, World Savvy*).

A social action project is a multi-step process in which youth address an issue they care about, learn about it and generate potential solutions, then take action to create positive change on this issue. We distinguish between two types of social actions, indirect and direct. We are talking about direct social action in cases when the action is designed to influence decision-makers. In contrast, indirect social action is addressing the problem and effecting a positive change (*Social action projects - make a difference, 2010*).

### **Why is it important to involve youth in social actions?**

These actions provide great opportunities to acquire important abilities and dispositions. It helps increase their understanding of curriculum content, enhance their sense of personal and collective efficacy, and contribute to the betterment of society (*Social action projects - make a difference, 2010*).



As an example, one of the most famous and successful social actions was created by the #iwill movement. The campaign was launched in 2013 and this movement now helps to ensure meaningful actions with the help of young people and organizations. The #iwill movement is focusing on youth because they have the energy and ideas to make a positive change in society. The program empowers children and youth together with organizations to be more active citizens and get involved in the community. Another recent and relevant example that might be inspiring is the #FridaysForFuture movement. These are some examples of actions that grew to a large scale, but a social action can be also small and locally focused, such as posting positive messages in bus stops.

#### **About this Guide**

In March 2023, a training was organized within Continue project in order to empower young people and youth leaders to facilitate co-creation processes of Social Actions. The program of the 2-day workshop forms the basis of the current Guide, which includes its detailed program (Annex I.), as well as the templates and presentation used during the training (Annex II.). Between May-September 2022, the 8 partners of Continue project realized Social Action co-creation processes in their respective countries in order to test the process described in the Guide, enrich it with alternative activities (Annex III.) and the case studies of these processes (Annex IV.)

The present Guide is intended to help in facilitating a co-creation process of organizing social actions with a group of young people by providing an overview of the process, hands-on descriptions of activities, and the case studies of the processes that we went through. It is meant to be a practical handbook with the help of which you can set off to facilitate a group process – however, we are assuming some prior experience working with groups and young people.

The main body of the Guide is a general description of the process complemented with some advice to the facilitators. Annex I. shows an example of a program of approximately 15 hours, which was planned for a group of 12 persons, realized over 2 consecutive days (and some warm-up activities which were done on the evening before). You can use the process outline and activities as they are or modify them, but please always consider your group and context, and make adaptations that suit the specific needs and circumstances! The group should be the starting point, and every part and aspect of the process should be adapted to their specific case. You might decide to break the process down into shorter sessions ( 2-3 hours each), which can suit some groups better. In that case, add some ice-breaker/group-building activities at the end of each session and some kind of reflection and sharing in the end.



In Annex II., you can find the templates that we used during our workshop – you are free to use these or get inspired and create your own.

Annex III. contains alternative activities which you can also use to complement the program or to substitute some of its parts.

Annex IV. is a set of case studies: stories and experiences of co-creation processes of social actions with young people in different European countries. All of these processes were realized between May–September 2022 and were based on the process and activities described in this Guide.

### **The process of Creating Social Actions**

There can be many ways of creating Social Actions, but we propose a basic process as follows:

1. Group building and framing
2. Gathering, mapping social issues
3. Understanding the consequences, choosing topics to address
4. Action inspirations
5. Brainstorming about action
6. Choosing ideas and creating working groups

7. Researching on the issue and existing actions

8. Planning Social Action

9. Risk assessment

10. Implementation

11. Evaluation

In the following chapters, we will explain each step in detail, also giving specific examples for activities and content, which you can find in the Annexes.





## GROUP BUILDING, GROUP DYNAMICS AND FRAMING

When a group comes together with the aim of creating something together, it is essential to spend some time getting to know each other and establish mutual trust within the group. This will be the mold that turns separate people into a larger unit: a group. Spending time together will make people more open and motivated to work together.

*You can find activities for this part in the Annex (Annex I/ 1,2,3,6, Annex III/1-7.)*

During the whole process, be attentive of the group dynamics! When the group gathers again after breaks, kick off with some ice-breaker activities.

It is also advisable to talk about the rules of working together:

- respecting times (*starting and ending sessions, keeping deadlines*);
- group confidentiality (*what is said in the group stays in the group*);
- mutual respect (*don't interrupt each other*);

are some general ones, but you can adapt these to your group and context, also adding others

*For example, should people wear masks? Is it ok to eat during sessions? What is the rule about using phones during the sessions?*

It is advisable to create the rules together so that it would be relevant and participants would like to follow them themselves.

We recommend suggesting some basic rules and open it up to the group, if they have any comments or requests for the framework of working together. There can be a gesture of mutual consent to the rules (*such as signing the flipchart, clapping together, raising hand, etc.*).

*You can find an example in the Annex I, no. 4.)*

The facilitator(s) should also briefly present the framework of the process – introduction of the project as a background: time, duration and location of sessions and any other relevant practical information. It is useful if you can prepare some visual material about this (*e.g. write the points on flipchart*).

**The group should be a space where members can express their opinions, ideas and feelings, including positive and negative ones.**

After each block of activities, give floor to questions and comments! At the end of each day or session, there should be space and time for reflections that are shared (*such as no. 16 in Annex I*), this will also help you monitor the process that the participants are going through.

At the set-out of the process, you can also include an activity to reflect on questions and doubts concerning the process, such as putting them on post-its and discussing them at a later point in the process (*see no. 5 in Annex I*).



## **GROUP BUILDING, GROUP DYNAMICS AND FRAMING**

The facilitator should be ready to respond to changes in the group dynamics, be it a momentum of creative energy or a conflict arising in the group. It is a good idea to have more than one person facilitating the process and, depending on the group, there can be more. Try to involve a trainer/educator/facilitator with past experience as well!





## GATHERING, MAPPING ISSUES

At the set-out of the process of planning a Social Action, it is important to map the issues that the group members are interested in. Choosing a topic of true interest is crucial in terms of motivation, which will impact the project result in many ways. Mapping issues together and finding the common denominator can be the basement of the house that you build together. So, make sure that you spend some time with this step!

In CONTINUE project, the initial topic research was done through a visual storytelling method: Community Reporting (CR).

In the framework of CR workshops, young people made videos of their own stories, expressing what issues they are facing in relation to the pandemic.

The video stories were analyzed and discussed during the Sense making workshops in groups.

After that, partners organized Conversation of Change events where young people and other stakeholders (*people working with youth, such as teachers, educators, youth workers, etc.*) watched some excerpts together and discussed what were the common issues among them – drawing conclusions about what young people are concerned with, based on these videos. These events also aimed at brainstorming about what actions participants could take to tackle those issues.

*Story gathering (personal stories) --->  
Group discussions (social issues).*

As a result of the aforementioned process, each partner had a list of social issues that the young people in their community were concerned about. We proposed to use this list as a starting point, and asked group members to add if there were any issues was missing which they were connected to.

If you are working on a different scheme, not basing the process of mapping issues on the Community Reporting process, we can propose some activities for doing it in other ways (*or to combine them with the Community Reporting process*).

*For the detailed description of these activities, see Annex I. and III.*





## UNDERSTANDING THE CONSEQUENCES, CHOOSING TOPICS TO ADDRESS

Now you have a list of social issues that group members are concerned about. It is time to focus on a few of them which the group will keep working with, and to go a bit more into them.

In the Problem tree activity, the group can work in more depth on some topics in smaller groups, in order to better understand the causes and consequences of each specific issue. *(For a detailed description of the activity, see no. 7 in Annex I).*

In our process, the next step was to focus on the consequences, and each participant had to choose one specific consequence of an issue they wanted to explore, and share his/her choice and the background of the choice *(Annex I, no. 8-9).*

If you are looking for a method to choose based on the voting process of group members, *you can find one in Annex III/18.*





## ACTION INSPIRATIONS

When the group members already have an idea about what specific topic they would like to work with, the facilitator can show some inspiring examples of Social Actions and highlight the different forms that these can take.

In our project and in this Guide we decided to focus on different categories of social actions, pick frameworks and suggest them to the young people. The different forms cover a range of activities, from the point of view of participation the challenges vary, so it is a pool from which you can pick the most relevant ones for your group or your community, whether they are beginners in the field of social action design or they are already experienced activists.

We present the different categories with examples collected from our practices and from our national networks, which you can find in Annex II/3. Feel free to use these examples in your Presentation for young people!

We also encourage you to look around in your context and gather some examples of inspiring actions, it will be a source of motivation for not only your group, but yourself as well! You can also invite activists, members of local movements to share their experiences and struggles and give hints and tips for your community.

**The categories we used are as follows:**

- Volunteering
- Awareness raising
- Peer support
- Creative actions
- Community events

We also recommend asking the group members what examples of Social Actions they are familiar with (*before or after giving the examples collected by the facilitator*).



## BRAINSTORMING ABOUT ACTION

Before brainstorming, it is a good idea to do some kind of activity to wake up the creative energies of the group.

We suggest using body and movement, such as the Collective Sculpture exercise (based on Forum Theater methodology), described in Annex 1, nr. 12.

This exercise warms up participants for sharing creative ideas, while also brings their focus back to the issues they were working on before the presentation.

Furthermore, creating a purely visual form of an issue might reveal some new aspects or details that the group might not have thought about at first.

It is important to allow every group to interact after presenting these forms for a more enriching thought-provoking experience.

After this we suggest brainstorming in pairs. They can be formed based on their interest and what consequence of an issue they want to address (*mapped out in the Problem Tree activity before*).

Each pair / group gets and fills out pre-prepared templates to present to the others. The templates contain basic information about the Social Action idea: its focal topic and the form of the action (*see Annex. II/1.*) Each pair can fill out up to 3 templates (*to manage time*), so they can come up with 3 different social actions for the same issue or different issues (*Annex I./13.*).





## CHOOSING IDEAS AND CREATING WORKING GROUPS

After the work in pairs, each pair shares one or more ideas with the group, depending on the available time. When all the ideas have been presented (*briefly!*), the group should choose the ideas that they will realize, and form small groups for working on the Actions. In our case, participants were asked to select up to 3 projects by voting. We did it by posting the templates on the wall, and participants marked their choices by putting stickers on them. After choosing the ideas that will be realized, the working groups were formed.

*See Annex I/ 14.*







## RESEARCHING ON THE ISSUE AND EXISTING ACTIONS

Before planning the Social Action, it is important to research the context, connect to the local reality and talk to different stakeholders who might be affected by or engaged in the action. We encourage reaching out to people and having conversations with them. Think of the different possible target groups of the action and do not be afraid to approach people to ask for their opinion! This will help the group to stay focused. Ideas might seem interesting, but the priority is to come up with a social action that is meaningful for those concerned.

If there is more time, it is also useful to do research about other people and organizations who are working on similar topics and/or similar forms of action, and approach them for a discussion (*sharing information, experiences or possibly even collaborating in the action itself*).

By doing this, the group can see how some actions turn into what have developed into their final forms, and have an idea of how they look in reality. It is an exercise to see social actions from outside and inspire groups to design something that will look in reality as it does on paper.

It is important to have some reflection after the research, in order to organize and integrate the findings (*see no. 15, 16. in Annex I.*). If there is time, the groups can share their findings with each other.





## PLANNING SOCIAL ACTION

After gathering background information, it is time to make concrete plans and set tasks for Social Action. You can also provide the working groups with templates (see *Annex II./ 2.*) containing questions about planning the Social Action. The template helps focus the group's attention on concrete details.

Each group receive a set of cards with the following (suggested) **steps of planification:**

- understanding in more depth the aim of the action;
- identifying the target groups and how we will reach them;
- setting the concrete steps that have to be taken to realize the action and achieve the aims;
- risk assessment and strategies for handling them;
- mapping the resources necessary for the action and planning how to ensure them;
- evaluation of the action.

The groups then put the cards in order that they find most appropriate. They are also encouraged to create their own task list and timeline based on the given cards.

The working groups share these with the whole group, which can be followed by opening the floor for questions and comments, or a voting process of choosing one action to be realized, depending on the framework and time limitations.

Groups are likely to create different orders of the same cards and if there is enough time, they are encouraged to discuss their choices.

As Social Actions can be very different, they might require different tasks or a timeline.

However, **it is important** to make it clear for the group throughout the process, which version you are following (see *Annex I/17.*).



## RISK ASSESSMENT

It is important for the groups to think through the possible things that can go wrong. Challenges can come from outside factors (e.g. *bad weather on the day of event, few people reached, legal obstacles*), or from inside the group (e.g. *conflict among team members, too much workload*). It is worth making a list of possible challenges and answering them by strategies of handling them.

After the risk assessment process, please revisit the plan and incorporate the learnings!





## IMPLEMENTATION

It is time to make it happen!

When planned well, the group has a clear starting and concluding moment of the action. You should have everything needed in the plan already, but for any unexpected events, please know who will be in charge of making decisions on the spot. The planification takes place in the safe and isolated environment of the group, but the social action is conducted in a more complex environment.

The group should keep their goal in mind, because from the first moment unexpected and sometimes distracting circumstances can arise. The decision maker(s) should pay attention to all that occurs during the action and monitor the process, being ready to step in and make modifications when needed.





## EVALUATION

What is evaluation exactly and why is it important?

*“Evaluation is the employment of methods to assess whether a set goal is reached through a specific intervention, and to what degree it was reached or whether an intervention has the desired and intended effects.”*

Evaluation can be used before, during and after your projects.

### BEFORE

Before you start your project it is suggested to apply the SMART goals. As you might have heard about it, the SMART acronym stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Bound. In order for a goal to be effective, it needs to be Specific.

While defining this parameter, you should have the answer to the following questions:

- What needs to be accomplished?
- Who is responsible for it?
- What steps need to be taken?

Making your goals Measurable is not an easy step, but it will definitely help you track your progress and show your achievements.

Speaking of which, your goals need to be Achievable, as well as realistic. You should ask yourself whether the set goal is something that your team can accomplish, or not.

Also, don't forget to think about the reason why you are setting your goals! Are those Relevant to the theme of the project?

Last, but not least, the goals should be Time-bounded. If you give a specific time frame for yourself and your team, it will help you stay on track and achieve the set goals.

### DURING

Evaluation during your projects will give you a better understanding of how your project is really going, and how you and your team are doing. The mid-term evaluation will help you know if you are on the right path, and will help you see the points where you can improve. It can help you realize the possible risks, and what can be the steps to avoid unwanted failure.

Creating a short survey or a quick interview will lead you to the information about how the team feels like working together, is the work going smoothly, what are your team-members' motivation?

We are also suggesting you to use this template in the process:  
<https://docs.google.com/document/d/19nAzds6elaJytzX9X6CdM2PAqP0rugU9I367WZ8zH-U/edit?usp=sharing>

### AFTER

It is very important to do an evaluation after the Social Action is finished. It helps determine what works well and what could be improved in a program, initiative or your work itself.





## EVALUATION

The result of the evaluation can be used to demonstrate impact to funders and other interested stakeholders, suggest improvements for continued efforts, seek support for continuing the program and help decide whether the program should be implemented in a different location with similar needs.

It is a great learning tool, not only for you, but for others as well.

### **Long-term sustainability of the project**

The group might have planned a short-term project, but in some cases it can be interesting to explore the possibility of carrying on. How to sustain the momentum of social actions in the long run? The group should agree about the strategic aims, and the framework of the common work. How are the decisions being made? How frequent will the meetings be and where will they take place?? What are the tasks ahead and who will be in charge of them? What resources are needed and how to raise funds for the project?

These are some of the questions worth answering. But also, keeping the motivation of the participants is crucial! To do so, you can ask them what has kept them engaged so far, and come back to asking them again and again. Foster the group socializing by organizing shared meals, and create a group culture (such as the structure of the meetings, rituals, group identity, etc.)

While going into the details of long-term project coordination is beyond the scope of this Guide, hopefully the above tips can get you started if the group decides to carry on together!

As an evaluation method, you can always define the positive and negative impacts. What do you want to keep and continue doing? What are the experiences that you don't want to happen again?

We propose this activity to evaluate Social Actions: *Annex 1./18.*

It is also important to reflect on the working process to close the experience, for which we recommend this activity: *Annex 1/19.*



# RESOURCES

## Resources used in the Introduction chapter:

- <https://www.tigurl.org/images/tiged/docs/activities/1409.pdf>
- [https://tc2.ca/uploads/PDFs/Social%20Action%20Projects/IA\\_Handbook\\_5-8\\_EN\\_FINAL.pdf](https://tc2.ca/uploads/PDFs/Social%20Action%20Projects/IA_Handbook_5-8_EN_FINAL.pdf)
- <https://activeyouth.lt/portfolio/continue/?lang=en>
- <https://thelinkingnetwork.org.uk/what-is-social-action/>

## Resources used in the Evaluation chapter:

- [https://uk.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/97995\\_book\\_item\\_97995.pdf](https://uk.sagepub.com/sites/default/files/upm-assets/97995_book_item_97995.pdf)
- [https://www.caad-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CAaD-IO1\\_Evaluation\\_ENGLISH.pdf](https://www.caad-project.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CAaD-IO1_Evaluation_ENGLISH.pdf)
- <https://www.grosvenor.com.au/insights-resources/public-sector-advisory/6-reasons-why-evaluation-is-a-great-opportunity-for-program-managers/>
- <https://www.atlassian.com/blog/productivity/how-to-write-smart-goals>

## Inspirations and brainstorming:

- <https://loesje.org/>

# ANNEX I

Program plan for 15 hours  
(with a group of 12 persons)

## Day 0 – getting to know each other

### 1. Name a game with a ball (10 min)

Stand in a circle.

1. Throw the ball to someone and say your name
2. Throw the ball and say the person's name who you're throwing the ball to
3. Same as b) but with 2 balls at the same time

*Alternative*

1. Round 1 – throw the ball to someone and say your name
2. Round 2 – throw the ball to someone and say their name
3. Round 3 – throw the ball to someone and say the name of the person on their right

### 2. Group scale (15 min)

Stick a long strip of tape on the floor that will serve as a scale. One end of the tape means 0%, and the other end is 100%. Ask the members to stand on the scale to show their answer.

Possible questions:

- How tired are you?
- How easy is it for you to get up early?
- How well do you know the aim of this training program?
- How well do you know the Continue project?
- How much did you research social actions in your countries? (+examples)

### 3. Speed dating (25 min)

The group stands in 2 circles: a small one inside facing out, a bigger outside facing in, everyone has a person in front of them.

Possible questions:

- How was your journey here?
- What brought you here?
- If you could live in any country for a year, where would it be and why?
- If, for any reason, we had to quarantine again for weeks, what would you do differently?
- If you were your country's PM, what 3 social issues would you address?
- Ask something you would like to know about the other!

Reflection round after the speed dating (15 min)

- How was the experience?
- Which was the most difficult question to answer?
- Did you find out anything surprising?
- Were there any common things between you and your partners?

To finish the session ask the group: *Do you have any questions now? Tomorrow we'll talk you through the program.*

## Day 1

### Block I: 90 minutes

Self-introduction, name review (10 min.)

A frame of the project (5 min.)

Talk about the Continue project process with young adults: Community Reporting, Story Curation, Conversations of Change events (done). *We are at the start of creating Social Actions. You will be the mentors for the social action creation process. Do you have any questions about the project or its aims?*

### Program review (5 min.)

Outline and go through the program of the day on the flip chart that you prepared beforehand.

### 4. Rules of the training (15 min.)

Suggested rules:

English is not everyone's first language, keep it in mind.

Be on time, we have a tight schedule.

There might be some differences in our opinions that can cause tension. They also enrich our vision, so respect everyone.

Be active participants – these 2 days are short but will be intensive. You take out of them as much as you put it.

*Ask: Is there anything missing from these rules? What is important for you to have a successful cooperation? Participants share ideas, discuss them, and write them on the flipchart. If you agree with these common rules, please sign the flipchart.*

### 5. Question & doubts (15 min.)

*Do you have any questions or doubts regarding the process? Write them on post-it notes. The trainers collect them on the flipchart. We will discuss them tomorrow. Some might be answered by then, you might have new ones. We will have a slot to reflect on them.*

### 6. The blind labyrinth (40 min.)

Before the activity, prepare the space. Clear the middle which will be the swamp. Arrange a few chairs randomly that will be crocodiles in the game.



### Instructions

1. Form pairs, decide who is the first, who is the second to take turns. The first one is blindfolded.
2. Help your blinded partner cross the swamp by giving them instructions from the starting point. You can't move, only speak, and the blindfolded partner can rely only on your instructions. If someone bumps into a crocodile, everyone who hasn't crossed the swamp yet goes back to the start and begins crossing all over again. You have 8 minutes for this mission. Before starting you have one minute to discuss your strategy. The ones who manage to cross can take off the blindfold.
3. After the 8 minutes change roles.
4. Reflection in group after the second round:
  - a. How did you feel?
  - b. Which role were you more comfortable with?
  - c. What strategy did you use? Did you change it at any moment?
  - d. What does this game have to do with this mentor training?
  - e. How would you adapt these strategies and learning points to a mentoring setting?
  - f. What are the key messages to take away? (on flipchart)

**Break: 15 minutes**

**Block II: 75 minutes**

### 7. Problem tree (60 min.)

Introduce activity. *We collected problems brought up in your Local Conversation of Change events, we'll try to understand them better.*

1. Collect key topics on A4 sheets
2. Put the sheets on the floor around the room. Ask participants to walk around in the room, reading the papers on the floor, and ask the group: *Are there any missing topics or questions? Add anything missing.*
3. *Now as you walk around looking at these topics, choose the one you most feel connected to.*
4. *Let's make groups of 3. If there's 1 person left without a group, they join another group.*
5. *Draw a tree together. The trunk is the chosen topic. Think about the roots as the roots of your topic. What are the reasons that can cause this problem? The branches are the consequences of the problem. Where does this problem lead to? Brainstorm as many ideas as you can imagine for each part of the tree.*
5. Each subgroup presents their trees to the rest of the group.

### 8. Focusing on consequences

*Choose 1-2 consequences from the branches of your trees that you would like to work on in the frame of a social action. We will continue in the afternoon. It can be from your tree but it can be from other trees. Have them in mind while listening to social action examples.*

### 9. Reflection (15 min.)

Participants share their choices with the group.

*What topics did you choose? Why?*

*Do you have any questions so far?*

### Lunch Break

### Block III: 90 minutes

### 10. Energizer: game of the opposites (10 min.)

1. Do what I say. If I say 'stop', you stop. If I say 'yes', you say 'yes' too. Action pairs to use: stop – move / yes – no / clap – touch your head
2. Do the opposite of what I say. If I say 'yes', you say 'no', if I say 'stop' you keep walking but if I say 'walk', you stop.

### 11. Action forms and inspirations ppt (25 min.)

- Definition: what is social action?
- Present examples for each element with a discussion: *Do you know any similar actions in your country / environment? Have you participated in any? Have you organised any?*

### 12. Statues for change (15 min.)

1. Go back to your groups that you drew the tree with. Make a group statue to represent this problem. You can use any object you find in the form. Form them using your bodies and don't move or speak. Remember your positions!
2. Each group presents the statue group by group, the others give titles of the statues.
3. Create another statue that shows some kind of solution to this problem.
4. Now re-create your first statue and you will have 10 seconds to change into the 2nd statue in slow motion, from the problem to the solution.
5. Reflection – what happened when you created the statues? Did you notice anything in any of the statues? Or when you moved from the first statue to the second?

### 13. Idea fair (30 min.)

1. These statues were to get into a creative mindset. Now use that inspiration to brainstorm in pairs about possible social actions that you think would be meaningful and interesting. Aiming for a small change is good as well – e. g. drawing the attention about an issue with creative actions.
2. Fill the template (title / short description / target group – optional / aim) for each idea, but first decide which branch you will work on first. You can work on several branches, more actions for the same branch, just give a short explanation, don't need to provide details.

Participants create a template for each action they chose to work on.

### Break: 15 minutes



#### **Block IV: 130 minutes**

##### **14. Presentation of possible actions and selection (30 min.)**

*Now you will present your ideas. You have 1 minute for each template. (maximum 3 ideas / pair)*

Templates are put up on the wall. Ideas are presented in 1-minute pitches. You can use a sand timer.

Everyone is given 2 stickers. You have 2 votes to choose the ideas you want to work on today and tomorrow. Think of one that you consider possible to flesh out (or part of it) during this training. Participants put their stickers on the sheets they choose.

*We would like you to work in 3 groups. Let's see how we can make 3 working groups to develop 3 action plans from the most voted ones.*

##### **15. Connecting with local community (100 min.)**

*It is important to connect social actions to the local reality. Therefore we are going to send you out to the city to gather information by talking to local people. To have this data you can ask them about your plans or about anything else you feel relevant. Find out what is useful to further develop your action. Have conversations and see what they bring.*

#### **Break: 10 minutes**

#### **Block V: 35 minutes**

##### **16. Reflection**

When the group is back together, they share their experiences and reflect on the experience. Ask:

1. *What happened?*
2. *What did you find out? How can you connect it to your action? (the other groups can comment on the integration of the experiences to the action)*
3. *What was your strategy? Did it change?*
4. *Would you do anything differently?*
5. *What did you learn? What do you bring with you? How can these experiences be helpful in the future?*

## Day 2

### Block VI: 90 minutes

#### Energiser (10 min.)

#### Programme review (5-10 min.)

Outline and go through the program of the day on the flip chart that you prepared beforehand.

#### 17. Action planning (70 min.)

1. *In your action group, each group gets a set of papers with different tasks / steps of action organisation in general. Create an order that makes sense for you. (10 min)*

Each group receives a set of the following tasks, each on a separate sheet:

buy material, promote the action, reach the audience, write material list, define roles in the group (e. g. designer, administrator, communication manager, etc.), evaluate the action, define the goals for the action, think about possible risks.

2. *After the working groups order them, they compare each others' timelines. Are they the same or different? Give them time to explain their choices. Are there any steps you would add? Steps may vary depending on the action.*

3. *In action groups start working on your chosen action, incorporating your experiences from the local research. Planning actions – step by step, roles and responsibilities, create a timeline. See if the steps are the same as the ones on the papers, or you might need to change it, add new ones etc. After 30 min the working groups should have a presentable plan ready.*

4. *Each group presents their ideas and votes which ones to realise.*

5. *Together come up with an order of the voted social actions, so that everyone can be present when the others do them. 3 min. to present and then we vote which to realise.*

#### Break: 15 minutes

### Block VII.

#### Social actions implementation: 165 minutes

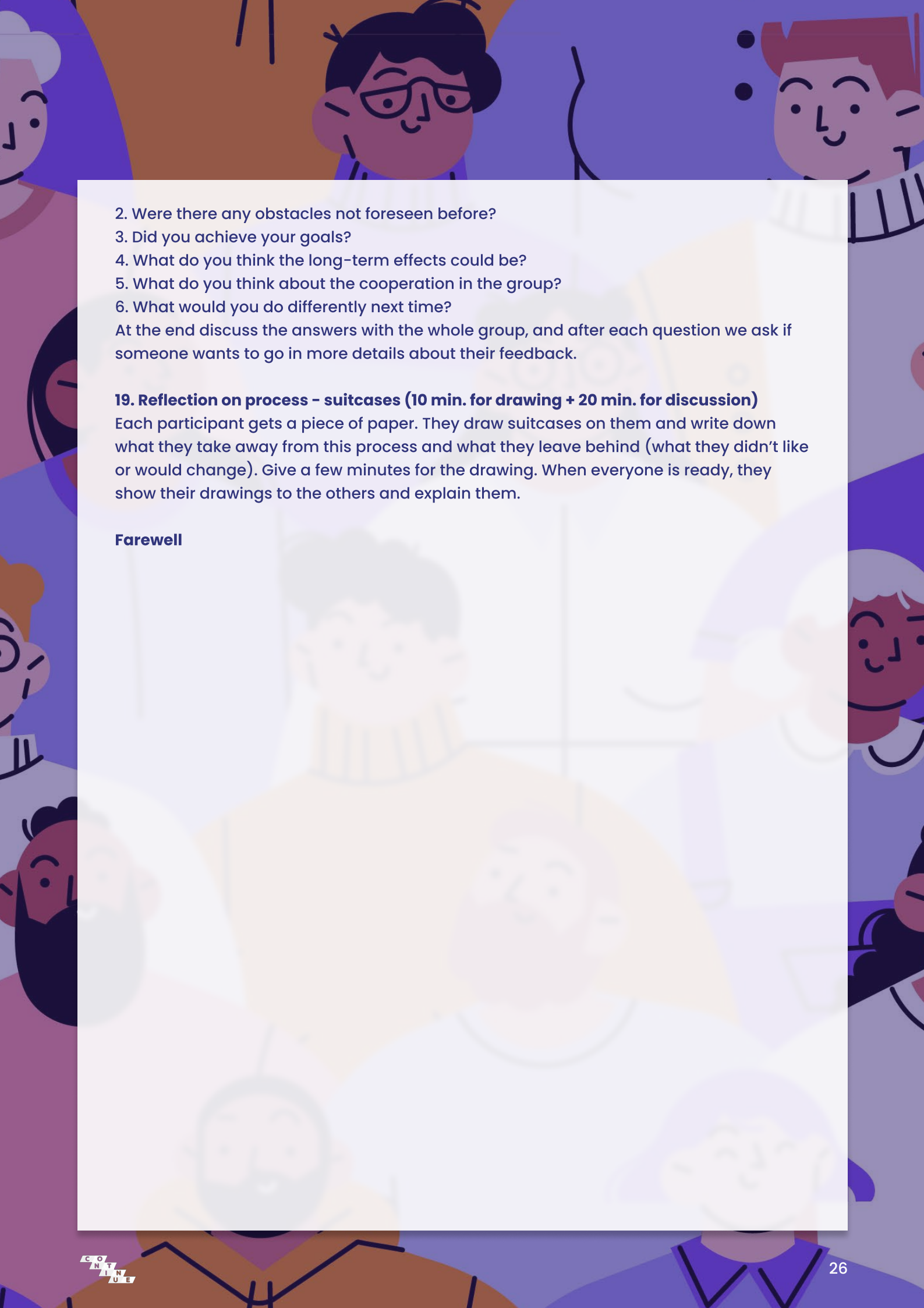
#### Lunch Break

### Block VIII. (60-90 minutes)

#### 18. Evaluation (30 min.)

After the action is finished, the whole group gathers again. Prepare the following questions on flip chart papers on the floor, and ask the participants to discuss them in working groups:

1. Could you follow the plans?

- 
2. Were there any obstacles not foreseen before?
  3. Did you achieve your goals?
  4. What do you think the long-term effects could be?
  5. What do you think about the cooperation in the group?
  6. What would you do differently next time?

At the end discuss the answers with the whole group, and after each question we ask if someone wants to go in more details about their feedback.

### **19. Reflection on process – suitcases (10 min. for drawing + 20 min. for discussion)**

Each participant gets a piece of paper. They draw suitcases on them and write down what they take away from this process and what they leave behind (what they didn't like or would change). Give a few minutes for the drawing. When everyone is ready, they show their drawings to the others and explain them.

### **Farewell**



# ANNEX II

## Templates and presentations used during the process

### 1. Social Action idea template

Action Title:

Aim:

Target group:

Short description:<sup>1</sup>

### 2. Social Action planning template

Action plan template:

Title of the action (creative name with which you would advertise it):

Short description (what will happen):

What is the aim? (What do you want to achieve? What do you want to change?):

Steps (How will you get there? How will you start?):

What do you need? (Resources, tools, expertise, information, knowledge, etc.)

Risks (What can go wrong? For example, people we want to do the event with don't show up / it is raining at our open-air round table event):

Backup plans for the risk (How to prepare for that? For example, people not showing up - > we invite some friends who will be there for sure; rain -> there is a bar nearby where we can go in in case of rain):

Now divide the tasks and set deadlines!

### 3. Examples of Social Actions

#### Volunteering

Volunteering can be defined in various forms, and here we think any idea can fit when someone takes action or supports others alone, in a group, or in the frame of a movement, grassroots organization, or official institution without being paid for it. Of course, here, our list could be endless. People help their community voluntarily in many different forms. Let us pick one of our favourites now, Budapest Bike Maffia, who are active in Hungary, helping people living in homelessness in different forms.

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<sup>1</sup> You can also use this pdf: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/13ymswsPDlrWDNYRyRa1FY2g7RQWcUoIp/view?usp=sharing>



### **Budapest Bike Maffia**

Budapest Bike Maffia (<https://bikemaffia.com/en/home/>) is a movement, an informal group of people who organize support for people living in homelessness on the streets in Hungary or in homeless shelters. They started a program called Vitamin Commando, delivering sandwiches to the homeless by bike, to which they added vitamins and hygiene supplies during the pandemic.

They realized through their voluntary work that homeless women are in need of a gynecological office as they are often rejected in public health institutions. BBM crowdfunded for an office and opened it some time ago.

### **Raising awareness**

By this we mean online or offline events, campaigns or any other action that aims to share information about a certain social question.

### **Forms can be:**

- Round table discussion – with activists, artists (artists who work through art), members of a movement or other stakeholders
- Movie night and discussion – with a related movie and possibly with related guests
- Podcast series, Instagram page, Facebook campaign – these online means can serve perfectly for sharing information
- Living Library
  - *The Human Library (<https://humanlibrary.org/>) is an international organization and movement that first started in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 2000. It aims to address people's prejudices by helping them to talk to those they would not normally meet.*

### **Experimentas VERTIMAS**

The social video clip "Experimentas VERTIMAS" (2015), created and disseminated by the Youtube account of the Lithuanian Centre for Human Rights, created a great resonance in Lithuania, spreading the idea of tolerance and coexistence. The main message of the advertisement is to urge all of us not to be indifferent to bullying and hate speech, which affects so many people every day, but we just don't see it or notice it.<sup>2</sup>

### **Peer Support**

This is a type of action in which members of the community support a marginalized group to achieve their goals together. This example came from a participant of our youth mentor training:

**Carriera Alias in Sicily:** is a path that allows girls and boys undergoing gender transitions to be called by their chosen name and gender at school.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNX1256eVw8>

Regina Margherita is the first school in Sicily to approve this type of protocol. Carriera Alias was proposed by the students' community: in fact over 2000 signatures were collected in order to bring this proposal to the school council (a committee made up of the school principal and teachers' and students' representatives), who approved it by a unanimous vote.

### **Creative actions**

We could write an entire book on possible creative actions for social change. Street performances, creative posters and messages on the street, theater piece or another form, the limit is the sky and your imagination. One of our favorite low entry tools is chalk, with which you can draw and write your messages on the floor in public spaces.

### **Hand holding flashmob by Stereo Akt, Hungary**

*„The event: the participants create a scene of statues with same-sex couples holding hands on the square, reflecting as a still image of a utopian world. Our tool is a simple, everyday gesture: holding hands. Together we will make a live installation of an array of people which will be transformed into a small parade afterwards.*

*We believe that everyone has the right to love!*

*Let's come together so we can live in this utopia for more than 7 minutes each year! But we need you for it to happen!*

*The fight for equality and human rights is not only the cause of minorities, but everyone's responsibility.*

*If you agree, join us, bring your friends and let's meet on the 17th of May at the Third Hand-Holding Flashmob!”<sup>3</sup>*

### **Men are Flowers**

Neringa Rekašiūtė's photo exhibition (2020) "Men are Flowers" – 12 photographs of men of different ages, social status and sexual orientation, with floral compositions. On the occasion of Women's Day, the project aimed to draw attention to the stereotypes of masculinity which deny men's vulnerability. At the same time, interviews were taken from the participants.<sup>4</sup>

### **Community events**

This can also be a variety of actions that aim to create or reinforce relationships between members of a community, to show solidarity or even for example to fundraise for a cause. These could include organizing a hike to fight isolation, creating a treasure hunt to discover the hidden places of a (stigmatized) neighborhood, or holding a board game marathon as a means of fundraising for an educational program for marginalized children.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://fb.watch/bLhZn8IWNV/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://neringarekasiute.com/work/menareflowers> ; <https://www.lrt.lt/en/news-in-english/19/1149214/men-are-flowers-photography-project-bares-bodies-and-vulnerabilities-of-lithuanian-men>



### **Arte Migrante**

Arte Migrante is an informal non-party group that was established in Bologna in 2012 and is now present in many Italian cities. The main aim of Arte Migrante is to promote transcultural community-building and inclusion through arts, socialization and intercultural dialogue. It organizes weekly meetings open to everyone in a safe and accessible space where everyone can freely share and actively listen to others. Such meetings usually presents the following elements:

- A moment to get to know each other through ice-breakers and games
- A communal dinner, in which people can bring their favorite or traditional dishes to share with others
- Free artistic sharing in a circular setting. Art is conceived as any kind of expression, both at individual or collective level: songs, dances, stories, games, poetry, etc., become a tool for sharing one's own culture, experiences, stories or talents.<sup>5</sup>

Of course, there are many other types of possible social actions, from collecting signatures for a petition, to civic disobedience, to organizing a demonstration. We aimed to highlight some categories and action examples, but feel free to discover more and adapt the ideas to the needs and interests of your group. There are many groups and organizations who have created resources that can inspire your social actions, these are just a few with which to start the journey.<sup>6</sup>

Along with the examples above, social actions can also be on a very small scale, such as random acts of kindness, helping someone in your neighborhood, volunteering for an existing organization, or posting positive messages in public spaces.

In order to present inspiring examples of social actions to the group, a presentation such as this one can be used: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EGZrJ8h-dJjLH3oEKSHooSKiwnzuLJ2T/view?usp=sharing>.

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<sup>5</sup> „Arte Migrante”: <https://www.artemigrante.eu/EN/indexEN.html>

<sup>6</sup> „Beautiful trouble” – kūrybinės priemonės teisingesniui pasauliui: <https://beautifultrouble.org/toolbox/>

Meno Aktyvumo Centras: <https://c4aa.org/>

Su smurtu nesusijusių akcijų sąrašas: <https://www.aeinstein.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/198-Methods.pdf>

„The Yes Men”, kūrybinga hakerių grupė, iš kurios galite pasimokyti (turėtumėte pažiūrėti ir jų filmus!):

<https://theyesmen.org/about>

# ANNEX III

## Alternative activities

### GROUP BUILDING

#### 1. 2 truth 1 lie

Aim: getting to know each other's names and some more information

Materials: none

Length: depending on number of participants and their guessing skills, approximately 15-25 minutes

Inside/Outside: both are possible, also possible to do it online

Steps:

- Each participant needs to think of 2 truths and 1 lie about her/himself.
- The lie should not be self-evident, and it should be rather tricky to guess. The aim is to make the lie blend in with the 2 truths.
- If everyone has made up their mind about their truths and lies, the group sits or stands in a circle, facing each other (or using a video platform).
- One person starts to tell 3 facts about her/himself, and the rest of the group collectively need to find out which one of these 3 facts is a lie.
- Then it's the next person's turn to tell her/his 3 facts, and again, the group needs to guess the lie.

#### 2. Human Bingo

Aim: getting to know each other's names and some more information

Materials: printed papers with specific amount of statements on the table, pens

Length: depending on number of participants, approximately 15-20 minutes

Inside/Outside: both are possible

Steps:

- The organizer has to create random statements according to the participants and write it down into the tables – some common things which may be applicable to many participants, some more rare ones, some according to yourself, or totally random.
- Before participants come you can even ask them to send some interesting facts about themselves and include them in the list.
- You have to print the same table for every participant and then each of them have to keep walking and asking each other if the facts suit other participants.
- The rule is to fill in all of the tables with different names of the participants.

During this game there is a lot of movement, conversations and interesting stories coming up.



### 3. Who am I?

Aim: getting to know each other and yourself at a deeper level

Materials: printed papers with template, pens

Length: depending on number of participants, approximately 20–30 minutes

Inside/Outside: both are possible, also online

#### Steps:

- The organizer prepares a template where on the top of the paper it is written “Who am I?” and under that there are 10 points starting with “I am...”
- Participants get the papers and pens and are asked to write 10 roles of their life they are playing, the most important ones according to them.
- Participants get 10 minutes to think and write, and have to choose 1 role which they like the most and prepare to explain it to others.
- Sharing can be done in a circle – everyone shares their role or in pairs, while changing partners and talking to different people.

### 4. Getting to know each other

Aim: getting to know each other's names and some more information

Materials: self-adhesive paper, pens

Time: depends on the number of the participants

Inside/Outside: both

#### Steps:

- Everybody gets self-adhesive paper and a pen, and they have to write their name on it.
- Collecting the papers.
- Everybody has to find a pair, and for a particular time (around 5–10 min.), they tell facts about themselves (name, hobbies, interests, schools, etc.)
- Making a circle, pulling a name, and introducing them by the person who got to know that person before.
- The person puts the paper with their name on their T-shirt.

### 5. The circle of rain

Aim: to create something together, to build up the group's harmony, to encourage a soothing atmosphere

Materials: none

Time: 5 minutes

Inside/Outside: both, only offline

#### Steps:

- Participants stand in a circle. The facilitator makes some gestures and sounds that suggest a little dew, by rubbing their palms together.
- In a clockwise rotation, each participant, one by one, repeats the latter person's movement and sound so that the sound of the dew is more and more palpable.
- The facilitator starts changing its movement and sound while all the others keep making the dew sound. The new sound sounds more like drips (clicking fingers), and there again, the participants will start doing this new sound and gesture one by one.
- The facilitator makes a new sound that evokes more of the rain (tapping their thighs), then like a clap of thunder, they will jump two by two to feel like there is an echo.
- And then back to the rain sound, to the drips and the dew. In the end, it feels like all the participants created something together, and at the same time, going back to the dew will calm the mood.

Explain to the participants that it is a one-by-one sound. The last person in the circle can't start until the person before does. If not, the effect will not be the same. Usually, the participants really like this activity because of its originality and the effect it has. The participants should be able to recognize the sound of the rain. As natural elements (such as rain) are things that we are all familiar with, it emphasizes the group's unity – we are all human beings.

#### **6. Paint back to back**

Aim: encouraging active listening and understanding of the importance of communication in the group

Duration: 20 min.

Materials: paper, pens / felt pens, copies of simple line drawings or basic shapes

Any preparation needed: the room should be prepared for the activity with chairs, and the young people have to be divided into peer groups without leaving someone single so that everyone can join.

#### Steps:

- Prepare the room with chairs with enough distance from other groups.
- Describe the game to the participants and ask them to find a partner for the game or divide them into peer groups and let them decide who is going to be A and B.
- Give a piece of paper and a pen to person A and a shape or a simple picture to person B.
- Ask person B to explain what they are holding or seeing by describing it using geometrical shapes, no other specific words. Person A has to draw it.
- Remember that they have 20 min. for this game before they start.
- After the game, ask the teams to compare the original image with the painted image and determine who reproduced it best.
- Discuss, what was the meaning of the activity, what were the learning points.



## 7. Floating wood

Aim: encouraging to understand the importance of teamwork

Duration: 10 min. (If it's monitored very strictly by the facilitators, it may take even 3-4 hours)

Materials: 2 m bamboo stick / very tightly rolled flipchart paper / plastic cable ducts plugged into one another, etc.

Instruction: the group is given to put down a stick on the floor together.

This task seems simple, but the implementation is not that easy – and it does not work without communication!

The trainer asks the seminar group to line up into two lines aligned to each other so that two participants are always facing each other (about an arm's length apart). The participants now stretch out their index fingers with their arms bent. All fingers should be at the same height so that a long bamboo stick can be placed on the fingers (it is essential to use a stick that is as light as possible, sufficiently long, and stiff).

The participants are now instructed to lower the stick to the ground (if you want to increase the difficulty level, you must not allow verbal communication in the group).

The most important rule for this exercise: each participant must always keep their finger in contact with the pole. If someone is not touching the pole anymore, the whole group has to start over again.

In the beginning, the seminar leader holds the pole in position with gentle pressure on the fingers of the participants until the starting signal.

Amazingly, the stick tends to go up most of the time. The lowering is only successful after several attempts and after the group (preferably non-verbally) has agreed on a common, coordinated approach.

This exercise provides an introduction to the topics of cooperation, goal-oriented action, the importance of leadership, communication, and/or body language.

Only use this exercise if physical proximity is not a problem for the participants!

## 8. Today's feelings/thoughts/experiences ice-breaker with visual tools

Aim: finding out how the participants are feeling and engaging them

Duration: 10-15 min.

Materials needed: "Points of view" / "Dixit" or other similar cards with visuals (even your own prepared photos)

Preparation needed: just spreading the cards upside down on the table

Steps: participants have to go around the table and pick the card which suits them at that moment the best (e.g. their feeling of today, their day reflection, their expectations of the meeting, or after the meeting, some reflective thoughts or feelings) and then they have one by one show their card to the others and explaining why they chose it – it can be a very intuitive choice not even knowing what you will say at first, just "clicking" with the card.

### 9. Online ice-breakers ideas

- Take an object that now reflects your state, mood, thoughts, show it to the group and tell us why you chose it
- Take an object starting with the letter P and tell us what it reflects to you
- Take an object that represents your childhood and tell us what it means to you (and perhaps why it is important to you?)
- Say a letter (P) / color / texture (soft) / object that symbolizes childhood and that you would bring back within 30 seconds an object from that letter and tell me what it reflects to you / what it means to you / why it is important to you?
- This or that? Participants have to choose and explain why they chose this way. For example: [https://www.canva.com/design/DAFDrGkV7EQ/62i-CxE8aclGuyQOmd878w/view?utm\\_content=DAFDrGkV7EQ&utm\\_campaign=designshare&utm\\_medium=link2&utm\\_source=sharebutton](https://www.canva.com/design/DAFDrGkV7EQ/62i-CxE8aclGuyQOmd878w/view?utm_content=DAFDrGkV7EQ&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton)

## GATHERING AND MAPPING SOCIAL ISSUES

### 10. Mapping social issues

Aim: finding out what kind of problems may exist, brainstorm

Materials: something which functions as a board, pens, papers, glue or gluetech

Time: minimum 30 minutes (30–50 min.)

Inside/Outside: both, also possible to do it online (e.g., on Jamboard)

#### Steps:

- Collecting together places where social issues can occur (a facilitator writes them on the board).
- Making smallgroups, distributing the places, and brainstorming what kind of social issues could occur (write down separate the ideas on separate papers).
- Sharing the results with the whole group.
- From the papers making a big poster after or during the presentations. / The facilitator makes a collective sheet about the results while the group members share their thoughts.

*\*Asking questions after every presentation if there are additional ideas from anybody.*

### 11. Mapping Your Neighborhood

Aim: finding out what kind of problems may exist, brainstorming

Duration: 1 hour minimum – this activity could be extended to as long as you want it to be

Essential: something to draw with and on (pencil & paper as a minimum)

Optional: magazines or visual content to be cut up and stuck to the map



#### Preparation needed:

- Facilitators should know who they are delivering the activity to and where they are from
- It works well if the group is from the same community or uses a specific location in a community (e. g., school / library / local park, etc.)
- If the facilitator is not familiar with the location that will be the focus of the activity – it's good for them to familiarize themselves by doing some research before the activity
- Google search or visit the location themselves
- Gathering equipment
- Facilitators should think about how they want to use the activity – the primary purpose is to highlight issues that exist in a specific location, but this can be adapted and made more specific to suit the needs and experiences of each group
- Decide on what area / areas you want your group to create a map for

#### Aims:

- To create a map of your local community or space highlighting the positive and negative aspects
- To share experiences with peers and gain an understanding of how other people experience spaces in a community
- To highlight areas of improvement and inspire social actions

#### Steps:

- Ask the group to work in teams (or pairs / independently, depending on numbers & the needs of the group) and think about the space / location the workshop will be focusing on.
- Get the groups to brainstorm ideas around the positive and negative aspects of the space they want to map out.
- Example prompts / questions: What memories do you have of this place? What is your favorite thing about this place? What don't you like about this place?
- Once the groups have brainstormed their ideas, get them to give feedback to the rest of the participants.
- Once everyone has shared their ideas, provide people with stationary / paper / materials and ask them to map out their thoughts / ideas on paper, creating a visual map of their experiences in the space.
- Provide some examples of maps – it might be maps that have been created in previous workshops or images off the internet.
- If you want to, you can provide people with old magazines, scraps of visual material, glue, and scissors to help them visualize their maps.
- Give people time to create their maps.
- Once everyone has created a map, ask them to present their ideas to the group.

### Tips for the facilitators:

- As this creative activity includes people sharing their own opinions and experiences, there are no right or wrong answers, encourage free expression
- When working with younger groups or people with less confidence in their ability to get creative, you might want to help them by creating a simple map template for them to add to.
- If it's a geographical location that already exists on a map, bring one along to help people visualize the space.

## **12. Image-theatre**

Aims: mapping the personal approaches to some focal topics and generating discourse about these.

Duration: 30 min

Materials needed: quiet music, quiet space and big enough to stand in a circle and move safely

Preparation needed: the facilitator identifies 4 urgent words coming up from the previous meetings or activities, relevant to the topic.

Tell participants that there is no right or wrong; The activity is a proposal and at any time they can go out of the circle and/or simply say "I pass"; they are asked to use their body and gestures, no words.

### Steps:

1. Moving around: (start the music) ask participants to move around, observing the space in which they are walking; ask participants to say "hello" to the person they meet while moving through eye contact, without speaking; ask participants to walk as if they were at school, as if they were in a conference with EU policy-makers, as if they were in a party (choose contexts relevant for the group)
2. Say to participants that you will count till ten. At the number 10 they will stop in a circle. The facilitator will check the process and make sure that everyone has a comfortable place in space.
3. Inform participants they now will be asked to turn around, facing outside the circle (so nobody can see others) and make a statue expressing the word the facilitator will say out loud. The facilitator will propose 4 words. The 4th will be the main word you want to work on. The previous three are "preparatory words". (It can be a good idea to go from easier words to more abstract ones.)
4. Participants turn back and the facilitator says the first word. Participants make their statue without turning (e.g. "I", "group", "social action", "PRIDE". In this example PRIDE is our keyword.
5. Participants are asked to keep the statue and adjust it if they need while the facilitator repeats it again.
6. Participants are asked to keep the statue and turn in front of the other to show it. They will be asked to observe around and see others' statues and then relax.
7. One by one, everyone is invited to replicate the statue and express it in words.



#### Tips for the facilitators:

This activity can be done before the “problem three” to start from a better understanding and awareness of the topic at personal-individual level and get to know others’ points of views (what this issue means for me?)

### **RESEARCH ON THE ISSUE AND EXISTING ACTIONS**

#### **13. Peer-to-peer interviews**

Aim: to find more information on the topic

Materials: questionnaire, papers, pens

Time: the interviews itself from 1 hour to even 3 hours (depending on where is it done, if it’s outside on the street or inviting people to come to some place in advance) + 2–3 hours

Inside/Outside: both, also possible to do it online

#### Steps:

- Beneficiaries build the questionnaire of relevant questions.
- Participants conduct interviews (either on the streets or in some community places, e. g., school, maybe inviting people to come to a specific place and talk to you or doing the same online).
- Analyzing the answers in a workshop setting, supported by youth workers.

#### **14. The Nobel prize**

Aim: Getting to know the resources of a specific context (e.g. neighborhood, school, village, city, etc.) and creating a space for community-building

Materials: papers, pens

Time: 1 hour for the preparation + the interviews itself from 1 hour to even 3 hours (depending on where it is done, if it’s outside on the street or inviting people to come to some place in advance) + the time to organize the event

Inside/Outside: both, also possible to do it online

#### Steps:

- Preparing the questionnaire of relevant questions.
- Interviewing one to one, random people in the street:

*“Hello, thinking about your neighborhood, who would you give the Nobel Prize to? Why?”*  
*E.g. “I would give it to Mr. Giuseppe who makes the best bread in town; I would give it to my father because he is the best dad in the world; I would give it to my teacher because she is always attentive and understanding towards me and my classmates, etc.”*

- The facilitator collects these answers and the contacts of the person mentioned, as well as the contact of the person interviewed.

- The person mentioned will be contacted and invited to a “Nobel Prize award event”  
*“Good morning, I am calling to inform you that you are a Nobel Prize winner today. We invite you to come and collect your prize on day X at Y at Z. You can also bring your family and friends.”*
- The team will have organized an event in a reachable, known and accessible place of that neighborhood attended by the people who have been interviewed and the people who have been mentioned.
- Create a convivial moment of meeting and exchanging ideas on relevant topics.

## BRAINSTORMING

### 15. A river of thoughts

Aim: to find as many as possible ideas

Materials: papers, pens

Time: up to 5 minutes

Inside/Outside: both, also possible to do it online

#### Steps:

Starting with a general theme that is shared and clear to everyone, participants are invited to write down everything that comes to mind without ever taking their pen off the paper for the duration of the song.

The facilitator chooses a song for reflection.

### 16. Mind Map

Aim: creating a lot of ideas without critically thinking and later looking for some links

Materials: paper, felt tips / pencil / pen / crayon, rubber if needed, sharpener if needed

Time: 15 - 20 minutes

Inside/Outside: both, also possible to do it online (e.g., on Mind Map Maker app, Miro)

#### Steps:

- There is one big topic which needs to be discovered & discussed further. The name of this big topic is written in the middle of the paper and usually a circle is drawn around it to improve visibility.
- From this central topic the participants should think of further related topics or ideas / thoughts connected to this topic, or associations and write them down next to the center. If the participants feel like their idea / thought etc. is closely linked to the main topic, then they should write it nearer to the center. If the idea / thought is not closely linked to the main topic but is still relevant then they need to write it more to the middle or further away from the center / middle.



+2 ideas:

Loesje method

This creative method can help the group get inspired, write slogans and discuss them. It should be facilitated by someone who knows the process, but you can find out more about it here: <https://loesje.org/>

Lego Serious play

Building models of ideas and discussing them (the models!) can be an excellent, and playful way to develop ideas in the group. You can find out more about it here: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lego\\_Serious\\_Play](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lego_Serious_Play)

## CHOOSING FORMS AND IDEAS

### 17. Fishbowl

Aim: to critically select the most important or useful ideas by encouraging going deeper into the topic and active listening

Materials: papers, pens

Time: 20 min.

Inside/Outside: both

Steps:

- The facilitator shares and clarifies the main topic. Participants are separated into an inner and outer circle.
- In the inner circle or fishbowl, participants have a discussion; participants in the outer circle listen to the discussion and take notes.
- After that follows the discussion with the reflection of the people of the outer circle and then all together.

### 18. Weighted voting

Aim: choosing the topics by voting

Materials: papers, pen, scissors

Time: 5-10 minutes

Inside/Outside: both

Steps:

- Making a vote. It can be kept secret by writing down on small pieces of paper, and if there are more topics to be chosen: everybody gets a certain amount of paper, e. g.: the group needs to choose 3 topics, so everybody gets 3 papers.
- Scaling them by marking the topic with a multiplier number, e. g.: hate speech x3, child poverty x2, women at the workplace x1.
- Counting the votes with the multiplier number.

## RISK ASSESSMENT

### 19. World Café method

Aim: to critically select the most important or useful ideas by encouraging going deeper into the topic and active listening

Materials: flipcharts, pens

Time: 2 hours

Inside/Outside: both, also possible online (e. g., with break out rooms)

#### Steps:

- The facilitator identifies the main topics to reflect on. (usually 3-5)
- Participants have 10-15 minutes to approach each table and discuss in the small group the topic, writing down:
  - the potential risk
  - how to face it
- Each topic-table will have a fixed reference person who will help the “newcomers” to reconnect with the previous discussion

The facilitator will manage the time using a sound (e. g., a clap).

- Every 10-15 minutes, when the facilitator claps, each participant will change the table (apart from the reference person).
- Once all the tables have been approached by all participants, the reference persons will share the results of the discussions in full. All participants will be invited to join the presentation and discuss.

## EVALUATION

### 20. Jar and powder

This is a self-evaluation method but can be adapted to evaluate other things (workshops, actions, etc.).

Aim: to develop awareness of the learning achievement at a personal level, to assess the learning experience

Materials: a transparent jar per person (like an empty marmalade jar), powder of 5 different colors per person

Time: 1 hour

Inside/Outside: can be done both, and also online and offline

Steps:

**Preparation:**

One week before the meeting, the facilitator asks participants to provide themselves with a transparent jar and five different colored powders.

**Implementation:**

- The facilitator asks participants to associate the following learning aspects to each color:
  - Awareness
  - Attitude
  - Knowledge
  - Competence and ability
  - Other
- Participants are invited to fill in the jar with the quantity of powder representing their learning achievements. It is not mandatory to use all the colors.
- Individually participants are asked to share with the group their jar describing which color refers to what and why. The jar becomes a way to measure the learning process visibly.



# ANNEX IV

## Case studies of local Social Action co-creation processes


In March 2022, a training was organized in Vilnius for youth leaders in order to empower them to facilitate local processes of Social Action co-creation (the content of the training is covered by this Guide, and its program is outlined in Annex I.) After that, in May–September 2022, local processes were organized by each of the partners, and in the following you can read about these experiences.

### Case Study 1.

Name of Organization: Crossing Borders
Country: Denmark
Contact Email Address: Emma Hyland – emma@crossingborders.dk, Rosangela Vertullo – rosangela@crossingborders.dk
Name of the workshop series: “Social Action – Designing & Implementing”
Place(s) of the workshop: Ubuntu House, Copenhagen x2 Union, Copenhagen x2
Dates of the workshops: August 12th, August 19th, August 27th, September 12th
Number of participants: 9

The series of workshops entitled “Social Action – Designing and Implementing” were held at Crossing Borders offices and had 9 participants from different backgrounds.





The majority of the young people in attendance were university students – amongst them were psychology students, anthropology students, environmental science students, as well as some recent graduates and unemployed youth. They were all between the ages of 21–28.

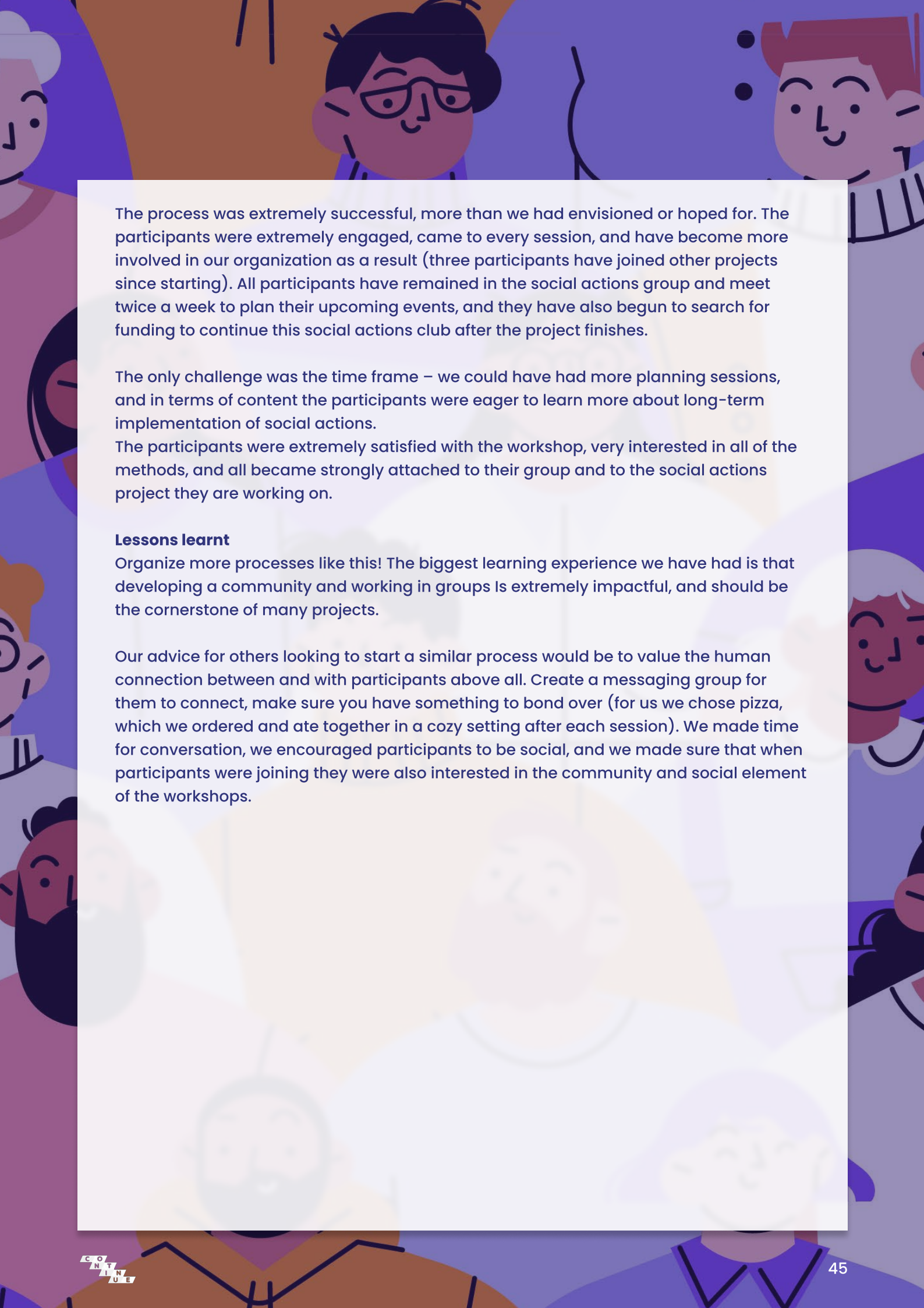
Furthermore, we chose to involve an associated partner in this process, a food-sharing NGO in Copenhagen called Madboks that works with a large team of volunteers to collect food waste from supermarkets around Copenhagen and create low-cost food boxes from it. We chose Madboks as a partner as they are a great example of a social action, conceptualized, implemented and managed by young people who value both the climate conservation aspects of the organization and the community. We felt this was an important link to have in our social actions process too.

The process began with exchange of intentions and the drafting of a timeline together with Madboks. Half of our participants were recruited from internal Madboks channels, but we also kept our call open to the public through posting about it on social media. We drafted the programme with our trainers over the course of the summer, and held our workshops on the last three Fridays of August and the second week of September. We made sure to include a communal dinner at the end of each workshop, which was hugely influential in creating a close-knit community amongst our participants. Each session was impactful and was met with a significant level of enthusiasm from our participants.

### **Social actions**

The main social action that was conceptualized and initiated by the participants was the creation of a social actions club, called “The Everything Social Club” which is designed to meet the needs of two main issues the participants felt were important for them: social isolation and lack of power. The Everything Social Club was built by the participants to be both a community and a source of education and initiative both for themselves and for other youth who want to be involved.

They have designed this club to consist of two meetings per month – one educational/ social workshop, where they invite speakers from social action projects in Copenhagen, and one field trip to the social action project. They already tested these social actions with a trial period, in which they held a workshop on food waste, with 5 participants presenting and facilitating activities, talks and quizzes, and a field trip which they took to Madboks, the associate partner for these social actions, where each of the 9 participants volunteered for 4 hours sorting food waste into saved food, and were able to see the real life impact of social actions. This club will continue each month and their aim is for it to spread and grow into a big community of youth activists. They will also start social media accounts where they share information about social actions and the local organizations that fight to make changes in society.



The process was extremely successful, more than we had envisioned or hoped for. The participants were extremely engaged, came to every session, and have become more involved in our organization as a result (three participants have joined other projects since starting). All participants have remained in the social actions group and meet twice a week to plan their upcoming events, and they have also begun to search for funding to continue this social actions club after the project finishes.

The only challenge was the time frame – we could have had more planning sessions, and in terms of content the participants were eager to learn more about long-term implementation of social actions.

The participants were extremely satisfied with the workshop, very interested in all of the methods, and all became strongly attached to their group and to the social actions project they are working on.

#### **Lessons learnt**

Organize more processes like this! The biggest learning experience we have had is that developing a community and working in groups is extremely impactful, and should be the cornerstone of many projects.


Our advice for others looking to start a similar process would be to value the human connection between and with participants above all. Create a messaging group for them to connect, make sure you have something to bond over (for us we chose pizza, which we ordered and ate together in a cozy setting after each session). We made time for conversation, we encouraged participants to be social, and we made sure that when participants were joining they were also interested in the community and social element of the workshops.

## Case Study 2.

Name of Organization: CRN
Country: Germany
Contact Email Address: Anja Söyünmez, <a href="mailto:asoeyuenmez@crnonline.de">asoeyuenmez@crnonline.de</a>
Name of the workshop series: Get Your Happiness Back!
Place(s) of the workshop: Aufbruch Neukölln e.V., Uthmannstraße 17-19 Berlin / Sprengelhaus-Straßenfest Sprengelstraße 15, Berlin
Dates and duration of the workshops: 20.08.22 (6,5h) & 04.09.22 (6h)
Number of participants: over 40 people

The age range of the group was from 9 years up to 30 years. It was a great workshop where young and old worked and learned together creatively. We had two trainers and two young people who were taught in the Vilnius training, plus one artist who led the art workshop and one other trainer who was leading the Loesje Campaign.





### **Any partners or stakeholders involved in the process? (if yes, describe them and their roles)**

We partnered up with Aufbruch Neukölln e.V., who gave us their rooms for the workshop, as well as the artist Ercan Arslan, who conducted the creative workshop on both of the days on which the workshop and the social action took place. The first workshop was with Aufbruch Neukölln e.V., and for the second one we teamed up with the SprenglHaus who gave us a stand at their street festival.

### **Outline of the process**

The process was carried out in its entirety. We did not face any difficulties. Our team met three times to discuss and organize the workshop and the street festival. There we divided the tasks and kept in close contact with each other as we communicated openly about the upcoming task. The first and second workshops went as planned and we did not face major difficulties. The only problem at our first workshop was that it started raining just as we had finished with the workshops and were planning to do a walking exhibition with all the created artwork and Loesje slogans – this sadly could not be realized. However, with the street festival that we took part in at SprenglHaus we had a very big outlet for dissemination and presentation of the art pieces and we gave another great art workshop

### **What were the social actions?**

As mentioned above, one of the social actions would have been the walking exhibition, which we got to exhibit the second time at SprenglHaus street festival. The creative art workshop together with the Loesje campaign at Aufbruch Neukölln e.V. and the SprenglHaus festival served as social actions. The title for our social action is “Get Your Happiness Back”, addressing how to overcome the depressing period of the Corona pandemic through creative processes.

### **What were the successes and challenges of the process?**

The whole process was a success, from the planning stages right through to the end.. We had many participants, our social actions were very popular and dissemination via social media and a short film received a lot of attention.

### **What was the feedback of the participants?**

The participants enjoyed the art workshop and the Loesje campaign a lot, as well as the topic, and asked for further workshops like these.

### **Lessons learnt (by organizers and by youth)**

Good organization beforehand as well as reliable project partners and good communication are all needed. Thankfully we had all three of these and could start planning, organizing and carrying out the workshops without any difficulties. The young people had had a lot of input from the Vilnius training and were full of energy and ideas on how to improve the workshop and the social action.

The background of the page is a colorful illustration featuring various stylized human faces and figures. At the top, there are three distinct faces: one on the left with white hair, one in the center with dark hair and glasses, and one on the right with red hair. Below these, the illustration continues with more faces and figures, some appearing as faint, larger-scale background elements. The color palette is dominated by purples, blues, and oranges. The overall style is modern and artistic.

### **Advice to people who are starting to run a similar process**

The workshops and the social actions should have a clear target group and a clear topic. For organizations it is always great to have connections to places where you can get a room for free or a reduced price. The team should have solid communication and tasks should be divided so that anyone can step in, in case someone gets sick or is unable to do the task for other reasons. Go through a risk assessment, talk through the implementation and don't forget to have an evaluation afterwards — talk about what can be improved and what went well. Don't forget catering if there is money for it. The workshop should also have more than one layer – we did this by having a creative workshop and the Loesje campaign. One is a creative tool for painting and the other is a creative tool with words. This way you can switch what you are doing in the workshop and get new input from new methods of learning.

### Case Study 3.

Name of Organisation: People's Voice Media (In partnership with Gorse Hill Studios)
Country: United Kingdom, England
Contact Name and Email Address: Georgia Davenport - georgia@peoplesvoicemedia.co.uk
Name of the workshop series (if any): CONTINUE Social Action Workshops
Place(s) of the workshop: In-person at Gorse Hill Studios in Stretford, Greater Manchester.
Dates and duration of the workshops: 3 Days: 22nd Aug, 23rd Aug & 1st Sep (3x 1.5 - 2hr sessions)
Number of participants: Workshop 1: 6 Young People Workshop 2: 6 Young People Workshop 3: 2 Young People

#### Composition and description of the group (Background, age of participants):

- Young people & young volunteers from Gorse Hill Studios' youth programmes
- Young people from GVO (Good Vibes Only), an unfunded community led youth group
- Age range of 13 - 20
- Varying ethnic backgrounds
- Some of the young people have experience of the care system



The process was carried out in collaboration with a partner organisation, GHS (Gorse Hill Studios):

Gorse Hill Studios (GHSCC) is an ambitious youth arts charity, who believe all young people have the right to social, emotional, and educational investment in their future. They work with young people encouraging them to value themselves by taking an active role in their community and learning. They support them with building achievable aspirational pathways for their futures.

- Recruitment of young people
- Provision of venue / meeting space
- Youth workers & staff to support sessions

### **Outline of the process (timeline and aim of sessions)**

#### **Session One: Introduction**

1. What is the CONTINUE Project?
2. Inspiration from other partners (Palermo & Vilnius)
3. Activity: Problem Tree

**Aim:** To contextualize the CONTINUE project, provide an introduction to social action and to explore social issues young people wanted to address.

#### **Session Two: Choosing A Topic**

1. Social Action planning outline
2. Examples of other Social Action activities
3. Activity: Pitching Ideas
4. Activity: Vote

**Aim:** To gain an understanding of what other social action activities exist and take inspiration from these. To develop pitches based on the Problem Trees created in the previous sessions and settle on one idea for the group to develop further in the final session.

#### **Session Three: Planning Our Social Action**

1. Activity: Photography & Social Action
2. Planning & Preparation
3. Activity: Ordering SA
4. Evaluation & Reflection

**Aim:** To develop an understanding of what steps should be taken when planning and delivering a Social Action. To evaluate and reflect on the workshops that have taken place as part of the CONTINUE Project.

#### **Further Reflections:**

- Intended start date was pushed back significantly due to staff changes at GHS (Late August as opposed to mid-May)

- Initially planned for the sessions to be full day workshops, however this proved difficult to arrange as other activities had been booked in at GHS due to timings of school holidays
- Shorter 2 hour-long sessions seemed to work well – it would have been difficult for the young people to engage for long periods of time and would have been a big ask in terms of them giving their time
- The guideline provided a broad strategy in terms of delivering social actions and the resources came in handy

### **What were the social actions?**

Young people settled on hosting some form of showcase event to promote the work Gorse Hill does in the local community. They also wanted to write an open letter to the people in their community expressing the need for safe spaces for young people and gather stories exploring people's understanding and experiences of safe and unsafe spaces.

Some of the group members had been working on a film project, during which they explored the theme of loss of safe space in their community following the COVID-19 pandemic. They have created a film which touches on the topic and invites people to think about what it means for young people to have access to safe spaces.

### **Successes of the process**

- During the initial exploration of SA (Social Action) and the brainstorming of ideas, the group size was larger
- There was plenty of content for the group to discuss and research further
- GHS have a strong connection to the young people they work with – this is something that helped ensure young people attended the sessions
- We have successfully planned our SA

### **Challenges**

- It was difficult to achieve a consistent level of attendance which meant the group members and size was different in each session
- When it came to the planning stage the group was significantly smaller – 2 young people – meaning it was a challenge to assign roles and responsibilities relating to the SA
- As PVM don't have a direct connection to the young people outside of the SA workshops (we recruit and engage via our partner GHS) it could have been a challenge for us to build relationships with the young people and encourage them to get involved with the project and show up to sessions
- Due to staff changes at GH the SA sessions started a lot later than initially planned, this made it difficult at times to arrange sessions and forward plan

### **What was the feedback of the participants?**

- Mixed response from young people
- Some engaged consistently and felt the workshops provided them with relevant information
- Some enjoyed the sessions and were happy to commit their time and energy to the social action activities
- Others were less connected to the aims of the sessions and doubted their ability to impact social issues
- Some attended only one session so it made it difficult to gauge their feedback
- One young person was a regular attendee of other sessions held at GHS and often volunteers their time supporting other workshops

### **Lessons learnt (by organizers and by youth)**

1. Timing – The sooner you book in the sessions the better!
2. Flexibility – Sessions should be planned in a way that can be easily adapted on the spot to suit group size / needs
3. Managing Expectations – Ensuring young people clearly understand the goals of the project, timescale of the sessions and capacity for social action means whatever you plan will be achievable
4. Commitment – Not everyone can give the same level of commitment, spending time exploring this and gaging what is possible will help when it comes to planning the SA, distributing responsibilities & actions

### **Advice to people who are starting to run a similar process:**

- Plenty of snacks and refreshments
- Check in regularly with the group and offer time for breaks
- Ensure you are aware of the capacity you possess in terms of delivering the social action to avoid overestimating what you can achieve in the time you have to plan and carry out the action.



#### Case Study 4.

Name of Organization: FAJDP
Country: Portugal
Contact Name and Email Address: Claudia Ferreira // Claudia.ferreira@fajdp.pt
Name of the workshop series (if any):
Place(s) of the workshop: Live at FAJDP House of Associations
Dates and duration of the workshops: 03 August 2022
Number of participants: 14

To complete this CONTINUE project task, FAJDP did work with young people from two different social neighborhoods in Gondomar, a city close to Porto. Both neighborhoods are known for their social challenges, such as unemployment or early drop off school. All participants are involved in the “Escolhas” project: a Portuguese government project aimed at socially disadvantaged young people. This one is running in a Youth Association affiliated in FAJDP – Associação Juvenil, Social, Recreativa e Cultural Vai Avante.

The group was between 13 and 18 years old and all the participants currently attend school.

In this process, 3 Youth Associations were involved: Vai Avante, with the participants group; FOCA (Focus on Critical Actions), with two mentors who helped with the process and CREFA (Animators Regional Training Center), who helped with the logistical aspect (coffee break, lunch, bus and informal activities).

The workshop was done in one day with the aim of creating three different social action. In the morning, we took time to get to know each other better with some informal educational activities and team-building games. In the afternoon we split into three groups, and built up the social actions after reflecting on social issues, choosing the topics, brainstorming and finding inspiration. A detailed programme of the day is attached at the end for more specific information.

During this co-creation process, we let the youngsters take the lead of what they wanted to approach. Each organization involved (FAJDP/FOCA/Vai Avante) had one group to mentor.

After some reflection and brainstorming, these were the topics they want to address as Social Actions:

- 1) Domestic Violence
- 2) Cyberbullying
- 3) What to be in the future/what profession to choose

And these were the chosen tools to make it happen:


- 1) Domestic Violence =====» making a video to disseminate on social media
- 2) Cyberbullying =====» awareness action for other young people
- 3) What to be in the future/what profession to choose =====» direct contact with professionals from different areas.

The video was made on the day of the workshop; the awareness action was made the week after the workshop for other young people of Escolhas Project and the third group had been in contact with different professionals from different areas who had talked with them about their professional realities.

It was challenging to keep everyone participating and engaged in the workshop activities all day long. But, in the end, all the participants were more aware about some issues (such as domestic violence and cyberbullying) and happy with the outcomes they co-produce.

In general, the feedback was positive. Not only because of the co-creation activities but also because the participants got the chance to leave Gondomar and visit Porto and FAJDP House of Associations (especially after two years of Covid-19 pandemic, this was a rare opportunity to leave their neighborhood).

For them, it was important to be heard about what concerns them the most and have the possibility to do something about it.

The background of the page is a colorful illustration of a diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities sitting in a circle. In the center of the page is a large white rectangular box containing text. The illustration uses a flat, modern style with bold outlines and a palette of purples, blues, and oranges.

FAJDP has learned that this is a process led totally by the participants. The more they are involved, the more they can conduct the process. Mentors and other similar participants should only interfere as process facilitators.

The participants learned, or became more aware, that they can act effectively in similar groups to this, and can co-create something with impact.

Our best advice is to trust in the co-creation process and in the participants.



### Case Study 5.

Name of Organization: Asociacija "Aktyvus jaunimas" (Active Youth Association)
Country: Lithuania
Contact Email Address: Evelina, evelina@akt.lt
Name of the workshop series (if any): -
Place(s) of the workshop: those workshops which were held live (there were 4 of them) were held in Active Youth office in Vilnius (once near the seaside in Klaipėda), and those workshops / weekly meetings which were online (there were 5 of them) were held via Zoom using extra platforms to collaborate - Miro and Trello
Dates and duration of the workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2022-05-08 (live) - 3,5 hours</li><li>• 2022-05-22 (live) - 5,5 hours.</li><li>• 2022-06-02 (online) - 2 hours.</li><li>• 2022-06-13 (online) - 1 hour.</li><li>• 2022-06-16 (online) - 1 hour.</li><li>• 2022-06-22 (online) - 1,5 hour.</li><li>• 2022-07-03 (live) - 5 hours.</li><li>• 2022-07-31 - the first social action live and its' reflection</li><li>• 2022-08-05 (live) - 2 hours.</li><li>• 2022-08-16 - the second social action live and its' reflection</li><li>• 2022-08-26 and 27 - the third online social action - awareness raising campaign</li></ul>
Number of participants: 4-7

### **Narrative description of the process**

The composition of the participants were quite diverse – youth from four different cities in Lithuania (the two largest cities in Lithuania and two small ones), youth from school-age (sixteen years old) to Masters students (twenty-six years old), and regarding gender, there was only one male participant, the rest were female. It is hard to know concretely their background in activism, but some were already active in the community, while others only started developing their activism and community skills in this project. The base of the process of the social actions was at most four or five people, while in total there were around nine (the number fluctuated).

A partner organization was included on one occasion: members of the Lithuanian Psychology Students' Association conducted experiential training on the topic of strengthening social skills (a three-hour event).

In terms of the timeline, it was initially planned to have one live workshop per month and weekly online meetings. It was intended that (almost) every time participants would have some kind of homework (to think about something, to look for inspiring action, to read something, to ask someone something, etc.) and come to the meeting prepared. This in general didn't work, even after having conducted a survey of the most suitable days and times and frequency of the meetings and having planned the calendar of the meetings in advance. It was summer and every time we had to ask whether people would attend the meeting on the agreed date and sometimes cancel it (this happened with one live workshop) and move it to another date due to a lack of availability among participants. This was because of the lack of responsibility of participants not to plan anything else on the agreed times, and also, of course, a summer being a summer, it was a time full of opportunities, events, vacations and other attractive things for young people.

Later in the project process, the more we stopped referring to the initial dates of the meetings as we were constantly adapting to the situation.

As regards the aim of the workshop sessions, the process was mostly planned in advance up until the point of having more specific ideas for social actions.

### **What were the social actions?**

From many discussions, our participants identified three of the most important problems for them:

- Decreased socialization (fear/awkwardness/difficulty in interacting in person, and not only interacting but also being physically close to other people. Decreased social skills of young people. Psychosomatics – physical pain in a significant number of young people due to anxiety and tension in dealing with people).
- Uncertainty, insecurity, fear of the future + societal pressures on young people, the imposition of a framework of what 'should' be, what 'should' be done by young people.



- Lack of critical thinking – not knowing about opportunities, not knowing how to use them, fake news, hate speech.

They combined all the ideas about these problems and decided to make a series of social actions under the same name "Deepen" ("Gilyn"), which aims to raise awareness of young people's post-pandemic emotional well-being and other issues.

There were three social actions made – two live as events, and one online as an awareness-raising campaign:

1. The first event was an experiential hike named "Žygis gilyn – patirk save" (EN. "Go deeper – experience yourself"), which aimed to raise awareness of young people's post-pandemic emotional well-being and other issues (reduced socialization, increased physical and emotional distance between (young) people, and deteriorating mental (and physical) health).
2. The second event was the discussion "I don't know, do you know?" ("Nežinau, tu irgi?"), which aimed to answer young people's concerns about their future due to societal pressures on what and when to do and about the crazy pace of the labour market, and to reassure them that every path is unique and it's okay to not know what you want yet.
3. The third social action was an online knowledge and awareness raising campaign implemented through "Active Youth" Instagram stories over 2 days. It aimed to raise awareness of the dangers of the internet and the power of the internet. One day was for cyber security, another day was for media literacy. Through polls, interesting facts and interesting links it engaged young people to gain knowledge and change their view on what is happening on the internet.

The biggest challenge was the time: holding the program in summer created difficulties in gathering participants and maintaining their motivation in developing of their ideas. The decrease in motivation was also prompted by the fact that participants didn't expect the process to be so time-consuming and long, but they understood that it was their choice to make three social actions, not one, even when it was mentioned later on again, which at the beginning looked easier and requiring less input than it was. The other demotivating factor was that the most motivated participants ended up with the heaviest workload. They were taking too much to themselves when less active participants didn't contribute. This led to burnout and the dropout of the leader of the group (it was also triggered by a misunderstanding and conflict with one of the members of the team).

Later on, it appeared to be that the large age difference between participants caused the younger ones to stay away and be more shy.

Having more online meetings than live ones also decreased the motivation levels.

The successful outcomes of the process were of course implemented social actions, new skills gained and experiences, and new connections. All of the social actions were quite successful.



#### Overall assessment by participants (from feedback questionnaire):

- "I liked this co-creation process very much overall" – 3.9 out of 5
- "The organized social actions were successful" – 3.8 out of 5
- "I grew up in this process – I learned about myself, I learned something" – 4 out of 5

#### More specific feedback from their quotes:

- "Most of our time was spent on the development of the idea and less on the implementation, the development. Later on, the processes accelerated significantly. I would have liked to maybe keep a similar pace all the time, or to start more quickly with the planning and testing of ideas (which we didn't do), although brainstorming is important too."
- "Role sharing did not work"
- "Distribution of work – some did a lot of work because others didn't take the initiative sometimes"
- "This project is definitely the longest I've volunteered on, so I feel very used to everyone, it will be strange when it's over"
- "I think it was a great experience to try out new opportunities, but the number of people involved was disappointing..."
- "I realized that I like social activities like this, I wanted to test myself, to get involved somewhere else. (Just not TOO much action)"
- "I learned about myself, about mental health. I realized that any practice is a good practice, even if the experience is not all happy and pleasant. I got out of my comfort zone many times during the project."
- "I really liked Miro. I learned empathy, to understand how others feel, to rethink, to acknowledge that these experiences can be different."

#### Lessons learnt by youth:

- "Common sense is not a common sense"
- Better time management and how to stay focused in a long online meeting
- Time planning could have been better
- Recognise your time constraints
- Important to communicate immediately if there are disagreements/concerns
- Ask more questions
- Try to spread the work out as much as possible, delegate
- Maintain group motivation
- While having online meeting it's much more effective and fun to do task when being together online rather than deciding on what to do and doing it individually
- Risks assessment wasn't done and the actions for them wasn't prepared
- Dissemination was usually started to do too late – there are many things to learn to foresee all of the processes
- I realized that I need to learn to listen much better, to listen to people's language, to enquire, and that team spirit is much more important than the result, however much I would like to achieve that perfection

- Can you identify with the idea of the project and how you personally benefit from it – essential questions

#### Lessons learnt by organizers:

- Summer is not the best time for long continuous processes (even though due to the weather it looks better, but young people also have more plans and their minds are somewhere else)
- Shorter process would be way better for such a process, but in general as well – it is hard to find youth to commit for that long period of time to participate in the project (one year) and to keep them engaged while their lives are changing very fast
- Even if organizing the event in summer (and if not as well) collecting participants from the same city would be much easier for the logistics – to meet in-person more often, be more effective and spend time together in-person informally. It's much easier to keep up the motivation in-person than online.

#### Some advice to people who are starting to run a similar process:

- Know why you're here and from time to time recall this
- Answer two key questions: can you identify with the idea of the project and what are the personal benefits?
- DON'T FORGET TO HAVE FUN
- Time management, both personally and as a team
- Communicate your needs and opportunities openly
- Focus on quality not quantity
- Take ownership and don't "overpower" team members
- Remember that it is the process that matters, not just the result
- Take things lightly and enjoy the process
- Agree meeting dates in advance

### Case Study 6.

Name of Organization: Per Eempio Onlus
Country: Italy
Contact Name and Email Address: Emanuela Firetto e.firetto@peresempionlus.org, Alberta Buffa a.buffa@peresempionlus.org
Name of the workshop series (if any): We run two different series of workshops for two social actions. Although we didn't pick specific names, one was in preparation for the Pride and the other was done at school.
Place(s) of the workshop: The workshops took place in person in two different locations: at the local high school Regina Margherita, and at Arci Porco Rosso Association
Dates and duration of the workshops: Pride workshop was the 4th of July, 3 hours at Porco Rosso; School workshops: 9th of June, 4th-5th-7th-8th of July, about 3 hours each meeting, at Regina Margherita School
Number of participants: about 20 participants in total

Per Eempio realized two youth-led social actions: one to raise awareness on gender equity preparing a collective action for the local Pride Parade, and another one to improve the school's environment through visual art.

The young people that participated in the social actions were all high school students, aged between 15 and 17 years old.

#### **Social action 1. "Students towards the Palermo Pride Parade"**

The process consisted of the following meetings:

1. Group building and framing: Meeting at the school to inform young people about the project and choose the topic of the social action led by the trained participants



The meeting took place at the school and involved students from different classes. The agenda was:

- Ice breaking and getting to know each-other games;
- Presentation of the project;
- Mapping social issues: sharing needs and desires in small groups
- Understanding the consequences and brainstorming about the social action: Discussion to make sense of the needs and desires expressed and identification of the topic: 1) raising awareness on gender equality, preparing a collective action for the local Pride Parade; 2) improving the school's environment through visual art.

2. Creating working groups and planning the social actions

3. Implementation of Social action 1. – Workshop: learning about gender equality, developing a better understanding about the Pride Parade and co-creating the banner The Pride workshop was run in collaboration with another local organization, CESIE, because they also work with young people and in particular with gender identity. The association Arci Porco Rosso offered their space for the workshop. The agenda of the workshop was as follows:

- Ice breaking and getting to know each-other games;
- Discussion about gender equality and brainstorming for the youth-led online platform “TheGenderTalk”, run by CESIE: how do we want this platform to be?;
- Discussion about what “Carriera Alias” is, how other schools can activate this tool to allow students to change their name in the school records according to their gender identity;
- Open discussion about what Pride means for young people through individual and group activities using the image-theater method, visual art, brainstorming and discussion, ;
- Preparation of posters and banners to bring to Pride.

4. Action: Participation in the Pride parade

The social action was then completed with the participation of young people in Pride the following week. Young people participated in the Pride Parade as a group bringing the materials created and using social media (photo and video on Instagram mainly) to raise awareness about gender equality, human rights and the political value of the Parade.

5. Evaluation of the social action

Young people met to share about the outcomes of the social action, facilitated by youth workers through non formal and active educational methods. The main highlights have been: Better understanding about the Pride parade and the human rights it supports; increased awareness about gender equality and freedom of expression; Improved skills in working as a team; Developed understanding of how to co-create social action; Reinforced relationships; Desire to participate more in collective initiatives in the community.

Participants enjoyed the workshop because Pride is something of great importance to them and they finally had the opportunity to discuss and brainstorm together on what it really means to them and work together towards a common goal.

## **Social action 2. “Improving the school’s environment through visual art”**

This Social action is part of a long-term, youth-led process of participation supported by Per Eempio together with the school and other youth organizations of the local field and it responds to one of the urgent needs expressed by students: to improve the school’s environment.

The workshops took place at the school and were organized by Per Eempio together with a representative group of the students committee and in collaboration with MoVI – Movimento di volontariato Italiano, a volunteering organization that works closely with the school.

The process consisted in the following meetings:

1. The first two meetings were the same as the Social action 1, in which several needs and topics have been identified.
2. Workshop: co-creation of thematic graphics in four meetings
  - Brainstorming what message the panels should send: on the first meeting, after an ice-breaking game, the group discussed the content of the graphics and working method. They decided to use visual arts to bring attention to a specific problem: the massive rubbish bins that were always full, placed right next to the school gates. MoVI proposed providing panels that students could decorate and then hang outside the school. Therefore, all other workshops were spent as follows:
  - Designing the panels: the next three meetings were dedicated to the co-creation. It was decided to have four thematic areas: civil rights, local history, freedom and environment. Participants were divided in four groups to tackle each thematic area. They decided to use mostly photos for the panels.

## **Results**


The students have inaugurated the first self-managed space in which they can meet after school to carry out social activities that are open to the neighbourhood, in which they can study in the afternoons and in which they plan to set up student radio.

The entrance to their school, in Piazza Casa Professa, in Ballarò, is surrounded by rubbish and neglect. That is why they have placed denunciation panels all around it on which they have depicted some themes dear to them, from the anti-mafia to the fight for climate justice, for social justice and for freedom, so that beauty – they explain – can contrast the brutness and the distortions around them.

## **Lessons learnt**

Students were very happy to participate in this kind of activity and felt very motivated to engage in a social action that could improve their school’s experience. The only challenge we faced was communicating and organising the social action with the school.





From the two experiences we learned that a social action can take off from a recognized and felt need. The school can be a fertile ground to encourage social action because students can easily recognize themselves as a community and feel committed. Arts and enjoyment are key words for a learning process. The first gives the chance for everyone to fully express personal feelings and thoughts; the second helps to “stay within” the experience and participate in it. Youth workers are asked to guarantee a secure and non-judgmental space in which to act, first of all through active listening which seems to be one of the main requests from adolescents.

Moreover, the social action responded to the desire to make the school more open towards the community. Students strongly expressed their intention to establish an active dialogue between the school and the city, co-creating learning experiences together with the youth organizations and stakeholders of the local field. This would make the school a “life gym” where to practice and train active citizenship. To start a similar experience, it would be important to reflect on which participants you want to involve and why. The experience showed us that “one shot” activity requires a lot of effort for small impact. For this reason we recommend first identifying the people with whom you want to build a process of change in a medium or long-term perspective. It is suggested to identify a group of peers who may share a common interest or need to address. Youth workers should be ready to represent a point of reference for adolescents, to be present with active listening and let young people act, trusting them because they know more than is generally expected. Use art and music in your workshops, it helps to create a welcoming and open educational environment.



### Case Study 7.

Name of Organization: Artemisszio
Country: Hungary
Contact Name and Email Address: Olga Irimias, olga.irimias@artemisszio.hu
Name of the workshop series (if any): Make a change!
Place(s) of the workshop: Central European University, Budapest, Nador u. 13.
Dates and duration of the workshops: 28th May., 4th, 11th, 18th June between 13.45–17.00.
Number of participants: 13

We organized a series of 4 consecutive workshops in the framework of the Olive program of the CEU. It was offered as one of the courses of the program, so some students of Olive (with refugee background) came to participate and we also invited some young people with migrant backgrounds from our Mira intercultural community.

So, the group was heterogeneous in terms of background: some participants moved to Hungary many years ago and some of them just arrived a few weeks before the workshops. But all the participants shared a migratory or refugee background, and the majority came from African countries. Most of the participants were working in Hungary (largely for multinational companies). They were largely in their late 20s.

The plan of the sessions was as the following:

Session 1: Group building, getting to know each other, mapping issues, problem tree in small groups, presentation about inspiring social actions, brainstorm about ideas

Session 2: Focus on issues, choosing topics, forming small groups, start planning

Session 3: Realization

Session 4: Evaluation, lessons learnt, future plans, closing


We followed the plan in the first two sessions, but the group (they were working on two separate actions in subgroups) did not finish planning by the end, so the third session was also spent on planning, and realization was shifted to the fourth session, leaving little time for evaluation in the end.

The two social actions realized by the working groups were:

- Initiation of a podcast for foreigners living in Hungary about essential information, such as access to healthcare or finding a job. The process started with a very thorough needs assessment in the form of a questionnaire which was filled by about 50 people. A plan for the podcast was outlined and during the workshop process, young people arranged the background needed (technicalities, online platform, planning content, organizing possible experts to interview, etc.). The podcast series was planned as a longer process, which reaches over the end of our 4 workshops, but was kick-started there
- The other working group organized a public event with the title "Dare to print it", where people were encouraged to come up with slogans that are important to them and represent their beliefs and wishes, especially about topics of mental health and social change. Participants could print their messages on T-shirts or tote bags with silkscreen printing, with their own hands.

The group was very fluctuating, which was a challenge, but there was a core group of 5 people with whom we could really develop the actions (the rest were more like occasional companions on the way). The youngsters who were actively engaged said at the end that it was an empowering experience for them, which showed them the possibility of really having an impact on society and inspired them to make similar actions in the future.

Apart from the fluctuation in the group, the co-creation aspect was also challenging: we had to take some tasks and roles in our hands as organizers (administration, finances, etc.), and some tasks were clearly done by the young people, but there were gray zones in between, where the roles and decision making capacities were not clear (and because of the short time frame, there was no time to clarify those details). As a result, sometimes it was unclear who was in charge of what, which was especially a problem in the case of the public event. The group members had to stay attentive and proactive to solve some emerging problematic situations.

The background of the page is a colorful illustration of a diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities sitting in a circle. In the center of the page is a large white rectangular box containing text. The text is in a dark blue, sans-serif font. The text reads: "Lessons learnt: more time is needed for planning and realization than we planned. Also, allowing more time in the beginning to get to know each other might have created a stronger group cohesion and decreased fluctuation in the group. I would suggest others doing a similar process to allow more time for it than what we had (4x3 hours)." The text is left-aligned within the white box.

Lessons learnt: more time is needed for planning and realization than we planned. Also, allowing more time in the beginning to get to know each other might have created a stronger group cohesion and decreased fluctuation in the group. I would suggest others doing a similar process to allow more time for it than what we had (4x3 hours).



### Case Study 8.

Name of Organization: Youth Europe Service (YES)
Country: Italy, Potenza
Contact Name and Email Address: Anna Cierpiol, euroidea.fsk@gmail.com
Name of the workshop series (if any): Social Action Workshops
Place(s) of the workshop: Artistic high school – Liceo artistico, Liceo Statale "Walter Gropius", Potenza
Dates and duration of the workshops: 14/09/2022– 2h 15/09/2022– 2h 19/09/2022– 2h
Number of participants: 14/09/2022– session 1 – 15 students of 5C class 15/09/2022– session 2 – 13 students of 5C class 19/09/2022– session 3 – 15 students of 5C class (1 disabled student was included)

Three groups introduced their ideas of social actions.

They made a video during all processes of co-creation and interviewed YES staff to properly describe the process.

They were very active and took initiative into their hands.

Before distributing the petition we (trainers and students) brainstormed and shared the action plans.

The first selected social action was not accepted by the institute, this happened after the second session.

Students presented the idea to the headmaster and asked for permission and feedback about their social action idea, so as to not waste the time on planning an impossible action.

During the last session, students brainstormed and selected the second action to implement.

They collected 503 signatures on the petition during the third session. More than half of the students of the institute signed this petition.

After the workshop sessions they were working on the video, graphics, and final presentation of the co-creation experience.

#### Composition and description of the group (Background, age of participants)

- Young people, final year students of artistic high school, from one class
- One disabled student
- Age range of 17 - 18
- Italians
- Some were already experienced as volunteers working with children and elderly people, some were activists.

We worked with an artistic high school - Liceo artistico, Liceo Statale "Walter Gropius" in Potenza, Italy.

#### Timeline of sessions

##### Session One: Introduction

1. What is the CONTINUE Project?
2. Inspiration from others social actions - from problem to solution
3. Activity: Problem Tree
4. Introduction of social action context and examples

Aim: To contextualize the CONTINUE project, provide an introduction to social action and to explore social issues young people wanted to address. To gain an understanding of what other social action activities exist and take inspiration from these.

##### Session Two: Choosing A Topic

1. Social Action planning - Activities in three groups (choice of the theme, type, objective, target group of the social action)
2. Activities: Presentations
3. Activity: Vote
4. Activity: Brainstorming and selection of one social action, thinking whether it is applicable or not

Aim: To develop pitches based on the Problem Trees, and local community problems discussed in the previous sessions. Selecting three ideas and voting for one idea which the group will develop further in the final session.

### Session Three: Planning Our Social Action

1. Planning & Preparation of Petition
2. Activity: Pitching Ideas - Video, Photography, graphics & Social Action
3. Activities : Presenting petition to the whole institute, getting feedback and support signatures

### After the workshops

1. Presenting petition to the institute council
2. Video making - documentation of whole process
3. Graphics for social media making

### Final session

1. Evaluation & Reflection
2. Video interview with the project staff

### What were the social actions?

After brainstorming during the second session, nine ideas emerged and three were selected for further consideration.

The problem that we identified was related to the social exclusion of youth in different environments (school, safe place/home, community).

The solution was chosen from three ideas of actions for social inclusion:

1. Petition for Neutral Bathroom for LGBTQ+ community or those who are facing gender-fluid issues. Gesture of inclusive approach and welcoming and supporting them in the school.
2. Petition for Creativity Wall - where students in the public space of the institute are able to express feelings by drawings, and texts, sharing them with the school community. The aim is a creative dialogue with the school community, raising problems to look for help or support, and sharing positive and negative feelings to find solutions. A Creativity Wall is a place where students can discover that they are not alone with their feelings and there are also others that could face the same problems, so they can support each other and work on solutions.
3. Social Circles - to socialize, share interests, get feedback and support each other (refers to non-formal, informal education, sexual education, and other issues not addressed by public educational programs).

### Results of the process

- 503 signatures under petition for Creativity Wall implementation and presenting a formal petition to the institute.
- Video about the social action building process and presenting three social actions
- One graphic Manifest of social action Creativity Wall
- One logo of social action Creativity Wall made by a disabled student



### **Successes and challenges of the process**

With the process, we succeeded in activating young people.

Students were very active and also went to the headmaster to ask for all permissions and feedback about their social action idea, so as to not waste the time on useless action.

It was challenging for the facilitator not to control the process and leave the young people free to act.

All students were involved in the process, they shared their ideas, decided on task implementation, and fulfilled all the planned actions.

### **Advice for facilitators of a similar proces**

- Trust in your youth and stimulate the dialog between them.
- Build a safe space.
- Let the group members express themselves.