



# EDUCATHE+ EXPANDER



**EDUCATIONAL THEATRE AS THE PLACE OF RAISING INCLUSION  
AND EMPLOYABILITY OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY**

**LTT C3 „FORUM THEATRE AS EDUCATIONAL TOOL“**

(Kraków, Poland)



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Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

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Educational theatre as the place of raising inclusion and employability of people with disability – Expander

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## CONTENTS

<b>ABOUT EDUCATHE+ EXPANDER</b>	4
<b>FORUM THEATRE AS EDUCATIONAL TOOL: SHORT DESCRIPTION OF FORUM THEATRE</b>	8
<b>GETTING YOU STARTED: FEW EXAMPLES OF EXERCISES</b>	13
<b>EXERCISE 1: WALKING</b>	14
<b>EXERCISE 2: PHOTOGRAPHY/STILL IMAGE</b>	15
<b>EXERCISE 3: STATUE</b>	15
<b>EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK</b>	16
<b>WORKSHOP</b>	17
<b>REFERENCES</b>	19

## ABOUT EDUCATHE+ EXPANDER



Educathe+ Expanded (full title: „Educational theatre as the place of raising inclusion and employability of people with disability – Expander“) is an international educational partnership funded by the programme of European Union for education Erasmus+<sup>1</sup>, under contract number 2019-1-HR01-KA204-060833. In a broader context, this partnership is a continuation of the successful [Grundtvig workshop \(2013\)<sup>2</sup>](#) and [Erasmus+ partnership \(2015-2017\)<sup>3</sup>](#) and aims to expand those positive educational experiences both geographically and in practice – by introducing new locations, new partners, and new methods into Educathe+ corpus of knowledge about using educational theatre in working with people with

disability.

The partnership consists of five partner organisations that originate from [Lisbon](#) (Portugal), [Škofja Loka](#) (Slovenia), [Zagreb](#) (Croatia), [Krakow](#) (Poland) and [Skopje](#) (North Macedonia). It is coordinated by a public cultural centre with years of experience in developing and implementing inclusive educational programmes, Trešnjevka Cultural Centre CeKaTe from Zagreb (website: [www.cekate.hr](http://www.cekate.hr)). They are joined by Associacao Vo'Arte from Lisbon (website: [www.voarte.com](http://www.voarte.com)), Zavod TRI from Škofja Loka, Slovenia (website: [www.zavod-tri.org](http://www.zavod-tri.org)), Fundacja Inicjatyw Tworczych i Społeczno – Edukacyjnych Kurdybanek from Krakow, Poland (website: [www.kurdybanek.com](http://www.kurdybanek.com)), and Union- National Council for Gender Equality from Skopje, North Macedonia (website: <http://www.sozm.org.mk>). While all partner organisations Beside the later partner organisations, all but one have experience of working with people with disability by means of educational theatre.

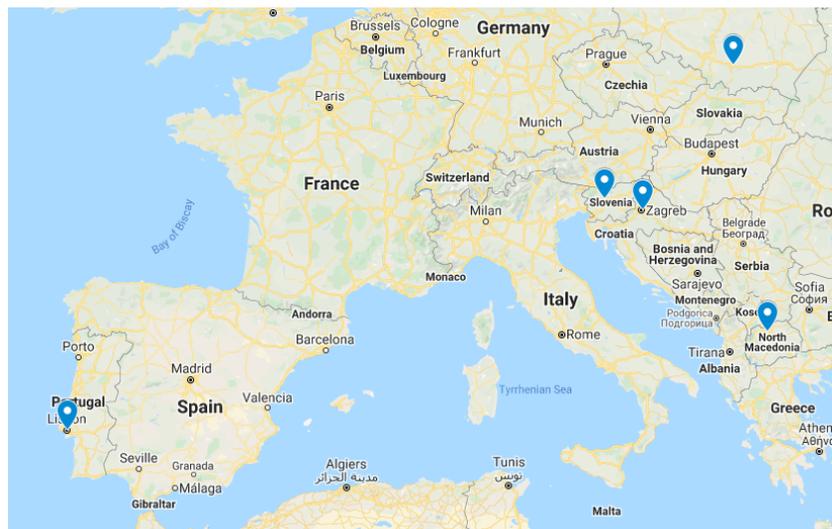


Figure 2: Locations of partner organisations

<sup>1</sup> For more information about Erasmus+, please visit Erasmus+ official webpage: [https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en)).

<sup>2</sup> Educational Theatre as the place for overcoming discrimination of people with disabilities (contract number 2012-1-HR1-GRU13-01891).

<sup>3</sup>

Starting from 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2019 and ending on 31 July 2022, during 32 months of implementation, partner organisations are dedicated to achieving three main priorities in non-formal education, in accordance with Erasmus+ programme:

- ADULT EDUCATION: Extending and developing the competences of educators and other personnel who support adult learners
- HORIZONTAL: Social inclusion
- HORIZONTAL: Supporting educators

To achieve those goals, partners have a plan of organising and implementing various educational and promotional activities that will produce both educational outcomes and (non-formal) outputs.

Namely:

- 3 Transnational project meetings (TPM meetings TPM1 - 3) for project managers
- 5 international Learning, Teaching, Training Activities (LTT workshops C1 – C5) for educators, people with disability and assistants
  - that will end with 5 public performances given in front of live audience
  - and 5 live streams published online (livestream of 5 public performances)
  - with 5 public debates about the labour market status of people with disability and those who work with them

During that time, partner organisations will organise 60 mobilities, with an equality formula “20-20-20” (people with disability – assistants – educators), focused on raising their [Key Competences \( European Commission, 2018\)](#), “soft-skills”, empowering and motivating participants for active participation on the labour market.

Partners will also promote the project on its

- free web platform (E+ Toolbox repository with examples of good practices)
- and social media (Facebook, Instagram etc.),
- as well as on websites of each of the partner organisations

Based on their experiences, partner organisations will publish:

- 5 E+ Manuals (digital publications for educators) on EU-wide platforms such as EPALE or SALTO
- accompanied with 5 E+ educational videos (short videos showing the method used at a particular educational workshop).

In the broadest sense, these publications (E+ Manuals and E+ Videos) have the purpose of sharing the knowledge and experiences of working in an international setting and using educational theatre in non-formal education, especially when working with people with disability, and when (equally important) promoting their capabilities so that we diminish their stigmatisation in the general public and on the labour market.

In other words, this partnership has multifold impacts that can be divided into direct and indirect ones. The direct impacts are: 1) raising the key competences of educators (staff working with and for people with disability), people with disability, and their assistants; 2) actively promoting social inclusion (via publications, promotional campaigns, and public performances); and 3) supporting educators and all

others involved by providing them with international professional and educational experiences that will come in handy when participating on a labour market. Indirectly, this partnership will produce outputs (this E+ Manual, E+ videos, recordings of live performances etc.) that have the potential to impact the wider professional and amateur audience and, hopefully, promote the use of educational theatre in non-formal education, art and disability work.

The main educational activities of this partnership are its workshops. These workshops are hosted by all partners (one partner hosts while all other partners join) and focused on sharing their particular style of educational theatre and of working with people with disability. Each workshop ends with a public performance in which all participants present their work together – to the live audience at the venue<sup>4</sup>, but also for the online audience via livestream link on our official YouTube channel. To see the performances live, or access the video archive, please follow this [link](#).

To learn more about the partnership, get news and updates on our performances, or access the archive with all activities of the partnership, please:

...visit the official webpage of the partnership: <https://cekate.hr/program/educathe-expander/>

...follow us on Facebook <fb.me/educathe.expander>

... Instagram [@cekate.hr](https://www.instagram.com/cekate.hr)

...or Twitter [@cekatezg](https://twitter.com/cekatezg)

... with the official hashtag of the partnership **#eplusexpander**

PARTNER	ACRONYM	WEBSITE	COUNTRY	CITY
Trešnjevska Cultural Centre	CeKaTe	<a href="http://www.cekate.hr">www.cekate.hr</a>	Croatia	Zagreb
Associacao Vo'Arte	Voarte	<a href="http://www.voarte.com">www.voarte.com</a>	Portugal	Lisbon
Zavod TRI	Zavod 3	<a href="http://www.zavod-tri.org">www.zavod-tri.org</a>	Slovenia	Škofja Loka
Inicjatyw Tworczych i Społeczno – Edukacyjnych Kurdybanek	Kurdybanek	<a href="http://www.kurdybanek.com">www.kurdybanek.com</a>	Poland	Krakow
Union- National Council for Gender Equality	NCGE	<a href="http://www.sozm.org.mk">http://www.sozm.org.mk</a>	North Macedonia	Skopje

Figure 3: Overview of partner organisations

<sup>4</sup> At the time of writing this publication, it has become obvious that restrictions due to COVID-19 might interfere with organising our workshops and especially live performances, even with the livestream performances (since organisers have to think of the safety of the performers, as well of the safety of the audience).



# FORUM THEATRE AS EDUCATIONAL TOOL: SHORT DESCRIPTION OF FORUM THEATRE

## FORUM THEATRE AS EDUCATIONAL TOOL: SHORT DESCRIPTION OF FORUM THEATRE

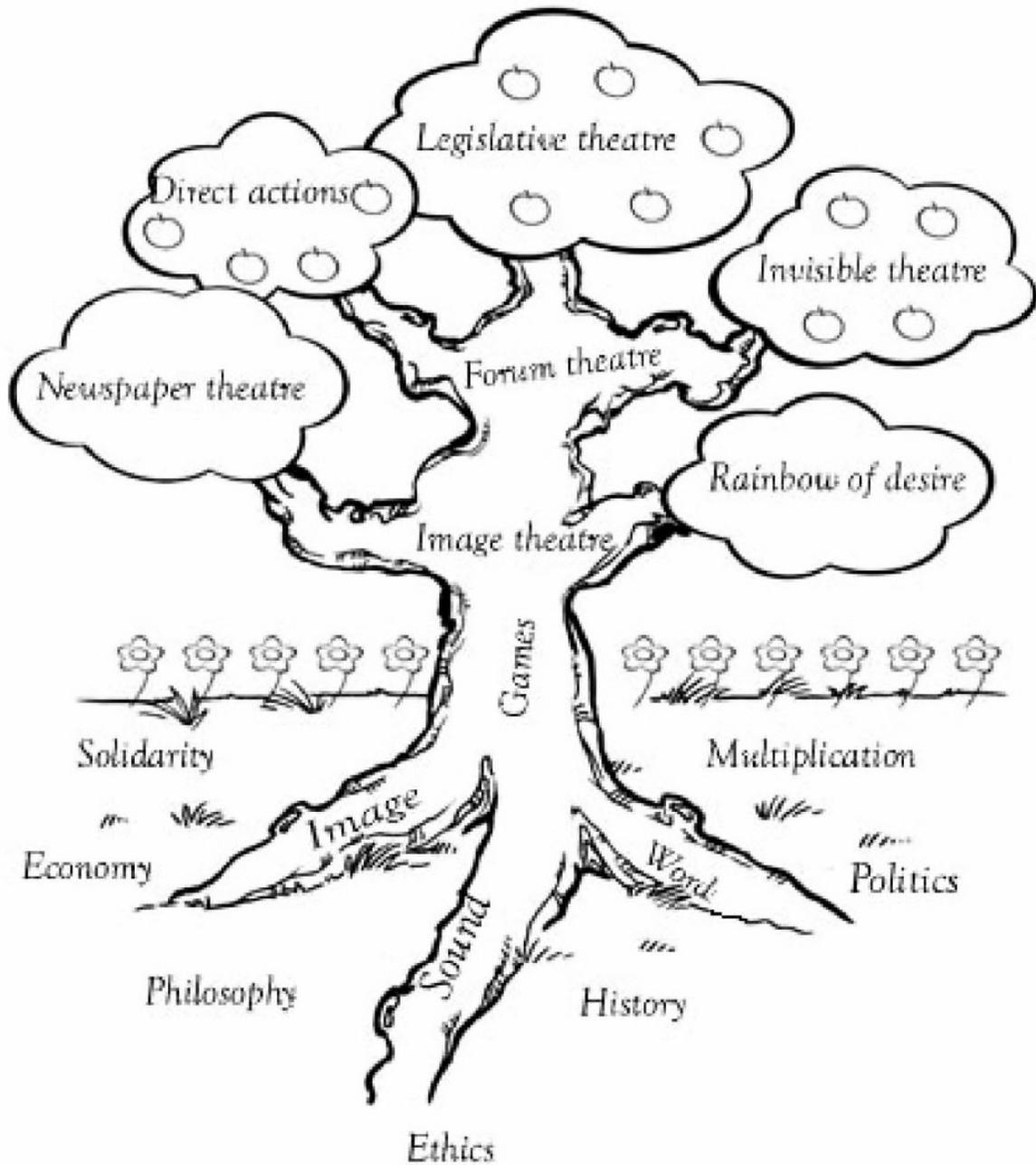
“Forum Theatre as educational tool” was the third workshop in our partnership, and it took place in [Centrum Obywatelskie](#) in Kraków, Poland, from 16<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2022. Below, there are the main goals and the outcomes of the workshop presented:

- to introduce participants to FT (Forum Theatre) method as an educational tool
- to equip participants with the skills of using the method in favour of facilitating the debates on the topic of countering exclusion and discrimination in the local and international context
- to raise the capacity of partner organisations by equipping them with a new method of working with people with disabilities
- to reflect on situations of oppressions in the life of participants and their social circles

As a result of this workshop, there have been 2 scenarios created and performed with interventions from the audience. The recording of both plays is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qRKooh3Kblg&t=6339s>

Forum Theatre is a drama method derived from the Theatre of the Oppressed, created by the Brazilian director Augusto Boal. The key values of this method are based on the democracy of the entire theatrical and drama process, in which many actors take part in the ‘game’, becoming active creators of their own fate, able to question the existing order and act for change. The spectacle is created during many meetings, and the characters and scenes are the results of work on a problem participants face, TF is therefore not role-playing, from the very beginning, it is based on ‘entering the role’ - this is a fundamental difference. Forum Theatre allows expressing disagreement with injustice expressively and symbolically. It is a theatrical method that aims to create a space for dialogue on topics related to the oppressive situation and to look for solutions to get out of these situations and understand the mechanisms behind them. Forum Theatre is, on the one hand, an activity that empowers discriminated groups through a common feeling of injustice and disagreement with it, and on the other hand, by acting out improvised oppressive situations, it becomes a kind of general attempt at social change. Oppression presented in the Forum Theatre is focused on the fate of a specific individual, the main character (protagonist). With this character’s problems, the audience is identified (spect-actors), and this character’s behaviour can be changed during the intervention. This is of great importance because, in a symbolic sense, the protagonist symbolises us, our loved ones and friends. So, only we have a say in how we behave in this situation. Trying to change the protagonist’s behaviour is like exercising and strengthening one’s readiness for change, for courage and strength, Forum Theatre is a theatre of questions, not answers. Everyone must answer the question themselves. On the one hand, therefore, the idea of TF is to reflect and research on different topics, but on the other hand, by showing the possibility of change and finding common ground concerning the subjects, it is also about empowerment.

## Tree of the Theatre of the Oppressed



## VOCABULARY

**Oppression** - it starts when the dialogue turns into a monologue. It may be caused by the difficulty to solve a political or social problem that affects a person, a 'no way out' situation. The oppressor can be a single person or a system. Oppression is the axis of the TF performance. Although it may be growing and strong, the oppression in the play must not show a situation with no way out when there is nothing more you can do, no way you can help. It must be possible for the target groups to cope with it.

**Protagonist** - the main character of the Forum Theatre spectacle. A person who is in a situation of oppression. They try to overcome it but also feel helpless, stuck, at a dead end. It is the protagonist with whom the spect-actors identify and, through their involvement in his situation, look for solutions, intervene and try to change the way they act. Taking this role, they experience life and reality 'as if', thereby strengthening themselves and the protagonist. Forum Theatre needs to see that the change of reality begins with a change of own thinking and acting. And it does not give an answer.

**Antagonist** - oppressor. A person who puts pressure on a protagonist 'pushes him against the wall'. The antagonist can be a figure of a personified system. It is worth following the principle that the antagonist is less sympathetic than the protagonist. Sometimes the attempts appear to justify the antagonist – which opposes the idea of Forum Theatre. The antagonist can be a multidimensional character (as in real life), but in performance, we show oppression and focus on how to overcome it, and how to deal with it. Therefore, FT deals with the protagonist, strengthening and empowering him, not the antagonist

**Spect-actor** - the audience of the Forum Theatre session, involved in the process of generating solutions to the protagonist's situation. This involvement is possible due to the fact that the spectacle is dedicated to a homogeneous group by which the presented problem is identified. This condition makes the audience speak. In order for the audience to transform into spect-actors, it is necessary to break the barrier: stage - audience. That is why Boal emphasises the importance of establishing contact with the audience through various exercises, establishing a theatrical community and introducing Joker - a person who builds a safe atmosphere.

**Forum Session** - the whole event, starting with introducing the audience to the subject, presenting actors, breaking the barrier: stage - audience, playing the performance twice, interventions, summary, the role of the Joker. The spectacle transforms into a social debate.

**Dynamisation** - a category that replaces catharsis in Forum Theatre. It is a concept introduced by Augusto Boal, which consists of the active involvement of the spectator in the activities taking place on stage and thus transferring them further into real life. Crossing one's boundaries in intervention in thinking contribute to attempting this transgression in reality. The viewer leaves the theatre with a desire to change the harmful social situation.

**Joker** - the person who runs the entire Forum session, asks questions. He introduces spectators to the subject and manages interventions; he is the link between the actor, the audience and the intervening person. He assists but does not affect solutions; he is impartial. One of the most important things that the Joker is responsible for is always referring to what has been said and not to his own interpretations. He formulates statements in the form of questions; he does not decide on anything.

**Intervention** - a situation in which, during the second performance, the spect-actor can stop the action at any time, „stop”; and try to solve the protagonist's situation in a different way, propose him a different

behaviour/resolution. Thus, it expands the spectrum of possibilities for action, empowering the protagonist, the audience who identifies with the protagonist.

## THE PROCESS

The whole process of building forum theatre play may be contained in the following subsections:

- Building the group: as most of the group work, workshops, trainings, we start from group building activities, such as: ice-breaking games, getting to know each other games, team building games and also the space for discussing the frames of working and being together. This phase is focused on building group identity and responsibility for the whole project/event.
- Introducing and working on the terms of oppression, roles and statuses: in this phase, we introduce how the oppression is understood by Boal and in Forum Theatre and how it is understood by the group. By using different applied drama activities, we explore and discuss on power differences, statuses and roles we are in or take.
- Building the spectacle: in this phase, we share the stories which happened to us or involved us directly or indirectly. Based on these stories, we build the plot and scenes of the spectacle. Here we work also on the characters, stressing out their motivations which is crucial for improvising the dialogues and further on to react to interventions. In this phase, there are theatrical exercises used, exercises for deepening the characters and polishing the artistic dimension of the play.
- Forum spectacle – below, we are presenting what the structure of the spectacle looks like usually:
  1. Welcoming the audience and warm-up: this part is made by the Joker, and the warm-up aims to engage the audience from the very beginning and to dare the public to intervene during the second play
  2. Introduction of the characters and the background: in this part, the audience gets familiar with the main themes and the characters on the stage, so they know what to pay attention to.
  3. Showing the play: a play should not be longer than 15-20 minutes and at the same long enough to present the highest tension point, to introduce and get familiar with the characters, know their patterns of behaviour.
  4. Discussion: by asking questions, Joker communicates with the audience in order to begin the “research” on oppression and spot the moments when something “didn’t feel right.”
  5. Second time play with interventions: the play is shown a second time, anyone from the audience can clap and stop the play at a chosen moment where they feel something can be changed. Here is the most important part, so the FORUM part begins. It is deepening our research on oppression, discussing its different perspectives, and gathering learning outcomes. NOTE: in a classical forum play, we replace only the protagonist, so the character the spect-actor identifies with. We follow the approach that the change of

reality begins with a change of own thinking and acting. The antagonist(s) may also be oppressed, but it is a different story for another forum play.<sup>5</sup>

Depending on the resources available, group members, finances and purpose, the whole process may last a week, weeks, month or months.

Below is presented the draft agenda how we designed the time given:

Day 1: Welcome, the introduction of the team, introduction to the project and brief information about forum theatre. The name game, exercise based on walking (which we present in different variations in the exercise section), speed dating for getting to know each other, debriefing and group contract. Exercises introducing the terms of “statue”, “photo/image”, “machine”. Closing circle

Day 2: Working with statues and sculptures, discussion about needs. Columbian hypnosis exercise and debriefing. Short lecture deepened the concept of theatre of the oppressed and forum theatre, learning the vocabulary. Closing circle

Day 3: Creating sculptures of the oppressor, sharing stories of oppression, splitting into working groups. Searching for the moments of strongest oppression in the stories, building statues and dynamising them. Improvisations. Closing circle

Day 4: Working on the scenes, improvisations and deepening the characters, introducing the “hot chair” technique and 5 levels of consciousness. Closing circle

Day 5: Spectacle day, deepening the characters, practising interventions, setting the stage, performances. Sharing emotions as and actors and spect-actors, discussion about the method, closure of the training course.

Comments from the facilitators: During these few days, we decided to combine the group process with meta-level comments and discussions in order to achieve 2 goals – firstly, to provide participants with the space of experiencing the forum process from the very beginning, so group forming until the very end, which in our case was presenting the plays in front of other group members and reacting to interactions. According to us, the time planned was very short and turned out to be sufficient only because of the fact that the group was very cooperative, goal-oriented and motivated to learn the technique. For a combination of both: experiencing the process and learning the process, we do recommend a longer period of time or different time spacing of the workshop, for instance, a month-long process (usually 40-50 hours) plus meta-level debriefing after all. Another recommendation is to plan a day or two for work with the theatre director and, in the best-case scenario, the director who is already familiar with the concept of forum theatre or similar spectacles. This work would enrich the artistic dimension of the final play and contribute to the public’s engagement. Extra days could also be added for practising interventions within the groups, so the actors can gain confidence in reacting to different approaches and ideas performed by the spect-actors.

Last but not least, we see a workshop on Joking as complementary to such kind of a course. In our case, the facilitators took over the roles of jokers. In the end, as a result of our workshop, participants came up

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with Adrian Jackson, part 1 by Drama Way Foundation  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GL5LVZaHQz4&t=1s>

with two universal (in terms of the theme) scenarios and created plays, which could be easily shown to the public and which we see quite impressive in such a short time period.

## GETTING YOU STARTED: FEW EXAMPLES OF EXERCISES

### GETTING YOU STARTED: FEW EXAMPLES OF EXERCISES

In this section, we would like to share with you a few exercises, often well known and inspired by Augusto's Boal collection of exercises, which we adapted for the purpose of this training. We would like to highlight that these are theatrical warm-up exercises, which can also be used for other types of applied theatre, regular theatre or non-theatrical activities – for energising the group, familiarising with the space, getting accustomed to entering different roles.



## EXERCISE 1: WALKING

This exercise in different variations can be used in each phase of the process, from the getting to know each other phase till deepening the characters.

- The group may walk/move (tip: in case of having in a group people with disabilities, you may consider asking participants which command they feel comfortable with, either walk, move or another type of command they prefer) freely in the space, in own peace and in silence. Ask the group to feel the mood they are in at the moment (each person individually, each person answers these questions in their head): how are you feeling in this space, with these people? What are the thoughts in your head? Look around, what do you observe? You can silently say “hello” to your fellow participants. Look outward to the community. What is it what you see? What kind of items? What do you like in here? What is that you don’t like and why? Find the space in the room where you feel the least comfortable – the facilitator may ask all or some participants what is it what makes them feel uncomfortable where they are. Then, space where you feel most comfortable – why? After each command/question, give some time for the participants to really feel the mood/ emotion. This variation can be used to familiarise the space and each other, break the ice and get comfortable with the people and space. It also helps to be present.
- The group walk/move everyone in the peace they feel like at the moment. After a while facilitator invites the group to imagine that the ground is pavement, slippery, muddy, forest ground, rock, etc. Participants react to changing ground. When back to the ground of the workshop room, you may want to proceed with being in different roles. Participants imagine walking as: 90 years old person, 5-year-old, king/queen, cowboy, ballerina etc. You may incorporate animals or topic related characters.
- Walking may also be used as deepening the characters of the spectacles, participants take the role of who they play and move as this person. They can also interact with each other.

## EXERCISE 2: PHOTOGRAPHY/STILL IMAGE

Boal discovered that still images, made using the participants' bodies, provided an alternative way of sharing ideas that were less dependent on verbal language. As in the previous exercise, there are many ways to use this technique. Briefly speaking, it refers to "freezing" the movement. The concept comes from an image theatre, participants are in roles where they can look closer at their emotions. It also provides information about the person – why this specific role was chosen, it creates a group story. It can be used to warm up, relax, get into a playful mood and very often serves as a point of departure for building the scenes and elaborating on them (what happened before? What happened after). Below we would like to present the game, which can be an introduction to working with still images, which is very playful and suitable for all age groups.

Amazon jungle: participants walk in space in silence. Imagine that you are in a jungle (you can give more details to the group, not too many, though). The facilitator counts down from 5 to 0, and each person needs to think about who they would like to be (or what). It can be an item, animal, or atmospherical phenomenon. Participants freeze. By touching the arm of the person, a facilitator may ask the questions: who/what you are? What are you doing at the moment? What do you see in front of you? You can repeat the command asking participants to imagine what happened in 1 hour/ 1 day etc.

## EXERCISE 3: STATUE

A statue is created by the participants of their own bodies. It is made as a result of freezing in a still image imaginary situations, emotional states, expressions, professions, social roles, and places, which result in creating a metaphor, symbol of a certain phenomenon. Persons in a statue are frozen in nonverbal interactions. The statue can be dynamised, in other words, we can bring the statue to life by adding a sound, movement, repeated words or phrases.

The meaning of the statue can be read from the inside and outside of the statue. The group can describe the statue's interrelations between its elements and give an interpretation of its meaning. The group who is creates the statue also gives their meaning and interpretation. The people involved in the statue can be asked what they are feeling at the moment, who are they, what are they thinking, etc.

Examples: statue of a situation, symbol, idea, value (love, argument, oppression, school, society, family, etc.)

This technique can bring us different perspectives and points of view on a specific topic or situation. It supports the learners/participants in putting oneself in the shoes of another person and fosters a sense of empowerment and ownership as well as responsibility for the situation.

## EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

After each international activity of the project, regardless if it is educational or management, partners agreed to evaluation and feedback sessions. This helps not only the participating organisations to improve their future activities, but also shares a participants' perspective with the reader, and ensures participants' experience is put into the centre of partnership's interest. Learning from all perspectives, all angles, is crucial and can prove to be helpful to a variety of readers, professionals and amateurs from various fields of work.

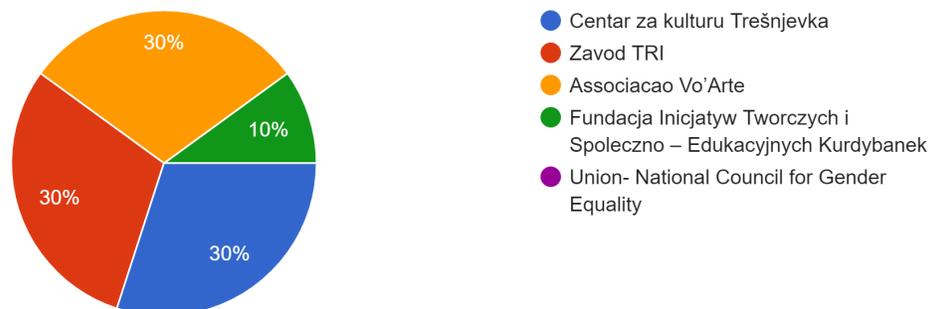
This second eManual covers the responses we collected after the LTT C3 "Forum Theatre as educational tool" workshop, the third workshop of the partnership, held in Kraków.

Evaluation is conducted online (online questionnaire) in order to give participants' the opportunity to share their experiences without conforming to the group mentality or peer pressure. They are asked a few close-ended questions about their experiences and then they are given an opportunity to go more in-depth and provide qualitative insight into their experience, in their own words – by putting experiences and elements of the workshop into "Backpack" (anything they feel they want to bring back home with them, which was useful), "Washing Machine" (anything that might be useful, but still needs rinsing/cleaning), and "Waste bin" (anything that was not good and should be abandoned in the future workshops).

### ACTIVITY

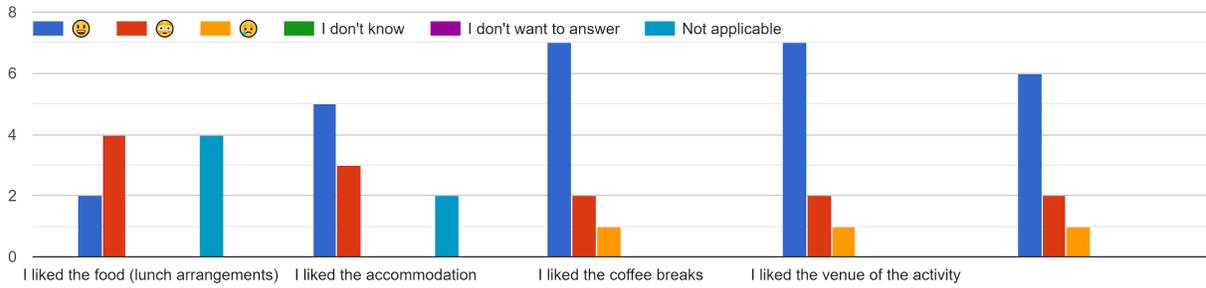
Which is your organisation? Which organisation you represented at this workshop?

10 responses



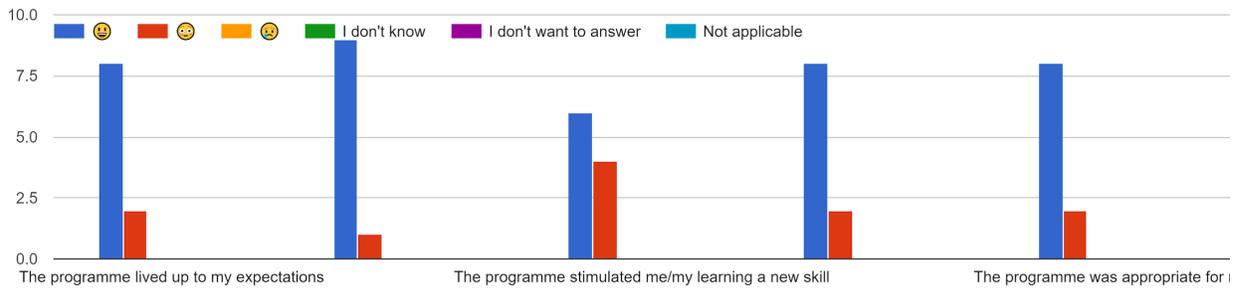
## HOSPITALITY

Please grade the general HOSPITALITY of this activity



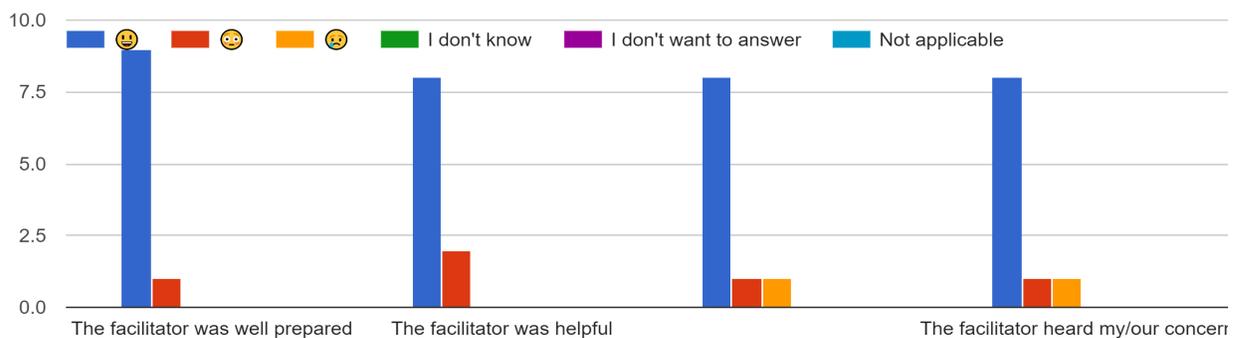
## WORKSHOP

Please share how was the PROGRAMME of this activity?



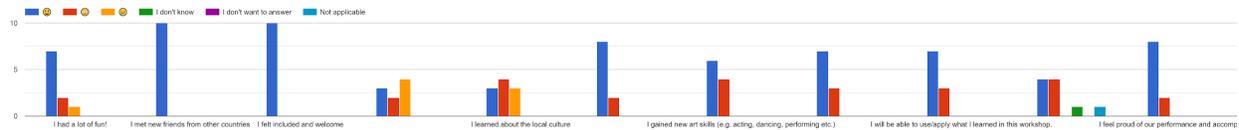
## FACILITATOR

Please share your opinion about the FACILITATOR



## OBJECTIVES

Please share your opinion about the OBJECTIVES of this activity



## IN-DEPTH EVALUATION

- **(BACKPACK) If anything, what was great at this workshop/meeting?**
  - The people and the community
  - “Creating machines”
  - I learned new skills in forum theatre. I saw what a well prepared organisation can do. Workshop enhanced my understanding of theatre and gave me new ideas for my work at the theatre.
  - Forum theatre method, friendship
  - Great. I found a lot of interesting new topics and I did enjoy it a lot.
  - The participants and facilitators’ exercises
  - I learnt a new method of work and its was great to meet and work with different people
  - I found most of the tools presented in the workshop very useful. But I especially admire the way facilitators were able to create a very safe environment to work and took their time for their propositions and discussion.
  - Methods can change
- **(WASHING MACHINE) If anything, what should have been done better at this workshop/meeting?**
  - More time for debates/ sharing ideias. Aldo more time to explore the city
  - Coffee breaks, off-programme participation and help by hosts (e.g. socialising with participants helps build partnership relations, learning local culture is easier with help from locals). New projects also often come up when socialising outside of the “working hours”.
  - Maybe to make a small tourist guide with the locals as well.this would be a nice part to see the city with them
  - I would also like to learn some of the more contemporary approaches to this methodology
  - I thought it was too long work day
  - I would re-question the “list of values” and see if commitment can be achieved without strict rules.
  - Some rules of the method should be improved.

- **(WASTE BIN) If anything, what should not have happen at this workshop?**
  - More time to eat
  - Too much time for circles when people don't have so much to say at that time. No time just to chat with the partners. Too much pressure about schedule and time and probably the program should be more open to changes or time to discuss when some questions appear also if they appear out of the circle moments.

## REFERENCES

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Witerska, K. (2016). Teatr Forum. Drama. Edukacja rówieśnicza. Profilaktyka



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